Republican Women: For Women or for Trump?

An Analysis on the Voting Behavior of Republican Women during the Trump Era

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Acknowledgements

This thesis has been the most exciting and tireless project I have ever endured, and I am eternally grateful for the people who helped me throughout its duration.

Firstly, a thousand thank you's to my advisor, Assistant Professor Pamela Ban. Your support and inspiration are what brought me to take on a thesis. I would not have survived without your perspective and continual guidance every step of the way. Together, we took an idea discussed almost a year ago and turned that idea into a thesis. Thank you for being by my side constantly.

Thank you to Professor Phillip Roeder and Professor Margaret Roberts for leading the seminar and providing feedback throughout the initial steps of my thesis. Your personalized insights helped shape the foundation of my thesis and I am forever appreciative.

A huge thank you to Bertrand Wilden. I had a minuscule background in R and data analysis prior to this project. Your dedication and continual aid are what introduced me to my passion for analytic research. I would not have been able to produce such beautiful data without your help.

I would also like to thank my friends and family. I spent many days and nights frustrated and stressed but their love and encouragement guided me back on track. A special thank you to my parents who have always supported me academically and gave me the courage to take on this project.

Finally, thank you to UC San Diego and the Political Science Department for providing me such a unique opportunity and experience in my undergraduate career. This idea has been a thought in my mind for years and I am thankful for the opportunity to bring it to light.

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1. Introduction

"As women, we're all for equality - or superiority. But there are better ways to attack the problems which have come to be known as women's issues. Elect more women to the United States Senate. It's women's fault for not running for office." ~ Paula Hawkins (R-FL)[1]

"I believe that women look at issues differently than men do, and that's just the way we are. We [women] come at things in a different way, and since 52 percent of the population is female, it behooves us to make sure we have a women's voice in the discussions." ~ Diane Black (R-TN)[2]

"I'm not a believer in women's issues. I think all issues are women's issues." ~ Nancy Johnson (R-CT)[3]

Based on the statements above, Republican women legislators appear to be inconsistent in their attitudes toward representing women and supporting women's issues. What is becoming apparent is the struggle for Republican women to accept and balance their dual identities of being both women and Republicans. The contradictions of what it means to represent women in Congress as defined by Democrat women and the conservative Republican Party agenda appears to place Republican women in the position of choosing to support one or the other. With this, how does the gender of a legislator influence their vote behavior on women's legislation, especially in light of a new Republican movement led by President Donald J. Trump?

Republican women have struggled with balancing their dual identity, but it has not been until recently that it has become a major issue needing to be addressed within the Republican

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[1] "Women in Congress, 1917-2017," prepared under the direction of the Committee on House Administration of the US House of Representatives, Gregg Harper, chairman, Robert A. Brady, ranking minority member, by the Office of the Historian and Office of the Clerk, US House of Representatives (Washington, D.C.: US Government Publishing Office, 2017).

[2] Diane Black, Center for American Women and Politics Interview, October 28, 2015.

[3] Nancy Johnson, Center for American Women and Politics Interview, August 7, 1995.

Party. When women first entered Congress, they were known to support other women regardless of party due to the need to uplift women's rights and equalize the political field previously unavailable to them (Mansbridge 2003). At the same time women began to join Congress, the political substance of party agendas evolved. Now, the major American political parties have taken on drastically separate positions on legislation with Republicans acting more conservative and Democrats more liberal (Layman 2005). Additionally, the election of President Trump, a publicly conservative president America has not experienced in many years, has further complicated the ability for Republican women to address their identities. Republican women now face a dilemma of choosing between expressing loyalty to their political party or providing support for women with voting on women's issues for they are no longer able to compromise between the two identities.

In this thesis, I examine the effects of gender on Congressmember's voting behavior across the parties and investigate how the rise of Trump influences these gender effects. I present new Congressional data on the voting behavior of legislators on women's legislation before and after President Trump took office in order to evaluate the recent accounts of Republican women voting more conservatively during Trump's presidency. The entrance of Trump into the Oval Office, I argue, provided the means necessary for the Republican Party to advance more conservatively driven women's legislation resulting in Republican women voting more conservatively to reflect the ideals of the party.

My thesis begins with an overview of the history of gender in American politics and the impacts of party polarization in recent years. Then I present the case study of Republican women's attitudes toward their identities and how they have evolved over time due to the influence of party interests, agenda, and leadership. Next, I will outline my research design in

testing the differences of voting behavior of Republican women on women's legislation. Then, I will explain how my findings and provide an in-depth analysis of them and their relation to my hypotheses. Finally, I will conclude with an overview of my findings and whether or not they are aligned with my hypotheses. Ultimately, I find a negative correlation between Republican women's voting and the influence of party and the presence of Trump, resulting in Republican women voting more conservatively. This aligns with my hypotheses which I further explain in my results and discussion.

2. Literature Review

What exactly is women's legislation? The categorization of women's legislation is easy enough to explain in a broad sense, but a consistent, definitive explanation is harder to come by in Political Science. The initial attempts in defining women's legislation consists of legislation supported or introduced by the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues (Swers 2005). The Caucus functions to discuss legislation and politics believed to directly affect women such as abortion, violence against women, and human trafficking (Women's Congressional Policy Institute 2019). What this definition lacks are the legislation highly supported and introduced by women that do not directly affect women. For example, the proposed constitutional amendment Democracy for All, does not involve women, but it does function to provide equal opportunity for more non-wealthy individuals to run for government elections (Democracy for All 2015). Although it did not directly involve women, this bill was highly supported by women legislators because it enabled more equal opportunity for anyone to run for office. An alternative definition for women's legislation is then necessary to use in order to include those supported/introduced by women that include legislation indirectly effecting women.

An efficient way to define women's legislation is proposed by Volden et. al. in which women's legislation is simply "those of which women introduce significantly more bills than men do" (Volden et. al. 2018). This not only includes legislation directly and indirectly affecting women, but it is also reflective of the political climate and the variation possible in women supported policy areas throughout different Congresses. For example, in 2016, Volden et. al. found women's legislation to be within the following policy areas: Education, Health, Housing and Development, and Civil Rights (Volden et. al. 2018). In the following Congress, the American Association of University Women (AAUW) found Economic Security, Education, and Civil Rights to be the main women's legislation policy areas (AAUW Action Fund 2009) (see Research Design 3.2 for more information). This exhibits what constitutes "women's legislation" is variable and dependent on the political climate in consideration. With this, women's legislation should be considered as legislation most often supported/introduced by women during a Congressional period to include any direct and indirect legislation women are affected by. I employ this definition of women's legislation for my research.

The discussion of women's legislation in American politics is fairly recent and coincides with the entry of women into Congress. Research has shown women were not always afforded the same opportunities to participate in American politics, especially at the elite level. Although their numbers in Congress have steadily increased since the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, it was not until the 1970s that women became a distinct minority in Congress (Anzia and Berry 2011). Women's more recent inclusion then has allowed for the previously underrepresented population to be heard in Congress. Since politics lacked women's voice on women's legislation, women legislators are believed to feel responsible for representing their female constituents as they are more likely to understand their experiences as women than

compared to men legislators (Mansbridge 2003). This is based on the idea of potentially shared experiences and backgrounds, such as being a woman, between legislators and constituents motivating Congress members to respond and act on behalf of them during Congressional deliberation (Lowande et. al. 2019). With this, women legislators are believed to be more motivated to focus on advancing women legislation than compared to men.

