Political Leaning and Coverage Sentiment: Are Conservative Newspapers More Negative Toward Women?*

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Objectives. This article examines whether newspapers’ political leaning affects coverage tone for individuals in the news and whether the gender of the person covered affects this relationship. Methods. I analyze sentiment data on millions of person-names from more than 200 major American newspapers between the years 2004 and 2009, juxtaposing them with various measurements for the political leaning of these newspapers. Results. Results show mixed support for the idea that political leaning in the media affects coverage patterns for individuals in the news. While newspapers located in states that are more likely to vote for Republicans cover women in a more negative way, I find no relationship between political leaning scores and coverage sentiment for men. Conclusions. The study shows mild support for the proposition that relatively liberal newspapers are more likely to cover women and women’s issues in a positive way.

A long line of research has looked at the coverage of female political candidates in various countries, showing that they often receive less media attention and that their coverage is not on par with their male counterparts. This differential coverage, in turn, often translates into fewer campaign donations and may negatively affect their ability to draw voters (Braden, 1996; Bystrom, Robertson, and Banwart, 2001; Caul Kittilson and Fridkin, 2007). Similarly, the coverage of women’s movements has tended to delegitimize the movements through focusing on protesters’ appearance, criticizing their statements and demands as unrealistic or childish, and emphasizing dissent within the movements (Ashley and Olson, 1998). In business, studies have shown that the media tend to ignore and marginalize female entrepreneurs, making it more difficult for them to succeed and develop their businesses (Baker, Aldrich, and Nina, 1997). Finally, various studies have shown that the coverage of sexual assault and violence against women often vilifies the victims, portraying them as promiscuous or careless and generating victim blaming (Anastasio and Costa, 2004; Carll, 2003; Meyers, 1997; O’Hara, 2012).

In the present study, I examine whether media’s political leaning may be associated with some of these coverage patterns. More specifically, I explore potential differences between conservative and liberal media in their general coverage of individuals in the news and in their diverging coverage of women and men. While a long line of research has looked at the various ways in which the media portray women and men, no previous study has examined in a systematic manner the potential role of media’s political leaning in accounting for these differences. This study thus offers a novel contribution to two large bodies of literature: research on media partisanship in political science and media studies, and the sociological research on gender inequalities in the media.

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Media Leaning and Differential Coverage

Media outlets often have traditions, self-identities, political affiliations, and political agendas. These agendas are not always explicit, and they may change over time based on the identity of the outlet’s owners or editors. However, in most outlets, identities and affiliations are quite stable. Furthermore, political agendas often shape decisions such as which editors and journalists should work for the outlet, what topics it should cover, and what political inclination this coverage should take. Oftentimes, these choices then contribute to the reproduction and fortifying of the paper’s agendas and political inclinations. Indeed, Groeling (2013), in his recent review of North American news, suggests that the short “golden age” of a relatively objective press during the second half of the 20th century has now been replaced by an overt partisanship era in American journalism.

Previous research has suggested that differing political agendas may also lead to variations in coverage, which may be expressed in both selection and presentation bias. Much of this research has focused on the ways in which the media cover political parties and individuals who are either aligned or stand in opposition to their own political agenda. Some of these studies reported that clearly aligned conservative and liberal media were more sympathetic to politicians who shared their political orientations, presenting them as more competent, warm, and agreeable and downplaying their failures (Aday, 2010; Barrett and Barrington, 2005; Baum and Groeling, 2008; Smith and Searles, 2014). Others, however, found only a weak relationship, or none at all, between the political leaning of a given media outlet and its depiction of ideologically aligned politicians (Niven, 2001; Soroka, 2012; Waldman and Devitt, 1998). Indeed, as Groeling (2013) argues, even if an individual or a news organization favors one partisan entity over another, this does not necessarily mean that the news they produce would be biased.

Another theme often emphasized by previous media studies is the tendency of most media to focus on negative news (Aday, 2010; Lengauer, Esser, and Berganza, 2011; Schudson, 1999). Herbert Gans (1980) was one of the first to observe this inclination, reporting the norm among newsmakers to view “bad news” as more newsworthy. It is less clear, however, whether this tendency toward negativity is associated with the media’s political leaning. While previous research has looked at the predisposition of media to present political rivals less favorably, no previous study, to my knowledge, has examined whether either conservative or liberal media are overall more likely to engage in negative coverage of individuals in the news.

