A Gender Gap in the Tea Party? A Gendered Analysis of Tea Party Voters in the 2012 Presidential Elections

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Abstract

This paper examines presidential vote choice among self-identified Tea Party members to examine whether gender in any way impacted those choices. In addition, this paper examines whether there are attitudinal differences among women and men Tea Party members with respect to policy issues that dominated the 2012 elections, such as tax policy, repealing the Health Care Act, and the role of government in helping those most in need. I also analyze Tea Party attitudes on issues that were front-and-center in the so-called War on Women, namely abortion and the birth control mandate, again to determine if men and women of the Tea Party viewed these issues differently.   While my analysis shows that men are significantly more likely than women nationally to support the Tea Party, once individuals identify as part of the movement, gender differences are not significant when it comes to voting for president: both men and women of the Tea Party vote in similar ways, giving their ideological views priority over their sex. This is not to say that there are no gender differences among Tea Party members on policy attitudes: indeed, Tea Party women were significantly more likely to support the Obama administration's birth control mandate and showed slightly more liberal tendencies than their male counterparts when it comes to tax policy, Obamacare, and the government's role in helping the poor. Yet these policy differences were not enough to sway Tea Party women to vote differently than Tea Party men.

A Gender Gap in the Tea Party? A Gendered Analysis of Tea Party Voters in the 2012 Presidential Elections

The 2012 contest between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney marked the Tea Party's first presidential election. The Tea Party burst on the political scene in early 2009, in response to the federal government's decision to bail out financial institutions that were deemed "too big to fail" during the 2008 fiscal collapse and, after Barack Obama's election, his administration's stimulus bill, which further increased the federal debt. Although the Tea Party is not a monolithic entity, what binds its many grassroots and national organizations and leaders together is its advocacy for limited government, rooted in a conservative interpretation of the Constitution (Zernike 2010; Paul 2011; Meckler and Martin 2012; Skocpol and Williamson 2012).

Given its primary focus, not surprisingly voters who identify with the Tea Party are far more likely to back Republican candidates than Democratic ones and at rates higher than the general electorate (Abramowitz 2012). However, the Tea Party's desire to push the GOP further to the right has caused friction with many established Republican leaders, who believe a more moderate path will be less alienating to the general public's electorate (Cohen 2012). Many commentators argue that the Republican Party lost historic opportunities to retake the Senate in 2010 and 2012 by promoting very conservative candidates with close ties to the Tea Party.[1] In particular, the extreme rhetoric of anti-abortion Republican candidates such as Todd Aiken of Missouri and Richard Murdoch of Indiana in the 2012 Senate races, combined with the Republican Party's reluctance to support several politically popular policies aimed at women, such as the Obama administration's birth control mandate, funding for Planned Parenthood's healthcare programs for poor women, and the Lilly Ledbetter Act, aimed at making it easier for women to sue for pay discrimination, allowed Democrats in 2012 to make the claim that the GOP was waging a "War on Women." Indeed, in 2012 Barack Obama extended his appeal among women voters, as the gender gap—defined by the difference in the percentage of women voting for Obama compared with the percentage of men voting for Obama—grew from 7 percent in 2008 to 10 percent in 2012.

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[1] In 2010, these candidates included Christine O'Donnell of Delaware, whose past pronouncements on masturbation and witchcraft became late night talk show fodder, and Sharon Angle of Nevada, who once promoted a prison rehabilitation program modeled on Scientology teachings (Cohen 2012). U.S. Representative Todd Aiken, in his Senate run in 2012, claimed in a televised interview that a rape exception for abortion was unnecessary because victims of "legitimate rape" rarely get pregnant. In a debate against his Democratic opponent Joe Donnelly, Indiana Republican Senate candidate Richard Murdock, who defeated Republican stalwart Richard Lugar in the 2012 GOP primary, defended his stance that abortion should be outlawed in cases of rape because God intends pregnancies to happen "even when life begins in that horrible situation of rape" (Krieg and Good 2012).

Obama's advantage among women voters in both elections is part of a larger voting trend in presidential elections first identified by political scientists in 1980. Since Ronald Reagan's first election, women have been more likely to vote Democratic and to identify as Democrats than men (Chaney, Alvarez, and Nagler 1998; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Carroll 2006). Of course, women are not monolithic in their political choices, as demonstrated by the important contributions made by women to the Tea Party as both leaders and activists (Deckman 2012). Women such as Amy Kremer and Jenny Beth Martin currently lead two of the most prominent Tea Party organizations, Tea Party Express and Tea Party Patriots, respectively, and several new Tea Party women's organizations, Smart Girl Politics and As a Mom…a Sisterhood of Mommy Patriots, now promote conservative political awareness, education, and activism through state chapters across the country and via an active social media presence. Yet, the question remains whether there are gender differences among Tea Party members when it comes to their vote choices and policy preferences.

Using data from the 2012 American Values Survey conducted by the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI 2012a, 2012b), this paper examines presidential vote choice among self-identified Tea Party members to examine whether gender in any way impacted those choices. In addition, this paper examines whether there are attitudinal differences among women and men Tea Party members with respect to policy issues that dominated the 2012 elections, such as tax policy, repealing the Health Care Act, and the role of government in helping those most in need. I also analyze Tea Party attitudes on issues that were front-and-center in the so-called War on Women, namely abortion and the birth control mandate, again to determine if men and women of the Tea Party viewed these issues differently.

Will gender matter in Tea Party Members' attitudes and vote choices? On the one hand, factors aside from gender, such as ideology, partisanship, policy attitudes or demographic and religious characteristics may be the driving forces behind Tea Party vote choices so gender might be irrelevant. For example, in my previous work on the voting behavior of men and women Evangelicals in the 2008 presidential election, a core constituency of the Republican Party that also happens to be disproportionately represented in the Tea Party (Brody 2011; Public Religion Research Institute 2011), I found no gender differences among white Evangelicals: both men and women overwhelmingly backed John McCain over Barack Obama (Deckman *forthcoming*). If Tea Party women, for instance, are somewhat analogous to white Evangelical women, Tea Party women may simply place greater salience on other factors aside from their gender in making their 2012 vote choice.

