Introduction

When George H.W. Bush took office in 1989, he had 12 grandchildren. There were no speculative headlines asking if he would be able to balance time doting on the grandchildren with leading the nation. No one conjectured that his role as a grandfather would in any way compromise his role as president (Fruman, 2014). However, on April 17, 2014, Chelsea Clinton, daughter of political power couple Bill and Hillary Clinton, announced that she was expecting a child that fall. In a *USA Today* article published online the day of the announcement of Chelsea’s pregnancy, the subject turned to the grandmother-to-be and potential presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton.

“For former president Bill Clinton and his wife have made no secret of their wish for a grandchild. It's unclear how Chelsea's pregnancy will affect Hillary Clinton, who is considering a race for president in 2016” (Camia, 2014, p. 5).

On April 12, Clinton announced her 2016 run, making it clear that her granddaughter wouldn’t stop her from running to president. In fact, the Clinton camp has made being a grandmother a part of the campaign strategy. It seems that Charlotte Clinton Mezvinsky is being used to soften the candidate’s image.

The standards for women in politics are often structured through antiquated views of a woman’s societal value (Anderson, Diabah, & hMensa 2011; Manning, 2006; Taylor, 2010). This is clearly demonstrated by the suggestion that Hillary’s presidential aspirations could be derailed by the birth of her first grandchild. Mitt Romney, who ran
for president in 2012, had 18 grandchildren during his presidential bid but was never framed as a grandfather over being a viable political candidate (Boxer, 2012).

Research has established that women and men in politics are framed differently according to their gender, but the framing goes beyond the basic facts presented about the candidates. As Clinton gears up for a 2016 run, watchdog groups have already emerged with the sole task of calling out media outlets for using sexist, coded language when writing about the candidate. It is perceived as a problem even outside the world of feminist academia. This critical discourse analysis, or the study of how language contributes to social practice, identified how the language magazines use to write about female politicians differs from how they write about male politicians, specifically using the 2008 campaigns of Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama for the Democratic nomination. Using media framing and feminist theory as its theoretical framework, this analysis identified the gender differences in news magazine coverage of Clinton and Obama and how that is creating systematic barriers for women who want to enter politics. This critical discourse analysis looked at the overall content focus in each candidate and uses established research to decode the descriptors used for Clinton particularly.

There have been many studies that look at the media framing of female political figures, but the magazine coverage of Clinton and her primary opponent for the Democratic nomination, Obama, offers a chance to update those findings. Clinton is a particularly interesting candidate to study because of her political background and her viability as a candidate.

Despite an increase in the number of women in political roles that have moved them away from being novelty political figures, they are still fighting a system that casts
them as outsiders. Political writing about women still perpetuates stereotypes and gender bias that can have detrimental effects on their credibility as a political candidate (Anderson et al., 2011, Entman, 2010).

Addressing the inherent sexist frames used in political writing is key to eradicating the imbalance between the number of men and women in public office. Not only are these media frames reinforcing gender stereotypes, but they are also harmful to women who want to enter politics and voters who may already be reluctant to vote for women. Media framing plays a central role in the way that women politicians are viewed, setting the lens through which the public understands and thinks of these women. In a secondary layer, the patriarchal systems that women in politics operate in, and thus which the journalists writing about them view them through, are also harmful for women’s success and the public’s perception of women in politics.

Theoretical frameworks

Framing

Some scholars maintain that second-level agenda setting is equivalent to framing. McCombs (1997) suggested that “framing is the selection of a restricted number of thematically related attributes for inclusion on the media agenda when a particular object is discussed.” Although this study does not choose to equate second-level agenda setting with framing, there are some inherent biases that contribute to what is perhaps a media contribution to the reinforcing sexist stereotypes, which could be attributed to the patriarchal construct of our society.
Tankard, Hendrickson, Silberman, Bliss, and Gahrem define a media frame as “the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration” (1991, p.3). Unlike McCombs’ (1997) idea that the media are choosing these elements as part of a media agenda, Tankard et al.’s definition of media framing paints framing as a wider idea. Framing, rather, incorporates a wide view of society as a factor, while agenda setting is more of a conscious act (Weaver, 1991).

Media framing focuses on how issues are reported and what is emphasized in that reporting. This is important in the context of this research because it offers a two-pronged approach for looking at the portrayal of women in the media — how they are reported on, and what precisely is focused on in the report. Because established scholarship has shown that women are generally characterized by their physical appearance rather than their policy making, this framework will be crucial to this research.

Framing is important for this research in particular, because of the rising number of voters who do not consistently side with a particular party. Media framing has the most impact on voters who lack a strong ideological conviction, the “swing” voters. If media coverage of women continues to be framed through harmful stereotypes identified in past research, coverage of female candidates could potentially turn a large part of the voting population against her (Entman, 2010).

Winfrey & Carlin looked at media coverage of both Alaska Governor Sarah Palin and Sen. Hillary Clinton during their 2008 campaigns for vice president and Democratic presidential nominee, respectively. By using media framing and research on the use of sexist language, Winfrey & Carlin identified different brands of sexism faced by the two
candidates, but each dealt with stereotypes employed by the media that were, at least in some capacity, harmful to their separate campaigns (2009). Winfrey & Carlin used four stereotypes of professional women established in Rosabeth Moss Kanter’s landmark book on women and power structures, *Men and Women of the Corporation*. The iron maiden stereotype is distinguished by adjectives such as “cold” or “intimidating,” and is often applied to women who exhibit traditionally masculine traits of ambition or aggression. The sex object stereotype can manifest in a wide range of discourse, from sexual harassment to dress, and includes adjectives such as “sexy” or “pretty.” The mother stereotype usually focuses on the woman as a mother or exhibiting motherly traits, and plays out in discourse with words such as “compassionate” and “honest.” Finally, the pet stereotype evokes the idea that women should be unduly praised for their accomplishments or that a woman’s role is mainly as a support system. The stereotype is characterized by descriptors such as “precocious” and “cheerleader” (Kanter, 1977). They found that women are often represented by the media as a combination of these four stereotypes, each used in a way that can both harm and enhance their reputations (Winfrey & Carlin, 2009).

In their study of the media’s portrayal of female candidates in gubernatorial and Senate primary races, Bystrom, Robertson, and Banwart point out that there are significant differences in the way men and women are framed in the media. This study was interesting because it compared women and men directly to each other, and while it found that women tended to be the focus of the coverage, there were still many stereotypes at play that resulted in the coverage slanting toward the male candidate. The study did note that the stereotypes and shortcuts that the media and audiences often rely
on to stereotype women in politics can sometimes work to the candidates’ advantage. For instance, women are considered more warm and loving (2009).

Feminist theory

The second framework, feminist theory, will be crucial to interpreting the findings and could help shed light on why women are still so scarce in politics and how gendered political reporting contributes to the phenomena. Feminist perspectives and research challenge and question patriarchal systems that society operates through, with the promise of overturning the patriarchy as an accepted reality (Hesse-Biber, 2012). Political reporting, which is still largely dominated by men, is often done though a male perspective by virtue of men being the ones to control the stories. This is reflective of the attitudes that women are faced with when they want to enter the political realm. Harp and Tremayne highlight the pervasive ideology that outlines the politics and political blogging — that under the patriarchy women are expected to occupy private spheres, where men are encouraged to take on leadership roles such as political positions (2006). Patriarchal underpinnings in society have relegated women to domesticity, where men are free from duties like housework and caring for children.

This manifests itself in the language used to discuss women and men. Feminist linguists have identified that language centers itself on men rather than women, in a phenomenon that Hellinger (2001) calls male as norm (MAN). Although in English there has been an increase in the feminization of language, such as adopting feminine suffixes (congresswoman) to words that are generally relegated to men, women still often find themselves feeling invisible in their own language (Hellinger, 2001). This is a byproduct
of the patriarchy rooting itself in language, transforming it into a field where women are viewed as secondary parts of a language and, by extension, society. Using feminist framework in application to language will allow a critical look at how the patriarchal systems have invaded the language we use to speak and report on women.

This research will apply the findings of previous research that shows that politics are framed through masculinity (Anderson et al., 2011; Everitt, 2005; Manning, 2006). Women in politics must learn to embrace both their masculine and feminine attributes in order to be successful (Griswold, 2007). Because gender plays a critical role to the female politician, this critical discourse analysis will use feminist theory to explain the political disparity between men and women. It will also use gender schema as an idea of how reporters and readers use shortcuts to digest information about candidates (Entman, 2010).

**Literature review**

**Media and politics**

Media play an essential role in politics and political engagement. The public depends on the media for its news, and count on news to chronicle the successes, failures, and the often gray areas in between those extremes of elected officials. The media can help create and foster feelings about politicians, including trust in political figures, their efficacy as officials, and general political knowledge. Studies have shown that media have a direct impact on political trust in particular, which could eventually lead to larger effects like decreased civic engagement (Corrigal-Brown & Wilkes, 2014).

With such an integral role in shaping political beliefs and perceptions, political journalists should exercise caution in how they cover political candidates. In a study on
political reporters and their relationships with political sources, Revers (2011) noted that even though journalists were hesitant to burn bridges by publishing negative stories about their sources, many said that they felt a sense of satisfaction that was tied to fulfilling a journalistic duty if it indeed came to that point. Although journalists are seemingly thrilled with the idea of perpetuating some sort of journalistic integrity, there are still underpinnings of subjectivity that go into journalism (Revers, 2011). It is especially important, then, that journalists be conscious of the way they frame political figures. For reporters covering women in particular, the subjective influences that leak into reporting could have detrimental effects on women candidates, who are already represented far less at the voting booths.

