THE CHANGING SOCIAL DEFINITIONS OF MEN AND WOMEN
AND THEIR EFFECT ON THE PARTISAN GENDER GAP,
1953-2003

A Thesis in
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by
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Abstract

This project develops a theory of social definition of gender, the meaning society ascribes to being a man or a woman, and its influence on partisan attachments of men and women and the resulting partisan gender gap. The gender gap in partisanship is a dynamic process. I address the dynamic nature of the gender gap in partisanship between 1953 and 2003 by tracing its evolution as a function of the social and political context captured by the social definition of gender. I argue that how society conceptualizes the meaning of gender continually reshapes not only the social, but also the political fabric of the United States giving rise to shifts in the social definition of gender. These shifts produce new policies for women and men, resulting in the reshuffling of partisan attachments. Additionally, this project integrates the theoretical work on the social construction of gender into empirical research by developing empirical measures of the social definition of gender.

Many theories exist to explain change in aggregate party balance: partisan realignment and generational replacement (Campbell et. al. 1960; Nie, et. al. 1979; Miller and Shanks 1996); retrospective evaluations of candidates (Downs 1957; Fiorina 1978); political and economic events (Erikson et. al. 2002). The empirical work on the gender gap allows changing trends to have differential impacts on men’s and women’s partisanship, but treats sex as a constant. Treating sex as a constant limits our understanding of the dynamics underlying the gender gap in partisanship. The goal of the dissertation is to integrate the theoretical work on gender into our understanding of partisan change.

Two questions serve as the organization of the dissertation: First, what has caused changes in the social definition of gender? Second, how has the social definition of gender affected the gender gap in partisanship? I test the effect of the social definition of gender and competing theories on the formation of the gender gap.

The concept of the social definition of gender is operationalized using public opin-
ion. I use James Stimson’s dynamic algorithm, a form of principle component factor analysis, to combine multiple question series into a single time series of the progressiveness of American’s gender attitudes. Survey questions pertaining to the roles and expectations of men and women are collected from iPoll and the National Election Studies. The partisanship data has been gathered from Gallup surveys.

Changes in the social definition of gender continually remold the social and political landscape of the United States. However, the connection between changes in social identities and the behavior resulting from those changes is often overlooked. This project makes that connection through understanding the impact the dynamics of social definition of gender has on men’s and women’s political alignments. Additionally, this project enhances our understanding of what causes changes in macropartisanship and provides an explanation for the dynamics of the partisan gender gap.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The 1980 Presidential election was a turning point for women in politics, not because a record number of women ran or won elected office, nor because it marked a victory for women’s rights or women’s issues. Rather, the 1980 election marked the point when women voters and women’s issues became central components of U.S. electoral politics.

Before the 1980 election, neither political party paid much attention to issues of special relevance to women. If forced to choose a party more sympathetic to women’s issues during the 1950s and 1960s it would have been the Republican Party (Freeman 2000, Wolbrecht 2000, Sanbonmatsu 2002). Starting in the mid-1970s, however, the relationship between the political parties and women’s rights and issues began to shift (Freeman 1987). By the 1980 election, then presidential candidate Ronald Reagan and the Republican Party solidified this shift by stating opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment and taking anti-choice stands on abortion. Today, voters have clear choices between the parties on abortion, women’s rights issues, and other women’s issues (Wolbrecht 2000, Sanbonmatsu 2002).

The potential influence and power of women voting as a group was realized
for the first time during the 1980 election. This election was the first time in the 60 years of U.S. women’s suffrage that women turned out to the polls in equal numbers to men (Frankovic 1982, Mueller 1988, CAWP 2005b). This group of female voters was also different than those in previous elections; they were better educated and more likely to be employed outside the home. The National Organization of Women (NOW) released a post-election analysis memo showing that only 46 percent of women voted for Reagan, as compared to 54 percent of men (CAWP 2005a). A NOW press release termed these differences the “gender gap,” prompting a fury of journalistic reporting and academic research on sex differences in men’s and women’s political behavior.

Since the 1980 election, we have seen the gender gap in vote-choice become an enduring characteristic of the political landscape. Scholars have found that the gender gap in vote choice exists not only in presidential elections, but also in elections for the House of Representatives (Chaney & Sinclair 1994), the Senate (Cook 1994, Paolino 1995, Dolan 1998, CAWP 1999, Ondercin & Bernstein 2007), and Governorships (CAWP 1999). While the 1980 election marked the start of popular and scholarly attention to the gender gap in vote-choice, it by no means was the actual start of sex differences in political behavior between men and women. The gender gap existed at least as early as the 1950s (Wirls 1986, Norrander 1999a, Manza & Brooks 1998)

While scholars have observed these differences, our understanding of the gender gap in partisanship is still under-developed. We know that the gender gaps in partisanship and vote choice are linked to the changing position of women and men in society and attitude differences between men and women. However, we do not understand why these changes matter for men’s and women’s partisanship. Additionally, our understanding of over time changes in the gender gap is limited since
most studies of the gender gap focus on only one or two elections. I contend that, in order to understand the dynamic nature of the partisan gender gap, we need to conceptualize gender as a social and historical construct. I develop the concept of the social definition of gender as a way to capture empirically the theoretical social construction of gender and to explain the movement of the partisan gender gap over time. The social definition of gender represents the combination of experiences and expectations placed on men and women in a particular society at a particular point in time. As the social definition of gender changes over time, men’s and women’s relationship with government is altered. Men and women develop new preferences, interests, needs, and wants. Because men’s and women’s experiences and expectations are shaped by gender, these preferences and needs are likely to be different. In turn, men and women will adjust their partisan attachments to align with their new preferences, creating the partisan gender gap.

The contributions of this project are three-fold. First, the development of an empirical measure of the social definition of gender allows us to trace the historical and social construction of gender over time. Measuring the social definition of gender empirically allows us to observe and model changes in the social definition of gender. Additionally, it allows us to understand the effects of changes in the social and historical construction of gender. Second, this project provides us with insight into the gender gap in partisanship, an enduring feature of U.S. electoral politics. The expansive time frame for this project, 1953-2003, allow us to trace changes in the gender gap before the 1980s. In demonstrating the gender gap as a function of changes in the social definition of gender, we learn how the gender gap in partisanship is a reflection of the different expectations and experiences placed on men and women that result in different evaluations of the political parties, politicians, and policies. Third, beyond the substantive contributions of
this project, this project works to bridge the divide between often disparate fields: women’s studies and political science. The project is a mix of both disciplines; I draw on both in constructing my theory, measures, and testing.

1.1 The gender gap in partisanship

The gender gap is a long-term and persistent feature of U.S. electoral politics. The gender gap in partisanship and vote choice in the United States goes back at least until the 1950s, when we have the first reliable large-scale surveys. Historical accounts of women’s involvement in the parties before and after suffrage are inconclusive in determining if a gender gap existed during this point in time; however, several studies suggest that women favored the Republican Party over the Democratic Party (Gustafson 2001, Freeman 2000, Gustafson 1999, Durkin 1995). In one the few empirical tests of this question, Corder and Wolbrecht (2003) find that immediately following suffrage there was not a gender gap. Yet regardless of the exact date the gender gap emerged, gender has nonetheless shaped electoral politics in the United States for a long time and continues to shape politics today.

The gender gap is a widely-used term to describe any difference between men and women. In politics, the term refers to differences in vote choice, partisan attachments, political knowledge, presidential approval, political ambition, and public opinion. In this project, I use the gender gap to refer to differences in men’s and women’s partisan attachments. I focus on the partisan gender gap because partisanship serves as the motivation for other political activities such as vote choice and opinion formation. With a better understanding of the gender gap in

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1 Differences in the political behavior of men and women are not unique to the United States. Differences exist in many countries including but not limited to: France, Canada, England, Italy, Germany, Belgium, and The Netherlands (Inglehart & Norris 2003).
partisanship we can also gain a better understanding of political behavior more broadly.

I calculate the gender gap in partisanship as the percent of women identifying with the Democratic Party minus the percent of men identifying with the Democratic Party.\textsuperscript{2} It is helpful to look at the gender gap in partisanship to understand how it has changed over time. Figure 1.1 shows the Democratic and Republican gender gap in partisanship between 1953 and 2003, yearly.\textsuperscript{3} From the figure it is clear that the gap in the 1950s was much different than it is today; in this early time period women were less likely than men to identify with (and vote for)

\textsuperscript{2}A positive gender gap indicates that women are more likely than men to identify with the Democratic Party. A negative gender gap indicates that men are more likely than women to identify with the Democratic Party. The gender gap can also be calculated for Republican partisans or Independents. I measure the gender in reference to Democratic partisanship for consistency with the literature (Carroll 2006, Chaney, Alvarez & Nagler 1998, Clark & Clark 1999, Kaufmann & Petrocik 1999, Wirles 1986)

\textsuperscript{3}See Appendix A for information on the data and the creation of the partisanship series.
the Democratic Party. This early gender gap, which is sometimes referred to as the “traditional gender gap” (Inglehart & Norris 2003), ranged from -0.26 to -6.78 points and existed until the early 1960s, with the average gap between men’s and women’s partisanship from 1953 to 1963 being -3.63 points. Starting in 1963, women became more Democratic than men by an average of 6.06 points, and this gap held steady until 1971. Between 1971 and 1976, the gap greatly declined, and in some cases men became slightly more Democratic than women. In 1976, we see the emergence of the gender gap in partisanship that exists today, or the “modern gender gap” (Inglehart & Norris 2003), where women are more likely than men to identify with the Democratic Party. During this time we witness the gender gap range from 1.43 to 14.8 points, with an average gap of 7.81 points. The gender gap reached its peak in 2000 when women were 14.8 points more likely to identify with the Democratic Party than men.

Figure 1.1 highlights the dynamic nature of the gender gap in partisanship. The gender gap in partisanship grows and shrinks over time. Looking at this dynamic process raises the central question of this project: Why does the gender gap in partisanship change over time?

### 1.2 Partisan change in the U.S. electorate


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4 If we look at the Republican gender gap during this period we see the reverse trend. In the 1950s women were more likely to identify with the Republican Party than men. Today men are more likely to identify with the Republican Party. Because the meaning of the Independent category changes over time it is hard to assess the gender gap in Independents. However Norrander (Norrander 1997) suggests that men are more likely between 1952 and 1994 to classify themselves as Independents.
Mackuen & Stimson 2002). From these studies we learn that changes in partisanship have shaped elections and public policies (Erikson, Mackuen & Stimson 2002). Similarly, we know that the gender gap has played a pivotal role in elections. However, the existence of the gender gap suggests that the dynamics of macropartisanship are different for men and women. Unfortunately, the literature on partisan dynamics does not address the role gender plays in shaping partisan attachments.

Two main theories dominate our understanding of partisanship and partisan change in the United States: the American Voter model (Campbell et al. 1960) and the running-tally model (Fiorina 1978, Downs 1957, Erikson, Mackuen & Stimson 2002). The former tells us that partisan attachments are highly stable, suggesting that we should observe little change at the macro-level. Change occurs as a result of partisan realignment and generational replacement. From the latter model, we learn that macropartisanship changes systematically because of political events, political parties, and politicians. However, both theories are virtually silent on the role of gender in shaping macropartisanship. The silence is mainly due to the focus on sex, rather than gender that traditional political science employs. Sex has been constructed as a constant. Because sex does not change, this story goes, it cannot be responsible for the dynamics of the partisan gender gap. Additionally, men’s and women’s preferences are treated as the same. Because their preferences are not different, then, we would not expect to see partisan differences between men and women.

In order to understand the gender gap in partisanship we need to go further. I argue we need to shift our focus from sex to gender. Additionally, we need to recognize that gender shapes the preferences of men and women and is the likely source of partisan differences. The gender gap in partisanship is a persistent but evolving feature of the U.S. electoral system. Thus, we need to reconsider our
understanding of partisanship and partisanship change to address the role that gender plays.

1.3 Looking at sex, when we really care about gender

This project works to increase our understanding of how gender shapes politics in the United States. I contend by treating sex as a constant, current theories of partisan change miss the important role of gender and its dynamic influence. To better understand the dynamic nature of the gender gap in partisanship, we need to reconsider how we treat sex and gender in our theories and analysis. I make the distinction between sex and gender as a way to illustrate the dynamic effect gender has on the political landscape. Additionally, using gender rather than sex provides a framework that allows me to move away from individual identities and toward a macro understanding of partisan change.

In empirical political science, the distinction between sex and gender is weakly made. Often practitioners make no distinction, using the concepts interchangeably both in theory and in measurement. There are only a handful of scholars who recognize that sex and gender are conceptually distinct. These scholars acknowledge that theoretically we are interested more in the social concept of gender, not the biological concept of sex.\(^5\) Despite the growing awareness that sex and gender are not interchangeable labels, however, political science still grapples with the

\(^5\)There is a growing body of literature that works to break away form the sex/gender dichotomies and articulate theoretically how gender functions. A few examples are: Burns, Schlozman and Verba (Burns & Verba 2001), Keiser, Wilkins, Meier, and Holland (Keiser et al. 2002) and Hawkesworth (Hawkesworth 2003). Also see “The Concept of Gender: Research Implications for Political Science” featured in Politics and Gender (2005).
Sex and gender are distinct concepts. Sex is the biological identity of an individual determined by chromosomal make-up. But there is no inherent social meaning to the categories that we identify with sex, until meaning is constructed around them. While sex is biological, gender is social. Gender is more than just a social label for biological categories. Gender is conceptualized and defined in many different ways: individual identity, group identity, seriality, institution, etc. No matter how gender is utilized, it is seen as both a social (Lorber 1993, Lorber 1998, West & Zimmerman 1987, Scott 1991, Ferree, Lorber & Hess 1999) and an historical construction (Riley 1995). It is the social meaning of gender and its political consequences that we, as political and social scientists, are interested in.

In this project, gender is conceptualized as operating in two ways: as a category of analysis and as a social process. When gender functions as a category, we are referring to:

the multidimensional mapping of socially constructed, fluid, politically relevant identities, values, conventions, and practices conceived of as masculine and/or feminine, with recognition that masculinity and femininity correspond only fleetingly and roughly to “male” and “female.” (Beckwith 2005)

This term is used to understand how men and women are politically positioned towards each other. Gender as a category serves as this project’s platform for inquiry into the differences between men’s and women’s political behaviors — the gender gap in partisanship.

Gender is also conceptualized as a process. Beckwith (2005) explains: “By
‘process,’ I mean behaviors, conventions, practices, and dynamics engaged in by individuals, organizations, movements, institutions, and nations.” In this project gender, is not an individual identity. Rather it a macro-level phenomenon structuring the behaviors of men and women. I use Iris Marion Young’s (2002) work on gender as a social structure as a foundation:

social structure specifically directed at the project of giving institutional account of sources of injustice and in response to the dilemmas that emerge from claiming that individuals share group identities. Structures denote the confluence of institutional rules and interactive routines, mobilization of resources, and physical structures, which constitute the historical givens in relation to which individuals act, and which are relatively stable over time. Structures also connote the wider social outcomes that result from the confluence of many individual actions within given institutional relations, whose collective consequences often do not bear the mark on any person or group’s intention.

Gender in this sense is working at the macro level, creating the contextual space in which individuals operate. One of the advantages to thinking of gender as a social structure is that it moves us away from gender as an individual identity. Young (2002) highlights one of the problems of seeing gender in terms of simply identity “On this account, what it means to say that individual persons are ‘gendered’ is that we all find ourselves passively grouped according to these structural relations, in ways too impersonal to ground identity [emphasis original].” The concept of the social definition of gender developed in this project utilizes gender as a social structure.

Separating sex from gender is the first step in recognizing how gender shapes the
political landscape. Recognizing that gender is a social and historical construction places the dynamic nature of gender at the center of this project. The changes associated with the social and historical construction of gender have important political implications.

1.4 The social definition of gender and its political implications

Gender is more than an identity possessed by an individual; it is a process that structures social relationships and behavior in the aggregate. Drawing on the vast body of literature that complicates the concepts of sex and gender as social and historical constructions, I develop the concept of the social definition of gender. The social definition of gender represents the gendered expectations and experiences of men and women in a particular society at a particular point in time. The social definition of gender structures men’s and women’s relationships with various institutions, one of which is government. The political implications of the social definition of gender are far reaching; however, in this project I am concerned with one in particular — the partisan gender gap.

The social definition of gender is an aggregate concept designed to capture the existing gender ideologies, stereotypes, opportunities, roles, expectations and experiences of men and women. It captures the meanings behind the categories of men and women and is able to trace out the changes associated with the meanings over time. The social definition of gender rests on the idea that gender is a social and historical construction. The social definition of gender is an aggregate phenomena not an individual identity. It is also a dynamic process, changing systematically
The social definition of gender has important political consequences. It structures men’s and women’s relationships with government by gendering the needs and expectations that men and women have of government. As the social definition of gender changes over time, needs and expectations change, resulting in political change. Changes in the social definition of gender have far-reaching political consequences, from influencing the agenda of government and the political parties to influencing the dynamics of the partisan gender gap.

I draw on the extant work on partisan change, incorporating the social definition of gender into theories of partisan change. I begin with the framework of Downs (1957) and Fiorina (1978) on the running-tally models of partisan change at the individual level and Erikson et al. (2002) at the aggregate level. The running-tally model contends that individuals adjust their partisan attachments based on evaluations of politicians and parties. Erikson et al. has translated this micro model into the aggregate, arguing that macropartisan change is the cumulation of these individual evaluations. The political implications of the social definition of gender do not contradict this basic argument; rather, the social definition mediates men’s and women’s relationships with government and structures their respective evaluations of parties and politicians. I argue that the social definition of gender shapes men’s and women’s preferences. As a result, men and women will not always react in the same manner to political events, political parties, or politicians. The result is the partisan gender gap.

The social definition of gender provides a conceptual framework through which to view the dynamics of partisan change represented in the partisan gender gap. It helps us understand the partisan gender gap by switching our analytic focus from sex to gender. The socially constructed meaning of gender and its political
implications are what truly interests us as political scientists.

1.5 An interdisciplinary project

This project has its roots in two separate disciplines: political science and women’s studies. Each one of these fields independently contributes to the project. However, the project rests at a nexus between the two fields and would not be able to exist without the contributions of both. Political science contributes both the topic and methodological focus. This project is fundamentally about politics and the macro political behavior of the electorate. It also take a quantitative, empirical approach to questions, an approach which is largely a function of coming from the political science discipline. Women’s studies provides the theoretical underpinnings and motivation for this project. The vast theoretical work of women’s studies provides the lens through which we can see how gender operates. It also moves us beyond simply thinking in terms of binaries, constants, and just about women.

A project grounded in two distinct and sometimes disparate disciplines is not straightforward or simple. These fields are often viewed as inconsistent or incompatible with each other at epistemological, theoretical, and methodological levels. Sapiro (1995) explains that feminist scholarship on gender and politics is not fully integrated into either political science or women’s studies. On the political science side, Sapiro identifies the public/private divided, the positivist legacy of the discipline, and the prominent role of canonical works as barriers to feminist scholarship.

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7Although women’s studies began as an interdisciplinary field, over the past several decades, as a field it has constructed a set of disciplinary boundaries. It has developed its own theories, methods, norms, and practices. Additionally, more and more women’s studies programs have shifted from being interdisciplinary programs or institutes on campus to formal degree and tenure granting departments.
in political science. On the women’s studies side, Sapiro identifies several factors that restrict the integration of political science into women’s studies: the feminist question in science and anti-empirical sentiment; many other fields finding the politics and political and taking these questions on under their scope of inquiry; the differences between theory in the humanities and the social sciences; and the focus on text-based research in the humanities.

Can the two fields be blended into a sound research project? I contend the answer is yes. Drawing on both fields enhances our understanding of politics as well as gender. In order to carry out such a project successfully we need to examine the underlying assumptions of the project. What exactly do the methods and methodologies tell us or do not tell us? When approaching any research project, the question and how it is asked places boundaries on the scope of inquiry. The question dictates where the data should come from and how the data should be analyzed. No method should be excluded because it is empirical, theoretical, qualitative, quantitative, text based, or non-text based.

Feminist scholars should not buttress traditional dichotomies by making assumptions about what can and cannot be said or accomplished using scientific and empirical modes of analysis. Feminist social scientists who use quantitative analytical methods are not just ‘squashing people into little numbers.’ To suggest they do because of an assumed logic of inquiry without considering their work more carefully is simply to fall prey to a revised but nevertheless dangerous form of math anxiety. Feminist scholars in the social sciences are, in fact, exploring the implications of feminist theory for the practices of empirical social science. This requires studying and understanding research practices as
well as probing the theory-based logic of inquiry (Sapiro, 1995, 76-77).

Each method should be recognized for what it is: a tool of social inquiry. Just like any tool in a person’s tool box, each method is designed for a specific task. Tools can be misused but there is nothing inherently wrong with any one tool. And just like a builder cannot build a house with just a hammer, we cannot understand the complex workings of society with only one tool. Methodological pluralism can provide a diverse set of perspectives, which will only enhance our understanding of society.

This project utilizes a specific set of tools to examine one aspect of the political behavior of men and women. It is empirical and quantitative in nature. The project also examines the behavior of men and women as a group — in the aggregate — individual men and women. This perspective is chosen because it best answers the question about the movement of men and women in the electorate. Time series methodologies are used because these are the best tools to analyze the data and capture the data generating process.

This project only tells one part of a much larger picture of how gender shapes men’s and women’s relationships with government and their respective political behaviors. However, no project is able to answer all the questions. This project calls attention to the need for more research on women’s and men’s political behaviors at different levels of analysis and using different methodological approaches.

1.6 Project organization

This project examines how gender shapes politics. Gender structures men’s and women’s relationships with government. In this project I work to develop an empirical measure of the social definition of gender. This measure allows us to
trace the social and historical construction of gender over time. The creation of an empirical measure also enables me to identify the political consequences of the changes in the social definition of gender, namely the partisan gender gap.

Chapter 2 develops the theory of the social definition of gender and its political consequences. I begin by outlining the assumptions made regarding gender and partisan change in both the political behavior and women and politics literature. This review highlights our tendency to study sex thus seeing the concept as a constant. However, what we as social scientists are truly interested in is gender, a social and historical construction. Based on these ideas I develop the concept of the social definition of gender to capture the meaning of being a man or a woman in society at a particular point in time. I then show how the social definition of gender structures men’s and women’s relationships with government and how changes to the social definition of gender have important political consequences.

With the theory of the social definition of gender outlined, I turn my attention to measuring and modeling the social definition of gender in Chapter 3. The social construction of gender is a latent concept, thus there is no way to measure it directly. Yet we can observe different indicators that reflect the changes in the social definition of gender. I utilize one of those indicators, public opinion, to measure changes in the social definition of gender. I draw upon 139 public opinion questions that have been asked between 1953 and 2003. I use Stimson’s dynamic dimensional algorithm to combine these questions into a single time series. This time series reflects the progressiveness of American’s attitudes towards the roles and status of men and women in society.

In addition to developing a measure of the social definition of gender, I model this series as a function of demographic, political, and economic events. Based on the theory of the social definition of gender we would expect the public opinion
series to respond in certain ways. Thus, modeling the series provides a validity check on the series. Additionally, understanding the dynamics of the social definition of gender is important for understanding the political consequences of the social definition of gender.

After developing the empirical measure of the social definition of gender in Chapter 3, in Chapter 4, I demonstrate how the social definition of gender causes changes in the Democratic partisan gender gap. I include tests of several of the competing explanations for the partisan gender gap, including women’s workforce participation, women’s college education, the economy, and the cumulative impact of events in women’s movement. This analysis demonstrates that changes in the social definition of gender are key to understanding the dynamics of the partisan gender gap.

In Chapter 5 I highlight the importance of treating gender as a social construction in both our theory and our analysis. Gender is not the only social construction we encounter in social science research. Rather, the meanings associated with many of the variables that we commonly use and treat as constants actually change over time. These include (but are not limited to) race, class, and union membership. I contend that our theories and our research would benefit by recognizing that the meanings of these and other concepts are is socially and historically constructed.

This project advances our understanding of the gender gap in partisanship. Differences in men’s and women’s political behavior have become increasingly salient to politicians and political parties as the attempt to capture enough support to win elected office grows more heated. We currently have a good understanding of the influence of other characteristics, such as race or class, on politics. This project provides insights into how gender shapes the U.S. political system. It illustrates the influence of gender by exploring differences in men’s and women’s partisan at-
tachments. Additionally, it provides a theocratical foundation to explore the role of gender in other avenues of politics.
Chapter 2

The Social Definition of Gender
and Its Political Implications

The gender gap in partisanship — the difference between how men and women identify with the political parties — is a long-run enduring phenomenon of American political behavior, existing at least as far back as the 1950s.¹ The Democratic gender gap² was once produced by men being more likely to support the Democratic Party; now the Democratic gender gap is a result of women being more likely to support the Democratic Party. Although the gender gap has expanded and contracted at different points in time, there is no evidence that the differences in partisanship between the sexes will evaporate any time soon. The gender gap has played a decisive role in many elections, capturing the attention of the media and politicians. And yet, beyond identifying the phenomenon of the partisan gen-

¹It is hard to determine if the gender gap in partisanship existed pre-1950s due to the lack of quality data. Corder and Wolbrecht (2003) examine the period immediately post-suffrage and report very little evidence of a gender gap.
²The Democratic gender gap refers to the proportion of women who identify with the Democratic Party minus the proportion of men who identify with the Democratic Party. Additionally, we could conceptualize the gender gap in terms of Republican or Independent partisanship.
nder gap, we have only a limited understanding of why these differences exist and why they change over time.

To understand the dynamics of the partisan gender gap, I offer a theory of the social definition of gender and its political implications. I argue that the social definition of gender, what it means to be a man or a woman, reflects the gendered expectations and the gendered experiences of men and women. In American society, what it meant to be a man or a woman in the 1950s was considerably different than what it meant to be a man or a woman in the 1990s. Changes in the social definition of gender have important political consequences, one of which is the partisan gender gap.

Briefly, I argue that the social definition of gender and its evolution over time is key to understanding the dynamics of the partisan gender gap. The social definition of gender reflects the gendered expectations and experiences of men and women at a particular point in time and in a particular society. Changes in the social definition of gender are a function of social, political, and economic forces that alter the roles and opportunities available to men and women. In turn, these new gendered experiences and gendered expectations create tension between the previous roles and opportunities available to men and women, on one hand, and new roles and opportunities, on the other. As the tension between the new and old experiences and expectations grows, something must give; in the end, society redefines the social definition of gender, reshaping the social and political fabric.

The changes in the social definition of gender leave men and women positioned differently in relation to their respective needs and wants from government. New needs translate naturally into either voter realignments or party realignments. The former will occur when the party positions remain fixed on certain issues (relative to the other parties) and the latter will occur when the parties themselves
adopt new positions to appeal to changes in the preferences of voters. I argue that the existing gender gap in partisanship is a function of voters adjusting their partisan preferences as the social definition of gender evolves. In particular, men and women adjust their partisan preferences in relation to the parties’ positions on social welfare and economic issues, positions which have remained relatively fixed over the past fifty years.