On the other hand, we might see some gender differences emerge among Tea Party members on both attitudinal and voting measures given that much social science evidence indicates that women consistently hold less conservative views than men about social welfare issues, tax policy, and the role of government in helping the disadvantaged (Shapiro and Mahajan 1986; Chaney, Alvarez, and Nagler 1988; Kauffman and Petrocik 1999; Norrander 1999; Kaufmann 2002; Box-Steffensmeier, De Boef, and Lin 2004;

Norrander 2008), even among self-identified Republicans (Deckman 2012). Moreover, even women who consider themselves members of the Tea Party may not have been immune to the "Republican War on Women" campaign narrative targeted to women voters by both Democratic leaders in Congress and the Obama campaign. For instance, several prominent Republican women such as Senators Susan Collins and Lisa Markowski and syndicated columnist Kathleen Parker expressed dismay at their own party's refusal to back funding for health services offered to poor women through Planned Parenthood, its selection of extreme anti-abortion candidates in hi-profile races, and its treatment of Sandra Fluke, the Georgetown Law student who was refused the ability to testify about the birth control mandate before a congressional committee (and was infamously characterized as a "slut' by conservative radio personality Rush Limbaugh for her advocacy work on the birth control mandate) (Johnson 2012; Parker 2012). Parker lamented in her August 2012 *Newsweek* cover story, "What the *#@% is Wrong With Republican Men?!" that the "men of the GOP are driving their party off a cliff" by pushing through what she described as "the most invasive state policies in modern history" (Parker 2012). In a campaign in which gendered themes were so prevalent and pointed, perhaps Tea Party women may have been less reluctant to back Barack Obama than their male counterparts.

Examining the gender dynamics within the Tea Party makes two important contributions to the scholarly literature in political science. First, it broadens our understanding of conservative women, which as a group often receives less attention than women on the left from political scientists (but see Klatch 1988; Schreiber 2008). Second, it helps us to flesh out differences that exist among Tea Party members. As a relatively new social movement in American politics (but one with antecedents in earlier conservative and libertarian movements, to be sure), scholars are just beginning to analyze the reasons people join the Tea Party. This paper helps us to understand what sorts of differences, if any, characterize Tea Party members and what sorts of opportunities and challenges these differences may present the movement in terms of building and maintaining support for the future.

Data and Methods

I use data from the Public Religion Research Institute's 2012 American Values Survey[2], a large pre- and post- election survey (n=3,000 pre-election; n=1,400 post-election) that examines vote choice in the 2012 presidential elections by religion, values, and standard socioeconomic status variables. The major variable under consideration in this paper is Tea Party status, which is derived from responses to the following question from their pre-election survey: "Do you consider yourself part of the Tea Party movement, or not?" Using this question, PRRI found that 11 percent of Americans

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[2] More information about the American Values Survey can be found on PRRI's website, both the pre-election survey results and analyses (http://publicreligion.org/research/2012/10/american-values-survey-2012/) and the post-election survey results and analyses (http://publicreligion.org/research/2012/11/american-values-post-election-survey-2012/).

classify themselves as a member of the Tea Party, while 89 percent said no (83 percent) or were unsure (6 percent). This question is a more restrictive, conservative estimate of Tea Party status as other surveys have asked Americans if they are supportive of the Tea Party or, even more generally, whether they agree that the Tea Party shares its values. In the past several months, other national surveys have found that between 22 percent (January 2013 AP-Gfk Poll) and 24 percent (October 2012 NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll) of Americans consider themselves "supporters" of the Tea Party.[3] PRRI's 2011 American Values Survey found 29 percent of Americans say that the Tea Party "shares their values" (PRRI 2011).   The Tea Party movement question was the only available option on the 2012 American Values Survey; however, it has the benefit of isolating those respondents who feel most attached to the Tea Party compared with those who may not consider themselves a part of the movement but who may share some of their values.[4]

While the main objective of this paper is to determine the impact of gender on Tea Party members' vote choices using multivariate analysis, I start with a general look at which American women and men consider themselves Tea Party members and how they are distinctive from or similar to other Americans when it comes to their socioeconomic status, religious behavior, partisanship and ideology.   Next, I examine whether any significant gender differences emerge among members of the Tea Party with respect to the key issues that dominated the 2012 election and compare their attitudes with the general public. Finally, I examine how Tea Party members voted, and using multivariate analyses, whether significant gender differences emerged among the Tea Party vote. I also examine whether Tea Party membership more generally had a statistically significant impact on presidential vote choice and then isolate its impact among men and women voters to see if Tea Party membership had an independent effect on the decision to vote for president and to determine which variables weighed most heavily in the voting calculus of the American electorate.

Analyses

Women and Men of the Tea Party: A Profile

Early studies of Tea Party members finds that the movement is dominated by older, middle to upper-middle class white folks who are more conservative and religious than the general public (Zernike and Thee-Brennan 2010; Zernike 2010; Public Religion Research Institute 2010; Abramowitz 2012). Examining such traits among self-identified Tea Party members from PRRI's American Values Survey from last fall, as will be revealed in Tables 2 through 4, shows a continuation of that trend. First, however, I turn to general gender differences in support for the Tea Party.

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[3] These findings are available at PollingReport.com (http://www.pollingreport.com/politics.htm). . Accessed on February 21 2013.
[4] For a more thorough discussion of the various wording of Tea Party support questions among different surveys and the implications such changes in wording have for assessing Tea Party activity among the general public, see Skocpol and Williamson (2012, 143-46).

