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UNDERGRADUATE JOURNAL OF POLITICS

ΠΣΑ

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Editor's Preface to the Fall Edition

Here at Elon University, we are extremely grateful for the opportunity to host the Pi Sigma Alpha Undergraduate Journal of Politics for the coming years. We are proud to present the Fall 2020 issue, and congratulate all authors published in this issue.

This journal seeks to highlight the intellectual curiosity that has led to innovative scholarship in all subfields of political science, scholarship that addresses timely questions, is carefully crafted, and utilizes diverse methodologies. We are committed to intellectual integrity, a fair and objective double-blind review process, and a high standard of scholarship. Through this publication, we aim to accentuate student achievements in political science research and showcase the works of undergraduate scholars, some of which has been traditionally ignored in the broader field of political science literature, despite representing the future of this discipline.

As an editorial team composed entirely of women, we understand that this occurrence is not a common one. Following the lead of the all-female American Political Science Review (APSR) Editorial Board, we are excited to promote research in the areas of "American politics, comparative politics, international relations, political theory, public law and policy, racial and ethnic politics, the politics of gender and sexuality and qualitative and quantitative research methods." This journal values the relationships formed through student-faculty collaboration and aims to inspire a culture of intellectual curiosity that expands far beyond the college campus. In addition to recognizing the academic endeavors of undergraduate students, we hope to further encourage and empower students to seek out knowledge and realize their potential in contributing to growing scholarship in a variety of disciplines.

In the journal's first year, we want to emphasize our appreciation for all the individuals who have made this first publication possible. Our advisors, Dr. Laura Roselle, Dr. Baris Kesgin, and Dr. Aaron Sparks, have been unwavering in their support of us throughout this entire process. Without their consistent support and insights, this issue would not have been possible. In addition, we would like to thank the entirety of the Political Science and Policy Studies Department at Elon University, as well as our Faculty Advisory Editorial Board reviewers for all of their hard work and support.

Going forward, we are excited to create a culture within our Editorial Board that embraces these values and continues to strive for excellence for the remainder of the journal's tenure at Elon University. Thank you for your continued support and readership of our publication, we hope you enjoy our first edition.

Sincerely,

The Editorial Board at Elon University

Submission of Manuscripts

The Journal accepts manuscripts from undergraduates of any class and major. Members of Pi Sigma Alpha are especially encouraged to enter their work. We strive to publish papers of the highest quality in all areas of political science.

Generally, selected manuscripts have been well-written works with a fully developed thesis and strong argumentation stemming from original analysis. Authors may be asked to revise their work before being accepted for publication.

Submission deadlines are October 1st for the Fall edition and February 15th for the Spring edition. Manuscripts are accepted on a rolling basis; therefore early submissions are strongly encouraged.

To submit your work, please email psajournalelon@gmail.com with an attached Word document of the manuscript. Please include your name, university and contact details (mailing address, email address, and phone number) in a separate document.

Submitted manuscripts must include a short abstract (approximately 150 words), citations and references that follow the *APSA Style Manual for Political Science*. Please do not exceed the maximum page length of 35 double-spaced pages, which includes references, tables, figures, and appendices.

The Journal is a student-run enterprise with editors and an Editorial Board that are undergraduate students and Pi Sigma Alpha members at Elon University.

The Editorial Board relies heavily on the help of our Faculty Advisory Board consisting of political science faculty from across the nation, including members of the Pi Sigma Alpha Executive Council. Due to the time committed to the manuscript review process, we would like to remind students to submit only one manuscript at a time.

Please direct any questions about submissions or the Journal's upcoming editions to the editors at Elon University: psajournalelon@gmail.com.

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“A Black Daughter of the South”: An Analysis of Local and National Coverage of Stacey Abrams’ Gubernatorial Campaign and Black Descriptive Representation

Pearl Sullivan, *Elon University*

In 2018, Stacey Abrams, the Minority Leader in the Georgia State House of Representatives, campaigned to be the governor of Georgia. The campaign garnered national attention as Abrams, the first Black woman to be a major party’s nominee for governor in the country, excited Democratic hopes of turning Georgia blue (Bacon 2018). Between the start of 2017 and the beginning of 2019, the Atlanta Journal Constitution published 611 articles that mentioned Abrams, and the New York Times published 285 stories related to her candidacy. This paper explores the differences in the local and national portrayal of Abrams’ campaign and how the coverage reflected media trends in the presentation of women of color, specifically female candidates of color. The research finds that the national coverage of Abrams both mentioned and focused on Abrams’ identity as a Black woman to a greater extent than the local coverage. Additionally, the paper shows that neither local or national coverage used stereotypical framing common in the coverage of women and people of color in politics.

INTRODUCTION

In 2018, Stacey Abrams, the Minority Leader in the Georgia State House of Representatives, campaigned to be the governor of Georgia. The campaign garnered national attention as Abrams, the first Black woman to be a major party’s nominee for governor in the country, excited Democratic hopes of turning Georgia blue (Bacon 2018). The campaign was heated as Abrams ran as an unabashed liberal and leaned into her identity as a Black woman in the traditionally conservative state of Georgia (Abrams 2018). Meanwhile, Brian Kemp, the eventual winner of the election, ran a hardline conservative campaign where he specifically highlighted the deportation of undocumented immigrants and gun rights as the central facets of his candidacy (Kemp 2018). The election itself was contentious as Kemp maintained his position as Secretary of State of Georgia, the role responsible for elections in the state, while running for office. This ignited suspicions of conflicts of interest and potential corruption as thousands of voters, specifically voters of color, had their voter registrations revoked by Kemp’s office under an Exact Match Law in the months leading up to the election (Valverde 2019). Additionally, as Kemp beat Abrams with only 50.2% of the vote to her 48.8%, Abrams refused to concede, and the election remained undecided through December of 2018 (Politico 2018; Valverde 2019).

