

White Millionaires and Hockey Skates: Racial and Gendered Mediation in News Coverage of a Canadian Mayoral Election

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We investigate gendered and racial mediation in news coverage in the 2014 Toronto Mayoral Election. Drawing on a content analysis of a large sample of election stories in two major daily newspapers, we find significant differences across candidates in the prominence of coverage received and in the media's attention to candidates' racial and ethnic characteristics and immigrant status. In particular, we find that a non-White woman candidate (Olivia Chow) was significantly less prominent in media coverage and significantly more likely to be racialized than other candidates, despite being a well-established politician and the frontrunner in polling for a sizeable portion of the election period. These findings highlight, among other things, the significance of the intersection of race and gender in the study of electoral politics and political communication.

Keywords: gender, race and ethnicity, newspapers, elections, urban politics

It is now widely accepted that news coverage of electoral politics is often neither gender nor race neutral; rather, the coverage of women and non-White candidates often differs in both the amount and type of coverage received, relative to how news media discuss White men in political campaigns. Although there is substantial scholarship on gendered mediation, outside the United States studies of racial mediation are limited, and few studies in any context have explored gendered and racial mediation together. Moreover, few studies consider news coverage in nonpartisan elections, even though media effects may be especially large in elections lacking partisan cues to anchor opinion. Building on these literatures, and in an effort to address these gaps, this study examines gendered and racial mediation in the 2014 Toronto Mayoral Election.

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The 2014 Toronto Mayoral Election presented an unusual slate of candidates in a high-profile election in the largest single electorate in Canada. Candidate Olivia Chow was one of the highest profile non-White woman candidates to have run in any Canadian election, and, had Chow won, she would have been one of the few non-White woman mayors ever elected in Canada. The competition also featured a second woman candidate, Karen Stintz, and the city's controversial sitting mayor, Rob Ford. With a strong non-White woman candidate and a scandal-ridden incumbent, the 2014 mayoral election was big news, both in terms of its political importance and the quantity of media coverage the election generated. We take advantage of these features to examine racial and gendered mediation in coverage of electoral politics.

Past research identifies several ways in which gender and race can shape the amount and type of coverage candidates receive. Women candidates may receive more attention to their private lives, in keeping with "public man, private woman" stereotypes (Heldman, Carroll, & Olson, 2005; Trimble, Raphael, Sampert, Wagner, & Gerrits, 2013). Women candidates may receive less coverage, perhaps because they are seen as less competitive (Heldman et al., 2005; Kahn, 1994)—a dynamic that has also appeared in coverage of non-White candidates. Non-White candidates may be racialized in news coverage, with relatively more attention paid to their race, ethnicity, or immigrant origins (Terkildsen & Damore, 1999; Tolley, 2016). Although the most recent research generally suggests that women and non-White candidates are no longer heavily penalized with either stereotyped coverage or less coverage, non-White women appear to face a double bind: They receive less coverage and, when they are covered, they face increased stereotyping in the media (Gershon, 2012a).

To study racial and gendered mediation in the 2014 Toronto Mayoral Election, we conduct a content analysis of a random sample of all election-related articles in the two most well-read newspapers in the city, the *Toronto Star* and the *Toronto Sun*, from January 2 to October 27, 2014. We combine two coding frames used successfully in previous research. To capture the general prominence of the candidates, as well as attention to candidates' private lives—or "private framing"—we draw on a coding frame developed by Linda Trimble et al. (2013). To this coding frame, we add measures of racialized coverage drawn from Erin Tolley's (2016) recent study, capturing features such as mentions of ethnic origin and place of birth.

Moreover, we make use of an important feature of the campaign's competitive dynamics to construct a unique *controlled comparison* in the coverage received by the leading candidates in the election. During the first several months of the campaign, Olivia Chow held a significant lead in the polls. In the latter part of the campaign, however, Chow's fortunes changed considerably, as her support dropped and support for John Tory, Chow's closest competitor and the eventual election winner, grew. For the final two months of the campaign, Tory consistently topped the polls, enjoying a margin over his rivals as large as Chow had enjoyed earlier in the campaign. These symmetrical dynamics across candidates allow us to examine the difference in prominence in media coverage of the two candidates across periods when the competition between them was significantly different. Comparing differences in prominence across the candidates in this way allows insight into whether the influence of candidate viability on media prominence is shaped by candidates' race and gender.

Our major findings are as follows. First, our analysis of private framing finds no clear gender- or race-based differences in media's treatment of the candidates in the Toronto election; rather, much of the attention to candidates' gender, appearance, and family life focused on the spectacle of Rob Ford (and his substitute-candidate brother Doug Ford). Second, our findings show clear evidence that both the *Star* and the *Sun* afforded Olivia Chow less prominent news coverage, when compared with attention to her closest competitors (Ford and Tory). In particular, regarding the comparison of Chow's and Tory's prominence over time, although Tory's coverage increased when he was in the lead, Chow received no corresponding boost when she held a significant lead. Finally, when Chow did receive coverage, the newspapers did indeed racialize her, although to a lesser extent than some other research has found. Our findings suggest that the *Star* and the *Sun* covered the candidates in racialized and gendered fashion, and that Olivia Chow, a non-White woman, may have been penalized relative to her White, men competitors.

