

Newspaper Coverage of Female Candidates During Election Campaigns: Evidence From a Structural Topic Model

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NO WONDER BILL'S AFRAID

Hillary explodes with rage at Benghazi hearing



The lady has some temper: Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton came out bubbling fire yesterday at a congressional hearing where panelists laid her blame for the Benghazi debacle. **PAGES 8-9**



EL DEFAULT EMOCIONAL de Cristina

Exposó de Verbitsky: sus duras críticas al Gobierno. Caso ARBA: escudado por un infiltrado de la Federal.



MACHOCHA EUROPY

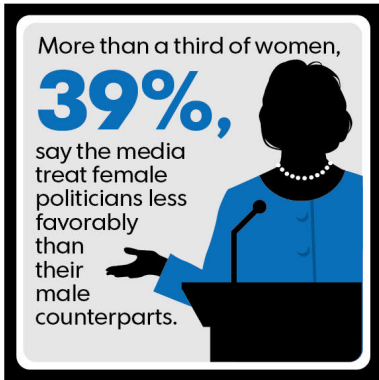


ROMA IN BAMBOLA

Campidoglio Stravince la Raggi che disintegra il PD. È il primo sindaco donna della storia capitolina. Una città distrutta in mano a chi non ha mai governato.

LAURENTI
 COMPRO ORO - ARGENTO - BRILLANTI
 STIMA BENI EREDITATI
 COMPRATE VITA OROLOGI GRANDE MARCHE
 VISITA IL NOSTRO SITO SU: WWW.ITOTALE.IT

How media cast female candidates



Source SheSpeaks online survey
of 250,000 female members

TERRY BYRNE AND PAUL TRAP, USA TODAY

Previous studies

- ▶ Consensus: gender bias in media coverage has decreased over time
- ▶ Disagreement: nature and extent of remaining biases
- ▶ Studies tend to rely on relatively small samples and manual coding

(Kahn and Goldenberg 1991; Kahn 1994; Smith 1997; Bystrom et al. 2001; Banwart et al. 2003; Heldman et al. 2005; Jalalzai 2006; Fowler and Lawless 2009; Gershon 2012; Hayes et al. 2014; Baitinger 2015; Escobar-Lemmon et al. 2016; Ward 2016; Kittilson and Fridkin 2008; Dunaway et al. 2013; Lühiste and Banducci 2016; Hayes and Lawless 2015; Fiechtner et al. 2016)

Our approach

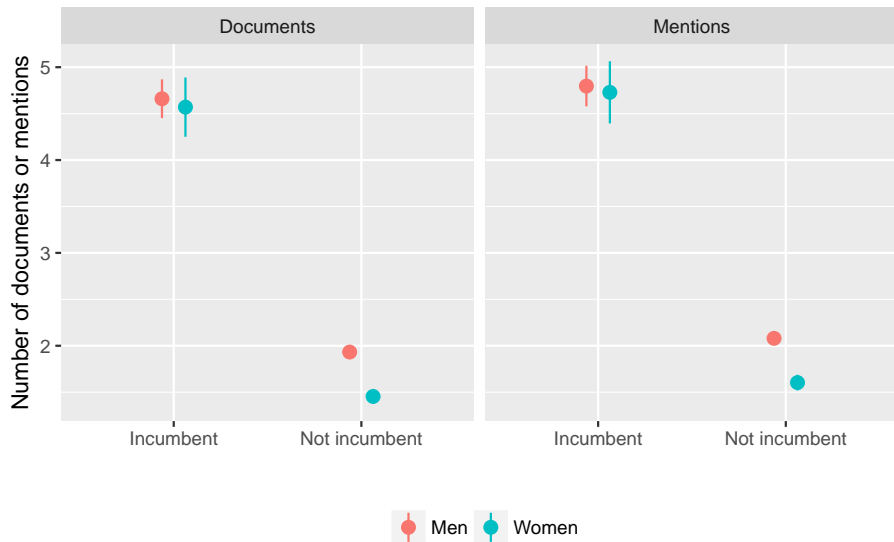
- ▶ Almost comprehensive sample of newspaper coverage of the 2015 Swiss national elections (2.5 months, 70 sources, 200,000+ articles, all 3900 candidates)
- ▶ Analysis in three steps:
 1. Candidate level: number of mentions and number of articles with mentions (negative binomial models)
 2. Article level: which topics are associated with male and female candidates? ⇒ Structural topic models (Roberts et al. 2014; Roberts et al. 2016)
 3. Article level: within topics, which words are associated with male and female candidates? ⇒ Structural topic models (Roberts et al. 2014; Roberts et al. 2016)