The election received intense coverage on the local and national stages due to Democratic hopes that Georgia would

become a battleground state, the engagement of southern Black voters, the contentious nature of the race, and, most importantly, due to the charisma of Abrams herself and the groundbreaking nature of her candidacy (McFarland 2019). Stacey Abrams was the first Black woman to be a major party’s nominee for governor in the United States and, if she had won, she would have been the first Black woman elected governor in the country. Moreover, she focused her campaign on previously overlooked populations and, instead of focusing on moderate voters in the predominately white Atlanta suburbs, the campaign continued Abrams’ legacy of voter registration specifically the registration of Black people in rural areas of the state (Abrams 2018). Due to both her identity and to the focus of her campaign, Abrams was a new type of candidate for the country and for the state of Georgia specifically. Therefore, the national and local coverage of her candidacy could have been definitive for the perception of Abrams as a candidate and almost certainly had implications for the electoral calculus of similar candidates considering running for political office.

Between the start of 2017, almost two years before the election, and the beginning of 2019, two months after Abrams lost a contentious election to Republican Brian Kemp, the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* (AJC) published 611 articles that mentioned Abrams and the *New York Times* (NYT) published 285 stories related to her candidacy. This paper explores the differences in the local and national portrayal of Abrams’

campaign and how the coverage reflected media trends in the presentation of women of color, specifically female candidates of color. The research predicts that national news covered Abrams' identities more than local news, both by focusing on her race and gender explicitly and by mentioning her identities as a qualifier in articles with a different focus. In contrast, the paper hypothesizes that while national news focused more on Abrams' identities, local news used stereotypical frames to allude to her race and gender.

The aforementioned hypotheses are based on the nature of the readerships of the two newspapers analyzed. *The New York Times* is the national paper of record and, while a portion of its readers vote in Georgia, the majority of both its reporters and its readership would not be directly affected by the results of the gubernatorial election due to their residency outside the state. On the other hand, the vast majority of the *Atlanta Journal Constitution's* readers and reporters live and vote in Georgia meaning that the outcome of the election, and the policies of the victor, would directly affect their lives (AJC 2012). These differences in the geography of the readership is what prevents national outlets from covering local elections in general unless the candidate becomes a celebrity, as Abrams did due to both her identity as a Black woman and her intelligence and charisma as a candidate and political messenger (Gulati, et. al 2000). As a large part of Abrams' celebrity, which led to national coverage, was based on her role as the first Black woman to be a major party's nominee for governor, this research hypothesizes that the national news focused more on the groundbreaking nature of her candidacy, both implicitly and explicitly, than the local news which focused on her policies that had the potential to directly affect their readers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing literature examines both the portrayal of political candidates by the media and the portrayal of Black women by the media, but, due to Stacey Abrams' historical significance as the first Black woman to be a major party's nominee for governor, scholarship exploring the coverage of Black women in politics is rare. In previous research on coverage of political campaigns, scholars have examined differences between national and local framing of the campaigns (Stevens, et. al 2006; Gulati, et. al 2000). This scholarship has generally focused on framing of national candidates by national and local media outlets as local elections generally only receive coverage in dramatic contests, such as the Georgia 2018 gubernatorial election. Additionally, previous research discusses how different identifiers affect media coverage of political candidates. Specifically, scholars have examined the impact of gender and race separately as well as the intersectional effects of race and gender on coverage of campaigns. In order to understand the coverage of Abram's candidacy, understanding how the media portrays women, Black people, and, specifically, Black women is crucial.

National versus local framing of political campaigns

Framing is how media sources present information based on what the source decides to include, exclude, and emphasize (Moghaddam 2017). Framing allows news sources to take complex events and ideas and explain them in an understandable manner that leans towards a specific interpretation and, therefore reaction (Moghaddam 2017; Entman 2010). In their research, Stevens and his colleagues (2006) found that local news focuses more on national campaigns than on local elections, only changing the coverage when local elections become contentious or in the days before the election occurs. Additionally, when campaigns or political issues are covered by the local news, they fail to provide in depth coverage or explain candidates' positions (Stevens, et. al 2006). Finally, research shows that local news coverage of local political issues uses episodic framing instead of thematic framing meaning that the news attributes problems to specific circumstances instead of systemic issues (Stevens, et. al 2006; Entman 2010). However, scholars have found that local newspaper coverage does delve into political issues and campaigns to a greater extent than local television even though the same episodic framing is used (Gulati, et. al 2000).

On the other hand, national news barely covers local elections (Gulati, et. al 2000). Gulati and his colleagues found that the national news predominately focuses on Presidential campaigns with little attention given to senate or congressional elections and even less attention to local elections (2000). However, the same research showed that national news will focus on a smaller election if the candidate becomes a celebrity or faces a scandal (Gulati, et. al 2000; Cook 1989). The Georgia gubernatorial race fulfilled both of these conditions due to Stacey Abrams' national stature based on her historic role as the first Black woman to be a major party's nominee for governor and due to the controversy surrounding Brian Kemp's refusal to resign as Secretary of State amid claims of voter suppression (Valverde 2019). Given that these conditions were met, it can be concluded that the national news framing that is seen in national campaigns – sensationalizing the news or printing stories that are easy to understand and draw readers in — were used in coverage of the Georgia election (Gulati, et. al 2000; Entman 2010).

Portrayal of women candidates by the media

When discussing the media portrayal of women in politics, a double standard often arises. Scholars have found that if a woman is too warm, she is seen as incompetent, but if she occupies a leadership position she is perceived as cold (Bligh, et. al 2012; Hayes and Lawless 2015). Carlin and Kelly (2009) went farther with their research finding that women in politics are placed in one of four different roles by the media: the Pet, the Mother, the Seductress, or the Iron Maiden. The Pet stereotype, also known as the child role, occurs when a woman is tokenized and “symbolically taken along on group events as a mascot” (Carlin and Kelly 2009, p. 328). The

Mother stereotype means that women in power are portrayed as more compassionate than their male counterparts (Carlin and Kelly 2009). However, the Mother role often raises concerns about how women can hold leadership roles while still being good mothers, leads to a perception of women as emotional, and brings up images of scolding and shrewish behavior (Carlin and Kelly 2009, p. 328). The Seductress stereotype portrays women as sex objects, therefore contributing to an image of women as incompetent and superficial (Carlin and Kelly 2009, p. 327). The Iron Maiden leads to criticism of women being too masculine which can also hurt their candidacy (Carlin and Kelly 2009).