Focusing on the dynamic meaning of gender helps us understand the evolution of the partisan gender gap and enhances our understanding of how gender shapes politics. Focusing on gender as a social and historical construction moves us beyond thinking about sex as a constant. This theory recognizes that, as political scientists, we are interested in the social meaning behind the binary categories of men and women and that the social and historical construction of gender has important political consequences.

In this chapter, I explore the explicit and implicit roles of gender in shaping the political behaviors of men and women. When do we expect to see differences in men’s and women’s political behaviors? Why do those differences between men and women exist? When do we expect the differences between men’s and women’s political behaviors to change? In this review of the literature on political behavior, I show how that much of this work focuses on sex as a constant, a concept that is fixed in terms of political meaning. I then demonstrate how gender is conceptualized as a social and historical construction in the women’s studies literature and use these works to develop the theory of the social definition of gender. Finally, I outline what factors cause changes in the social definition of gender and the political implications of these changes, specifically the partisan gender gap.
2.1 Men’s and women’s political behaviors

The extant body of literature on political behavior in the United States makes both explicit and implicit assumptions about how gender functions in shaping the opinions and partisanship of men and women. The literature assumes that gender is relatively unimportant in shaping political behavior because it equates men’s and women’s interests as similar. Additionally, it assumes that gender does not vary over time.\(^3\) From these assumptions in the political behavior literature, we can extract two claims about gender differences in political behavior: First, we would not expect large differences between men’s and women’s political behaviors. Second, if these differences did exist, we would not expect to see them change systematically over time.

Yet, we know that there are differences in both the opinions and partisanship of men and women. Research in women and politics contends that these differences are largely a function of men and women being differentially positioned in society.

Women’s and men’s interests are assumed to be the same.

From women’s fight for the right to vote to political science’s understanding of how women vote, women’s interests have often been constructed as being identical in kind to the interests of men. Because men’s and women’s interests were conceptualized as the same, we did not expect to see differences in opinion, vote, or partisanship.

Sentiments such as these were expressed in *The American Voter* (1960). Camp-bell et al. (1960) suggest that we would not expect differences or change over time

\(^3\)As will be discussed shortly, the literature fails to differentiate between the concepts of sex and gender. The distinction that needs to be made is that biological sex does not vary greatly over time; however, gender and its social meaning does vary over time in systematic and important ways.
based on sex. Bourque and Grossholtz (1974) argue that Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes minimize the role of women in the American political system by attributing women’s actions to the beliefs of their husbands:

We have suggested earlier that a disproportionate amount of the partisan fluidity that is shown by voters from election to election may come from the politically unsophisticated. If this is so, it would follow that the addition of women to the electorate might have a consequence of greater variability in the partisan division of the vote over time. However, in the case of women, there is an added consideration. The wife who votes but otherwise pays little attention to politics tends to leave not only the sifting of information up to her husband but abides by his ultimate decision about the direction of the vote as well. The information that she brings to bear on “her” choice is indeed fragmented, because it is second hand. Since the partisan decision is anchored not in these fragments but in the fuller political understanding of the husband, it may have greater stability over the period of time than we otherwise suspect. (Campbell et al. 1960)

This argument has two distinct implications for the study of the partisan gender gap. First, there should be no gap, because by this argument married women should adopt their husbands’ partisanship. Second, changes in women’s partisanship will only occur if male partisanship changes, once again meaning there would be no gap. The gender gap in partisanship existed at the time that Campbell et al. wrote The American Voter, and sex differences have been persistent since. Yet, these authors dismiss the gender gap without hesitation. In discussing the partisan differences between men and women, they explain that women during this time
favored the Republican Party by 3 to 5 percent.\footnote{Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes only discuss differences in vote partisanship.} They account for these differences by stating: “However, much of this discrepancy is traceable not to something unique in female political assessments, but to aggregate differences in other social characteristics between the sexes (Campbell et al. 1960).”

The impact of this treatment of the differences between men’s and women’s political behavior stretches beyond The American Voter because this book set the agenda for the study of political behavior in the United States. While not directly stating that women lacked the sophistication to make political decisions on their own, the various reincarnations of the The American Voter (i.e. The Changing American Voter, The New American Voter) address differences between men and women in a similar manner. Even in more recent work, which generally recognizes the differences between men and women, we simply “control” for these differences by including a dummy variable into our model. This approach does very little to advance our theoretical understanding of gender or political behavior. The general consensus of the political behavior literature is that gender is relatively unimportant in our understanding and theories of political behavior.

**If there are differences between men and women, those differences should not change systematically over time.**

Starting with the classic treaty on political behavior, The American Voter, Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes (1960) argue that macropartisanship is highly stable. Partisanship is stable at the macro level, these authors contend, because the factors that determine partisanship remain constant over a lifetime. This theory dictates two ways in which changes occur in macropartisanship. First, as new
generations enter and older generations exit the electorate, it is possible for changes in macropartisanship to occur. Such changes would happen slowly over time, with very little observable change occurring at any single time point. Second, rapid change in macropartisanship may occur as a result of some event that creates a party realignment. Under these circumstances large segments of the electorate permanently adjust their partisan attachments, and do so quickly.

One of the factors that has remained constant in the electorate is sex. Individuals change their sex very rarely. And the ratio of the sexes in the electorate has remained fairly constant in the United States. Yet, sex differences in partisanship have changed. Sex differences in partisanship cannot be explained solely as a result of demographic shifts that might occur due to generational replacement. Additionally, the last party realignment on which scholars can agree occurred in the 1940s over the New Deal, with subsequent more modest changes in the late 1950s through the mid-1960s occurring around the issue of race (Carmines & Stimson 1989). While the parties have changed positions on issues relating to women’s rights and equality, they have not exhibited a realignment (Sanbonmatsu 2002).

Other scholarship on partisanship departs from the *The American Voter* with regard to changes in partisan attachments by arguing that these changes occur as a result of the ebb and flow of the economy and politics. Yet, these theories still consider sex to be a constant and not a factor in producing partisan change. Downs (1957) and later Fiorina (1978) adopt a model of partisanship that allows for change. Under these conceptualizations macropartisanship moves in response to the incumbent candidate’s performance. The electorate then moves in response to political and economic events, aligning themselves with candidates and parties

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5While advances in medical technology has made sex change a possibility, it is not a practice in which citizens readily engage.
that allow them to achieve their desired outcomes. Fiorina explains why we might not see large changes in party identification:

Granted, party ID may not reflect an elaborate ideology or a wealth of detailed information about current public policies, but at least it reflects the political experiences of these citizens. And while party ID might remain empirically stable for long periods of time, that stability only reflects the empirical consistency of political experience with previous identification, not the resistance of the latter to change (1978).

These theories allow individuals to adjust their party attachments over time based on a list of ordered preferences.

MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimson (2002, 1989) explain changes in macropartisanship as a reaction to political and economic events. The dynamics of macropartisanship reflect the electorate’s cumulative evaluations based on political and economic events. These authors argue that the macropartisanship series consists of two components. The first is a long-run equilibrium component. We would expect part of macropartisanship to change only slowly, and any changes to this portion would represent a permanent change in the mean level of partisanship. The second component is a series of short-term fluctuations around an equilibrium. This short-term component does not have memory; rather these shocks to the system fade away.

In order to demonstrate how changes at the macro-level occur as a result of individuals adjusting their partisanship, MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimson develop a theory that links macro understanding to micro-level behavior. Their most recent and most developed theory is presented in The Macro Polity (2002), in which they argue that partisanship at the individual level is a latent probability of identifying
with one party compared to the other party. This probability is generated by a variety of factors that combine *The American Voter’s* (1960) social-psychological theory and the running-tally theories outlined by Downs (1957) and Fironia (1978). An individual’s partisanship remains in equilibrium until the individual encounters a stimulus that causes an adjustment in their latent probability. These authors explain that most of the equilibrium mechanisms that operate at the individual level “remain constant over long periods, or even for a lifetime, and are thus incapable of producing ebb and flow in partisan disposition” (Erikson, Mackuen & Stimson 2002). Rather, these authors expect that changes in partisanship will be shaped by the dynamic nature of partisan politics.

The key to partisan change in the theories outlined above rests on the electorate’s evaluations of politicians and parties. Implicit in these theories is the first assumption discussed above; men’s and women’s political behaviors are similar. Thus men’s and women’s evaluations of the parties and politicians would be similar. As a result we would not expect to see differences over time in the dynamics of men’s and women’s partisanship.

Based on the theories of partisanship discussed above, scholars of political behavior would not expect to see differences between men’s and women’s partisanship; nor would these differences change over time. Yet, over the past fifty years the gender gap has shifted from women being more Republican than men to women being more likely than men to identify with the Democratic Party. Additionally, the series reveals many different time periods during which the gap grows.

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6MacKuen, Erikson, and Stimson mention the gender gap in partisanship in *The Macro Poli-
tics*. However, rather than incorporating the changes occurring in men’s and women’s partisanship over the past fifty years into their theory, they attribute the growth of the gender gap in partisanship to the electorate selecting the “correct” party to match to their gender identities. They point out this behavior may not have been possible before 1980, because the parties were not differentiated on women’s issues or women’s rights. This theory suggests that, once women reached their “correct” partisanship the gap would stabilize and not change thereafter.
or shrinks. By treating sex as a constant, theories of partisan change fail to account for the separate dynamics of men’s and women’s partisanship that have resulted in the gender gap.

**Differences that exist between men’s and women’s political behavior are a function of men and women being differentially positioned in society.**

Research on men’s and women’s political behaviors has identified differences in the types and levels of participation, differences in public opinion, presidential approval, political knowledge, voting and partisanship. While these differences vary in size and significance, they suggest that gender plays an important role in shaping political behavior. Explanations for these differences focus on how men’s and women’s different positions and experiences result in differences in political behavior.

Women and men are differentially positioned in society as a result of differences in labor force participation, education, and family relations. While women have always participated in the paid labor force, it is only recently that women’s participation rate has equaled that of men. In addition to labor force participation, women have been excluded from education and other economic activities. Women’s limited access to the paid labor force and educational opportunities resulted in women having access to fewer resources and opportunities for political participation. Women are also more likely to experience poverty in their lives. In today’s world women are more likely to be single for longer in their lives (Robers, Goodman & Balleza 2007). Despite the significant changes associated with the workforce and education, women still perform the majority of household chores
and are the primary care givers for children.

Additionally, while women’s participation in the labor force today closely resembles men’s in terms of proportion employed and women’s enrollment in college exceeds that of men, women are still positioned differently as a result of sex segregation in many fields. Generally women are more likely to be in jobs that are dependent on government directly or indirectly for their pay checks. Women dominate areas of the economy and education known as “pink collar” and these jobs tend to be less prestigious, lower paying, and without the job security and benefits of more elite positions. Women who enter traditionally male, prestigious white collar occupations, such as law, medicine and business are still few in the higher ranks.

But regardless of whether they are equally or differently positioned from men, women’s experiences are always shaped by gender. For example, women who are in white collar positions felt the effects of the economic downturn in the 1980s much more than men, because women were the first to be laid off because they were the last to be hired. Women working in the same positions as men are also more apt to experience sexual harassment, discrimination, and difficulty balancing the demands of work and family.

Women’s and men’s different positions in society and different experiences in turn shape men’s and women’s political behaviors by producing different needs and wants from government. These differences in experience and position in work, family, etc. result in the process of adult socialization shaping the behavior of men and women (Clark & Clark 1986, Sapiro 2002). Women’s entrance into the paid labor force has been identified as one of the driving factors behind adult socialization and differences in men’s and women’s political behaviors (Andersen & Cook 1985, Welch 1977, Manza & Brooks 1998, Erie & Rein 1988, Carroll 1988,
Andersen 1999). Women’s workforce participation has resulted in women being differently located with regard to both men currently, and women historically. Carroll (1988) argues that women’s participation in the paid labor force resulted in women obtaining greater economic and psychological independence from men. Women who participate in the paid workforce are more likely to participate in politics (Welch 1977, Beekwitt 1968), to hold feminist and liberal views (Andersen & Cook 1985), and to vote Democratic (Manza & Brooks 1998, Carroll 1988, Erie & Rein 1988) than women who are not participants in the paid labor force.

Along with workforce participation, women’s marital and family status also serve to shape their political behavior differently than men’s political behavior (Schlozman & Danahue 1995, McGlen 1980, Andersen 1975, Box-Steensmeier, De Boef & Lin 2004). Regarding participation in politics, the presence of children in the household shows mixed influence on political participation. Several studies find that having school age children depresses participation in politics among women (McGlen 1980, Clark & Clark 1986, Welch 1977). However, Burns et al. (2001) find very little influence of children on the participation of men or women.

In regards to public opinion, women in non-traditional family relationships hold more feminist attitudes than women in traditional family relationships. Along with women’s workforce participation, women who are single possess increased economic and psychological independence from men, resulting in differences in vote choice (Carroll 1988). The increased trend of single women has also been linked to the growth in the Democratic gender gap in partisanship (Box-Steensmeier, De Boef & Lin 2004). Men and women are differentially positioned in society; these differences in experience, then, lead us to expect differences in behavior.
Assumptions about men’s and women’s political behaviors and the partisan gender gap

The work on partisanship and partisan change, on the one hand and women’s political behavior, on the other, often scholars talk past one other. But it is in the intersection of these two bodies of research that we can understand the dynamics of the partisan gender gap. From the assumptions made in the work on partisan change, we can conclude that there should be no differences between men’s and women’s behaviors because their interests are similar; and there should be no change in the partisan attachments of men and women because the sex of an individual is fixed and the distribution of the sexes is essentially constant. Sex alone cannot explain the dynamics of partisan differences.

What has changed are the the experiences, situations, roles, expectations for men and women, resulting in the evolution of the social meanings tied to being a woman or a man — the social definition of gender. The social definition of gender structures men’s and women’s evaluations of parties and politicians. Thus, as the social definition of gender changes, men and women adjust their partisan preferences based on these gendered evaluations.

2.2 Understanding sex and gender in political science

Political scientists have long confused the terms gender and sex (Beckwith 2005). Placed on the right hand side of an equation, sex is used as an explanatory variable of many social phenomena. In addition to explanation, we use the variable as a way to classify individuals into fixed groups. While extremely useful, the variable
sex measures something different than that with which we are primarily concerned in political science. The categories of male and female that compose this variable are based on biology. But as political scientists, we are more interested in gender, the social meaning given to the biological categories of men and women. Gender divorces itself from the binary, fixed, categories of biological sex and provides a dynamic and theoretically grounded understanding of the behaviors of men and women.\textsuperscript{7}

Switching our explanatory variable from sex to gender allows us to shift our analytical focus. The biological categories of sex are often treated as constants.\textsuperscript{8} When we rely simply on sex we ignore what is of primary importance, as Keiser, Wilkins, Meier and Holland (2002) explain:

By extracting ‘sex’ from gender to distinguish female from male, scholars dispense with precisely what makes gender important to social science research - social meaning - and endow sexual difference with a constant and invariant quality that much feminist thinking about social identification and political action shows to be problematic.

Conversely, when we think in terms of gender we are able to appreciate the significant changes that occur to the meaning of being a man or a woman in society. When we focus on gender, compared to sex, we recognize that meaning is both socially and historically constructed.

\textsuperscript{7}I see gender as connected to, but not directly synonymous with, the biological categories of male and female. Beckwith (2005) defines gender as a category as “multidimensional mapping of socially constructed fluid, politically relevant identities, values, conventions, and practices conceived of as masculine and/or feminine, with the recognition that masculinity and femininity only fleetingly and roughly correspond to ‘male’ and ‘female’.”

\textsuperscript{8}There is some very interesting work done by feminist theorists, such as Judith Butler (1999), which argues that sex is not a constant but rather socially constructed. Additionally, these authors sometimes argue that it is a challenge to classify people biologically into the male/female dichotomy. However, for the current research in political science, it is suitable to classify the biological categories of sex as constants.
2.2.1 Gender as a social and historical construction

It is common to see the terms sex and gender used interchangeably, not only in everyday conversation but also in the work of political scientists. However, there are important distinctions between sex and gender. Sex is based on biological characteristics and gender refers to the social meaning. Yet we often view sex and gender as the same because of the way in which they have been constructed. Lorber (1998) explains how society has constructed the connection between the categories masculinity, femininity, men, and women: “we see two discreet sexes and two distinguishable genders because our society is built on two classes of people, ‘women’ and ‘men.’ Once the gender category is given, the attributes of the person are also gendered: Whatever a ‘woman’ is has to be ‘female’; whatever a ‘man’ is has to be ‘male’ (p. 34).”

There is nothing “natural” or biological about gender; rather gender is produced by a complex web of interactions between social, economic, political, and psychological forces. Consequently, gender is conceptualized distinctly from sex (Fausto-Sterling 1992, Fausto-Sterling 2000, Lorber 1993). However, recent scholarship argues that meanings attached to sex are influenced by cultural expectations captured in gender (Andersen 2000, West & Zimmerman 1987, Butler 1999). The social construction of gender is theorized to operate in society in many different ways: as an institution (Acker 1992, Risman 2004), as seriality (Young 1994), as performance (Andersen 2000, Butler 1999, West & Zimmerman 1987), as a process (Beckwith 2005).\(^9\) Broadly speaking, the idea of the social construction of gender contends there is no inherent meaning in the categories of masculinity, femininity, man, or woman. The meanings of these categories are a result of society

\(^9\)See Hawksworth (2005) for a more exhaustive list of the way gender has been conceptualized and theorized.
constructing or attaching specific meanings to them.

In addition to being socially constructed, gender is also historically constructed. The meanings attributed to masculinity, femininity, men, and women change over time. Riley (1995) argues that “being a ‘woman’ is more accurately conceived as a state that fluctuates for the individual, depending on what she and/or others consider to characterize it.” Thus, the meaning of gender is situated by its history, and can only be understood when considered in its appropriate political, social, and economic context. Gender is inherently dynamic in nature; it changes in response to changes occurring in society at large. So unlike sex, gender can change over time.

As stated in the previous chapter, I conceptualize gender as a category of analysis and as a structure. Gender operates as a category of analysis by constructing the categories of men’s and women’s partisanship that constitute the gender gap. Gender acts as a structure that provides context and shapes the political behaviors of men and women.

When talking about gender and sex, too often we are speaking solely about women. Conceptions of gender cannot be considered in a vacuum; rather they are mutually reinforcing. Filene (1998) contends that to understand what it means to be a woman historically, we must also consider what it means to be a man. “The history of one sex is only one half of the whole.” The actual historical experiences of women (and men) result from a web of cultural norms that prescribe the behaviors of men and women given social and economic circumstances. Thus, when studying gender in political behavior, we need to look not only at women’s political behavior but at both men’s and women’s political behaviors. We must deconstruct previous theories that focus on explaining either men’s or women’s behavior singularly. Additionally, this approach requires us to look at the interaction
of the two; perhaps changes in the meaning of being a woman in society have an impact on the behavior of men.

When discussing about the meanings attributed to men and women in society, we are referring to a theoretical concept. Rarely do cultural norms match the reality of these social and economic circumstances that men and women face (Chafe 1977). For example, until recently gender norms dictated that women should not work outside the home. However, because of economic necessity, many women had to violate these norms and work outside the home. There is a tension between normative ideals held about masculinity or femininity and the reality experienced by men and women. It is in the nexus of this tension that meaning of men and women is created. The social definition of gender reflects both the gendered expectations and the gendered experiences that create the meaning of being a man or a woman in society. The historical experiences of men and women are also shaped by more than just gender: race and class play equally important roles. Because reality does not coincide with the concepts of gender roles, sex roles and gender stereotypes are inadequate to capture the larger meanings of being a man or a woman. I propose we think about gender in terms of the social definition of gender.

Sex and gender are distinct, and this distinction is theoretically and practically important. Theoretically, gender is historically constructed, evolving over time. It is constructed as a function of prevailing gender expectations and social experiences nested in a particular time period, structuring, as I will argue, the relationships that men and women have with the political parties. In practical terms, sex is unable to explain political change over time. For this task we need to turn to gender. More specifically, we must turn to the definition of gender as it is prescribed socially and historically. In the next section I define and elaborate on the concept of the social definition of gender.
2.3 The social definition of gender

The social definition of gender is the nexus between gendered expectations and gendered experiences. The social definition structures the meaning of being a man or a woman and in turn shapes men’s and women’s political behaviors. This definition has two important features. First, the social definition of gender is latent; while we cannot directly observe the social definition of gender we can observe the roles and status of men and women in society, public opinion, and how the media reflects the social definition of gender. Second, the social definition of gender is dynamic. It changes over time in systematic ways in response to social, political, and economic forces.

I employ the concept of the social definition of gender to capture the theoretically rich body of literature briefly outlined above on gender as a social construction.\footnote{The concept of the social construction of gender is extremely broad and complex. I choose not to use this language as the label for my theory and empirical measures because I make no claims about being able to capture the nuanced nature of the social construction of gender.}

*The social definition of gender reflects gendered expectations and gendered experience, capturing what it means to be a man or a woman at a particular point in time in a particular society.*

As a society we hold a set of gender expectations embodied in gender roles, sex roles, and gender stereotypes. These expectations attest to a larger gender ideology that exists at a particular time and place and that is reflected in the public presentations of gender. At the same time, our lived experiences are gendered and contribute to the meaning of being a man or a woman. Experience sometimes contradicts and sometimes reinforces the normative ideals expressed in gender expectations, thereby shaping public attitudes towards gender. It is this nexus of
public presentation combined with public attitudes that form the social definition of gender and define what it means to be a man or a woman in a particular society at a particular time.

The social definition of gender is a latent concept because we cannot directly measure it. However, we can observe a wide variety of indicators of the social definition of gender, such as the roles acted out by men and women each day, public opinion, and the media. Generally, we can point to different factors that illustrate the social definition of gender at a particular point in time. For example, we can observe that fathers are now taking their children to the grocery store, thereby demonstrating that the gendered expectations and experiences of men include child care and shopping. We can also identify factors that measure changes in the social definition of gender. Continuing with the previous example, we can observe that more fathers today than ten years ago are taking time off work to focus on their children.

We can also see these changes in responses to survey questions. For example, in 1972 the General Social Survey found that 72 percent of the electorate was willing to vote for a women for president.\textsuperscript{11} While we know this question is plagued with problems of social desirability potentially inflating positive responses, the question provides insight into the changing roles and status of women in society over time. In fact, social desirability is an indicator that that expectations in society are changing, expectations simply tend to change more quickly than the actual roles or individual preferences. By 1998, 90 percent of survey respondents faced with this same question said they would vote for a women if she was qualified, suggesting that women were facing different expectations and experiences regarding roles in

\textsuperscript{11} The exact question wording used was “If your party nominated a woman for president, would you vote for her if she qualified for the job?”
politics in 1972 compared to 1998.

Because gender is also historically constructed, the social definition of gender is a dynamic process. This definition is reshaped as a function of social, political, and economic forces. When such events are large or significant enough they produce systematic changes among individuals. For example, if one family experiences a decrease in the wages earned by the main bread-winner (a man) it may cause a woman to enter the workforce to make up for the loss. The woman entering the workforce might see herself as an exception and thus may wish to return to a full-time homemaker role, having no effect on social identity. However, if an economic downturn creates a situation where hundreds of thousands of men experience a cut in wages, sending large numbers of previously unemployed women into the workforce, a significant shift occurs in the aggregate social identity. Changes such as these will likely have a ripple effect, creating tension between the expected gender roles and the lived experiences for this segment of the population, resulting in a change in the social definition of gender.

The concept of the social definition of gender captures the dynamic and constructed nature of gender. Again, the meaning of being a man or a woman is created at the nexus between the gendered expectations and the gendered experiences of men and women. When changes occur to the social definition of gender, new opportunities and roles are created for both men and women. At the same time doors could shut for both men and women as alternative opportunities and roles may no longer be available or acceptable. Thinking in terms of the social definition of gender endows important, substantive meaning to the differences we observe in men’s and women’s political behaviors. The social definition of gender structures and shapes men’s and women’s relationships with government, leading to long-lasting political consequences.
2.3.1 Operationalization of the social definition of gender

The social definition of gender is a theoretical and latent concept. To be integrated into empirical research, the concept needs to be operationalized in such a way that allows us to measure it and its changes over time. I operationalize the social definition of gender using public opinion data on the roles and status of men and women in society.

In Chapter 3, I develop a measure of the social definition of gender based on the public opinion data. This measure reflects the public’s attitudes towards the role and status of women and men.

To be employed in an empirical model, a measure of the social definition of gender needs to fit into a single dimension. I use the dimension of progressiveness to capture changes in the social definition of gender. A more progressive social definition of gender represents changes for both men and women. It indicates that a greater variety of opportunities, roles, and experiences are available and acceptable for both men and women. This dimension best captures the changes associated with the social definition of gender.\textsuperscript{12}

2.4 The political implications of the social definition of gender

The evolution of the social definition of gender has political consequences. The new roles, opportunities, expectations, and experiences mean that men and women want or need different things from government and, thus, evaluate it differently.

\textsuperscript{12}I choose to use progressiveness, instead of liberalism or feminism, as a way not to endorse or align this research project with any political agenda. With that said, more progressive attitudes would be seen as a success for liberal feminists. It would not align with the goals of radical feminists.
The political implications of changes in the social definition of gender can be observed within the electorate as men and women shift their partisan attachments to fit their interests. The growth in more progressive attitudes results in boarding or narrowing the partisan gender gap.

Changes in the social definition of gender usually create tension between the status quo and the new roles, opportunities, experiences, and expectations of women and men. This in fact happened in World War II, where the massive entrance of women into the workforce created an expectation among many that they would continue to be employed. But when the troops came home from the War, women were fired. Most adapted and returned to their pre-war identity, but many did not; contributing to the women’s movement of the 1960s was. Women’s entrance into the workforce as a result of World War II led directly to a massive realignment in the social definition of gender. Women experienced new expectations as workers, not just mothers and wives. However, adopting this new role into their identity did not occur seamlessly; tension existed between previous roles and the new roles now available to them. The conflict between the new and old expectations and experiences is what propels social change into motion.

This project is concerned with the impact these changes have on politics. As the social definition of gender shifts, individuals develop different needs, adopt different expectations of what government should provide, and rely on government differently. For example, as women entered the workplace, they did not do so as equals to men. They were paid less and were more likely to rely both on government employment and government aid (Erie & Rein 1988). Additionally, women at that time were then forced to balance their previous roles as wives and mothers with their new roles as workers. As a result, many women looked towards government to help balance these new and old expectations and experiences.
Various institutions in society help resolve these tensions; one of the institutions is government. The political implications of the social definition of gender are far-reaching because the social definition structures men’s and women’s relationships with government. One of the key political implications of the social definition of gender is the partisan gender gap.

