

Examining Individuals' Understanding of Gender and Politics: Content Analysis Project

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Project Description:

These materials are designed to accompany the SRCD monograph *Toward A Developmental Science of Politics*. This project allows students to build on their learning from reading the monograph by reflecting on key findings and analyzing data. This content analysis project could be used for courses in psychology, sociology, political science, media studies, or gender studies.

To access the monograph, visit <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/15405834>

For additional materials related to this monograph, visit <https://monographmatters.srkd.org/>

Project Objectives:

This project explores the ways in which media convey information about gender and politics. From this project, students should be able to:

- Identify ways that messages about gender and politics are conveyed through media.
- Identify ways that the messages about gender and politics in media might justify or undermine the status quo.
- Reflect on the power dynamics embedded in messages about gender and politics and the implications for people's understanding of and engagement with politics.

Discussion Questions:

1. What were the main results of this study? Did these results surprise you?
2. What do you remember about the 2016 election? How did you or other people you know react to the election outcome?
3. What do you remember about how the 2016 election was depicted in media? Are your memories consistent with the statement in the Patterson et al. monograph that media messages about candidates and elections are frequently negative?
4. What themes do you see in the examples brought in by the class? Do these themes suggest there are common ways in which women candidates are depicted in media?

RESEARCH PROJECT

Find an example of a media depiction of a woman running for political office (newspaper article, advertisement, magazine story, etc.).

Context: What is the context for the item's publication? What publication or online site did it come from? How would readers/viewers have seen this item?

Audience: Who is the intended audience for this item?

People: Are people pictured in the item? If yes, who is pictured? Think about factors such as gender, race, and age.

Language: What is the important text of the item? Is the text informational? Does it directly relate to the candidate? Does it contain a slogan or catchphrase?

Political socialization: Do the images or text in the item convey messages about the nature of political leadership? Are these messages about political leadership similar to the characteristics of leaders discussed in the monograph?

Political issues: Are messages about political issues depicted? Are the political issues discussed similar to the political issues included in the monograph study?

Stereotypes: Do the images or text in the item convey or refer to gender stereotypes? How do you know?

Children's perceptions: How do you think children of the age included in the monograph study (5-11 years old) would react to this item?