PRRI's American Values Survey find that of the 11 percent of the U.S. population identifies itself as a member of the Tea Party. Broken down by gender, men are more likely to identify as part of the Tea Party: 12 percent of men in the US and 9 percent of women in the US identify themselves as part of the Tea Party, a difference that is statistically significant according to a chi-square test (p<.001; data not reported). Gender remains a statistically significant predictor (p=.053) in a multivariate, binary logistic regression model that regresses sex and a range of independent variables on Tea Party membership (1=Tea Party member; 0=not Tea Party member); see Table 1.[5] The coefficient for gender (1=women; 0=men) is negative, suggesting that men are more likely than women to identify themselves as Tea Party members. The relative predicted probability that a man would support the Tea Party, with all other variables held constant at their mean values[6] in this model is 7 percent compared with 5 percent of women.[7]

Table 1 about here

Also significantly related to identification with the Tea Party are ideology, party identification and views on Barack Obama. In other words, men, conservatives, Republicans, and those who hold very unfavorable views of Obama are significantly more likely to identify themselves as members of the Tea Party than their counterparts. Democrats were not less likely than Independents to identify with the Tea Party, just Republicans (I use dummy variables for party identification, with Independents being the reference category)—a finding that does not lend credence to the idea often promoted by Tea Party leaders that the Tea Party is at heart a non-partisan movement.

Even though men are significantly more likely than women to support the Tea Party, nine percent of women in the U.S population still define themselves as Tea Partiers. What do these Tea Party women look like? Are there gender differences among Tea Party members? And how do Tea Party men and women compare with the general public? Tables 2-4 offer comparisons of Tea Party members with the general public and with men and women in the general public on a variety of demographic, religious, and political variables.

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[5] I include the following independent variables in the logistic regression model in addition to sex; age, education levels (1=HS or less; 4=post grad); income categories (1=<$30,000; 4=$100+), marital status (1=married; 0=not married), parental status (1=yes; 0=no), race (1=white; 0=nonwhite), church attendance (1=seldom or rarely attends; 3=attends weekly or more), Views of the Bible (1=Bible is not the word of God; 2=Bible is the word of God, but not literal; 3=Bible is Literal Word of God), ideology (1=conservative, 2=moderate, 3-liberal), two dummy variables for party identification (Republican and Democrat with Independents being the reference category), and views on Barack Obama (1=very favorable; 4=very unfavorable).

[7] I calculated the predicted probabilities using the "prvalue" function in Stata. For purposes of calculating predicted probabilities, I replaced the two dummy variables for Republican and Democratic party identifiers (with independents as the reference categories) and instead used a 3-point party identification measure (1=Republican; 2=Independent; 3=Democratic).

Table 2 compares Tea Party members with the general public on the standard socioeconomic status measures, including age, income, education, marital status and parental status. On most standard socioeconomic measures, Tea Party members are very similar to the general public. At the bivariate level of analysis, only two statistically significant differences emerge. Tea Party members are more likely to married (59 percent) compared with the general population (50 percent) (chi-square test; p=.002; data not reported). Also, Tea Party members are far more likely to be white (87 percent) than the general population (75 percent) (chi-square test; p=.00l data not reported). Although not reported in Table 1, Tea Party members are only half as likely to consider themselves Hispanic (8 percent) compared with the general population (15 percent) (p=.004). Looking just at members of the Tea Party, there are relatively few socioeconomic differences among men and women who consider themselves Tea Partiers, except income: Tea Party men report higher incomes than women, which should not be surprising given than women make less than men on average in the United States.

Table 2 about here

Compared with the standard battery of socioeconomic indicators, however, Tea Party members are distinctive from the general public on numerous measures of religion, as indicated in Table 3. Here, we see that the ranks of Tea Party members are significantly more likely to be filled with White Evangelical Protestants and, conversely, are significantly less likely to be unaffiliated with a major religion. Tea Party members also report much higher rates of church attendance than the general public and are significantly more likely to agree that the Bible is the Literal Word of God, a conservative religious interpretation. Turning to Tea Party members by gender, Tea Party women are significantly more religious than their male counterparts when it comes to church attendance, which could be reflective of more general trends that show that women tend to be more religious than men in the United States overall (Putnam and Campbell 2010, 24-26).

Table 3 about here

The largest differences between Tea Party members and the general population, perhaps not surprisingly, concern ideology, partisanship, and views of Barack Obama: Table 4 shows that Tea Party members are far more likely to identify as conservative and as Republicans than the general public and they hold distinctively more negative views of Barack Obama than the general public. Moreover, Tea Party women look much more like their male counterparts in the movement than American women at large when it comes to the first two political categories. There are no gender gaps in party identification or ideological identification among Tea Party members, although women in the general public are statistically more likely to identify as Democrats than men in the general public and men in the general public have a greater tendency to identify as conservative than women. However, while certainly not ardent fans of Barack Obama, Tea Party women hold significantly less negative views about him than their male counterparts: 72.5 percent of Tea Party women view Obama either mostly or very

unfavorably compared with 83.8 percent of Tea Party men (chi-square test: p<.000; data not reported).

Table 4 about here

Policy Positions and the Tea Party

Demographically, the survey results show that, compared with the general public, Tea Party men and women are predominately white, more religious, more Republican, and more conservative. They are also more likely to be married than the general public, but have similar rates of parenthood. They share with the public similar levels of family income and education, though they do trend slightly older in terms of age. In general, women and men of the Tea Party share more in common with their fellow Tea Partiers than with women and men nationally in terms of these demographic, religious, and political data. Isolating men and women in the Tea Party, however, we find that Tea Party women are more religious than Tea Party men, and interestingly, hold less negative views about Barack Obama.

But what gender differences, if any, exist among Tea Party members when it comes to policy positions? Here, I analyze policy attitudes among Tea Party members by gender and compare them with the general public and men and women in the general public. I look at economic issues, longer-standing cultural issues such as abortion and gay marriage and issues that took on greater prominence in this past election cycle, namely the birth control mandate and religious liberty.

Economic Issues

Table 5 examines three issues that pertain largely to economic concerns and the government's role in society. The first question asks respondents to decide between two options concern social welfare policy. Namely, they are asked whether government policies aimed at helping the poor either "serve as a critical tool" or "create a culture of poverty." (See Appendix A for exact wording of these questions). Tea Party men and women take more conservative positions on this issue: whereas two-thirds of the general public are more likely to agree to agree with the notion that such policies serve as a critical tool, just 35 percent of Tea Party men and 45 percent of Tea Party women do. While a slight majority (54 percent) of Tea Party women are more likely to agree that such policies create a culture of poverty, Tea Party men agree with this statement at a higher rate: 65 percent—a gender difference that just misses conventional tests of statistical significance (p=071) using a chi-square test, but leans in the expected direction. That the data trend this way is not surprising, given past research by Karen Kaufmann (2002) that shows that women continue to hold more liberal positions on social welfare

concerns despite the fact that women are more religiously devout than men and are more committed to "traditional moral positions" than men (303).