Still, the fact that the data examined in the present study are limited to a concrete period (2004–2009) may offer some insights. During most of these years (from 2004 to the end of 2008), the United States had a conservative federal administration. This may suggest that conservative media were less critical and negative in their coverage of individuals in key political positions (who were likely to receive relatively more press coverage) than liberal media. Indeed, Aday’s (2010) analysis of the media coverage of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan found that the conservative Fox News was much more sympathetic to the administration than the more mainstream NBC. Given the prominence of politics, security, and reports about the war in Iraq in news reports, we may expect such coverage to constitute a significant portion of all news coverage. Hence, since the politicians who were more likely to be in the news at the time were those from the conservative party, I draw the following hypothesis:

H1: Conservative media will exhibit more positive coverage patterns than liberal media.
Political Leaning and Gendered Media Sentiment

While conservative and liberal media may not vary much in their overall sentiment, the gender of the individuals in the news may play an important role in the sentiment they receive. Political leanings may affect both who is being covered and how they are portrayed. Former research suggests that media political slant is not clearly associated with the amount of media attention devoted to women versus men (Adkins, Covert, and Wasburn, 2007; Potter, 1985; Shor et al., 2014a, 2014b). However, it remains plausible that media political leaning is associated with the tone of coverage and its level of negativity. Rodgers and Thorson argue that work environment and organizational factors are often important in shaping gendered coverage. They state that “although male and female reporters may bring different values, attitudes, and perspectives to the news, organizational factors and experiences can mediate these differences” (2003: 661). Similarly, Gallagher, in her book on gender in the media, argues that “journalists’ output has been found to be conditioned by the reward system and political preferences of their employers” (2001: 111), and that this affects gendered coverage. Patterson and Donsbach (1996) further found that political leaning has a significant effect on news decisions and coverage patterns, especially in the written press. Others agree that the political leaning and ideology of news organizations may influence their news content, particularly as it relates to the coverage of gender issues (Armstrong, 2004; Shoemaker and Reese, 1996).

Theoretically, there are a number of reasons to believe that news outlets that are more conservative might depict women and issues related to women’s rights, concerns, and social status less favorably compared with their liberal counterparts. First, conservative media often view feminism and women’s rights issues in a relatively negative light (Baker Beck, 1998; Brescoll and LaFrance, 2004; Taibi, 2014). Therefore, they may be less sympathetic in their coverage of these issues and of the individuals associated with them. Second, and related to the first point, conservative media may also be less likely to employ female reporters and female editors, which, according to some scholars, may be detrimental to the coverage of women (Armstrong, 2004; De Swert and Hooghe, 2010; Gallagher, 2010; Mills, 1997; Rodgers and Thorson, 2003; Wood, 1994; Zoch and Turk, 1998). Finally, conservative papers may be more likely to cover “hard” topics that are traditionally (that is, conservatively) considered to be more important or interesting, including politics, business, and sports. Conversely, they may be less likely to report on issues such as social welfare, healthcare, and education, where women have a stronger presence and are more likely to be presented in positive and nondegrading ways (Holland, 1998; Ross, 2007, 2009; Ross and Carter, 2011). I therefore draw the following hypothesis:

H2: Conservative media will cover women more negatively than liberal media.

Finally, since I predicted that overall the coverage of conservative media will be more positive than that of liberal media (H1), but also that the coverage of women in conservative media will be more negative (H2), it stands to reason that the overall predicted pattern should be driven by a relatively more positive coverage of men in conservative media. Theoretically, this may be the result of conservative media adopting a less critical approach to stereotypically masculine-identified views and behaviors, such as male politicians who pronounce anti-feminist ideas or support the use of power in resolving conflict. Similarly, liberal media may adopt a more critical stance regarding the actions and views of army generals, policemen, top businessmen, successful male athletes, and the likes compared with conservative media, who may view them uncritically as national heroes or as the manifestations of the American dream. For example, conservative media may be more
likely to excuse sexist demeanors or even sexual assault by male army officers or athletes, and instead point a condemning finger to the female victims and their conduct. Likewise, they may treat the statements of these high-profile leaders uncritically, praising them for their charisma, success, and service to their nation, particularly in times of conflict and war (Allan and Zelizer, 2004; Carruthers, 2011). I thus propose the following:

H3: Conservative media will cover men more positively than liberal media.

