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978-1-107-11558-3 - Women on the Run: Gender, Media, and Political Campaigns in a Polarized Era

Danny Hayes and Jennifer L. Lawless

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Women on the Run

Gender, Media, and Political Campaigns in a Polarized Era

Claims of bias against female candidates abound in American politics. And although these purported obstacles don't doom women to electoral failure, they raise a formidable series of barriers that complicate women's path to elective office. Or so the conventional wisdom goes. *Women on the Run* challenges that prevailing view and argues that the declining novelty of women in politics, coupled with the polarization of the Republican and Democratic parties, has left little space for the sex of a candidate to influence modern campaigns. The book's in-depth analyses of the 2010 and 2014 congressional elections reveal that male and female House candidates communicate similar messages on the campaign trail, receive similar coverage in the local press, and garner similar evaluations from voters in their districts. When they run for office, male and female candidates don't just perform equally well on Election Day – they also face a very similar electoral landscape.

DANNY HAYES is Associate Professor of Political Science at George Washington University. A former journalist, his research focuses on how information from the media and other political actors influences citizens' attitudes during public policy debates and election campaigns. He is the co-author of *Influence from Abroad: Foreign Voices, the Media, and U.S. Public Opinion* (Cambridge University Press, 2013).

JENNIFER L. LAWLESS is Professor of Government at American University, where she is also the Director of the Women & Politics Institute. She is the author of *Becoming a Candidate: Political Ambition and the Decision to Run for Office* (Cambridge University Press, 2012), and the co-author of *Running from Office: Why Young Americans Are Turned Off to Politics* (Oxford University Press, 2015) and *It Still Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

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George Washington University

JENNIFER L. LAWLESS

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Acknowledgments

So Much Shouting, So Much Laughter is the name of an Ani DiFranco album that came out in 2002. That could also be the title of this book, based on our experience writing it. What began as a series of shouted conversations between our across-the-hallway offices at American University eventually turned into a collaboration that involved almost as much laughing as it did writing. We could never have known that analyzing congressional campaigns with an eye for gender differences – and how those differences might account for women’s under-representation – would be so much fun. Most of the time, we even enjoyed engaging the often-skeptical reactions to our findings from politicians, practitioners, and political scientists, exchanges that undoubtedly improved and sharpened our argument, analysis, and presentation.

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