Table 5 about here

Tea Party women also hold less conservative views on tax policy than Tea Party men, as the next question concerning increasing taxes among high-income earners shows that 40 percent of Tea Party women agree with increasing the tax rate on Americans earning more than $250,000 annually compared with just 29 percent of Tea Party men (chi-square test; p<.05; data not reported). Tea Party women are also significantly less likely than Tea Party men (p<.05) to favor repealing and eliminating the 2010 health care law, known by its critics as Obamacare. While Tea Party women are still noticeably more conservative on these issues than the general public, the gender differences (at the bivariate level, at least) among Tea Party members corresponds with past research that shows that women tend to be less conservative on taxes and government social welfare spending for the poor and for healthcare.

Cultural Issues

Table 6 shows that on two issues that often define the culture wars, gay marriage and religious liberty (abortion is examined in Table 7), Tea Party men and women again hold far more conservative positions than American men and women, respectively, and the general public as a whole. On the issue of religious liberty, in which the American Values Survey asks if respondents agree or disagree that the right of religious liberty is threatened in America, there are no gender differences among Tea Party members: overwhelming majorities of Tea Party men and women agree that religious freedom is threatened compared to 58 percent of the US population. However, on the issue of gay marriage, while Tea Party women are still far less likely to oppose gay marriage than support it, they do show statistically significant higher levels of support (35 percent favor) than do Tea Party men (20 percent favor) (p<.01). In this respect, Tea Party women's more liberal take on gay marriage follows larger trends in public opinion data, which find that women are more supportive of gay rights than men (Herek 2002; Deckman, Crawford, and Olson 2007).

Table 6 about here

Abortion and War on Women

Given the heightened emphasis in the 2012 campaign on women's reproductive rights and the decision by the Obama administration to require religiously affiliated colleges and hospitals to provide insurance policies for employees that cover birth control, Table 7 examines Tea Party attitudes on abortion and the birth control mandate, as applied to religious organizations such as hospitals or universities, which were at the

time of the survey not exempt from the mandate, and churches or places of worship, which do have an exemption.[8]

Table 7 about here

There are no statistically significant gender differences among Tea Party members when it comes to attitudes on abortion, though, like men and women in the general public, Tea Party women trend toward being both more pro-life and more pro-choice at the same time, being more likely than Tea Party men to support either abortion's legality in all cases or its illegality in all cases, which tracks similar findings among men and women in the general public (Selzter et al 1997; Jelen and Wilcox 2005; Norrander 2008).

Turning to the birth control mandate, however, Tea Party women are more than twice as likely as Tea Party men, 46 percent to 20 percent (chi-square test, p<.001; data not shown), to say they back the Obama's administration to require religiously affiliated hospitals and colleges to provide birth control as part of their insurance coverage, which follows similar trends among men and women in the general public. And, this difference actually increases when specifically asked about the insurance plans of churches and houses of worship: 39 percent of Tea Party women support requiring churches to cover contraception in their employees' insurance plans compared with just 10 percent of Tea Party men (p<.001; data not shown).

Issue Positions: Summary

Tea Party women and men hold far more conservative views on numerous public policy issues compared with the general public, hardly surprising given the movement's commitment to conservative goals. However, some gender differences remain among the Tea Party that mirror similar gender gaps found among the American public at large. At the bivariate level, at least, Tea Party women hold more liberal positions than their male counterparts on numerous issues, both cultural, such as gay marriage, and economic, such as taxes and repealing Obamacare. On the so-called "War on Women" issues, I find a wide gap between Tea Party women and men on the birth control mandate, with Tea Party women being more than twice as likely than Tea Party men to be in favor of this policy. However, do such attitudinal differences among Tea Party women and men mean that Tea Party women and men vote differently in the 2012 presidential election? Moreover, did Tea Party status among men and women serve as a predictor in terms of vote choice in the general electorate?

Vote Choice

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[8] In February 2013, bowing to pressure from conservative religious institutions, the Obama Administration revised its policy so that the onus for providing access to contraception falls on insurance companies, not religious organizations, although reaction from religious groups most concerned about this policy has been mixed (Gibson 2013).

Presidential vote choice among survey respondents in the American Values Survey closely tracks the exit poll results. Table 8 lists the presidential vote breakdown by the general public, men and women in the general public, and Tea Party men and women.   While Tea Party women do appear to have voted for Barack Obama at higher rates (26 percent) than Tea Party men (16 percent), this difference just misses standard tests of statistical significance at the bivariate level (p=.074).

Table 8 about here

When subjected to multivariate controls in a model that regresses sex on vote choice (Vote for Obama=1; Did not Vote for Obama=0) among Tea Party members only (N=321), those gender differences remain statistically insignificant (p=.159). Table 9 shows the results of this model, in which I control for a variety of standard independent variables that are often linked to voting behavior, including ideology (1=conservative, 2=moderate, 3=liberal), party (Republican and Democrats dummies, Independents the reference category), church attendance (1=seldom or rarely attends; 2=sometimes attends; 3=attends weekly or more), views on the Bible (1=Bible is not the word of God; 2=Bible is the word of God, but not Literal), education (1=high school or less, 4=post-grad education), marital status (1=married, 0=not married), parental status (1=parent of child 18 or younger; 0=not parent), and race (1=white, 0=non-white).[9] Caution is in order in interpreting the results because of the much lower sample size than the whole survey. Nonetheless, in this multivariate model, I find that the only statistically significant predictors of vote choice among Tea Party members for Obama are party and ideology: Republican Tea Party members were significantly more likely than those Tea Party members who are Independents to vote against Obama while Democratic Tea Party members were significantly more likely to vote for Obama than Independents. Likewise, there is a positive relationship between ideology (recall that ideology has been coded in a liberal direction) and vote for Obama among Tea Party members. Gender is not a significant predictor of vote choice President for Tea Party members, so from this perspective, Tea Party men and women vote in similar ways.