Race and Gender in Media Coverage

In many electoral settings, including Toronto's mayoral competition, voters access much of their information about political campaigns through the lens of the news media (Gershon, 2012a; Kahn, 1994). The media lens, however, is far from unproblematic. We build on the gendered mediation and racial mediation theses, which, together, suggest that candidates receive different news media coverage depending on candidates' gender and/or racial characteristics—often to the detriment of their political campaigns.¹ The gendered and racial mediation literatures posit several differences in the amount, type, and content of the coverage candidates receive.

Personalization

The gendered mediation literature proposes that political news often focuses on the "private" aspects of women candidates' lives, such as their appearance, relationship status, age, and upbringing. Attention to clothing, makeup, and hairstyle plagues women running for political office—a phenomenon Heith (2003) terms "the lipstick watch" (p. 126). Furthermore, the classic and deeply problematic stereotype of women as belonging in the private sphere of the home often leads to a greater focus on women's family life. In the case of former U.S. presidential candidate Elizabeth Dole, for example, 61.9% of news stories covering her campaign discussed her husband—longtime senator and former presidential candidate Bob Dole—which likely undermined her perceived independence and credibility as a candidate (Heldman et al., 2005). Such gendered mediation is clearly evident in Canadian politics. Trimble et al. (2013) found, in their exploration of 37 years of federal party leadership campaign news coverage, that Canadian media consistently focused on women's appearances, personalities, and private personas—at the expense of focusing on their political leadership skills and qualities.

¹ Gendered mediation arguments shifted the focus away from questions exclusively of women politicians' visibility (or invisibility) in news coverage toward an emphasis on metaphor, imagery, and language that reinforces the "male as norm" (Gidengil & Everitt, 1999, p. 48; Sreberny-Mohammadi & Ross, 1996, p. 112). Rather than completely eschew questions of media visibility, this study follows the lead of feminist researchers suggesting that gendered mediation and framing "can help explain why women may receive more or less media attention than their male counterparts" (Trimble, 2007, p. 973).

More recently, however, scholars have found that coverage of women candidates is no longer as strongly mediated by overt gender stereotyping (Trimble & Wagner, 2012; Wagner, 2011). Wagner's (2011) exploration of media coverage of women running for municipal office in 2007 in Alberta, Canada, found little attention to women's gender, appearance, or family status (p. 49). Exploring media coverage of U.S. politics, Smith (1997) found decreasing gender-based difference when comparing coverage of statewide campaigns in 1994 with coverage of pre-1990 campaigns. Similarly, whereas Kahn (1994) found gender differences in coverage of candidates in the 1980s, analysis of more recent (1992–2000) data fails to replicate the earlier finding (Jalalzai, 2006). Overall, past research suggests some potential for gender-based difference in coverage of candidates' personal traits and private lives; in more recent elections, however, the magnitude of any differences may be quite modest.

We have less evidence regarding racial differences in personalization and concerning how race and gender may combine to affect the media treatment that candidates receive. Theoretically, gender and race may interact to promote personalization. Specifically, if media are relatively attentive to the ethnic or racial backgrounds of non-White candidates, then this may amplify gendered mediation processes: that is, relative to non-White men candidates, non-White women candidates' family status, appearance, and upbringing may be more likely to attract journalistic attention simply because the media's gaze is already upon features of these candidates' personal backgrounds. Some past research is consistent with this argument. Tolley (2016) observes, for example, that non-White women running for office receive coverage that emphasizes their gender and racial features, often in ways that are privately framed.

Prominence

A considerable amount of research suggests that women running for political office receive less attention than the men running against them with regard to news coverage, commentary, photos, cartoons, appearance in the headlines, front-page coverage, and so on (Heldman et al., 2005; Sampert & Trimble, 2003). Kahn and Goldenberg (1991) suggest that women candidates are generally perceived as less electorally viable and, therefore, receive less coverage. At the same time, some research finds that women receive equal or even *more* media coverage than the men running against them (Bystrom, Banwart, Kaid, & Robertson, 2004; Lawrence & Rose, 2010; Trimble, 2007). Trimble (2007) argues that the relatively greater attention Kim Campbell received during her campaign for the leadership of the Canadian Progressive Conservative Party in 1993 was a result of the novelty that she could (and did) become the country's first woman prime minister. The literature, then, is mixed with respect to the relationship between gender and the prominence of the media coverage candidates receive: perceived lack of competitiveness may drive down a woman candidate's media prominence, even as her novelty boosts the level of attention she receives.

The literature is equally mixed in regard to racial differences in the prominence of coverage candidates receive. Some early studies found that Black politicians in the U.S. receive less coverage than White politicians (Canon, 1999; Reeves, 1997). Other research, however, suggests non-White candidates are not penalized in terms of amount of coverage. Zilber and Niven (2000), for example, find that African American congressmen receive a level of coverage equal to that received by other congressmen, and Schaffner and Gadson (2004) find that African American congressmen actually receive *more* local

television coverage than other congressmen. The (albeit limited) evidence for Canada is equally mixed: Tolley (2016) finds that racial minority candidates receive less prominence in media coverage, although racial differences in prominence are erased among incumbents. Indeed, Tolley finds that, in some cases, non-White incumbents receive more favorable coverage than comparable White competitors.

