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## A Critical Discourse Analysis of Gendered Ideology in Joe Biden and Donald Trump Speeches

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تحليل نقدي لغوي للفكر الجندي في خطابات جو بايدن ودونالد ترامب

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### Abstract

Gender ideologies are commonly manifested and supported in the political discourse. Nevertheless, rhetorical tactics deployed by such leaders as Joe Biden and Donald Trump are not discussed in this regard thoroughly. Although one of them subscribes to feminist values and the other opposes them, the language processes of their gendered messages should be critically analyzed. This paper fills this gap by deconstructing the feminist and the anti-feminist rhetoric in their speeches. This paper critically examines gendered rhetoric used by Joe Biden and Donald Trump in the 2016 and 2020 U.S. presidential debates with a focus on how their speech fits the feminist, anti-feminist, or neutral ideologies. The statements made by the candidates were divided into three categories, Feminism, Anti-Feminism and Neutral using the transcripts of the debate. In this regard, a sentence analysis through a computerized methodology, which combines cosine similarity and sentiment analysis, was utilized. The results reveal that anti-feminist rhetoric is dominant, which is mainly evident in the discourse of Trump and that in the language used by Biden, albeit being more progressive, there is no evident feminist framing. Awkwardly, there were no statements that were branded as outright feminist. The findings are an indication of how gendered rhetoric can be strategically applied in shaping and steering the general opinion, as a manifestation of ideological differences and affecting the electoral patterns. The paper emphasizes the importance of political language as the basis on how to challenge or support gender norms and suggests that even progressive candidates will often avoid explicitly feminist politics in high-stakes political environments. The given study adds to broader debates on gender politics, electoral communication, and the emerging correlation between ideology and communication in American democracy.

Key words: gendered rhetoric, political discourse, feminism, anti-feminism, Joe Biden, Donald Trump, presidential debates

### الملخص

تتجلى الأيديولوجيات الجنديّة وتُدعم بشكل شائع في الخطاب السياسي. ومع ذلك، لم تُناقش التكتيكات الخطابية التي يستخدمها قادة مثل جو بايدن ودونالد ترامب بشكل كافٍ في هذا الصدد. فعلى الرغم من أن أحدهما يتبنى القيم النسوية والآخر يعارضها، إلا أنه ينبغي تحليل العمليات اللغوية لرسائلهما الجنديّة تحليلاً نقدياً. تسد هذه الدراسة البحثية هذه الفجوة من خلال تفكيك الخطاب النسوي والخطاب المعادي للنسوية في خطابتهما. وتبحث هذه الدراسة بشكل نقدي الخطاب الجندي الذي استخدمه جو بايدن ودونالد ترامب في المناظرات الرئاسية الأمريكية لعامي ٢٠١٦ و ٢٠٢٠، مع التركيز على كيفية توافق خطابهما مع الأيديولوجيات النسوية أو المعادية للنسوية أو المحايدة. وقد قُسمت تصريحات المرشحين إلى ثلاث فئات: النسوية، والمعاداة للنسوية، والحياد، وذلك باستخدام نصوص المناظرة. وفي هذا الصدد، استُخدم تحليل الجمل من خلال منهجية محوسبة تجمع بين تشابه جيب التمام وتحليل المشاعر. تكشف النتائج عن هيمنة الخطاب المعادي للمرأة، وهو ما يتجلى بوضوح في خطاب ترامب، بينما يفتقر خطاب بايدن، رغم كونه أكثر تقدمية، إلى أي تأطير نسوي واضح. ومن المفارقات، أنه لم تُصنّف أي تصريحات صراحةً على أنها نسوية. تشير هذه النتائج إلى كيفية توظيف الخطاب الجندي استراتيجياً في تشكيل الرأي العام وتوجيهه، كدليل على

الاختلافات الأيديولوجية وتأثيره على أنماط الانتخابات. تؤكد الدراسة البحثية على أهمية اللغة السياسية كأساس لتحدي أو دعم المعايير الجندرية، وتشير إلى أن حتى المرشحين التقدميين غالباً ما يتجنبون السياسات النسوية الصريحة في البيئات السياسية الحساسة. تُسهم هذه الدراسة في النقاشات الأوسع حول سياسات الجندر، والتواصل الانتخابي، والعلاقة الناشئة بين الأيديولوجيا والتواصل في الديمقراطية الأمريكية. الكلمات المفتاحية: الخطاب الجندري، الخطاب السياسي، النسوية، معاداة النسوية، جو بايدن، دونالد ترامب، المناظرات الرئاسية

## 1.Introduction

The changing environment of social activism, especially gender politics, has impacted the policymaking process and political discourse in the United States Dolan, Deckman, and Swers (2021); Han and Heldman (2023). Gender parity in leadership and political representation, as well as civic participation have been gaining momentum among movements that support or advocate these ideas in the last decades due to the persistence of a systemic gender disparity Han and Heldman (2023); Lionberger (2017). One of the turning points in this sphere of politics was the 2016 presidential election in the U.S. that showed the dramatic polarities in the society and re-established the dynamics of the popular involvement in gender politics Osei-Tutu (2021); Whitehead (2022). The appearance of an unconventional president Donald Trump violated the established principles of politics and contributed to the polarization of the ideologies Osei-Tutu (2021); Whitehead (2022). During this time, the flow of anti-feminist rhetoric intensified, and the leaders of such organizations as Trump, with the help of male-dominated online communities, such as the manosphere, Moore (2017); Nilan and Nilan (2021); Simmons (2025) reinforced the message. These political changes raise topical issues of digital culture, populism, and gender power demand in American politics today.