Framing is often lumped under the umbrella of cognitive media effects along with agenda-setting and priming, but when examining political communication Scheufele (2000) proposes that the group be broken up and examined with its own categorical differences. Framing and agenda setting still have similar characteristics that are key to understanding when conducting research on political communication. Partisanship, for example, has a significant effect on how audiences consume political news. Less-partisan readers tend to be affected more by all three of the cognitive media umbrella elements. Information processing in audiences is also researched in the same way. But when re-examining the three media effects, framing differs from agenda-setting and priming in two major ways. First, framing relies on the hierarchy of the frames used in the media rather than the media agenda. This indicates that framing is more of an implicit effect of larger power structures rather than an intentional act by the media. Agenda-setting and priming also focus on the salience of the audience; whereas framing examines how the
audience is framing the information presented (Scheufele, 2000). Overall, the updated definition of framing puts more responsibility on how the audience views political information in the context of existing power structures.

Gender in politics

Research on political coverage of women has established that campaigns of women are traditionally marked by five characteristics that reveal themselves in news discourse. First, women receive less attention than male counterparts though as women become less of an anomaly in the political sphere that has started to shift (Wasburn, 2011). Second, reporting on women focuses on personal and trivial aspects such as their appearance, family and lifestyle rather than central campaign issues. Third, women face harsher character attacks and how those perceived drawbacks would affect their performance in office. Fourth, women are generally asked about their positions on policy that is traditionally geared toward women such as abortions, education and childcare while questions about the economy and the military are left for male candidates. Finally, the news media will question a woman’s ability to influence others if she is elected to office (Wasburn, 2011).

While women certainly can use the “feminine” attributes identified by Wasburn (2011) to their advantage, they also become more susceptible to more rigid frameworks and closely held stereotypes that make it difficult to influence the media’s agenda (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007). In countries such as Sweden and Norway, where women hold around 40 percent of cabinet positions, the issue of a candidate’s gender has become nearly obsolete (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007; Matland, 1994). Not so in the United States. In
2013, the U.S. had a record-breaking 19 percent of U.S. congressional seats filled by women. By continuing to perpetuate women’s role in politics differently from men’s, the media contribute to a cyclic and systematic barrier to women participating in the political sphere (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007).

Research has shown that the characteristics associated with men serve them as public speakers, which is a central role of politicians and one of the main sources of political reporting. Men are generally perceived as domineering figures: aggressive, assertive, and freed of emotion. Women, by contrast, are expected to be submissive, able to counter the emotionless male with warmth. In politics, still operating under the ideals of the patriarchy, women’s personal rhetoric is at odds with the qualities that make a successful politician (Manning, 2006).

Language

Feminist linguistic theorists have defined feminism as “the practice of challenging the linguistic systems as well as the structures and institutions it produces, including education, politics, religion, and the economic system” (Manning, 2006, 111). Language reinforces gender power structures, and without taking steps to mitigate semantics that reinforce these stereotypes, the media will continue to perpetuate harmful gender roles about politicians (Anderson et al., 2011; Manning, 2006).

The very nature of politics, particularly in an age of increased partisanship that necessitates strength and will, puts women at a disadvantage. Because these stereotypical characteristics have been inextricably linked to gender roles and the constructs of language, they often play out in political writing. Werner and LaRussa (1985) and
Brosioff and Merrill (1998) created a list of gender-specific characteristics to women: being soft-spoken, emotional, subjective, self-effacing, uncertain, humble, compliant, submissive, sincere, cooperative, fair-minded, and optimistic. Men, by contrast are characterized as being ineffective listeners, emotionally inexpressive, categorical, certain in their use of language, and dominating (Ivy & Backlund, 2004). Manning (2006) characterizes these traits in the context of communication as women having emotional connections, while men assume the role of experts.

Firmly rooted in semantics and a reliance on stereotyped gender characteristics, the language used in political reporting interprets all politicians in masculine terms (Anderson et al., 2011; Everitt, 2005; Manning, 2006). Using language that inherently favors men perpetuates the idea that women are in some way intruding in the political realm, effectively making and maintaining their status as outsiders in a male-dominated world (Anderson et al., 2011). Because the public relies on the media as a watchdog, the images formed through semantics and the frames put forth by news outlets can have powerful effects on the public’s perception of female politicians.

In order to be successful in politics, Griswold (2007) asserted that women must at once embrace masculine and feminine rhetoric as part of their political speech. When they deviate too far from the personal, warm rhetoric that have become a part of the feminine ideal, women are scrutinized in the media and by the public. If they embody this rhetoric, however, they are decried as politicians for lacking leadership qualities. So how, then, can we pick a middle ground for reporting on both men and women? Griswold (2007) argued that gender-neutral language and representation in the media causes two major problems: It introduces the idea that gender and politics should be separated, and
that gender neutral language is not powerful enough to reinforce or change much in the way of women in politics. Rather, women should be able to tap in equally to male and female rhetoric to become successful politicians.

Political writing tends to include violent language more suited to the aggressive nature of men constructed by the media. Images of warmongering, violence, and confrontation are reinforced by verb usage like “fought” and “battled.” These forceful and powerful word choices have become go-to metaphors for political action in reporting (Griswold, 2007; Manning, 2006; Nacos, 2005). When more “masculine” terms are applied to women in politics, they are generally used as either a snide compliment or an insult. When The Wall Street Journal reported Nancy Pelosi’s vote gathering for health care reform in 2010, it employed adjectives like such as “stalwart,” “imposing,” “formidable,” “arm-twisting,” “pressure maker,” and “threatening,” giving Pelosi the nickname, “the Slaughter Solution” (Taylor, 2010). These needlessly aggressive descriptors were designed specifically to give Pelosi the image of a cutthroat, manipulative politician (Taylor, 2010). Even when women are characterized in a positive light, words such as “trailblazer” only reinforce the idea that women are still political outsiders fighting for their chance (Anderson et al., 2011).

**Research questions**

I have identified three research questions that I answered through my critical discourse analysis:
RQ1: What are the differences, if any, in the language used to report Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama's candidacies for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination in *TIME*, *Newsweek* and *US News & World Report*?

RQ2: What prominent stereotypes, including those of iron maiden, sex object, mother and pet as established by Rosabeth Moss Kanter in her book *Women of the Corporation*, are presented in the language used to describe Hillary Clinton?

RQ3: What major content focus do the articles about Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama have in terms of their status as a parent, a policymaker, education, or other areas?

**Methodology**

Political reporting is a prime area for critical discourse analysis, because in itself it is a living, breathing power structure. Chilton and Schaffner (2002, p. 5) define politics as “a struggle for power, between those who seek to assert and maintain their power and those who resist it.” Critical discourse analysis lets researchers look at language as structure informed by historical social orders. The goal of critical discourse analysis is not only to identify problems in these linguistic constructions but also to view them as changeable rather than absolute (Locke, 2004). Locke offers several key attributes of critical discourse analysis: It looks at social orders as changeable and socially constructed, it views these as pervasive societal norms rather than the will of the individual, it accepts that ideology affects discourse, and it says societal power is an effect of privilege (2004).
Critical discourse analysis is most appropriate for my research topic because it will allow me to operate with the understanding that power structures, mainly the patriarchy, have affected how women are reported in the media. By using critical discourse analysis, I do not assume that journalists’ reporting is intentionally slanted in favor of men, but rather can view their words through the idea that the United States is still operating under a patriarchal boundary that is reinforced, often times implicitly, in our daily lives. Understanding the boundaries and hurdles that the patriarchy has presented in language will allow an examination of how this affects women who are running for office. This takes it a step beyond simply identifying that the problem exists, which has already been established, but takes a look into the specific ways that language does this. Van Dijk notes that critical discourse analysis is used to reveal structures that already exist in society, thus it will allow me to examine the ideas of how the patriarchy affects the media representation of women, and allow me to apply feminist theory in not only identifying the limitations that the patriarchy places on women’s representation in political reporting, but also look at them from an idea of how that has an impact on their career as a whole (1993).

Taylor used critical discourse analysis to examine an interview former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi granted with The New York Times Magazine, centering on her experience as a woman in politics. Taylor was able to look critically at the feminine attributes perceived in Pelosi’s demeanor and apply them to a broader of idea of how these come into play with women in the political sphere (2012). Critical discourse analysis will enable me to look at this kind of coded language that, according to research,
is rampant among women in politics. It will allow me to take a deeper dive beyond the surface of some kind of fishy adjectives.

Van Dijk identifies that critical discourse analysis is not as fleshed out as other research methods, which could be a potential drawback to using the method with my research. In order for critical discourse analysis to be effective, we must draw from existing power structures that define and course through the veins of daily life (1993). That is why using feminist theory is key to my research. Feminist theory assumes that gender parity is not present in women’s lives, and thus will establish a structural divide between men and women in politics and the language used to report on the two genders.

For this research, I chose the three news magazines with the highest circulations in 2008 according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations — *TIME* (3,374,000), *Newsweek* (2,720,000), and *US News & World Report* (1,721,000). Although they were included in the category of news magazines, I have also chosen to exclude *The New Yorker* and *The Economist* because both have more niche audiences, with *The New Yorker* focusing more on literary work and *The Economist* on economic reporting. The magazines I have chosen are marketed to some of the largest audiences and are likely to have nonpartisan reporting. Because of their wide audience, I expect these magazines to be more reflective of what news society is consuming as a whole rather than niche or partisan magazines such as *Mother Jones* and *Slate*.

