Beyond the Wage Gap: Political and Economic Gender Inequality Avigayil Altman

Campaign finance

- Women are more likely to donate to a female candidate, but women tend to donate less to political campaigns than men do
- Female candidates rely much more on individual donors than on PACs, partly because PACs favor incumbents and the lack of female governmental representatives means they receive less PAC money
- PACs and donations to incumbents, which favor men, remain extremely significant to election success and greatly outweigh the impact of EMILY'S List and similar groups
- Campaign spending translated into more votes for men compared with women who ran as challengers for the U.S. House
- Donor motivations (and policy preferences), donor networks
 → beneficial for male candidates
- Political money = speech, so women are silenced more when they spend less.





representation of men to women in political office? • Studying from the wage gap and beyond: the wage gap is exemplary of gender economic

political disparities

the relationship between such economic and political inequality
Variables studied: campaign finance, sociological views of women, women's occupations, and female political participation.

inequality on a small scale. Traced from this root, certain variables may lend insight into

 Ultimately, the downstream effect of the wage gap leads to the lack of descriptive representation for women.

The relationship between economic and

What is the relationship between gender economic inequality and the political

gender gap in the federal government? How does this affect the disproportionate

The role of identity politics and other variables

- Gender is an intrinsic part of one's identity, so identity politics cannot be ignored when considering the lack of descriptive representation for women
- Men have tendencies to assert their "manly prerogatives" in politics, resulting in their objection to the idea of female identity politics.
- In addition to economic disparities and identity politics, other variables contribute to the lack of descriptive representation in the federal government
- Further: when studying beyond simply the economic and political disparities between genders, there are glaring intersectional problems: the pay gap is larger for women of color and their descriptive representation is lower

What can be done?

- Since the political and economic inequalities are linked, the equalities must be linked as well → the relationship between economic and political gender equality is cyclical
- Greater economic equality may lead to greater political equality between genders
- The clear effect that gender economic inequality has on political inequality teaches important lesson: in order to increase descriptive representation for women, economic inequality - starting with the wage gap - must decrease



Relevant background, facts & stats

- The wage gap the difference in earnings between men and women for the same job (currently 17.7 cents)
- "Baseline gender preference" with all else held constant, an individual prefers to vote for and be represented in government by a male.
- Women make up 50.8% of the population, 47% of the labor force, but only 27.4% of Congress (as of 2021)
- Equal Pay Act (1963) prohibited employers from paying women less than men for the same job
- Civil Rights Act, Title VII amendment protecting women from workplace discrimincation based on gender



Female political participation

- Women are more likely to vote, but less likely to run, lobby, do other political activities
- Men are more likely than women to belong to a political party →
 individuals who belong to a party are more politically active and likely to
 engage in politics
- Less time for leisurely political participation
- If women were more involved in politics, they would be more likely to donate to political campaigns (relates back to issue of campaign finance)
- Women are socialized towards passive, private, and compassionate gender roles - men are socialized to leadership, public roles, and self reliance
- Incumbency advantage; since incumbents are more likely to win, they
 intimidate others from running against them (more male incumbents)
- Political involvement is also a leading factor in what drives individuals to donate to campaigns → help with female hardships with campaign finance

Sociological views of women in the U.S.

- Both genders need similar levels of resources to get votes, but women are stereotyped as less electable than men - "cannot do the job of governing as well as men can"
- wide belief that men are more "emotionally suited for politics" - those who hold this belief think that men will agree with them on more "stereotypically male" issues
- expected selflessness → less comfortable asking for money
- Around 50% of men think they are qualified to run for office: 25% of women
- Candidate-centered campaigns → confidence, personal intricacies



Women's occupations in the U.S.

- Women must work more than men to earn the same amount of money → must spend more time at work to achieve the same level of wealth
- "Relationally embedded" deciding factor to run affects women more than men - considering the perspectives of others, especially family members, when deciding to run for office
- Even when a male and female work the same, women shoulder more responsibilities at home
- Similar education rates → equal qualifications to work
- Sociological views by others but also by women themselves
 → contributes to the pay gap and to women's lower
 likelihood to run for political office
- Women are more likely to work part-time, resulting in their lower hourly wages and lesser benefits

