I am for keeping the thing going while things are stirring. Because if we wait till it is still, it will take a great while to get it going again. (Sojourner Truth, quoted in Campbell 1989, 252)

Alas, the 300 million pound Women March provides a strong argument for doing away with women’s suffrage. Most of these vagina screechers didn’t vote, but they mean business. Riiiiiiiight. What a farce. (Dathan Paterno, quoted in Stevens 2017)

Since Obamacare and these issues have come up, the women are in my grill no matter where I go. They come up—“When is your next town hall?” And believe me, it’s not to give positive input. (Rep. Dave Brat, quoted in Sganga 2017)

The sentiments of these individuals illustrate the importance of understanding gender differences in public opinion during a time when women’s opinions and activism have
Chapter 1

appeared to experience a resurgence and have also received much media attention. If Sojourner Truth was correct, now is the time for continued activism and for the careful study of public opinion while women’s opinions are salient and while the status quo is being questioned and challenged. The other two quotations highlight the negative reaction to women finding their political voice and to their increased political participation. Dathan Paterno resigned from his school board position after he tweeted this in response to the Women’s March in 2017. His offensive and likely inaccurate comments about women marchers not having voted were highly controversial, placing him in hot water and leading to his resignation (Stevens 2017). The idea that women should lose the right to vote because of differences in opinion is a shocking and ludicrous notion, as well as fundamentally undemocratic. Finally, House representative from Virginia Dave Brat received a lot of attention for his comment about female constituents, but he was not the only member of Congress dealing with a vocal constituency. Women all over the country have been leading the push to keep the Affordable Care Act through their persistence at town hall meetings and their tenacious phone campaigns to the offices of elected officials (Sganga 2017).

It is worthwhile to understand whether the women participating in these marches or requesting town halls of their members of Congress are unique. Or if women in general differ from men in their opinions, which would mean that women marchers and women at town hall meetings are indicative of a larger phenomenon. Moreover, investigating why gender differences exist on certain political issues is also of interest and relevant, particularly during this time of increased activism among women and an upsurge in the number of women running for elected office. Although the factors that lead an individual to possess certain opinions about government and public policy are wide-ranging and multifaceted, I find that gender strongly influences these attitudes. What is more, gender differences in values, such as caring about the well-being of others, helping other people, and ensuring
equal rights, are integral to understanding the origins of gender differences on an array of public policies.

There are several areas of research in American politics referred to as gender gaps. First, gender difference in vote choice, in which women are more likely than men to vote for Democratic candidates, is a gender gap (Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2008a). A gender gap in vote choice emerged in the 2016 presidential election, with 54 percent of women and 41 percent of men voting for Hillary Clinton, the Democratic Party nominee (Center for American Women and Politics 2017). This equates to a 13 percentage point gap. Second, gender difference in party identification, in which women are more likely than men to identify with the Democratic Party, is a gender gap (Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2008a). For example, a 9 percentage point gap in identification with the Democratic Party was found in April 2014, with 36 percent of women, compared to 27 percent of men, identifying as Democrats (Center for American Women and Politics 2014). Third, gender difference in voter turnout, in which women are more likely than men to turn out to vote, particularly in presidential elections, is a gender gap. In 2012, 63.3 percent of eligible women voted, and 59.3 percent of eligible men voted (Center for American Women and Politics 2019). Fourth, gender differences in other forms of participation, in which men are more likely to donate to and volunteer for political campaigns, are also gender gaps. Fifth, gender differences in political knowledge, interest in politics, political efficacy, and political awareness are gender gaps (Lay 2012; Lizotte and Sidman 2009; Verba, Burns, and Schlozman 1997). Compared to men, women have somewhat consistently been found to have lower levels of political knowledge by the most frequent method of measurement, as well as lower levels of awareness, interest, and efficacy (Lay 2012; Lizotte and Sidman 2009; Verba, Burns, and Schlozman 1997).