Men legislators do not necessarily introduce or discuss legislation related to male livelihoods because of their historical privileges throughout American history. Men have been at the forefront of American politics since its founding, leaving them in charge of discussing political topics that concern them (Poggione 2004). Men legislators, therefore, do not have a "need" to act on behalf of men in the same manner women legislators act for women. This does not necessarily restrict women legislators to act solely on behalf of women but rather women legislators may feel more inclined to perform political action on behalf of women in general. By means of this, women legislators' participation with women's legislation should differ compared to men and their behavior within Congressional deliberation should be reflective of this.

Women legislators being more inclined to act on behalf of women constitutes the theory that they behave differently than men legislators in their level of participation. With this, we should observe an increase in participation by women legislators in consideration of women's legislation. Women's legislation as noted above is typically defined as legislation in which women introduce significantly more bills than do men that can either directly or indirectly affect women (Volden et. al. 2018 and Wineinger 2022). With this, women legislators should be participating in favor of advancing legislation in women-related policy areas more often than compared to men legislators.

Participation, especially voting patterns, exposes legislators' preferences of certain policy issue areas. Women and men legislators' voting habits in regard to women's legislation differ. In regard to welfare, a popularly cited women's policy area, women legislators tend to vote more liberally than men and Republican women were found to vote more liberally compared to Republican men who voted more conservatively (Poggione 2004). Similarly, Republican women have been noted to vote "well to the left" of Republican men on women's legislation creating a gender divide within the party (Frederick 2009, 115). This exhibits party may not necessarily be the primary motivating factor for women legislators in voting on women's issues.

Disregarding gender and single policy issues, legislators have historically voted in accordance with their party. This is evident with the high degree of correlation between legislator preferences and partisanship (Lawrence et. al. 1999). This has allowed legislators to vote based on their own political agenda as it has coincided with that of their party. Legislators, additionally, advance an agenda that will result in the likeliness of reelection (Hall 1987). The main goal of a legislator is to succeed in being reelected and will make and follow an agenda, regardless of if it aligns with their party. American politics today, however, have allowed for the growth of party polarization with conflicting positions on single policy issues. This has made voting for legislators to be more based on the party's agenda rather than that of their own.

The relevance of legislative voting behavior and party polarization in regard to women's issues is that Democrats and Republicans have become most divided on women's legislation (Layman 2005). For example, in the 1960's Democrats and Republicans argued on cultural and moral legislation involving race but, more recently the parties differ on cultural/moral legislation related to race, homosexuality, abortion, and religious rights (Layman 2005). With this continual divide in positions and the further separation on the ideological spectrum, American politics have

become most divided on social and welfare legislation, also commonly considered as women's legislation. Women legislators, who have been cited as participating more with women's legislation due to the "need" to represent women, may witness changes in voting behavior on women's legislation to reflect the current changes in American politics.

In more recent years, however, women legislators have become polarized in Congress (Frederick 2009). The impact of gendered voting has since lessened over time, prompting men and women in either party to vote more based on their party, removing the possibility of Republican women to vote more liberally (Frederick 2009). Additionally, Republican women in 2020 are voting more closely to male Republicans (Rhinehart and Crespin 2020). This suggests the gender theory no longer applies to Republican women and that party explains why women legislators have diverged from gender, especially with women's legislation.

The rising divide of parties due to polarization explains why Republican women have voted alike their male counterparts rather than with Democrat women on women's legislation. Polarization with political parties today is drastically different than that of the past and explains why its effects on parties presently are so prominent. Parties have often held opposing stances on a variety of policies throughout American history but the extent of major policies at a single time never surpasses three (Layman 2005). The current political climate has Democrats and Republicans divided across most political issues, with Republicans acting in a more "traditionalist" manner and Democrats as "modernist and secular," making compromise on issues hard to come by (Layman 2005).

As mentioned above, party polarization is most prominent with women's issues, placing Republican women in a position of choosing between voting based on their party or their gender. Additionally, the Republican party experienced an increase in Congressional power after the

2016 Presidential Election. Republicans were already in control of the Senate before the election but thereafter, a Republican controlled the Presidential branch and later filled enough seats in the Supreme Court for Republicans to control the Judiciary branch, giving Republicans majority power within all three branches of the American government (Barber and Pope 2019, 719). This provides Republicans the opportunity to advance conservative legislation as the likelihood of success has drastically increased compared to their abilities during the Obama Administration, including more conservative women's legislation. Given that Republican women have already voted more alike their male counterparts in recent years and the increased governmental power held by Republicans starting in 2016, it is reasonable to infer that they will choose to vote based on party rather than gender on women's legislation.

In addition to the division of parties, a unique leader took office with extreme views and an overwhelming amount of constituent support. President Trump is the most publicly conservative leader America has had since Ronald Reagan (Smith 2021). His support for more conservative policy has the potential to strengthen the divide between party and gender, especially for Republican women, with women's legislation. This is because Republicans are mostly considered to be "partisan loyalists" in that individuals place party ideals over self-ideology (Agadjanian 2021). Self-ideology, the idea that a particular stance on a policy influences an individual's voting behavior, has little to no effect in reflecting policy commitments of Republicans (Barber and Pope 2019, 39). This explains the voting behavior of Republicans to be based more on their party rather than their own individual political ideology.

In relation to this, Republican voters have clearly exhibited their support for Trump and have expressed they will not support those who do not, including Republican legislators (Agadjanian 2021). Therefore, Republican legislators, regardless of if they support Trump or not,