2.4.1 Linking changes in the social definition of gender to the partisan gender gap.

Linking the social definition of gender and changes in partisanship starts with the theoretical foundations for partisan change outlined by Fiorina (1978), Downs (1957), and Erikson, Mackuen, and Stimson (2002). Changes in macropartisanship are a result of evaluations of parties and politicians. I argue that the social definition of gender shapes men’s and women’s evaluations of the political parties and politicians. These gendered evaluations then result in the partisan gender gap.

As previously outlined, theories of partisan change find that the dynamics of macropartisanship are the cumulation of the electorate’s evaluations of incumbent candidate performance, the economy, and politics. These theories also state that there are a set of factors that are highly stable over an individual’s lifetime that provide stability to partisan attachments. These factors include things such as race, class, occupation, religion and sex. It is here that I depart from these theories. While sex is stable, gender is dynamic and shapes partisan attachments of men and women and changes to these attachments.

We have traditionally treated sex as a constant, because we tend to use biological sex to measure the social concept of gender. Biological sex does not usually change over the course of an individual’s lifetime, nor does the aggregate distribu-
tion change drastically over time, except in the times of massive war. But the social construction of gender does change over time. Changes in the social definition of gender produce new expectations and experiences of men and women which in turn help construct a new set of interests in what men and women need and want from government. Then men and women adjust their partisan preferences to align their shifting interests in order to maximize their utility. The gender gap in partisanship is simply the aggregation of these shifts over time.

For the gender gap to emerge or change over time, one party needs to be more attractive to women than men and vice versa. I contend that the historical gender gap in partisanship is a function of the electorate adjusting their partisan preferences based on social welfare and economic issues. I assume that the parties remained fixed on these key issues between 1953-2003, the time period of this study. Between 1953 and 2003 the identities of the two parties on these issues have been clearly defined and distinct from each other. The Democratic Party, known for the more expansive government programs of the New Deal era, is associated with a larger role for government in the social welfare of the nation. On the other hand, the Republican Party is known for a limited government approach, arguing that private enterprise and the free market economy will provide the necessary goods for social welfare. In addition to social welfare and economic issues, during this time period race issues also differentiated the parties. The gender gap in vote choice is influenced by the rhetoric on compassion pertaining to racial issues (Hutchings & White 2004). Thus, the differences between the parties on racial issues may also provide a cue to men and women as they adjust their partisan preferences.

I argue that the social definition of gender has become more progressive over

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13As in World War I and Russian and Germany after World War II.
time and the Democratic gender gap in partisanship becomes larger.\textsuperscript{14} Progressiveness represents acceptance of a more diverse set of roles and opportunities for men and women. For example, women may have shifted their attachments towards the Democratic Party over the past fifty years because the party’s positions on social welfare and larger government are more inline with the needs of women than are the positions of the Republican Party.\textsuperscript{15}

If we examine the structural situation of men and women in society, we would see that women and men are becoming more similar than different. So, why then do we see the gender gap in partisanship growing over time? I contend that we are still in a time where gender plays a role in shaping expectations, experiences, and behavior of men and women. Post-identity politics is a vision, not yet a reality. While men and women are gaining equality situationally, or have at least gained the perception of equality, this perceived or real equality does not imply that men and women interpret or react in the same manner. We still live in a gendered world that shapes men’s and women’s expectations and experiences. Thus, an increase in the structural similarities between men and women does not necessarily translate into the alignment of interests and men’s and women’s behaviors.

\textbf{2.4.2 Predictions of the future}

When considering what the dynamics of the gender gap will look like fifty years into the future, we need to identify the necessary and sufficient conditions for changes in the partisan gender gap to occur. First, men and women need to hold different opinions on an issue or set of issues. Second, the parties need to hold

\textsuperscript{14}Further discussion of the measurement and what is meant by progressiveness of the social definition of gender is located below and in Chapter 3.

\textsuperscript{15}This theory is consistent with research showing that views on social welfare are more predictive of partisanship than views on women’s issues (Kaufmann & Petrocik 1999).
divergent views on that issue. Third, the issue needs to serve as the key issue or set of issues that the electorate uses to evaluate parties and politicians. Fourth, the social definition of gender needs to continue to evolve as it has the past fifty years. Given this set of conditions, we can examine what happens if we vary several of the assumptions made in the theory outlined above.

As stated above, the political parties have remained fixed on a variety of social welfare and economic issues that are key to the political alignments of men and women. However, as we know, throughout U.S. history the political parties have not been associated with the same issues and have not remained relatively fixed on their issue positions. Party realignments that shift the positions of the parties on social welfare and economic issues could result in changes in the gender gap. If the parties switched positions, then we could potentially see the gender gap flip directions. And we assume that the gender gap in partisanship would shrink if the parties adopted the same positions on social welfare and economic issues.

Additionally, new issues could become the primary focus of government and of people’s partisan preferences, resulting in changes to the partisan gender gap. For the period of this study, social welfare and economic issues dominate American electoral politics. Recently that has begun to change, as more attention has been paid to cultural issues, such as abortion, stem cell research, and other moral issues. If these issues surface as the defining features of people’s partisan attachments and vote choices we could see change in the behavior of the gender gap in partisanship. On many of these social and moral issues the opinions of men and women do not differ greatly; thus if these issues became the defining feature of politics, we would expect that the gender gap would shrink. On the other hand we know that women tend to be more religious than men and that strength of opinion is tied to religiosity, so the gender gap in partisanship may reverse directions as these
religious women are attracted to the Republican Party’s conservative stances on these issues.

The theory outlined above implies that we could arrive at the point where there were only two political parties in the United States: one composed solely of men and one composed solely of women. The current movement of the social definition of gender implies a certain relationship between gender and partisanship. However, this direction could change or the meaning behind this direction could change.

The final consideration when speculating about the gender gap into the future is that gender is not the sole politically relevant characteristic that structures partisan choice. Many factors go into determining an individual’s partisanship and in turn shape the aggregate partisan makeup of the electorate. Some of these factors intersect with gender in a way to make either men or women more or less likely to identify with a particular party. With these multiple factors defining the partisan attachments of the electorate, we would not expect to see the extreme sorting out of the electorate into two political parties based on gender.

Understanding the dynamics of the partisan gender gap over the past fifty years requires identifying the role of many potentially moving parts: the parties’ stance on issues, which issues voters use to evaluate parties, voters’ opinions, and the social definition of gender. I have made assumptions about the fixed positions of parties relative to each other on social and economic welfare issues, that voters use these issues as the primary issues when evaluating the parties and that men and women hold different opinions on these issues. I make these assumptions in order to tease out the influence of the social definition of gender on the partisan gender gap. However, we can vary these assumptions to speculate about the dynamics of the gender gap in partisanship for the next fifty years.
2.5 Conclusion

This project examines one political implication of the social definition of gender — the partisan gender gap. This chapter has laid out the theory of the social definition of gender and its political implications. I argue that gender is a social construction and offer a theoretical foundation to better understand the influence of gender on social and political phenomena. I build the theory of the social definition of gender and then outline how changes in the social definition of gender causes changes in the partisan gender gap. Changes in the social definition of gender changes men’s and women’s relationships with government and, in turn, men and women adjust their partisan attachments to align with their new interests. I contend that the gender gap is a function of the electorate adjusting its partisan preferences based on social welfare and economic issues as a result of changes in the social definition of gender.

The political implications of changes in the social definition of gender extend beyond the electorate by shaping both the agenda of government and the positions of the political parties. As the social definition of gender evolves, issues previously labeled as political and non-political shift. For example, who is responsible for the care of a sick child or elderly parents? Maternity leave, an issue once thought not to be government’s concern, was politicized and placed on the legislative agenda as it became acceptable for women to work outside the home. As the social definition of gender continued to evolve for men and women, the issue of paternity leave emerged as it became expected that men play an increasing significant role in raising children. The issue was further transformed into family leave as the social definition of gender continued to evolve. Ultimately, these changes resulted in policy change with the passage of 1992 Family and Medical Leave Act (Bernstein
The evolution of the social definition of gender has worked to transform the scope of government. Understanding the changes in the social definition of gender provide us insight into how and when different issues emerge as political issues and are placed on the government’s agenda.

Of course, parties have not remained constant; they change their positions in important ways. Yet, the understanding of the relationship between political parties and the formation of the gender gap remains underdeveloped. Some scholars have suggested that the gender gap in partisanship might be a result of the differentiation of the parties based on feminism and women’s rights. Freeman (1987) argues that starting with the 1972 elections the parties began a considerable shift in their positions regarding women’s rights. During the next two decades feminists found the culture of the Democratic Party more welcoming compared to the Republican Party. However, Sanbomastu (2002) argues that there has been little realignment among the masses around the issues of gender equality. Wolbrecht (2000) contends that during the 1980s and 1990s an issue evolution occurred in regards to women’s rights. But in relation to the gender gap she observes, “In terms of party identification, the shift in party loyalty actually precedes the elite alignment” (Wolbrecht 2000). These findings suggests that the gender gap is something more than a response to the parties on issues of women’s rights.

In the next chapter, I turn my attention to operationalizing the concept of the social definition of gender. I develop a measure of the social definition of gender based in public opinion. I also model changes in the social definition of gender as a function of societal changes.
Chapter 3

Measuring and Modeling the Social Definition of Gender

In the 1940s Rosie the Riveter personified the ideal woman; she was strong enough to do a man’s job, even if it meant getting a little dirty. Rosie’s muscles and willingness to defend the home front were replaced by Donna Reed who was the ideal woman for the 1950s, perfectly pressed and in pearls with dinner on the table at 5 p.m. sharp. Gloria Steinman was the new woman in the 1970s; not only was she college educated but she expected to work throughout her adult life and demanded equality with men. The 1980s gave us Madonna and Geraldine Ferraro, strong women who showcased how women’s roles — from sex to politics — were changing. From the choice to stay at home, bake cookies, and have teas to the ability to run for high elected office, Hillary Clinton embodies the opportunities open to women in today’s world.

Over the decades, similar images can also be associated with men. While Rosie the Riveter was working in the factories, G.I. Joe was fighting the war to end all wars. When G.I. Joe came home from war, he reigned supreme as head of the
household in the 1950s. Bill Cosby, father of the Huxtables, still knew best in the 1980s; however, he was more involved in the family, sharing the bread-winning and family responsibilities with his educated and professional wife. In the 1990s the role of men as the head of the household slowly eroded; personified by Dan Conner, struggling to provide for his family but ultimately looking towards his wife, Roseanne, for help.

These iconic women and men, fictional or real, epitomize the public presentation of gender; reflecting the roles women and men play in society at different points in time. Our reaction to these images illustrate that the public persona of these individuals are tied to society’s larger understanding of gender. These images of men and women embody the social definition of gender. As a society we hold a set of gender expectations embodied in gender roles, sex roles and gender stereotypes. It is this nexus of public presentation and public attitudes that forms the social definition of gender and defines what it means to be a man or a woman in a particular society at a particular time.

To understand the full extent of the impact of the social definition of gender on the political landscape, we need to measure changes in how society defines being a man or a woman. I develop empirical measures of this social definition of gender, thus allowing for more systematic studies to understand the effect of changes in the public presentations of gender and public attitudes towards gender on politics. I argue that generational replacement, women’s college education, women’s workforce participation, public policy mood, the women’s movement, and the economy all drive changes in the social definition of gender by reshaping public presentations of gender and public attitudes towards these presentations.

I begin by developing an empirical measure of the social definition of gender based on public opinion data. This measure explores how aggregate opinion has
changed over time, capturing how the public reconciles expectations about gender with lived experience. I draw on 139 survey questions that have tapped the roles and status of women and men. I use the dyadic dimensional analysis algorithm developed by James Stimson to measure shared variation in these indicators of the progressiveness of Americans’ attitudes towards women’s and men’s roles and status. The measure is based on the intersection of society’s gender expectations and the realities of men’s and women’s lives. By looking at both we can trace the changes to the social definition of gender over time.

This measure demonstrates that attitudes have grown more progressive, showing a shrinking differentiation in the roles of men and women. With the measure established, I demonstrate how generational replacement, socio-economic trends, changes in the political climate and the economy have influenced attitudes towards women. I find that generational replacement, women’s increased workforce participation, and the increase in the proportion of college educated women play fundamental roles in shaping gender attitudes.

3.1 The evolution of the social definition of gender

The social definition of gender continually evolves as gender expectations contradict and reinforce each other over time. Four forces affect changes in experiences of men and women: generational replacement, socio-demographic trends, political climate, and economic forces. These elements provide both long-term and short-term effects on the social definition of gender as well as other contours of society. Generational replacement and socio-demographic trends are slow to evolve, pro-
ducing changes in attitudes that take years, perhaps decades, to unfold. On the other hand, short-term political and economic events can exert short-run effects on the social definition of gender.

I now turn to understanding the theoretical relationship between these forces and the social definition of gender. Over time men and women have different experiences and encounter different gender expectations, changing what it means to be a man or a woman in society.

Older generations in the electorate are likely to hold more conservative gender expectations as a result of being socialized in a time with more traditional gender attitudes. Furthermore, women and men in these generations were less likely to have been exposed to experiences that challenged these expectations. In contrast, younger generations tend to hold more progressive gender expectations as a function of the environment in which they were socialized. Research at the individual level finds that generational replacement plays an important role in the shifting gender attitudes of the American electorate (Mayer 1993, Mason & Lu 1989).

The pre-suffrage generation in particular is likely to hold distinct views from previous generations. The passage of the 19th amendment did more than just grant women the right to vote; it marked the opening of the public sphere to women and redefined what it meant to be a woman in society. Women and men who were politically socialized during a time when women were formally excluded from full citizenship should hold less progressive gender attitudes than generations that came of age after women’s suffrage. The gradual disappearance of the pre-suffrage generation is likely to affect changes in the social definition of gender.

In addition to generational replacement, there have been many important socio-demographic changes over the past fifty years that reflect changes in the experiences of men and women. Women’s workforce participation and the percent of college
educated women are two socio-demographic changes key to the social definition of
gender. Women’s workforce participation has expanded and contracted over the
past fifty years, although the overall trend represents a considerable increase in the
number of women active in the paid labor force. The rate of increase has slowed
substantially since the late 1980s, as women’s level of workforce participation has
reached similar levels as men’s workforce participation.

The increase in women’s workforce participation affects the social definition
of gender by exposing men and women to different experiences that contradict
or reinforce gender expectations. Workforce participation shapes attitudes for
women and men through interest-based or exposure-based mechanisms (Bolzendahl
& Myers 2004). The theory of interest-based change predicts that, as women enter
the workforce, they are placed in economic and social positions that make it in
their best interest to support more liberal stances on women’s rights and policies.
The exposure-based argument contends that, when in the workforce, women are
exposed to sexual harassment, discrimination and other experiences that make
them more supportive of liberal positions. While the interest and exposure based
arguments focus on women, they also apply to men’s attitudes based on their
experience with women in the workforce and indirectly through their spouses.

The social definition of gender should also be shaped by the increase in the
proportion of women who have achieved a college education. Along with work-
force participation, the proportion of women who have earned college degrees
over the past fifty years has increased substantially. The proportion of women
earning college educations started to increase in the 1960s, shot up substantively
in the 1970s and has continued its increase to the present. Women’s entrance
into higher education has served as a gateway to higher paying and more presti-
gious jobs. It is also seen as a measure of the status of women in society. Indi-
individual level analysis shows that people who are highly educated are more likely to hold progressive attitudes towards women’s roles and opportunities (Welch & Studlar 1986, Schreiber 1978, Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Banaszak & Plutzer 1993). Additionally, because mothers serve as the main reference for girls and boys in developing conceptions of gender, the children of mothers with higher levels of education should hold more progressive attitudes (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004).

The political climate provides context for changes in the social definition of gender. The context created by public policy mood and the second wave of the women’s movement shapes both role expectations and opportunities for men and women.

Public policy mood represents liberalness or conservativeness of the political times. It speaks to how large or small a role the electorate would like government to play in their lives. Public policy mood of the 1950s suggests a conservative political climate. Then mood grew considerably more liberal in the 1960s, only to grow more conservative again in the 1980s. Mood then grew slightly more liberal in the 1990s and stayed around this level until the end of the series. Public policy mood influences the opportunities for change in the social definition of gender by structuring the agenda of government (Erikson, Mackuen & Stimson 2002). When mood is more liberal, government adopts a more active agenda creating the context for larger social change. Society should be open to changes regarding women’s and men’s status and roles. When mood is more conservative, then the political climate should be less likely to foster social change.

The second wave of the women’s movement also created a political climate that fostered change in the social definition of gender.\footnote{The terminology, second wave, is used to refer not only to a time period but also to the types of activities and groups involved. Generally speaking, the women’s movement in the United States has experience three waves. The first wave ended with the fight for suffrage, the second...}
second wave of the women’s movement increased the consciousness about inequality between women and men and was fundamental in winning greater legal rights for women. The very purpose of the second wave of the women’s movement was to transform the meaning of being a woman in society, thus we would expect that activities of the movement would cause changes to the social definition of gender. The central goal of the women’s movement was to push for changes in the roles and status of women in society. Thus, we would expect to see larger changes in gender attitudes when there is an active women’s movement.

In this way, the social definition of gender is shaped by both public policy mood and the second wave of the women’s movement. In addition, we would expect changes in the economy to shape the social definition of gender.

Economic conditions vary considerably over time. Economic prosperity and hardship influence the social definition of gender by shaping the experiences of men and women. Economic conditions affect the decisions men and women make about issues such as work, family structure, and child care. The influence of the economy on the social definition of gender could function either to expand or contract the opportunities of and expectations towards women and men. When economic conditions are poor, the social definition of gender should become more conservative as people desire men and women to adopt traditional gender roles. Jobs becoming scarce and working women may be seen as a threat to the role of man as bread winner, for example. Times of economic uncertainty are often associated with backlashes or increased resentment expressed towards groups who have newly entered the workforce (Faludi 2000, Faludi 1991). Alternatively, economic

wave peaked in the 1960s and 1970s, and the third wave started in the late 1980s to early 1990s (Banaszak 2006, Whittier 2006). These dates are ranges; peaks in each wave’s activities and organizing occurred in between. I identify my measure as activities of the second wave of the women’s movement because this wave serves as the generating force for much of the activity measured, even after the wave may have ended.
downturns could force a larger women’s role out of necessity; women may have an easier time finding employment as the nature of the economy shifts or the need for a second income becomes a necessity, not a luxury.

Thus, the social definition of gender evolves as a function of generational replacement, socio-demographic trends, the political climate and the economy. Generational replacement and socio-demographic trends reflect changes in the experiences of men and women that work to reshape the social definition of gender. The political climate and the economy provide the context that expands or shrinks the opportunities for women and men. Before I can assess the influence these forces have on the social definition of gender, I need to develop an empirical measure of the social definition of gender.

\section*{3.2 Measuring the social definition of gender: gender attitudes}

There is no existing adequate measure of the social definition of gender. Previous measures either describe only a small part of the social definition of gender or they measure the causes of changes in the social definition of gender, not the social definition of gender itself. Because we can’t measure the social definition of gender directly and other existing indicators are inadequate, we need to develop an alternative measure.

The social definition of gender, as stated above, reflects the nexus between public presentations of gender and the public attitudes towards gender. A good empirical measure of the social definition of gender has several important features that provide construct validity. First, it needs to be able to tell us something
about how societies view gender. Second, the measure of the social definition of
gender should be dynamic. Third, a good measure must build from a wide cross-
section of information about a wide variety of roles and experiences. In addition,
the different components should be highly related. The final element of a good
empirical measure of the social definition of gender is that the elements of the
measure should be flexible. As the social definition of gender evolves we need to
adapt our measure to accurately trace changes in the underlying concept.

In this chapter I develop one measure of the social definition of gender —
gender attitudes — using public opinion data from 1953 to 2003. Public opinion
captures the latent concept of the social definition of gender because public opinion
represents the public’s definitions of gender. I combine multiple survey questions
over time to create a single indicator measuring the social definition of gender,
extracting the series’ shared variation using James Stimson’s dyadic dimensional
analysis algorithm.

There is a vast amount of public opinion data about Americans’ attitudes on
the wide cross-section of roles women and men play or should play in society.
This array of questions will allow the empirical measure to tap into the many
different facets of the social definition of gender. Questions on Americans’ gender
attitudes have been asked since the 1950s. One of the traditional problems of
using public opinion data over time is that questions change, questions are asked
at uneven intervals, and the salience of topics change. Stimson’s algorithm allows
me to combine survey questions to create a single measure, helping overcome these
technical problems. On a theoretical level, the changes in survey questions actually
work to my advantage because they allow the measure to be flexible. As the social
definition of gender evolves, so does the information that goes into the measure.

While there are many advantages to using public opinion to capture the public’s
reaction to gender, there are some limitations. The main limitation concerns the types of questions that have been asked over time. The social definition of gender speaks to the changing meaning of women and men in society. I am limited by the survey questions that have been asked, which rarely focus on men and masculinity. However, the meaning of masculinity and feminity interact and reinforce each other (Filene 1998), making the social definitions of men and women highly inter-related. Public gender attitudes can indirectly help us understand attitudes towards men.

The vast amount of public opinion data can tell us a lot about the public’s gender attitudes and, subsequently, about the evolution of the social definition of gender. However, to understand what the resulting time series tells us, we need to understand the mechanics of how the measure is created and the information that is used to form the measure.

3.2.1 The mechanics of measuring global public opinion

Probably thousands of questions capturing public attitudes towards the roles of women and men in work, family and politics have been asked over the past fifty years. The questions used to create the measure of gender attitudes ask about the electorate’s attitudes towards the roles women and men should play and public policy pertaining to women and men. Figure 3.1 summarizes five questions that have been asked multiple times and that tap the social definition of gender. The first question is asked by the Gallup Organization: “If your party nominated a woman for president, would you vote for her if she was qualified for the job?” The second question is from the General Social Survey: “Do you approve or disapprove of a married woman earning money in business or industry if she has a husband capable of supporting her?” The third question originates from the National Elec-
tion Studies: “Recently there has been a lot of talk about women’s rights. Some people feel that women should have an equal role with men in running business, industry and government. Others feel that a women’s place is in the home. Where would you place yourself on this scale or haven’t you thought much about this?”

The final two questions are also asked in the General Social Survey: “(Now I’m going to read several more statements. As I read each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.)... It is more important for a wife to help her husband’s career than to have one herself” and “Tell me if you agree or disagree with this statement: Most men are better suited emotionally for politics than are most women.”

These questions touch on aspects of politics, work, and family. Each series has a separate mean and variance over time and the questions are asked during different time periods. However, there is considerable shared movement following a general upward trend, illustrating that the American public has become more willing to vote for a woman for president, more accepting of women working, and in general more likely to support equal roles for women. Beyond simply sharing an upward trend, the series often move up and down together. This shared movement across different topic areas suggests that there is something similar driving changes in American’s gender attitudes in these different contexts. I contend that this shared movement reflects changes to the social definition of gender.

Figure 3.1 illustrates that the series cannot easily be combined. While there is shared movement in the questions, they are not asked on an consistent basis; in some years no questions are asked, in other years multiple questions are present, and in no year are all the questions asked. The missing data poses a problem for traditional methods of analysis, such as principle component analysis, which is usually used to estimate shared variance. However, James Stimson has created an
Figure 3.1. Five Individual Questions Tapping Attitudes Towards Gender
algorithm to overcome these very problems.

To capture the shared movement in these series and develop a measure of the social definition of gender, I use Stimson’s algorithm to analyze the covariance across ratios of change calculated for each individual question, conditional on an established baseline. Stimson’s algorithm produces a single time series that captures the relative change among each of the individual questions by analyzing shared variation in this change relative to a baseline year. Specifically, we begin by selecting a baseline year, \( t \). For illustration purposes, consider 2004. For the two questions that have observations in the baseline year, we arbitrarily rescale the observations by 100. We can then use these observations to compute the ratio of change within each question for any other time point:

\[
Question_{i,t-k} = 100 \times \left( \frac{Question_{i,t}}{Question_{i,t-k}} \right)
\] (3.1)

For example, the entry for the “equal roles” question in 2004 is converted from 62% to a ratio between the value in 2004 and the value in 2000 (57%) or \( 100 \times \frac{62}{57} = 108.77 \). While the series is converted to a ratio of change, the process simply rescales the data, leaving the meaning otherwise unchanged. Time periods that had more progressive attitudes about equal roles are still more progressive relative to other time periods. This is carried out for each series moving backwards in time.

If we had observations for every single question during each year and no missing data, the series would simply be a weighted average of these change ratios of the survey questions regarding women. But what about the other three series that do not have observations in the baseline year? A different baseline is selected for each of the other three series, the series are rescaled and the ratios calculated. This routine carried out until there are ratios for each question series in all years. The
new baselines are then calibrated to the original baseline, using information about
the relationship between the original baseline series and the new series.

\[
\text{GenderAttitudes}_t = \sum_{i=1}^{N} \sum_{j=1}^{Z} \frac{\text{Question}_{ij}}{\text{Question}_{ib}} \ast \text{Metric}_b
\]  

(3.2)

Where \(i = 1, n\) is all available questions for period \(t\); \(j = 1, z\) is all available dyadic
comparisons for issue \(i\); \(b\) is the base period for the recursive metric generation;
and \(\text{Metric}_b\) is the value of the metric for period \(b\).

The result is that each of the individual question series share the same metric.
The whole process is repeated moving forward in time, giving more weight to the
questions that are asked more frequently because those ratios are used more often
in the process. The final series produced by the algorithm is essentially a weighted
average of each of the individual question series.

A complete list of questions included in the measure can be found in Appendix
B. I selected two types of survey questions: to include the series, a) roles and
status and b) policy. Questions about the role of women and men in society
spanned many different topic areas, such as the workplace, family, politics, and
military. For example:

Do you think that women should work outside the home full-time,
part-time, or not at all under these circumstances...After marrying and
before there are children?

and

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Women should take care
of running their homes and leave running the country up to men.

Second, questions that dealt with a specific policy or program were also included.
Policy questions are included when support for the policy indicates greater sup-
port of the changing roles and opportunities for women or men. These programs
and policies included maternity and paternity leave, Title IX, the Equal Rights
Amendment and affirmative action. For example:

Generally speaking, are you in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment,
the E.R.A., or are you opposed to it – or haven’t you heard enough
about it yet to say?

and

Do you believe that where there has been job discrimination against
women in the past, preference in hiring or promotion should be given
to women today?