Table 9 about here

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[9] In this regression model and in subsequent analyses I decided to leave income out as a control variable due to the large number of respondents who did not answer this question, which dramatically reduced sample sizes in all of the models. For instance, in the above model, which regresses the impact of sex on vote for Obama among Tea Party members only, the sample size (already relatively low at 321 for this version of the model) would have been reduced to 260.   Moreover, I did not add the attitudinal variables featured in the bivariate analyses (Tables 5 through 7) as controls to the Tea Party model because adding them cut the sample size more than half, making the findings of the models too speculative at best.

Another way to examine the interplay between gender and Tea Party status is to model presidential vote among the full data set to see if Tea Party membership has an independent, interactive effect on sex in the general population while controlling for other factors. First, however, Table 10 shows the results of two logistic regression models in which I regress Tea Party status on vote for Obama for the entire sample (both men and women). In the first version of the model (Model 1), I control for the same independent variables that are modeled in Table 9 among Tea Party members only. In the second version of the model (Model 2), I include the battery of policy questions that are analyzed in earlier tables to determine which, if any, issues drove vote choice for Obama.

Table 10 about here

In the initial model shown in Table 10, Tea Party status is statistically significant: being a member of the Tea Party makes a voter significantly less likely to vote for Barack Obama, even while controlling for a variety of other factors. Holding all other variables at their mean value, the predicted probability that a member of the Tea Party will vote for Barack Obama is 30 percent compared with 51 percent of voters who are not part of the Tea Party. In essence, being a member of the Tea Party relative to other factors reduces the probability of voting for Barack Obama by more than 20 percentage points.

Sex, however, is not significant: while the raw percentages reported in exit polls do show a gender gap in the American electorate, when I control for Tea Party status, partisanship, ideology and several other factors, sex does not have a direct, independent effect on vote choice. We see in this model that in addition to Tea Party membership, what matters to vote choice is partisanship, ideology, and race: white folks, Tea Party members, conservatives, and Republicans are significantly less likely to vote for Barack Obama than those individuals who are not white, who are not part of the Tea Party, who hold more liberal views and who identify as Independents, respectively. Religion matters, too, in this initial model: church attendance and holding literal views on the Bible (one way to capture whether a respondent is a conservative Christian) are negatively related to voting for Obama. I find that older voters are also less likely to vote for Obama, but education, marital status and parental status have no impact on presidential vote choice.

In the second version of the model of the full sample, I add controls for attitudes about several policy concerns that made headlines during the presidential election, both in terms of Tea Party discourse and the "War on Women" theme promoted by the Obama administration and congressional Democrats. When these specific policies are added to the mix, the religious variables are no longer significant but partisanship, ideology, Tea Party status, and race still are. I find that five out of the six policies under consideration in Model 2, with the exception of attitudes on abortion, are statistically significant, with the coefficients pointing in the expected direction (all of the variables have been recoded so that the most liberal policy response is the highest value; see Appendix A for exact question wording). The predicted probability that Tea Party members will vote for

Barack Obama in this second version of the model, while holding all other variables at their mean values, remains 30 percent.

Perhaps the most interesting results involve policy issues that were germane in just the 2012 election cycle, specifically "Obamacare" and the Birth Control mandate, which can also be linked to religious liberty concerns. Voters who supported repeal of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act were significantly less likely to vote for Obama. The brouhaha over the birth control mandate also appears to have impacted voters' decisions: those who supported the Obama administration's decision to mandate that religious organizations be required to provide birth control in their insurance offerings were significantly more likely than those who didn't support the mandate to vote for Obama. Relatedly, attitudes about whether religious liberty is threatened in America (a claim made repeatedly by conservative religious opponents of the birth control mandate, such as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops) also factored into the voting calculus of the general population.

Among the general electorate, then, Tea Party status does impact vote choice: being a member of the Tea Party makes individuals less likely to vote for Barack Obama even while controlling for ideology and partisanship. In the final series of regression analyses, I isolate women (Table 11) and men (Table 12) to determine which factors help predict vote for Obama. I opted to run separate regression models for men and women, as opposed to a series of interaction terms, since some research suggests that different processes influence men and women in terms of their political behavior (see, for example, Burns, Schlozman and Verba [2001]). In addition to isolating the impact of Tea Party membership on men and women's 2012 vote choice, I can analyze the other factors that may differentiate the vote choices of men and women, particularly issues that have long been linked to the gender gap, such as attitudes about social welfare policy and taxes, and issues more topical to the 2012 campaign, namely the so-called war on women.

Table 11 about here

Turning to women voters, Tea Party status is not a significant predictor of presidential vote choice. Instead, ideology, partisanship, religion (at least views of the Bible), and race all help predict whether or not women voted for Barack Obama, in the expected directions. Race and party continue to have an independent effect on vote choice for Obama once I add attitudinal measures on the public policies. For women voters, attitudes about government assistance to the poor, gay marriage, religious liberty and the birth control mandate all matter to the voting calculus of women voters. Women who are more apt to believe that government assistance for the needy is a critical tool rather than a crutch for the poor—one way to measure sympathy to social welfare policy—voted for Obama. There is also a positive relationship between support for gay marriage and voting for Obama among women voters. However, disagreeing that religious liberty is threatened made women voters significantly more likely to vote for Barack Obama. And, this model finds evidence that the birth control mandate certainly

had an impact on women voters: those who agreed with the Obama administration's decision were more likely to vote for him than those who did not. Moreover, the large size of the coefficient shows that attitudes about this issue weighed most heavily among women voters compared with the other policy attitudes.

Table 12 shows the results of the same regression analysis but isolated to men, which shows that Tea Party membership matters more to men more than women voters when it comes to their voting decisions. In the first version of the model of male voters, at least, men who belong to the Tea Party are significantly less likely to vote for Barack Obama, which was not true for women. Similar to women voters, race, partisanship and ideology are also significant predictors of vote, as is a more literal interpretation of the Bible. However, also significant in the first version of the model is church attendance: the more a man attends church, the less likely he is to vote for Barack Obama. Age is also negatively related to vote for Obama among men.