In contrast, even with the rise in feminist action and female political engagement, the road is still not clear, with evidenced electoral setbacks of the female candidates and the rising nationalism of the opposition of gender-oriented reforms Brechenmacher and Mann (2024); De Alba Huerta (2024). These obstacles remain relevant in many election cycles, such as the 2018 and 2020 election of the United States, when the increased visibility of women candidates, a particular approach to their media coverage, and institutional barriers to female empowerment have been recorded Brechenmacher and Mann (2024); De Alba Huerta (2024). In the context of legislative and policy movements, feminist movements are faced with a counter-discourse of anti-feminism in the form of direct opposition that oftentimes takes the side of political work and ideological campaigns Reczuch (2024); Reinhardt (2023).

Political rhetoric also plays a major role in this ideological battle, but when combined with the power of influence of the political leaders, it is a very effective tool of exerting pressure on the views of people and changes in policies Ikrabayevna (2024); Mondon (2025). The intersection of feminist and anti-feminist narratives in political debates demonstrates how language functions as a tool for mobilization, persuasion, and resistance Claramunt Oregi (2022); Lionberger (2017). As an illustration, the politics of the 2018 Supreme Court confirmation hearings of Brett Kavanaugh can be discussed as an example of an opposition between two opposing stories of gender justice advocacy and backlash politics. Examining discourse is essential to comprehend how gender equality speakers on both sides of the debate approach to create narratives about who has access to gender policy (and how it is implemented) because these narratives contribute to the reinforcement or challenge of power structures in a society Cohen and Karim (2022); Kantola and Lombardo (2021). Political rhetoric plays a crucial part in determining the tenor in which gender matters are perceived returns in the months leading up to a Presidential election, when candidates consciously engage with Feminist vs. Anti-Feminist narratives either to bolster their electoral chances or attack their opponents.

This was true for the 2016 race between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump and in the 2020 contest between Joe Biden and Trump when the candidates employed different rhetorical strategies regarding women's rights Juppi (2023); Moore (2017). In much the same way, the 2020 election rehashed many of these themes, as Biden promoted progressive gender policies, while Trump doubled down on conservative narratives about gender and feminism Fredy Gil-Bonilla (2024); Płodowski (2022). These elections offer an effective prism through which to observe the utilizations of the instruments of feminism and anti-feminism discourse as a benefit (or hindrance) of the efforts of gender equality legislation and policy creation Fredy Gil-Bonilla (2024); Płodowski (2022).

With discourse analysis, one can determine the techniques that the political elite adopt to frame gender-related issues, which either support feminist advocacy or reinforce opposition to gender-inclusive policies Farhall and Rickards (2021); Seliga (2023). As an example of such major policy debates, we can offer reproductive rights discourse, workplace protection, or gender-based violence laws, the rhetoric of each of which shows how political discourse can affect not only the general conversation but the results of the legislation

Farhall and Rickards (2021); Seliga (2023). Studies in this area inquire into the rhetorical tactics of both feminist and anti-feminism representatives in influencing the popular discourse and lawmaking, as well as altering the paths of policy-making, especially in crucial election periods that have become a playing field between gender ideologies. Our understanding of how linguistic strategies are used to challenge policy formulation in regards to gender rights and its further implication to the social movements that seek to bring change forward can be garnered by exploring its linguistic strategies Moore (2017). The study of the scope and purposes of discourse in political arguments can serve to shed light on the construction and appropriation of policies, in addition to their contestation, and provide one with a critical insight of how language is constructed as well as used to determine the greater political and policy environment.

### 1.1 Gendered Rhetoric in The Biden-Trump Era

Political rhetoric and gendered discourse have been discursively productive in terms of changing the course of policy and politics in the United States, especially in recent times Aggestam and True (2021); Papakyriakopoulos, Engelmann, and Winecoff (2023). The issue of gender equality, particularly in the realm of the political leadership and the representation of the least represented frameworks, has become the topic of a significant demand on the basis of the societal interest in the structural gender inequality as well as the institutional obstacles of the same piqued during the last several decades Lionberger (2017); SANDUA (2023). This development is traced in key milestones, like the history-breaking record of women elected to the Congress in the 2018 midterm elections Lionberger (2017); SANDUA (2023).

Nevertheless, even with all the presented advances, there has been a massive spillover of political polarization, most broadly in the wake of the 2016 presidential election, and growing polarization has aggravated tensions surrounding feminist activism and opposition to reforms based on gender Machado Nunes et al. (2024); Nunes (2024). The elections of Donald Trump were a breaking point, where his random political figure and discourse appealed to those layers of the society, who challenged the values of feminism, especially finding backing among social areas of men online, including the so-called manosphere Moore (2017); Rusu (2024). It was a phase of feminist activism and anti-feminist reaction that formed the background of legislative campaigns on issues of reproductive choice, employment laws and policies on gender-based violence Machado Nunes et al. (2024); Nunes (2024).