The survey questions used in this analysis come from two sources: iPoll and the
National Election Studies (NES). iPoll is an online archive of nearly a half-million
survey questions at the University of Connecticut’s Roper Center.2 Questions were
collected from eight Roper-defined categories: women, men, equality, work, family,
rights, abortion and sex. iPoll archives most major surveys in the United States
with one exception, the National Election Studies.3 I identified relevant questions
in each version of the NES from 1952 to 2004 and calculated the marginals for
these questions. All questions were coded in a direction so that higher scores
reflect more progressive gender attitudes. I define these as responses that indicate
equality between men and women or minimize the differences between the sexes.4

2More information on Roper and iPoll is available at their web site:
http://www.ropercenter.uconn.edu/
3Some years of the National Election Studies are archived at iPoll. However, at this time
their archive is not complete.
4This coding choice reflects the types and topics of the survey questions that were asked over
the past fifty years, which were reflective of a liberal feminist standpoint. Questions from other
standpoints where not asked multiple times or with the same question wording.
I retained questions asked in (almost) identical fashion more than once of a national sample for analysis. Questions where wording changed were not included. If the question series was long enough before and/or after the wording change occurred, the series was included but not counted as the same question. For example, the questions “If your party nominated a generally well-qualified person for the president who happened to be a woman, would you vote for that person?” and “If your party nominated a woman for president, would you vote for her if she seemed qualified for the job?” are not considered the same question. While such strict requirements mean that some information is lost, this approach protects against observing changes in opinion that are the artifact of changes in question wording (Stimson 1999).

Series were excluded when the response categories lacked clear meaning in regard to the social definition of gender. For example, the question “People have different ideas about what is sexual harassment. Do you think sexual harassment occurs when a man who is a woman’s boss or superior makes remarks to the woman that contain sexual reference or double meanings?” Increases to the affirmative response category could mean several things: there is more awareness of what constitutes sexual harassment, a broadening of what constitutes sexual harassment, or it could indicate increased incidents of sexual harassment. It is unclear what an increase in agreement with this question means for the progressiveness of gender attitudes, so it was omitted.

I also excluded questions that dealt with sex and abortion. Some research suggests that abortion attitudes (Luker 1984) and attitudes about sex (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004) are tied to respondents’ attitudes about gender more broadly. However, the abortion series was relatively flat in contrast to the other series, all of which demonstrate considerable growth in the progressiveness of society’s attitudes
about gender. Abortion questions were not statistically highly correlated to questions in other topic areas. A series using just abortion questions was negatively correlated with all the other topic areas (politics, family, sex, general, and the ERA) except work. These findings suggests that abortion questions are no longer closely tied to attitudes towards gender. Other research finds the individual abortion questions have fluctuated year to year but have not grown increasing liberal and instead have become less polarizing (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004).

Attitudes about sex grew considerably more progressive over the past fifty years. These questions asked about a wide variety of behavior and beliefs, including if it was morally acceptable to sleep with someone before marriage or have an extramarital affair. However, when I estimated a series using just questions about sex, it was not highly correlated with the other topics areas either. Due to the low levels of correlation, I chose to exclude the questions from the final series.\textsuperscript{5}

\subsection*{3.2.2 The resulting measure}

The combination of public opinion questions results in a single series tapping the latent concept of the social definition of gender. I refer to this measure as \textit{gender attitudes}. Figure 3.2 displays the gender attitudes series. Overall gender attitudes became more progressive between 1953 and 2003.\textsuperscript{6} However, there is also movement around this progressive trend, as attitudes turn more conservative during certain time periods. Gender attitudes appear to be more progressive in the early 1950s than we would expect, but this may be due to the lower number of survey questions that comprise the measure in this earlier time period (Stimson 1999).

\textsuperscript{5}The series that included questions about sex and the final series that excluded questions about sex are highly correlated with each other (.98).

\textsuperscript{6}The metric of the series is artificial, meaning there is no substantive meaning behind the fact that gender attitudes in 1994 was 51.7 points; rather, we can say that attitudes towards women in 1994 where slightly more progressive than in 1990 (50.3).
The increase in more progressive gender attitudes starts around 1954 and proceeds fairly steadily through the entire length of the series. This increase in more progressive attitudes appears to precede the start of the women’s movement, which is generally considered as the founding of the National Organization of Women (NOW) in 1966. Thus, rather than the women’s movement being a catalyst for changing public opinion, changes in public opinion may have been a catalyst for the women’s movement. While there are fluctuations from year to year, the trend continues toward more progressive views about gender. There is no evidence of a backlash in public opinion in the 1980s.

### 3.2.3 Validity of the measure

This measure uses public opinion data and taps the latent concept of the social definition of gender, specifically public attitudes about gender. Construct validity of the measure is confirmed on two grounds. First, the measure performs consis-
Figure 3.3. Gender Attitudes Broken Down By Topic, Annual 1953-2006
tently with expectations drawn from research on gender attitudes. Second, the multiple facets this measure move together and are highly inter-related. I begin by examining a series containing all questions, then building additional series based on specific subsets of questions.

Much of the work on gender attitudes has found increasing egalitarian attitudes across a wide variety of issues: gender roles (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004), workforce participation (Mason, Czajka & Arber 1976, Mason & Lu 1989, Simon & Landis 1989), family responsibilities (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Mason, Czajka & Arber 1976, Mason & Lu 1989, Simon & Landis 1989) and premarital sex (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004). Increased levels of support have been recorded for equal pay, the women’s movement, and more egalitarian divisions of labor in marriage (Simon & Landis 1989). It is not surprising, then, that we see a general progressive movement in gender attitudes.

Additionally, neither previous research or my series find evidence in the 1980s of a backlash against women. Support for more egalitarian roles for women actually increased from 1977 to 1987 (Mason & Lu 1989). College educated women were the only subgroup that failed to increase significantly their support for a more equalitarian role in that time. However, by 1977 college educated women already exhibited extremely high support for the equal status of women. As Mayer (1993) observed, “Certainly, there is no evidence of a backlash or retreat: whenever public opinion changes, it moves in the direction of greater support for women’s rights.”

Beyond simply increased support, attitudes towards women’s role and status in society exhibit a growing connection among different domains. Mason et al. (1976) report that attitudes towards women’s workforce participation and family responsibilities are becoming more inter-related. The same factors predict attitudes across premarital sex, gender roles and family responsibilities (Bolzendahl & Myers
Additionally, over time, public opinion about the roles and status of women have become less polarizing among the American public (Bolzendahl & Myers 2004, Plutzer 1991). Thus we would expect to find that individual questions and topic areas are highly related.

Although there are many different facets of the social definition of gender, the data support a single dimension among the questions used to create the gender attitudes series. The output from Stimson’s dynamic algorithm provides the fit between individual questions and the final gender attitudes series. The gender attitudes series appears to represent the information provided by the individual questions quite well. Just over fifty-five percent (76 out of 139) of the individual questions correlate with the gender attitudes series at .75 and above, indicating that the composite series featured in Figure 3.2 reflects a wide variety of topics sharing a single underlying dimension. There are 34 questions that are negatively correlated with the overall algorithm. However, 14 of those 34 series contain only 2 observations. Questions that are only observed in a few time periods can be skewed by a single sample, thus negative correlations on shorter individual question series do not necessarily reflect a second underlying dimension (Kellstedt 2003). Additionally, the questions that are negatively related span across all the topics, indicating there is no shared meaning behind them.

To further understand the movement of the gender attitudes series compared to its components, I estimated five series representing five of the topic areas into which questions could be classified: ERA, family, general, politics, and work. These five series represent the topic areas where the majority of questions are located and have the longest time spans. Figure 3.3 shows these five topic series and the composite series estimated with all the questions. Generally, the series show similar movement over the past fifty years: society has grown more progressive in their attitudes
about women in general, women in politics, women in the workplace, women in the family, and so on. Table 3.1 reports the correlations between individual topic series and the composite series to help assess the relationship between these series. Overall, all the topic areas are highly and positively correlated with the gender attitudes series.

Table 3.1. Correlation Matrix of Gender Attitudes Series and Topic Areas, Shared Samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gender Attitudes</th>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Politics</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender Attitudes</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the gender attitudes series I develop as a measure of the social definition of gender has strong construct validity. It behaves over time as we would expect based on previous research. And the individual questions also tap into a single underlying dimension; the various components of the measure are highly interrelated. Overall, these results provide construct validity that the measure of gender attitudes taps the latent concept of the social definition of gender.

3.3 Modeling changes in gender attitudes

As discussed above, I contend that the social definition of gender is a function of generational replacement, socio-demographic trends, the political climate, and economic conditions. These forces cause changes in the social definition of gender because they represent exposure to new experiences that shape public attitudes towards gender. I present hypotheses here regarding how these forces influence
gender attitudes and discuss measures of the independent variables used to test them. Information about the variables can be found in the Appendix A.

3.3.1 Measures and expectations

**Generational Replacement** As the pre-suffrage generation declines in proportion to the entire population, gender attitudes should grow more progressive. I identify the pre-suffrage generation as the proportion of the voting age population in the electorate that turned 21 before the passage of the 19th amendment in 1920.

**Socio-demographic trends** As more women enter the paid labor force and earn college degrees, gender attitudes should grow more progressive. Women’s workforce participation is measured as the percent of the civilian labor force comprised of women over the age of 20. The percent of college educated women reflects the percent of women over the age of 25 who have completed 4 or more years of college.

**Political Climate** I measure two aspects of the political climate: public policy mood and events of the women’s movement. I expect that when public policy mood is more liberal gender attitudes should grow more progressive. To capture the general political environment, I use the measure of the public policy mood developed by James Stimson (Stimson 1999). This measure reflects public opinion on the appropriate size of government. Public policy mood is constructed on a liberal-conservative continuum. The measure tracks with general sentiment about the nature of the political times (Stimson 1999).

I would expect that when the women’s movement is more active, gender attitudes should grow more progressive. When there are more events associated with women’s fight for equality, the public should be more cognizant of society’s gender
expectations, providing greater opportunity for change. To measure the presence of the second wave of the women’s movement, I create an events series. This series captures the activities associated with the second wave of the women’s movement reported in the *New York Times*. These events include protests, rallies, the passage of legislation, and court decisions. The series I developed is designed to reflect the women’s movement event series originally developed by Anne Costain (1994).

**The Economy** The economy could work to increase the progressiveness of gender attitudes or cause the electorate to adopt more traditional gender attitudes. I employ a single measure of the health and prosperity of the economy: personal disposable income. Hibbs (2000) argues that personal disposable income is the best single indicator of the economy because “it includes income from all market sources, is adjusted for inflation, taxes, government transfer payments and population growth and tends to move with unemployment.” I use percent change from the previous year in personal disposable income in chained 2000 dollars.

### 3.3.2 The dynamic processes underlying gender attitudes

The social definition of gender is a dynamic process and needs to be analyzed as such. Time series methodologies provide a set of tools to assess the nature of the underlying dynamics of the social definition of gender and to examine its relationship with other dynamic processes. I model the social definition of gender using cointegration and vector error correction, a time series specification that allows for non-stationarity. By using cointegration and vector error correction, I am able to assess the long-run and short-run effects of generational replacement, socio-demographic trends, the political climate, and the economy on gender attitudes.

Several of the series appear to move together over time; attitudes towards
women, women’s workforce participation, college educated women, and the pre-
suffrage generation all move in tandem. The shared movement of the series suggests
that they are engaged in an equilibrium relationship. When series are involved in
such a relationship we call them cointegrating. The theory of cointegration enables
us to explore the dynamic relationship between a set of variables that are involved
in an equilibrium relationship. When a shock to one variable causes that variable
to move out of equilibrium, the other variables in the cointegrating relationship
respond by establishing a new equilibrium relationship. We assume an endogenous
relationship between variables in a cointegrating relationship, often because the
same underlying trend is moving all the variables.

If the series are cointegrating, the model can be estimated using an error cor-
The error correction model provides information about the short-run and long-run
relationships between the variables. Additionally, if the series are cointegrating,
taking the first difference of the series would be a mispecification of the model
because important information about the dynamic processes is lost (Enders 2004).
See Appendix C for a detailed discussion of cointegration and the dynamics of the
variables.

The Johansen cointegration test suggests at least one cointegrating equation
between public attitudes about women, the pre-suffrage generation, women’s work-
force participation, the percent of college educated women, and public policy mood
(Johansen 1992b, Johansen 1992a, Johansen 1996). I include a deterministic lin-
ear trend in this equation.\(^7\) I also include events of the women’s movement and
changes in personal disposable income as short-run influences on the social defini-

\(^7\)The results of the Dickey-Fuller tests suggest that the several of the series have a determinist
trend. The trend in the cointegrating equation falls very short of our traditional standards for
significance, suggesting that there is an additional linear trend.
tion of gender. 

\[
\Delta A_t = -\gamma (A - \beta_1 S - \beta_2 W - \beta_3 C - \beta_4 M - T - \alpha)_{t-1} + \beta_6 \Delta A_{t-1} + \beta_6 \Delta A_{t-2} \\
+ \beta_7 \Delta S_{t-1} + \beta_8 \Delta S_{t-2} + \beta_9 \Delta W_{t-1} + \beta_{10} \Delta W_{t-2} + \beta_{11} \Delta C_{t-1} + \beta_{12} \Delta C_{t-2} \\
+ \beta_{13} \Delta M_{t-1} + \beta_{14} \Delta M_{t-2} + \beta_{15} \Delta E_t + \beta_{16} \Delta I_t + \alpha_1
\]

where \( \Delta \) is the difference operator; \( \gamma \) is the error correction rate; \( A \) is gender attitudes; \( S \) is the pre-suffrage generation; \( W \) is women’s workforce participation; \( C \) is the proportion of college educated women; \( T \) is a linear time trend, \( M \) is public policy mood; \( E \) is events of the women’s movement; and \( I \) is the personal disposable income.

The results reported in Table 3.2 tells us about three broad things: the long-run relationship, the error-correction rate, and the short-run impact. First, the coefficients estimated in the cointegrating equation, located at the top, tell us about the equilibrium or long-run relationship between these variables. Notice that based on the model written out above, the coefficients in the cointegrating equation are signed the opposite of their substantive impact. In conjunction with the error-correction rate (\( \gamma \)), we are able to estimate the total effects of shocks to the system and how long it takes for those shocks to dissipate. The final set of estimates are the short-run coefficients which tell us the immediate impact of a shock to the system.

\(^8\)To ensure proper model specification I checked for autocorrelation in the residuals and that the residuals are normally distributed. The Lagrange Multiplier test finds no autocorrelation in the residuals of this model specification and a normality test demonstrates only small kurtosis.

\(^9\)The cointegrating relationship is specified in the model as \( 0 = \left( A - \beta_1 S - \beta_2 W - \beta_3 C - \beta_4 M - T - \alpha \right)_{t-1} \). When in equilibrium the cointegrating equation is equal to zero. In order to estimate the model we need to restrict \( A \) to = 1. Thus when interpreting the coefficients we need to flip the sign.
Before we assess the influence each one of the independent variables has on gender attitudes, it is important to look at the error correction rate ($\gamma$) and what it tells us about the dynamics of the long-run equilibrium process. The error-correction rate measures the rate at which the gender attitudes series returns to equilibrium with the other variables in the model. As reported in Table 3.2, the error correction rate is -.69. The error correction rate indicates that shocks to the system persist for several time periods, with about 69% of the shock lasting into each subsequent year. It takes approximately 11 years for a shock to no longer substantively affect gender attitudes. Many of the series examined represent fundamental changes to the makeup of society; thus it is not surprising that these changes affect gender attitudes for several years before fully dissipating from the system. Shortly, I will use the information in conjunction with the long-run and short-run effects to determine the overall impact of the results.
Table 3.2. A Dynamic Model of Gender Attitudes, 1953-2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cointegrating Relationship</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender Attitudes$_{t-1}$</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Suffrage Generation$_{t-1}$</td>
<td>46.13</td>
<td>17.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Workforce Participation$_{t-1}$</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Educated Women$_{t-1}$</td>
<td>-0.67</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Policy Mood$_{t-1}$</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trend</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-40.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Error Correction Relationship</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Error Correction Rate</td>
<td>-0.69</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ Pre-Suffrage Generation$_{t-1}$</td>
<td>30.36</td>
<td>66.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ Pre-Suffrage Generation$_{t-2}$</td>
<td>-142.71</td>
<td>64.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ Gender Attitudes$_{t-1}$</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ Gender Attitudes$_{t-2}$</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ Women’s Workforce Participation$_{t-1}$</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ Women’s Workforce Participation$_{t-2}$</td>
<td><strong>-0.64</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.24</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ College Educated Women$_{t-1}$</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ College Educated Women$_{t-2}$</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ Public Policy Mood$_{t-1}$</td>
<td><strong>-0.10</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.05</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ Public Policy Mood$_{t-2}$</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events of the Women’s Movement</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in Personal Disposable Income</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- R-Squared: .53
- Adjusted R-Square: 0.35
- Sum Squared Residuals: 9.32
- Standard Error of the equation: 0.53
- F-Statistics: 2.9
- Mean $\Delta$ Gender Attitudes: 0.26
- Standard Deviation $\Delta$ Gender Attitudes: 0.66
We now turn our attention to the long-run relationship reported in the cointegrating equation at the top of Table 3.2 and the short-run results reported under the error-correction relationship in Table 3.2. The long-run relationship tells us the dynamic equilibrium relationship between these variables. In conjunction with the error correction rate discussed above, we can understand how shocks to the system throw the relationship into disequilibrium and then how the series move back into equilibrium. The short-run relationship tells us the immediate effect in a single time period; unlike the long-run relationship the effects of these shocks do not persist into the future. As expected, the decline of the pre-suffrage generation, women’s workforce participation, and the college education of women have had an influence on the progressiveness of the electorate’s gender attitudes in the long-run. In the long-run, the proportion of the electorate composed of the pre-suffrage generation is negatively related to gender attitudes. In the short-run, as the proportion of the electorate who came of age before the passage of the 19th amendment declines, gender attitudes grow more progressive. The short-run effect of the decline in the pre-suffrage generation is felt only at the second lag. Consider the average decline of the pre-suffrage generation of 0.005 points. Since the influence occurs at the second lag, we do not observe attitudes growing more progressive until 2 years after this decline, at which point, we see a one-time bump in the progressiveness of gender attitudes by .71 points. The overall influence of the decline in the pre-suffrage generation in the long-run and short-run is discussed below.

Both women’s workforce participation and women’s college education are related to gender attitudes in the long-run, and both in the expected direction. As women have increased their participation in the workforce and earned college degrees at a higher rate, gender attitudes have grown more progressive. Looking
at the short-run relationships between these socio-demographic trends and gender attitudes, we see a different story than what is found in the long-run. As women increase their presence in the workforce, we adopt more traditional gender attitudes.\textsuperscript{10} I speculate that there is an initial resistance to women’s entrance into the workforce that results in this negative finding. Women’s workforce participation directly challenges gender expectations. Thus, as more women experience workforce participation, women and men may desire the status quo ante and express more conservative attitudes. As women and men experience and get used to women’s presence in the workforce, attitudes change and grow more progressive in the long-run. In the short-run, the percent of college educated women has no influence on gender attitudes.

To understand the overall effect these changes have on gender attitudes, I calculate the cumulative effect of an average shock or change for each series on gender attitudes.\textsuperscript{11} Figure 3.4 plots the cumulative effect for the average change for the pre-suffrage generation (-.005), for women’s workforce participation (.5), and for women’s college education (.39). We can see from the figure how the impact of the shocks level off after about 11 years and the total effects of the shocks cumulate over time, showing a much larger effect than just looking at the coefficient reported in the Table 3.2. Comparing across the different variables we see that the average shock involving the pre-suffrage generation has a larger substantive impact on the progressiveness of gender attitudes than do the average shocks to women’s workforce participation and women’s college education. We also see how the negative short-run influence on women’s workforce participation

\textsuperscript{10}Several different specifications of the model were run to test the robustness of this finding. The negative relationship in the short-run between workforce participation and gender attitudes remains under these different specifications.

\textsuperscript{11}For more about understanding and calculating the cumulative effect see Keele and De Boef (2005).
mitigates much of the overall influence of the series.

Both elements of the political climate as well as public policy mood and the events of the women’s movement fail to perform as anticipated. In the long-run, public policy mood is not significant and is signed in the wrong direction. In the short-run, public policy mood and gender attitudes are negatively and significantly related. This significant relationship is likely the result of public policy mood moving more conservative over long periods of time, while gender attitudes are growing more liberal. Finally, there is no relationship between gender attitudes and the events of the women’s movement and the economy. Changes in gender attitudes appear to grow increasingly more progressive before the activities of the women’s movement really peaked. There were conflicting expectations about the role economic prosperity would have on the social definition of gender. The lack of relationship suggests that either there is no relationship or the effects of the economy cancel one another out in the aggregate, resulting in this null finding.

Figure 3.4. Cumulative Effects on Gender Attitudes
3.4 Conclusion

The social definition of gender evolves as experiences confirm or contradict gender expectations and is reflected in the nexus of public presentations of gender and public attitudes towards gender. The empirical measure of the social definition of gender developed in this chapter allows us to see these changes over time. We witness how gender attitudes have grown more progressive over time. We also see that sometimes gender attitudes grow progressive faster than at other times. Substantively, the movement of the series demonstrates a more diverse array of roles open to women and men, decreasing differences between the roles and opportunities of men and women.

The analysis in this chapter demonstrates what drives many of the changes we observe in the social definition of gender. These forces operate to shape gender expectations and experiences of men and women; changes in these forces transform the social definition of gender. I demonstrate that the decline of the pre-suffrage generation, women’s workforce participation, and women’s college education in the long-run cause gender attitudes to grow more progressive over time. However, different short-run influences, women’s workforce participation and public policy mood, have a negative influence on gender attitudes.

Based on these findings, we can postulate how the social definition of gender will behave in the future. I would expect to observe less change in the social definition of gender than we have observed over the last fifty years. Given the large role the decline of the pre-suffrage generation played in increasing the progressiveness of gender attitudes, we could expect that changes in the social definition of gender would slow down. Further, change in the social definition of gender will depend on future socio-demographic trends. The patterns in women’s workforce participation
also support the contention that changes in the social definition of gender will slow down in the future.

Tracing the evolution of the social definition of gender tell us how these presentations and reactions change over time and why these changes occur. Beyond this, understanding the factors that lead to changes in the social definition of gender starts to tell part of a larger story about politics and political consequences of changes in the social definition of gender. As the social definition changes, men and women develop different expectations and needs from government. As a result, they adjust their party attachments based on these new needs. Identifying the political consequences of changes in the social definition of gender in relation to the partisan attachments of men and women is my next task.
Chapter 4

The Dynamic Gender Gap in Partisanship

Change in the social definition of gender has important political consequences. One of these political consequences is the partisan gender gap, or differences in how men and women identify with the political parties. As the social definition of gender evolves, it reshapes men’s and women’s relationship with government by structuring their experiences and their evaluations of government. In the previous chapter, I have developed an empirical measure based on public opinion data regarding the roles and status of women and men in society. This measure has been designed to capture the social definition of gender and its changes over time. I also demonstrated that this measure responds systematically to generational replacement, socio-demographic trends, and the women’s movement. In this chapter, I demonstrate how changes in the social definition of gender have resulted in the growth of the Democratic gender gap.

The gender gap is a dynamic process, explanations for the gender gap need to focus on its dynamic nature. However, the current literature on the gender gap
tends to focus on static differences between men and women; exploring one or two elections and offering explanations of the gender gap that work in that particular time period, such as issue positions or characteristics of individuals. But static explanations grounded in single elections (or a small number of elections) cannot explain over time change in partisanship. Instead, we need to look for explanations of the gender gap that move over time. The social definition of gender offers a dynamic explanation. I contend that the gender gap is a function of changes in the meaning of being a man or woman in society — the social definition of gender. I find the dynamics of the gender gap are a combination of both changes in the social definition of gender and the economy.

Previous research on the gender gap has focused on the post-1980 differences between men’s and women’s partisanship. Few scholars have looked at sex differences before the 1980 election; and those scholars who have focused on presidential elections, providing us only periodic glimpses into the behavior of the gender gap in this earlier time period. However, the gender gap in partisanship exhibits interesting behavior between elections and before 1980. This chapter improves our understanding of the dynamics of the gender gap by stretching the analysis back to 1953, capturing a time when men identified with the Democratic Party in larger numbers than women. This time period also encompasses the switch in the gender gap to today’s reality, where women are more likely than men to identify with the Democratic Party. The yearly time series created for this project also provides us with insight into the behavior of the gender gap between presidential elections, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of how the gender gap changes over time.

1The exception to this is Box-Steffensmeier et. al. (2004) which looks at the dynamics of the gender gap starting in 1980. Additionally, Norrander (1997, 1999a, 1999b) and Wirls (1986) look at multiple elections.
The social definition of gender shifts our focus from thinking about sex to thinking in terms of the dynamic, socially and historically constructed concept of gender. Shift our focus allows us to rethink our previous explanations of differences between men and women. And to help think about the gender gap as a dynamic process, I begin by looking at the evolution of the gender gap and men’s and women’s partisanship over time. I then offer a dynamic explanation for the gender gap with the theory of the social definition of gender. Before testing the relationship between the social definition of gender and the partisan gender gap, I review the theory and the findings for the four main explanations for the gender gap: women’s increased psychological and economic independence; women’s more nurturing disposition; issue position differences between men and women; and the second wave of the women’s movement and the resulting increased feminist consciousness. With these foundational understandings of the dynamics of the gender gap, the theory of the social definition of gender and the extant literature on the gender gap, I outline and test several expectations for the sources of the gender gap. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, socio-demographic changes shape the social definition of gender. In this chapter I demonstrate how the social definition of gender shapes the gender gap in partisanship.

4.1 The gender gap as a dynamic process

The gender gap is a dynamic process. This is contrary to the usual focus on gender gaps at a specific time point, such as an election. For example:

According to the nationwide election day voter polls conducted by Voter News Service (VNS), a 10 percentage point gender gap was evident in support for the Republican candidate, with 53% of men and
43% of women voting for George W. Bush. Similarly, a 12 percentage point gender gap was evident in support for the Democratic candidate, with 54% of women and 42% of men voting for Al Gore (CAWP Downloaded June 27, 2007).

While we only hear about that single observation, obviously the gender gap existed before and will exist after that point in time. In fact, our single observation of the gender gap is dependent on the gender gap that existed before that point in time. And gender gaps occurring in the future will be shaped by the gender gap in the past. In order to understand the gender gap, we need to move beyond thinking of it as static observation to thinking in terms of dynamics. To help with conceptualizing the gender gap as a dynamic process, I will review the evolution of the gender gap over time. While the general movement of the Democratic gender gap was discussed in chapter one, I will provide a brief overview of the movement of the gender gap and its components: men’s and women’s partisanship.

The Democratic gender gap is the difference between men’s and women’s Democratic partisanship. Figure 4.1 breaks the gender gap down into its component parts. It is striking that the series resemble each other in the amount of shared movement over time. The timing and magnitude of changes appear to be about the same for men and women. For example, when Democratic macropartisanship plunged in 1953 it did so for both men and women about equally. The parallel nature of these series suggests that many of the same forces are driving changes in men’s partisanship, are driving the changes in women’s partisanship and vice versa.
There are several times when men’s and women’s partisanship exhibit slightly different behavior. Overall men’s and women’s Democratic macropartisanship peaks in the mid 1970s and then starts to decline. This decline is commonly attributed to the Southern realignment, resulting from the parties dividing on racial issues. While men and women started at the same level of Democratic macropartisanship, women ended up with higher levels of Democratic macropartisanship than men. Additionally, the Watergate scandal in 1973 and 1974 caused men to adopt Democratic partisan attachments at a faster rate than women; however, at the start of the scandal women were already more Democratic than men.