At the intersection of gender and race, the evidence regarding the prominence of candidate coverage is quite limited. The theory of intersectionality would suggest that race and gender interact to compound problematic media patterns. Crenshaw (1991) suggests that “the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism” (p. 40). Taking seriously the insights of intersectionality, Gershon (2012a, 2012b) finds that non-White U.S. congresswomen receive less coverage and more negative tone than both White women and non-White men. Gershon (2012a) suggests the difference may be a result of journalists’ perceiving racial minority congresswomen as less competitive or less “newsworthy” candidates (p. 108). More generally, the experience of non-White women candidates may reflect a simple summation of separate racial and gendered effects or, per Crenshaw (1991), a unique interaction between the effects of the two mediation processes, such that racial mediation is modified in the presence of gendered mediation (and vice versa).

Overall, the literature suggests women and non-White candidates may receive less prominent coverage than their men and White counterparts, although such differences are far from ubiquitous. Non-White women candidates, however, may be especially likely to receive less coverage: past research, particularly Gershon (2012a, 2012b), suggests such candidacies may be doubly disadvantaged in the prominence of the coverage they receive.

Racial Mediation

The racial mediation thesis suggests that the news media differentially represent White and non-White candidates (Tolley, 2016). Non-White candidates do not fit the norm of politicians as do White candidates, and this distinction is often considered novel and newsworthy by the media. Terkildsen and Damore (1999) call this “racial dualism” (p. 680). Such emphasis may manifest in explicit mentions of a candidate’s racial background, immigrant status, proficiency in nonofficial languages, and support in specific ethnic or racial communities, or through more implicit focus on racialized policy issues. Racialization may also manifest in the evocation of racial stereotypes.

There is a considerable amount of research on the United States that finds that the media emphasize the race of non-White politicians, but do not do so when covering White candidates (Reeves, 1997; Terkildsen & Damore, 1999). These findings hold in a wide range of contexts, including television coverage (Schaffner & Gadson, 2004) and print media (Zilber & Niven, 2000), and for candidates from various ethnic groups (McIlwain & Caliendo, 2011). Similarly, using Canadian data, Tolley (2016) shows that the media are far more likely to mention the race or ethnicity of a non-White candidate than they are to do so when covering a White candidate.

As regards the interaction of race and gender, again, direct evidence is in short supply. However, we may expect a pattern of racialized coverage similar to the pattern we suggest (above) may apply to

personalization: If media are relatively attentive to personal features of women candidates, then this may amplify the racial mediation process, inasmuch as personalization draws attention to family origins, upbringing, or appearance.

The following questions guide our analysis of the 2014 Toronto Mayoral Election. First, did women candidates—especially *non-White* women candidates—receive more coverage of their private lives, and were they less prominent (that is, receive less overall coverage) than other candidates? Second, were non-White candidates—again, non-White women especially—more likely than White candidates to experience racialized media coverage?

Context

The 2014 Toronto Mayoral Election was a high-profile election in Canada's largest city, with well-known candidates and a great deal of media coverage heightening attention to the election. There were three front-runners, as well as two less-successful, but still significant, candidates. John Tory, the eventual winner, was a former leader of the right-wing Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario. Rob Ford, the incumbent, was a right-leaning populist whose well-publicized problems with alcohol and drug use had seriously undermined his mayoralty. Olivia Chow was a former city councilor and high-profile Member of Parliament at the federal level for the left-wing New Democratic Party (NDP). She was also the widow of Jack Layton, who led the federal NDP to a historic second-place finish in 2011. The remaining candidates, Karen Stintz and David Soknacki, were the former head of the municipal transit commission and a former city councilor, respectively. Over half (55%) of eligible voters voted in the contest (City Clerk, 2014), which is substantially higher than the 43% average of turnout in other municipal elections in Ontario (Association of Canadian Municipalities, 2014). Similarly, the information environment during the election was less like that of a formally nonpartisan city council race and more like that of a partisan national or provincial campaign. In particular, reflecting the salient partisan backgrounds of the main contenders, research suggests partisan considerations were influential for voters (McGregor, Moore, & Stephenson, 2015).

Toronto is ethnically diverse: Nearly half of the population is non-White and, within the non-White population, no single ethnic group dominates (Statistics Canada, 2011). Although racial tensions, especially in politics, are certainly not unknown to Toronto, they are generally considered to be lower than in the United States, particularly in urban centers (Banting, 1997; Doering, 2015).² Overall, we expect patterns of racial and gendered mediation in this Toronto election to be generally instructive. The election's competitiveness and salience to voters imply that coverage of the event approximated norms at more senior levels of government.

² It should be noted that marginalization and discrimination against indigenous Canadians is far more serious. However, the indigenous population in Toronto is quite small (.07%; see, Statistics Canada, 2011), and none of the candidates here have an indigenous background.

Data and Methods

Using the Press Display and Factiva databases, we selected all articles that were primarily concerned with the Toronto Mayoral Election published in the *Toronto Star* and *Toronto Sun* between January 2, 2014, the day candidates were able to register, and October 27, 2014, Election Day. We only selected articles that referred to (a) a candidate as a *candidate* running for mayoral office or (b) the mayoral election (as determined by the authors). For example, we excluded coverage of the Toronto Transit Commission that discussed Karen Stintz as its former head, but did not describe her as a mayoral candidate or recount events connected to the election. We collected 553 articles from the *Star* and 395 from the *Sun*, for a total N of 948. Excluding letters to the editor and cartoons, our population of texts included news items, editorials, opinion pieces, and special columns. We randomly coded a sample of 325 stories, 34% of all stories collected,³ using a coding frame that, as noted, borrows measures of gendered personalization and prominence from Trimble et al. (2013) and measures of racialization from Tolley (2016). Drawing our measures from past research facilitates comparison across studies (see below).