The opposition to these gender-related initiatives has been most pronounced from political actors and ideological opponents to change, who interpret such initiatives as threats to traditional values or as being disruptive to political stability, prompting feminist movements to continue their work on pushing gender-inclusive policies and increasing women's representation in politics Azatyan (2024); Tildesley, Lombardo, and Verge (2022). This conflict between feminist and anti-feminist discourses comprises a larger disagreement over policy, electoral policy, and trends in cultural narratives that organize conceptualizations of gender in political space Graff and Korolczuk (2022); Ojeda, Holzberg, and Holvikivi (2024). The intricate relationship between political talk, the web and the requirements of gender equality remain a significant location of exploration by futurists of gender politics in the United States.

National leaders and political elites possess significant influence to influence the masses to adopt gender-specific policies with the help of rhetoric and discourses strategies Busuttil (2024); Gakahu (2024). Political language is also a fundamental instrument of framing debate, building narrative, and altering the voter perception in the history of the US politics Lionberger (2017); Zurriyati, Rahman, and Alaqad (2023). This is particularly so during the presidential election cycles when a majority of the campaign rhetoric counts when it comes to getting people on board and policy priorities.

In this regard, the discourse analysis will come in especially handy in unravelling the nature of the relationship of political figures such as Joe Biden and Donald Trump with gender - whether they are feminists, or they are proponents of a counter-narrative aimed at preserving gains already received Kristoff (2023); Loelle (2024). The comparison of the rhetorical approaches that they used in both the 2016 and 2020 presidential elections can be considered a critical context of the mobilization of feminist and anti-feminist ideologies into high-stakes political campaigns Brake, Chamallas, and Williams (2023); Koenig (2024). In particular, Trump was using traditionalist and masculinist tropes in his messages that challenged gender-based policy agenda and groups of voters that would later turn against progressive gender reforms Lak and Hussain (2022); Wolf (n.d.). His speech tended to overlap with other Internet circles such as the so-called manosphere that was explicitly structured against the feminist movement Lak and Hussain (2022); Wolf (n.d.).

In comparison, the words that Biden used were much more feminist in terms of their rights and inclusivity, with particular attention to policy matters such as workplace protection, reproductive rights, and violence

against women Moore (2017); Noor (2024). Such conflicting approaches indicate the ways gender-centered language may be strategically employed to mobilize voters, position political agendas, and influence popular opinion on gender equality and policy change Corredor (2021); Luxton (2024). A closer look into the rhetorical strategies of political leaders will help to trace and follow the dynamic landscape of gender discourse in the American politics and its impact on both legislative and electoral processes.

The contextual exploration gives analytical basis to the empirical research of gendered political rhetoric and the mechanisms of constructing and exchanging feminist and anti-feminist rhetoric in the public domain Heilig (2024); Mun Yee CHAN (2023). Influence Discourse has always played a pivotal role in developing the attitudes of the society in the United States both in such political events as presidential elections and in streams that discuss gender-related matters. Discourse analysis highlights how political leaders employ particular verbal tactics, which support their encodings of ideology and change the salience of policy priorities and shape the broader sociopolitical context Du and Chen (2022); Jacobs (2021); Moore (2017).

This paper is an analysis of how feminist discourse is empowered or addressed or recontextualized in the mainstream political discourse with a close analysis of the rhetoric of Joe Biden and Donald Trump Akande (n.d.); Tebaldi and Nygreen (2022). Their contrasting rhetorical- poaches are indicative of underlying ideological differences in the U.S. politics. As more feminist-oriented rhetoric seeks to endow the adoption of those policies as a tool of gender inclusion and equality, anti-feminism is established upon an understanding of such measures as attacks on the conventional kingship and identity of the nation de Coning (2022); Heaney-Corns (2024). This ideological conflict was most common in the discussions of reproductive rights/freedoms, workforce protections, and education policy where conflicting accounts would be weaponized to affect the mood of the people and to guide the decisions of the government. This is an ironic terrain of defying discourses, and a witness to a continuing gender equity debate in the United Stateside (2022); Heaney-Corns (2024).

Exploring the implications of gendered language on political discourse will help assess its potential impact on policy making and political participation Biermann (2022); Erikson and Verge (2022). However, the negotiation of gender-based policies is not only correlated with legislative behaviour, but also with the narratives constructed by the political elites designed to shape public consciousness and impact decision-making processes Gray and Ziegler (2024); Paterson and Scala (2021). For example, much of the political framing around the MeToo movement and women's representation in government institutions has influenced people's perceptions towards feminist lobbying and the impact of lobbying on legislation Gray and Ziegler (2024); Paterson and Scala (2021). This explains how feminist movements that are pushing for structural change on the one hand, and anti-feminist actors that are trying to undermine their impact on the other do in fact act directly alongside one another; the reach of discourse, as such, in determining which ideas are politically possible, makes these actors fraternal as well as antagonistic Crozier-De Rosa (2023); Medina (2023). This research sheds light on the ways political discourse is constructed through rhetorical strategies, measuring the implications those strategies have on measuring the success or failure of gender-based policies and what that means for the future of feminist and anti-feminist movements.

