

- Fowlkes, Diane L., Jerry Perkins, and Sue Tolleson Rinehart. 1979. "Gender Roles and Party Roles." *American Political Science Review* 73 (3): 772–80.
- Franceschet, Susan. 2005. *Women and Politics in Chile*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Franceschet, Susan, Mona Lena Krook, and Jennifer M. Piscopo. 2012. "Themes and Implications for Future Research on Gender Quotas." In *The Impact of Gender Quotas*, ed. Susan Franceschet, Mona L. Krook, and Jennifer M. Piscopo. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 229–42.
- Hazan, Reuven Y., and Gideon Rahat. 2010. *Democracy within Parties. Candidate Selection Methods and their Political Consequences*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Jennings, M. Kent, and Barbara G. Farah. 1981. "Social Roles and Political Resources: An Over-Time Study of Men and Women in Party Elites." *American Journal of Political Science* 25 (3): 462–82.
- Kenny, Meryl. 2013. *Gender and Political Recruitment: Theorizing Institutional Change*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Lawless, Jennifer L., and Richard L. Fox. 2005. *It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lovenduski, Joni. 2005. *Feminizing Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Lovenduski Joni, and Pippa Norris, eds. 1993. *Gender and Party Politics*. London: Sage.
- Murray, Rainbow. 2010. *Parties, Gender Quotas and Candidate Selection in France*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Norris, Pippa, and Joni Lovenduski. 1995. *Political Recruitment: Gender, Race and Class in the British Parliament*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Puwar, Nirmal. 2004. "Thinking About Making a Difference." *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 6 (1): 65–80.
- Verge, Tània. 2009. *Dones a les institucions polítiques catalanes: El llarg camí cap a la igualtat (1977–2008)*. Barcelona: Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials.
- Verge, Tània, and Maria de la Fuente. 2014. "Playing with Different Cards: Party Politics, Gender Quotas and Women's Empowerment." *International Political Science Review* 35 (1): 67–79.

## Encouragement is not Enough: Addressing Social and Structural Barriers to Female Recruitment

*Kelly Dittmar, Rutgers University*

doi:10.1017/S1743923X15000495

Invite a woman to run for office. Based on findings that women are most responsive to and reliant on encouragement in making the decision to run for office, this invitation refrain is pervasive among those seeking greater gender parity in U.S. politics. For example, in 2007, the Women's Campaign Fund launched *She Should Run*, complete with an online tool that, to date, has been used to ask just under 200,000 women to run for

Thank you to Susan Carroll, Kira Sanbonmatsu, and Debbie Walsh for their encouragement and feedback while drafting this piece.

office. In 2014, another organization, Vote Run Lead, adopted a similar strategy, launching *Invitation Nation* to send e-invitations to run to nearly 10,000 women within their first year of launching the project. My own organization, the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), has “invited” countless women to run for office through online communications, training programs, and recruitment campaigns and initiatives. While each of these organizations has also sought to provide potential women candidates with training, information, and resources to assist them throughout the recruitment process, our obsession with inviting can constrain a more complex and comprehensive approach to female candidate recruitment in both research and practice.

In this contribution, I argue that female candidate recruitment takes place within gendered institutions and requires incentive, opportunity, and strategy on the part of both recruiters — including, but not limited to, political parties — and the recruited. Moreover, strategically minded recruitment to combat stagnation in women’s representation requires strategically motivated research that grapples with the complexities of the environments in which recruitment and selection occur.

## COMPREHENSIVE AND STRATEGIC RECRUITMENT IN THE U.S. CONTEXT

In their analysis of the social barriers to female candidate recruitment, Lawless and Fox (2010) identify gender gaps in self-perceived qualifications and willingness to run for office. Carroll and Sanbonmatsu (2013) argue that women’s underrepresentation has both social and political origins, challenging the presumption that harboring nascent political ambition is necessary to launching a candidacy. Instead, they find that “ambition and candidacy may arise simultaneously” through effective political recruitment (44). Their findings are consistent with research findings that encouragement is more predictive of candidacy among eligible women than men (Bledsoe and Herring 1990; Lawless and Fox 2010; Moncrief, Squire, and Jewell 2001).

While asking women to run may combat self-perceived inadequacies and bolster self-confidence, multiple studies have found that women are less likely to receive the type of encouragement *most* influential in increasing their likelihood of running — that from party leaders and elected officials (Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013; Frederick and Burrell 2007; Lawless and Fox 2010). Instead, strong party organizations in the

United States appear to have a *discouraging* effect on women's legislative presence because they engage in gatekeeping or negative recruitment that dissuades or prevents women from running (Crowder-Meyer 2013; Niven 2006; Sanbonmatsu 2006). Carroll and Sanbonmatsu (2013, 107) find that officeholders, family members, friends, or acquaintances were nearly as likely as party officials or legislative leaders to be sources of discouragement to women's candidacies, with women of color most likely to have experienced negative recruitment. This discouragement may be tied to normative perceptions of who is best suited to run and win elected office, demonstrating how institutional realities can complicate the case for encouragement (Niven 1998; Sanbonmatsu 2006).