Table 12 about here

Once I factor in specific policy attitudes, however, Tea Party status, the religious variables and age no longer remain significant in the model. Instead, attitudes on tax policy and the health care repeal help predict men's votes: men who are in favor of increasing taxes on those making more than $250,000 a year are more likely to vote for Obama while men who support repealing the Health Care act are significantly less likely to vote for Obama. These findings are also likely why Tea Party status no longer is significant in the model, given that both a commitment to lower taxes and overturning Obamacare are important goals of the Tea Party movement. Somewhat surprisingly, however, I find in this model that attitudes about the birth control mandate impact not just female voters, but male voters, too: men who support the Obama administration's birth control mandate are significantly more likely to vote for Obama than men who do not. Similarly, abortion is not a significant factor for men voters, which is also true of women voters. With the exception of abortion attitudes and attitudes about the birth control mandate, I find that from a policy perspective, men and women largely differ in what drives their vote choice for president. For men, it's taxes and health care reform; for women, it's social welfare issues, gay marriage, and religious liberty attitudes.

Discussion

When it comes to gender dynamics in the Tea Party, the findings here reveal a mixed picture. Men and women who consider themselves members of the Tea Party do show some differences when it comes to attitudes about public policy, at least at the bivariate level of analysis. Like women in the general population, Tea Party women hold more liberal views than Tea Party men on taxes, repealing the health care act, and gay marriage. And they are twice as likely as Tea Party men to agree with the Obama administration's birth control mandate: 46 to 20 percent. However, despite such attitudinal differences among men and women of the Tea Party, these differences do not appear to dictate their vote choices: in a regression model isolated among Tea Party

members, sex is not a significant predictor of vote choice for vote for Obama.[10] At the end of the day, Tea Party women share many more similarities with their male counterparts than differences, including their propensity to vote against Barack Obama.

Another way to consider the impact of the Tea Party on men and women voters is to see whether being a member of the Tea Party impacts a voter's decision to vote for Barack Obama compared with citizens who are not part of the Tea Party. In the full model of voters, being a member of the Tea Party makes a voter significantly less likely to vote for Obama, even after controlling for a variety of attitudinal measures and other factors.   When I regress Tea Party membership on vote choice for women, however, I find that Tea Party status is not significant. Being a member of the Tea Party makes men, however, less likely to vote for Barack Obama than American men who are not part of the Tea Party, at least before I include attitudinal measures that touch on two issues that are key concerns of the movement: taxes and repealing the health care bill. In both cases, holding conservative positions on taxes and Obama care lead voters to be statistically less likely to vote for Obama.

In some ways, these findings correspond with my earlier regression analysis, which finds that men are statistically more likely to identify themselves as part of the Tea Party than women (Table 1).   Why the Tea Party brand carries more weight among men voters than women voters may be related to the issues that dominated Tea Party discourse in the 2012 election, such as opposition to taxes and opposition to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, labeled by Tea Party movement leaders and other conservatives as Obamacare (both of which are significant predictors of vote choices for men voters but not women voters).   Past research shows that an individual's perception about his own economic situation (whether it is better or worse) shapes men's presidential voting decision but not women's (Chaney, Alverez, and Nagler 1998) and certainly tax rates have a direct impact on a voter's pocketbook.

One unexpected finding is the extent to which voters cared about the birth control mandate. Here, in the bivariate analysis, there is a gender gap among men and women, both the general public and those in the Tea Party, showing that women held much more liberal views on the mandate then men. But the issue has great salience among both men and women when it comes to vote choice: for both sets of voters, there is a positive relationship between support for the birth control mandate and voting for President

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[10] While women of the Tea Party appeared much more supportive of the birth control mandate than Tea Party men, this attitudinal difference did not result in making an impact on voting for Obama. Although not reported, I created a separate logistic regression model for only Tea Party members (building on to the model reported in Table 9) in which I controlled for attitudes about the birth control mandate and then included an interaction term for sex by birth control mandate. The question about the birth control mandate was given to just half of the original sample, so that when I ran a regression model with only Tea Party members who had been exposed to this question, the sample size dropped to 175, so the results really should be interpreted with caution. But in this model, while the coefficient was in the expected direction (i.e. the birth control mandate appears to be isolated to Tea Party women as opposed to Tea Party men), it was not quite statistically significant (p=.097).

Obama.   Although targeted to women voters, this "war on women" theme—and perhaps the backlash it spawned among conservative religious voters—actually mattered to both men and women voters.

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Appendix A
Survey Question Wording

This appendix contains the wording for Public Religion Research Institute's 2012
American Values Survey questions on matters of public policy.   The topline survey
results with full question wording can be found at PRRI's website
(http://publicreligion.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/AVS-2012-Topline-
FINAL.pdf). The values for the policy answers have been recoded for use in the
regression models so that all are consistently liberal in direction.

Economic and Role of Government Questions

1. Government poor policies as critical tool or culture of poverty:

"Now, as I read a pair of statements, please tell me whether the FIRST statement or the
SECOND statement comes closer to your own views - even if neither is exactly right.

> 1: Government Policies aimed at helping the poor serve as a critical tool
> 2: Government Politics aimed at helping the poor create a culture of poverty
> 3: Both Equally

(For use in the regression model, I recode it such that 1=culture of poverty; 2=both
equally; and 3=critical tool)

2.   Taxes: "Do you favor or oppose increasing the tax rate on Americans earning more
than $250,000 a year?" (1=strongly oppose, 2=oppose, 3=favor, 4=strongly favor).

3. Health Care: "Do you favor or oppose repealing and eliminating the 2010 health care
law?" (1=strongly oppose, 2=oppose, 3=favor, 4=strongly favor)

Cultural Questions

4. Gay Marriage: "Do you favor or oppose allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry
legally? (1=strongly oppose, 2=oppose, 3=favor, 4=strongly favor)

5. Religious Liberty: Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or
completely disagree that the right of religious liberty is being threatened in America
today? (1=completely agree, 2= disagree, 3=mostly disagree, 4=completely disagree)

War On Women Questions

6. Abortion: Do you think abortion should be legal in all cases, legal in most cases,
illegal in most cases, or illegal in all cases? (1=illegal in all cases, 2=illegal in most cases,
3=legal in most cases, 4=legal in all cases)

7. Birth Control Mandate: There is currently a debate over what kinds of health care plans some religious organizations should be required to provide. Do you think religiously affiliated colleges and hospitals should be required to provide their employees with health care plans that cover contraception or birth control, or not? (1= No, they should not have to provide, 2=Yes, they should have to provide;).