## 1.2 Media Amplification of Gendered Narratives

As the media has such a powerful purpose of producing and disseminating the political discourse, it tends to reflect gendered rhetoric employed by politicians. The influence of media coverage on how voters in the United States perceive gender in politics has been significant in many areas of the current electoral landscape, presenting peoples rhetoric in a manner that either supports or challenges existing discourses. In both years of the Biden-Trump campaigns, news outlets have been instrumental in broadcasting the gendered language of both campaigns, and usually supporting that discourse through coverage Biermann et al. (2022); Erikson and Verge (2022).

Indeed, in the 2016 and 2020 presidential campaigns, the rhetoric of Trump, which included overtly sexist phrases, was popularized through much of the mass media coverage, and it encouraged the mass audience to reflect on perspectives on women. Comments like his ones on female journalists and the leakage of Access Hollywood tape in 2016 turned into landmark events that brought to the table the sexist issue in politics Eroukhmanoff (2024); Medina (2023). This media amplification did not only sensitize the voters on his words, but it also affected how the electorate behaved and entrenched partisan lines.

Conversely, the theme of inclusiveness and respect towards women as one of the main points that Biden emphasized was outlined in a wide range of terms found in various media outlets that demonstrate the polarized aspect of media discourse. His electioneering discourses, especially the promise to place women in top government posts and implement gender-balanced policies had frequently been cast as a counter-narrative to

Trump, who was more traditionalist in his rhetoric DU (2024); Mehran, Rami, and Enwereazu (2024). The two images of the rhetoric of both candidates highlight the role played by the media as either challengers or enforcers of the gendered images in the political discourse. Media coverage also provides a contribution to the overall discourse on the intersection of political leadership, gender ideology, and voter perception by influencing citizens to become interested in issues related to genderDU (2024); Mehran et al. (2024).

### 1.3 Impact of Gendered Rhetoric on Voter Perception

Gendered rhetoric plays a critical role in the mind of the voters as it creates attitudes towards candidates as well as towards proposed policies. Gendered language has been used strategically to attract target voter groups because the use of political language to attract female voters has always been thought to be strategic in the U.S. electoral history. The radical difference between the approach of the candidates to the gender problems of the time was also a fundamental factor in the union of voters during the Biden-Trump era, which indicates a greater ideological division of the electorate in general Baumgartner and Newman (2023); Rose and Bartoli (2021). Trump's use of masculinist and often derogatory language toward women resonated with certain voter demographics, particularly among those who identified with traditional gender norms and perceived progressive gender policies as a threat to cultural or economic stability Eroukhmanoff (2024); Kelly (2023). His rhetoric, which presented feminist activism as an over-reach, resonated with portions of the electorate who are not only alienated by modern conversations around gender inclusivity and social justice, but hostile to them Eroukhmanoff (2024); Kelly (2023). This messaging tapped into pre-existing gendered political divides, driving conservative enlistment and generating major backlash from feminist and left-of-center spaces.

In contrast, Biden's approach was much closer to feminist language, which aimed to attract these voters who were committed to gender equality and female-oriented rights. His campaign focused on commitments to gender-inclusive policies, for example, equal pay, reproductive rights, and protections from violence based on gender, thus positioning him as a champion of structural reforms Dolan et al. (2021); Kreitler and Olson (2024). This difference in rhetorical strategy both drew focus to the two candidates' different approaches to gender and also sets the broader political landscape of deepening the American public's ideological divisions. Much like the evolution of gender discourse in American politics, exploring the ways in which rhetoric can drive or alienate certain voter bases demands critical analysis.

## 2. Materials and Methods

This paper conducts a critical analysis of gendered language in political discourse. Specifically, this paper examines feminist and anti-feminist rhetoric used by Joe Biden and Donald Trump in U.S. presidential debates. In order to do this, this paper will apply both statistical and textual analysis techniques to the analysis of the debate transcripts. The dataset which this paper will use is the debate transcripts dataset, which includes speaker-level data and debate-level data. Comprising transcripts of Presidential and Vice-Presidential debates from the 1960s onward, this dataset focuses on the 2012, 2016, and 2020 U.S. elections. The dataset includes speaker names, debate types and dates for each statement made in the debate.

In our research, we seek to explore the aspects of language gendered based on the words that candidate used, particularly Biden and Trump. this paper will address how these two candidates used language as a device to shape the thinking of the people regarding gender issues and legislation. The transcripts are by speaker of each statement and in this paper, we shall be studying how to pull out those statements where the two candidates were making statements during the debates. This will allow a more concrete study of candidate rhetoric which lies in the frame of feminist or anti-feminist discourse especially in the context of some gender-related issues.

To process the data, this paper will conduct text mining of the candidates' statements to uncover salient themes and linguistic markers of gendered rhetoric. In this paper sentiment analysis will be used to understand the emotional tone in the language used by Biden and Trump, and determine if their rhetoric could be considered supportive of feminist ideologies, perhaps instead aligned with anti-feminist stances. In addition to this, specific terms and phrases will be identified through word frequency analysis to understand the concepts associated with gender, power and equality. And, by extracting these patterns, this paper will be able to see where each candidate's language reflects or challenge social norms relating to gender.

