
NEXT KCDW MEETING SEPT 28TH: Yacht Club Broiler – No host lunch – 11:30 am; Meeting – 12:30 pm. Speakers still to be determined. NO RSVP required.

GENDER BIAS IN THE 2016 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN– *by Jo Fox Burr*

Years ago I watched a documentary on gender bias. In a seminar for teachers which focused on this topic, a film was shown of an elementary school class conducted by a female teacher. After the film, the teachers in the seminar were asked if they thought the class had been taught fairly to both sexes. Every teacher, except one male, felt it had been. Turns out something like 70% of the teacher's time was spent with the boys. For the same quality homework, boys received comments like 'you can do better,' while girls received comments like 'nice penmanship.' The point being that even when looking for it, gender bias is very difficult for us to see because it is so much the norm in our society. These kind of norms are very hard to change.

Hillary Clinton's nomination demonstrates that we have made some progress on this. The video of her appearing from behind a shattering glass once officially nominated was very moving. But we are not there yet. Why else would such an unqualified *deplorable* candidate like Trump still be so close in the polls to Clinton, one of the most qualified candidates we have ever had?

Politifact has fact checked both Clinton and Trump through July of this year and has determined that over 70% of Trump's statements fell into one of three categories – Pants on Fire False,

False, or Mostly False. Fewer than 27% of Clinton's statement fell into these categories, fewer than any other candidate running in the primaries. Still, Trump has managed to somewhat successfully brand her a 'Liar.' While canvassing I talked with a Republican woman who while not voting for Trump could not support Clinton because she said Clinton lied about always being a Democrat. Clinton was at one time a Goldwater girl, a fact she is quite open about. These Politifact statistics did not faze this woman. Clinton lied at least once as far as she was concerned which is all that mattered. I guess women are just not supposed to ever lie. Seems OK for men though.

Daniel Bush of PBS wrote an article entitled '*Election 2016: The hidden Sexism that could sway the election.*' According to him, a 1937 Gallup poll showed only 33% of Americans said they would vote for a woman for president. That number theoretically climbed to 92% by 2015. However, 2016 primary exit polls have indicated this may not actually be accurate – particularly where white males are concerned. Bernie Sanders, for instance, did better with males by huge margins in states where the Democratic electorate was predominately white. This was not the case in states where minorities dominated the Democratic electorate. At least people know what they are supposed to think, even if it is not how they vote.

In this article, Bush referenced a paper by two social psychologists which defined two kinds of sexism. One was 'hostile' sexism which is overtly negative toward women. The other, which is harder to change, is 'benevolent' sexism, defined as positive feelings men have of women based on feelings of dominance. This type of sexism approves women who accept traditional female roles and disapproves those who don't. Perhaps Hillary Clinton served as the prototype target of this

kind of sexism when she dared to work on political issues such as health care as First Lady, something that is unforgivable.

Bush also quoted Terri Vescio, a Penn State psychology professor who studies gender bias issues, as saying of women, "If you are perceived as competent, you're not perceived as warm. But if you're liked and trusted, you're not seen as competent." This leaves Clinton with a very delicate balancing act to perform. No wonder she sometimes seems a little stiff.

I think most people like to think of themselves as not having a gender bias with candidates. It may be less of an issue with candidates for any other office besides President, though women are still a minority in Congress. The real problem is that people are unaware of their subconscious biases. They come up with all sorts of reasons not to support Clinton which for a male candidate would just not matter. Though he understands little else, Trump does understand this and is very good at wakening this hidden internal unease. I still believe we will win this one, but it might be more of a squeaker than we expect. And the more I think about this gender issue, the more I find myself admiring Hillary Clinton's forbearance over all these years.

Special Election Notes: Ballots will be mailed October 19th. Get them in early. There will be 3 Presidential Debates - Sept 26, Oct.9, and Oct 19 and one Vice Presidential Debate on Oct. 4. Debate parties are being planned. Stay tuned.

OTHER UPCOMING DEMOCRATIC MEETINGS AND EVENTS: (*GM designates a general membership meeting)

Kitsap Co. Dem. Central Com: GM* Sept 19th (Monday); 6:30 pm Desserts; 7 pm meeting; Eagles Nest

23rd Leg. District Democrats: GM* Sept 20th (Tuesday); 6:30 pm social time; 7 pm meeting; Poulsbo Library

26th Leg. District Democrats: GM* Oct 6th (Thursday); 7-9 pm; Kitsap Rm, Givens Ctr 1026 Sidney Rd, Pt Orchard

35th Leg. District Democrats: GM* TBA

“As the first woman to be nominated for the highest office in the land, [Hillary Clinton] has had to climb more mountains than Sir Edmund Hillary before the country considered her worthy. Harvard Law. First Lady. U.S. Senator. Secretary of State.” – Nicole Brodeur, The Seattle Times, September 13, 2016

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