Looking at men’s and women’s partisanship in relation to one another can provide us with some insights into who is responsible for the gender gap. Clearly, it is not just men’s political behavior or the political behavior of women that is responsible for the gender gap. Rather, it appears to be a combination of men’s
Figure 4.2. The Gender Gap in Democratic Macropartisanship, yearly 1953-2003

and women’s behavior. For the most part it appears that men’s and women’s partisanship are responding in a similar fashion, but often the degree of their responses is different. This suggests that underlying mechanism that structures men’s and women’s evaluations of the political parties and politicians is largely the same; however, there is some mechanism that works to create slight differences over time. I contend that the social definition of gender shapes men’s and women’s relationship with government in different ways. And changes to the social definition of gender would result in men and women evaluating the political parties differently, resulting in the partisan gender gap. I will expand on this more in the following section.

The difference between men’s and women’s partisanship is reflected in Figure 4.2, which shows the gender gap in Democratic macropartisanship between 1953 and 2003. Overall, the series is very similar to what we know about the movement
of partisanship over this period of time and what we would expect based on the series of men’s and women’s partisanship. Men in the 1950s were more likely to identify with the Democratic Party than women. Between 1953 and 1963 the average gender gap in partisanship was -3.63 points. Nineteen-sixty marks the largest difference in this time period with men 6.78 percentage points more Democratic than women.

Starting in 1963 women became more Democratic than men by 6.06 points. Between 1971 and 1976 the gap greatly declined, and in some cases women became slightly more Republican than men. Watergate was taking place during this time period so it is not surprising that sex differences declined, as people left the Republican Party in the wake of the scandal. Starting in 1976 the gap in Democratic macropartisanship starts an upward trend that is continued through 2003. Movement resulting in the sex differences of the much publicized 1980 gap appears to have started several years earlier. The high point of this trend is reached in 2000 with women being 14.8 percentage points more likely than men to identify with the Democratic Party.

Over the past fifty years the gender gap in partisanship has gone through an interesting transformation. Men were once more likely to identify with the Democratic Party, today women are more likely to be Democrats. The evolution of the gender gap over time requires us to think about the gender gap in terms of a dynamic process. Additionally, explanations of the gender gap need to fit with these changes. I contend that the social definition of gender allows us to explain the dynamic nature of the partisan gender gap.
4.2 The social definition of gender and its effect on the gender gap

The dynamic nature of the gender gap described above requires a dynamic explanation. As I have argued previously, this dynamic explanations is found in the changing meaning of being a man or a woman, the social definition of gender. The social definition of gender shifts our thinking from sex to gender, a socially and historically constructed concept that changes over time. The partisan gender gap then becomes a political consequence of the changes in the social definition of gender.

Theories of macropartisanship conceptualize the series as an equilibrium that respond partisan politics (Erikson, Mackuen & Stimson 2002, MacKuen, Erikson & Stimson 1989, Meffert, Norpoth & Ruhil 2001). A political event provides a shock throwing the system out of equilibrium. For example, unemployment increases. The electorate then responds in a systematic way to reestablish the equilibrium relationship, in this case the electorate would shift their partisan attachments towards the Democratic Party because of the perception that the Democrats are better at handling the problem of unemployment.

I argue that changes in the social definition of gender act as a shock to men’s and women’s macropartisanship. Because changes to the social definition of gender differentially influence men’s and women’s relationship with government, men and women have adjusted their partisan attachments in a manner that produces the Democratic gender gap. Additionally, men and women will respond differently to political events, because gender structures the the context in which they experience the event.

Changes in the social definition of gender creates a tension between gendered
expectations and gendered experiences. Often we turn to government to help resolve this tension. In the case of women, government has helped resolved this tension through social welfare polities. For men changes in the social definition of gender have been constructed as something to fight against, because they threaten their position of power and privilege relative to women. As a result the Republican Party’s protectionist economic policies and appeals to traditional values prove more appealing. The gender gap in partisanship emerges because the political parties are able to meet needs of men and women differently.

The political consequences of the social definition provides a dynamic, macro explanation for the partisan gender gap. It also fits theoretically with macro explanations for partisan change. The dynamic nature of the social definition of gender stands in contrast to much of the extant work on the gender gap which treats it as a static event.

4.3 Explaining the gender gap

A considerable amount of scholarly attention has been paid to the gender gap in America politics since the 1980 presidential election. The debate over the origins of the gender gap continues. Central to this discussion is who is responsible for the gender gap: men, women, or both men and women? Additionally, four main explanations for the gender gap have been offered: women’s changing role in society, women as mothers, differences in attitudes, and the events of the women’s movement. These explanations have found varying support in the extant literature and offer limited insight into the dynamic nature of the gender gap.

\footnote{The gender gap is a term used to refer a larger number of differences between men and women. In the review of the literature offered here I focus on differences in vote choice and partisanship.}
The vast majority of the literature treats the gender gap as a static event. These studies look at one or two elections, focusing on why individuals voted for a particular candidate or identified with a particular political party. The theories are constructed to explain the behavior of individual men and individual women in a particular political context. As a result the theories used to explain the gender gap are limited in their ability to address the dynamics of the gap. Notable exceptions that explore the gender gap over a larger number of time points (Wirls 1986, Norrander 1999a, Norrander 1999b, Norrander 1997) or address the dynamics of the gender gap (Box-Steffensmeier, De Boef & Lin 2004) will be highlighted below.

More attention has been paid to explaining the voting patterns of men and women, leaving our understanding of partisan differences underdeveloped. Political scientists are more interested in explaining vote choices than explaining partisanship. The differences in how men and women vote have been responsible for deciding elections, thus voting captures the public and media attention more easily. Additionally, because we tend to collect considerably more data on the political behavior of individuals around elections, it is only logical that voting would serve as the center of analysis. As a result much of our understanding of the sex differences in political behavior is centered around elections, mainly presidential, looking at the behavior of individuals in a given electoral environment. Our understanding of long-term aggregate behavior across different electoral environments and between elections is underdeveloped (Burns 2007, Sapiro & Conover 1997). However because vote choice and partisanship are so highly intertwined, understanding the work done on both is necessary. Additionally, based on current work done at the individual level, we can build expectations about the behavior of men and women in the electorate at the aggregate level of analysis.
4.3.1 Whose partisanship has changed? Men? Women? or both?

The gender gap may be caused by a number of different combinations of change or stability in the partisan attachments of men and women. First, the gender gap may be a function of women moving towards the Democratic Party, away from either the Republican or Independent identifiers. There needs to be no movement in the partisan attachments of men in order for a gender gap to form under these conditions. Second, men could move away from the Democratic Party, moving towards either the Republican or Independent position. Women would not have to change their partisan attachments and a gender gap would still emerge. Third, the gender gap could be a function of men moving away from the Democratic Party and women moving towards the Democratic Party (1 and 2 occurring simultaneously). Fourth, the gender gap could be a function of both men and women moving in the same direction, either away from or towards the Democratic Party, but at different rates of change.

Most media’s attention and early scholarly work concerning the gender gap in partisanship and vote choice would lead one to conclude that the gender gap is a function of women’s changing behavior. These accounts reported that women in 1980 started voting and acting differently than men in the electorate and women in the electorate before 1980. The 1980 election did represent a milestone for women voters; after 60 years of national suffrage women finally cast ballots at the same rate as men (Frankovic 1982, Mueller 1988, CAWP 2005b). Not only did women voters show up to the polls in greater numbers, but women voters in the 1980s were

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3This discussion focuses on the formation of the Democratic gender gap for consistency with previous literature and simplicity. However, parallel arguments can be made if conceptualizing the gender gap in Republican identifiers.
better educated and more likely to be employed than women voters in previous decades. While the changes in the composition of the electorate regarding women make a catchy story for the news media it simplifies the potential source of the gender gap.

More recent scholarly attention attributes the gender gap not to changes in women’s attachments, but as a function of changes in men’s political behavior (Kaufmann & Petrocik 1999, Norrander 1999a, Norrander 1999b, Norrander 1997, Miller 1991, Kenski 1998, Wirls 1986). These theories focus on the overall decline in Democratic macropartisanship and conceptualize the gender gap as largely a function of different rates of defection from the Democratic Party to the Republican Party (Wirls 1986, Norrander 1997). Wirls (1986) observes “Rather than reflecting an increase in Democratic and liberal sentiments among women, the gender gap resulted from more rapid and widespread movement among men than women to conservative values and the Republican Party (page 317).” Thus, the gender gap in partisanship and vote choice is largely a function of men’s partisanship.

A subset of these scholars focuses in on one specific group of men responsible for the gender gap: Southern white males. These theories contend that the gender gap is largely a function of Southern realignment (Norrander 1999a, Norrander 1999b, Norrander 1997, Miller 1991). Due to changes within the parties over issues of race, white men in the South fled the Democratic Party for the Republican Party (Carmines & Stimson 1989). Women in the South were slower to change their partisan attachments, creating a gender gap in partisanship. However, locating the origins of the gender gap regionally in the south is troublesome because the gender

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4Norrander (1999a, 1997) observes that some of the differences between men and women in partisan attachments is not a result of men and women switching party identification. Rather, it is a result of men being more likely claim the independent position and women being more inclined to identify with a party.
gap in partisanship exists across all regions (Ondercin & Bernstein 2007, Box-Steffensmeier, De Boef & Lin 2004).

It is difficult to know who is responsible for the gender gap. The most likely answer is that it is some combination of both men and women. Men’s declining Democratic macro-partisanship has clearly contributed to the gender gap. At the same time women’s resistance to the overall trend of declining Democratic macro-partisanship has also contributed to the formation of the gender gap. To better understand the gender gap in vote choice and partisanship, we turn our attention to the causes for differences between men’s and women’s political behavior.

4.3.2 Women’s changing role in society

Many of the explanations for the gender gap in vote choice and the gender gap in partisanship have centered around the changing positions and role of women in society. Women’s changing position in society is illustrated by several socio-demographic trends: women’s increased participation in the paid labor force, especially in professional and managerial positions; increasing numbers of women who have earned college degrees; and the increasing number of women choosing to remain single. These new roles lead women to develop economic interests and greater independence from men socially and politically; leading to changes in women’s voting patterns and partisan identification.

The impact of women’s changing role in society on political behavior is illustrated in Susan Carroll’s (1988) popular thesis that the gender gap is a function of individual women who are psychologically and economically independent of individual men.

In a patriarchal society like ours, economic independence from indi-
vidual men and psychological independence from men, as reflected in a preference for an egalitarian state of existence, may be prerequisite conditions for women to consider their political interests – their choices among candidates, their public policy preferences, their evaluations of political figures – independent of constraints posed by (and perhaps domination by) the interests of men. (p. 240)

According to Carroll women have become economically independent from individual men as they have entered into the paid labor force, specifically professional and managerial jobs and choose to remain single for a longer portion of their lives. Psychological independence for women is represented as the individual woman’s belief in an egalitarian society.

The socio-demographic trends identified by Carroll as leading to women’s greater independence from men represent significant structural changes to the position of women in society. As a result of these changes, women have developed interests that are different than men; and in turn they vote and identify with the political parties differently than men and non-independent women. Many scholars have unpacked Carroll’s argument; further developing the causal mechanisms and testing the effects of these socio-demographic changes independently.

Women’s increasing participation in the paid labor force is the main source of women’s greater economic independence from men and serves as one of the main explanatory variables for changes in women’s political behavior. As discussed in Chapter 3, women who participate in the workforce hold more liberal and feminist

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Economic independence for women is in relation to men. It should be noted that she is not referring to economic independence in general. In fact Carroll notes that many women entering the paid labor force are not economically independent of men or of government due to the types of occupations open to women.

Carroll finds the strongest support for her hypothesis when women are both economically and psychologically independent in 1980 presidential election. However, these results are not robust in 1982 elections.
attitudes than women who do not participate in the workforce (Andersen & Cook 1985, Plutzer 1991). In order to create a gender gap, women in the paid labor force must develop interests that are divorced from that of men. Thus despite that fact that women are becoming more like men in terms of their labor force participation, they become less like men in terms of politics.

Women’s labor force participation rate has come to resemble men’s labor force participation rate, which raises the question of why if men and women behave differently if they are becoming more similar? Women’s new, independent political interests that result from working could be a function of many different factors. First, women who are working in the paid labor force have an income that is independent from men. With their own income, women are left to consider their economic interests, not the economic interests of their husbands (Carroll 1988). Second, women who enter the workplace do so at an unequal position to men. These women face wage discrimination, sex segregated occupations, and sexual harassment, and overall have lower incomes and less prestigious jobs. While women develop greater economic independence from individual men by entering the workforce, working women often become more dependent on government (Erie & Rein 1988). This dependence on government has many sources. Women’s paychecks are more likely to depend on government funds, directly or indirectly. Women employed in the workforce are more dependent on government programs to supplement their lower incomes, provide child care, or benefits such as health care. This marginal and unstable economic position then result in new economic self-interest, for working women (Erie & Rein 1988, Andersen 1999). Regardless of the source of women’s economic self-interest these arguments contend that the positions of the Democratic Party and Democratic candidates best serve the working women’s interests, generating the gender gap in vote choice and partisanship.
Overall support for the role of workforce participation is mixed. Not considering occupation, participation in the paid labor force for women increases the tendency to vote for the Democratic presidential candidate (Manza & Brooks 1998). Women who are most economically vulnerable, those who either receive means tested benefits and those who hold occupations more dependent on government, were more likely to vote for Clinton in 1992 (Andersen 1999). However, at the macro-level no connection was found between college educated women working in professional occupations, the group Carroll (1988) described as most independent, and the Democratic gender gap (Box-Steffensmeier, De Boef & Lin 2004).

In conjunction with women’s workforce participation the role of marriage in women’s lives has changed as well. Women are choosing to remain single for a longer period of their lives; either as a function of delaying marriage until later in life, not marrying, or divorcing. Additionally, unlike in the past, unmarried women are more likely to live on their own, not with family. As a result single women tend to be both economically and psychologically independent from individual men; thus having individual political interests. The gender gap in vote choice tends to be larger among the unmarried, compared to the married (Carroll 2006). At the macro-level the increasing numbers of single women are strongly related to the growth in the Democratic gender gap (Box-Steffensmeier, De Boef & Lin 2004).

While rarely acknowledged, changes in women’s position in society is not independent of changes in men’s position and role in society. Women’s interests may not be the only ones being shaped by the socio-demographic changes discussed above. Men in the paid labor force will interact with women more often at work, but are also more likely to have wives or mothers who participated in the paid labor force. Additionally, men are also experiencing the effects of increases in women’s college education and changing marital patterns. Men’s experiences
with women in the workforce may lead them to develop greater sympathy for the challenges women face, resulting in more feminist attitudes by men (Banaszak & Plutzer 1993). However, these feminist attitudes may not translate into voting and partisanship. Because women’s workforce participation and greater independence has been seen as a threat to men’s economic power and privilege (Faludi 2000), causing men to shift their partisan attachments away from the Democratic Party towards the traditional rhetoric of the Republican Party. These socio-demographic changes could also be responsible for shaping men’s interests in ways that lead to the formation of the Democratic gender gap.\(^7\)

This literature suggests the positions individual women hold in society (working v. non-working; single v. married; college educated v. non-college educated) shape how an individual women identifies with a political party. However, if we consider the socio-demographic trends associated with these societal positions have dynamic implications. Structural changes have resulted in women developing interests distinct from men and as a result voting and identifying with the political parties differently from men. On their own, these changes lack meaning and would lack political implications. For example, a large flux of women in the labor force just means more women are working. But it is the changes in attitudes and expectations that have political meaning and consequences. Changes to the social definition of gender reflect the meaning behind the socio-demographic trends and events, such as the women’s movement. The political impact of socio-demographic trends and the women’s movement are indirect, felt through their influence on the social definition of gender. However, on the other hand several explanations for the gender gap focus on one role that has remained fairly stable for women in

\(^7\)The idea that these trends influence men’s interest more than women’s fit better theoretically with the argument that the gender gap is a function of men’s partisanship moving away from the Democratic Party.
4.3.3 The role of women as mothers

In addition to the explanations that focus on women’s changing roles, many argue that the differences between women and men are a function of women’s more nurturing roles, such as mother and caregiver. These arguments contend, whether a function of biology or socialization, women are more compassionate and protective of human life (Ruddick 1980, Ruddick 1989, Chodorow 1978, Gilligan 1982). And these nurturing tendencies shape women’s political behavior, making it distinct from men.

Because of women’s more compassionate nature, women should be more concerned and supportive of programs for the less fortunate in society. Additionally, they will be more willing to share the cost of programs that are designed to help the less fortunate (Clark & Clark 1999). Along with compassion issues, this theory contends that the maternal nature of women makes them more concerned with human life; taking a more peace oriented or pacifist stance on issue of war (Ruddick 1989, Conover & Sapiro 1993). These theories fail to identify if women have to be mothers or care givers for this thesis to apply, or if the maternalism applies to all women.

There is limited evidence to support this thesis. There is considerable evidence that there are differences in the attitudes of men and women on issue areas such as compassion and foreign affairs (Shapiro & Mahajan 1986). More will be said about these differences shortly. The question really is whether these differences translate into differences in voting and partisan attachments. The idea that the gender gap is a function of women’s more compassionate nature resulted, from an
analysis of the gender gap in vote choice in 1980 which found that women tended to believe that Reagan was more likely to involve the United States in armed conflict (Frankovic 1982). However, looking at the group most likely to fit this thesis, mothers, Conover and Shapiro (1993) find no difference between mothers and non-mothers in terms of attitudes.

The mothering theory has few implications at the macro-level for helping us understand the dynamics of the gender gap. If we interpret the theory as all potential mothers would have these more compassionate characteristics, this translates in the aggregate a characteristic possessed by all women. If we interpret the theory to only apply to mothers, in order to influence the gender gap some aggregate change would have needed to take place in terms of the number of mothers or the meaning of being a mother. Both of which offer unsatisfying explanations for the dynamics of the gender gap.

### 4.3.4 Gender differences in attitudes

Issue difference between men and women are often small; however, these differences are persistent and consistent over time and found across many different topic areas. Additionally these differences shape the way men and women vote, accounting for some of the gender gap in vote choice.

Differences in attitudes held by men and women span across many topic areas. War and peace attitudes often get the most attention. Women are less suppositive of the use of force both domestically and internationally. Additionally, women are more supportive of non-violent actions (Shapiro & Mahajan 1986, Frankovic 1982, Conover & Sapiro 1993, Chaney, Alvarez & Nagler 1998). Men’s and women’s attitudes also diverge in regard to the scope of government (Shapiro & Mahajan 1986).
Women tend to be more supportive of a wide array of policies where government works to generate greater equality. These policies include, but are not limited to: guaranteed annual income, wage-price controls, equalizing wealth, guaranteeing jobs, governmental health care, student loans, education, rationing to deal with scarce goods (Shapiro & Mahajan 1986). Men and women differ little on issues classified as “women’s issues”; and when there are differences on these issues, men actually tend to hold more liberal stances. These differences are largely a function of women’s slightly more anti-choice stance on abortion, a result of women’s higher levels of religiosity (Cook, Jelen & Wilcox 1992).

Not only are there differences in the opinions held by men and women, but the salience and priority of these issues vary (Kaufmann & Petrocik 1999, Shapiro & Mahajan 1986). Men are more likely to focus on economic issues, women are more likely to focus on social issues (Sapiro 2002).


The explanation that the gender gap in vote choice or partisanship is a function of men’s and women’s different attitudes is unsatisfactory and tautological. If issue differences explain the gender gap, what explains issue differences? The source of issue differences are complex and vary based on the issue being explored (Howell
& Day 2000). However, many of these factors may directly explain the gender gap in vote choice and partisanship, such as education, occupational status, marriage, and so on. Similar to identifying if the chicken or the egg came first, determining if differences in issue attitudes or differences in vote choice and partisanship emerged first is next to impossible to assess. Most likely differences in issue position, vote choice, and partisanship emerged simultaneously and influence each other.

The dynamic implications of issue differences on the partisan gender gap are mixed. Differences found around a single issue are not likely to have an impact on the evolution of the gender gap, because issue salience changes over time. However, economic issues may generate some of the dynamics underlying the gender gap in partisanship. Unlike other types of issues, economic issues are salient the majority of the time. And economic issues vary in the aggregate. Additionally, economic issues are key to partisan identification and partisan change. Thus, I would expect that economic issues to play a role in shaping the evolution of the gender gap in partisanship.

One final explanation focuses on events that could be responsible for differences in men’s and women’s issue attitudes, voting patterns, and partisan identification. This explanation points the gender gap as one of the political implications of the second wave of the women’s movement in the United States.

### 4.3.5 The political impact of the women’s movement

Attention to the gender gap emerged in the early 1980s after the peak of activity of the women’s movement in the 1970s. Thus it appears that there is a logical connection between the women’s movement (Abzug 1984, Mandel 1982, Smeal 1984) and the resulting feminist consciousness (Gurin 1985, Conover 1988, Cook
1989, Cook & Wilcox 1991, Tolleson Rinehart 1992, Plutzer & Zipp 1996) and the gender gap. However, both the women’s movement and feminist consciousness seem to have played an indirect, rather than direct, role in shaping the gender gap.

In one way the gender gap is a product of the women’s movement. In the aftermath of the 1980 election the National Organization of Women (NOW) coined the term of the gender gap to describe voting difference between men and women. Through NOW’s efforts, the gender gap garnered media attention and later scholarly attention. The gender gap was seen as the dreams of the suffragists coming true because it represented the clearly defined women’s interest, that women would vote as a group, thus gaining political clout. Carol Mueller (1988) explains:

The feminist interpretation of the women’s voting bloc as the “gender gap” is based on a similar vision of women as a category of people who share a set of experiences and interests that distinguish them from other members of society.

This early discussion of the gender gap worked to link the sex differences in voting to key feminist issues, mainly the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and increasing the number of women elected and appointed in government (Mueller 1988). However, men and women did not differ on these feminist issues and thus they were not linked to the gender gap (Frankovic 1982, Mueller 1988).

The increase in women who identified as feminist or developed a feminist consciousness was one component of the second wave of the women’s movement. Generally group consciousness occurs when an individual identifies with a group, recognizes that membership in that group is related to her place in society, and sees group action as the best avenue for change (Cook 1989, Klein 2003). Individuals who have developed feminist consciousness are supposed to create the gender
gap. The feminist identities of these women would place them in line with the goals of the women’s movement and today’s Democratic politics.\textsuperscript{8} There is some evidence that women with a feminist consciousness are more likely to support the Democratic Party and Democratic candidates (Conover 1988, Cook 1993). However, Manza and Brooks (1998) conclude that most of the impact of the women’s movement and feminist consciousness on the gender gap is indirect through such things as women’s workforce participation.

### 4.4 Modeling the gender gap

The differences between men’s and women’s partisanship that constitute the gender gap have evolved considerably over the past fifty years. The growth of the gender gap underlines the importance of gender in American politics and understanding the movement behind the gender gap in partisanship provides insight into the larger dynamics of American politics. The review of the extant literature on the gender gap highlights how previous explanations of the gender gap are individual static explanations. These explanations focus on an individual’s position in society (i.e. worker, single, college educated, or mother) or on the attitudes of an individual (issue differences between men and women and feminism). We can extrapolate dynamic implications from several of these static explanations. I develop expectations about the influence of socio-demographic trends, the economy, and the women’s movement based on the existing gender gap literature.

While it is possible to extrapolate dynamic explanations for the gender gap out of the extant literature, theoretically it is unsatisfying. The changes represented in

\textsuperscript{8}It should be noted that this was not the case when the gender gap first emerged. Before the 1980 election there was not a real difference between the Democratic and Republican parties in terms of their support for the women’s movement. Thus the causal order of this theory is in doubt.
the socio-demographic trends and the women’s movement lack theoretical meaning on their own. Rather, I argue that these trends produce changes in the social definition of gender, which in turn influences the partisan attachments of men and women. The social definition of gender offers a dynamic theory to explain the gender gap in partisanship. I will examine the relationship between the social definition of gender and the partisan gender gap. I demonstrate how changes in the social definition of gender have resulted in the growth of the partisan gender gap.

4.4.1 Existing expectations for the gender gap

I draw on both the literature on the gender gap in partisanship and vote choice outlined above to establish the following set of expectations about the behavior of the gender gap. As noted above, much of the previous research is conducted at the micro-level. As a result the theories speak to the specific behavior of the individual men and women. I use these micro-level theories and other work at the macro-level to develop the following expectations.

The individual, micro focus of some of the theories does not lend themselves to aggregating nicely to the macro-level. These include the gender gap in issue differences, the mothering thesis, and feminist consciousness. Because the salience of issues, the specific issues, and the meaning of the issues change over time it is next to impossible to develop a macro measure of this. The mothering thesis is also difficult to translate to the macro level. One of the reasons is that this theory suggests that the tendency for women to be more nurturing is the basis of the gender gap, locating the causal mechanism in a trait that all women have to some degree does not give us much leverage to understand over time change. Finally,
it is also difficult to measure at the aggregate level the very micro concept of an individual’s feminist consciousness. The role of feminist consciousness is indirectly tested via the women’s movement, which increased the overall level of feminist consciousness.

4.4.1.1 Structural change to women’s position in society

Women’s structural position in society has gone through considerable changes over the fifty year time period in this study. Women’s participation in the paid labor force has increased from 33% to 66%; with women now participating in equal numbers to that of men. The average age that women marry has increased from 20 to 25. The delay in marriage represents an overall trend of women remaining single for a longer part of their lives (Robers, Goodman & Balleza 2007). And the percent of women earning college degrees has increased from approximately 6% in 1950 to 26% in 2001.

I examine these three different structural changes to women’s positions in society: the proportion of women in the paid labor force, the percent of single women, and the percent of women with 4 or more years of college. These changes in women’s structural position in society are central to many explanations of gender differences in both vote choice and partisanship (Manza & Brooks 1998, Erie & Rein 1988, Carroll 1988, Box-Steffensmeier, De Boef & Lin 2004). These trends represent the changes experienced by women that lead to individual women becoming psychologically and economically independent from men, leading to differences in men’s and women’s political behavior. Additionally, both women’s workforce participation and the percent of single women represent increases in the number of women who find themselves economically dependent on government and econom-
ically disadvantaged compared to men.\textsuperscript{9} The movement of these aggregate series represent considerable change in women’s position in society and would then represent more women who hypothetically would find the policies of the Democratic Party more attractive. This in turn causes an increase in the gender gap in partisanship. As a result I would expect the following relationship between the gender gap and these measures:

- Increases in women’s workforce participation should result in the Democratic gender gap increasing in size.
- Increases in the percent of single women should result in the Democratic gender gap increasing in size.
- Increases in the percent of women with college educations should increase the size of the Democratic gender gap.