had to "follow the leader" in order to receive continued support from their constituents and retain their seats in Congress (Barber and Pope 2019, 43 and Hall 1987). Given the influential power Trump has over constituents and his ability to convince Republicans to support him, Republican women may be more influenced to vote conservatively on women's legislation in order to not lose support from their fellow party members and constituents.
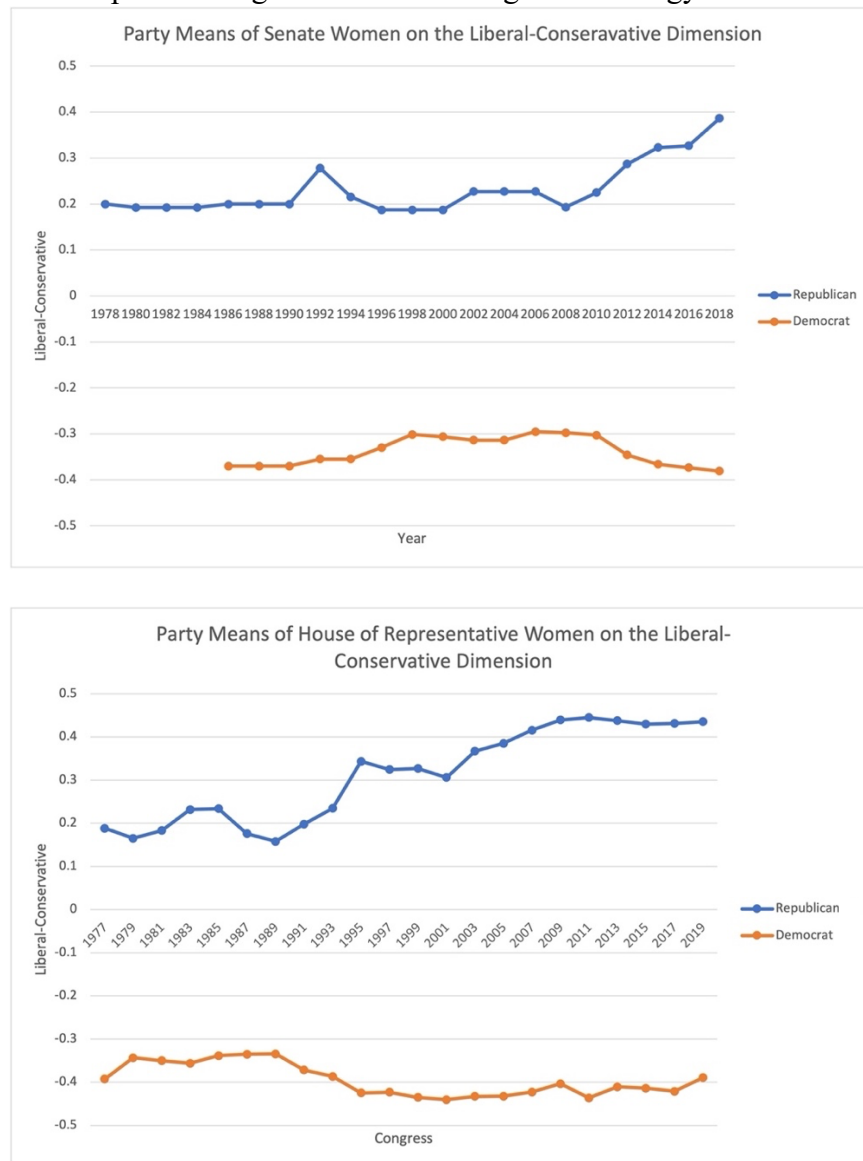
I believe party polarization and President Trump are motivating factors in influencing Republican women to vote more conservatively on women's legislation. The increasing distance between parties along the political spectrum and Trump's devotion to more conservative policy encourages Republicans to vote more conservatively on all legislation presented to them. Republican women then have to choose between following a gendered agenda or follow their party and President. This will be tested and more thoroughly explained in my research design, but I plan to examine voting behavior of legislators across a set of Congresses in order to determine if Republican women's voting behavior on women's legislation changed before and after Trump became president.

2.1 Case Study: A Narrative of Republican Women

Based on the surrogate theory presented by Mansbridge and the past voting patterns of legislators, a political assumption of women legislators was established that women, regardless of their party, vote on women's legislation in the same way (Wineinger 2022). Specifically, Republican women are assumed to vote on women's legislation similarly to Democrat women because their gender influences their decision-making process in the same way. What is now apparent is that Republican women on occasion voted more moderately, but that is no longer the case (see Figures 1A and 1B on page 13). I argue, Republican women vote differently on women's legislation than compared to Democrat women due to the differences in gender within

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their parties that influences their voting decisions. This is evident with the evolution of

Republican women's voting being influenced by the advancement of a conservative agenda in

the Republican Party and the continual divergence of parties on the political ideology spectrum.

Figure 1A and 1B. Graphs of Congresswomen's changes in ideology from 1978-2018[4]

Party Means of Senate Women on the Liberal-Conseravative Dimension

Party Means of House of Representative Women on the Liberal-Conservative Dimension

Source: Lewis, Jeff. "Polarization in Congress." *voteview.com,* UCLA Social Sciences Division, 20 Jan. 2022, voteview.com/articles/party_polarization.

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[4] These graphs show the ideological divide between Republican and Democrat women over time. Using the data from voteview.com, I complied their DW-NOMINATE scores. Values below 0 are more liberal and above 0 are more conservative.

Although Republican women presently vote with their party on women's legislation, Republican women voted more moderately on women's legislation in the 1970s unlike their male counterparts, creating a divide between genders within the Republican Party (Wineinger 2022). This arguably permanently tainted women's reputation as Republicans, as they exhibited a preference that differed from their party's and voted in a manner that coincided with Democrat women (Hall 1987 and Wineinger 2022). Because of this, Republican women were cited as placing their gender above their party, an issue that has worsened as party polarization and Republican conservatism has grown. With the evolving political climate, Republican women have needed to adapt in order to retain their few seats in Congress by showcasing their loyalty to the Republican Party. To do so, Republican women have established what Catherine Wineinger terms, the "partisan-gender identity," to balance their inherent party-gender divide in the decision-making process to vote on women's legislation.

To convey to Republican men their "partisan-gender identity," Republican women have evolved their use of gender in politics to be in line with the cultural values of the Republican party. For example, Republican women have recently taken on the rhetoric of "conservative motherhood" showcasing women, specifically mothers, are able to be conservative and retain their gender identity in accordance with the values of the Republican Party (Wineinger 2022, 61). This is evident with Sarah Palin's famous mention of "mama grizzlies" and "hockey moms" in her acceptance speech for Republican Vice-Presidential candidate in 2008 (New York Times par. 14). Categorizing "conservative motherhood" in this manner provided a unique viewpoint on policy for Republican women to endorse that is ideologically separate from Democrat women and would be accepted by Republican men and the party overall. With this, Republican women

provided narratives of their experience as mothers and running their households to appeal to women across America with similar experiences.

This "conservative motherhood" layer to the "partisan-gender identity" starkly contrasts with Democratic ideals of motherhood and separates each party's approach to policy related to family life. For example, funding for schools is a policy topic important to mothers in providing a decent education for their children. Democrat women would offer more liberal solutions for school funding such as changing the federal budget to allocate more federal funding to schools across the country to ensure more students are benefiting from increased resources. This method is reflective of the party's views that the government plays a large role in providing equal opportunity (Frederick 2009). Republican women, on the other hand, would offer more conservative solutions such as increased local funding to ensure those who know best (i.e., teachers) can appropriately allocate funds without the intervention of "big government" (Wineinger 2022, 81). This is reflective of the Republican Party's views as their "traditionalist" manner warrants the avoidance of utilizing the federal government in resolving local issues (Frederick 2009). Republican women's choice in framing their party's politics into their identities as women/mothers has provided evidence to Republican men that they are no longer supportive of Democrat women's position on women's legislation when it contrasts with the Republican agenda. This, however, has not been enough in diminishing the gender gap of the Republican Party nor has it provided equal opportunity for Republican Congresswomen to seek higher positions within the party.