The *Toronto Star* is generally considered the newspaper of record in Toronto, and has the largest total circulation of any daily broadsheet newspaper in Canada. In the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area, it has an average daily print readership of 708,900. The *Toronto Sun* is a tabloid-style newspaper with an average daily readership of 332,100 in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area and is part of a chain of newspapers operating in a number of Canadian cities (NADBank, 2015). The *Sun* newspaper is particularly interesting because, given its reputation for populist conservatism, we expected considerable gendered and racially differentiated media coverage as compared to the more centrist *Star*. Despite their substantial circulations, to our knowledge, there has been little academic analysis of any newspaper in the *Sun* chain.⁴

We coded coverage of six candidates: Olivia Chow, David Soknacki, Karen Stintz, John Tory, Rob Ford, and Doug Ford. For analytical reasons, however, we treat the Fords as a single candidate. Rob Ford withdrew from the race for health reasons on September 12 and, on the same day, his brother Doug Ford registered as a candidate. This was widely understood as a kind of successor candidacy. The brothers shared a common support base and many common issue positions. Accordingly, voters largely perceived the Ford brothers as interchangeable.⁵ Furthermore, the brothers' treatment in the media was very similar. In the analyses to come, therefore, we refer simply to a single, continuous Ford candidacy, which means Rob Ford before September 12 and Doug Ford thereafter. Rob Ford aside, two other candidates dropped out of the race—Karen Stintz and David Soknacki withdrew on August 2 and September 10, respectively—and were not coded after the date they left the race. Although there were other candidates on the ballot, these five candidates—Chow, Soknacki, Stintz, Tory, and the Fords—were the only candidates included in campaign debates and in most media coverage.

³ Thank you to the three coders who manually coded the stories: Kathryn Wesley, Josh Smee, and Christoph Pike.

⁴ Tolley (2016) includes the *Sun* in her sample, but did not examine it separately.

⁵ A large survey of Toronto voters conducted during the election found just 3.8% of respondents "believed that the policies of the brothers were either entirely or mostly different" (Anderson, McGregor, Moore, & Stephenson, 2015, p. 9).

To analyze the textual patterns in our sample, we conducted a content analysis. Krippendorff (1989) succinctly defined content analysis as a “research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context” (p. 403). In the case of media analysis, one common approach is to examine the frequency of mentions of a particular subject to infer the importance placed on that subject (Krippendorff, 1989, p. 404). In this study, we examine the frequency of attention to the candidates’ private lives, the relative prominence afforded to each candidate, and the amount of racialized coverage candidates received in an effort to understand the role of gender and race in news coverage of municipal politics.

To measure media attention to the candidates’ private lives, we rely on a 6-point scale. The measure sums six binary indicators that track mentions of each candidate’s age, appearance, children or childlessness, sex/gender (e.g., male, woman, son of), upbringing (e.g., childhood, parents), and sexuality or sexual characteristics.

To measure a candidate’s prominence, we primarily use an additive scale that combines six indicators that capture whether the candidate was named in the story, was named first, was named more than three times, was quoted in more than 10 words, appeared in a photo alongside the story, and was named in the headline of the article. The result is a variable that ranges from 0 to 6. In addition, we measure the actual number of times the candidate was named in a story and the number of the candidate’s words that were quoted. As a simple count of words proved difficult to code reliably, we rely on a 5-level ordinal indicator that refers to ranges of quoted words (0–10 words, 11–20 words, etc.).

The final set of measures tracks racial mediation. Our coding frame, following Tolley (2016), tracks explicit racialization. The racialization measure sums four binary variables that indicate whether a story contained references to a candidate’s ethnic or racial origins, place of birth, support from ethnic or immigrant communities, and languages spoken. Note that we code both White and non-White racialization; thus, for example, we capture references to both Chow or Chow’s parents having been born in Hong Kong and Tory or Tory’s parents having been born in Canada.

One form of racialization not captured by our measure is association with racialized policy issues. The policy issues that are most often racialized in Canada—crime and immigration—received little coverage in this election. Two other issues that are sometimes racially coded in municipal politics, transit and social housing, were salient during the campaign; however, neither issue was highly racialized in the Toronto election.⁶

Fifty-nine stories (approximately 20% of the sample) were coded by at least two coders. To evaluate intercoder reliability, we use Krippendorff’s alpha (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007). Krippendorff’s

⁶ There was some media coverage when a strategist on the Olivia Chow campaign suggested that the Tory transit plan was racist because it avoided areas of the city that were more diverse (Dale, 2014a). However, the Chow campaign quickly distanced themselves from the strategist, and the issue received no further coverage. Social housing is also sometimes racially coded, but in this election this issue was most strongly linked to Rob Ford, a White candidate.

alpha is sensitive to rare events, which is important, given that some of our measures aim to capture content that occurs with very low frequency (e.g., references to a candidate's marital status). On Krippendorff's alpha, .67 is generally considered an acceptable level of reliability (Krippendorff, 2009). By this standard, nearly all of the variables used in the analysis have very high intercoder reliability. The lowest intercoder reliability scores are for the number of times Ford was quoted (.59) and the number of times Ford was named in an article (.69).⁷ With a mean reliability of .9, Krippendorff's alpha was above the threshold for all the other variables.