I analyzed articles published between December 1, 2007 and June 30, 2008, using “Hillary Clinton” and “Barack Obama” as my search terms. The timeframe encompassed the beginning of the primary calendar, including the Iowa caucus and New Hampshire primary race, and stretched through to Clinton’s concession to Obama on June 7, 2008.
Each of the magazines’ articles were found using different databases. I accessed the *Newsweek* archive using Factiva, filtering out opinion and online-only pieces for a total of 163. *US News & World Report* keeps its complete archive on its website, and by setting my date parameters and using the search terms I found over 150 articles. I then whittled the *US News* pieces down by throwing out any that were filed as a blog or under the opinion section, bringing the total to 114. *TIME* has its own paid archive of the magazine, and I paid the $3.99 monthly fee to have access to the 114 articles that I needed for this research, also deleting any that were filed under opinion.

I created a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to keep the coding process streamlined. Along with noting basic information like the name of the article, the author and the publication, I used five different columns to sort the coding information. “Major content focus BO” tracked the article’s main focus on Obama as a candidate, policymaker, his education or his family. “Major content focus HC” looked at the same broad-stroke information but focused on Clinton. This allowed me to easily look at the how the content of the articles describes the candidate in areas such as their family, education, and professional experience. For the second part of the coding process I focused on Hillary Clinton. Using the “Kanter” column, I indicated which of Kanter’s four stereotypes of professional women the author employed, if any. I chose between four options in this column - mother, pet, iron maiden and sex object. Under the “Kanter words” column, I listed which words were used in this frame by using the descriptors Kanter provided and others that I found were similar. In the final column, simply titled “notes,” I put down any differences that wouldn’t neatly fit in the other columns that I believed would be useful to my research. This was valuable for me in tracking any other trends I saw.
emerging or indicating when I thought a column served as a particularly good example of something. Finally, when noting the author, I changed any female writers to be highlighted yellow so I could understand if the writer’s gender had anything to do with the way that he or she chose to frame the candidates or influenced the language.

Findings

The first of my three research questions was certainly the widest, but it also gave me the most flexibility to look for problematic linguistic usage in the magazine pieces I read. For the findings for this question, I primarily turn to the “notes” section of my coding, in which I noted my reactions about the choices that writers used when chronicling Clinton’s campaign. These allowed me to look beyond the words and broad focus points and really get into the idea of how the writers’ choices about Clinton as a candidate influenced their descriptions.

Billary

One of the most notable tropes was the recurrence of Bill Clinton in the writing. The former president was active in Hillary Clinton’s campaign, particularly in the early stages around the Iowa caucus and New Hampshire primaries, so it was unsurprising that he appeared in the reportage for his stump speeches. But even beyond campaign reportage Bill became a central part of the conversation, with almost speculative type pieces about how Clinton would potentially run her presidency alongside her husband. This was particularly striking to me because even when Clinton’s campaign did not involve Bill, his absence and his influence was an integral part of the pieces.
“Billary” was evoked several times to refer to the Clintons on the campaign trail. This term found its way into each of the publications, but it was never reported in a journalistic fashion. It was accepted as a common colloquialism that wouldn’t seem out of place on a blog, but seemed strange employed in actual campaign reporting. Anytime Billary was referenced their relationship was a central part of the conversation, and it typically cast the candidate Clinton in a negative light.

Clinton was frequently painted as having lost control of her husband, who was still hungry for the spotlight after his own presidency. There were several articles in the research devoted to her lack of control. *US News & World Report* seemed particularly fixated on the phenomenon of Clinton controlling her husband. “Former President Bill Clinton Tones it Down to Help His Wife, Hillary,” “Who Can Keep Bill Clinton in Line?,” “Bill Clinton Asks For a Second Chance,” all focused on Clinton’s failures to control her husband and how it could hurt her and ultimately hurt her campaign.

But Clinton wasn’t just painted as a failing wife. She was also a beneficiary of former President Clinton’s political success. In *Newsweek’s* “Calling in a Late Family Intervention,” *US News*’ “Clinton Fights For Voters in Obama Territory,” Clinton’s success, at least partially, was attributed to her husband’s background. He becomes almost as integral to the story as she does. Her experience as First Lady is also evoked frequently when the writers mention Bill. Granted, this was also a huge part of Clinton’s campaign rhetoric. She often used her experience as First Lady to tout her diplomacy abilities. But though she was painted as an aggressive First Lady with an active role in her husband’s presidency, it is just the opposite when she is the candidate. As a candidate it was speculated that she would run a “co-presidency” with her husband that, according
to many of the articles, would be an equal playing field. The former president was never painted as an intrusion, but a partner. It was almost as if they were running a campaign for his third term.

Although Michelle Obama was out on the campaign trail with her husband, she was rarely written about in the articles. The only piece I encountered in my research that discussed her at length, “Just Don’t Know What To Do with Myself,” also contained interesting commentary about how strange it was that the former President Clinton was often lambasted for campaigning for his wife, yet Michelle Obama was largely left out of the conversation.

Yet this seems almost unavoidable. The Clintons were political superstars, both from their time in the White House and separate accomplishments. Michelle, on the other hand, was virtually unknown before Obama came out as a candidate in the 2008 primary. Both of the Clintons were subjects of interest; whereas Michelle, until Obama became the Democratic nominee, was not a compelling figure to the media.

Hillary Clinton as a woman’s champion

It was almost never backed up with actual statistics, but Clinton was always painted as popular amongst women. It is true, in certain states and at certain points of the campaign, Clinton polled better among women, but throughout the campaign that support faltered. It wasn’t an across-the-board fact about the campaign, but it was continuously promoted as a fact. In the same way, Obama was propped up as the champion of black Americans. But although this was mentioned as one of his key voting demographics, the specifics of the bloc weren’t discussed in the articles — unlike the women. Articles
danced around the fact that Obama was popular among African Americans largely because he could represent them in an unprecedented way. The articles, however, had no problem saying that women were voting for Clinton – or at least perceived to – for the same reasons. In a *US News & World Report* article, “Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama Look For Ways to Break Out,” Kenneth Walsh went as far as to say that women voted for Clinton as a point of “gender pride.” Other articles explored the women who did not feel obligated to vote for Clinton because of their shared gender as a sort of anomaly. In another article for *US News*, Nikki Schwab chronicled these types of voters, going into great pains to establish Obama’s growing bloc of women voters and painting them as some sort of outlier.

But if African Americans decided not to vote for Obama, they weren’t discussed at length or really at all. There was something about women voting for Clinton that was at once expected but also able to be defied. Black Americans either didn’t have that luxury or the writers were uncomfortable discussing it as a possibility. It was often recognized in the articles that the two candidates would break boundaries, but only one of those groups seemed off limits to discussion.

First of her name

AP and Chicago style dictate that if you have two people in the same family, both of them will need to be referred to by their first name. But with Clinton she was frequently referred as simply “Hillary.” Often this was in lieu of referring to her husband by his first name. The former president frequently had a work around in his name, either referring to him by his former title or letting him simple remain “Clinton.” His wife,
however, was nearly always “Hillary” if she was referred to in the same article as he was, even if she was mentioned higher in the article than she was.

But more surprising was the fact that even when there was no other Clinton in the article, Hillary was still, at times referred to by her first name. *TIME* was particularly flagrant in calling the senator by her name. It seemed that this flouted not only AP style, but the publication’s guidelines as well. There was no instance that I saw in the articles that I coded from any publication in which Barack Obama was referred to only by his first name. Even in *TIME*, where the writers seemed very comfortable calling Clinton by her first name, Obama was always referred to in proper AP style.

This was extremely surprising to me. As I was pulling articles initially, before I had thrown out all of the online-only pieces, I saw a lot of headlines that referred to Clinton as “Hillary.” I was surprised that articles such as “Letting Hillary Be Hillary,” “What Does Hillary Want?” and “Hillary’s Hidden Hand” were not a product of blog style, or at least a choice from an editorial. This could be an area of future research, because I believe that Clinton’s first name was used as a function of her gender. It is unclear if Sarah Palin, however, was ever called Sarah in print publications in a similar manner.

Although campaign materials put out by her own staff frequently refer to Clinton by her first name, other candidates such as Rand Paul, who also have campaign slogans using their first name, are never referred to as simply “Rand.” Clinton may have used “Hillary” as part of her brand, but that shouldn’t mean that reporters should use it - especially when she is the only candidate they call by first name.
Prominent stereotypes:

Iron maiden

In assigning’s Kanter’s stereotypes of professional women to the writing about Clinton, the iron maiden depiction was used almost three times as much as any of the others in the adjectives and descriptors. Kanter summarizes the iron maiden stereotype as women who were “stereotyped as tougher than they are,” and “trapped in a more militant stance than they might otherwise take.” There has been a lot of chatter – both academic and from media critics —about Clinton’s frequent characterization as aggressive and cutthroat. In journalistic writing, I was shocked by how many palpable examples there were of this. Out of all of the coding work I’ve done, the depiction as iron maiden was the least buried in its own rhetoric. There were few times in my coding where I employed a feminist lens to find these terms, rather, I could easily pick out the abundantly clear examples of how Clinton was cast as the militant candidate.