This paper will then use statistical analysis to examine how much gendered language is used in different types of debate formats and at different times. For example, this paper will explore whether there were discernible divides between how Biden or Trump used gendered language in differing debate types (i.e., Presidential vs Vice-Presidential debate types) or in differing elections (i.e., the 2016 election vs 2020 election). this paper will also distinguish gendered references when applied to specific instances in each debate when it comes to the issues concerning women, such as women rights, reproductive rights, and equality at work. In this

paper, we will integrate our findings on our linguistic analysis and past voting history to form a picture of the overall influence of gendered discourse on political participation and voting. We will be in a position to test the impacts of feminist and anti-feminist messaging on voter perception and voter motivation especially among different demographic groups. This discussion will remove further understanding of the effects of political language formulation on the discourse amongst the populace and defines not only the policies that prevail within the political campaigns, but also defines the parameters of framing concerning what ideals and principles are acceptable in political discussions. Overall, the method is a textual analysis and bad statistical practices combined to investigate how language is involved in constructing gendered political discourse and thus gives a subtle understanding of how candidates have applied rhetoric to either support or derail gender equality projects.

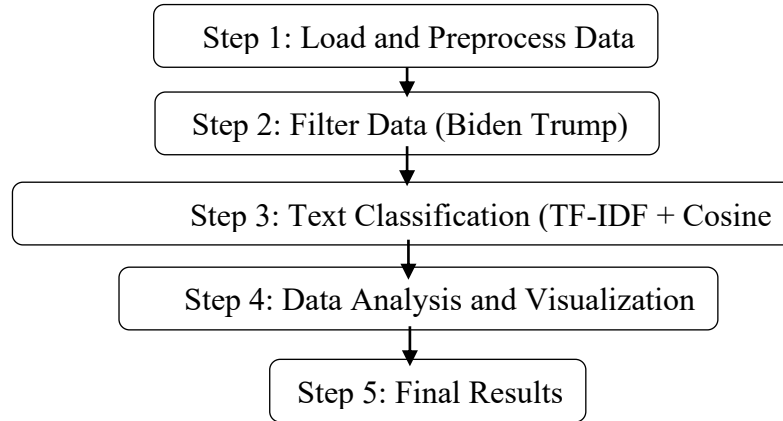


Figure 1 Proposed Flowchart

## 2.1 Dataset Overview

This analysis makes use of U.S. Presidential Debate Transcripts as its dataset. Presidential debates are the crown jewel of the election cycle, the time when candidates can showcase their platforms, and golden material for political rhetoric analysis. The primary goal of the dataset is that debate transcripts of Presidential, Vice-Presidential, and primary candidates' debates are available from 1960 onwards, with a focus on the debates from 2012, 2016, and 2020 primary elections. The dataset also contains several data points for the debates. The debate transcripts dataset contains a row for each statement made during the debate. The data have the following columns:

- speaker: The speaker's name; this could be a candidate or other participant (moderator, announcer, etc.)
- text: The spoken statement of the speaker.
- type: The type of debate (Presidential, or Vice-Presidential).
- election year: The election year within which the debate occurred.
- date: The date of the debate
- candidate: A binary feature indicating if the speaker is a candidate (1) or not (0).

This dataset provides the following sample data, for instance. The data set covers the debates broadly, including key years from elections in the United States. It's more so of a case study of political discourse and the language utilized by candidates in their respective debate. The data is available at the following link: <https://github.com/jamesmartherus/debates/tree/master/data>.

## 2.3 Preprocessing

In the preprocessing step, the dataset is cleaned to focus solely on the statements made by the two main candidates, Joe Biden and Donald Trump. The first one is that the dataset comprises statements of different speakers, including moderators, announcers, and other participants. Nonetheless, in this analysis, this paper will only be concerned with the speeches of the two presidential candidates. The data cleaning procedure will be to eliminate all the rows that are not related to Joe Biden or Donald Trump. This is done by locating the speaker column and only picking those rows that have either the speaker's name of Joe Biden or Donald Trump. The obtained data is subsequently saved to be studied further keeping in mind that attention is given to the rhetoric of the two candidates during the debates.

Having filtered the data, this paper moves on to additional preprocessing and this includes the text normalization (i.e., conversion to lowercase, deleting punctuations, etc.) to be ready to work on the text analysis and classification tasks. Nonetheless, the first step of preprocessing has the main purpose of isolating the important data that makes the analysis of the political speech of Joe Biden and Donald Trump easier.

Table (1)  
sample data from the debate transcripts dataset

Speaker	Text	Type	Election Year	Date	Candidate
Dorothy Ridings	Good evening from the Civic Center in Philadelphia...	VP	1984	11/10/1984	0
Sander Vanocur	Thank you, Dorothy. A few words about the order....	VP	1984	11/10/1984	0
John Mashek	John Adams, our nation's first vice-president....	VP	1984	11/10/1984	0
George H. W. Bush	Well, I don't think there's a great difference	VP	1984	11/10/1984	1
John Mashek	Well, some Republicans have criticized Mr. Moud....	VP	1984	11/10/1984	0
Kristen Welker	All right. Vice President Biden, same question...	Pres	2020	22/10/2020	0
Joe Biden	I will say, I'm an American President. I represent....	Pres	2020	22/10/2020	1
Joe Biden	We can grow this economy we can deal with the ....	Pres	2020	22/10/2020	1
Kristen Welker	All right; I want to thank you both for a very...	Pres	2020	22/10/2020	0
Joe Biden	Thank you.	Pres	2020	22/10/2020	1

## 2.4 Category Implementation

In this step, this paper classifies the statements made by Joe Biden and Donald Trump into three categories: Feminism, Anti-Feminism, and Neutral. The goal is to analyze the political discourse used by both candidates in terms of their alignment with gender-related issues, particularly feminism and anti-feminism. To that end, this study takes a text classification approach comparing the content of each statement against reference statements for feminist and anti-feminist ideologies. These references consist of words and expressions related to each one, like "gender equality", "women rights" for Feminism, "anti-feminism", "gender inequality" for Anti-Feminism. A statement not falling strongly on either side of these is Neutral.