Findings

We find little evidence of gender- or race-based inter-candidate difference in the amount of personalized coverage candidates received. On the other hand, we find that both the *Star* and the *Sun* penalized Olivia Chow in terms of the prominence accorded to her campaign, even when she was leading in the polls. When the media did pay attention to Chow, roughly 5% of the stories included racial mentions. Below, we discuss in detail these findings.

Private Framing

The data indicate few inter-candidate differences in the amount of attention the *Sun* and *Star* paid to the candidates' personal or private lives (see Figure 1). Contrary to the expectation that the populist-tabloid style of the *Sun* might have led to relatively more gendered coverage than the *Star*, we find no significant differences in personalized coverage between the papers. Overall, with a mean of .18 (on a 0–5 scale) and a mere 4% of stories containing more than one reference to a candidate's private persona, private framing was mostly incidental in the election coverage.

In terms of raw numbers, Stintz, contrary to the gendered-mediation thesis, received the least private framing of any of the candidates.⁸ This may reflect her early exit from the race (August 21, 2014) and consistently low standing in the polls. Notably, there is no clear evidence here that Chow received more personalized coverage than Stintz: the (very low) rates of personalized coverage of the two candidates are statistically indistinguishable. The outlier in personalized coverage was Ford; the *Star* and *Sun* discussed Ford's personal life, appearance, and family life over twice as many times as any other candidate ($p < .001$). Gendered references to "the Ford brothers" ("Welcome to a New Race," 2014), remarks about Rob Ford's sex life (Dale & Moloney, 2014), and appearance-centered references to Rob Ford's weight (Andrew-Gee & Benzie, 2014) were ubiquitous.

⁷ Because the reliability for measures involving the other candidates is much better, we suspect the coders may sometimes have confused Doug Ford and Rob Ford.

⁸ However, the value for Stintz is not statistically different from that for other candidates, except Ford.

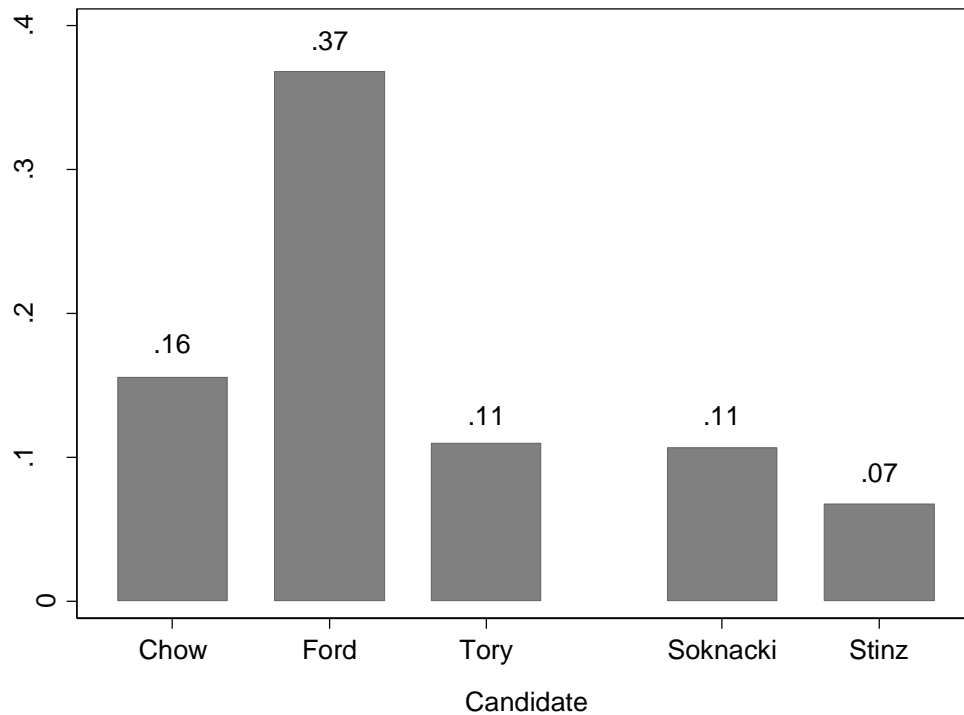


Figure 1. Private framing by candidate.

Comparing Prominence

The prominence variable measures the amount of coverage a candidate received in each story. Importantly, all of the candidates scored a 6—the theoretical maximum—in at least one story. This shows that these candidates were all given substantial coverage, at least some of the time; no candidate, that is, was strictly marginal. The distribution of the prominence variable is skewed downward, with a mean of 1.7. This reflects the fact that many stories leave out at least one or two of the candidates.

In terms of inter-candidate differences, Chow was clearly less prominent than her two main rivals. First, Chow was mentioned in 193 stories, as compared to Tory's 213 stories and Ford's 258.⁹ Second, comparing prominence scores across the candidates (plotted in Figure 2) also indicates that Chow was less prominent in the campaign than her two major rivals.¹⁰ In terms of the prominence scale, Ford was, on average, 60% more prominent than Chow, a difference that is statistically significant ($p < .001$).

⁹ Notably, Stintz was mentioned in more stories (152) than her closest rival, Soknacki (80).

¹⁰ In all figures, we separate the three leading candidates from the others to facilitate appropriate comparisons.