Across each of the publications, but most notably in TIME and Newsweek, there were strong words used to describe both Clinton and her campaign strategy. In “It’s Not Over Yet,” TIME’s Karen Tumulty called the candidate, who was struggling to stay relevant in the Democratic primary race, “cajoling” and “arm-twisting,” to both her potential voters and to her political equals. Her colleague Joe Klein wrote that she was a “robo-pol,” a “tireless” force on the campaign trail who was waging an “assault” on the Obama campaign. Newsweek called her “overbearing” and “penetrating,” and in a separate article she was “confrontational” and “chilling.”

Some of the examples of the iron maiden stereotype weren’t quite so overt. Her campaign was often described as having “bitterness” to it when she was being foiled by
the Obama campaign, which was generally depicted with throw-no-punches niceties. She was also described on several occasions as being “ruthless” against her opponent Obama. Generally, if Clinton and Obama were mentioned in equal amounts, the negative adjectives about Clinton were severely reduced. But when she was discussed more in the article, the writer seemed to take license to use such characterizations.

The iron maiden stereotype was reinforced with the constant use of battle terms when referencing Clinton’s actions toward Obama. The literature review indicated that battle terms were often employed in political writing, something that this research easily reinforced. Across each of the publications words such as “battle,” “combat” and “fighting” were used frequently. Occasionally the adjectives and verbs were more colorful, including “slugfest,” “knock-down, drag-out” and “tooth-and-nail.”

Pet

Although infrequent, Clinton was occasionally painted as her husband’s pet, or as Kanter describes the stereotype, “a cheerleader for shows of prowess.” In the context of the campaign, this stereotype most often came up in when Clinton was perceived to be softening her image. This maybe meant letting Bill or Chelsea serve as a surrogate on the campaign trail or allowing herself to get “misty,” as Newsweek put it. The pet stereotype often came up alongside her former role as First Lady, called Bill’s “cheerleader,” by Newsweek article “How They Have Lost.”

Most frequently, Clinton’s characterization as a pet wasn’t neatly defined. She was almost never written as the deferent campaigner or wife who would define this categorization, but the writing about her took on those qualities, just not as the primary
characterization. On seven occasions, I used both iron maiden and pet to code the articles. This was usually in a situation in which Clinton was being painted as the preeminent loser, and used words such as “haughty,” “weak,” “hopeless” and “vainglorious.” In these cases, her confidence was underscored by her perceived inability to call the fight against Obama, who had taken an almost insurmountable lead over Clinton by May 2008. The press put her as the victim to her own campaign, with people around her forced to take the reins and allow her to act as a flailing figurehead. She was at once cast as unstoppable and an inevitable failure. Thus, the writing about Clinton, in these cases, embodied the battling strength of a candidate willing to fight and the failing campaigner who needed to be helped along by her husband and support staff to continue.

Mother and sex object

Clinton was never depicted using the mother or sex object stereotype. Based on the predominant findings of this critical discourse analysis, this is unsurprising. Kanter’s mother stereotype generally depicts women as caring and understanding, a description that was never afforded to Clinton. Rather, the writers in this study framed her as the relentless go-getter, which landed her easily in the realm of an iron maiden rather than a gentle mother.

Clinton’s appearance was rarely discussed, so it is also unsurprising that she wasn’t characterized as a sex object. Kanter’s explanation of the stereotype goes beyond it being an overtly sexual one, but to also encompass a woman who is described with overly feminine traits. The only time that I found in my coding that Clinton was remotely characterized as feminine were the references to her getting “misty” at a campaign event.
in New Hampshire. Even still, that fell into the pet category rather than the sex object, because it was her showing emotion rather than using her femininity.

Major content focus

The major content focus of the two candidates was usually the same. If Barack Obama was being discussed as a candidate, there were few times when the magazine’s focused on a completely different area for Hillary Clinton. For an overwhelming majority of the articles, both of the candidates were framed as candidates or policymakers. The articles rarely delved primarily into other aspects of Clinton’s life such as family, but none of the articles I analyzed did this with Barack Obama. The rare instances in which family was mentioned as the primary focus for Clinton was mostly due to the fact that it talked about her husband as the primary focus of her campaign, but not necessarily from a technical campaign aspect. Her husband’s presidency and his established reputation in the press seemed to take precedence over her experience as both First Lady and a New York senator to the point that, as Obama was being discussed for his merits as a candidate, Clinton was talked about as a sideshow to her husband.

A few times, the focus also widened to include her daughter, Chelsea. The Obama girls were never mentioned, though that wasn’t necessarily surprising within the context of my research. When she was growing up in the White House, Chelsea was often left out of the press. There were several articles that spoke specifically to this fact, juxtaposed with the idea that now, as a consenting adult, Chelsea had chosen to throw herself into the press machine alongside her parents. “Chelsea Finds Her Voice” and “Chelsea Come Lately,” referenced the woman who Maureen Dowd called in The New York Times “mute
Chelsea.” As a public figure who grew up in the spotlight, it didn’t seem strange that her decision to campaign for her mother made headlines. The Obama girls, both significantly younger and unable to make an independent contribution to their father’s campaign, would have been bizarre for the press to mention.

Author’s gender

I found that the author’s gender made little difference in the way that Clinton was portrayed on both a larger scale and at a linguistic level. In a big picture sense, Clinton was overwhelmingly portrayed as an iron maiden and the articles focused on her as a candidate. There was no significant variation between male and female writers in this, although I documented many more pieces written by men. In a linguistic sense, women were not kinder to the candidate. They were just as likely to use harsh adjectives or call her by her first name as their male colleagues, or at least based on the sample size I could not conclude that they were more likely.

Conclusion

Ultimately, I made significant headway in addressing my three research questions, restated here:

RQ1: What are the differences, if any, in the language used to report Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama’s candidacies for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination in *TIME*, *Newsweek* and *US News & World Report*?
RQ2: What prominent stereotypes, including those of iron maiden, sex object, mother and pet as established by Rosabeth Moss Kanter in her book *Women of the Corporation*, are presented in the language used to describe Hillary Clinton?

RQ3: What major content focus do the articles about Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama have in terms of their status as a parent, a policymaker, education, or other areas?

There were certainly differences in the writing around Clinton and her campaign and Obama’s. Ultimately, the media used words that simply would not be easily reversible to use for Obama, such as “ruthless” and “ice queen.” Although it can be argued that Obama’s campaign tactics were much different than Clinton’s and those descriptors might not apply, there would be no feasible situation, from what the research revealed, in which any of those negative words would be used to describe Obama or any other male candidate.

Preceding the 2012 election, the Women’s Media Center released its “chart of reversibility,” or words that the organization found were used to describe women and countered by the male equivalent of that word. The list was derived from case studies done for the center’s “Guide to Gender Neutral Coverage of Women Candidates and Politicians,” and though the guide didn’t look specifically at Clinton’s coverage, many of the semantic differences were similar. For example, a writer might call a female candidate “opinionated,” but choose to call a man “knowledgeable.” Other examples included calling a woman “shrill,” which was applied to Clinton several times in the analyzed articles, but calling a man “determined.”
The Women’s Media Center guide was not used as part of my backbone of scholarly work, but it was an interesting thing to run across after my coding had concluded. Many of the words that were used to describe Clinton in the coding sheets, such as “nagging,” “aggressive,” “shrill,” “ice queen,” and “cold,” also made an appearance on the chart of reversibility, each coupled with the male equivalent of the descriptor.

It was surprising that there were no instances of Clinton’s appearance that came up in the articles, which I expected would be a difference between her and Obama. Neither of the candidates was noted for their dress or appearance in the newsmagazines, neither in a positive or negative light.

The biggest difference in coverage of Clinton and Obama was the fire-and-ice dynamic the media painted of the two candidates. At the earlier stages of the campaign, Obama’s tactics were rarely mentioned; whereas, Clinton was painted as a warrior queen on the “ruthless” path to the nomination. This echoed research from Bystrom, Robertson, and Banwart, which showed that women in politics are generally the primary focus of an article (2009). But as Clinton’s nomination lost its inevitability, Obama’s strategy as the cool, calm and collected candidate was painted more vigorously by the media. Although it might be true that Clinton was a more aggressive candidate, the way that she was written about revealed gender stereotyping from the press. Unfortunately, unlike previous research revealed, this gender slant was not the warm and loving boost that can sometimes help female candidates (Bystrom et al., 2009).

One of the differences that I did not anticipate while conducting this analysis was how much Clinton’s husband played a role in the reporting about her. Former President
Bill Clinton was inextricably linked to Clinton’s campaign whether he was out stumping for her or standing on the sidelines. Many of the political achievements she touted were partially credited to him, as were many of her political failures.

Michelle Obama did not appear as frequently in press coverage of her husband as Bill appeared in Clinton’s. As a former president, he is a person of interest. Further research could be done to understand if Clinton’s husband was mentioned so frequently as a result of her being a woman or if it was simply because he had existing star power heading into the campaign. This could be achieved by choosing a female candidate with a relatively unknown spouse running against a male candidate whose spouse had similar unrecognizability.