Despite their efforts toward exhibiting party loyalty, Republican women have not been accepted as equals in their party. This is evident with Republican men not consistently supporting Republican women taking on higher ranks. This is best explained as the "Republican

Women Paradox" in which "Republican women being overrepresented as party messengers is cyclically related to their underrepresentation in Congress" (Wineinger 2022, 160-161). The Republican Party utilizes its few women members as "spokespersons" for their party to convey their "inclusivity" of women. The reason why the Republican Party needs to emphasize its gender-inclusivity is due to the large gender gap in voting in which Democrats have a more diverse voter population, including a large population of women, that are turning out to vote (Campbell 2016). Additionally, the Democrat Party continues to place women in positions of power within their party, such as Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Primary Presidential Candidate Hilary Clinton, which places the Republican Party as appearing to be "anti-feminist" because of their inability to place women in similar high-ranking positions (Mason and Wronski 2018 and Wineinger 2022). Republicans believe that if they focus on party messaging to Republican and conservative women, then they can close the gender gap in voting as well as portray to Democrats they are not "anti-feminst." With this, Republican Congresswomen are able to take on leadership roles in the Republican Conferences but have since struggled with attaining leadership elsewhere in the party (Wineinger 2022).

Jennifer Dunn (R-WA) and Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) are the closest Republican women equivalent to Pelosi and Clinton thus far with their positions as Chair and Vice Chair of the House Republican Conference. These women persevered through the gendered obstacles of running for office as Republican women and worked their way to represent their party in the distinguished Republican Conference. However, they were not able to achieve higher positions in Congress such as Speaker or Majority Leader (Wineinger 2022). The Republican Party allocates high power positions within committees and caucuses based on seniority (Lawless and Pearson 2008). Republican women again are low in numbers, and often incur high competition

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not only to run for office but even for reelection (Osborn et. al. 2019). This is one of the main obstacles for Republican women in achieving seniority to be considered for such higher positions. Despite these challenges, Dunn and McMorris Rodgers were able to defeat all of the odds in achieving high ranking positions in the Republican Conference but came short of achieving majority leader and/or speaker for the Republican Party.

Jennifer Dunn, an outspoken "glamor girl," who took on Congress like a storm in structuring the message of the party toward being a safe space for women, ran for majority leader but came short due to her relationship with then Speaker John Boehner (Wineinger 2022). He heavily aided in supporting Dunn's actions and endorsed her both in her chair and majority leader campaign. Republican men believed she "bi-passed" the pathway toward seniority from her connection and endorsement of Boehner despite other Republican men receiving similar endorsements in the past and being accepting of them (Wineinger 2022). Given this, McMorris Rodgers decided to not run for majority leader or speaker because of her relationship with then Speaker Gingrich. She felt her connection and past work with Gingrich would overshadow her individual work she had done and wanted to work "on her own" to establish herself apart from him before embarking on the campaign trail (Wineinger 2022). Both women were unable to seek higher positions due to the men in their party, an issue indicating inequality inside the party continues to persist.

I believe party polarization and President Trump are motivating factors in convincing Republican women to vote more conservatively with women's issue legislation. The increasing distance between parties along the political spectrum and Trump's devotion to more conservative policy encourages Republicans to vote more conservatively on all legislation presented to them. As Wineinger has shown, Republican women have created an identity to balance between their

gender and their party affiliation, but she did not utilize voting outcomes to prove this. I plan to examine the changes in Republican women's voting behavior on women's legislation before and after Trump entered office to exhibit the influence of party and Trump on their decision to vote.

3. Research Design

My research design is a statistical analysis on addressing how and why Republican women in Congress have altered their voting behavior in regard to women's legislation. I argue the election of President Trump enabled politics to be more conservatively driven and warranted Republican legislators to vote conservatively, more specifically, Republican women with women's issues. I believe the presence of Trump has the ability to alter the behavior of Republican women due to the continual impacts of party polarization and his influence as a conservative leader.

My research will be divided into two parts to address the differential influences of party and the presence of Trump on gendered voting behavior.
My hypotheses are:

1. The Party Difference: Being a woman has a different effect on women's legislation voting based on the party of the member.[5]

2. The Trump Difference: Being a Republican woman has a different effect on women's legislation voting based on the presence of Trump in and out of office.[6]

To test this, I will use floor votes from Congressional legislation related to women's issues prior to and during Trump's time in office to determine changes in voting behavior, if any,

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[5] My null hypothesis is that gender has no differential effect on voting outcomes based on party.

[6] My null hypothesis is that Republican women's voting behavior did not change between the Obama and Trump Administrations.

of Republican women legislators. Many analyses of Congressional participation and behavior have focused on alternative aspects of participation within the legislative process such as speech analysis by Catherine Wineinger. Those research designs have the goal of explaining why an individual votes one way or another. My research seeks to examine voting as a behavioral trend of a group, not the individual decision-making process, making voting outcomes the best source of analysis for my work.

3.1 Variables and Controls

My independent variables are gender, party, and ideology of individual legislators. I use demographic information of legislators, DW-NOMINATE scores, and presidential district voting from the Center for Effective Lawmaking for legislators who are present in Congress before and after Trump.[7] Since my sample population is limited to a specific time frame and is further restricted by particular legislation, the results found do not reflect all of Congress' behavior across all issues, but rather the best to use in formulating generalizations of legislators' voting behavior in relation to women's legislation during this time. My dependent variable is the final passage and amendment votes of individual legislators on women's legislation from the 113th-116th Congresses. To measure this, I will be using the Action Fund Congressional Voting Record compiled by the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

3.2 The AAUW Congressional Voting Record

The AAUW is a non-profit organization whose main goal is to "advance equity for women through advocacy, education, and research" (AAUW Action Fund 2009). Part of their

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[7] Source: Volden, C. and Wiseman, A., (2021). *Center for Effective Lawmaking*. The Center for Effective Lawmaking, thelawmakers.org/.

research is to create the Congressional Voting Record to identify legislators' level of support in advancing women's legislation. The record has covered Congresses since 1981 to differentiate the Congressmembers in favor of and against women's legislation. After each Congress, the AAUW Public Policy Program selects legislation they categorize as "women's legislation" and apply scores for legislators based on their voting on the selected legislation.

The AAUW's scores are taken together and calculated into a final percentage to exhibit the rate in which legislators were supportive of advancing women's legislation. Figure 2 (see left) includes a portion of the Congressional Voting Record from the 110th Congress. Legislators who support a bill have a plus sign to signify their support and a minus sign, if not. As evident in Figure 2, legislators' voting patterns follow historical voting trends with Democrats having higher scores since they vote more liberally, and Republicans having

SENATE
Votes in the 110th Congress

	% Support All Votes	% Support When Voting	College Cost Reduction	STEM Education	Domestic Priorities	Higher Education Act	DREAM Act/College Access	Pay Equity	Minimum Wage Increase	Hate Crimes Prevention	Repeal Global Gag Rule	Budget Resolution
Alabama												
Sessions (R)	30	30	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shelby (R)	40	40	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Alaska												
Murkowski (R)	50	50	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
Stevens (R)	50	50	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-
Arizona												
Kyl (R)	10	10	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
McCain (R)	0	0						-				
Arkansas												
Lincoln (D)	80	100		+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+
Pryor (D)	90	90	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
California												
Boxer (D)	90	100	+	+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+
Feinstein (D)	100	100	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+

Figure 2: Portion of the AAUW Action Fund Congressional Voting Record from the 110th Congress (2007-2008)

lower, more conservative scores (Hall 1987). The four Democrat Senators listed in Figure 2 have 90-100% rates in support of all the chosen legislation. Republicans, on the other hand, have lower rates that can be as low as Senator McCain's 0%, or higher like with Senator Murkowski's 50%. The AAUW's scoring system tends to be more liberal leaning as the AAUW Public Policy Program is a liberal organization. As I am observing the trends of conservative voting in

Republican women, the liberal scoring system is not an issue in inflating my data results. It is, however, something I need to take into account in my data analysis.