Last, gender differences in public opinion, in which women on average hold more liberal views than men on a number of issues,
are gender gaps (Norrander 2008). For example, one poll finds a 21 percentage point gap on gun control, with 48 percent of women and 27 percent of men wanting major restrictions on owning guns; another poll finds a 4 percentage point gap in support of government action to reduce the wealth gap, with 54 percent of women, compared to 50 percent of men, supporting such action (Center for American Women and Politics 2012). In addition, women are more likely to support increased government spending for the poor, are more likely to support gay rights, are less likely to support the use of force, and are more likely to support a greater role for government (Carroll 2006; Center for American Women and Politics 2012; Lizotte 2017a; Norrander 2008; Sapiro 2002). Policy gaps are discussed in greater depth later in this chapter.

Gender gaps in public opinion matter. Research demonstrates that gender differences in issue positions contribute to the gender gap in voting (Chaney, Alvarez, and Nagler 1998; C. Clark and J. Clark 2009; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999). Which issues are salient during a particular campaign also affects the size of gender differences in voting (Ondercin and Bernstein 2007). For three elections, in a statistical simulation in which men’s issue preferences are given to women, there is a substantial decrease of the gender gap in vote choice (Chaney, Alvarez, and Nagler 1998). Support for government spending for the poor was more influential for women’s vote than for men’s vote in the 2004 election (C. Clark and J. Clark 2009). Moreover, Karen Kaufmann and John Petrocik (1999) find evidence that controlling for gender gaps on social issues and social welfare spending reduced the party identification gap to –0.2 percent from 9 percent in 1992 and to 4 percent from 14 percent in 1996. This means that during a particular election, if an issue on which there is a gender gap becomes salient, we would expect to see an electoral advantage for one political party and that party’s candidates among women voters.

In a democracy, the public’s opinions toward policy alternatives should matter. Individuals’ preferences on government spending, actions, and regulations should influence elected of-
ficials and all other policy actors in the policy-making process. In a representative democracy, those elected and the government overall are supposed to represent the people and pursue policies that are in the people’s interests. Encouragingly, the extant literature provides support that public opinion does influence policy makers. Public opinion, generally, is politically consequential. For example, shifts in opinion shape policy makers’ decisions (Page and Shapiro 1983; Zaller 1992). Policy makers, presidential administrations, and other elected officials often seek public support for their policy agendas, necessitating successful public appeals. Public officials take public opinion into consideration and attempt to influence public opinion when there is opposition to their policy goals (Powlick 1991). Elections should ensure that elected officials are responsive to the people. Women are more than 50 percent of the population, making gender differences in public opinion of particular interest because women are more likely to turn out to vote than men (Center for American Women and Politics 2019). Thus, the origins of gender differences in public opinion deserve research attention.

Despite the significant influence of gender on public opinion, there is a conspicuous dearth of theoretically driven empirical research on why so many gender gaps on such varied policy areas exist. Prior work on gender and public opinion takes a more piecemeal approach. To date, the issue gap literature focuses on gender differences on individual issues rather than investigating multiple gaps. This method does not provide an overarching theory for why a number of gaps exist. My approach examines the emergence of gender differences in several policy areas, providing an overarching and broad theoretical framework for understanding the existence of many issue gaps.

This book is distinctive in four ways. First, it thoroughly investigates gender differences in public opinion through a careful analysis of public opinion on several policy areas where gender gaps emerge. Second, it provides a comprehensive explanatory approach to understanding multiple gaps in policy preferences, analyzing how value differences elucidate why many gaps emerge.
Third, I examine the political consequences of gender differences in public opinion, exploring how the different gender gaps have influenced the party identification and presidential vote choice of men and women. Fourth, the book contributes to several areas of research, including the study of public opinion, voter behavior, partisanship, women and politics, and political psychology.