Kanter’s iron maiden stereotype surfaced most frequently in the reporting on Clinton, which was unsurprising to me given my existing knowledge of the candidates’ reputation in the press. Clinton was rarely cast into the pet stereotype, and when she was it was because Bill made an appearance in the story. And never once was Clinton painted as the sex object or mother. I believe that her primary role as an iron maiden surfaced most frequently because of the qualities that Clinton as a candidate possesses – tough, tenacious, and commanding. Further research could explore female candidates or politicians with a different leadership style to see if Kanter’s other stereotypes make their way into the coverage.

Much like Winfrey & Carlin’s (2009) study, I found that Kanter’s iron maiden was a detrimental factor to Clinton’s campaign. Clinton was consistently painted as a relentless fighter, something that typically wouldn’t be admonished in a candidate. But as Clinton fought for her political life, so to speak, she was at once praised and chided for
her tenacity. Obama emerged as the cool-headed frontrunner, and Clinton was painted as “vainglorious” for staying in the race in what the writer indicated was past her prime. This reinforced previous findings that women in politics must learn how to play both sides of the coin in gender roles (Griswold, 2007). Because Clinton could not be deferent to a man in conceding the nomination sooner, she was singlehandedly splitting the Democratic party. But if she had conceded, she would have let down her backers, who in certain states were still numerous, and betrayed the image the press painted of her as the woman who wouldn’t stop. The press both expected her to maintain the fighter attitude and concede.

The struggle to balance the both male and female qualities in the descriptions of Clinton, however, appeared even before writers started inadvertently calling for her withdrawal. On several occasions, writers depicted Clinton as attempting to “humanize” herself in some way to match Obama’s charisma. This was often followed by indications that she had, in some way, failed. According to past research, the qualities that Clinton was charged with having should have helped her credibility as a public speaker, and thus her campaign. Public speakers are generally successful if they are aggressive, free of emotion, and assertive, traits that are generally associated with men rather than women, who tend to be characterized as submissive (Manning, 2006). Clinton was sometimes referred to as a robot, generally unfeeling in her speeches. But when Clinton took a softer approach to her campaigning, she was called out for being ineffective. The masculine terms typically employed in political writing were generally used to insult Clinton. Much like Taylor’s (2010) discourse analysis of Nancy Pelosi, Clinton was painted as manipulative through words like “formidable” and “confrontational.”
This played out most prominently as Clinton’s campaign started losing traction in April 2008. Although the media gave her credit for being unrelenting in her candidacy, noting that this was one of the most recognizable traits about Clinton, it also seemed like a call for her to step aside. There were pieces dedicated to hypothesizing, through the context of her time as first lady, why she wouldn’t just concede the campaign. The pieces seemed to point the finger at Clinton for dividing the Democratic primary vote.

Yet simultaneously, Clinton was held up for her historic role as one of the first truly viable female presidential candidates. Several articles spoke about her voter base, noting that her supporters, mostly identified as women, would be angry if she decided to step aside. Thus, articles lacked any kind of real resolution for the candidate. Writers were never willing to commit to either side of the conundrum of if Clinton should step aside, thus letting down her voting base, or stay in the race, ultimately hurting the Democratic party. In that was she was held to a double standard.

There was little difference in the content focus between Obama and Clinton. Both of the politicians were overwhelmingly written about in the context of their campaigns. I was a bit surprised that there was not more about Bill Clinton’s affair while in the White House and the potential implications on his wife’s campaign. I thought that, given the Clintons’ background with the press, those details would become part of the reporting on Clinton. Rather, the newsmagazine coverage I analyzed did not expressly mention the affair. When the affair was alluded to, which was only occasionally, it was usually used as a portrait of how Clinton now held a tight leash on her husband, which contributed to her iron maiden stereotype.
Wasburn (2011) found that female candidates were asked more frequently about issues that specifically related to women. I found this to be true, but not necessarily from a policy standpoint. Clinton was frequently discussed in terms of her female voting bloc. As one of the first viable female presidential candidates, Clinton was held up as a symbol for women breaking barriers. She addressed this status in speeches, and it was certainly talked about in the newsmagazine articles about her. But by holding her up as a champion of women, the press also cast her as a symbol of everything women had to lose if Clinton did not secure the nomination. Many of the articles painted her female voting bloc as potentially angry or disappointed if she didn’t win, but not because it was a candidate that they had supported, but because she was a woman.

Wasburn’s (2011) study was particularly interesting to revisit because of its five established characteristics of women’s campaigns in news discourse. This critical discourse analysis did not reveal, as Wasburn’s did, that women were reported on less than men in a campaign or that the focus of the coverage would be on non-policy related issues. It did, however, back up Wasburn’s findings that the media would question a woman’s credibility in office and that women were typically asked more about topics related to women (2011).

The newsmagazine coverage of Clinton often hypothesized about what kind of president she would be. The most popular conclusion, it seemed, is that she would share her presidency with her husband or that her successful election would be Bill’s third term in office. The implication was that she either was running as a divisive way for Bill to resume power in the White House or that she was incapable of making decisions on her own. Wasburn (2011) found that women’s qualifications were questioned by other
candidates and in the press. Although there was evidence in the reporting that other candidates called Clinton’s qualifications into question, my analysis found that the press did this on its own without outside voices.

In the coverage of Hillary Clinton’s campaign, it was clear that the media tried to foist sexist expectations onto Clinton that did not belong, but not necessarily in the overtly feminine ways that many people think of when they talk about sexist writing. Through the linguistic choices of the writers, the newsmagazine coverage in this critical discourse analysis revealed a wider problem with women in politics. The media tried to sort Clinton into a categorical box of iron maiden, but then criticized her for fitting their expectations, and typically the country’s expectations for a strong leader.

A similar critical discourse analysis of Clinton’s expected 2016 run could build upon this research. Perhaps with women appearing more and more frequently in politics – and without the shock of a viable female candidate for the first time – updated newsmagazine coverage of Clinton would not be rife with sexist underpinnings. It is also unclear if Clinton’s background in the press had anything to do with her special brand of notoriety in her 2008 Democratic primary campaign. Research that focused on lesser-known female candidates would also be a useful look into how female candidates are characterized.

This research is particularly significant as Hillary Clinton heads out on the 2016 campaign trail. Clinton will likely face many of the things that I have pointed out here from her 2008 campaign, but they won’t be met without scrutiny. There are already groups, such as the “HRC Super Vols,” who have pledged to call out sexist writing about Clinton the in the mainstream media. There is increased awareness of the problems
Clinton faced from the media in 2008, and with research like my analysis, there can be
more awareness of exactly how pervasive gendered language is in political writing.

The benefits of this research are not just for Clinton, however. All female
candidates can benefit from the media’s awareness of gendered language in reporting,
because it could potentially stop them from being outsiders in the political world. When
there are differences in the way female politicians are written about compared with male
politicians, it inevitably will cast women as an exception to the rule. If the press can be
aware of and mitigate the gendered writing about female politicians, there is a potential
for more women candidates to feel comfortable stepping forward.

I used past research of media coverage of female candidates as a foundation for
my research. This update both reinforces and contradicts trends other researchers have
identified. For example, female candidates are continuing to appear in the media more
frequently, but they are still questioned for their leadership skills. Although women are
becoming more visible in politics that exposure hasn’t led to increased confidence in their
abilities. This critical discourse analysis provided the groundwork for continued research
on Clinton and women in politics. It would be helpful for someone to conduct a similar
critical discourse analysis after the 2016 election to understand if there have been any
shifts in the last eight years.

This research is also a benefit to the field of journalism as it continues to diversify
and write about groups that are traditionally not covered – such as female politicians.
From my experience, many newsrooms tend to be filled with mostly white men. Their
subjects, often times, are mostly white men. There needs to be a disruption in the media
that is written by, for, and about white men, and allowing gendered language and clear
differences in the writing about female and male politicians will not further that goal. Research like this analysis will help bring these issues to light, which I believe will help the profession of journalism as a whole.

The most disturbing differences in the writing about Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama will continue to surface in other campaigns until society recognizes that sexism can exist outside of overt misogyny. Sexism is deeply engrained in the fabric of our society, but it seems that many people are only willing to define sexism by obvious cheek-pinch type acts. It’s doubtful that we’ll see that kind of treatment from the media in 2016, but there will undoubtedly be subtle examples of sexism that many won’t recognize as such.

Identifying coded sexist language and trends can help journalists and society as a whole understand that sexism doesn’t stop at cat calling or even wage disparity. If the media was more aware of the language used to discuss Clinton, it would perhaps stop it from being perpetuated. In turn, the information that readers received about female candidates wouldn’t have a sexist tilt, which could ultimately help voters make better choices about candidates. Journalists have the power to influence people with their words. Therefore, it is important for reporters to understand the implications of their semantic choices.
References


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<tr>
<th>Article name</th>
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<td>pet</td>
<td>&quot;corporate Hillary&quot;</td>
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**Appendix A: Coding book**

| Obama Overaged Teen Wasted to Settled | Michael Schudt | US News | Policymaker | Policymaker | Iron marker | "Kerry" | Used her as a point of her, but Very specific of the term. |
| Meet the Superdelegates: Remarks of Various | Michael Schudt | US News | Policymaker | Policymaker | Pet | "Kerry" |
| Meet the Newsmakers: Remarks of Various | Michael Schudt | US News | Policymaker | Policymaker | Pet | "Kerry" |
| Bill Clinton's Female Strategy: Clinton's View of | Michael Schudt | US News | Policymaker | Policymaker | Pet | "Kerry" |
| Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama Look for Ways to | Hannah Waish | US News | Policymaker | Policymaker | Iron marker | "pension" | Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama look for Week to break out. |
| Who Can Take Illinois? | Hannah Waish | US News | Family | People | pet | "corporate Hillary" | Previously in serious terms as she struggled to build on to relationships. He talked about clean arrows among white women even though he was the whole party. |
| Bill Clinton Blows a Second Chance | LeKhalil | US News | Family | Family | pet | "corporate Hillary" |

**Obama Overaged Teen Wasted to Settled**

Meet the Superdelegates: Remarks of Various

Meet the Newsmakers: Remarks of Various

Hillary Clinton's Female Strategy: Clinton's View of

Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama Look for Ways to

Who Can Take Illinois?