This percentage derives from the ratio of the difference of the Ford and Chow prominence means to the mean for Chow (i.e., $(2.4 - 1.5)/1.5 = 0.6$). Given that Ford was the incumbent, and something of a celebrity, however, the comparison between Chow and Tory may be more informative. By the same calculation, Tory was 20% more prominent than Chow, a difference that falls just short of the 95% threshold for statistical significance ($p = .07$). Nonetheless, these differences fit with the expectation that women and non-White candidates will be less prominent than men and White candidates. The pattern of prominence across the three candidates also confirms Ford's status as an exceptional candidate: despite losing the election and being behind in the polls for most of the campaign period, Ford's prominence score was by far the highest of any candidate.

The scores of Stintz and Soknacki clearly reflect their status as second-tier candidates—both candidates were substantially less prominent than the top three candidates in the media coverage. For instance, the most prominent of these two candidates, Stintz, was roughly half as prominent as the least prominent of the top three, Chow. Interestingly, Stintz was somewhat more prominent than Soknacki ($p = .009$). This may reflect a sense that Stintz was a more viable candidate: she had recently held an important municipal office (Chair of the Toronto Transit Commission), whereas Soknacki had been retired from politics for eight years. Nonetheless, this finding clearly runs against the expectation that women candidates receive less media coverage.

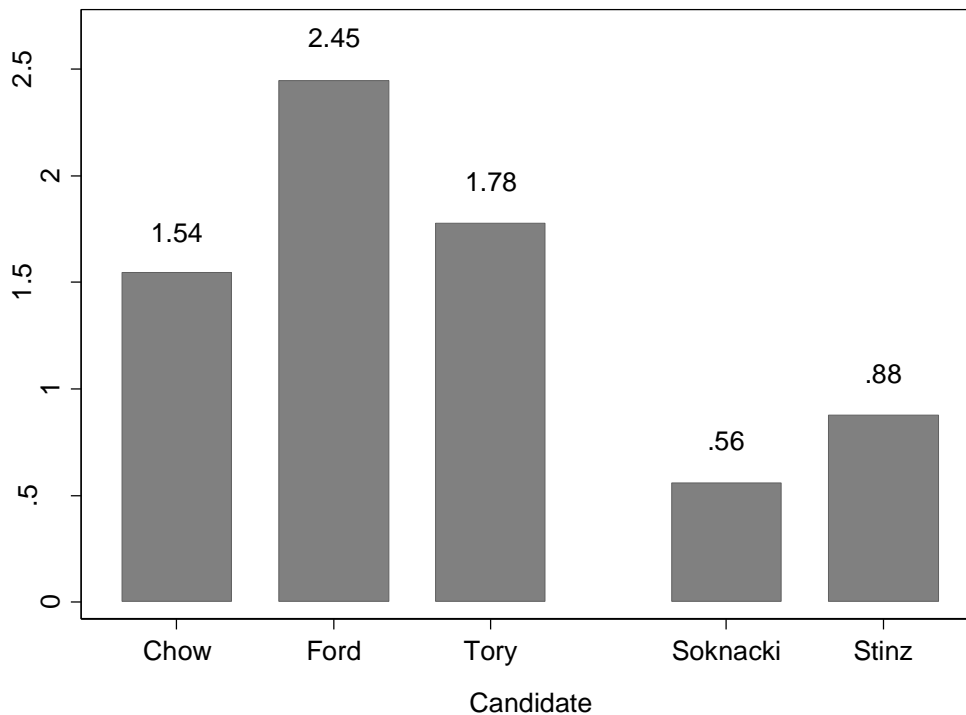


Figure 2. Mean prominence by candidate.

Prominence in the news media is, in good part, a function of perceptions of candidate viability, which, in turn, are influenced by perceptions of public support. Accordingly, we might expect a relationship between candidate support in the polls and candidates' prominence in media coverage, with leading candidates receiving more coverage than others (Matthews, Pickup, & Cutler, 2012). Published polls indicated substantial change in the pattern of support for Chow and Tory. From January until July, Chow maintained roughly a 10-point lead over her nearest rivals. On July 2, Chow led with 35%, while both Ford and Tory lagged at 25%. Thereafter, Chow's support began a rapid decline. Tory's polling evidenced a complementary dynamic, which trended sharply upward as Chow's declined. By August 6, Chow and Tory had reversed positions, with Tory 10 points ahead—a lead he maintained until Election Day on October 27 (Toronto Mayoral Election Poll Tracker, 2014). This feature of the campaign allows us to analyze the relative prominence of the same candidates both when a given candidate is leading and when he or she is trailing. This is an important methodological advantage, inasmuch as much about the candidates and context is approximately controlled in these comparisons.

Surprisingly, the evidence suggests that the rank ordering of these two candidates in terms of prominent coverage was unaffected by the dynamics in the polls. Figure 3 shows the prominence of Chow, Tory, and Ford *before July*, when Chow had a 10-point lead, and *after July*, when Tory had a substantial lead. To clarify any differences, the figure excludes stories *during July*, the period of transition. Figure 3 reveals, sensibly enough, that Tory's mean prominence increased from 1.5 to 2 after he took the lead in the polls, ahead of Chow ($p = .05$). Yet in the six months during which Chow held a substantial lead, she was less prominent than the men (1.4 for Chow as compared to 1.5 for Tory and 2 for Ford). This difference is statistically significant for Ford ($p < .001$), but not for Tory ($p = .6$). In any case, not only was the non-White woman candidate third in prominence overall—behind the two White men in the race—she did not benefit from increased prominence even when she held a 10-point lead in the polls.

