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**ARE WOMEN VOTERS MORE LIKELY TO VOTE
FOR FEMALE CANDIDATES?
Research published by SAGE in *Political Research Quarterly***

Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, and Singapore (March 31, 2008) – Most people assume that women voters will automatically support female candidates with their votes, a phenomenon known as “gender affinity effect.” Is that an accurate assumption? And does political party affiliation impact the effect? Research in the current issue of SAGE’s *Political Research Quarterly* examines Americans’ attitudes towards the gender of political candidates.

The research, conducted by University of Wisconsin’s Kathleen Dolan, examined the National Election Study (NES) data, which provided information about voters’ reactions to female candidates and whether gender affinity was related to the election booth decision. The findings provided interesting results.

While the research looked at gender affinity, and such other issues as the desire for gender-specific representation on certain political issues, and the political party affiliation of both the candidate and the voter, the research did not find an overwhelming or consistent gender gap supporting female candidates. Instead, information about the candidate herself, and her position on significant issues seemed to be more important to the voters’ choice.

“As the number of women who seek elective office increases, we have increased our understanding of the sometimes complex dynamics that their candidacies raise,” concludes the author in the article. “While women support female candidates, they are evaluated in the same way that all candidates are evaluated, through the lens of personal and political considerations that take many forms. Sometimes this leads to situations in which women are more likely to support female candidates than are men, but even in these situations, candidate sex may be only one of several important considerations.”

The article, “Is There a ‘Gender Affinity Effect’ in American Politics?: Information, Affect, and Candidate Sex in U.S. House Elections,” written by Kathleen Dolan of the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee has been made available at no charge by SAGE for a limited time at <http://prq.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/61/1/79>.

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