Women’s workforce participation is the proportion of women in the civilian labor force over the age of 20. The percent of single women represents women who have never married, or who are divorced or widowed and over the age of 19. Women’s college education represents the percent of women who have received 4 or more years of college education and are over the age of 25. Further details about the variables can be found in Appendix A.

\textsuperscript{9}The increase in women with four of years of college may represent the opposite for women in terms of economic independence, because women with college education are more apt to be able to obtain higher paying jobs and thus not only economic independence from men but also from government. However, women in in professional and managerial fields often face wage discrimination and thus are still economically disadvantaged compared to men. And many college majors are still sex segregated, reinforcing differences between women and men.
4.4.1.2 Women’s Movement

Early reports of the gender gap in vote choice attempted to tie the gender gap to the second wave of the women’s movement (Mueller 1988). However, much of this argument was dismissed when it was observed that on key issues associated with the women’s movement men and women held almost identical opinions (Frankovic 1982). However, the individual level focus of many of these studies may have missed the cumulative impact of the women’s movement. Several studies have found that feminists are more supportive of the Democratic policies and candidates (Conover & Sapiro 1993, Cook 1993). It is difficult to say that the increase in the number of feminists should lead to the gender gap in politics because we know that the number of people who are willing to identify as feminists has either stayed the same or declined due to the negative stereotypes associated with the word “feminism”. However, the knowledge of feminist ideas and acceptance of these ideas may be tied to the gender gap in partisanship.

Starting in the mid-1970s, the internal dynamics of the political parties created an environment where the Democratic Party was more receptive to feminist and feminist politics compared to the Republicans (Freeman 1987, Freeman 2000). By the 1980 presidential election the two parties were clearly differentiated on women’s rights (Freeman 1987, Freeman 2000, Sanbonmatsu 2002, Wolbrecht 2000). Thus we would expect that the women’s movement would lead to increases in the Democratic gender gap, as feminist or feminist sympathizers become more likely to Democratic partisans.

The women’s movement is measured as the cumulative number of events pertaining to the second wave of the women’s movement recorded in the New York Times. These events included protests, press releases, reports, court battles, and
legislation. Detailed information about the type of events and the data collection can be found in Appendix A. We would not expect events of the women’s movement would immediately translate into changes in political behavior of men or women. As a result, I use the cumulative events of the women’s movement, rather than single events as an indicator. The cumulative events represent the number of events occurring in year, plus all events that occurred from the start of the series in 1953.

4.4.1.3 Economic issues

The economy plays a central role influencing vote choice and partisanship at both the individual and aggregate levels of analysis (Fiorina 1978, MacKuen, Erikson & Stimson 1989) and can be simply measured over time. There are several reasons why the economy may influence the size of the gender gap. First, women’s and men’s economic stances are not equal. As a result, changes in the economy may have a differential impact on men’s and women’s partisanship. Second, the economy is one issue area about which men and women tend to differ in terms of public opinion (Welch & Hibbing 1992, Chaney, Alvarez & Nagler 1998). However, the economy could work in competing ways regarding the gender gap.

First, poor economic times could increase the size of the gender gap in partisanship. Box-Steffensmeier et al. (2004) argue that because women are more economically vulnerable and because of women’s propensity to view the economy more negatively, perceived or actual economic downturns should cause women to move in greater numbers toward the Democratic Party and its social welfare policies. They also argue that this influence will be increased when the president is a Republican. The presence of a Republican in the oval office would increase the threat of economic hardship because of the Republican Party’s stance against
social welfare and larger government. As a result we would expect that:

- Poor economic conditions would result in the Democratic gender gap increasing.

- When a Republican is president and there are poor economic conditions the gender gap should grow larger than when a Democrat is president and there are poor economic conditions.

The second explanation focuses on the behavior of men and is specific to the nature of the economic conditions. If the source of poor economic conditions is unemployment, we expect the gender gap to shrink. The Democratic Party is perceived to be better at handling high unemployment compared to the Republican Party. When unemployment increases, men who were either Independents or Republicans would drift towards the Democratic Party, thus narrowing the gender gap. On the other hand, if the source of poor economic conditions were inflation, we would expect the opposite behavior because the electorate views the Republican Party as better able to manage higher levels of inflation. Thus we would expect men to move away from the Democratic Party, increasing the size of the gender gap. To summarize:

- Higher unemployment will decrease the Democratic gender gap.

- Higher inflation will increase the Democratic gender gap.

The economic variables of unemployment and inflation are examined to test the theories above. A dummy variable indicating if a Republican was in the White House during the year and the interaction between the dummy and the economic variables are also included in the models. Additional information about the economic variables can be found in the Appendix A.
4.4.1.4 Structural position, women’s movement, and economic models

I begin by exploring the dynamics of the gender gap in partisanship by examining the expectations extrapolated from the extant literature on the gender gap. I examine both the causal relationship between each of the expectations outlined above and the gender gap using the Granger causality tests. Then I turn to multivariate modeling of these series.

Granger causality tests allow us to test which series leads to another in time. After controlling for its own history, how does the history of another variable contribute to our ability the current (and future) values of itself? If X can contribute significantly to the variance in Y even after controlling for the history of Y, then X Granger causes Y. If the reverse is true, Y also Granger causes X. In this case, there is evidence of endogeneity and the analysis cannot rule out the possibility that causality runs in both ways if X Granger cause Y but Y does not Granger cause X then there is evidence for causality from X to Y. To assess the causal relationship I use Granger Causality tests, reported in Table 4.1.

Overall, the results of the Granger causality tests fit with what we would expect. Controlling for the past history of the gender gap, women’s workforce participation, the percent single women, women’s college education and the cumulative events of the women’s movement increase our explanation of the gender gap. The relationship does not work in the opposite direction, changes in the gender gap do not Granger cause women’s workforce participation, the percent single women, the percent of women’s college education or the women’s movement. This supports the specification in which the causal arrow runs from socio-demographic changes and events of the women’s movement to the Democratic gender gap. These tests
Table 4.1. Ganger Causality Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Null Hypothesis</th>
<th>F-Stat</th>
<th>Prob</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women's College Educ. → Gender Gap</td>
<td>7.03</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Gap → Women’s College Educ.</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.871</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Women → Gender Gap</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Gap → Single Women</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Workforce → Gender Gap</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Gap → Women’s Workforce</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Movement Events → Gender Gap</td>
<td>8.22</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Gap → Women’s Movement Events</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Unemployment → Gender Gap</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Gap → Δ Unemployment</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ Inflation → Gender Gap</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Gap → Δ Inflation</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Default lag length of two years used for all tests.

suggests that there is not an endogeneity issue.\(^{10}\)

The Granger causality tests suggest a least a weakly exogenous relationship between the socio-demographic variables, the events of the women’s movement and the gender gap. Additionally, there is the information that socio-demographic variables and the events of the women’s movement improve our explanation of the variance in the gender gap controlling for the past values of the gender gap. In order to further assess the relationship between the gender gap and these variables, I now turn to multivariate models.

Many of these socio-demographic trends are highly related theoretically and

\(^{10}\)We cannot reject the null hypotheses that the unemployment does not Granger cause the gender gap and that unemployment does not Granger cause the gender gap. We cannot reject the hypothesis that inflation Granger causes the gender gap. However, we can reject the null hypotheses that the gender gap does not granger cause inflation. This last result is a little troubling because it is the opposite of the causal order that theory would suggest. It also seems a little absurd that the gender gap may cause an economic indicator like inflation. But once again this is a reminder that the Granger causality does not prove causation, but tells us about order and information.
raise the question of multi-collinearity. As shown in Table 4.2, four of the series are highly collinear: women’s labor force participation, the percent single women, women’s college education, and the cumulative events of the women’s movement. The extremely high correlation prohibits placing all of these variables in the same model (Gujarati 1995,Wooldridge 2000). As a result I, present individual models for each set of variables. The economic variables are not highly collinear with with these four variables, so they are included in each of the models.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gender Gap</th>
<th>W.Workforce(_{-1})</th>
<th>Single W.(_{-1})</th>
<th>W. College Educ.(_{-1})</th>
<th>W.M. Events(_{-1})</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender Gap</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Workforce(_{-1})</td>
<td>0.8279</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Women(_{-1})</td>
<td>0.8382</td>
<td>0.9683</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s College Educ.(_{-1})</td>
<td>0.8662</td>
<td>0.9588</td>
<td>0.9800</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Movement Events(_{-1})</td>
<td>0.8298</td>
<td>0.9662</td>
<td>0.9942</td>
<td>0.9869</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, table 4.3 reports four separate models of the gender gap.\(^{11}\) The economic

\(^{11}\)The gender gap is a difficult series to model because of the conflict between unit-root theory and actual testing. Theory tell us that the gender gap cannot be a unit-root or have a deterministic trend. Specifically, it cannot grow or have infinite variance. This is because the series is bounded between -100 and 100. The Democratic gender gap would be 100 if all women identified with the Democratic party and no men identified with the Democratic Party. The Democratic gender gap series could equal -100 if all men identified with the Democratic Party and no women identified with the Democratic Party. For a series to be a unit-root or contain a deterministic trend it must be able to wonder off to positive or negative infinity. However, because we are only observing the gender gap for a limited number of time points (50) the series may behave like a unit-root or appear to have a deterministic trend. When testing the Democratic gender gap series for a unit-root using the Dickey-Fuller test, we cannot reject the null that the series is a unit root. The specification of the Dickey-Fuller tests for deterministic trends in the series, finding a significant trend. Additionally, given the limited number of time points we need to be cautious about relying too heavily on tests used for stationarity because the sample size is not large enough to appeal to their asymptotic prosperities. Thus the question becomes do you model the series like it appears in the tests even though theory tell us this cannot be the case or do you model the series based on theory even though this is counter to how the series behaves?
indicators are included in each of the models.

Table 4.3. Models of the Gender Gap in Partisanship: 1953-2003, yearly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Gender Gap_{t-1}</td>
<td><strong>0.66</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.58</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.62</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.66</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.11)</td>
<td>(.12)</td>
<td>(.11)</td>
<td>(0.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women in the Workforce_{t-1}</td>
<td>0.28 *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s College Education_{t-1}</td>
<td>0.30 *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Women_{t-1}</td>
<td>0.32 *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events of the Women’s Movement</td>
<td>0.005 *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.002)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>∆ Unemployment</td>
<td>-0.92 *</td>
<td>-0.91 *</td>
<td>-0.90 *</td>
<td>-0.94 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.42)</td>
<td>(0.40)</td>
<td>(0.41)</td>
<td>(0.41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>∆ Inflation</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.25)</td>
<td>(0.25)</td>
<td>(0.25)</td>
<td>(0.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican President</td>
<td>-0.90</td>
<td>-0.67</td>
<td>-0.99</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.72)</td>
<td>(0.71)</td>
<td>(0.71)</td>
<td>(0.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>∆ Rep President X Inflation</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.22)</td>
<td>(0.22)</td>
<td>(0.21)</td>
<td>(0.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>∆ Rep President X Unemployment</td>
<td><strong>0.63</strong> †</td>
<td><strong>0.63</strong> †</td>
<td><strong>0.65</strong> *</td>
<td><strong>0.65</strong> *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.27)</td>
<td>(0.26)</td>
<td>(0.27)</td>
<td>(0.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-9.16</td>
<td>-2.15</td>
<td>-8.47</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4.08)</td>
<td>(1.2)</td>
<td>(3.48)</td>
<td>(0.78)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Observations: 50 50 50 50
Adjusted R-Square: 0.84 0.85 0.85 0.84
Root MSE: 2.24 2.17 2.20 2.23
F(7,42): 38.44 40.84 39.36 38.44
Portmanteau test for white noise
Portmanteau (Q) statistic: 26.05 27.36 26.67 26.05
Prob > χ²(23): 0.30 0.24 0.27 0.30

Significance levels: †: 10% *: 5% **: 1%

§ The null hypothesis for the Portmanteau White Noise test is white noise.

I chose to do the latter. This is the decision made by others who are modeling similar series based on partisanship. Additionally, if I treated the series as a unit-root the appropriate way to deal with the series is to model the first difference of the series. However, the process of first differencing the series removes a considerable amount of the Democratic gender gap’s variation over time. Variation that is politically interesting and important. Further, it is the variation that I am interested in modeling. Thus modeling the series using standard OLS in its levels form is the appropriate course of action. Additionally, there is no evidence of cointegration in the series.
Looking across all the models reported in Table 4.3 we see a positive and significant relationship between the Democratic gender gap in partisanship and previous values of the Democratic gender gap. The coefficient for the lagged value of the gender gap is remarkably similar across the different models, indicating about 60 percent of the current value of the gender gap can be explained by previous levels of the gender gap. Thus the gender gap is a rather persistent series.\textsuperscript{12}

Second we find support for many of the extant theories of the gender gap across the models reported in Table 4.3. The first model (A) reported in Table 4.3 reports the influence of women’s workforce participation. I find that as women’s workforce participation has increased, the Democratic gender gap grows. Model B reports the role of college education. As the number of women who have attended four or more years of college increases then the Democratic gender gap has grown. Model C reports that as the number of single women has increased, the Democratic gender gap increases. These results support the previous theories that attribute the gender gap to women’s increased psychological and economic independence from men.

The substantive impact of changes in each of these socio-demographic trends on the gender gap is similar across the models. A one percent increase in any of the socio-demographic series increases the Democratic gender gap around 0.3 points. Looking at the impact of the average change for each of these series allows us to assess their comparative impact on the gender gap because the amount of change in these series varies. Additionally, the dynamic nature of the gender gap means we need to consider both the short-run and the long-run effects. The short-run effect is the immediate effect on the dependent variables as a result of a

\textsuperscript{12}Additionally, the magnitude of the lagged value of the gender gap suggests that the choice to model the gender gap in levels form was appropriate. If the coefficient for the lagged gender gap was close to one then it would suggest that there are problems with the modeling choice and unit-roots.
change in an independent variable. However, because the series is auto-regressive, the effect of that shock is carried into the future, slowly decaying. The cumulative effect is the long-run effect. An average change in women’s workforce participation (.8) increases the Democratic gender gap by .22 points immediately or in the short-run. Because the effect of a change in women’s workforce participation is felt into the future we need to look at the long-run effect to understand the overall impact. The overall impact of an average change in women’s workforce participation is .65 points. An average change in the percent of women with 4 or more years of college education (.5) increases the gender gap by .15 points in the short-run and 0.36 percentage points in the long-run. And an average change in the the percent of single women (.3) increases the gender gap by .08 percentage points in the short-run and 0.21 points in the long-run. Changes in women’s workforce participation has a larger substantive impact on the Democratic gender gap.

The final model (D) reported in Table 4.3 looks at the cumulative effect of the women’s movement. As the number of events increases the gender gap increase. However, the substantive impact on the gender gap is limited. For each additional event of the women’s movement the gender gap increases by .005 percent. Every additional event of the women’s movement increases the gender gap by only .005 points in the short-run and in the long-run an event increases the gender gap by 0.014 percentage points.

The economic expectations finds mixed results. Changes in unemployment are negatively and significantly related to the Democratic gender gap. When poor economic conditions are the result of unemployment the Democratic gender gap shrinks, as predicted. This supports the theory that when unemployment is an issue men are going to move towards the Democratic Party because of the Democrats’ reputation for handling unemployment. This effect is reduced by nearly
two-thirds when the presidency is held by a Republican, as demonstrated by the interaction. While signed in the correct direction, there is no significant relationship with inflation in any of the models or with the interaction.

The results presented in this section support the expectations developed from the extant body of literature. Changes to the structural position of women in society have affected the size of the Democratic gender gap. Additionally, the women’s movement has contributed to the growth in the Democratic gender gap. On the other hand, it appears that men and women interpret economic conditions differently, contributing to the gender gap. Unfortunately, multi-collinearity prohibits making any statements about the relationship of these variables controlling for the influence of the others.

While support has been found for the extant literature, it is still unsatisfying because these expectations are extracted from static explanations of the gender gap and changes lack political meaning on their own. The theory of the social definition of gender helps us understand the dynamics of the gender gap better because it is a macro-level theory, constructed to understand the dynamics of the gender gap. Not only does the theory of the social definition of gender specifically address the dynamics of the gender gap, it does so by building off the theoretical understanding of partisan change in the existing literature on political behavior.

4.4.2 The social definition of gender and the Democratic gender gap

One of the problems with the extant literature is the socio-demographic and women’s movement variables being used are really proxies. They attempt to capture changes in attitudes that have resulted from these changes in women’s status.
The theory of the social definition of gender provides us an advantage over the current theories because it is designed to directly capture changes in attitudes produced by changes in socio-demographic trends. As a result we would expect that socio-demographics and the women’s movement to cause changes to the social definition of gender. In turn, the social definition of gender causes the dynamics of the partisan gender gap.

As the theory outlined above stipulates the social definition of gender structures men’s and women’s evaluations of government, parties, and politicians, resulting in differences in men’s and women’s partisanship and the dynamic growth of the partisan gender gap over time. I use the public opinion measure of the social definition of gender developed in Chapter 3 – gender attitudes. I argue that as gender attitudes grow more progressive the gender gap in partisanship should grow.

The theory of the social definition of gender argues that change in the social definition of gender will lead to changes in the Democratic gender gap. I test the causal relationship by using the Granger causality tests, reported in Table 4.4. The results of the Granger causality tests support the causal relationship laid out in the theory of the social definition of gender. Additionally, the tests show an exogenous relationship between the variables. Controlling for the past history of the gender gap, gender attitudes increase our ability to explain the dynamics of the gender gap in partisanship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Null Hypothesis</th>
<th>F-Stat</th>
<th>Prob</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender Attitudes → Gender Gap</td>
<td>5.40</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Gap → Gender Attitudes</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Default lag length of two years used for all tests.

Similar to the other models of the gender gap, I model the gender gap in its lev-
els form using OLS. Additionally, because the socio-demographics and the women’s movement are related to gender attitudes there is considerable multi-collinearity among the variables; as a result I am not able to include these variables in the multivariate models. Table 4.5 then tests the relationship between attitudes and the gender gap.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Democratic Gender Gap&lt;sub&gt;t−1&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
<th>Gender Attitudes</th>
<th>Δ Unemployment</th>
<th>Δ Inflation</th>
<th>Republican President</th>
<th>Δ Rep President X Inflation</th>
<th>Δ Rep President X Unemployment</th>
<th>Constant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.62 **</td>
<td>0.52 *</td>
<td>-0.90 *</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>0.65 †</td>
<td>-22.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.11)</td>
<td>(.17)</td>
<td>(0.41)</td>
<td>(0.25)</td>
<td>(0.75)</td>
<td>(0.22)</td>
<td>(0.27)</td>
<td>( 7.97)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Observations</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R-Square</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root MSE</td>
<td>2.182</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F(7,42)</td>
<td>40.27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portmanteau test for white noise§</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portmanteau (Q) statistic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob &gt; χ²(23)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significance levels:  †: 10%  *: 5%  **: 1%

§ The null hypothesis for the Portmanteau White Noise test is that the series is white noise.

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13Correlations between attitudes towards women: women’s workforce participation<sub>t−1</sub> 0.96; women’s college education<sub>t−1</sub> 0.96; single women<sub>t−1</sub> 0.95, cumulative events of women’s movement<sub>t−1</sub> 0.95. Several alternative model specification were tested in all cases the gender attitudes measure was signed in the correct direction and in one case it was still significant when single women were added to the model.
There are several similarities between this model and the models based on the literature of the gender gap. Like the other models, the gender gap in the previous year explains about 62 percent of the variance of the gender gap in the current time period. Additionally, unemployment is significant and negatively related to the gender gap. However, the overall impact of that relationship is reduced when a Republican lives in the White House. The average change in the unemployment rate (0.014) decreases the gender gap in the short-run by 0.01 percentage points. In the long-run the overall impact of the average change in unemployment is 0.03. However, when a Republican is president the effect is mitigated. In the short-run unemployment only reduces the gender gap by 0.007 and in the long-run the gender gap in reduced by at total of 0.017 percentage points.

The measure of the social definition of gender, gender attitudes, performs as the theory predicts. The measure, gender attitudes is positive and significantly related to the Democratic gender gap in partisanship. As gender attitudes grow more progressive, the Democratic gender gap increases in magnitude. A one point change in the progressiveness of gender attitudes causes the gender gap to grow a half (.52) points larger. The average change in the gender attitudes measure is .23, producing a change in the gender gap of .11 points in the short-run. The overall effect of an average change in gender attitudes is 0.32 percentage points.

Changes in the social definition of gender provide us with a dynamic explanation for the partisan gender gap. Changes to the meaning of being a man or a woman, the social definition of gender, reshape men’s and women’s relationship with government and do so differentially for men and women. As the social definition of gender has created more opportunities for women, it has also meant that women are expected to perform a greater number of roles everyday. Women have turned towards government for help through the larger government, social welfare
policies of the Democratic Party. As a result we have witnessed women’s increasing propensity to identify with the Democrats. Changes in the social definition of gender have also meant an increase in the number of roles men are expected to perform. However, changes in gender roles has also been interpreted as a loss of men’s economic power and privilege, which has made the protectionist economic policies and the traditional rhetoric of the Republican Party appealing. It takes substantial changes in the social definition of gender to affect the partisan gender gap. Changes to the social definition of gender cause men and women to evaluate partisan politics differently, in turn creating the partisan gender gap.

The adjusted R-square states that the gender attitudes model explains 85% of the variance in the gender gap series. The performance of this model is indistinguishable statistically from the models presented in Table 4.3. The various tools used to assess fit (adjusted R-square, and Root MSE) are also most identical. The similar performance of these models is not surprising given how highly the series are correlated.

4.5 Conclusion

The gender gap is a macro political phenomena and evolves over time in systematic ways. I contend that in order to understand the gender gap in partisanship we need to think about its dynamics and focus on dynamic causes in our explanation of the gender gap. I offer the theory of the social definition of gender to explain the dynamic nature of the partisan gender gap. The theory of the social definition of gender shifts our theorizing about differences between men’s and women’s political behavior from sex to gender. Gender is a useful concept because of its dynamic nature resulting from its social and historical construction. The social definition
of gender advances our understanding over previous theories of the gender gap because of its dynamic nature. Additionally, it builds on our current understanding of changes in macropartisanship.

In this chapter, I have shown that the social definition of gender, measured using public opinion data, does shape the gender gap over time. As gender attitudes grow more progressive, the Democratic gender gap increases. Additionally the economy plays a role in shaping men’s and women’s partisanship, as increases in unemployment cause the Democratic gender gap to shrink. The role of partisan politics is highlighted when examining the impact of the economy, as the effect of unemployment is much smaller when a Republican lives in the White House.

Based on the macro expectations, extracted from the extant micro literature, the gender gap is likely to remain about the same. These expectations tell us that as women’s workforce participation increases, the percent of single women increases, the percent of women with college education increases, and events of the women’s movement grow the Democratic gender gap should increase. Yet, we know that women’s workforce participation nearly resembles that of men’s workforce participation. The number of women who are in college exceeds the number of men. And the events of the the second wave of the women’s movement have decreased substantially. Perhaps the only trend that continues is the increasing number of single women. Thus based on these expectations we would expect that differences between men and women would level off and remain constant into the future. Any changes to the gender gap would then be a function of movement in the economy. However, the evolution of the gender gap does not appear to be ending any time soon.

What does the theory of the social definition of gender tell us about the future of the gender gap in partisanship? The social definition of gender provides us more
flexibility in our predictions about the future of the gender gap. As discussed in the Chapter 3, the social definition of gender is likely to continue to grow more progressive for at least a decade. This would suggest that the gender gap in partisanship will continue to grow over the same time period. Predicting what the gender gap will look like beyond this time frame is more difficult. We need to assume that the political parties will remain differentiated along economic and social welfare issues. Additionally, these issues need to remain the defining feature of partisanship. If these circumstances exist, then the dynamics of the gender gap would be dependent on how the meaning of being a man or a woman changes. Thus, the gender gap could continue to grow if the social definition of gender continues to become more progressive or the gender gap could shrink if the electorate adopts more conservative gender attitudes. However, if partisan politics goes through a realignment, the relationship between the social definition of gender and the partisan gender gap could switch direction or even cease to exist.
Chapter 5

Conclusion

The 2008 presidential election underscores the evolution of the social definition of gender and the importance of gender in U.S. electoral politics. Hillary Clinton had the choice between staying at home and baking cookies, being partner at a law firm, and running for elected office. Hillary’s decision to run — for president — combined with her being the first viable female presidential candidate for one of the two major political parties’ illustrates the changes in the opportunities and roles of women, highlighting changes in the social definition of gender.

Hillary Clinton was not the first woman to run for her party’s nomination for the presidency. Carol Moseley Braun (2004), Elizabeth Dole (2000), Patricia Schroeder (1984), Shirley Chilshom (1972), and Margaret Chase Smith (1964) each did so.¹ Each time a woman has chosen to run for the presidency, her candidacy helps gauge the roles and opportunities available to women and provide a snapshot into how the social definition of gender has evolved from previous candidacies. One

¹Victoria Clafin Woodhall (1872) was the first women to run for the presidency as the Equal Rights Party nominee. The Equal Rights Party then nominated in Belva Ann Lockwood in 1884 and 1888. Margaret Chase Smith was the first woman to run for the nomination of the major political parties in the United States. In addition to the women listed above both Bella Abzug (1972) and Patsy Mink (1972) ran for their parties presidential nomination. As of writing no woman has won the nomination of a major political party.
of the main differences between Hillary Clinton and the other women who have run for the presidency has been Clinton’s ability to raise money and be perceived as a viable candidate. This indicates not only is it becoming more acceptable for women to run, but political professional believe she has a good chance to win. Hillary’s run for the White House is one indicator of the meaning of being a man or a women — the social definition of gender.

Additionally, Hillary Clinton’s candidacy illuminates the role of gender in shaping U.S. electoral politics. The image of Hillary Clinton, as the only women on stage with 7 other male candidates during the Democratic debates, highlights, the role of gender in U.S. electoral politics. Often times, the role gender plays in politics goes unacknowledged unless we have a female candidate or some other salient event that focuses our attention on gender. Yet, gender has served as an important feature of partisan politics in the United States (Edwards 1997). One way that gender has shaped U.S. electoral politics is through the partisan gender gap. In the 1950s men were more likely to identify with the Democratic Party than women. The gender gap evolved over time and today women are more likely to identify with the Democratic Party than men. These differences in men’s and women’s behavior have played a pivotal role in several elections. The fortunes of the 2000 election would have been different due to the gender gap: if only women voted Al Gore would have clearly won with 54% of the vote compared to 43% for George W. Bush (CAWP 2005a).3

2It is a very similar image as the all white male Senate Judiciary committee interrogating Anita Hill in 1991 during the confirmation hearings for Clarence Thomas. Those hearings and image are credited for motivating many women to run for elected office. Combined with a high number of open seats, this event lead to a record number of women running and winning elected office (Wilcox 1994)

3Similarly, the 1996 presidential election may have turned out different if only men had voted. In 1996 men favored Bob Dole slightly giving him 44% of the vote and Bill Clinton only 43% of their vote. However, these numbers are based on exit polls and thus within the margin of error.
This project illustrates how gender shapes U.S. politics. Changes in the social definition of gender continually remold the social and political landscape of the United States. However, the connection between changes in social definition of gender and the political implications of those changes are often overlooked. This project makes that connection through understanding the dynamic affect the social definition of gender has on men’s and women’s political alignments. Additionally, this project enhances our understanding of changes in macropartisanship and provides an explanation for the partisan gender gap. But the implications go beyond the partisan gender gap; the interdisciplinary nature of this project brings together disparate fields such as women’s studies and political science, enhancing the work done in both of these fields.