The research demonstrates that women in positions of power, specifically in politics, are relegated to stereotypical roles in order to maintain an appearance of femininity, under which they appear weak and emotional (Gilardi, et. al 2017; Carlin and Winfrey 2009). If women combat these stereotypes, they are portrayed as unfeeling, cold, and calculating (Kittison and Fridkin 2008; Meeks 2013). Research on the coverage of women in politics is extensive and a growing field. However, it generally focuses on white women, ignoring the intersectional challenges faced by female candidates of color.

Portrayal of Black candidates

Candidates of color face similar challenges to those faced by female candidates, but the challenges are expressed in a different manner. Jeffries (2002) found that the race of nonwhite candidates was mentioned significantly more than the race of their white opponents. As media outlets are predisposed to favor a reality where wealthy white men predominately hold power, a deviation from this norm becomes newsworthy, therefore making the race of a nonwhite candidate more prevalent in their coverage than the candidate's positions on issues (Entman 2007). This framing in turn causes public opinion to view a person of color campaigning for power as abnormal, causing a self-fulfilling cycle where the candidate's race attracts a disproportionate amount of attention (Entman 2007; Hutchings and Valentino 2004).

Furthermore, as public awareness of racism has increased, so has the coded language used by opponents of Black candidates (Hutchings and Valentino 2004). A common example of coded language in campaigns is the use of Willie Horton's image by George Bush's presidential campaign in 1988. Bush used the image of Willie Horton, a Black man convicted of kidnapping, sexual assault, and murder, to accuse the Democratic candidate, Michael Dukakis, of being soft on crime (Hurwitz and Peffeley 2005). Willie Horton is significant in the discussion of race in political campaigns as Horton's race is never explicitly mentioned. Instead, the narrator details Horton's crimes over a menacing photo of Horton, an image which brings to mind the stereotype of the dangerous Black man without directly calling Black men dangerous (Hurwitz and Peffeley 2005; Hutchings and Valentino 2004).

The racially coded language first used in the Horton ad is now common in political campaigns and is also present in the media coverage of candidates of color (Hutchings and Valentino 2004). Since the election of President Barack Obama in 2008, scholars have found that the public, specifically the white public, believe that racism was no longer a relevant social issue (Teasley and Ikard 2010; Enck-Wanzer 2011). However, the same scholars found that the coded language that defines Black candidate's campaigns became more common throughout Obama's tenure and have continued to grow since he left office in 2017 (Teasley and Ikard 2010; Enck-Wanzer 2011). Racially coded language reinforces the societal norm where white people hold power and monopolizes the coverage of nonwhite candidates' campaigns.

Portrayal of Black women candidates

The research on the coverage of women in politics and the coverage of Black people in politics predominantly focus on white women and Black men respectively meaning that the coverage of women of color, who face an intersectional experience, is largely ignored in both areas of study. Women of color in the political sphere face the double challenge of sexist media portrayals in addition to racial stereotypes. While white women and Black men have received more political coverage in recent years, Black women still face significant barriers to even receive coverage (Gershon 2012; Gershon 2013; Ward 2016). Orlanda Ward (2016) found that women of color receive more negative coverage than both white women and nonwhite men, that they are less likely to receive coverage than white women, and that, when they do receive coverage, the coverage is twice as likely to be explicitly based on their gender. Gershon (2012) attributes the disproportionate amount of negative coverage to the fact that women of color face both racial and gender-based stereotypes. These stereotypes shape the coverage of female candidates of color as the framing of news stories is shaped by journalists' biases and beliefs, many of which may be based in the common stereotypes surrounding race and gender (Gershon 2012; Thornton 2010).

There is a long history of stereotyping Black women in the United States. Historically, the governing stereotypes regarding Black women are the Mammy stereotype, the Jezebel stereotype, and the Sapphire stereotype which is more commonly known as the "Angry Black Woman" stereotype today (Carew 2016). In addition to the modern evolution of the Sapphire stereotype into the Angry Black Woman stereotype, the so-called positive stereotype of Black women as Superwomen has also become widespread in recent years (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al-Dobbs, et. al. 2008).

The Mammy stereotype is named for the character (or perhaps more accurately, the caricature) of Mammy in the Civil War era novel *Gone with the Wind*, who was an enslaved Black woman whose entire character was based on her care of the O'Hara family (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008). The stereotype characterizes Black women as motherly, nurturing,

loyal, self-sacrificing, and servant, similar in some ways to the Mother stereotype discussed earlier, but with the crucial added subservient aspect which dates back to the history of slavery in the United States (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008). As candidates and in the corporate world, the Mammy stereotype is used to overlook Black women's knowledge and experience and instead view them as compassionate support systems for others (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008; Carew 2016).

The second prominent historic stereotype is the Jezebel stereotype which characterizes Black women as seductive, promiscuous, flirty, manipulative and hypersexual (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008). This stereotype builds on the Seductress stereotype discussed earlier and was created to blame Black women for sexual relationships with white men, even when the white man assaulted the Black woman (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008). Today, the Jezebel stereotype often applies to lighter-skinned Black women who, according to the stereotype, will do anything to be successful including "sleeping her way to the top" (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008). This assumption causes the dismissal of the Black woman's qualifications, accomplishments, talents, and work ethic as the stereotype portrays her as a sex object (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008).