Table 1
Logistic Regression Model:
DV=Tea Party (1=Part of Movement; 0=Not Part of Movement)
Unstandardized Coefficients Reported (Standard Errors in Parentheses)

	B	S.E.
Sex	-.281*	.145
Church Attendance	-.081	.103
View of Bible	.166	.112
Education	-.028	.081
Income	-.013	.078
Age	-.004	.004
Marital Status	-.225	.173
Parental Status	.198	.170
White	.370	.241
Republican	.515***	.165
Democrat	.060	.265
Ideology	-.816***	.138
Views of Obama	.557***	.091
Constant	-2.710	.550
N	2372	
% Categorized Correctly	89.3	
-2 XLLR	1365.785	
Model Chi-Square	265.147***	

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Table 2
Socioeconomic Status by Gender and Tea Party Status

	General Population	U.S. Men	U.S. Women	Tea Party Men	Tea Party Women
Average Age	47.75 years	46.21 years	48.67 years	49.95 years	50.02 years
Annual Family Income*					
Less than $30,000	28.3%	24.1%	32.4%	21.0%	31.6%
$30-50,000	19.3	21.1	17.5	15.5	22.6
$50-100,000	26.3	27.9	24.7	37.0	20.3
More than $100K	10.5	8.5	12.4	14.9	14.3
Education*					
HS or less	41.7%	43.2%	40.2%	43.4%	44.4%
Some college	29.2	27.8	30.6	26.9	31.6
College grad	17.6	18.0	17.3	19.8	18.0
Post grad	11.0	10.3	11.6	9.9	6.0
Married	50.1%	50.6%	49.6%	58.6%	58.6%
Parents (kids under 18)	30.6%	27.7%	33.3%	27.1%	35.3%
Race					
White	76.1%	74.4%	77.7%	85.2%	88.7%
Black	12.1	11.8	12.4	6.6	4.5
Asian	1.7	1.7	1.8	0.0	0.0
Mixed	3.3	3.9	2.7	3.3	3.8

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, American Values Survey 2012
N=3003
*Several columns do not round to 100 percent due to the exclusion of missing cases for those questions.

Table 3
Religion by Gender and Tea Party Status

	General Population	U.S. Men	U.S. Women	Tea Party Men	Tea Party Women
Religious Tradition					
White Evangelical	19.9%	18.8%	21.1%	42.6%	45.5%
White Mainline	15.0	14.1	15.8	10.4	7.6
Black Protestant	8.5	7.8	9.1	4.4	4.5
Catholic	22.0	19.8	24.2	17.5	21.2
Other Christian	10.4	9.9	10.8	12.6	11.4
Not Affiliated	18.5	23.5	13.8	8.2	6.1
Non-Christian	5.7	6.2	5.2	4.4	3.8
Church Attendance					
Weekly or More	39.6%	34.2%	44.8%	48.9%	56.4%
Monthly/Yearly	33.7	34.5	32.9	26.4	27.8
Seldom/Never	25.8	30.2	21.7	23.1	15.0
Views of the Bible					
Literal word of God	33.3%	31.5%	36.0%	49.2%	52.3%
Word of God, not Literal	29.8	28.2	31.4	21.5	26.5
Other, but word of God	2.5	2.2	2.8	3.3	6.1
Not word of God	27.8	32.0	23.8	21.0	14.4

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, American Values Survey 2012
N=3003
*Several columns do not round to 100 percent due to the exclusion of missing cases for those questions.

Table 4
Party and Ideology by Gender and Tea Party Status

	General Population	U.S. Men	U.S. Women	Tea Party Men	Tea Party Women
Party					
Republican	24.7%	26.3%	23.2%	57.7%	53.0%
Democrat	31.3	25.7	36.7	8.8	13.6
Independent	40.3	44.4	36.3	30.8	30.3
Ideology					
Very Conservative	8.7%	9.4%	8.0%	29.8%	24.8%
Conservative	31.4	33.0	29.9	49.7	48.1
Moderate	34.3	33.3	35.2	14.9	19.5
Liberal	16.1	15.1	17.0	3.3	3.8
Very Liberal	5.8	5.4	6.1	1.7	1.5
Views on Barack Obama					
Very Favorable	29.6%	25.4%	33.6%	9.5%	16.8%
Mostly Favorable	27.6	30.3	25.0	6.7	10.7
Mostly Unfavorable	16.6	18.4	14.9	17.3	13.0
Very Unfavorable	262	25.9	26.5	66.5	59.5

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, American Values Survey 2012
N=3003
*Several columns do not round to 100 percent due to the exclusion of missing cases for those questions, or in case of party, identification with a third party

Table 5
Economic Issues, Role of Government by Gender and Tea Party Status

	General Population	U.S. Men	U.S. Women	Tea Party Men	Tea Party Women
Government Policies for Poor					
Critical Tool	66%	63%	69%	35%	45%
Both Equally	1	1	1	1	1
Culture of Poverty	33	36	30	65	54
Increasing Tax Rate on Americans (>$250K)					
Favor	63%	60%	66%	28%	40%
Oppose	37	40	34	72	30
2010 Health Care Act					
Favor Repeal	46%	50%	42%	78%	60%
Oppose Repeal	54	50	58%	22	40

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, American Values Survey 2012
Note: For ease of interpretation using cross-tabulations, missing cases are removed from analysis so column numbers add to 100 except for rounding errors; also, the Health Care Act question was asked of just half the original sample (N=1499).

Table 6
Cultural Issues by Gender and Tea Party Status

	General Population	U.S. Men	U.S. Women	Tea Party Men	Tea Party Women
Gay Marriage					
Favor	52%	48%	56%	20%	35%
Oppose	48	52	44	80%	65
Religious Liberty is Threatened in US					
Agree	58%	57%	59%	82%	84%
Disagree	42	43	41	18	16

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, American Values Survey 2012
Note: For ease of interpretation using cross-tabulations, missing cases are removed from analysis so column numbers add to 100.