Analytical Strategy and Data

Because some of the data were not available for all newspapers and for all years, the panel data are unbalanced, but variations in sample size across years are modest. I present both bivariate and multivariate analyses of the relationship between newspaper political leaning and sentiment toward names in the news. I use random effects (RE) models in all of the multivariate analyses, as the main independent variable (political leaning) does not vary across time. With regard to issues of multicollinearity, I found a very high correlation (0.80) between city size and newspaper circulation. Since models including either of these control variables look very similar, I present only models including the former.

Appendix 1 presents data on all the dependent and independent variables included in the multivariate analyses. The table includes data on the way variables are measured, the data sources from which they were gathered, and basic descriptive statistics for each variable. Below I provide further details on each of these variables, concentrating on the dependent variable—sentiment toward either female or male names—and on the focal independent variable—newspaper political leaning.

Dependent Variable

Sentiment of Newspaper Articles. Data on newspapers’ sentiment between 2004 and 2009 are derived from the Lydia text analysis system. In previous work, I have provided a thorough review of this system, its scope, and its ability to accurately classify the gender of individuals in the news (Shor et al., 2014, 2015; van de Rijt et al., 2013). In the present analysis, I examine a subsample of this database, containing 203 newspapers, for which I was able to obtain a conservativism score (see below for more details on these sources).

The Lydia system assigns scores indicating positive or negative sentiment to each distinct entity (name) in a text corpus (newspaper articles in this case). (For more details on this process, see Godbole, Srinivasaiah, and Skiena, 2007.) The system then computes an aggregate sentiment score, allowing one to determine the average sentiment score (ranging from $-1$ to $+1$) for women as a group and for men as a group in all articles that appeared in a given newspaper during a given year. Appendix 2 demonstrates the ability of this system to track down temporal changes in the sentiment associated with chosen individuals. The appendix shows that Lydia accurately identifies changes in sentiment that follow negative or positive life events.

One possible objection to using this analytical strategy would be that a sentiment analysis that simply measures “positive” versus “negative” references is too crude when trying to capture the subtle differences in the media coverage of women and men. For example, some

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1In the bivariate and multivariate analyses, we recoded this measure so that 0 represents entirely negative sentiment, 1 represents entirely positive sentiment, and 0.50 represents neutral sentiment.
scholars have argued that news reports on women often tend to emphasize their physical appearance or motherly traits, while belittling their professional competence or intellectual skills (Byerly and Ross, 2006; Jia et al., 2016; Tuchman, 2000). A computerized text analysis system categorizes adjectives such as “beautiful,” “attractive,” and “nurturing” as positive. However, many scholars would argue that this is qualitatively different (and often not as empowering and beneficial) from newspapers describing individuals as “competent,” “able,” “successful,” or “strong,” terms that are arguably more often associated with men in the news.

To test whether this is indeed the case, I examined the adjectives most commonly juxtaposed with either male or female names in the news (see Appendix 3). These adjectives are important because they serve as the principal cue for the Lydia text analysis system when classifying articles as having a positive or a negative sentiment (Godbole et al., 2007). Of note, the table presented in Appendix 3 shows only minor differences between the most common adjectives associated with women and men. Both female and male names are mostly associated with positive adjectives, and adjectives that focus on physical appearance (such as “beautiful,” “pretty,” or “attractive”) were not very common. While these findings do not preclude the possibility that women are more often associated with bodies and the private sphere and men with mind and the public sphere, they do suggest that gender differences in coverage may not be as large as previously suggested. Nonetheless, in the analyses below, I distinguish between the media sentiment toward women and toward men, recognizing that these may reflect qualitatively different ways of reporting.

Independent Variables

**Political Leaning.** To assess the focal independent variable—political leaning—I use two alternative measurements, each relying on a different assessment logic.

1. **States’ political leaning:** In order to increase robustness, I used two ways to code the political leaning of states in which newspapers appear. First, I used a binary coding, with each newspaper coded as either 0 (liberal) or 1 (conservative), based on whether the state in which it is located voted for the Republicans or the Democrats in the 2008 federal elections. Second, I used a continuous measure, with each state (and the newspapers located in it) assigned a score between 0 (liberal) and 1 (conservative), according to the average proportion of all voters who voted for the Republican Party in the 2004 and the 2008 elections. The logic behind this way of measuring political slant is that newspapers that mostly cater to a more conservative audience are themselves likely to be more conservative. This logic is supported by the results of a recent article by Puglisi and Snyder (2015), who found that, on average, the political leaning of U.S. newspapers is located almost exactly at the median voter in their states. Hence, newspapers located in states that voted for the Republicans were indeed likely to be more conservative, while those in states that voted for the Democrats were likely to be more liberal.