The third historic stereotype is the Sapphire stereotype which portrays Black women as loud, complaining, aggressive, bossy, and angry (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008). Interestingly, the Sapphire stereotype is a direct contrast to the Pet stereotype discussed earlier as the Pet stereotype portrays white women as passive and quiet while the Sapphire stereotype paints Black women as hostile, loud, and aggressive (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008). While the Sapphire stereotype is still relevant today, it has largely been replaced by the Angry Black Woman stereotype which, similarly, depicts Black women as crazy, vindictive, aggressive, disloyal, and angry (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008). There is little research examining the electoral impact of the Sapphire or Angry Black Woman stereotypes, but both are commonly applied to Black women expressing anger or even simple disagreement, devaluing their contribution and perspective.

The final stereotype commonly faced by Black women in the workforce and in politics is the Superwoman stereotype. Examples of the Superwoman ideal include former First-Lady Michelle Obama, TV personality Oprah Winfrey, and former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008). The stereotype creates an impossible standard for Black women to be overachievers intelligent, articulate, assertive, professional, beautiful, and capable of handling more than the average woman (Reynolds-Dobbs, et. al 2008). The Superwoman stereotype has become increasingly common in the political arena with Democrats consistently talking about Black women "saving" the country from itself, putting impossible pressure on Black women voters and, specifically, on Black women candidates like Stacey Abrams (Crumpton 2020; Connley 2020; Bolduan 2020; Scelfo 2019).

Georgia House Minority Leader Stacey Abrams became the first Black woman to be a major party's candidate for governor in the United States in 2018 (Bacon 2018). As a Black woman, Abrams could have been subject to the stereotypes and coded language that accompany discussions of political women and Black people, specifically Black women, in the media. Therefore, this analysis uses the stereotypes faced by Black women and includes stereotypes faced by women candidates and Black candidates more broadly as necessary. This research will examine the coverage of Abrams' campaign at the national and the local level by looking at stories from the *New York Times* and the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. The analysis of the randomly chosen articles will explore whether the trends seen in the coverage of female candidates, candidates of color, and, more specifically, female candidates of color is replicated in the coverage of Abrams' gubernatorial campaign. Additionally, this paper seeks to examine how these trends manifested themselves at the local and national level in order to understand the differences between the two types of coverage. The trends come from previous literature, as detailed above, and will demonstrate how Abrams' race and gender played a role in the coverage, and therefore public perception, of her gubernatorial campaign.

EXPECTATIONS AND THEORY

H1: The national coverage will focus more on the symbolism of Abram's campaign due to her race and gender than the local coverage will.

Scholars have found that the coverage of the so-called abnormality of a woman or person of color campaigning for office often outweighs serious coverage of their policy records (Gershon 2012; Gershon 2013; Ward 2016). This research hypothesizes that both the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* (AJC) and the *New York Times* (NYT) will discuss the fact that Stacey Abrams was the first Black women to be a major party's nominee for governor in the United States, but that the NYT's coverage will focus on this fact more than the AJC as the readers of the AJC were more likely to be affected by Abram's policy than the readers of the NYT.

H2: National and local coverage will focus more on Abram's race and gender than on her policy positions and record, and that national coverage will do this to a greater extent.

The literature shows that coverage of women in politics often focuses more on their roles as wife and mother, than on the candidate's political positions (Carlin and Kelly 2009; Kittison and Fridkin 2008). This research hypothesizes that the articles will show that the pattern repeated itself in the coverage of Abrams' campaign and was accentuated by the novelty of her campaign especially in a conservative state like Georgia.

H3: National coverage will explicitly discuss Abrams’ race and gender while local coverage will implicitly allude to her identities using the stereotypes discussed in the literature review.

As previously mentioned, readers of the AJC were more likely to have been directly affected by Abrams’ policy platform than readers of the NYT. For this reason, this paper hypothesizes that NYT articles will focus on Abrams’ gender and race in the context of her groundbreaking campaign while AJC articles will focus on her platform but will include the roles and implicit biases found typically in the coverage of women of color in government (Teasley and Ikard 2010; Enck-Wanzer 2011).

METHODOLOGY

In order to explore how local and national newspapers discussed Stacey Abrams’ race and gender during her 2018 Georgia gubernatorial campaign, *New York Times* (NYT) and *Atlanta Journal Constitution* (AJC) articles about Stacey Abrams that were published between January 1st, 2017 and January 1st, 2019 are examined. The AJC is the Georgia newspaper with the highest readership, reaching 214,303 readers daily and 405,549 readers each Sunday, it substantially covered the gubernatorial race as it was the largest political event in the state at the time and directly affected the paper’s readers. (AJC 2012). The NYT articles were accessed from the NYT website and the AJC articles from Lexis Uni. Every 20th article from the AJC that mentions Stacey Abrams (611 articles) was analyzed for a sample of thirty articles, and every 8th story from the NYT which mentions Abrams (245 articles) was analyzed for another sample of thirty articles. Only articles that have more than 100 words were analyzed. Additionally, in order to ensure that the articles focus to some degree on Abrams, her campaign, or the gubernatorial election only articles that substantively mention Abrams, or mention her at least three times, were used. This restriction limits the number of articles that are usable meaning multiple random samples were taken in order to reach the sample size of thirty articles per source.

As previously mentioned, readers of the AJC were more likely to have been affected by Abrams’ policy platform than readers of the NYT. For this reason, this research hypothesizes that NYT articles will focus on Abrams’ gender and race in the

context of her groundbreaking campaign while AJC articles will focus on her platform but will include the roles and implicit biases found typically in the coverage of women of color in government (Teasley and Ikard 2010; Enck-Wanzer 2011).