5.1 The social definition of gender

The theory of the social definition of gender offers a dynamic explanation for the partisan gender gap. Additionally, the theory demonstrates how focusing on gender, instead of sex, is useful to understanding the political behavior of men and women. The social definition of gender raises several questions for scholars to consider in future research: First, how can the social definition of gender be used to help understand the influence of gender in shaping other aspects of U.S. electoral politics? Second, the social definition of gender is a theory developed to explain macro political behavior, but how can it help us understand the behavior of men and women at other levels of analysis? Third, an empirical measure of the social definition of gender is one of the innovations of this project; are there other ways to measure empirically the social definition of gender? And finally, gender is not the only politically relevant characteristic that motivates the political
behavior of groups. How do the social definitions associated with these other politically relevant characteristics evolve over time? And how do these other social definitions intersect with the social definition of gender to influence the behavior of the electorate?

**The influence of gender on the U.S. political system.** In the theory of the social definition of gender, I argue that as social scientists, we need to distinguish between sex and gender. I contend that gender is a more useful concept for understanding politics because it is both socially and historically constructed, compared to sex which is based on biological categories that remain relatively fixed.

The paradigm shift for political science — moving from sex to gender — suggests other areas in U.S. politics in which we can use the social definition of gender to help us understand political change.

For example, the social definition of gender may be helpful to understanding the evolution of women in elected office. Hillary Clinton’s and other women’s bid for the presidency represents an extreme case of women and elected office; more commonly we observe women running for lower offices in municipalities, state legislatures, and the U.S. House of Representatives. The social definition of gender may help us understand the macro-level context that shapes the increase and decrease in the number of women running for elected office. And the historical context produced by the social definition of gender that has lead to the women running for higher and higher levels of office and winning.

Additionally, the social definition of gender can help us understand why and when new issues emerge on the government’s agenda. As the social definition of gender evolves, men’s and women’s relationship with government is transformed. Men and women need and want different things from government to help resolve the tension created between new gendered expectations and their gendered ex-
periences. As a result different things are asked of government, from developing child care programs to laws prohibiting sex discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace. Thus, the social definition of gender may be a useful tool for understanding the dynamics behind agenda setting.

**Level of analysis.** The theory of the social definition of gender is developed at the macro-level. Gender is conceptualized as a structure that shapes society’s expectations of men and women. The social definition of gender allows us to think about gender in terms other than individual identity. However, gender operates at multiple levels and the social definition of gender reflects both the gendered expectations that exist at the macro-level and, the more micro-level, lived experiences of men and women. While the social definition of gender is developed at the macro-level, we should not forget about the micro-level and how the macro provides context for micro-level behavior.

The social definition of gender is not an individual’s identity and is distinct from individual gender identity; however, the social definition of gender shapes and structures an individual’s behavior. Who is most influenced by changes in the social definition of gender? Do different sub-groups in the population respond differently to changes in the social definition of gender? Are changes in the social definition of gender more relevant under a certain set of circumstances? Developing the linkage between the micro and macro would help answer these questions and many more. Burns (2007) notes the value of exploring the connection between micro and macro: “This engagement would give political scientists the tools to say more about when, for whom, and for which outcomes gender matters. The conversation would give us better ways to understand how context makes gender relevant.” Using hierarchal models, we could explore the macro/macro link regarding partisanship and vote choice. The concept of the social definition of gender provides a macro-level of
measure to use in future analysis of how and when gender matters in U.S. politics at both the macro- and micro-levels of analysis.

**Measures the social definition of gender.** One of the reasons that the concept of gender was not more readily used in empirical social science research was the lack of a good measure. As a default these studies used the categories male and female, a reflection of biological sex. In doing so these studies missed that meaning attached to these categories changes over time and that these changes have social and political implications. This project addresses this measurement issue by developing an empirical measure of the social definition of gender.

Public opinion data was used to develop the measure of the social definition of gender, capturing the public’s perception about gender roles, opportunities, and status. Any good measure of the social definition of gender must share some common characteristics. First, it should capture macro-level perceptions of gender and reflect how society defines being a man or a woman. Second, the measure must be dynamic. Any measure should allow us to track change in how the social definition of gender evolves over time. Additionally, the components of the measure need to be dynamic, adjusting the changing social definition of gender, so that the measure does not become obsolete.

The media reflects the public presentations of gender and provides an excellent source of data to create a second measure of the social definition of gender. The real and fictional figures featured in magazines, on sitcoms, and in the movies illustrate the various roles and experiences of women and men. Susan Douglas (1995) comments on the power of the media, stating “In part because they got us when we were so young, and in part because the mass media have been obsessed with defining — and exaggerating — codes of masculinity and femininity, they have ensnared us in an endless struggle for gender self-definition (p. 17).” In the
stories they chose to tell on the news to the dramas the networks chose to pro-
mote, decisions are made about what roles both men and women should perform. While public opinion captures mass beliefs about gender, the media offers an elite perspective. With a measure of the social definition of gender based on the public presentation of the media we would be able to test the relationship between the elite construction of gender and the masses’ perception reflected in the public opinion measure.

**The social construction and intersection of multiple identities.** Not only is gender a social construction, but it is one of many politically relevant characteristics that shapes the behavior of the electorate. Additionally, political scientists have recognized the influence of race, class, religion, and region. The theory of the social definition of gender can be adapted to address the influence of these other politically relevant characteristics and their social definitions on politics. The theory of the social definition of gender recognizes the changing meaning attached to categories that had previously been seen as constant. This highlights our need as social scientists to think about other variables that we commonly treat as a constant, yet where the meaning associated with that variable may change over time. This is particularly the case with other social characteristics such as race, class, and union membership. However this could also be applicable to the very idea of partisan identification, as the meaning of being a Democratic, Republican, and Independent changes over time.

Beyond addressing these social definitions individually, we need to examine how these social definitions intersect with one another. The intersection of these various social definitions create a unique political context that influence politics in certain ways. Different social definitions may complement each other or they may conflict with each other. For example, scholars have observed that often racial and
gender identities result in conflicting preferences (Gay & Tate 1998). Studying the interaction of multiple social definitions would help us better understand the contexts where gender is relevant. The theory of the social definition of gender provides us with one part to understanding how these multiple social definitions shape politics. Further, researchers need to combine the social definition of gender with social definitions of race, class, religion, and region to understand when and how these social definitions shape politics.

5.2 The gender gap in partisanship

The theory of the social definition offers a foundation on which to build future research. In this project the evolution of the social definition of gender is used to understand the dynamic nature of the partisan gender gap. One of the innovative features of this project is to treat the gender gap as a dynamic process and doing so has implications for strategic politicians and political parties in their quest to gain or maintain power. Additionally, studying the gender gap at the macro-level raises several questions for future research. These questions include the gender gap’s relationship to the evolution within the parties regarding women’s issues, women’s rights and abortion, as well as the presence and dynamics of the gender gap in various sub-groups in the U.S. population.

The gender gap as a dynamic process. This project has shown that the gender gap is dynamic and needs to be treated as a dynamic phenomena. Traditionally we have conceptualized the gender gap as a singular event, focused around an election; it is the result of the characteristics of the voters, the candidates, and the salient issues. In the literature on the partisan gender gap and partisan change in the electorate we find very little to help us understand the dynamics of the gender
gap. For the most part these studies look at the gender gap in vote choice, mainly around presidential elections. Due to the primary focus on elections, this literature misses the fact that the gender gap exists between elections; and the gender gap in any given election is a function the gender gap that proceeded it. I offer a dynamic account and dynamic explanation of the partisan gender gap.

The gender gap in partisanship is a dynamic process. It grows and shrinks over time. Over the past fifty years the Democratic gender gap has ranged from a high of 14.8 in 2002 to a low of -6.78 in 1961. Generally speaking the Democratic gender gap was negative in the 1950s and the early 1960s. Then it was small and fluctuating in the late 1960s through the 1970s. By the end of the decade however, the gender gap that we know today started to take shape, growing substantially in the positive direction throughout the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. Additionally, the gender gap responds to political events in a systematic fashion. As the analysis in this project has demonstrated, the Democratic gender gap responds to changes in the economy. The gap shrinks when unemployment increases and grows when unemployment decreases. However, this relationship with the economy is mediated by partisan politics, specifically which political party occupies the White House. The gender gap is also a persistent process, in that any gap that we observe today is partly a function of the gender gaps observed earlier.

The social definition of gender is a dynamic process and provides a dynamic explanation for the gender gap in partisanship. Changes to the social definition of gender affects men’s and women’s relationship with government, producing new expectations about the role of government in men’s and women’s lives. As a result of the different preferences held by men and women, they will evaluate partisan politics differently. Based on these different evaluations, men and women will adjust their partisan preferences to best suit their preferences, resulting
The partisan gender gap.

**The political response to the gender gap.** Political parties and politicians are strategic in nature, responding to political phenomena in ways to best ensure they gain power or remain in power. Since the emergence of the gender gap we have seen attempts by politicians and political parties to respond to the gender gap. This include such things as George W. Bush’s slogan in the 2000 election “W stands for women” and the Democratic Party’s nomination of Geraldine Ferraro for vice president in 1984. However, these attempts have been mostly for show and unsuccessful, because of our failure to understand the nature of the gender gap. This study suggests several things that political parties or politicians wishing to manipulate the gender gap should pay attention to.

The gender gap does not represent a complete partisan divide between men and women. Rather, the gender gap is a function of the different gendered expectations and gendered experiences of men and women that structure men’s and women’s assessments of the political parties and politicians. As the social definition of gender has evolved, women have turned towards government to help resolve the conflict between the increasing number of expectations placed on them, making the social welfare and economic policies of the Democratic Party more appealing. On the other hand, the changes in the social definition of gender have been constructed as a negative for men (Faludi 2000), that their position in society has been threatened, making the conservative social welfare and protectionist economic policies of the Republican Party more attractive for men.

This study highlights the need for the political parties and politicians to analyze their policies and platforms in terms of gender. A gendered analysis would highlight

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4While the gender gap plays a decisive role in many elections it is a common misconception that the gender gap benefits one party more than the other.
how various policies differentially affect men and women and which policies help minimize the tension created by changes in the gendered expectations and gendered experiences of men and women. In general, we witness that the social welfare and economic policies of the Democratic Party are more attractive to women. But a detailed gender policy analysis would provide concrete issues that the parties could use to appeal to both men and women. For instance, if the Democratic Party wished to increase the gender gap they could focus on those policies most needed by women as a result of their changing gendered expectations and experiences. On the other hand, if the Democratic Party wished to reduce the gender gap by attracting men, they could focus on the policies that help men deal with changes associated with their gendered expectations and experiences. Generally, there is a lack of attention paid to the changing roles and experiences of men. Currently, the Republican Party has been able to attract men based on anti-change messages or appeals of returning to a more traditional society. A gendered policy analysis like the one proposed above allows us to focus on policies that differentially affect men. One of the parties could transform the gender gap by constructing an agenda that helps men minimize the tension between their new roles and experiences. Since currently neither political party is capitalizing on this strategy, its potential impact on the gender gap in partisanship depends on which political party adopts it. If the Democratic Party constructs an agenda that successfully meets the changing needs of men, then the gender gap would shrink, or even disappear. If the Republican Party switches its tactics, then the gender gap would grow larger, continuing on the same path.

Based on the assumptions made in this study, we learn that the gender gap is a function of the perceptions of the political parties’ stances on social welfare policy and the economy. The political parties’ different positions on these issues create
the gender gap. Additionally, these issues are fundamental to partisan politics. This creates two opportunities for political parties or politicians to strategically manipulate the gender gap. First, if the political parties’ positions regarding social welfare policy converge, leaving no discernable difference between the parties on this issue dimension, then the gender gap in partisanship would disappear slowly over time. Second, a new issue paradigm could emerge, replacing the New Deal realignments focus on social welfare. The future direction of the gender gap under these circumstances depends on what issues replace social welfare issues. If a set of issues without gender differences replace social welfare then the gender gap would likely dissolve. On the other hand, if a set of issues gender differences in the opposite direction replaces social welfare the gender gap may reverse directions.

Fundamentally changing the gender gap is going to be difficult because of its persistent nature and the movement of the social definition of gender. The current gender gap has taken nearly three decades to reach its current levels and is a persistent political phenomena. The gender gap is not going to disappear anytime soon, nor will it drastically change directions over night. Rather, changes in the gender gap are most likely to occur around the margins.

**Women’s right, women’s issues, abortion, and the gender gap.**

Throughout this project, I have assumed the political parties have been relatively fixed on economic, social welfare, and racial issues between 1953 and 2003. However, to say that the parties have remained constant during this time period or will remain constant in the future would be wrong. The political parties are constantly changing in terms of the mass participants, the elected officials associated with the parties, and the policies the parties pursue in elected office. One area that has garnered considerable attention is the political parities evolution over abortion, women’s issues, and women’s rights (Freeman 1987, Freeman 2000, Sanbonmatsu
Exploring the gender gap at the macro-level, as done in this study, provides us with leverage in understanding the evolution of the political parties surrounding these issues.

Over the fifty year time span of this study the political parties have gone through considerable transformation regarding women’s rights, women’s issues, and abortion. Historically, the Republican Party was perceived to be more supportive of women’s rights issues. Even though the election of women to political office was a rare event, both parties were equally likely to elect women. Additionally, there was no division between the political parties on the issue of abortion. However, starting in the 1970s that began to change. Women’s rights and feminists found growing hostility in the Republican Party and a much more welcoming atmosphere in the Democratic Party (Freeman 1987). After that, support for women’s issues and women’s rights by the Republican Party in Congress started to fade (Wolbrecht 2000). And after the 1980 election the two parties had distinct stances on abortion.

What relationship do these changes have to the partisan gender gap? The macropartisanship series of the gender gap can be used in conjunction with macro measures of the parties positions on women’s issues, women’s rights and abortion to trace out the timing of changes in the parties’ positions and the gender gap in partisanship. An ocular assessment suggests that the Democratic gender gap emerged before the parties were differentiated on the issue of abortion and had switched positions on women’s rights. This suggests that the evolution in the parties may be a result of the gender gap, not the other way around. However, more rigorous analysis needs to be conducted. The theory of the social definition of gender can help solve this puzzle, in conjunction with the macropartisanship series created for this project.
The gender gap and sub-groups in the U.S. population.

This project explores the differences in the partisan attachments of men and women. However, men and women are not monolithic groups in the population; there are divides within these populations along racial, socio-economic and regional lines. Our understanding of the gender gap in sub-groups in the U.S. electorate and the dynamics of these gender gaps is underdeveloped.

As discussed above, gender is only one politically relevant characteristic that influences political behavior. The extant literature on the gender gap suggests that race, region, income, and education (Norrander 1997, Norrander 1999a, Norrander 1999b, Carroll 2006) influence the gender gap at the individual level. These findings suggest that exploring the gender gap at the macro-level among different sub-populations would help us better understand how these various politically relevant characteristics interact to shape partisan attachments and the origins of the gender gap.

One of the reasons that we know little about the gender gap in sub-populations is the small n problem. When surveys are divided into sub-populations in the electorate we deal with only a handful of respondents that fit into any one category, making rigorous analysis impossible. However, the number of Gallup surveys available through the Roper Center combined with the aggregation techniques used to create the men’s and women’s macro-partisanship series will produce macropartisanship series for sub-populations in the United States that are based on reasonable sample sizes.

**The gender gap and the 2008 presidential election.** The 2008 presidential election provides us the opportunity to contemplate the considerable changes in the social definition of gender and the role of gender in the U.S. political system. In the long-run the 2008 election marks just one more point in the evolution of
gender gap. We would expect the gender gap in partisanship to look similar to the gender gap in partisanship in the previous presidential election, with women more likely than men to identify with the Democratic Party. The gender gap is shaped by the economic context in which the election takes place. At this time (July 2007) unemployment has remained steady for the past three months at 4.5% (BLS 2007). If the gender gap continues to trend in the same direction, we would expect the gender gap then the economy should have little context on the gender gap. However, if unemployment would start to increase, we would expect the gender gap to be larger in the 2008 election. If unemployment would decrease then the gender gap would be smaller in the 2008 election. Additionally, the 2008 election has so far proven to be unique because of how visible gender and race have been. The presence of a potential female candidate could send a powerful message about which of the two political parties is more accepting of the changing role of women leading to a jump in the Democratic gender gap. Additionally, the social definition of gender will continue evolve and in the near future to grow more progressive causing the gender gap to grow larger. The gender gap in partisanship has shaped U.S. electoral politics for over fifty years. The gender gap will continue to evolve and remain an important feature of U.S. electoral politics long into the future.
Appendix A

Variable Information

Democratic Gender Gap

I calculate the gender gap in partisanship as the percent of women identifying with the Democratic Party minus the percent of men identifying with the Democratic Party. A positive gender gap indicates that women are more likely than men to identify with the Democratic Party. A negative gender gap indicates that men are more likely than women to identify with the Democratic Party. The gender gap can also be calculated for Republican partisans or Independents.

Gallup surveys were used to create the men’s Democratic macropartisanship series, the women’s Democratic macropartisanship series, and the Democratic gender gap series. The series are based on a sample of Gallup surveys that consisted of surveys conducted in the month of March. When a survey was not available in the moth of March, surveys from February or April were substituted. March as selected to correspond with the Current Population Studies conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau outgoing rotation. There was at least one survey for every year and some years had as many as four surveys. The series where run through a Kalman filter that reduces the amount of error contained in survey data. The
filtering technique also weights the surveys based on the sample sizes. For more information about the Kalman filtering see Green, Gerber, and De Boef (1999) and for the software used: http://research.yale.edu/vote/samplemiser.html.

**Events of the Women’s Movement**

The time series of events of the women’s movement represents a count of individual events pertaining to the second wave of the women’s movement. The general idea was adopted from the methodology used by Costain (1994) to identify events of the women’s movement. Costain codes events identified from the abstracts of *New York Times*.

Events were identified using the *Historical New York Times* on-line data base through *ProQuest*. This data base consists of all articles from the *New York Times* between 1851 and 2003. For most articles you are able to view both the abstract and the full text. Five search phrases were used to identify events of the women’s movement: “wom* AND protest”, “wom* AND rally”, “wom* AND movement”, “wom* AND lobb*”, and “wom* and leg*”. These terms were selected to tap into outside activities, such as rallies and protests, and more traditional activities, such as lobbying and the passage of legislation. The searches were restricted to only cases where these terms appeared in the title or the abstract of the article. Each entry’s abstract was read to determine if the article reported on an event pertaining to the activities of the second wave of the women’s movement. If this was not evident from the abstract, the article was read to make the determination. Only, one article was included for each event. Events were excluded if they were an organized anti-women’s movement activity.

Figure A.1 plots the counts of events by year. We see that activity of the women’s movement was low throughout the 1950s and then started to pick up in the late 1960s. The activities of the women’s movement peaked in the mid
1970s, between 1972 and 1974. Activity of the movement started to decline in the late 1970s. Generally this decline continues until 2003; however there are a few years with resurgent activity such as 1982 and 1992. Two other series of events of the women’s movement have been created and overlap with my series allowing me to check the validity of the measure. Costain’s (1994) data run from 1953 to 1989. Wolbrecht (2000) creates a similar measure between 1953 and 1992. A visual comparison of the three, tell very similar stories about the movement in the activity levels of the second wave of the women’s movement. Thus, the series developed here does a good job capturing the events of the women’s movement.

Inflation
Inflation is the growth rate of the consumer price index. Calculated using the following formula:

\[
\left( \frac{\text{CurrentCPI} - \text{PerviousCPI}}{\text{perviousCPI}} \right) \times 100 \tag{A.1}
\]

The cpi index is based on all urban consumers, not seasonally adjusted for the based period: 1982-1984 = 100. And can be found at: http://www.bls.gov/cpi/.

**Personal Income Growth**

Data were from the Bureau of Economic Analysis: www.bea.gov. Chained dollars are indexed to the base year of 2000. Chained dollars directly show growth rates and allow accurate comparisons by controlling for issues such as inflation.

**Public Policy Mood**


There were a few questions that overlapped between public policy mood and the gender attitudes measure. The raw data used to create public policy mood was obtained from James Stimson. I purged any questions that overlapped with the gender attitudes series and then used the algirthom to re-estimate public policy mood. This purged series is used in all analysis.

**Single Women**

Is the percent of women over the age of 20 who have never been married (single), widowed, or divorced. The measures of marital status are based off of data reported
in the statistical abstract of the United States. The statistical abstract for each year was reviewed for any information on martial status in the population of the United States.

Data was not available for 4 years: 2001, 1990, 1974, and 1951. Values for these years were imputed by taking the average from the year before and year after the missing data point.

**Suffrage Generation**

Data on the population is from Census Bureau’s estimates of the U.S. Population and achieved at [http://www.census.gov/popest/archives](http://www.census.gov/popest/archives). After 1990 the Census Bureau fails to report population data by age in enough detail to produce accurate estimates of the remaining suffrage age population. However, by the 1990s the pre-suffrage constituted less than half a percent of the entire population. Attempts to interpolate the data using the average rate of change do not work because after one time period the interpolated data reflects the suffrage generation representing a negative proportion and code all remaining time points as 0.

**Unemployment**

The unemployment rate represents the number unemployed as a percent of the labor force. Data on the unemployment rates for the labor force as a whole were collected from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. [http://www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov). The data was extracted from the Historical Data for the “A” Tables of the Employment Situation Release. Using the tools available on their web site. Annual data is kept with monthly non-seasonably adjusted data.

**Women’s College Education**

Data on women’s college education were obtained from the U.S. Census web page and reflects the percentage of women over the age of 25 who have had four or more years of college. The table can be accessed at: [http://www.census.gov/](http://www.census.gov/)
The years 1953-1956, 1958, 1961, 1963 were missing. I interpolated the data for these years using the average of the year before and year after the missing time period.

**Women’s Workforce Participation**

This is the proportion of the civilian labor force that are women, over the age of 20. This data were obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics at: [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov).
Appendix B

Questions Used in Public Opinion Measure

Table B.1 lists the survey houses and the abberations used to identify the organizations. Table B.2 reports the question wording for all the survey questions included in the public opinion measure developed in Chapter 3. For organizational purposes the questions are organized into 10 topic areas: affirmative action, birth control, Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), family, gender, politics, religion, work, women, and women’s rights. In addition to question wording, the survey house, the first year the question was asked, the last year the question was asked, and the total number of observations for the question.
Table B.1. Survey Organization and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Abbreviations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Louis Harris and Associates</td>
<td>LHA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Princeton Survey Research Associates</td>
<td>PSRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Times Poll</td>
<td>LAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS News/New York Times</td>
<td>CBS/NYT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gallup Organization</td>
<td>GO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC News/Washington Post</td>
<td>ABC/WP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roper Organization</td>
<td>RO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hart and Teeter Research Companies</td>
<td>HTRC</td>
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<td>General Social Survey</td>
<td>GSS</td>
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<td>Harris Interactive</td>
<td>HI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yankelovich Clancy Shulman</td>
<td>YCS</td>
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<td>Washington Post</td>
<td>WP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Associated Press</td>
<td>AP</td>
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<td>Cambridge Reports/Research International</td>
<td>CRRI</td>
</tr>
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<td>ORC Public Opinion Index</td>
<td>OCR</td>
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<tr>
<td>NBC News/Associated Press</td>
<td>NBC/AP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mellman and Lazarus</td>
<td>ML</td>
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<td>National Election Studies</td>
<td>NES</td>
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Table B.2: Survey Questions Used in Series Organized by Topic

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Question Wording</th>
<th>Survey House</th>
<th>Start Year</th>
<th>End Year</th>
<th>Obs.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmative Action</strong></td>
<td>(Let me read you some statements about affirmative action programs in education and employment. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree.)... As long as there are no rigid quotas, it makes sense to give special training and advice to women and minorities so that they can perform better on the job</td>
<td>LHA</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In order to overcome past discrimination, do you favor or oppose affirmative action programs designed to help blacks, women and other minorities get better jobs and education?</td>
<td>PRSA</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In order to overcome past discrimination, do you favor or oppose affirmative action programs, which give special preferences to qualified blacks, women and other minorities in hiring and education?</td>
<td>PRSA</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Right now, how often do you think affirmative action programs, designed to help women and minorities get better jobs and education, end up depriving someone else of their rights—does that happen almost always, quite a lot, only occasionally or almost never?</td>
<td>LAT</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Let me read you some statements about affirmative action programs in education and employment. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree.)… After years of discrimination, it is only fair to set up special programs to make sure that women and minorities are given every chance to have equal opportunities in employment and education.

(Let me read you some statements about affirmative action programs in education and employment. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree.)… As long as there are no rigid quotas, it makes sense to give special training and advice to women and minorities so that they can perform better on the job.

In order to overcome past discrimination, do you favor or oppose affirmative action programs designed to help blacks, women and other minorities get better jobs and education?

In order to overcome past discrimination, do you favor or oppose affirmative action programs, which give special preferences to qualified blacks, women and other minorities in hiring and education?

Right now, how often do you think affirmative action programs designed, to help women and minorities get better jobs and education, end up depriving someone else of their rights—does that happen almost always, quite a lot, only occasionally or almost never?
Let me read you some statements about affirmative action programs in education and employment. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree.... After years of discrimination, it is only fair to set up special programs to make sure that women and minorities are given every chance to have equal opportunities in employment and education.

(Let me read you some statements about affirmative action programs in education and employment. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree.)... Once affirmative action programs for women and minorities are started, the result is bound to be reverse discrimination against white men and imposition of a quota system.

(Now let me read you some statements about affirmative action programs in education and employment. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree.)... If there are no affirmative action programs helping women and minorities in employment and education, then these groups will continue to fail to get their share of jobs and higher education, thereby continuing past discrimination in the future.

(Now let me read you some statements about affirmative action programs in education and employment. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree.)... Once affirmative action programs for women and minorities are started the result is bound to be reverse discrimination against white men.
(Now let me read you some statements about affirmative action programs in education and employment. For each, tell me if you tend to agree or disagree?)...Minorities and women are not entitled to any special consideration.