Bill Clinton Blows a Second Chance
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<td><strong>Key Issues</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Political Strategies</strong></td>
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**Maryland Governor:**

- Women Don’t Fear Obligation to Vote for Clinton
- Clinton and Obama Make Last-Ditch Efforts in Pennsylvania
- Clinton’s Pennsylvania Victory Depends on Democratic Women
- Clinton and Obama Voters Switch at Last Minute

**North Carolina Governor:**

- Clinton and Obama Lack In Personalizing Their Messages

**Hillary Clinton:**

- Clinton and Obama Campaigns Could Be Too Little, Too Late
- Clinton’s Women Support Her and Sanders for2016

**Barack Obama:**

- Obama Shortcuts

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**Criminal Justice Reform:**

- Campaigns Struggle with Criminal Justice Reform

**Facebook:**

- Facebook’s Influence on Campaigns

**Social Media:**

- Social Media’s Role in Election Campaigns

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**Media:**

- Media’s Role in Shaping Public Perception

**Advertising:**

- Advertising’s Effect on Campaigns

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**Elections:**

- Campaigns’ Strategies for Winning Elections

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**Voter Turnout:**

- Strategies for Increasing Voter Turnout

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**Conclusion:**

- Conclusion on Campaigns’ Efforts

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### The Winning Experience

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teresa Zaneva</td>
<td>Newsweek</td>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>“Teresa is a strong and confident candidate. Her leadership and vision are clear.”</td>
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### The Reputation Gap

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<tr>
<td>Richard Stuffle</td>
<td>Newsweek</td>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>“Richard has a proven track record in the business world.”</td>
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### The Campaign: A Newsweek Series

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<tr>
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<th>Description</th>
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<th>Candidate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Hamsell</td>
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<td>Candidate</td>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>“Mark is a dedicated and hardworking candidate.”</td>
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### A World of Challenges

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<td>&lt;place holder&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;place holder&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;place holder&gt;</td>
<td>&lt;place holder&gt;</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>“The challenges facing our city are significant, but we are up to the task.”</td>
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### The особь

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Thomas</td>
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<td>“Michael brings a fresh perspective and passion to the campaign.”</td>
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### The Road to Victory

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<td>Positive</td>
<td>“Jessica has a solid foundation for her campaign.”</td>
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### The Future

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### The Unknown

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Transactions</td>
<td>Newsweek</td>
<td>Candidate</td>
<td>Candidate</td>
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<td>“James has the experience needed to lead our community.”</td>
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### The Battle for the Senate

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Appendix B: Project proposal and literature review

This is my project proposal as approved by committee before I headed to Washington, D.C. The only change in my proposal was how I accessed the articles. I used the database Factiva to access *Newsweek*, and the websites of *TIME* and *US News & World Report* to access those archives. I originally thought I would use Lexis Nexis to access the articles needed for my analysis, but they were unavailable on that database.

Introduction

When I began graduate work at the University of Missouri, I came in with a year’s worth of full-time reporting experience. Although most entry-level journalism jobs are usually a general assignment position, mine was quite specific. I was a music critic and journalist at the Austin alternative weekly, *The Austin Chronicle*. I landed the job that I had dreamed of since I naively thought that all music journalists rode on tour buses and drank with the band after work. And to an extent, as I began to carve out my spot among Austin music and culture critics, my life consisted of daily concerts and a fair amount of beer.

During the Texas legislature’s 83rd session, there was an omnibus abortion bill that I had paid special attention to since it had been introduced. I crossed the dimly lit hallway between the music office and news and managed to successfully convince the news editor to let me contribute to the reporting on the controversial bill. It was the first time that I had reported from the Capitol, and from the moment I set foot into the marbled rotunda, I was hooked. Each day the bill came up for debate, I headed to the Capitol. From the press gallery I watched the drama unfold, from Sen. Wendy Davis’ now-famous
filibuster to the eventual passage. The entire time I watched, researched, and asked questions. I had never been more proud of my work.

My music editor, Raoul Hernandez, pulled me aside one evening after the session had ended. I had already turned in my two-weeks notice and let the Chronicle family know that I would be heading to the University of Missouri in the fall. I was still hesitant about going back to school after only a year as a full-time professional, and I found myself hoping that he would ask me to stay onboard. Instead, he encouraged me to stop writing about music completely. Initially, I was shocked. I had spent my entire undergraduate career working toward this goal and felt that my abilities were being questioned. Instead, Hernandez had more practical advice. After working with him for two years, one while I was still a student at the University of Texas, he commented that he had never seen my writing as passionate as when I wrote about politics. He saw in my writing what I felt as I sat in the Senate chamber, that I was finally doing something important.

So when I arrived at MU in August 2013, I threw all of my energy into political writing and reporting. During my first semester I pitched and wrote a freelance piece for Dissent on Missouri’s failed gun nullification bill. As I worked on this piece, which I spent two months reporting, I worked with Vox magazine as the digital managing editor. While there, I refined the skills that I gained as a multimedia journalism major, working with student digital editors to manage social media and website story presentation. The next year, I spent five months covering reproductive health and higher education legislation for the Jefferson City News Tribune and Columbia Missourian for the Advanced Reporting class. Since May, I have boiled down complicated political topics at
both state and national levels for the women’s site Bustle. And leading up to the 2014 midterm elections, I wrote a *Vox* cover story on millennial voting habits and why they have disengaged from the political process. In the past two years, I have felt like an integral part of one of the key tenants of journalism — serving as a watchdog for our government.

When I leave the graduate school, I want to pursue political reporting with the eventual goal of becoming a political columnist. I understand that I must first master the nuances of political reporting before I begin to inject my own opinion and analysis, and I believe that an entry-level job covering politics will be what gets me there. That is why I chose Washington, D.C. as the location for my professional project. I have the opportunity to expose myself to political coverage at the national level and learn from seasoned reporters who will hopefully show me the ins and outs of the nation’s capital.

**Professional skills component**

I will be interning at the Washington D.C. bureau of the media conglomerate E.W. Scripps for the spring 2015 semester. I will be working with DecodeDC, a new online-based podcast and blog purchased by Scripps in July 2013. The project was started by Andrea Seabrook, a longtime National Public Radio political correspondent, with the goal of making political issues applicable to audience’s day-to-day lives. DecodeDC uses graphics, blogs, podcasts, and online interactive features to deliver political news in an entertaining and useful way.

The nascent podcast and blog are still evolving in their scope, and in the next year will be turning out more content than ever before. I will be working on blogging,
podcasts, and web interactive elements for the site, which will give me a hands-on experience with political reporting and analysis. The Washington bureau chief Ellen Weiss was most interested in my experience with Bustle and web design, and she assured me that I would have ample opportunity to write posts for the blog and work on graphics for the website. My background in digital media will make me an asset to the DecodeDC team. My professional background working with blogs and websites and my multimedia journalism degree from the University of Texas have given me the skills to meaningfully contribute to a developing web-based project.

I will be working with Phil Pruitt, Scripps’ director of digital content. He will serve as my on-site supervisor and will oversee the work that I am doing at the D.C. office. I will be working directly with Pruitt and receive assignments from him though I am also encouraged to bring my own ideas to the team. I will work at DecodeDC five days a week for seven hours a day, with time allotted for the Friday seminars with Barbara Cochran. My appointment will begin January 12, 2015, and end May 1, 2015.

I will be blogging, creating podcasts, and building interactive elements for the site, which will serve as the abundant physical evidence needed to complete my graduate degree. DecodeDC is still a small operation, and Weiss assured me that this will not be a coffee-fetching internship. When I present my professional project, I will have a bundle of blogs, podcasts, and web elements that I have created that will serve as a testament to my direct involvement at DecodeDC.

I will submit weekly field notes to my committee members, Jennifer Rowe, Barbara Cochran, and Ryan Thomas, detailing what professional work I have done at
Scripps and progress with my scholarly research component. These notes will also include what was discussed in the Friday seminar I will attend with Barbara Cochran.

**Research topic**

When George H.W. Bush took office in 1989, he had 12 grandchildren. There were no speculative headlines asking if he would be able to balance time doting on the grandchildren with leading the nation. No one conjectured that his role as a grandfather would in any way compromise his role as president (Fruman, 2014). However, on April 17, 2014, Chelsea Clinton, daughter of political power couple Bill and Hillary Clinton, announced that she was expecting a child that fall. In a *USA Today* article published online the day of the announcement, Chelsea’s pregnancy, the subject turned to the grandmother-to-be and potential presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton.

“For former president Bill Clinton and his wife have made no secret of their wish for a grandchild. It’s unclear how Chelsea’s pregnancy will affect Hillary Clinton, who is considering a race for president in 2016” (Camia, 2014, p. 5).