The coding of each article is based on the main focus of the article. This means that each article was read to determine whether the focus is policy, political positioning, or Abrams’ identity. Each story is coded based on five categories. First, the focus of the article was analyzed in order to determine whether it is about Abrams’ race, gender, the intersection of her race and gender, or a substantive topic such as her policy positions or campaign. Additionally, whether the article mentions Abrams’ identity as a Black woman regardless of the focus of the article was tracked. For example, the sentence “Stacey Abrams, the first Black woman to be a major party’s nominee for governor, made a speech last week discussing the Hope Scholarship,” mentions Abrams’ race and gender, but her identity is not the focus of the sentence or the article. This coding examines both the explicit coverage of Abrams’ identities and more subtle allusions to her historic position as the first Black woman to be major party’s nominee for governor in the United States.

However, the coding used for the first two hypotheses and detailed above does not fully explore the third hypothesis which compares explicit mentions of Abrams’ identities (coded for above) with the use of stereotypes related to her race and gender. These stereotypes do not appear in the earlier coding as they do not explicitly describe her race or gender. Instead they rely on the biases discussed in the literature review to allude to Abrams’ identities. In order to include these stereotypes in the analysis, each of the modern stereotypical categories described in the literature review was coded for: the pet, the mother, the seductress, the ice queen, the superwoman, and the angry Black woman. Each article was read and coded based on these thematic categories to see if it fits one or more of the categories in order to examine the use of racial and gender stereotypes in the portrayal of Stacey Abrams at the local and national levels.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Stacey Abrams’ campaign garnered intense national and local attention, leading both the AJC and the NYT to cover her campaign extensively. The coverage differed substantially (see

Table 1: Explicit References Results

Source	Gender Focused	Race Focused	Intersectionally Focused	Mentions Race and/or Gender	Policy or Campaign Focused	Total number of articles
New York Times	1 (3%)	4 (13%)	7 (23%)	27 (90%)	19 (61%)	30
Atlanta Journal Constitution	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	10 (33%)	26 (90%)	30
Totals	1 (1.6%)	6 (10%)	9 (30%)	36 (60%)	46 (76.6%)	60

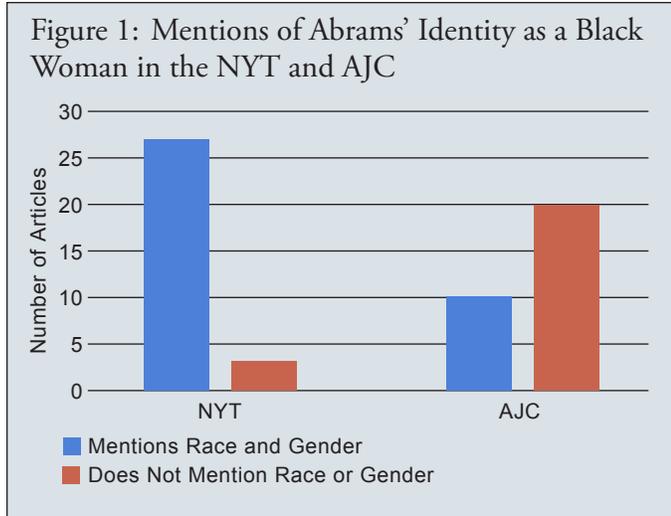


Table 1) with 40% of NYT articles focusing specifically on Abrams' gender, race, or both and 90% of NYT articles at least mentioning the significance of Abrams' race and gender even if the focus of the article was her policy positions and campaign. On the other hand, only 10% of the AJC's articles focused on Abrams' race or race and gender with none focusing on her gender alone. Additionally, only 26.7% of AJC articles mention Abrams' race and/or gender, a significant decrease compared to the number of mentions by the NYT. In terms of stereotypical framing, neither the NYT or the AJC used stereotypes in a majority of articles. The national coverage of Abrams's candidacy was more focused on her identity traits than the local coverage both in terms of explicit foci and mentions while local coverage focused almost exclusively on Abrams' policy positions and campaign decisions.

The finding somewhat supports the first hypothesis which states that the national coverage will focus more on the

symbolism of Abram's campaign due to her race and gender than the local coverage will. As Figure 1 demonstrates, a substantial majority of NYT stories mentioned the historical significance of Stacey Abrams' campaign with twenty seven of the 30 articles (or 90% of the articles) mentioning Abrams race, gender, or both. Comparatively, the AJC only explicitly mentioned Abrams' race and/or gender in ten of the thirty articles in the sample (or 30% of articles). The difference in how many articles mention Abrams' identity as a Black woman in the national versus the local coverage is stark and supports the first hypothesis to a certain extent. However, as is discussed in the examination of the second hypothesis, the articles that mention Abrams' identities in both sources often do not focus on those identities, instead mentioning her identities as a supplemental fact or descriptor in articles that, in general, discuss her campaign and policy.

The data does not support the first part of the second hypothesis which states that national and local coverage will focus more on Abram's race and gender than on her policy positions. As Figures 2.1 and 2.2 demonstrate, both the NYT and the AJC focus on Abrams' policy positions, campaign, or the election in general. For the AJC, twenty eight out of thirty articles (or 90% of articles) focused on topics related to Abrams' campaign instead of her race and gender. The NYT had more articles focusing on Abrams identities but with nineteen out of thirty articles (or 61%) discussing topics directly related to Abrams' candidacy, it also fails to support the first part of the hypothesis.