In terms of defining women's legislation, the AAUW's decision-making process in selecting legislation is based on Volden et. al. definition explained earlier (see Literature Review). Along with Volden et. al., the AAUW considers legislation directly and indirectly affecting women as well as the political changes between Congresses. For each selected piece of legislation, the AAUW provides an explanation for why it should be considered as "women's legislation" and how it potentially affects women. For example, in the 113th Congress, the proposed House Education bill, High School Transparency Act (2013), would require schools to report the number of female and male students participating in athletic programs (High School Data Transparency Act, 2013). As the AAUW explains, this bill directly affects women because the resulting information would exhibit whether or not a school is violating Title IX by disproportionately encouraging/accepting male students into athletic programs (AAUW Action Fund 2009). The AAUW utilizing this definition of women's legislation allows me to consider each score of legislators in an equal manner as their total scores reflect their overall support of advancing the proposed women's legislation in each Congress.

I have decided to use the AAUW Congressional Voting Record because of the consistency in its scaling. Although it is more liberal leaning, it is liberal throughout different Congresses that I can easily work around. Many researchers in tackling voting behavior often use the party's majority/minority leader's voting as the baseline. Given I am conducting an analysis over several Congresses, there is a chance the party leader will change within the time frame. Additionally, I am attempting to observe changes in ideology within and between parties. If I were to use party leaders, their ideologies may change within the time frame that will make it

difficult to account for in considering other legislators' ideologies. Therefore, the decision to utilize the AAUW Congressional Voting Record as my baseline will ensure the scoring of legislators over time is consistent.

The AAUW's choice in bills and their scoring decisions for legislators will be what I include in my research as my dependent variable. The scores will be the baseline of comparison on whether a legislator voted more conservatively or not. With the AAUW scores as my dependent variable, I will perform different statistical analyses to determine if there is a change in behavior of Republican women's voting and if a legislator's party or the presence of Trump is correlated to such behavioral changes.

3.3 Testing Hypotheses

My Party Difference hypothesis claims being a woman has a different effect on women's legislation voting based on the party of the member. The recent rise in party polarization within Congress functions as a salient driver in legislators' decision-making process resulting in party affiliation having a great effect on voting outcomes. The divergence of parties is most prominent with women's issues making Republican women have to choose between "ceding to the authority of their party," putting reelection and other policy goals at risk, or by following their own gendered agenda without support from their party (Layman 2005 and Mansbridge 2003). Given that the retention of seats in Congress is oftentimes the main political goal for a legislator in conjunction with the lack of Republican women's representation currently in Congress, it is plausible Republican women would vote based on their Party's agenda than based on a gendered one (Hall 1987). Additionally, Wineinger's "partisan-gender identity" exhibits Republican women voting more conservatively on women's legislation in more recent years (Wineinger 2022). It is appropriate then to infer Republican women feel more inclined to vote conservatively

given the need to satisfy party needs and thus there should be a change in their voting behavior after Trump is elected to office. An Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) analysis with a focus on party affiliation will be most appropriate in determining the relationship between gender and party in relation to voting on women's legislation before and after Trump took office.

In regard to my Trump Difference hypothesis, I propose there is a difference in voting behavior of Republican women that can be explained by the presence of Trump in office. President Trump was an initiator for the Republican Party to partake in more conservative policy during his time in office and his popularity amongst constituents could have affected Republican women's behavior in voting on women's issues (Barber and Pope 2019). Republican constituents were overall mostly supportive of Trump during his campaign and noticed the Republican legislators who did not support him (Agadjanian 2021). Republican women were then encouraged to "follow the leader" in voting on women's issues in order to have continued support from constituents and their male counterparts.

The Trump Difference hypothesis functions separately from the Party Difference hypothesis and will require additional testing. I will address it in two parts. Part 1 will be a statistical analysis comparing the gap (difference) between Republican women's voting before and after Trump took office (114th-115th Congresses). Part 2 will be a theoretical explanation for why Trump's presence explains these trends rather than any rising Republican president. This will be done by: comparing Trump's entrance to office to another time period where there was a transition to a conservative president, exhibiting the frame of influence presidents can have on Congressional voting behavior, and finally showing the inherent difference of Trump's conservatism compared to past conservative leaders. Testing and analysis of both parts of this

hypothesis will determine if the differences in voting for Republican women before and after Trump entered office is correlated.

4. Results

4.1 The Party Difference Hypothesis

Using the AAUW's Congressional Voting Record data and regressing the scores against party affiliation, gender, and the interaction between party and gender, I find being a Republican to be the most significant in explaining the outcome of AAUW scores. As depicted in the Party regression results in Figures 3A and 3B on the following pages, the negative correlation between being a Republican and AAUW scores supports my hypothesis in that Republican legislators are more likely to vote more conservatively on women's legislation than compared to Democrats. Further, being a woman does not significantly affect the outcome of AAUW scores but does result in a small increase in comparison to being a Republican, exhibiting women do vote more liberally on women's legislation. In terms of Republican women, their scores are better explained by the influence of their party rather than by their gender despite the inverse relationship between the two variables and the positive correlation of the interactive term.

I find being a Republican, results in a 60.74 unit decrease in AAUW score in the House and a 53.78 unit decrease in the Senate. Given the scoring of legislators is based on a scale from 0-100, these drastic drops in overall scores exhibits an intense correlation between party and predicting voting outcomes. In contrast, being a woman results in an increase in score. It correlates with a 0.139 increase for the House and a 2.51 increase in the Senate. Although being a woman does not have a statistically significant effect on legislators' AAUW score, it is

important to note being a woman does result in an increase in score, exhibiting gender has a

positive correlation to voting on women's legislation.

Figure 3A. Effects of Party and Gender on AAUW Scores for the Senate[8]

	Senate Voting on Women's Legislation (113th-116th Congress)		
	DV: AAUW Scores of Senators		
	Overall Rating		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Republican	-71.443***	-53.040***	-53.784***
	(1.378)	(4.770)	(4.786)
Female	6.969***	2.482	2.509
	(1.645)	(2.380)	(2.378)
114th Congress	-0.369		
	(1.886)		
115th Congress	-7.554***	-4.786**	-4.788**
	(1.870)	(1.908)	(1.904)
116th Congress	-17.116***	-14.621***	-14.597***
	(1.885)	(1.900)	(1.897)
dwnom1		-25.144***	-24.279***
		(5.387)	(5.423)
dwnom2		-12.452***	-12.460***
		(2.962)	(3.018)
African American			5.606
			(4.798)
Latinx			-7.718
			(4.813)
Previous Term			-0.126
			(1.615)
Republican * Female		1.184	1.299
		(4.292)	(4.311)
Constant	91.741***	81.780***	82.187***
	(1.522)	(2.478)	(2.579)
Observations	395	258	258
R^2	0.891	0.909	0.911
Adjusted R^2	0.890	0.907	0.907
F Statistic	636.331*** (df = 5; 389)	357.360*** (df = 7; 250)	251.726*** (df = 10; 247)
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

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[8] The table is compiled into three OLS regressions. The first focuses on the main variables being tested holding Congress (time) constant. The second, includes the interactive term and average DW-NOMINATE scores. The third includes more constants such as other descriptive variables and experience in Congress.
Source: Hlavac, M., (2018). stargazer: Well-Formatted Regression and Summary Statistics Tables. R package version 5.2.2. CRAN.R-project.org/package=stargazer.