In sum, this book attempts to fill the void in the literature by exploring in depth the role of gender in public opinion. I examine the factors that lead to certain positions on public policies, including opinions on governmental use of force both domestically and internationally, concern about environmental protections, attitudes regarding historically disadvantaged groups, and support for social welfare programs and spending. I seek to understand why women and men on average possess different policy positions even when taking into account other relevant factors such as education, class, race, income, and even party identification. Specifically, I investigate how values, such as egalitarianism, universalism, and benevolence, contribute to these various issue gaps. The analysis heavily relies on American National Election Study (ANES) data to lay bare these gender differences in opinion and the role of values in explaining these differences.

From a broader perspective, this research extends the understanding of public opinion on these policy areas, as well as provides evidence on the extent to which these gender gaps are the result of differences in values. This research also contributes to a better understanding of how appeals to different values can garner more support from women on public policy. I hope the analysis will advance political scientists’ understanding of the gender gap and the importance of values when examining the public’s attitudes toward these issues. At its core, this book is about how values influence public opinion, producing politically consequential gender differences.

In the following section, I summarize the existing literature on gender differences in public opinion. Gender gaps are present in many issue areas but do not materialize for all policies. The following section briefly discusses a number of established gaps.
Later chapters provide a more detailed discussion of each of these areas of public policy and the gender differences that exist.

**Gender Differences in Issue Positions**

First, for the sake of clarity, I employ the term *gender gap* because that is the established terminology used to refer to differences in opinions, voting, and party identification between women and men (Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2008a). Additionally, women’s lived experiences clearly vary but are also indistinguishably affected by society’s practice of assigning gender and the corresponding stereotype expectations (Kessler and McKenna 1978). Analysis of Canadian data reveals that sex approximates gender identity well for all but about a quarter of the sample (Bittner and Goodyear-Grant 2017). The theoretical approach of this book to gender differences in public opinion is nonessentialist, meaning that these gender gaps are not the result of foundational differences between men and women. The various gender gaps in policy preferences are sizeable; however, they are not large enough to indicate that all women differ from men.

**Force Issues**

One of the larger gaps, on average 8–12 percentage points, emerges for international force issues; women are consistently less supportive than men of military interventions (Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2008a; Norrander 2008). The gap on international force issues is particularly relevant to policy makers and political candidates in this post-9/11 era. The United States’ role in the world, including in international disputes, is a vital one. Continued unrest in the Middle East, conflicts in Africa, threats of nuclear armament in North Korea, and the potential for sustained Russian aggression toward its neighbors, the United States, and Europe means that public opinion regarding foreign policy and the international use of force is of considerable interest. Hence, the gender gap on these attitudes is worthy of attention.
Prior work established a gender gap in support for intervention during World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, Afghanistan, and the Iraq War (Conover and Sapiro 1993; Huddy, Feldman, Taber, and Lahav 2005; Huddy, Feldman, and Cassese 2009; Shapiro and Mahajan 1986). Women report being generally less likely to favor the use of force to solve international problems (Norrander 2008). For the duration of the Cold War, researchers found that women were less favorable toward nuclear armament, and women were more anxious than men about the possibility of nuclear war (Bendyna et al. 1996; Gwartney-Gibbs and Lach 1991). In addition, analysis of data from 1980 to 2000 finds that women are less likely to support increased defense spending in comparison to men (Norrander 2008). Gender differences in foreign policy attitudes extend to perspectives on military strategies. For example, women are more favorable toward air strikes rather than strategies that include a commitment of troops on the ground (Eichenberg 2003).

A gap also exists for domestic force issues. Women are less supportive of the death penalty and more supportive of gun control (Howell and Day 2000; Whitehead and Blankenship 2000). The death penalty and gun control continue to be controversial and salient issues in American politics. Questions regarding the effectiveness and the morality of the death penalty arise each time an execution takes place. Advocates of increased regulations on the sale of guns and the banning of particular guns surface each time a mass shooting occurs. The public’s opinions and the gender gaps on these issues are for that reason very important. Women are less likely than men to support the death penalty (Cochran and Sanders 2009; Kutateladze and Crossman 2009; Stack 2000; Whitehead and Blankenship 2000; for an exception to this finding, see Unnever, Cullen, and Roberts 2005). Women are also less likely to support police violence (Halim and Stiles 2001) or harsh punishment for criminals (Hurwitz and Smithey 1998).