However, the evidence does support the second part of the second hypothesis which predicts that the national coverage will focus more on Abrams' identities than the local coverage will. While both the NYT and AJC focused more on Abrams' campaign and positions than on her identities, the NYT still focused on the influence of Abrams' identities to a

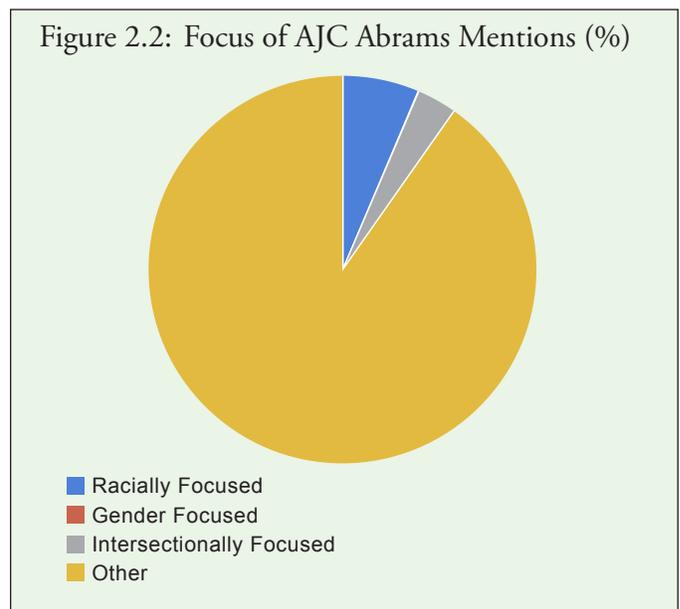
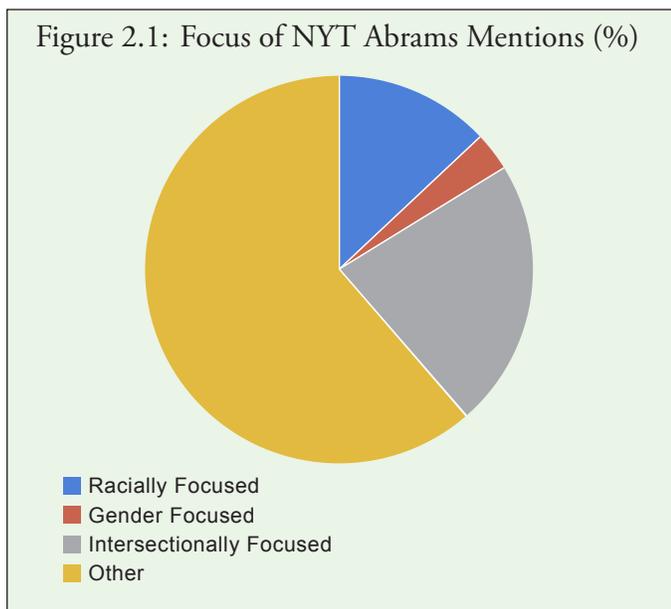


Table 2: Stereotypical Framing Results

Sources	Pet	Jezebel	Iron Maiden	Mammy	Superwoman	Angry Black Woman	No Stereotypical Framing	Total
New York Times	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (13%)	1 (3%)	25 (83%)	30
Atlanta Journal Constitution	1 (3%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	2 (6%)	1 (3%)	23 (77%)	30
Totals	1 (1.7%)	2 (3%)	1 (1.7%)	0 (0%)	6 (10%)	2 (3%)	48 (80%)	60

much greater extent than the AJC did. Out of the thirty-article sample, only three of the AJC’s articles focused explicitly on Abrams’ race and gender (or 10% of the articles). On the other hand, twelve of the NYT’s thirty articles (or 39% of articles) focused practically exclusively on Abrams’ identities. While this is still a minority of the articles, the findings demonstrate how the national coverage of Abrams’ campaign was more focused on the historical significance of her role, specifically her identity as the first Black woman to be a major party’s nominee for governor, than the local coverage.

Finally, the evidence does not support the third hypothesis which states that national coverage will explicitly discuss Abrams’ race and gender while local coverage will implicitly allude to her identities using the stereotypes discussed in the literature review. As previously shown, NYT articles explicitly mentioned Abrams’ identities at a much higher rate than AJC articles did. However, the coding used for the previous hypotheses does not account for the stereotypes and implicit bias described by the literature, meaning that all non-explicit mentions of Abrams’ identities were not included in the analysis. Once the articles were read for stereotypes, based on the six stereotypes which are commonly associated with women in politics and Black women in politics, there was not a substantial difference between the use of stereotypes by the NYT and the AJC. As Table 2 shows, five out of the thirty (or 16.7%) NYT articles used stereotypical frames and seven out of the thirty (or 23.3%) AJC articles did. This difference is too small to be seen as a genuine difference in the national and local coverage as it demonstrates that while stereotypes were present in the coverage of Abrams’ campaign, they were not often used.

However, even though less than a quarter of the sampled articles from both the NYT and AJC used stereotypical framing, the stereotypes used in reference to Abrams should be studied as well. As Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show, the NYT articles predominantly used the Superwoman stereotype with one appearance of the Angry Black Woman stereotype. On the other hand, AJC articles used a broader variety of stereotypical frames. The AJC only used the Angry Black Woman stereotype once, but it also used the Pet stereotype and Iron Maiden

Figure 3.1: Stereotypical Framing of NYT Abrams Mentions (%)

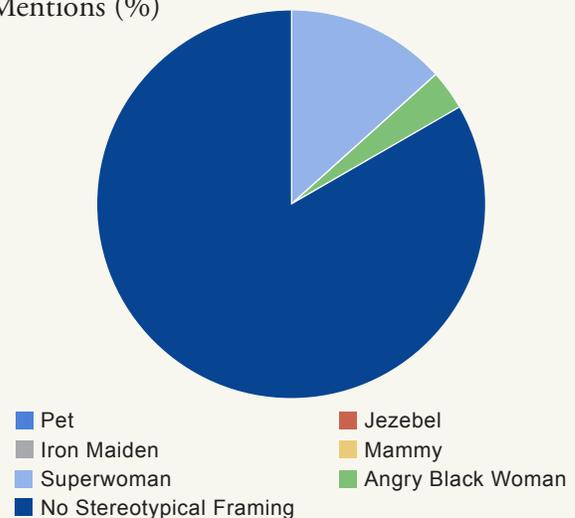
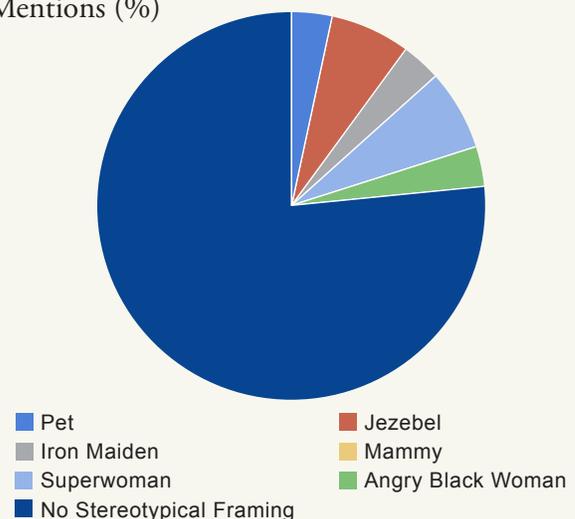