Figure 3B. Effects of Party and Gender on AAUW Scores for the House of Representatives[9]

	House of Representative Voting on Women's Legislation (113th-116th Congress)		
	DV: AAUW Scores of Representatives		
	Overall Rating		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Republican	-77.096***	-60.592***	-60.742***
	(0.653)	(2.304)	(2.345)
Female	1.634**	0.205	0.139
	(0.805)	(1.014)	(1.023)
114th Congress	-4.920***		
	(0.874)		
115th Congress	-13.390***	-7.282***	-7.293***
	(0.872)	(0.769)	(0.767)
116th Congress	-12.891***	-6.422***	-6.358***
	(0.874)	(0.805)	(0.803)
dwnom1		-24.190***	-25.346***
		(2.478)	(2.567)
dwnom2		-5.705***	-5.406***
		(1.283)	(1.291)
African American			-2.286*
			(1.189)
Latinx			-0.491
			(1.309)
Majority Party			1.696**
			(0.704)
Size of Delegation			0.016
			(0.021)
Previous Term			0.134
			(0.645)
Republican * Female		1.306	1.424
		(1.880)	(1.900)
Constant	101.869***	89.184***	88.331***
	(0.749)	(1.207)	(1.338)
Observations	1,740	1,045	1,045
R^2	0.901	0.941	0.942
Adjusted R^2	0.901	0.941	0.941
F Statistic	3,173.284*** (df = 5; 1734)	2,370.056*** (df = 7; 1037)	1,390.796*** (df = 12; 1032)
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

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[9] Ibid.

My interaction term exhibits the differential effect of gender based on a legislator's party regarding AAUW scores (i.e., how being a woman is affected by being a Republican). The average effect of being a Republican woman is therefore the estimated coefficient of the variable "Republican" plus the estimated coefficient of "Republican*Female." For the House, the average effect of being a Republican on women is:

$$(-60.592) + 1.306 = -59.286$$

representing a 59.286-point decrease in average AAUW scores. I find similar results for Senate women, with the average effect of being a Republican is:

$$(-53.040) + 1.184 = -51.856$$

representing a 51.86-point decrease in average AAUW scores. Observing the interaction term independent of the "Republican" variable, its effects on the outcome of scores is similar to being a woman. Neither chamber has statistically significant coefficients, but both are positive resulting in an increase in score in a similar manner as being a woman. The House has a 1.424 unit increase and the Senate has a 1.299 unit increase in overall AAUW score. The results of the interaction term and gender variable reflect the frame of influence of party in this time frame. Being a Republican continues to be the main and most significant explanatory variable in predicting the voting behavior of legislators on women's legislation.

An interesting result of the Party regressions is the differences between the two chambers. Although they produced similar results overall, the difference in coefficients requires further explanation. The House has a larger Republican and interaction coefficient (-60.592 and 1.424) compared to the Senate (-53.040 and 1.299), but the Senate had a larger Female coefficient (2.509) than compared to the House (0.139). This difference in coefficients is most likely explained by the rising House members being more ideologically conservative than their

Senator counterparts (Frederick 2009). The entrance of more conservative members in the House would explain this difference of the Republican and Female coefficients between the two chambers. In the Senate, being a woman may have more influence over voting decisions due to the differences in ideology than compared to the House, which is why we see a larger coefficient for being a woman in the Senate. The same process applies to the House experiencing more influence from party than compared to the Senate. Additionally, the difference in coefficient values of the interaction term may be better explained by the differences of Republican women within each chamber. For example, in the 116th Congress, the House had 15 Republican women members and the Senate had 9. Given this difference, the interaction term had more individuals to analyze that may have led to it producing a slightly larger coefficient compared to the Senate. Despite the differences between chambers, Republican women are more influenced by their party in their decision to vote on women's legislation.

Further, Figures 4A and 4B on the following page shows Republican women's average AAUW scores exhibit more conservative voting compared to Democrat women, but there are differences between the two chambers. In the Senate, the range of voting in comparison to Republican men shows there remains gendered differences in voting within the party itself. This is apparent given Democrat men and women have more similar ranges which further exhibits the gender differences with the Republican Party. Despite Senate Republican women voting less conservatively than Senate Republican men, it is apparent they are voting conservatively nonetheless and have moved away from their Democrat counterparts in voting on women's legislation.

Given the statistical results of my Party regressions, it is apparent being a Republican is the most explanatory variable in predicting AAUW scores. This can be further explained by

Republican women's need to present themselves as conservatives to their male counterparts. As noted in earlier, Republican women are actively working toward diminishing the gender gap within their party and to do so are voting more conservatively on women's legislation to prove they have no ties with Democrat women (see Literature Review 2.1). Republican women are thus presently voting more conservatively on women's legislation due to the influence of their party.

Figure 4A and 4B: Boxplot of Congress Average AAUW Scores from the 113th-116th Congress

Figure 4A: Average Senate AAUW Scores

Figure 4B: Average House AAUW Scores
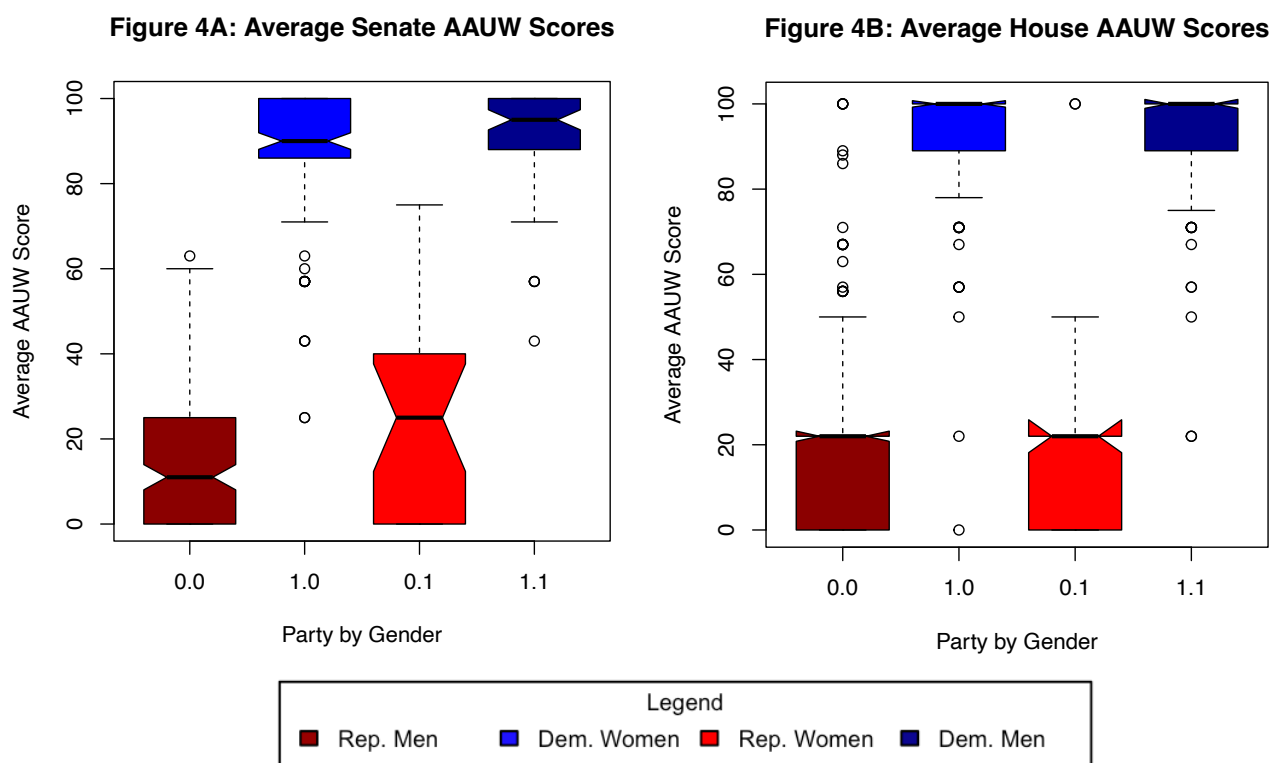
4.2 The Trump Difference Hypothesis