A considerable amount of research has established a gender gap on gun control, with women more supportive of regulations
than men (Celinska 2007; Erskine 1972; Haider-Markel and Joslyn 2001; Howell and Day 2000; Shapiro and Mahajan 1986; Wolpert and Gimpel 1998). Some of this research focuses on the gender gap (Howell and Day 2000; Shapiro and Mahajan 1986), while other studies include gender as a control variable (Celinska 2007; Haider-Markel and Joslyn 2001). As early as 1964, a gap of 14 percentage points on gun control issues existed (Erskine 1972). In a 1981 Gallup poll, women were more supportive of stricter gun sale laws by 19 percentage points (Shapiro and Mahajan 1986). Women are also more supportive of requiring a permit to buy a gun (Brennan, Lizotte, and McDowall 1993). Finally, prior research finds that women are more supportive of a handgun ban (Kleck, Gertz, and Bratton 2009).

**Social Welfare Issues**

Similar in size to force issues, the gender gap on social welfare policies is well established. Social welfare issues can include support for various types of government spending, such as Social Security, the homeless, welfare, food stamps, childcare, and public schools (J. Clark and C. Clark 1993; C. Clark and J. Clark 1996; Cook and Wilcox 1995). Others have also included support for government provision of health insurance (J. Clark and C. Clark 1993; C. Clark and J. Clark 1996; Howell and Day 2000), support for a government-guaranteed standard of living, support for an increase in government services (J. Clark and C. Clark 1993; C. Clark and J. Clark 1996; Howell and Day 2000; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999), support for government aid to black people or minorities (J. Clark and C. Clark 1993; C. Clark and J. Clark 1996; Cook and Wilcox 1995; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999), and support for government spending on the poor (J. Clark and C. Clark 1993; C. Clark and J. Clark 1996; Cook and Wilcox 1995; Howell and Day 2000; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999). These issues raise central ideological differences between left- and right-leaning Americans. First, these issues relate
to questions about the size and role of government. Second, these issues prompt debates about the effectiveness of a helping hand versus self-reliance. It is crucial to understand why gender gaps are so sizeable and consistent on these issues.

Women are consistently more liberal on these issues in that they are more likely to support greater government spending on social welfare (Goertzel 1983; Howell and Day 2000; Kaufmann 2004; Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999; Schlesinger and Heldman 2001; Shapiro and Mahajan 1986; Shirazi and Biel 2005). Women are more likely to support government policies intended to provide for the general welfare and aimed at helping the less fortunate (Howell and Day 2000; Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2008a; Norrander 2008). Of course, this means that by and large, men are more conservative than women on social welfare spending (Kaufmann, Petrocik, and Shaw 2008). Analysis of social welfare questions as a scale or as individual items, including support for government spending on food stamps, Social Security, the homeless, welfare, public schools, childcare, and the poor, typically reveals statistically significant gender gaps (Howell and Day 2000; Fox and Oxley 2016; Sapiro 2002). Women are also more supportive of increased government involvement in healthcare policy, including being more favorable than men toward the Affordable Care Act (Howell and Day 2000; Lizotte 2016b). In other words, women are consistently more likely than men to support policies that provide for the disadvantaged.

Recently, this gap has averaged close to 10 percentage points (Norrander 2008). Gender differences on the issue of social welfare vary in size, depending on what particular aspect of social welfare is being studied. The gap ranges from 4 to 5 percentage points for issues such as government help to minorities, government-funded health insurance, and government-guaranteed jobs (J. Clark and C. Clark 1993; C. Clark and J. Clark 1996). The differences are much larger, up to 14 or 15 percentage points, for support of increased Social Security spending (J. Clark and C. Clark 1993; C. Clark and J. Clark 1996; Cook and Wilcox 1995). For the issues of spending for the poor, welfare, food
stamps, and the homeless, the mean differences tend to be between 4 and 7 percentage points (Kaufmann and Petrocik 1999).