Figure 3.2: Stereotypical Framing of AJC Abrams Mentions (%)



stereotype once each. The AJC also used the Superwoman stereotype to a greater extent like the NYT with the stereotype appearing twice in the sample. The other more commonly used stereotype by the AJC was the Jezebel stereotype which was used in titles such as the article from July 30th, 2017 which describes the primary campaign as “Beyoncé vs Taylor Swift: Georgia Edition,” a title that alludes to Abrams’ and her opponent’s genders as well as their races and explicitly places Abrams, a Black woman, in opposition to Stacey Evans, her white opponent (Galloway 2017). Another example is the use of a sensational quote from one of the romance novels authored by Abrams under a pseudonym as the introduction to an article introducing her as a candidate (Redmon 2018). But these clear examples of stereotypical framing notwithstanding, the research shows that the use of stereotypes was uncommon in both local and national coverage of Stacey Abrams’ candidacy.

This finding breaks with previous research which repeatedly found that stereotypes framing was common in the coverage of women and people of color in politics and especially with women of color. There are a variety of potential explanations for the low number of articles that used stereotypes. One could be that as many articles, especially NYT articles, focused explicitly on Abrams’ race and gender, the use of coded language was unnecessary. Another potential explanation could be that journalists and their audiences are more aware of the subconscious biases that lead to stereotypes. A final potential explanation could be that American politics has become more diverse in recent years which could decrease the noteworthiness of Abrams’ identities, but the prominence of articles that focus on her race and gender present an argument against this explanation. The only way to determine which of these, or other, explanations account for the lack of stereotypes when compared to previous research is by completing new research specifically examining the bases for the stereotypes that are used by the newspapers.

Overall, the research shows that while both the *New York Times* and the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* covered Abrams race and gender, the NYT focused on her identities to a much greater extent than the AJC did and almost every NYT article sampled mentioned the historical significance of Abrams’ role as a Black woman regardless of the focus of the article. Neither newspaper used stereotypical framing commonly with under a quarter of both samples fitting within the typical stereotypical frames. The results of the hypotheses demonstrate that national news was much more oriented around the historical significance of Abrams’ run than the local news which predominantly focused on her policy history and campaign.

CONCLUSIONS

This research contributes to the literature by examining the differences between the local and national coverage of a woman of color’s political campaign. The paper provides more research on the coverage of women of color in politics, a gap that

scholars have failed to substantially fill. The evidence shows that national coverage of Abrams’ campaign largely consisted of articles discussing her role as the first Black woman to be a major party’s nominee for governor in the United States and, even in articles discussing her policy positions and campaign strategy, her identities remained relevant within the articles. In contrast, local news overwhelmingly focused on Abrams’ policy and campaign, only mentioning her identity in a handful of articles and focusing on it in even fewer. These findings provide a contrast to previous literature which found that both national and local coverage of women and people of color predominantly focuses on their identities and that this focus is primarily expressed through the use of stereotypes.

However, this research does face certain limitations, the largest being the coding of stereotypical framing within articles. As there is only one researcher for this paper, the coding was done by one white woman which could compromise the pure objectivity of the coding. Future works could combat this potential for subjectivity by having multiple researchers of diverse backgrounds code each article. The use of multiple coders would eliminate this limitation within the stereotype coding and would strengthen the coding of the foci of the articles.

In addition to multiple coders and an examination of the reasons behind the lack of stereotypical framing, other future avenues of research include examining how bias affected the coverage of both Stacey Abrams and her conservative opponent Brian Kemp. *The New York Times* predominantly covered Abrams and the coverage that Kemp received was generally negative as it focused on the potential conflicts of interest and voter suppression due to his role as Georgia Secretary of State during the election. On the other hand, much of the coverage Abrams received from the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* discussed her reliance on national donors with quotes from prominent state republicans condemning her decision to promote her campaign nationally. Both of these frames of coverage could influence voters’ perspectives of the gubernatorial race and would provide an interesting field of study for future researchers. Building on this, another path for future research could examine the quantitative impacts of the use (or non-use) of stereotypes in the national and local coverage of the race on public opinion and, therefore, on the outcome of the election. ■