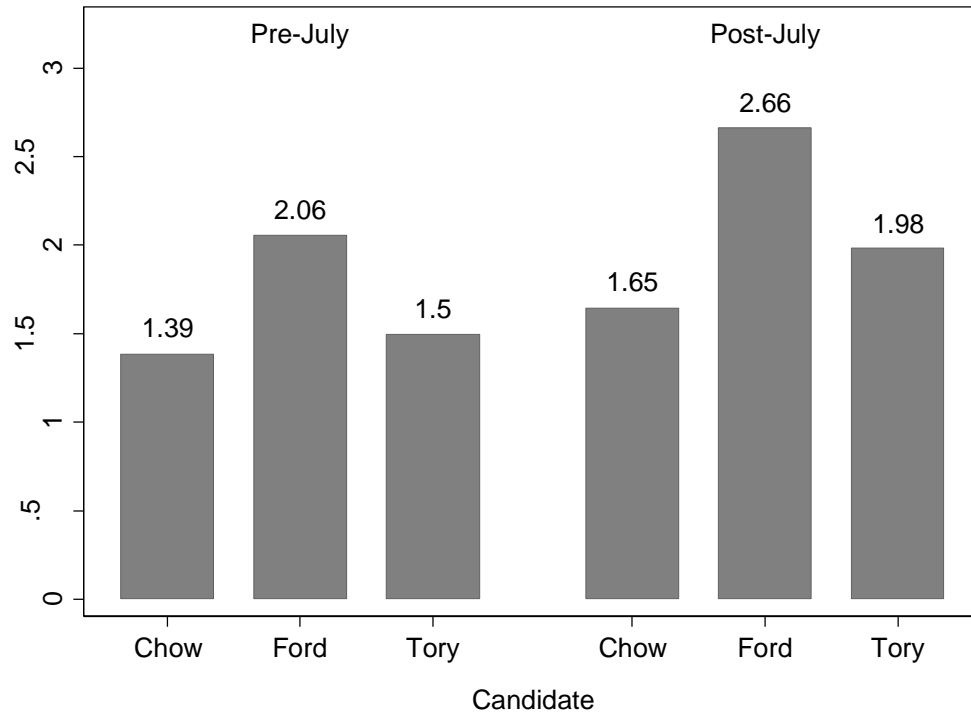


Figure 3. Mean prominence by candidate by time (leading candidates only).

The difference in Chow's prominence despite her lead is also reflected in one of the components of the prominence measure: times named.¹¹ Tory is named in articles more often than Chow, even when Chow has a large lead in the polls (before July). For example, when Tory is leading he is named an average of 4.2 times per article, whereas when Chow is leading she is only named 2.7 times, a difference that is statistically significant ($p = .01$).

Overall, our analysis of candidate prominence reveals that Chow received less prominent media coverage. Also, taking advantage of the reversal in candidates' poll standings, the analysis shows that whereas Tory received substantially greater news coverage when he was leading in the polls, Chow did not. Even when a non-White woman candidate is in the lead, it appears, the media may be inclined to discount her support and, therefore, afford her less prominent coverage.

¹¹ We do not consider the other components of the prominence measures because they have very low variances.

Racialized Framing in a "Least Likely" Place

Past research has suggested that the media may emphasize racial features of non-White candidates, whereas the origins or ethnic affiliations of White candidates receive little comment. We argue that Olivia Chow in the 2014 election is something of a least-likely case (Eckstein, 1975) for such racialization, in that she was a well-known and well-established politician and, thus, less likely than other non-White women to be perceived as a novel entrant in Toronto politics. Pursuant to this reasoning, Tolley's (2016) research on coverage of non-White candidates at the federal level in Canada finds that non-incumbent (i.e., less well-established) non-White candidates received less positive coverage than other candidates with regard to their electoral viability—a penalty that disappears for incumbent (i.e., more well-established) non-White candidates. This suggests that our findings may set a lower bound for racial mediation of non-White candidates.

Despite this, we find that the media did indeed racialize Olivia Chow. Of stories mentioning Chow, 5.6% made reference to her race or ethnicity, her or her parents' places of birth, or her support from ethnic and immigrant communities.¹² Although the total number of stories containing racialized references in our sample was low (13), the differences in racialization between Chow and Tory ($p = .02$) and between Chow and Ford ($p = .006$) are significant statistically. Putting these results in context, the percentage of stories mentioning Chow and containing racialized references is almost identical to that found in coverage of Asian members of Congress (e.g., McIlwain & Caliendo, 2011, report a figure of 5%, which is lower than for other minority ethnicities). The percentage is also comparable to Tolley's (2016) findings: She found 10.6% of stories about non-White candidates at the federal level in Canada contained racialization. The discrepancy between our results and Tolley's may reflect, in part, the fact her study includes candidates of many ethnicities, including non-Asians, who may be subject to higher levels of racialization (McIlwain & Caliendo, 2011). In addition, whereas our data consist of many articles concerning few candidates, each of whom received significant coverage in relation to a wide range of subjects, Tolley analyzes coverage of many local candidates in a federal election—a corpus of text that is likely to include relatively more introductory, biographical articles in which it would not be surprising to find relatively more references to, for instance, place of birth.

Interestingly, of the three racialized references to the White candidates, two were actually about statements made by a member of the Chow campaign team, who called Tory and the Ford brothers "White Conservative Millionaires" (Doolittle, 2014a). The third reference was contained in a self-reflective piece on the coverage of race by the media. If we exclude these somewhat idiosyncratic instances of racialization, we find no examples of racialized references to white candidates at all. This result is quite similar to past research (Terkildsen & Damore, 1999; Tolley, 2016).