2. **Newspaper political leaning score:** My first measure uses state voting as a proxy for newspapers’ political slant. While plausible, this measure assumes no variability among newspapers from the same state and fails to consider whether the newspaper actually caters only to the local state population or to a larger group of readers (e.g., the national readership). I therefore also use an alternative measurement—a ranking of each newspaper’s individual political slant, based on Gentzkow and Shapiro’s (2010) index. The authors (henceforth G&S) computed a political partisanship score ranging from
0 (liberal) to 1 (conservative) for 433 U.S. newspapers by measuring the similarity of a news outlet’s language to that of a congressional Republican or Democrat. They examined the set of all phrases used by members of the U.S. Congress in the 2005 *Congressional Record*, and identified those that were much more frequently used by one party than by another. They then indexed newspapers by the extent to which the use of politically charged phrases in their news coverage resembled the use of the same phrases in the speech of a congressional Democrat or Republican. Examples of phrases more often used by Democrats include “war in Iraq,” “tax breaks,” “minimum wage,” “poor people,” and “worker’s rights.” Examples of phrases more often used by Republicans include “war on terror,” “tax relief,” “government spending,” “illegal immigration/aliens,” and “border security.” This measurement has received praise for its elegance, as it is able to avoid the thorny issues of subjective interpretation and allows the politicians themselves to determine what Democrats or Republicans “sound like” (Groeling, 2013). It has the additional advantage of massive scalability, with political slant assessed in a large number of newspapers, rather than only a handful. I analyze here the 164 newspapers that appeared in both Lydia and the G&S index.

**Control Variables**

I control for a few contextual and geographical variables for which I was able to obtain data from various sources. These covariates may account for differences in the sentiment toward men and women.

1. **High-ranking political positions by sex**: I coded information from 2004 to 2009 on the sex distribution of high-level political positions in the cities and states in which a newspaper appears. This includes data on the following: (1) the proportion of female U.S. senators from a given state in a given year; (2) the proportion of women out of all U.S. House representatives from the state; (3) the proportion of women out of all local state senate members; (4) whether the state had a woman governor in a given year; and (5) whether the city had a woman mayor in a given year. In recent analyses (unpublished), I found that women who reach higher-level positions tend to receive relatively worse coverage (the opposite is true for men) in just about any profession. Therefore, I expect these variables to be associated with worse sentiment toward women.

2. **High-level business positions by sex**: These data from the American Community Survey of the U.S. Census Bureau estimate the proportion of female top executives out of all top executives in the relevant state.\(^2\) Once again, I expect newspapers appearing in states where women occupy more high-level positions in business to show a more positive coverage tone for women.

3. **Newspaper city size**: From the respective editions of the *Editor and Publisher International Yearbook* (Maddux 2004–2009), I coded a measure of the population size of the city in which a newspaper is printed. I expect a negative association between city size and favorable sentiment toward both women and men, mainly because newspapers from larger cities are more likely to have national rather than just local distribution patterns. This, in turn, means that they would be more likely to cover issues such as national crime, the global economy, the environment, and Washington politics.

\(^2\)We also ran models that included alternative measures, such as the overall proportion of female executives in the state, with similar results.
all of which may be associated with emotions that are more negative. Furthermore, previous research (Shor et al., 2014) has shown that the effects of political slant over coverage patterns may no longer be significant once studies control for newspaper distribution or city size.

Findings

I predicted that conservative newspapers would show a more positive sentiment toward all names (H1), and toward male names (H3), but a more negative sentiment toward female names (H2). The results of the bivariate analyses provide no support for H1 and H3, but do offer some support for H2. In Figure 1, I present comparisons between newspapers located in conservative states and those located in liberal states (Panel 1). While these results show almost no difference in conservative and liberal newspapers’ sentiment for either all names or men, we do see a difference between the sentiment toward women in conservative and liberal newspapers: liberal newspapers write about women in a more positive way compared with their conservative counterparts. Panel 1 further shows that the coverage for women is
more positive in both conservative and liberal newspapers, although this difference is larger for liberal newspapers.