Using the same AAUW Congressional Voting Record data and independent variables from my Party regressions, I conducted another set of regressions with the focus on analyzing the changes in voting behavior before and after Trump entered office. I find in addition to the significance of being a Republican, there is also statistical significance in predicting voting behavior after Trump entered office. As evident in the Trump regressions located in Figures 5A and 5B on the following pages, the negative correlation between post-Trump Congresses and AAUW scores supports my second hypothesis in that legislators voted more conservatively with the influence of a conservative president.

My Trump regressions mirror the results of my Party regressions but show high levels of significance with the "Post-Trump" variable. Trump entering office explains a decrease of 6.868 units in the House and 9.729 in the Senate. These coefficients are much larger than compared to the "Female" and interaction term but not as large as "Republican." This exhibits the transition from the Obama to the Trump Administration explains some unit decrease in overall scores for Republican legislators in both chambers of Congress.

Figure 5A. Effects of Trump and Gender on AAUW Scores for the Senate Post-Trump[10]

		Senate Voting on Women's Legislation (Post-Trump)	
		DV: AAUW Scores of Senators	
		Overall Rating	
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Republican	-71.625***	-53.143***	-53.828***
	(1.414)	(5.012)	(5.031)
Female	6.670***	2.050	2.051
	(1.693)	(2.500)	(2.498)
Post-Trump	-12.085***	-9.745***	-9.729***
	(1.372)	(1.737)	(1.735)
dwnom1		-24.918***	-24.117***
		(5.661)	(5.701)
dwnom2		-13.053***	-13.139***
		(3.110)	(3.170)
African American			4.844
			(5.041)
Latinx			-8.563*
			(5.056)
Previous Term			0.035
			(1.698)
Republican*Female		0.812	0.845
		(4.509)	(4.531)
Constant	91.710***	81.867***	82.218***
	(1.289)	(2.603)	(2.711)
Observations	395	258	258
R^2	0.884	0.899	0.901
Adjusted R^2	0.883	0.897	0.897
F Statistic	991.051*** (df = 3; 391)	373.521*** (df = 6; 251)	250.388*** (df = 9; 248)
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

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[10] The table is compiled into three OLS regressions. The first focuses on the main variables being tested including the time period after Trump. The second, includes the interactive term and average DW-NOMINATE scores. The third includes more constants such as other descriptive variables and experience in Congress. Source: Hlavac, M., (2018). stargazer: Well-Formatted Regression and Summary Statistics Tables. R package version 5.2.2. CRAN.R-project.org/package=stargazer.

Figure 5B. Effects of Trump and Gender on AAUW Scores for the House of Representatives Post-Trump[11]

	House of Representative Voting on Women's Legislation (Post-Trump)		
	DV: AAUW Scores of Representatives		
	Overall Rating		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Republican	-77.205***	-60.710***	-60.864***
	(0.658)	(2.301)	(2.343)
Female	1.549*	0.213	0.145
	(0.811)	(1.014)	(1.023)
Post-Trump	-10.695***	-6.891***	-6.868***
	(0.623)	(0.676)	(0.675)
dwnom1		-24.091***	-25.225***
		(2.476)	(2.565)
dwnom2		-5.667***	-5.370***
		(1.283)	(1.291)
African American			-2.264*
			(1.189)
Latinx			-0.479
			(1.309)
Majority Party			1.671**
			(0.704)
Size of Delegation			0.017
			(0.021)
Previous Term			0.129
			(0.645)
Republican*Female		1.275	1.394
		(1.880)	(1.900)
Constant	99.497***	89.241***	88.394***
	(0.623)	(1.206)	(1.338)
Observations	1,740	1,045	1,045
R^2	0.900	0.941	0.942
Adjusted R^2	0.899	0.941	0.941
F Statistic	5,188.418*** (df = 3; 1736)	2,764.478*** (df = 6; 1038)	1,516.579*** (df = 11; 1033)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

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[11] Ibid.

In addition to regressions, I performed t-tests to specifically test changes in AAUW scores during the transition of the Obama administration to Trump's with only observing the Republican women present during that time. Tables 1A and 1B show these results.

Table 1A. t-test Results of Continuing House Republican Women's AAUW Scores (114th-115th Congress)

t-test	6.862321
df	18
p-value	0.000002025
95% Confidence Interval	11.94147 – 22.47958
Mean of difference	17.21053
Number of Observations	19

Table 1B. t-test Results of Continuing Senate Republican Women's AAUW Scores (114th-115th Congress)

t-test	1.033
df	4
p-value	0.36
95% Confidence Interval	30.04356 – 65.64356
Mean of difference	17.8
Number of Observations	5

In the House, the t-test score of 6.8623 has a significant p-value exhibiting there was a change in the average mean scores for the Republican women present during the 114th-115th Congresses. With these members constant, the mean score difference decreased by 17.211 points in score. The Senate does not have a significant t-test score and I therefore am unable to reject the null hypothesis. This can likely be explained by the small number of observations present in both Congresses. There were only 5 Republican women Senators present in these Congresses

which is not statistically enough to confidently reject the null hypothesis. However, it is important to note there was a change in average means similar to the House, resulting in a 17.8-point decrease in present Senate Republican women's average AAUW scores.

Since I am unable to confidently reject the null hypothesis for the t-test results in the Senate, I decided to perform another set of t-tests in both chambers using all the Republican women present, regardless of their previous servitude in order to increase the number of observations in the hopes it will produce a p-value that can reject the null hypothesis. These results are listed in Tables 2A and 2B.