**Environmental Issues**

Compared to force issues or social welfare policies, the gap on environmental issues is smaller in size (Norrander 2008). Previous research shows significant gender differences in environmental policy preferences. I would argue that environmental issues are one of the most pressing of our time. The potential for severe and widespread effects of climate change render it of paramount consequence to understand public opinion in this policy area, including the origins of gender differences. Women tend to report greater environmental concern (Mohai 1992). Gender differences emerge on the use of nuclear power and concern for environmental contamination as a result of nuclear waste disposal (Davidson and Freudenburg 1996). Women are more likely than men to express concern about pollution (Blocker and Eckberg 1997). There is a gender gap on climate change attitudes, with women more likely to express concern (Bord and O’Connor 1997). For example, women are significantly more likely to agree that climate change will result in coastal flooding as the result of sea levels rising, will cause droughts, and will result in an increase in natural disasters such as hurricanes (Bord and O’Connor 1997). In more recent data, the results are similar, with a 5 percentage point gap on believing that the effects of global warming have already begun, an 8 percentage point gap on believing that human behavior is causing global warming, and a 6 percentage point gap on agreeing that most scientists believe global warming is occurring (McCright 2010).

**Equal Rights**

Last, gaps on equal rights are among the smallest gaps (Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2008a; Norrander 2008). With respect to equal rights, the size of the gap depends on the group about whose
rights are being asked. First, there are gender differences on support for gay rights. Although marriage equality is now the law of the land, the LGBTQ community is seeking other rights, such as employment rights, making this an area of continued importance to policy makers and pollsters. Women are more supportive of gay adoption rights, the right to serve in the military, and employment protections (Brewer 2003; Herek 2002a; Stoutenborough, Haider-Markel, and Allen 2006; Wilcox and Wolpert 2000). Men have more negative and hostile attitudes than women toward the LGBTQ community (Herek 1988; LaMar and Kite 1998; Mata, Ghavami, and Wittig 2010). Women are more likely to support equal rights and same-sex marriage (Haider-Markel and Joslyn 2008; Olson, Cadge, and Harrison 2006). Similarly, a gender gap in attitudes toward civil unions persists (Haider-Markel and Joslyn 2008; Olson, Cadge, and Harrison 2006).

Overall, the results with regard to gender differences in racial attitudes and race-related policy positions indicate a moderately consistent gap. The ongoing Black Lives Matter movement highlights the relevance and importance of understanding public opinion and gender differences on race-related policies. Women are more supportive of fair treatment in job practices for black people, including preferential hiring and promotion, are more favorable toward a greater government role in school integration, and are more positive toward affirmative action (Howell and Day 2000; Hughes and Tuch 2003). For example, Michael Hughes and Steven Tuch (2003), using the American National Election Study and the General Social Survey data, find that white women are significantly less likely than white men to report being against living in a racially mixed neighborhood, but these researchers fail to find gender differences for attitudes toward segregated neighborhoods or for feelings of closeness to black people. Susan Howell and Christine Day (2000) found women to be more liberal in their racial attitudes, which included perceptions of black people as trustworthy, intelligent, and hardworking.

In general, the magnitude of differences varies depending on the questions asked. Kaufmann and Petrocik (1999) found a 4–5
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A percentage point mean difference, with women more supportive of spending on programs to help black people. Others also find that a difference of 4 percent exists on spending for blacks (C. Clark and J. Clark 1996). For support of affirmative action, in terms of jobs, the difference varies from 4 percent to 6 percent, while support for education quotas results in a 7–9 percent difference (J. Clark and C. Clark 1993; C. Clark and J. Clark 1996; Cook and Wilcox 1995).