### Creating Incentive among Recruiters and the Recruited

One way to simultaneously address the social and political barriers to female candidate recruitment is to create incentives for women's candidacies among both the recruiters and the recruited. Incentivizing women requires more than asking them to run. As Carroll and Sanbonmatsu (2013) demonstrate, women make the decision to run (or not) for office more acutely aware of the potential costs to candidacy, including the ways in which candidacy or officeholding affects their roles and responsibilities outside of political life, whether in families, communities, or other professional settings. Women also perceive the financial costs of campaigns as a significant hurdle to candidacy and officeholding, a hurdle growing taller as the role of money in U.S. elections continues to grow. Other costs are related to the institutional biases that operate differently for women – and differently among groups of women – than they do for men. The pressure to adapt to accepted norms of gender and/or candidacy, the anticipation of greater scrutiny, and the evidence of institutional racism and sexism are unattractive to many who may otherwise pursue public service (see Dittmar 2015; Hawkesworth 2003). Shames (2014) describes how potential candidates weigh these perceived costs against the potential benefits of running and winning, finding that the calculus for women and potential candidates of color often results in perceptions that candidacy is not worthwhile.

In weighing whether or not to run, women need to perceive the electoral terrain as navigable, political success as possible, and officeholding as worthwhile. In assessing the gender power dynamics at play in existing institutions, they may also need to see the potential for institutional evolution and change. Candidate training programs have sought to

create a roadmap for women to navigate potentially hostile political spaces, for example, but have focused less on disrupting that hostility to reduce the costs of candidacy for women.

In focusing on the most effective modes and messages for recruitment, American politics research and practice too often underestimates the importance of incentivizing political actors to recruit women in the first place. Scholars and advocates need to effectively demonstrate the electoral benefits of inclusion among the candidate pool, whether direct to electoral success, highlighting the direct advantages women bring in voter evaluation, outreach, or mobilization, or indirect to electoral success by improving the reputation of political parties. While less immediate, practitioners might also consider the long-term investment of institutional change, whereby regendering ideal candidates and officeholders expands the criteria for all future candidates, not only women, and creates new opportunities for electoral recruitment (Dittmar 2015).

Parties are not the only game in town when it comes to female candidate recruitment in the United States. Extraparty political actors can be incentivized to recruit and support women candidates, influencing women's candidacy calculus as well as informing party perceptions of candidate value or viability. These actors can act as alternatives to party leaders in encouraging and supporting women candidates but may also place pressure on parties to prioritize women's representation.

While less directly engaged in asking men or women to run, political donors' decisions on who to support and how much to invest in them act as cues to potential candidates, party leaders, and political operatives of candidate viability within the monied environment of American politics. Outside of campaign finance reform, expanding the sites for financial support for women candidates, mobilizing likely donors (especially women, who remain underrepresented among all political donors), and leveraging that support can incentivize parties to recruit and select women. EMILY's List, a U.S. political action committee created to provide early financial support to pro-choice, Democratic women candidates, provides the clearest example that this can work. In just over two decades, EMILY's List has gone from struggling to gain access to party leadership to becoming a party adjunct of sorts, with Democratic party leaders motivated to support their endorsed candidates due to the guarantee of financial support that would not otherwise go to a male candidate. This model is limited, however, to improving recruitment among only potential women candidates who meet EMILY's List criteria. Expanding similarly advantageous sites for Republican women

and women of color is essential to incentivize female candidates and political practitioners alike to perceive an electoral advantage in recruiting and selecting women of all types.

Finally, some research indicates that women's inclusion among party leaders would yield better results for women's candidacies (see Crowder-Meyer 2013). Niven (1998) finds women party leaders are more likely than men to positively assess women candidates' electability, and Sanbonmatsu (2006) reports that female party leaders are more likely to be motivated by gender equality. More research is needed to identify the potential influence of female practitioners — in or out of parties — in boosting female candidate recruitment, as well as the institutional hurdles to them in gaining political power.

### **Identifying and Creating Political Opportunities for Female Candidate Recruitment**

Because structural changes to foster gender equality are particularly difficult within the U.S. electoral system, it is important to identify the best opportunities for expanding women's representation within the existing political structures. This requires drawing from and expanding research that identifies the conditions most conducive to female candidate success as well as anticipating the decennial redistricting at the state and federal legislative levels with attention to likely open or vulnerable seats for which women can run.

One of the few scholarly investigations into the sites for female success is Palmer and Simon's (2012) analysis of "women-friendly" congressional districts, wherein they not only look at district characteristics and demographics that appear helpful to women overall, but also take the necessary step of assessing how political opportunities for women vary by candidate race and party. Other scholars have highlighted the importance of taking an intersectional approach to identifying political opportunities for women, pointing to differences in the factors that have facilitated electoral success for women of color from those indicators of success for men of color or white women (Scola 2006). This research confirms that all political opportunities are not equal, particularly among and between potential women candidates (see also Celis, Erzeel, and Mügge in this volume).