Table 2A. t-test Results of House Republican Women's AAUW Scores (114th-115th Congress)

t-test	5.491
df	35.851
p-value	0.00000337
95% Confidence Interval	13.62419 – 29.58596
Mean of difference	21.60507
Number of Observations	24

Table 2B. t-test Results of Senate Republican Women's AAUW Scores (114th-115th Congress)

t-test	2.5375
df	5
p-value	0.05205
95% Confidence Interval	0.2479199 – 38.247919
Mean of difference	19
Number of Observations	6

In the House, I again find a significant t-test score of 5.491, which is larger than compared to the initial test, that results in a 21.60507-point decrease in average score. As mentioned, the incoming House Republicans have been cited as being more ideologically

conservative which helps to explain the increase in difference of means when accounting for all the Republican women present rather than those who served in both Congresses.

The Senate, once again, does not have a highly significant t-test score and I therefore am unable to confidently reject the null hypothesis, however, the p-value is significantly closer to the desired confidence level than compared with the initial test. Similar to the House, this second test resulted in a larger mean of difference of a 19-point decrease.

Despite the lack of statistical significance in the Senate with the t-tests to exhibit definitive changes in average AAUW scores of Republican women before and after Trump entered office, the overall findings of the Trump regressions and t-tests exhibit changes did occur to lower the overall scores of Republican women that are explained by the rise of Trump.

4.3 Trump: The Theory

The quantitative results for my Trump Difference hypothesis exhibits something occurred in order for Republican women to vote more conservatively on women's legislation during the transition into the 115th Congress. To show why Trump's entrance into the Presidential office explains this, I present a theoretical analysis of a situation in which America experienced a transition into a more conservative presidency and how Trump's approach to his administration is inherently different from that leader and how his frame of influence as the Republican president compels Republican women to vote more conservatively on women's legislation.

Many researchers have noted Trump's influence and his actions during his presidency mirrored that of Ronald Reagan. Both were inherently racist, argued to be white supremist, and cited to have altered the Republican Party's agenda to be vastly more conservative during their presidencies (Smith 2021). Due to the similarities between Trump and Reagan in terms of public image and political stances on various policies, Trump can be assumed to have great influence

over Republican legislators' voting behavior based on how Reagan had similar influence during his administrations. For example, Reagan's welfare policy goals were inherently conservative and racist as he publicly discriminated against black women benefiting from welfare by referring to them as "welfare queens" due to their attempts to "purposefully" bear more children in order to receive increased federal aid (Reingold and Smith 2012, 135). In regard to Republican women, they were placed in the position of choosing between supporting women with Democrats, as they had been doing at the time, or supporting their President. Ultimately, Republican women voted with their President in advancing more conservative women's legislation (Wineinger 2022). This exhibits presidents have the ability to influence legislator's voting behavior, including Republican women.

Although Reagan is exhibited to have influence over Republican women's voting behavior on women's legislation, the reasoning as to why his influence was able to suede them has to do with "follow the leader" dynamics. This idea in which leader cues have strong influence over co-partisans' opinions aids to explain why Republican legislators follow their party leaders to the extent they do (Barber and Pope 2019). Republican legislators have reason to "follow the leader" due in part to how much Republican constituents support a party leader. Republican constituents, as noted earlier, have been cited as "party loyalists" in which they support the efforts and actions made by the Republican Party overall, especially those of the party leader (Barber and Pope 2019). The importance of how the party's constituency reacts to party leaders relates to initial findings related to Congressional participation in which the main goal for legislators is to be reelected and retain their seats in Congress (Hall 1987). Supporting a party leader, especially a popular one, is in the best interest for legislators in order to retain their seats in Congress, regardless of their personal agendas. With this, it is in the best interest of

Republican women to "follow the leader" and vote alongside Trump's beliefs in order to ensure their likelihood of reelection to retain the few Republican women currently in Congress who continue to serve and represent them.

Given this, Trump has the ability to influence the voting behavior of the Republican Party to be reflective of his conservative views because of his popularity with constituents and rank within the party. The statistical analysis I conducted is reflective of this influence on voting, but my argument pertains to Trump himself, not as a Republican leader, explaining these results. In addition to his popularity, Trump's supporters were adamant followers. Trump supporters have been cited as following and supporting Trump's opinions even when they differed from being conservative (Barber and Pope 2019 and Agadjanian 2021). Even more interesting, Trump's support of "counter-stereotypical policy" results in more support from Republicans (Agadjanian 2021). This exhibits Trump's influence over the Republican constituency is strong enough to surpass inconsistent positionality on politics that Republican legislators have to keep up with. Additionally, Trump's supporters consisted of a majority of white women voters during his 2016 campaign despite his publicly sexist and anti-feminist comments (Wineinger 2022). Republican women then choosing to vote more conservatively on women's legislation based on Trump's "anti-women" positionality is quite telling of the influence he has on legislators.

Further research on the impact of Trump's presidency on the Republican Party is already underway but the literature published thus far and the statistical analysis I have conducted exhibits Trump's frame of influence over Republican women voting more conservatively on women's legislation.

5. Discussion and Concluding Remarks

Republican women are a unique and underrepresented group within Congress. Their past voting history of supporting Democrat women's position on women's legislation has separated them from their male counterparts. With this, they are constantly tested in their loyalty to their party with how they vote on women's legislation. Since then, Republican women have worked toward being treated as equals within their party and attempting to gain more seats in Congress. They are presented with the opportunity to express party loyalty with the ongoing party polarization and the presence of a conservative president.

In this paper, I find significant evidence in data before and after Trump became president to support my claims that party and Trump's presence have a strong influence over the decision for Republican women to vote conservatively on women's legislation within both chambers of Congress. Being a Republican was the most significant explanatory variable in influencing Republican women's voting outcomes while holding constant other potential explanatory variables. Being a woman, conversely was not statistically significant but exhibited a positive correlation in support of women's legislation. Despite this positive correlation in AAUW scores, the level of influence of being a Republican vastly outnumbered that of gender resulting in lower scores for Republican women. Between the two chambers of Congress, they differed in the levels of influence of being a woman and the interaction between gender and being Republican, however, being a Republican was the most statistically significant explanatory variable for conservative scores.

Furthermore, during the transition of Trump into office, Republican women's scores were heavily influenced by the new Congress resulting in a drastic decrease in scores. Analyzing the trends between Congresses, the Senate lacked a substantial number of Republican women

present in both Congresses and was not statistically significant, but their results mirrored that of the House with a large decrease in scores. This statistical trend was further explained by examining the importance of Trump being in office. His presidential influence over legislators and constituents is a given but his ability to retain supporters despite his opposing and constantly changing policy positions exhibits his frame of influence over legislators and his supporters that enable his agenda to be followed through on. Republican women, who are determined to increase their group size within Congress and retain their relationship with Republican men, voted in accordance with Trump's conservativism.

The implications of my work are not to label Republican women as permanently voting conservatively. It is evident Republican women are continuing this trend of conservative voting but an increase or decrease of Republican women in Congress may alter this theory. Additionally, the work I have presented is dependent on the time period of Trump in office and could change in the future. Future research on this subject is necessary due to the variability of time and political climate that affects how and why legislators vote. Ongoing research then is necessary in understanding what can influence Republican women's decision to vote on women's legislation and could lead to an understanding of why they do so.

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