Figure 1 also presents scatter plots for my second measure of the independent variable (based on the G&S partisanship index) for all names (Panel 2), women (Panel 3), and men (Panel 4). These results are inconsistent with those of the first measure. First, I found a significant (albeit weak) relationship between political slant and sentiment for the entire sample of names ($r = 0.16; p < 0.05$) and for men (Pearson’s $r = 0.11; p < 0.01$). These findings are therefore more in line with my first and third hypotheses, suggesting that conservativism is associated with coverage that is more positive overall and for men. However, I did not find a significant relationship between newspaper political slant and sentiment for women (Pearson’s $r = 0.05; p > 0.05$).

I further explore these relationships in the multivariate regression analyses. Table 1 presents results for each of my three main measures. These include the two measures for the voting patterns in the state in which a newspaper is located (a binary measure and a continuous measure) and the G&S index of political partisanship. The table presents nine models, broken down by these three measures and by the three subgroups—all names, women, and men. I found no significant effect for all names and for men. However, the results for women are in line with my theoretical suppositions: newspapers located in states that are more conservative covered women more negatively. The direction of the coefficient is also negative for the effect of the G&S index on sentiment for female names, but this effect is not statistically significant. This finding that conservative newspapers were generally more likely to adopt a negative coverage tone than liberal newspapers was also evident when examining separately the four main sections of newspapers—news, business, entertainment, and sports (see Appendices 5–7 for full results).

As for the remaining control variables in the analysis, the one variable that has a robust effect on coverage sentiment is city size. Newspapers that appear in larger cities (which generally also tend to have wider circulation) clearly exhibit less favorable coverage for both men and women, with the effect especially pronounced for women.

Conclusion and Discussion

I examined the relationship between newspapers’ political leaning and their coverage patterns of both women and men. I found no difference between the overall coverage sentiment of conservative and liberal newspapers. I did find some support for such a relationship for women, as newspapers located in states that are more conservative covered women in a more negative way. However, this relationship was not significant when using a measure of political partisanship based on the newspapers’ language (the G&S index).

These results join previous research that could not establish a clear relationship between the political leaning of various media and either their general coverage (Niven, 2001; Soroka, 2012; Waldman and Devitt, 1998) or their gendered coverage patterns (Adkins, Covert, and Wasburn, 2007; Potter, 1985; Shor et al., 2014). While previous research looked at the rates of coverage for women and men, the current study demonstrates that newspapers’ political leaning also has only a marginal effect on the sentiment of coverage. The one exception here is the coverage of women in newspapers that appear in more conservative states (as measured by voting patterns), which appears to be more negative. However, we should use caution when interpreting this finding. First, from a substantive standpoint, the difference in coverage is not very large—56 percent positive coverage for women in conservative newspapers versus almost 58 percent positive coverage in liberal
TABLE 1

RE Panel Regression of Factors Influencing the Sentiment Toward All Names, Female Names, and Male Names in 203 U.S. Newspapers, 2004–2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Names</th>
<th>Female Names</th>
<th>Male Names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper located in a conservative-voting state</td>
<td>-0.010</td>
<td>-0.024**</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(−0.80)</td>
<td>(−2.79)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(−0.59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion voting Republican</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td>-0.133*</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in newspaper's state (average 04, 08)</td>
<td>(−0.15)</td>
<td>(−2.31)</td>
<td>(−0.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper political partisanship (G&amp;S index)</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.53)</td>
<td>(−1.06)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of females among U.S. senators from state</td>
<td>-0.072</td>
<td>-0.089</td>
<td>0.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(−1.11)</td>
<td>(−1.84)</td>
<td>(−1.77)</td>
<td>(0.81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of females among U.S. House reps from state</td>
<td>0.04 (1.38)</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(−0.33)</td>
<td>(0.99)</td>
<td>(0.89)</td>
<td>(0.46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of females among local state senate members</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
<td>-0.018</td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(−1.53)</td>
<td>(−1.83)</td>
<td>(−1.65)</td>
<td>(0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female state governor</td>
<td>-0.024</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(−1.73)</td>
<td>(−1.82)</td>
<td>(−0.55)</td>
<td>(1.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female mayor</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(−1.58)</td>
<td>(−1.82)</td>
<td>(0.75)</td>
<td>(1.65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of females in state's top business executive positions</td>
<td>0.19 (1.68)</td>
<td>0.147</td>
<td>0.241*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(−1.66)</td>
<td>(1.86)</td>
<td>(2.37)</td>
<td>(1.66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City population (ln)</td>
<td>-0.013***</td>
<td>-0.012***</td>
<td>-0.014***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(−3.37)</td>
<td>(−4.33)</td>
<td>(−3.94)</td>
<td>(−2.18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations (newspaper years)</td>
<td>1,037</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>1,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE**: Reported are unstandardized coefficients and cluster-robust t/z statistics in parentheses. *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001 (two-tailed tests).
ones—and both conservative and liberal papers cover women in a more positive way than they do men. Second, I was only able to use RE models to test the robustness of this difference. These models fail to account for the potential problem of omitted variables in an adequate manner. Finally, the fact that I found no significant relationship between leaning and sentiment for women when using an alternative measure based on the newspaper’s language further puts in question the robustness of this relationship.