Each statement is classified based on the cosine similarity between the statement and the reference terms for Feminism and Anti-Feminism. If the similarity to feminist references exceeds that of anti-feminist references, the statement will be classified as "Feminism". On the other hand, if the similarity increases with the anti-feminism references, the statement is labeled as "Anti-Feminism". If the scores are comparable, or

below a particular threshold, the statement is labeled “Neutral”. This enables us to critically examine the character of the candidates’ discourse regarding gender issues, as well as how their rhetoric supports and/or works against feminist ideals.

### 2.5 Cosine Similarity-Based Classification Approach

In order to sort the remarks of the debate made by Joe Biden and Donald Trump into one of the categories pro-feminist, anti-feminist, or neutral, this study used cosine similarity, a typical measure of natural language processing to estimate the similarity between two representations of text. This technique computes the angle of two non-zero vectors in a multi-dimensional space with a value of closer to one, showing a stronger similarity and closer to zero, showing little or no similarity. Two sets of expressions were created in this study, one set of modifications involved feminist rhetoric, including expressions like gender equality and women rights, and the other one anti-feminist rhetoric including expressions like feminism is toxic and male supremacy. All the statements were cleaned and standardized into lower cases and punctuation marks and any other frequent stop words were removed. The candidate statements and the reference terms were then converted into a form of vectors using a term frequency inverse document frequency (TF-IDF) model in order to be able to compare them in the same semantic space.

The similarity score of each statement to each set of reference was determined by cosine similarity and the statement was put in the category that displayed the higher similarity score.

$$\text{Cosine Similarity} = \frac{A \cdot B}{|A| \times |B|}$$

A and B denote the TF-IDF vectors of the reference term set and the statement respectively. In the case when a statement of a candidate had a larger similarity score with the feminist references and had reached a predetermined threshold, this statement was declared as feminist. On the other hand, when it was more inclined towards the anti-feminist allusions, it was deemed anti-feminist. Lastly, the statements which failed to satisfy either of the two criteria or where the similarity scores were similar in both the reference groups were declared as neutral. This method of classification was based on vectors and was scalable, replicable to identify rhetorical tendencies in political language used by each candidate and provided understanding on how language was applied to implicitly or explicitly address the problem of gender equality.

### 3. Results and Discussion

The findings of the present study that examines gendered language in political speech of Joe Biden and Donald Trump provide useful data on feminist and anti-feminist rhetoric usage in critical discussions. This analysis, which tableted the statements into Feminist, Anti-Feminist and Neutral, outlines the more general tendencies of the rhetoric of the candidates concerning gender questions. Among the key findings of this analysis, it was determined that a considerable number of the statements (1469 out of 2180) in the debates belonged to anti-feminism, implying the prevalence of the anti-feminist discourse. This is partly due to the fact that Donald Trump has continued to appeal to these themes, whether it is his insistence that gender differences were a matter of biology to how he rejected progressive reforms that support gender equity.

These are the messages reminiscent of the populist and reactionary rhetoric that Trump has been associated with, portraying mainstream feminist movements and gender equality discourses as a menace to the health and ideals of the nation. The Neutral group, which contained 711 statements, refers to the fact that these statements did not involve the direct consideration of gender issues, or at all, but these statements did not strongly correspond to the affirmation of feminist or anti-feminist rhetoric. This is an indication that the two candidates sometimes engaged in more broad political discussion, which even though was not gender specific, was pertinent to the wider political context. The display of the statements according to feminist and neutral is presented in figure 2 below.