Results: Attention

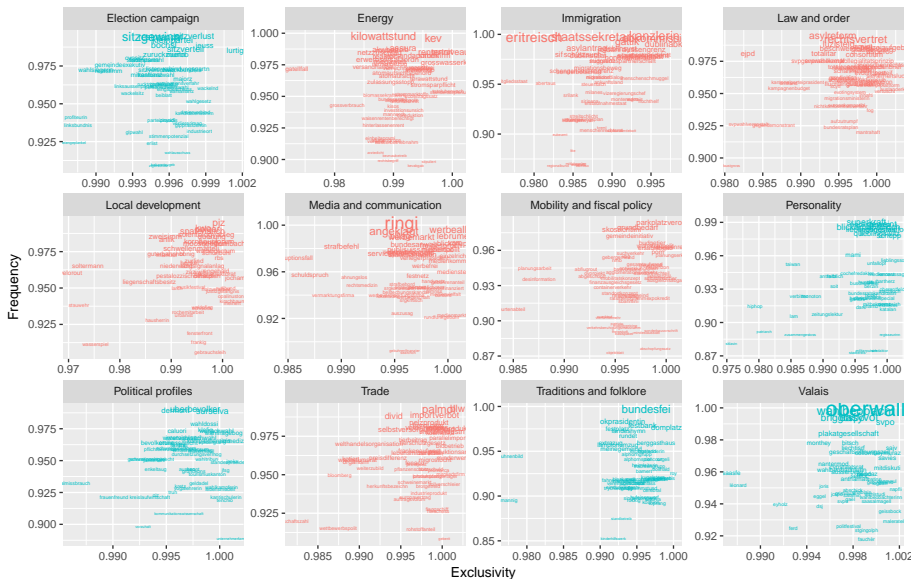
	Documents	Documents	Mentions	Mentions
(Intercept)	1.22*** (0.12)	1.22*** (0.12)	1.36*** (0.12)	1.37*** (0.12)
Woman	-0.45*** (0.05)	-0.48*** (0.05)	-0.45*** (0.05)	-0.48*** (0.05)
Incumbent	2.86*** (0.09)	2.73*** (0.11)	2.85*** (0.10)	2.72*** (0.12)
Woman \times Incumbent		0.39* (0.20)		0.41** (0.21)
Federal Councillor	5.10*** (0.51)	5.11*** (0.51)	5.10*** (0.54)	5.11*** (0.54)
Party fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Canton fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num. obs.	3913	3913	3913	3913

Negative binomial models. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Results: Attention