Understanding where women have fared well to date, and why, is central to identifying additional opportunities for recruitment, but it is also necessary to consider how to expand the sites for opportunity. For example, limiting the recruitment of black women to majority-minority

districts because these have been the primary sites for their representation to date constrains opportunities for black women's success in other districts friendly to candidates who share their backgrounds, ideology, and agendas. Additional political opportunities for potential women recruits may also exist among seats for which women have already been successful and where women officeholders expend political capital to support and encourage female successors. Long-term and strategic succession planning among women officeholders can combat both social and political barriers to female recruitment and candidacy.

### FOSTERING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

A more comprehensive and strategic approach to female candidate recruitment can create institutional change as well as advance women's representation in American government. Incentivizing party leaders and political practitioners to recruit women entails disrupting gendered perceptions of who is best to run or lead. Research and advocacy on women's electoral advantages and the electoral benefits of expanding pools of candidate credentials can help to alter the operating procedures and norms of political institutions in the U.S. Expanding who has influence in those institutions by enhancing women's leadership within parties or extraparty organizations' influence on or outside of parties is also an area worthy of greater study and potential advocacy. Finally, better specifying sites for women's political opportunities addresses practical institutional or political barriers to female candidate recruitment, normative institutional barriers that inaccurately assume all opportunities are equal, and social barriers of self-imposed doubt about women's ability to succeed. Most importantly, the interconnectedness of institutional realities and strategic approaches to female candidate recruitment, selection, and success necessitate greater complexity in research and advocacy.

*Kelly Dittmar is Assistant Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University, Camden, NJ, and Scholar at the Center for American Women and Politics at the Eagleton Institute of Politics, New Brunswick, NJ: [kdittmar@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:kdittmar@rci.rutgers.edu)*

### REFERENCES

- Bledsoe, Timothy, and Mary Herring. 1990. "Victims of Circumstances: Women in Pursuit of Political Office." *American Political Science Review* 84 (1): 213–23.

- Carroll, Susan J., and Kira Sanbonmatsu. 2013. *More Women Can Run: Gender and Pathways to the State Legislatures*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Crowder-Meyer, Melody. 2013. "Gendered Recruitment without Trying: How Local Party Recruiters Affect Women's Representation." *Politics & Gender* 9 (4): 390–413.
- Dittmar, Kelly. 2015. *Navigating Gendered Terrain: Stereotypes and Strategy in Political Campaigns*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Frederick, Brian, and Barbara Burrell. 2007. "Political Windows of Opportunity: Recruitment Pools, Gender Politics and Congressional Open Seats." Presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans.
- Hawkesworth, Mary. 2003. "Congressional Enactments of Race-Gender: Toward a Theory of Raced-Gendered Institutions." *American Political Science Review* 97 (4): 529–50.
- Lawless, Jennifer, and Richard L. Fox. 2010. *It Still Takes a Candidate*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Moncrief, Gary F., Beverill Squire, and Malcolm E. Jewell. 2001. *Who Runs for the Legislature?* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Niven, David. 1998. *The Missing Majority: The Recruitment of Women as State Legislative Candidates*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- . 2006. "Throwing Your Hat Out of the Ring: Negative Recruitment and the Gender Imbalance in State Legislative Candidacy." *Politics & Gender* 2 (4): 473–89.
- Palmer, Barbara, and Dennis Simon. 2012. *Women and Congressional Elections: A Century of Change*. Boulder: Lynne Reiner.
- Sanbonmatsu, Kira. 2006. *Where Women Run: Gender and Party in the American States*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Scola, Becki. 2006. "Women of Color in State Legislatures: Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Legislative Office Holding." *Journal of Women, Politics & Policy* 28 (3/4): 43–70.
- Shames, Shauna. 2014. "The Rational Non-Candidate: A Theory of (Uneven) Candidate Deterrence." Ph.D. diss. Harvard University.

## Intersectional Puzzles: Understanding Inclusion and Equality in Political Recruitment

*Karen Celis, Vrije Universiteit Brussel*

*Silvia Erzeel, Université Catholique de Louvain*

*Liza Mügge, University of Amsterdam*

doi:10.1017/S1743923X15000501

Feminist scholars have developed a solid research agenda on gender equality in politics. This scholarship is built on the conviction that

We thank Meryl Kenny and Tania Verge for their constructive comments on earlier versions of this contribution. The work of Liza Mügge was supported by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) [016.145.022]; she also acknowledges the Women and Public Policy Program (WAPPP) at the Harvard Kennedy School for hosting her as a fellow (2014–2015). The work of Silvia Erzeel was supported by the Belgian Fund for Scientific Research (F.R.S.-FNRS).