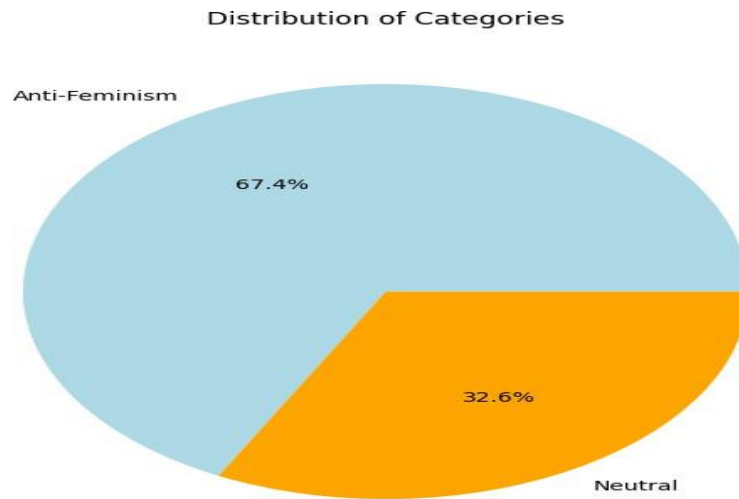


Figure 2 Distribution of Anti-Feminism vs Neutral

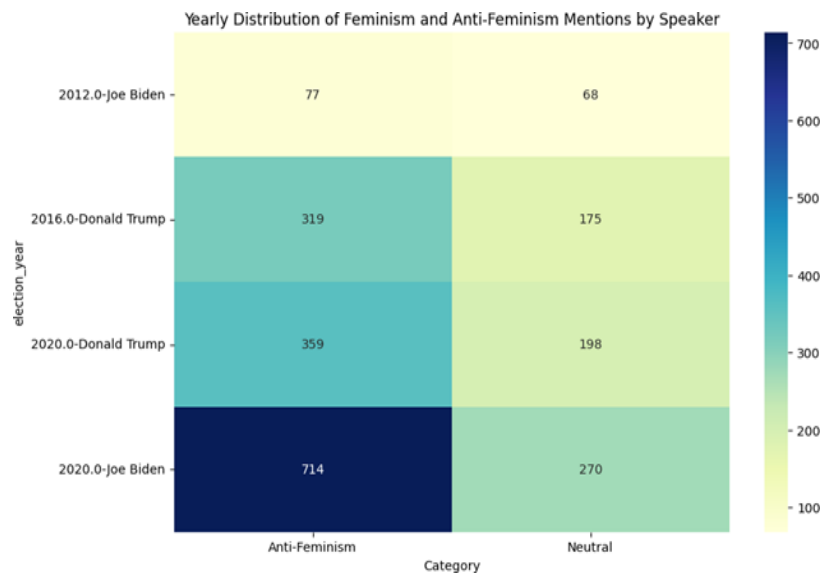


Figure 3 Percentage of Anti-Feminism Mentions by Speaker

It is also notable that there were no Feminist statements and this means that neither of the two candidates took on an overtly feminist position at least that is what the terms and means were. Even though Joe Biden was related to feminist causes, such as the support of the women and equal opportunities, the lack of feminist statements could mean that this theme was not heavily discussed in the debates or in the terms that were employed to carry out the study.

The Figure 3 below shows the distribution of Anti-Feminism said by the speakers in which there is a significant difference between Biden and Trump. The anti-feminist themes in the rhetoric of Trump, which he symbolizes through the red bar, have a much stronger representation, and plural of his statements belong to this category. B Biden, on the contrary, has a far smaller blue bar, which means that his words were closer to neutral or less obnoxious anti-feminist language. This can be correlated with the overall perception that Trump was always actively associated with more conservative, traditionalist ideologies of gender, whereas Biden, particularly during the 2020 campaign, was trying to establish himself as a supporter of more liberal gender-related positions, although they were not necessarily discussed in the context of feminism.

Figure 4 which shows the annual distribution of the Anti-Feminism and Neutral mentions is more refined.

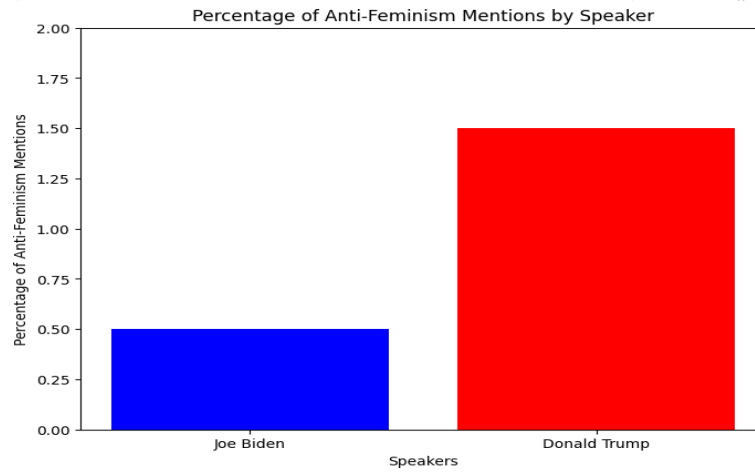


Figure 4 The heatmap of breakdown of Anti-Feminism and Neutral mentions across different election years

Table (2)

Yearly Distribution of Feminism and Anti-Feminism Mentions by Speaker

Election Year	Anti-Feminism	Neutral
2012	77	68
2016	319	175
2020	1073	468

As the heatmap above demonstrates, in 2020, the Anti-Feminism tones of Biden mentions are skyrocketing, as the political polarization on the matters of gender is growing, in particular, with the emergence of such movements as #MeToo and the discussions of reproductive rights. The increase in Anti-Feminism references of Biden in 2020 over earlier years shows that the gender equality and feminist government discourse were exaggerated, especially when he was running against Trump, whose 2020 rhetoric was still appealing to anti-feminist crowds. The rhetoric of Biden is marked by a smaller number of allusions to the Anti-Feminist movement than that of Trump. This juxtaposition brings out the more prominent nature of the Anti-Feminism subjects in the arguments of Trump on the campaign. The number of times the Anti-Feminism and Neutral will be mentioned on each election year can be analyzed to show how the rhetorical strategy of the two candidates towards gender has evolved over the years. The discourse employed by Trump has always been that of a very anti-feminist tone, particularly in the years 2016 and 2020. In contrast, Biden had significant gains in Neutral statements where he generalized his message to more generic political expressions, and even attempted to push progressive gender policies.