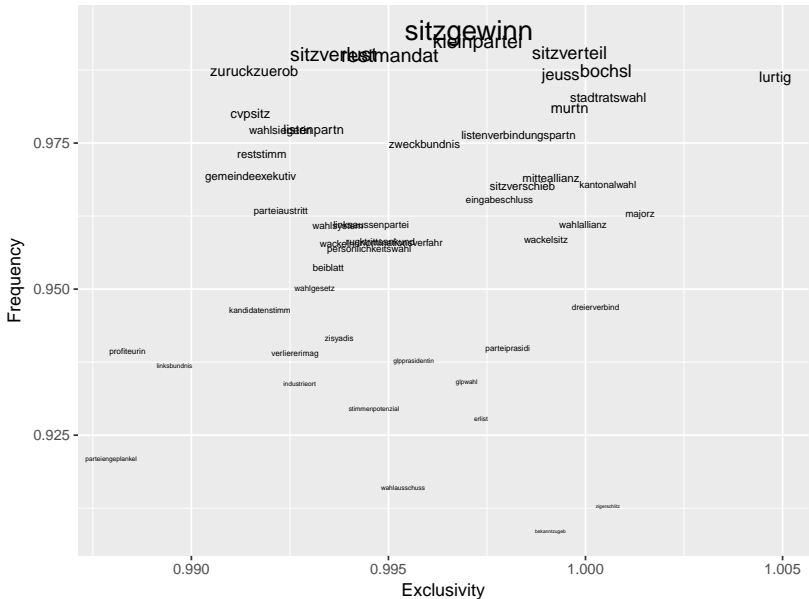


Results: Topics

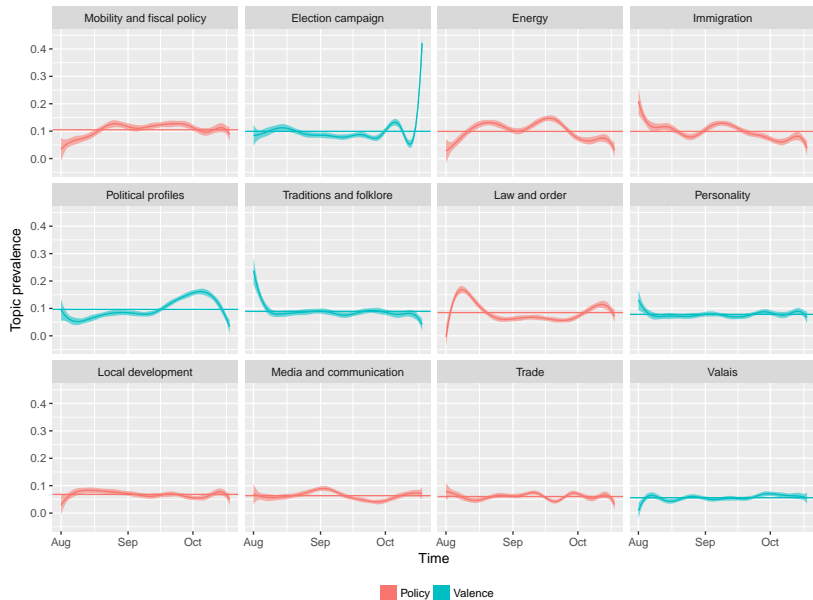


a Policy a Valence

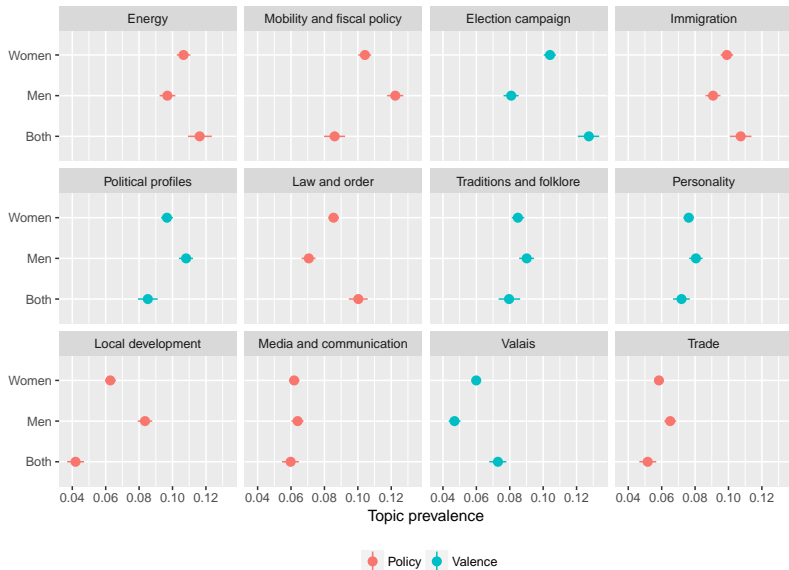
Election campaign



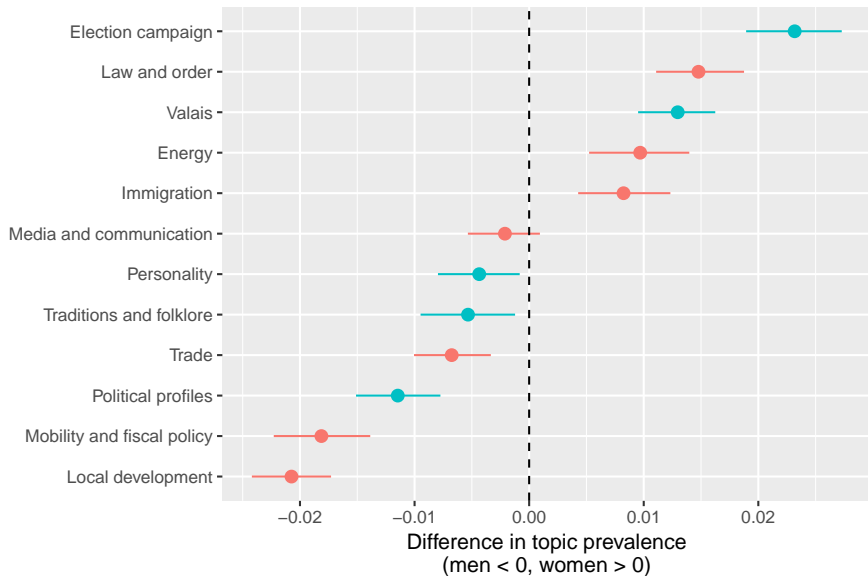
Results: Topics



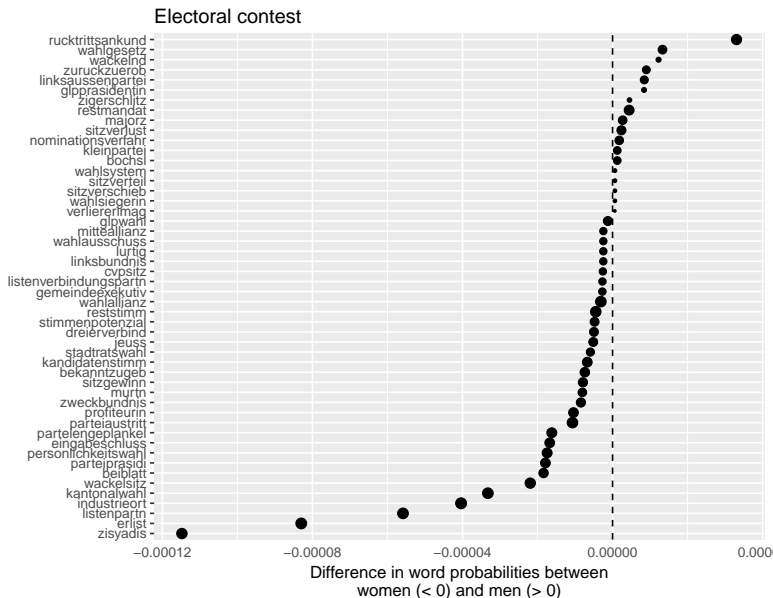
Results: Topics



Results: Topics



Results: Content



Conclusion

- ▶ Less media attention to female candidates only if non-incumbent; no gender bias for incumbents
- ▶ Topics co-vary with the gender of candidates mentioned in the articles
- ▶ Content of topics not obviously biased at first sight

Much left to do!

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