The standards for women in politics are often structured through antiquated views of a woman’s societal value (Anderson, Diabah, & hMensa 2011; Manning, 2006; Taylor, 2010). This is clearly demonstrated by the suggestion that Hillary’s presidential aspirations could be derailed by the birth of her first grandchild. Mitt Romney, who ran for president in 2012, had 18 grandchildren during his presidential bid but was never framed as a grandfather over being a viable political candidate (Boxer, 2012).

Research has established that women and men in politics are framed differently according to their gender. This critical discourse analysis seeks to identify how the
language magazines use to write about female politicians differs from how they write about male politicians. Using media framing and feminist theory as its theoretical framework, this analysis will identify the gender differences in media representation and how that is creating systematic barriers for women who want to enter politics. This critical discourse analysis of magazine articles about Hillary Clinton during her 2008 bid for president will serve as an examination of the differences between coverage of men and women in politics.

There have been many studies that look at the media framing of female political figures, but the magazine coverage of Clinton and her primary opponent for the Democratic nomination, Barack Obama, offers a chance to update those findings. Clinton is a particularly interesting candidate to study because she has many of the tools and experience that made her an extremely qualified candidate.

Despite an increase of women in political roles that have moved them away from being novelty political figures, they are still fighting a system that casts them as outsiders. Political writing about women still perpetuates stereotypes and gender bias that can have detrimental effects on their credibility as a political candidate (Anderson et al., 2011, Entman, 2010). If Clinton decides to run in 2016, her role as a grandmother to her first grandchild, Charlotte Clinton Mezvinsky, will perhaps become just as central in Clinton’s media coverage as her stance on foreign policy.

Addressing the inherent sexist frames used in political writing is key to eradicating the imbalance between the number of men and women in public office. Not only are these media frames reinforcing gender stereotypes, but they are also harmful to women who want to enter politics and voters who may already be reluctant to vote for
women. Media framing plays a central role in the way that women politicians are viewed, setting the lens through which the public understands and thinks of these women. In a secondary layer, the patriarchal systems that women in politics operate in, and thus which the journalists writing about them view them through, are also harmful for women’s success and the public’s perception of women in politics.

**Theoretical frameworks**

**Framing**

Some scholars maintain that second-level agenda setting is equivalent to framing. McCombs (1997) suggested that “framing is the selection of a restricted number of thematically related attributes for inclusion on the media agenda when a particular object is discussed.” Although this study does not choose to equate second-level agenda setting with framing, there are some inherent biases that contribute to what is perhaps a media contribution to the reinforcing sexist stereotypes, which could be attributed to the patriarchal construct of our society.

Tankard, Hendrickson, Silberman, Bliss, and Gahnem define a media frame as “the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration” (1991, p.3). Unlike McCombs’ (1997) idea that the media are choosing these elements as part of a media agenda, Tankard et al.’s definition of media framing paints framing as a wider idea. Framing, rather, incorporates a wide view of society as a factor, while agenda setting is more of a conscious act (Weaver, 1991).
Media framing focuses on how issues are reported and what is emphasized in that reporting. This is important in the context of this research because it offers a two-pronged approach to looking at women in the media — how they are reported on, and what precisely is focused on in the report. Because established scholarship has shown that women are generally characterized by their physical appearance rather than their policy making, this framework will be crucial to this research.

Framing is important for this research in particular, because of the rising number of voters who do not consistently side with a particular party. Media framing has the most impact on voters who lack a strong ideological conviction, the “swing” voters. If media coverage of women continues to be framed through harmful stereotypes identified in past research, coverage of female candidates could potentially turn a large part of the voting population against her (Entman, 2010).

Winfrey & Carlin looked at media coverage of both Alaska Governor Sarah Palin and Sen. Hillary Clinton during their 2008 campaigns for vice president and Democratic presidential nominee, respectively. By using media framing and research on the use of sexist language, Winfrey & Carlin identified different brands of sexism faced by the two candidates, but each dealt with stereotypes employed by the media that were, at least in some capacity, harmful to their separate campaign (2009). Winfrey & Carlin used four stereotypes of professional women established in Rosabeth Moss Kanter’s landmark book on women and power structures, Men and Women of the Corporation. The iron maiden stereotype is distinguished by adjectives such as “cold” or “intimidating,” and is often applied to women who exhibit traditionally masculine traits of ambition or aggression. The sex object stereotype can manifest in a wide range of discourse, from sexual
harassment to dress, and includes adjectives such as “sexy” or “pretty.” The mother stereotype usually focuses on the woman as a mother or exhibiting motherly traits, and plays out in discourse with words such as “compassionate” and “honest.” Finally, the pet stereotype evokes the idea that women should be unduly praised for their accomplishments or that a woman’s role is mainly as a support system. The stereotype is characterized by descriptors such as “precocious” and “cheerleader” (Kanter, 1977). They found that women are often represented by the media as a combination of these four stereotypes, each used in a way that can both harm and enhance their reputations (Winfrey & Carlin, 2009).

In their study of the media’s portrayal of female candidates in gubernatorial and Senate primary races, Bystrom, Robertson, and Banwart point out that there are significant differences in the way men and women are framed in the media. This study was interesting because it compared women and men directly to each other, and while it found that women tended to be the focus of the coverage, there were still many stereotypes at play that resulted in the coverage slanting toward the male candidate. The study did note that the stereotypes and shortcuts that the media and audiences often rely on to stereotype women in politics can sometimes work to the candidates’ advantage. For instance, women are considered more warm and loving (2009).

Feminist theory

The second framework, feminist theory, will be crucial to interpreting the findings and could help shed light on why women are still so scarce in politics and how gendered political reporting contributes to the phenomena. Feminist perspectives and research
challenge and question patriarchal systems that society operates through, with the promise of overturning the patriarchy as an accepted reality (Hesse-Biber, 2012).

Political reporting, which is still largely dominated by men, is often done through a male perspective by virtue of men being the ones to control the stories. This is reflective of the attitudes that women are faced with when they want to enter the political realm. Harp and Tremayne highlight the pervasive ideology that outlines the politics and political blogging — that under the patriarchy women are expected to occupy private spheres, where men are encouraged to take on leadership roles such as political positions (2006). Patriarchal underpinnings in society have relegated women to domesticity, where men are free from duties like housework and caring for children.

This manifests itself in the language used to discuss women and men. Feminist linguists have identified that language centers itself on men rather than women, in a phenomenon that Hellinger (2001) calls male as norm (MAN). Although in English there has been an increase in the feminization of language, such as adopting feminine suffixes (congresswoman) to words that are generally relegated to men, women still often find themselves feeling invisible in their own language (Hellinger, 2001). This is a byproduct of the patriarchy rooting itself in language, transforming it into a field where women are viewed as secondary parts of a language and, by extension, society. Using feminist framework in application to language will allow a critical look at how the patriarchal systems have invaded the language we use to speak and report on women.

This research will apply the findings of previous research that shows that politics are framed through masculinity (Anderson et al., 2011; Everitt, 2005; Manning, 2006). Women in politics must learn to embrace both their masculine and feminine attributes in
order to be successful (Griswold, 2007). Because gender plays a critical role to the female politician, this critical discourse analysis will use feminist theory to explain the political disparity between men and women. It will also use gender schema as an idea of how reporters and readers use shortcuts to digest information about candidates (Entman, 2010).

**Literature review**

**Media and politics**

Media play an essential role in politics and political engagement. The public depends on the media for its news, and count on news to chronicle the successes, failures, and the often gray areas in between those extremes of elected officials. The media can help create and foster feelings about politicians, including trust in political figures, their efficacy as officials, and general political knowledge. Studies have shown that media have a direct impact on political trust in particular, which could eventually lead to larger effects like decreased civic engagement (Corrigal-Brown & Wilkes, 2014).

With such an integral role in shaping political beliefs and perceptions, political journalists should exercise caution in how they cover political candidates. In a study on political reporters and their relationships with political sources, Revers (2011) noted that even though journalists were hesitant to burn bridges by publishing negative stories about their sources, many said that they felt a sense of satisfaction that was tied to fulfilling a journalistic duty if it indeed came to that point. Although journalists are seemingly thrilled with the idea of perpetuating some sort of journalistic integrity, there are still underpinnings of subjectivity that go into journalism (Revers, 2011). It is especially important, then, that journalists be conscious of the way they frame political figures. For
reporters covering women in particular, the subjective influences that leak into reporting could have detrimental effects on women candidates, who are already represented far less at the voting booths.

Framing is often lumped under the umbrella of cognitive media effects along with agenda-setting and priming, but when examining political communication Scheufele (2000) proposes that the group be broken up and examined with its own categorical differences. Framing and agenda setting still have similar characteristics that are key to understanding when conducting research on political communication. Partisanship, for example, has a significant effect on how audiences consume political news. Less-partisan readers to be affected more by all three of the cognitive media umbrella elements.

Information processing in audiences is also researched in the same way. But when re-examining the three media effects, framing differs from agenda-setting and priming in two major ways. First, framing relies on the hierarchy of the frames used in the media rather than the media agenda. This indicates that framing is more of an implicit effect of larger power structures rather than an intentional act by the media. Agenda-setting and priming also focus on the salience of the audience, whereas framing examines how the audience is framing the information presented (Scheufele, 2000). Overall, the updated definition of framing puts more responsibility on how the audience views political information in the context of existing power structures.