Gender differences also appear, though small, on the issue of equal rights for women. This issue is often considered alongside other policy questions referred to as women’s issues. Generally, few gender differences exist in public opinion on women’s issues. Depending on the issues, some gender differences are consistent, while others are not. With the Women’s March following the inauguration of Donald Trump, it is possible that the women’s movement is experiencing a resurgence and/or entering a new stage. Accordingly, the public’s preferences on these issues, including whether a gender gap exists, are of substantial interest.

The term women’s issues is fraught with a lack of clarity. Researchers have proposed different definitions, including issues that have a particular and more direct effect on women, such as equal rights and affirmative action policies. Men and women do not appear to consistently differ on their attitudes toward women’s rights, such as support for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA; Mansbridge 1985). Specifically, only a small public opinion gap of 3.7 percent exists in support for the Equal Rights Amendment, and positions on the ERA were not the driving force behind the gender gap in voting (Mansbridge 1985). For affirmative action policies directed at helping women attain better jobs and admission into institutions of higher education, there are sizeable gender differences of more than 10 percentage points (Steuernagel, Ahern, and Conway 1997). In sum, with respect to equal rights, gender differences tend to be small and do not always reach statistical significance (Chaney et al. 1998; Huddy, Cassese, and Lizotte 2008a; Mansbridge 1985; Shapiro and Mahajan 1986), but there are exceptions.
Other issues that may be categorized as women’s issues, such as sexual harassment and abortion, have been understudied or have not been found to produce a large gender gap. Women are more likely to state that sexual harassment is an important issue, with a difference of 13 percent (C. Clark and J. Clark 1996; Cook and Wilcox 1995). Abortion attitudes provide another example of the absence of anticipated gender differences. There are few gender differences in support for legalized abortion in the United States (C. Clark and J. Clark 1996; Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox 1992; Cook and Wilcox 1995; Scott 1989; Strickler and Danigelis 2002). And when differences emerge, men are sometimes more supportive than women of reproductive rights by a few percentage points (J. Clark and C. Clark 1993; Shapiro and Mahajan 1986), although a few studies find that women are more supportive than men after controlling for religiosity (Combs and Welch 1982; Jelen and Wilcox 2005). Ultimately, on abortion, it is somewhat unclear if a gender gap exists because, depending on the other variables included in the statistical model, sometimes a small and significant gender gap appears, and sometimes one does not (Lizotte 2015). Connectedly, a large gender gap does not seem to exist on the issue of the Affordable Care Act birth control mandate, which requires all health insurance policies to cover artificial birth control (Deckman and McTague 2015).

Many researchers have argued that public opinion on women’s issues does not contribute to the gender gap in voting (Gilens 1988; Lizotte 2016a; Mattei 2000). In the 2012 presidential election, though, attitudes toward the birth control mandate were more predictive of women’s vote choice than men’s (Deckman and McTague 2015). Therefore, not only is there a lack of consistent difference, but any differences that do exist do not always appear to contribute to the gap in voting. Because of the Women’s March, however, we might see an increase in the electoral importance of these issues. Relatedly, during the #MeToo era, American society may find that issues such as sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other forms of mistreatment or violence against women will pro-
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duce more sizeable and politically consequential gender gaps. In addition, the continued wave of stricter abortion regulations across several states, which was deemed the War on Women during the 2012 presidential election and continued after Justice Brett Kavanaugh’s placement on the Supreme Court, may lead to greater salience and electoral consequence for reproductive rights. Because of data or space constraints, I unfortunately do not include an analysis of sexual harassment or reproductive rights in this book.

Conclusion

As discussed at the outset of this chapter, public opinion—in particular gender differences in issue positions—is of great importance and political consequence. Now is especially a time of great interest in the gender gap in public opinion, given the Women’s March, multistate teacher walkouts and protests, and women’s involvement in the fight against repealing the Affordable Care Act. Women are finding their political voice in a heightened way compared to the past thirty years or so. Hence, knowing how women differ in their policy positions from men is of political and scholarly significance. During this time of increased activism, understanding the causes of the public’s policy positions is of considerable interest to political parties, pundits, candidates, pollsters, and the media.