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APPENDIX

New York Times Data Sources

- NYT: Michelle Obama and Stacey Abrams, Models of Power for Black Women 12/29/18
- NYT: Stacey Abrams Ends Fight for Georgia Governor With Harsh Words for Her Rival 11/16/18
- NYT: Fighting for Stacey Abrams and Empowerment in Georgia 11/5/18
- NYT: Stacey Abrams, Brian Kemp and Neo-Jim Crow in Georgia 11/7/18
- NYT: Stacey Abrams and the Black Women Reshaping the Left 11/1/18
- NYT: Trump, Offering No Evidence, Cites Stacey Abrams's 'Past' and Calls Her 'Unqualified' 11/1/2018
- NYT: Stacey Abrams, a Daughter of the South, Asks Georgia to Change 10/26/18
- NYT: Large-Scale Reforms' of Georgia Elections Sought in Federal Lawsuit 11/27/18
- NYT: Do the Math. Moderate Democrats Will Not Win in 2020. 11/12/18
- NYT: Stacey Abrams's Burning of Georgia Flag With Confederate Symbol Surfaces on Eve of Debate 10/22/18
- NYT: Stacey Abrams and Brian Kemp Renew Attacks in Georgia Debate 10/23/18
- NYT: Stacey Abrams Hopes Medicaid Expansion Can Be a Winning Issue in Rural Georgia 10/20/18
- NYT: Democracy in Danger in Georgia 10/12/18
- NYT: The Debt-Shaming of Stacey Abrams 08/27/19
- NYT: Stacey Abrams Wins Georgia Democratic Primary for Governor, Making History 05/22/18
- NYT: There Is More to Stacey Abrams Than Meets Partisan Eyes 08/19/18
- NYT: After Winning in Georgia, Stacey Abrams Says She's 'Ready to Get to Work' 05/23/18
- NYT: Stacey Abrams Didn't Play It Safe. Neither Do These Female Candidates. 05/29/18
- NYT: Is Stacey Abrams Assembling a New Democratic Majority? 04/30/18
- NYT: Can Stacey Abrams Change the Way Democrats Win in the South? 05/23/18

NYT: The Democratic Party Has Two Futures 08/09/18	scholarship fight 05/16/18
NYT: In Georgia Governor’s Race, a Defining Moment for a Southern State 07/28/19	AJC: Abrams wins Democratic race; Cagle, Kemp heading to runoff 05/23/18
NYT: Scouring for Stacey Abrams Votes, Georgia’s Democrats Keep on Campaigning 11/9/18	AJC: ELECTION 2018; Kemp hits Abrams on finances 08/09/18
NYT: Stacey Abrams and the Future of the Democratic Party 01/31/19	AJC: ONLY IN THE AJC CAMPAIGN SPENDING; Out-of-state money fuels Georgia races.09/12/18
NYT: Stacey Abrams to Deliver State of the Union Response for Democrats 01/29/19	AJC: AJC DIGGING DEEPER GOVERNOR’S RACE; ‘Black belt’ is key to Abrams’ strategy 09/30/18
NYT: In Georgia, Democrats Go With a Voter-Turnout Strategy 05/23/19	AJC: AJC 2018 ELECTION GOVERNOR’S RACE; Kemp lead shrinks; Abrams to sue 11/12/18
NYT: Black, Female and Running for Governor: Can She Win in the South? 05/19/18	AJC: VOTING RECOUNTS AND CHALLENGES; Abrams faces long odds to prolong campaign 11/08/18
NYT: 5 Key Takeaways From Tuesday’s Primaries 05/23/18	AJC: AJC ELECTION COUNTDOWN GOVERNOR’S RACE; Abrams, Kemp get high-profile supporters 10/23/19
NYT: Brian Kemp Resigns as Georgia Secretary of State, With Governor’s Race Still Disputed 11/8/18	AJC: AJC CONTINUING COVERAGE GOVERNOR’S RACE; Abrams, Kemp allies trade shots on ethics 08/03/18
NYT: Georgia Governor’s Race Still Unsettled After Claim of Victory by Brian Kemp 11/7/18	
<i>Atlanta Journal Constitution Data Sources</i>	
AJC: DEMOCRATIC Meet Stacey Abrams. 10/14/18	AJC: WHAT’S NEXT FOR STACEY ABRAMS?; Abrams shifting focus to federal lawsuit 11/18/18
AJC: ONLY IN THE AJC GOVERNOR’S RACE; Abrams brings stars; Kemp draws contrast. 10/05/18	AJC: INSIDE: 10 PAGES OF EXPANDED ELECTION COVERAGE; KEMP CLAIMS VICTORY; ABRAMS PRESSES ON 11/08/18
AJC: GUBERNATORIAL RACE; Abrams campaign deputy resigns 10/19/17	AJC: ONLY IN THE AJC 2018 ELECTIONS; Ga. black women key in Abrams’ bid for governor. 09/18/18
AJC: ELECTION 2018; Biden to campaign with Abrams 09/23/18	AJC: 2018 ELECTIONS; Carter announces support for Abrams in governor’s race. 08/15/18
AJC: AJC CONTINUING COVERAGE 2018 ELECTION; Governor’s race could look a lot like ‘20 presidential contest. 07/29/18	AJC: ONLY IN THE AJC GOVERNOR CANDIDATES; Spotlight helps to fuel Abrams’ bid 05/03/18
AJC: AJC CONTINUING COVERAGE GOVERNOR’S RACE; Outside donations a blessing and a curse. 08/12/18	AJC: GOVERNOR’S RACE; Abrams’ defiance delights fans, irks critics 11/17/18
AJC: GOVERNOR’S RACE; Abrams’ initiatives target early child care in Georgia. 11/20/17	AJC: AJC CONTINUING COVERAGE GOVERNOR’S RACE; Obama makes case for Stacey Abrams 11/3/18
AJC: LOCAL IN-DEPTH THE GUN DEBATE; In Georgia, Democrats find gun-curb courage. 03/24/18	AJC: Stacey Abrams’ vision, road map for Georgia. 10/14/18
AJC: Was Abrams misled on redistricting bill? 05/02/18	AJC: AJC CONTINUING COVERAGE 2018 ELECTIONS; Black and female voting surges in first wave of absentee ballots 10/02/18
AJC: AJC CONTINUING COVERAGE GOVERNOR’S RACE; Abrams banks on debt as advantage. 05/10/18	AJC: ONLY IN THE AJC GUBERNATORIAL CAMPAIGN; Abrams’ health plan has Medicaid, more 09/11/18
AJC: AJC TOP LOCAL STORY DEMOCRATIC GUBERNATORIAL DEBATE; Democrats renew	AJC: Beyoncé vs. Taylor Swift: Georgia edition 07/30/17