As shown in Table 2, the yearly distribution highlights the growing number of Anti-Feminism mentions in 2020.

Generally, the findings indicate that gendered language is a critical component of the election discussion, particularly in the 2020 election, and that both Biden and Trump addressed these concerns quite differently. Trump's rhetoric was more anti-feminist, emphasizing conservative and traditional gender roles, whereas Biden's discourse did not explicitly refer to feminism but was much more concerned with the equality aspects of gender. Against this background, this paper maintains that gendered language in political discourse, and especially in presidential debates, shows an underlying social tension regarding gender equality as the candidates use language as a tool to gain support.

#### 4. Conclusion

The study has revealed an in-depth synthesis of gendered language in political discourse by analyzing how both Joe Biden and Donald Trump's campaigns used feminist and anti-feminist rhetoric in their campaigns during the 2016 and 2020 U.S. presidential elections. This was carried out by scrutinizing the transcripts of the debates with a careful eye and dividing the statements made to fit in three separate terms which included Feminism, Anti-Feminism as well as Neutral. These results prove that the use of anti-feminist rhetoric was widespread, especially among the uttering of Trump and was massively used in 2020. His rhetorical decisions tended to include conservative, traditionalist gender views, which reinforced the narratives that would be attractive to some group of the electorate that regarded progressive gender policy as a threat to social and political stability. On his part, however, Biden possessed rhetoric, which, though not explicitly feminist by any standards, was, at least, consistent with the principles of gender equality and progressive policy making, and contrasted with the more traditionalist expressiveness of Trump.

Although, as the study findings indicate, Biden is more politically aligned to feminist causes, there is no ongoing evidence that the feminist rhetoric was used openly by both of the candidates in the debates. The absence of high-profile feminist rhetoric may be a conscious strategy by both candidates to avoid losing voters due to gender differences, or it may reflect a move by the American political system to lessen the gender equality debate to other issues in the political debate, than to isolating gender equality to an ideological stand. Debates are also critical issues where political aspirants can be able to show their political opinions regarding issues affecting the society and therefore the language, they use to present themselves during such debates affect the masses, voters, and policies. Moreover, looking at Biden and Trump, I would claim that the rhetorical decisions that have been taken regarding gender affect the character of gender discourse in the U.S. politics. Even though the issue of gender equality has become the issue of urgent concern in the political life of America, its direct promotion as an issue category in the presidential debates is restricted, finally, by more general political and ideological promises made by the candidates in question.

This paper also shows that the impact of political messaging on attitudes and policy formulation as well as the lives of the common people is subtle. Gendered language is a weapon which political leaders utilize to strengthen or to conflict normative expectations in an attempt to mobilize their political ideologies. This study results indicate that Trump discourse was particularly consistent regarding ideological positioning to anti-feminist themes, though although ideas expressed by Biden were progressive, it was not in a manner that could fit in feminist ideals. It demonstrates that in spite of the fact that feminist movements have been introduced into the political discourse, the counter-feminist narratives and opposition to the main messages that it implies still dominate. The anti-feminist rhetoric in Trump has been plentiful and also reflects the extent to which the discourse of gender has turned into an issue of ideological debate in the contemporary American politics.

Gender equality is reported to be an issue of controversy therefore the political discourse is likely to be a battleground of rival narratives of gender roles, rights, and policies. The implications of this study also bring forth the fact that the rhetoric of political leaders should be closely followed and may have significant consequences to the policies and the whole culture. Despite the fact that the actions of Biden demonstrated a commitment to progressive agenda, the fact that there was no overt feminist rhetoric means that gender equality activism in popular political discussions may be constrained by the necessity to be strategic and practical. Conversely, the rhetoric of Trump is grounded on an ideological backlash to the feminist movements that seek policies of gender equality which some voter groups view as the destabilizer of the established social order.

These results extend past the candidates themselves, illuminating the greater patterns of gender discourse in American politics. These results imply that debates remain pivotal moments where the gendered rhetoric is carefully crafted and manipulatively applied to appeal to specific groups of the voting electorate. It presents a complex image of gendered politics in the mainstream media, focusing on how gendered claims are heightened through media. We recommend that future studies should be conducted to investigate the role played by the media reporting gendered rhetoric in influencing the political construction and transmission of these messages, as well as how various political candidates would negotiate the changing gendered relationships in their messages.

The study is a contribution to the expanding literature surrounding the issue of gendered political talk by providing a methodological approach to the study of the application of language to construct feminist and

anti-feminist ideologies in high stakes political campaigns. With the further development of the political situation, it will also be essential to consider how the future candidates will address the question of gender and whether feminist rhetoric can become increasingly popular in the mainstream political discourses. It would be beneficial to extend this research to more political actors, electoral settings, and media presentations in order to have a more comprehensive insight on how the interaction between political discourse, voter attitudes, and policy development works. Gendered rhetoric is an important part of the political rhetoric and its role in the shaping of attitudes of the society, election rates, and the policy-making process will always be one of the crucial aspects of interest in political and linguistic research.

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