Most of the racialization of Chow focused, implicitly or explicitly, on her status as an immigrant (Dale, 2014b; Doolittle, 2014b; Powell, Pagliaro, & Moloney, 2014). This is not unusual in Canada, where being non-White is practically synonymous with being an immigrant in public discourse (despite Canada's large indigenous population also being non-White and nonimmigrant and the fact that many non-White

¹² There were no statistical differences in coverage between the two newspapers.

immigrants have lived in Canada as long as or longer than White immigrants). Chow herself, notably, at times contributed to an immigrant-centered narrative of her campaign. In one story about Chow's "humble beginnings as a daughter of immigrants growing in St. James Town," she is quoted as saying, "I can remember as a teenager wanting nothing more than to have a pair of hockey skates, because there is nothing more powerful, nothing more Canadian, than to be able to play hockey" (Doolittle, 2014b, p. GT1). Other stories mentioned her support in immigrant and Chinese communities (Dale, 2014b) or commented on her perceived novelty, with a *Star* columnist referring to her as possibly becoming "the first non-white mayor in Toronto's history" (James, 2014). In any case, given that she was a well-known and established figure in Toronto—indeed, in national—politics, the fact that racialized mentions relating to Chow occurred in 5.6% of stories is striking.

Conclusion

Taken together, our analysis suggests important conclusions about gendered and racial mediation in coverage of the 2014 race for Toronto's top political office. First, did women candidates—especially *non-White* women candidates—receive more coverage of their private lives, and were they less prominent (i.e., receive less overall coverage) than other candidates? We find no systematic race- or gender-based inter-candidate differences in the amount of attention to the candidates' private lives. We do, however, find clear evidence that Olivia Chow—the non-White woman candidate in the election—was less prominent than her closest competitors, a disadvantage that remained even when she was the clear frontrunner. Second, were non-White candidates—non-White *women* especially—more likely than white candidates to experience racialized media coverage? In spite of being well-known in Toronto politics, Olivia Chow was indeed more likely to be racialized by the media than were the other, White candidates in the electoral contest.

One implication of the findings is to highlight, following Gershon (2012a), the important consequences of intersections between gender and race in electoral politics. Recent research on intersectional mediation has emphasized how race and gender can combine to produce distinct interactions, rather than a simple summation of effects. In this study, it is striking that a non-White woman candidate (Chow) was clearly less prominent than her closest (White man) competitor (Tory), whereas a White woman candidate (Stintz) was more prominent than her closest (White man) competitor (Soknacki).

A related implication of the research is that, in short, candidate prominence *still* matters. Characterizing the study of women in the media, Gidengil and Everitt (1999) argue that early research was consumed with a focus on women's (in)visibility in the news media (p. 48). Urging a move away from this focus, these scholars suggest that studies need to consider "arguably more insidious forms of bias" in news coverage of women politicians (Everitt & Gidengil, 1999, p. 49). Our results indicate, however, that lack of prominence in coverage may still be an important problem for non-White woman candidates.

Moving forward, we note several promising lines of inquiry for future research. First, one possible limitation of our study is its focus on print media. To be sure, there is good reason to think coverage in other media would be broadly similar, given research on intermedia agenda setting (e.g., Golan, 2006)

and racialization in TV coverage (Schaffner & Gadson, 2004). It is also reassuring that, in this study, we find no significant differences in coverage of candidates between the two newspapers examined, despite important differences in the two outlets' formats and audiences. Nonetheless, it remains an empirical question whether patterns observed in this study generalize to television, radio, and exclusively online news providers.

Alternative—and possibly more discriminating—measures of personalization might be a good option for research in the future. Although, in this study, we find no evidence of race- or gender-based difference in the *quantity* of references to candidates' private lives, there may nonetheless have been differences in the content, or *quality*, of such references. One straightforward, but hitherto unexamined, possibility is that references to the families of women candidates are differently focused than those applying to men candidates, with references to women's families addressing the perceived conflict between being a politician and being a mother (or wife) and references to men's families attending to other considerations.

Researchers may also wish to capture the tone, rather than simply the volume, of coverage accorded to different candidates. Although our prominence measure has captured differences in the level of attention accorded to the candidates in the Toronto election, they are not sensitive to variation in the positivity of that coverage—which, given the notorious features of Rob Ford's candidacy, was likely very considerable.

Finally, a challenging question raised by Olivia Chow's seemingly unlikely racialization in the Toronto election is the following: To what degree did this pattern of media coverage reflect Chow's self-presentation? As noted above, there is evidence that Chow's campaign at times used her immigrant status strategically. At her campaign launch, for instance, she spoke about being an immigrant who had to work hard to make ends meet (Doolittle, 2014b). Chow's website—an increasingly important representation of a candidate's message—also highlighted her immigrant roots. Of course, the choice to self-present as an immigrant is not purely autonomous: Expectations about media coverage likely result in strategic self-presentation by candidates (for similar logic regarding gendered mediation, see Goodyear-Grant, 2013). If Chow had not described herself as an immigrant, it is quite possible media coverage would have racialized her anyway, and perhaps in a manner that was less electorally desirable. Chow's self-presentation, thus, may represent an attempt to take control of the media narrative. In any event, our study suggests that a full understanding of racial mediation may require an account of such strategic considerations.

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