Table 7
War on Women Issues by Gender and Tea Party Status

	General Population	U.S. Men	U.S. Women	Tea Party Men	Tea Party Women
Abortion					
Legal in all cases	23%	20%	25%	11%	18%
Legal in most cases	36	39	33	23	22
Illegal in most cases	26	27	24	26	33
Illegal in all cases	16	14	18	16	28
Birth Control Mandate: Religiously Affiliated Hospitals and Colleges					
Yes, should provide	58%	51%	65%	20%	46%
No, shouldn't provide	42	49	35	80	54
Birth Control Mandate: Churches and Places of Worship					
Yes, should provide	47%	43%	51%	10%	39%
No, shouldn't provide	53	57	49%	90	61

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, American Values Survey 2012

Note: For ease of interpretation using cross-tabulations, missing cases are removed from analysis so column numbers add to 100 except for rounding errors; also, the Birth Control Mandate question was asked of just half the original sample (N=1499).

Table 8
Vote for President by Gender and Tea Party Status

	General Population	U.S. Men	U.S. Women	Tea Party Men	Tea Party Women
Vote for President					
Obama	53.1%	50.7%	55.4%	15.9%	26.3%
Romney	40.1	42.0	38.3	79.7	69.2
Other/DK	6.8	7.3	6.3	4.4	4.5

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, American Values Survey 2012

Table 9 Vote for President
Logistic Regression Model: Tea Party Members ONLY
DV=Vote for President Obama
Unstandardized Coefficients Reported (Standard Errors in Parentheses)

	B	S.E.
Sex	.606	.430
Republican	-1.942***	.569
Democrat	2.664***	.617
Ideology	.877**	.337
Church Attendance	-.147	.337
Bible	.059	.851
Education	-.241	.285
Age	-.019	.014
Marital Status	-.534	.493
Parental Status	.585	.504
White	-.977	.633
Constant	-.310	1.303
N	321	
% Categorized Correctly	88.4%	
-2 XLLR	150.200	
Model Chi-Square	134.201***	

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, American Values Survey 2012
*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001;

Table 10
Logistic Regression Model: Full Sample
DV=Vote for President Obama
Unstandardized Coefficients Reported (Standard Errors in Parentheses)

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	**S.E.**	**B**	**S.E.**
Sex	.093	.112	-.079	.204
Tea Party Member	-.713***	.205	-.807*	.383
Ideology	.720***	.080	.461***	.154
Republican	-1.702***	.156	-1.791***	.283
Democrat	2.395***	.154	2.092***	.291
Church Attendance	-.216**	.078	-.016	.149
Bible Views	-.305***	.082	-.013	.158
Education	.024	.059	-.025	.113
Age	-.009**	.003	.000	.007
Marital Status	-.098	.121	-.133	.223
Parental Status	-.038	.130	.065	.242
White	-1.219***	.148	-1.308***	.270
Increase Taxes >$250K			.306***	.097
Helping Poor			.418***	.111
Health Care Repeal			-.282***	.092
Gay Marriage			.248***	.106
Religious Liberty Threatened			.303**	.103
Abortion			.104	.109
Birth Control Mandate			1.086***	.213
Constant	1.163	.330		
N	2667		1092	
% Categorized Correctly	81.9%		86.2%	
-2XLLR	2118.461		679.255	
Model Chi-Square	1542.759		828.309	

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, American Values Survey 2012

*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Table 11
Logistic Regression Model: Women Only
DV=Vote for President Obama
Unstandardized Coefficients Reported (Standard Errors in Parentheses)

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	**S.E.**	**B**	**S.E.**
Tea Party Member	-.301	.297	-.589	.498
Ideology	.669***	.121	.334	.248
Republican	-2.005***	.248	-2.496***	.488
Democrat	2.509***	.208	2.524***	.433
Church Attendance	-.202	.112	-.246	.243
Bible Views	-.307**	.119	-.293	.249
Education	.122	.084	0.086	.180
Age	-.005	.005	.007	.010
Marital Status	-.071	.167	-.019	.327
Parental Status	.046	.184	.230	.358
White	-1.451***	.233	-1.010*	.417
Increase Taxes >$250K			-.015	.149
Helping Poor			0.665***	.169
Health Care Repeal			-.205	.141
Gay Marriage			.395*	.159
Religious Liberty Threatened			.512***	.165
Abortion			-.005	.161
Birth Control Mandate			1.304***	.346
Constant	1.064	.531	-1.874	1.452
N	1414		540	
% Categorized Correctly	84.1		89.1	
-2XLLR	1019.096		293.363	
Model Chi-Square	845.224		446.663	

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, American Values Survey 2012
*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Table 12
Logistic Regression Model: Men Only
DV=Vote for President Obama
Unstandardized Coefficients Reported (Standard Errors in Parentheses)

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	**S.E.**	**B**	**S.E.**
Tea Party Member	-1.087***	.299	-1.382	.777
Ideology	.766***	.109	.603**	.211
Republican	-1.486***	.204	-1.557***	.381
Democrat	2.245***	.231	1.905***	.431
Church Attendance	-.244*	.108	.124	.199
Bible Views	-.294**	.113	.105	.221
Education	-.051	.083	.007	.160
Age	-.012**	.005	-.004	.010
Marital Status	-.090	.183	-.134	.345
Parental Status	-.089	.192	-.185	.374
White	-1.053***	.194	-1.685***	.377
Increase Taxes >$250K			.629***	.144
Helping Poor			.176	.159
Health Care Repeal			-.403**	.133
Gay Marriage			.035	.154
Religious Liberty Threatened			.179	.147
Abortion			.131	.162
Birth Control Mandate			.987***	.286
Constant	1.274	.436	-2.540	1.269
N	1253		552	
% Categorized Correctly	80.7		86.5	
-2XLLR	1086.422		352.112	
Model Chi-Square	702.695		408.000	

Source: Public Religion Research Institute, American Values Survey 2012
*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001