In conclusion, gender differences in public opinion emerge for several important and politically consequential policy areas. Because women consistently differ from men in their political attitudes and are recently more likely to vote, these gender differences in public opinion are of considerable interest to scholars and pollsters. Average differences in core values between men and women, particularly on pro-social values, are a largely untested explanation for these gender differences. Understanding gender differences in public support for policies will provide insight into general support for such policies, as well as an understanding of how to appeal to men and women on these matters. Moreover,
these gender gaps have the potential to have important political consequences for partisanship and elections.

Organization of the Book

In Chapter 2, I outline the theoretical underpinnings of the empirical investigations in subsequent chapters. The chapter provides an overview of existing explanations found in the literature on gender gaps in public opinion. I discuss four previously researched explanations, including feminist consciousness, professional and economically independent women, economically struggling women, and social role theory. Then I introduce a novel and, for the most part, previously untested explanation: values. Ample evidence shows that men and women differ in their value endorsements, which I contend is the reason for many of the gender gaps in public opinion. Relevantly, there are gender differences in pro-social values, including humanitarianism, universalism, benevolence, and egalitarianism. These values measure support for individuals, as well as society, ensuring equality, promoting social justice, and caring for close others.

Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 investigate the efficacy of the values explanation for different broad areas of public opinion where gender gaps emerge. Each of these chapters relies heavily on 1980–2012 American National Election Study Data (ANES) cumulative data.1 The ANES is an established data set with a nationally representative sample that has been widely used in previous studies of the gender gap in issue preferences, party identification, and voting. At times, other data, including those of the 2011 World Values Survey2 and the 2016 ANES, supplement the cumulative ANES analysis.

Chapter 3 specifically looks at domestic and international force issues. As noted previously, women are more likely than

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1. ANES data are available at http://www.electionstudies.org.
men to support gun control and oppose the death penalty, while men are more likely than women to support military interventions rather than diplomacy to deal with international disputes. The gender gap on force issues is one of the largest gaps, according to the extant literature. I find that differential value endorsement elucidates the existence of gender gaps on force issues. These findings provide insight for policy makers and activists interested in garnering support for force policies.

In Chapter 4, I consider the gender gap in environmental attitudes. As discussed previously, women are more likely than men to express concern about the environment and endorse greater government involvement to protect the environment. This is a timely issue, as public debates about the consequences of climate change have garnered a great deal of media attention in the United States. I find that value differences help illuminate why these gender differences in environmental attitudes exist. The pro-social values hypothesis could provide an avenue for acquiring more support for future environmental policies that have the possibility of improving the living conditions of all Americans.

Chapter 5 examines gender differences in attitudes toward various historically disadvantaged groups, including gay men and lesbians, African Americans, and women. The chapter demonstrates how women’s greater endorsement of egalitarianism leads to increased support for rights for historically disadvantaged groups. For social movements, both present and future, these results suggest a pathway for increasing public support by emphasizing equality in their messaging and public appeals.

The focus of Chapter 6 is women’s greater support for a social safety net. According to the literature, the gap on social welfare issues is the other largest gap besides force issues. As noted earlier, women are more likely than men to support government spending to help the less fortunate and other government programs to provide for the public’s general welfare. Chapter 6 investigates how women’s greater endorsement of egalitarianism results in differential support for social programs that make up the welfare state.
Chapter 7 provides a summary of the findings and their implications, including an analysis and discussion of the political consequences of these gender gaps. The chapter includes an examination of how the gender gaps in public opinion analyzed in prior chapters affect the gender gaps in party identification and presidential vote choice. In this final chapter, I also discuss how the findings underscore the central role of values in understanding public opinion. Moreover, I highlight that this research underscores the ways in which the political parties, social movements, interest groups, and political candidates can appeal to men and women through emphasizing how policies align with certain values. Finally, I suggest some avenues for future research on gender gaps in public opinion.