Moving beyond newspapers’ political leaning, the findings regarding the effect of individuals reaching high-level positions in politics and business on coverage sentiment are interesting. I found that when men occupy more top political and business positions in a city or state they receive more favorable coverage, but when women reach these positions in higher numbers, this does not improve their coverage in the news. These results reveal an interesting discrepancy: while men are often able to mobilize their stronghold over high-level positions to achieve better coverage, it appears that even when women are finally able to break the glass ceiling and reach positions of power, this does not translate into more favorable media coverage. One possible explanation for this may be that women who make it to the top are often still viewed as being “out of place” and are judged more harshly when compared with their male counterparts. Indeed, previous research suggests a differential media treatment for high-profile politicians and businesspeople that is largely affected by their gender (Braden, 1996; Bystrom et al., 2001; Caul Kittilson and Fridkin, 2007).

Finally, the most robust finding is that newspapers located in larger markets (and consequently usually enjoying higher circulation) tend to cover both men and women in a more negative way. Indeed, this factor is more important than the newspaper’s political leaning in predicting its tone of coverage. I suggested that a possible reason for this pattern might be that newspapers from larger cities are more likely to have national rather than just local distribution patterns. Consequently, they are also more likely to cover issues such as national crime, the global economy, the environment, and Washington politics, all of which are potentially associated with emotions that are more negative.

While the results of this study are revealing, I recommend interpreting them with caution. First, the measure of newspaper sentiment is somewhat crude. I demonstrated the validity of Lydia in capturing negative life events and the close similarity between the terms most often associated with male and female names. Still, this measure is unable to capture the nuances of sentiment and the cases where a certain description or focus is coded as positive when it is in fact belittling and diminutive, as previous research suggested is more likely to be the case in the coverage of women. Taking heed of this fact, I was careful to analyze sentiment toward women and toward men separately. It is nevertheless possible that liberal and conservative media still differ in the degree to which they use diminutive language, and that this analysis was not able to capture this difference in full. Furthermore, the two measures I used to evaluate political leaning (the state in which a newspaper is located and the G&S index) are both somewhat controversial. The first is only a proxy for the political inclination of the newspaper itself, despite the research that suggests it is quite an accurate proxy (Puglisi and Snyder, 2015). The second, while more newspaper specific, remains somewhat simplistic. Clearly, both “conservativism” and “liberalism” are complex labels, and it is hard to assess them simply by looking at the adoption of certain terms by a given newspaper.

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3In past research I have demonstrated the advantages of a qualitative analysis of newspaper data in assessing more nuanced coverage patterns of women and other minority groups (e.g., Shier and Shor, 2015; Shor, 2008a, 2008b, 2010; Shor and Yonay, 2010, 2011; Yonay and Shor, 2014).
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**Supporting Information**

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of the article.

**Appendix 1**: Descriptive Statistics of the Dependent and Independent Variables in Table 1

**Appendix 2**: Seven American Celebrities and the Sentiment They Received During Selected Time Periods

**Appendix 3**: Adjectives Commonly Juxtaposed with Female and Male Names

**Appendix 4**: List of Newspapers in the Most Inclusive Analyses \( (n = 203) \)

**Appendix 5**: All Names: Random Effects Panel Regression of Factors Influencing the Sentiment Toward People’s Names in U.S. Newspapers, by Section, 2004–2009

**Appendix 6**: Female Names: Random Effects Panel Regression of Factors Influencing the Sentiment Toward Female Names in U.S. Newspapers, by Section, 2004–2009

**Appendix 7**: Male Names: Random Effects Panel Regression of Factors Influencing the Sentiment Toward Male Names in U.S. Newspapers, by Section, 2004–2009