Do you believe that where there has been job discrimination against women in the past, preference in hiring or promotion should be given to women today?

Do you favor or oppose federal laws requiring affirmative action programs for women and minorities in employment and education provided there are no rigid quotas?

Do you generally favor or oppose affirmative action programs for women and minorities?

**Birth Control**

In some places in the United States, it is not legal to supply birth control information. How do you feel about this—do you think birth control information should be available to anyone who wants it, or not?

Do you think birth control information should be available to teenagers who want it, or not?

Do you think birth control pills should be made available free to all women on relief of child-bearing age?
Do you think birth control information should be available to anyone who wants it, or not?

In some places in the United States it is not legal to supply birth control information. How do you feel about this—do you think birth control information should be available to anyone who wants it, or not?

**Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)**

(Frequently on any controversial issue there is no clear cut side that people take, and also frequently, solutions on controversial issues are worked out by compromise. But I’m going to name some different things, and for each one would you tell me whether on balance you would be more in favor of it, or more opposed to it?)...Passage of an Equal Rights Amendment.

I am going to read a few statements. After each, please tell me if you agree with that statement or disagree with it, or if, perhaps, you have no opinion about that statement.... The Equal Rights Amendment should be ratified.

Let me read you some statements some people have made about the Equal Rights Amendment. For each, tell me if you agree or disagree.... The Equal Rights Amendment should be passed because, until women are made equals with men under the law, they won’t be treated equally in their day-to-day lives.
Many of those who favor women’s rights favor the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution. This amendment would establish that women in the future would have rights equal to men in all areas. Opponents argue that women are different from men and need to be protected under the law by special laws which deal with women’s status. Do you favor or oppose the Equal Rights Amendment?

Many of those who favor women’s rights favor the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution. Those who favor ERA argue that unless it is passed, women will continue to receive lower pay for the same work, receive fewer promotions to better jobs, and be discriminated against financially. Opponents argue that the special laws that now exist to protect women are sufficient and no new law is needed. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose the Equal Rights Amendment?

Recently there has been a lot of talk about the Equal Rights Amendment–ERA–which forbids any kind of discrimination on the basis of sex. Do you generally favor or oppose such an amendment?

(Here are some of the amendments to the Constitution that are currently being talked about. Would you read down that list, and for each one tell me whether you would favor or oppose such an amendment?)...An amendment to assure equal rights for women.
(Now here are some amendments to the Constitution that are currently being talked about. (Card shown respondent) Would you read down that list, and for each one tell me whether you would favor or oppose such an amendment?)...An amendment to assure equal rights for women.

(I'm going to read some of the issues the federal government may be dealing with for the remainder of the 1980s. As I read each issue, please tell me whether you think the federal government should do more, should do less, or should continue to do about the same.)...Assuring equal rights for women.

Do you favor or oppose the Equal Rights Amendment, also known as ERA—the constitutional amendment concerning women?

Do you tend to agree or disagree that the Equal Rights Amendment should be opposed because it would wipe out many of the laws that have given women special protection for many years?

Generally speaking, are you in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment, the ERA, or are you opposed to it—or haven’t you heard enough about it yet to say? (If in favor or opposed) Is that (in favor/opposed) strongly or (in favor/opposed) somewhat?
The various State Legislatures are now voting on an amendment to the United States Constitution which would assure women equal rights under the law. As I'm sure you know, there is a lot of controversy for and against this amendment. How do you personally feel about it—are you in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment or opposed to it?

Have you heard or read enough about the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, often referred to as the ERA, to have an opinion about it? (If yes, ask) Do you favor or oppose the Equal Rights Amendment? (If favor, ask) Do you strongly favor the proposed amendment, or mildly favor it? (If oppose, ask) Do you strongly oppose the proposed amendment, or mildly oppose it?

**Family**

Do you agree or disagree... family life often suffers because men concentrate too much on their work?

(I'm going to read you some more statements on a different topic. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements.)... Too many children are being raised in day care centers these days. Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or completely disagree?
Do you agree or disagree with this statement: It is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and the family. (If agree or disagree) Is that (agree/disagree) strongly or (agree/disagree) somewhat?

Do you agree or disagree: people who have never had children lead empty lives?

Do you agree or disagree...family life often suffers because men concentrate too much on their work?...Strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree.

If a woman wants to have a child as a single parent but she doesn't want to have a stable relationship with a man, do you approve or disapprove?

More and more women are working outside the home these days. In general, do you think this is a good thing or a bad thing for marriages?

What kind of marriage do you think is the more satisfying way of life, number 1 or number 2?...1. One where the husband provides for the family and the wife takes care of the house and children. 2. One where the husband and wife both have jobs and both take care of the house and children.
(America has many different types of people in it. But we would like to know whether you think each of these different types of people is more helpful or more harmful to American life, or don’t they help or harm things much one way or the other?)... Working career women with young children.

Too many children are being raised in day care centers these days.

(Do you think that women should work outside the home full-time, part-time or not at all under these circumstances.)... After the children leave home.

(Do you think that women should work outside the home full-time, part-time or not at all under these circumstances.)... When there is a child under school age.

(More and more women are working outside the home these days.) In general, do you think this is a good thing or a bad thing for...women in general?

(Now here are some statements about marriage, work, divorce, etc. Would you read each one and tell me whether on balance you tend more to agree with it or disagree with it?)... There is no reason why women with young children shouldn’t work outside the home if they choose to.
(Now I'm going to read several more statements. As I read each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.)...

It is more important for a wife to help her husband’s career than to have one herself.

Do you agree or disagree... being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.

(Now I'm going to read several more statements. As I read each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.)...It is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and family.

Do you agree or disagree... a man’s job is to earn money, a woman’s job is to look after the home and family?

Do you agree or disagree... both the husband and the wife should contribute to the household income.

Do you agree or disagree... a job is alright, but what most women really want is a home and children.

(Now I’m going to read several more statements. As I read each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.)...A preschool child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works.
| Do you agree or disagree... a pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works. | GSS | 1988 | 2002 | 2 |
| Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with... A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his or her mother works. | GSS | 1985 | 2002 | 13 |
| Do you agree or disagree... a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work. | GSS | 1988 | 1994 | 2 |
| Now I’m going to read several more statements. As I read each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it....A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work. | GSS | 1985 | 2004 | 14 |
| Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with... A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work. | GSS | 1985 | 2004 | 14 |
| Do you agree or disagree... All in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job. | GSS | 1988 | 2002 | 4 |
| Do you approve of a married woman holding a job in business or industry if her husband is able to support her? | GSS | 1985 | 1998 | 11 |
Do you think that women should work outside the home full-time, part-time or not at all under these circumstances... After marrying and before there are children.

I'm going to read two statements and I'd like you to tell me which one comes closer to your own views...A. In general, women will be better off if they stay home and raise families, or...B. In general, women will be better off if they have careers and jobs.

More and more married women are working at full time jobs these days. Some people say this is a good thing because it is not only more interesting for women to work outside the home, but provides extra money for the family. Others say it is a bad thing because family life isn't as good and it causes a shortage of jobs for people who really need them. All things considered, do you approve or disapprove of married women working outside the home if they want to?

A proposal has been made to make child care centers available for all pre-school children as part of the public school system. This program would be supported by taxes. Would you favor or oppose such a program in your school district?

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: It’s always best for children to be raised in a home where a married man and woman are living together as father and mother.' (If Agree or Disagree, ask:) Do you (agree/disagree) strongly or (agree/disagree) somewhat?
Do you think that women should work outside the home full-time, part-time or not at all under these circumstances... After the youngest child starts school.

People talk about the changing roles of men and women today. For each of the following statements I read out, can you tell me how much you agree with each. Do you agree strongly, agree, disagree, or disagree strongly?... A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work.

Gender
If you were to have a child right now would you rather have a boy or a girl?

Suppose you could only have one child. Would you prefer that it be a boy or a girl?

Which do you, yourself, think is easier to raise—a boy or a girl?

All things considered, which has a better life in this nation—men or women?

Military
(As you know, this country stopped the military draft in 1972. Since that time we have relied on volunteers. Now I’d like to ask you a few questions about our armed forces)... At the present time, about 9 percent of the armed forces are women. All things considered, do you think there are too many women in the armed forces, about the right number, or should there be more women in the armed forces?

Do you favor or oppose allowing women who serve in the military to participate in combat?

Do you favor or oppose drafting women into the armed forces?

If a draft were to become necessary, should young women be required to participate as well as young men or not?

Would you favor or oppose the registration of the names of all young women under these circumstances (so that in the event of an emergency the time needed to call people up for a draft would be reduced)?

**Politics**

(Between now and the 2000 political conventions, there will be discussion about the qualifications of presidential candidates—their education, age, religion, race, and so on.) If your party nominated a generally well-qualified person for president who happened to be... a woman, would you vote for that person?

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<th>Source</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
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<td>GO</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If your party nominated a woman to run for mayor or top official of your city or community, would you vote for her if she were qualified for the job?

A number of people have said they would like to see changes in the kind of people who are elected to public office. Here is a card that lists a number of the kinds of changes that might be made. For each pair on that list would you indicate the direction you would like to see us move as far as political office holders are concerned?...More women, or more men?

Do you think the country would be governed better or governed worse if more women held political office?

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Women should take care of running their homes and leave running the country up to men.

Do you think America is ready to elect a woman president, or not?

If your party nominated a woman for president, would you vote for her if she qualified for the job?

If your party nominated a woman for president, would you vote for her if she seemed qualified for the job?

If your party nominated a woman to run for Congress from your district, would you vote for her if she were qualified for the job?
If your party nominated a woman for president, would you vote for her if she qualified for the job?

If your party nominated a woman for president, would you vote for her if she qualified for the job?

Tell me if you agree or disagree with this statement: Most men are better suited emotionally for politics than are most women.

Would you vote for a woman for President or not?

If your party nominated a woman to run for Governor of your state, would you vote for her if she were qualified for the job?

Religion
Currently, women cannot become priests in the Roman Catholic church. Do you favor or oppose that policy?

Sex
(Do you feel that the following changes that took place in the 1960s were a good thing or a bad thing for our society?)... More acceptance of premarital sex.

Do you think it is wrong or not wrong if a man and a woman have sexual relations before marriage...always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?
There is a lot of discussion about the way morals and sexual attitudes are changing in this country. What is your opinion about this? Do you think it is wrong for a man and a woman to have sexual relations before marriage, or not?

There's been a lot of discussion about the way morals and attitudes about sex are changing in this country. If a man and woman have sexual relations before marriage, do you think it is... always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?

Generally speaking, would you say you approve or disapprove of men and women living together without being married if they want to, or is that something you haven’t formed an opinion on?

There is an increase in the number of couples living together without being married. Do you think this is okay, or is it something that’s always wrong, or doesn’t it matter much to you?

No decent man can respect a woman who has had sex relations before marriage.

There’s a lot of discussion about the way morals and sex are changing in this country. Here is a question that is often discussed in women’s magazines. What is your view on this-do you think it is wrong for a man and woman to have sex relations before marriage, or not?
There’s been a lot of discussion about the way morals and attitudes about sex are changing in this country. If a man and woman have sex relations before marriage, do you think it is always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?

There’s been a lot of discussion about the way morals and attitudes about sex are changing in this country. If a man and woman have sex relations before marriage, do you think it is always wrong, or almost always wrong, or wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?

What about a married person having sexual relations with someone other than his or her husband or wife, is it always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?

(Do you feel that the following changes that took place in the 1960s were a good thing or a bad thing for our society?)... More openness about sex and the human body.

What is your opinion about a married person having sexual relations with someone other than the marriage partner? Is it always wrong, almost always wrong, wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?
What is your opinion about a married person having sexual relations with someone other than the marriage partner? Is it always wrong, or almost always wrong, or wrong only sometimes, or not wrong at all?

(Here are some social changes which might occur in coming years. Would you welcome these or not welcome them?)... More acceptance of sexual freedom.

If someone said that individuals should have the chance to enjoy complete sexual freedom without being restricted, would you tend to agree or disagree?

(Here is a list of things which some people think make for a successful marriage. Please tell me, for each one, whether you think it is very important, rather important or not very important for a successful marriage.) Happy sexual relationship.

(Next, I'm going to read you a list of issues. Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, for each one, please tell me whether you personally believe that in general it is morally acceptable or morally wrong.) How about...sex between an unmarried man and woman?

(Next, I'm going to read you a list of issues. Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, for each one, please tell me whether you personally believe that in general it is morally acceptable or morally wrong.) How about...married men and women having an affair?
Do you agree or disagree?... It is alright for a couple to live together without intending to get married.... Strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GSS</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you approve or disapprove of schools giving courses in sex education?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Work**

Do you approve or disapprove of a married woman earning money in business or industry if she has a husband capable of supporting her?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GSS</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you agree or disagree... having a job is the best way for a woman to be an independent person.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GSS</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you approve or disapprove of paying women the same salaries as men, if they are doing the same work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you feel that women in this country have equal job opportunities with men or not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you think that a married woman should earn money in business or industry if she has a husband capable of supporting her?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBS/NYT</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you think that a woman has to have children in order to be fulfilled or is this not necessary?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How hard do you think it is for men and women to get top executive jobs in business or government these days? Generally, is it easier for men, easier for women, or isn’t there much difference?

If a woman has the same ability as a man, does she have as good a chance to become the executive of a company or not?

If you were taking a new job and had your choice of a boss (or supervisor), would you prefer to work for a man or a woman?

(I’d like to ask about some specific federal government programs. For each, please tell me whether you feel spending for that program should be increased, decreased or left about the same.) How about... day care programs which take care of the children of working parents who can’t afford it? Should spending for that program be increased, decreased or left about the same? (If increase/decrease) Is that increased/ decreased a great deal or increased/decreased somewhat?

I'm going to read several statements. As I read each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree.... Because of past discrimination, employers should make special efforts to hire and promote qualified women.
Now I’m going to read several statements. As I read each one, please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or disagree strongly. For example, here is the statement: Because of past discrimination, employers should make special efforts to hire and promote qualified women.

Turning to another topic, there is a lot of talk these days about discrimination against women and women’s rights. Taking into account this question of discrimination and all other aspects of their lives, how would you, yourself, rate the situation of women in general in this country today: excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

What about salaries? These days, if a man and a woman are doing the same work, do you think the man generally earns more, the woman generally earns more, or that both earn the same amount?

What do you think the chances are these days that a man won’t get a job or promotion while an equally or less qualified woman gets one instead? Is this very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely these days?

Would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?)...Women who work at the same job as men should be paid the same as men.
(More and more women are working outside the home these days.) In general, do you think this is a good thing or a bad thing for...the workplace itself?

(Now here’s a list of things people have said are or could be responsibilities of business to employees in this country. (Card shown respondent) Would you go down that list and for each one tell me whether you consider it to be a definite responsibility of business, or highly desirable although not a definite responsibility, or something that is nice to do but shouldn’t necessarily be expected, or something that is beyond what business should do?)...Giving paternity leave to employees who are fathers of newborn children.

(To what extent do you agree or disagree?...Strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, or strongly disagree.)...Working women should receive paid maternity leave when they have a baby.

Congress is now considering a bill, often called the ‘parental leave’ bill, that would require employers with five or more workers to offer both mothers and fathers an unpaid leave of up to 18 weeks after a birth or adoption. The legislation would require employers to give parents their former jobs or comparable ones when they returned to work. The bill would also allow parents time off to care for a seriously ill child. Do you think requiring employers to provide unpaid parental leave for employees is a good idea or a bad idea?

YCS 1986 1995 2

RO 1981 1985 2

GSS 1994 2002 2

CRRI 1986 1990 3
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What about paid parental leave? Do you think it would be a good idea or a bad idea to enact a law that would require employers to give both mothers and fathers 3 months of leave at 75% pay following a birth or an adoption?</td>
<td>CRRI</td>
<td>1986</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you feel that...Most employers are unwilling to make the conditions of work flexible enough to help women with families who want to go to work... or not?</td>
<td>LHA</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think an employer should offer child care benefits if the cost of these benefits leads to a reduction somewhere else in the wage or benefit package for all employees?</td>
<td>GO</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think companies should provide child-care facilities at the workplace or should they provide financial assistance to encourage the development of good child-care facilities in the community?</td>
<td>CRRI</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think employers should be required to provide an unpaid leave of absence to employees upon the birth or adoption of a child with guaranteed re-employment?</td>
<td>GO</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think employers should play a role in providing child care assistance to employees, or not?</td>
<td>GO</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(I’m going to list some ways in which family values could be strengthened. After each, please tell me how effective it would be in strengthening family values—extremely effective, very effective, somewhat effective, not too effective, or not at all effective. If you are not sure how effective a particular thing would be please say so and we’ll move on.)... Providing day care for children of working parents.

Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements....Companies should make child day care available to their employees as part of their benefits.

(Here are some different types of people. (Card shown respondent) Thinking of large business corporations, would you tell me for each of those types of people whether you think they should or should not be represented on the board of directors of large business corporations?)... Women.

(I’m going to read you a list of things that some people think might contribute to lower moral standards in this country. As I read each, please tell me whether you think this contributes to lower moral standards or does not contribute to lower moral standards.)... More women working outside the home.

(Would you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?)... I don’t object to women having career jobs, as long as they aren’t taking those jobs away from men.
A number of efforts have been made to help certain groups in this country improve their opportunities. For example, women have been given more consideration than in the past in getting jobs and in being promoted on the job. Thinking about women and job opportunities, do you think that we in this country have gone too far, not far enough, or have done about the right amount in making job opportunities for women?

Women

(Here are some statements on a different topic. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements.)... Women should return to their traditional role in society.

(Here are some statements on a different topic. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements.)... Women should return to their traditional role in society.

Do you consider yourself to be a feminist, or not?

Do you think that private clubs should or should not have the right to exclude prospective members on the basis of their sex?

Generally speaking, are you in favor of most of the efforts to strengthen the status of women in society today, or are you opposed to that—or haven’t you heard enough about that yet to say? (If in favor or opposed) Is that (in favor/opposed) strongly or (in favor/opposed) somewhat?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On the whole, do you favor or oppose most of the efforts to strengthen and change the status of women in society today?</td>
<td>ABC/WP</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like you to think about men’s and women’s personalities, interests and abilities. Not including the physical differences, do you think men and women are basically similar or basically different?</td>
<td>GO</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There has been much talk recently about changing women’s status in society today. On the whole, do you favor or oppose most of the efforts to strengthen and change women’s status in society today?</td>
<td>LAT</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There has been much talk recently about changing women’s status in society today. On the whole, do you favor or oppose most of the efforts to strengthen and change women’s status in society today?</td>
<td>LHA</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(I’m going to read you some more statements on a different topic. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of these statements.)... Women should return to their traditional roles in society. Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or completely disagree?</td>
<td>PSRA</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(Next, we’d like to know how you feel about the state of the nation in each of the following areas. For each one, please say whether you are—very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied. If you don’t have enough information about a particular subject to rate it, just say so.) How about... the position of women in the nation?

Do you consider calling someone a feminist to be a compliment, an insult, or a neutral description?

Recently there has been a lot of talk about women’s rights. Some people feel that women should have an equal role with men in running business, industry and government. Others feel that a women’s place is in the home. Where would you place yourself on this scale or haven’t you thought much about this?

**Women’s Rights**

Has the women’s movement achieved anything that has made your life better?

I’d like your opinion of some people and organizations. As I read from a list, please tell me which category best describes your overall opinion of who or what I name. Would you describe your opinion of... the women’s movement... as very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?
I'd like your opinion of some people and organizations. As I read from a list, please tell me which category best describes your overall opinion of who or what I name. Would you describe your opinion of... the women’s movement... as very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?
Appendix C

Technical Information on Cointegration

In order to carry out standard regression analysis using time series methods, the data must meet all the regression assumptions and including stationarity.\(^1\) A series is stationary when its mean and variance are constant across time (Chatfield 1996). Non-stationarity can come in many different forms including unit roots, deterministic trends, or some combination of the two.\(^2\) An integrated or unit root process represents a series where shocks accumulate over time.\(^3\) A deterministic trend is a process that can be represented as some function of time (McCleary &

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\(^1\)One of the most common regression assumptions time series data violates is that the observations are not independent of each other creating the problem of autocorrelation. To combat this problem model specification is extremely important. Post-estimation tests are performed to ensure that no autocorrelation remains after specification.

\(^2\)Most time series can be represented in an autoregressive form, a function of its past values: \(y_t = \alpha + \beta y_{t-1} + \epsilon_t\). In a stationary series \(\beta\) is less than 1. In a non-stationary series \(\beta\) is equal to or greater than 1.

\(^3\)Integrated series or unit roots are also called random walks because they drift or tend in one direction for a long period of time before drifting back. This stochastic trend is a function of the errors accumulating over time. \(y_t = y_0 + \sum_{i=1}^{t} \epsilon_i\)
Non-stationary series pose particular problems for estimation. For example, if a series has a unit root and we use ordinary least squares to estimate the relationship between the non-stationary series and an other dynamic process, we will underestimate the coefficients in the model and misestimate the standard errors for the coefficients. The central limit theorem does not hold for integrated series (Nathaniel 2003). Additionally, the presence of two unit roots could lead to spurious results if the trends are correlated even if they are unrelated.

To assess the stationarity of the series, I first examine them graphically and then perform augmented Dickey Fuller tests. Examining the data graphically helps us understand their movement over time. The graphical presentation of the data also lets us assess if there may be issues with the stationarity of the series: do they trend upward or downward, is there a single year that is an outlier, etc. Figure 3.2 looks at the dependent variable, gender attitudes, and Figure C.1 provides plots of each of the independent variables. These several figures show upward trends over time (attitudes towards women, women’s workforce participation, women’s college education). On the other hand the pre-suffrage generation trends downward over time. The events of the women’s movement do not trend in any direction, however, its mean and variance are much larger in the middle of the series than at the ends. Public policy mood and changes in personal disposable income do not demonstrate obvious patterns graphically.

If the series are non-stationary we are concerned with the underlying dynamics that cause the non-stationarity. Women’s workforce participation, women’s college education and the pre-suffrage generation each demonstrate steady growth or decline over the time periods observed, suggesting that these series may con-

\[ Y_t = \beta t + \epsilon_t \]
Figure C.1. Independent Variables
tain a deterministic trend. The remaining series’ behavior appear to contain more stochastic trends or drift upward and downward for long periods of time. These observations are made cautiously because it is difficult to determine the differences between deterministic and stochastic or random trends. This difficulty is largely a function that we only observe series for a finite number of observations thus it is hard to determine if progressive change in a series is deterministic or stochastic (McCleary & Hay 1980). A more precise understanding of the underlying dynamics is gained through formal testing of the series.

I formally test for stationarity using an augmented Dickey Fuller test.\(^5\) The augmented Dickey Fuller test for the presence of a unit root. The null hypothesis is that the series is a unit root. Accurate results of the augmented Dickey Fuller tests rests on properly specifying the data generating process, as a result we are able to assess if the series contains a deterministic trend, unit root, unit root with a drift, or some combination of deterministic trend and unit root. While, the augmented Dickey Fuller does not directly test for deterministic trends through the specification of the test we evaluate if a deterministic trend is present. Augmented Dickey Fuller unit-root tests were performed individually for each of the series: gender attitudes, women’s workforce participation, college educated women, public policy mood, events of the women’s movement, and changes in personal disposable income.

Table C.1 reports the coefficient for t-statistics and the probability of reject-

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\(^5\)The Dickey Fuller test the series for a unit root. Unit roots are one type of non-stationary series where in the model \( y_t = \alpha + \beta y_{t-1} + \epsilon_t \), \( \beta = 1 \). The null hypothesis is that the series has a unit root. If we are able to reject the null hypothesis then standard ordinary least squares methods can be used. On the other hand failing to reject the null does not confirm the presence of a unit root, it simply tells us there is not enough information to reject the idea that the series is integrated. The Dickey Fuller test uses the simple difference equation, \( \Delta y_t = \alpha_0 + \gamma y_{t-1} + \epsilon_t \), where \( \gamma = 1 - \beta \) and critical values established by Dickey and Fuller. The augmented Dickey Fuller tests uses the same logic but allows for more lag lengths. This standard model is adjusted to resemble the data generating process by adding in constant and/or trends.
Table C.1. Augmented Dickey Fuller Unit-root Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>t-statistic</th>
<th>probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender Attitudes*</td>
<td>-3.77</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-suffrage Generation*</td>
<td>-4.35</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Workforce Participation**</td>
<td>-1.39</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Educated Women*</td>
<td>-2.22</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Policy Mood **</td>
<td>-1.99</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events of the Women’s Movement**</td>
<td>-1.63</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>∆ Personal Income*</td>
<td>-7.672</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Model includes a constant and trend.
** Model includes only a constant.

Lag length determined with the Schwartz information criteria.

ing the null based on critical values established by Dickey and Fuller. The test statistics for gender attitudes is extremely close to the critical values; however, we still cannot reject the null hypothesis that the series is integrated at the 1% significance level. When controlling for a deterministic trend, the pre-suffrage generation does not contain a unit root. Thus, the data generating process underlying the pre-suffrage generation consists of a deterministic trend. Additionally, we cannot reject the null hypothesis that the series women’s workforce participation, public policy mood, and events of the women’s movement are integrated. Our inability to reject the null hypothesis for these processes indicate they are unit roots, or stochastic series where shocks to the system accumulate over time. The data generating process underlying the proportion of women’s college education is a combination of deterministic and stochastic trends. Thus the series can be decomposed into a proportion that is a function of time and a proportion of random shocks that accumulate over time.

6While we could see fluctuation in this series due to random shocks (i.e. an influenza epidemic or war) that effect the mortality rate of this generation such shocks are highly unlikely and not observed during the time period we are studying. Thus it is likely that the series is deterministic and can be modeled as a function of the probability of serving until a certain age.

7Model specifications were tested that included a deterministic trend in the data generating process, however, the trend was not significant.
The above results indicate a wide array of dynamic processes: stationary series, deterministic trends, unit roots, and a combination of unit roots with deterministic trends. Based on these results we then build our model. As discussed above non-stationarity pose problems for estimation using standard ordinary least squares. This suggests two ways to proceed. First, we can make the process stationary by removing any deterministic trends and taking the first difference of the series, and then to proceed with standard OLS. The major drawback to this approach is that we can only estimate short-run changes, losing information about the long-run dynamics of the process. The second option is to use the information about the data generating process and model these relationships using techniques that deal with deterministic trends and unit roots, namely cointegration. The theory discussed above suggests a long-run relationship, making the second option of cointegration more appealing.
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Heather Louise Ondercin

Education

Publications

Awards and Honors
Sophonsiba Breckinridge Prize. The best paper on women and politics presented at the 2006 Midwest Political Science Association Meetings.
National Science Foundation Dissertation Support Grant $4,804, P.I.: Suzanna De Boef.
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Instructor The Pennsylvania State University, PL SC 001 Introduction to American Government (Summer 2005) and PL SC 428 Women and Politics (Summer 2006)