Gender in politics

Research on political coverage of women has established that campaigns of women are traditionally marked by five characteristics that reveal themselves in news
discourse. First, women receive less attention than male counterparts though as women become less of an anomaly in the political sphere that has started to shift (Wasburn, 2011). Second, reporting on women focuses on personal and trivial aspects such as their appearance, family and lifestyle rather than central campaign issues. Third, women face harsher character attacks and how those perceived drawbacks would affect their performance in office. Fourth, women are generally asked about their positions on policy that is traditionally geared toward women such as abortions, education and childcare while questions about the economy and the military are left for male candidates. Finally, the news media will question a woman’s ability to influence others if she is elected to office (Wasburn, 2011).

While women certainly can use the “feminine” attributes identified by Wasburn (2011) to their advantage, they also become more susceptible to more rigid frameworks and closely held stereotypes that make it difficult to influence the media’s agenda (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007). In countries such as Sweden and Norway, where women hold around 40 percent of cabinet positions, the issue of a candidate’s gender has become nearly obsolete (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007; Matland, 1994). Not so in the United States. In 2013, the U.S. had a record-breaking 19 percent of U.S. congressional seats filled by women. By continuing to perpetuate women’s role in politics differently from men’s, the media contribute to a cyclic and systematic barrier to women participating in the political sphere (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007).

Research has shown that the characteristics associated with men serve them as public speakers, which is a central role of politicians and one of the main sources of political reporting. Men are generally perceived as domineering figures: aggressive,
assertive, and freed of emotion. Women, by contrast, are expected to be submissive, able to counter the emotionless male with warmth. In politics, still operating under the ideals of the patriarchy, women’s personal rhetoric is at odds with the qualities that make a successful politician (Manning, 2006).

Language

Feminist linguistic theorists have defined feminism as “the practice of challenging the linguistic systems as well as the structures and institutions it produces, including education, politics, religion, and the economic system” (Manning, 2006, 111). Language reinforces gender power structures, and without taking steps to mitigate semantics that reinforce these stereotypes, the media will continue to perpetuate harmful gender roles about politicians (Anderson et al., 2011; Manning, 2006).

The very nature of politics, particularly in an age of increased partisanship that necessitates strength and will, puts women at a disadvantage. Because these stereotypical characteristics have been inextricably linked to gender roles and the constructs of language, they often play out in political writing. Werner and LaRussa (1985) and Brosioff and Merrill (1998) created a list of gender-specific characteristics to women: being soft-spoken, emotional, subjective, self-effacing, uncertain, humble, compliant, submissive, sincere, cooperative, fair-minded, and optimistic. Men, by contrast are characterized as being ineffective listeners, emotionally inexpressive, categorical, certain in their use of language, and dominating (Ivy & Backlund, 2004). Manning (2006) characterizes these traits in the context of communication as women having emotional connections, while men assume the role of experts.
Firmly rooted in semantics and a reliance on stereotyped gender characteristics, the language used in political reporting interprets all politicians in masculine terms (Anderson et al., 2011; Everitt, 2005; Manning, 2006). Using language that inherently favors men perpetuates the idea that women are in some way intruding in the political realm, effectively making and maintaining their status as outsiders in a male-dominated world (Anderson et al., 2011). Because the public relies on the media as a watchdog, the images formed through semantics and the frames put forth by news outlets can have powerful effects on the public’s perception of female politicians.

In order to be successful in politics, Griswold (2007) asserted that women must at once embrace masculine and feminine rhetoric as part of their political speech. When they deviate too far from the personal, warm rhetoric that have become a part of the feminine ideal, women are scrutinized in the media and by the public. If they embody this rhetoric, however, they are decried as politicians for lacking leadership qualities. So how, then, can we pick a middle ground for reporting on both men and women? Griswold (2007) argued that gender-neutral language and representation in the media causes two major problems: It introduces the idea that gender and politics should be separated, and that gender neutral language is not powerful enough to reinforce or change much in the way of women in politics. Rather, women should be able to tap in equally to male and female rhetoric to become successful politicians.

Political writing tends to include violent language more suited to the aggressive nature of men constructed by the media. Images of warmongering, violence, and confrontation are reinforced by verb usage like “fought” and “battled.” These forceful and powerful word choices have become go-to metaphors for political action in reporting
When more “masculine” terms are applied to women in politics, they are generally used as either a snide compliment or an insult. When *The Wall Street Journal* reported Nancy Pelosi’s vote gathering for health care reform in 2010, it employed adjectives like such as “stalwart,” “imposing,” “formidable,” “arm-twisting,” “pressure maker,” and “threatening,” giving Pelosi the nickname, “the Slaughter Solution” (Taylor, 2010). These needlessly aggressive descriptors were designed specifically to give Pelosi the image of a cutthroat, manipulative politician (Taylor, 2010). Even when women are characterized in a positive light, words such as “trailblazer” only reinforce the idea that women are still political outsiders fighting for their chance (Anderson et al., 2011).

**Research questions**

I have identified three research questions that I seek to answer through my critical discourse analysis:

i. RQ1: What are the differences, if any, in the language used to report Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama’s candidacies for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination in *TIME, Newsweek and US News & World Report*?

ii. RQ2: What prominent stereotypes, including those of iron maiden, sex object, mother and pet as established by Rosabeth Moss Kanter in her book *Women of the Corporation*, are presented in the language used to describe Hillary Clinton?

iii. RQ3: What major content focus do the articles about Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama have in terms of their status as a parent, a policymaker, education, or other areas?
Methodology

Political reporting is a prime area for critical discourse analysis, because in itself it is a living, breathing power structure. Chilton and Schaffner (2002, p. 5) define politics as “a struggle for power, between those who seek to assert and maintain their power and those who resist it.” Critical discourse analysis lets researchers look at language as structure informed by historical social orders. The goal of critical discourse analysis is not only to identify problems in these linguistic constructions but also to view them as changeable rather than absolute (Locke, 2004). Locke offers several key attributes of critical discourse analysis: It looks at social orders as changeable and socially constructed, it views these as pervasive societal norms rather than the will of the individual, it accepts that ideology affects discourse, and it says societal power is an effect of privilege (2004).

Critical discourse analysis is most appropriate for my research topic because it will allow me to operate with the understanding that power structures, mainly the patriarchy, have affected how women are reported in the media. By using critical discourse analysis, I do not assume that journalists’ reporting is intentionally slanted in favor of men, but rather can view their words through the idea that the United States is still operating under a patriarchal boundary that is reinforced, often times implicitly, in our daily lives. Understanding the boundaries and hurdles that the patriarchy has presented in language will allow an examination of how this affects women who are running for office. This takes it a step beyond simply identifying that the problem exists, which has already been established, but takes a look into the specific ways that language
does this. Van Dijk notes that critical discourse analysis is used to reveal structures that already exist in society, thus it will allow me to examine the ideas of how the patriarchy affects the media representation of women, and allow me to apply feminist theory in not only identifying the limitations that the patriarchy places on women’s representation in political reporting, but also look at them from an idea of how that has an impact on their career as a whole (1993).

For this research, I have selected the three news magazines with the highest circulations in 2008 according to the Audit Bureau of Circulations — TIME (3,374,000), Newsweek (2,720,000), and US News & World Report (1,721,000). Although they were included in the category of news magazines, I have also chosen to exclude The New Yorker and The Economist because both have more niche audiences, with The New Yorker focusing more on literary work and The Economist on economic reporting. The magazines I have chosen are marketed to some of the largest audiences and are likely to have nonpartisan reporting. Because of their wide audience, I expect these magazines to be more reflective of what news society is consuming as a whole rather than niche or partisan magazines such as Mother Jones and Slate.

I will analyze articles published in December 2007, which will encompass the beginning of the primary calendar with the Iowa caucus (January 3, 2008) and the New Hampshire primary (January 8, 2008). Article analysis will extend to the end of June 2008, the same month when Clinton conceded the nomination to Obama (June 7, 2008). I will pull each of the news articles that appeared in print during that time period, throwing out any opinion pieces, and will use the Lexis Nexis database to access them. I will use Kanter’s four stereotypes of professional women to code the articles, focusing on
identifying the gendered language that she finds is indicative of these stereotypes. This part of the coding process will primarily focus on the adjectives the writers employ to describe Hillary Clinton. As I am coding the articles, I will also take note of the gender of the reporter to see if any patterns emerge in the way the candidates are covered by a particular gender. I will also look at the major content focus of the articles and categorize what aspects of the two candidates the article focuses on. This will allow me to look at the how the content of the articles describes the candidate in areas such as their family, education, and professional experience in a more complete way than the adjectives.

Taylor used critical discourse analysis to examine an interview former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi granted with *The New York Times Magazine*, centering on her experience as a woman in politics. Taylor was able to look critically about the feminine attributes perceived in Pelosi’s demeanor and apply them to a broader of idea of how these come into play with women in the political sphere (2012).

Van Dijk identifies that critical discourse analysis is not as fleshed out as other research methods, which could be a potential drawback to using the method with my research. In order for critical discourse analysis to be effective, we must draw from existing power structures that define and course through the veins of daily life (1993). That is why using feminist theory is key to my research. Feminist theory assumes that gender parity is not present in women’s lives, and thus will establish a structural divide between men and women in politics and the language used to report on the two genders.

**Possible publications**
I have identified the following academic journals for publication: *Mass Communication & Society; Journal of Women, Politics & Policy: A Quarterly Journal of Research and Policy Studies; Women’s Studies in Communication.*