Michelle Obama:
A Contemporary Analysis of Race and Gender Discrimination through the Lens of Title VII

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“Meet the new political wife. She has a career; she has opinions — a partner in every way. And now, she’s become controversial.”

– Ted Koppel1

I. INTRODUCTION

The 2008 presidential campaign is historic given the presence of a Black candidate (Barack Obama) and a woman candidate (Hillary Clinton). Not only is it historic that Americans had a real opportunity to elect the first Black or woman president, it is also the first time that Americans are faced with the prospect of having a Black First Lady — Michelle Obama. As such, the presidential campaign provides a useful context in which to analyze how race and gender attitudes influence voting behavior.2 Even Senator Clinton analogized the 2008 presidential election campaign to a hiring decision in the employment context.3 Underlying this analogy is the

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The authors thank Rebecca Soquier for her tireless work editing and BlueBooking this article. We also thank Jeffrey J. Rachlinski for his input on early drafts of this article. All errors are the authors’.

* Although the 2008 Presidential election has passed, this article continues to uses “Senator Obama” when referring to now President-elect Obama as this analysis is focused on his candidacy, not his actions as or society’s perception of him as President-elect. – Eds.

notion that voters stand in the shoes of employers, and candidates stand in the shoes of prospective employees. Thus, the same principles and modes of analysis that apply to employment discrimination may apply to voting behavior. If it is apropos to analogize elections to hiring decisions, new frontiers in employment discrimination law that involve the intersection of race and gender, the role of implicit bias, and third-party associative discrimination are implicated. In essence, the Title VII framework provides a template for how certain aspects of the 2008 Presidential election can be understood. Here, we focus on the role of Michelle Obama.

If voters harbored race stereotypes and biases about Senator Obama, and if voters harbored gender stereotypes and biases about Senator Clinton during her campaign, then it is reasonable to believe that both types of preconceptions may have influenced voters’ perceptions about Mrs. Obama. Some researchers have proposed models that describe the role of First Ladies. Gladys Lang offered a model of status based upon a woman’s relationship with her spouse. According to that model, women may possess one of the following types of status: 1) satellite status, which implies that a woman defines herself through her spouse and possesses no independent ideas; 2) sponsored status, which implies that a woman achieves recognition by her relationship with a prominent spouse; or 3) autonomous status, which implies that a woman’s conferred recognition is based on her own ideas and actions independent of her spouse. Watson presents a similar typology (specific to First Ladies) categorizing the wives on a continuum from non-partners to full partners based on their relationships with their husbands. He argues that only Eleanor Roosevelt, Rosalyn Carter, and Hillary Clinton, have achieved full partnership based on their professionalization, integration into the political agenda, and activism.


5. See Section III infra on Implicit Bias and Voter/Employment Discrimination.


7. See HEARTH AND HOME: IMAGES OF WOMEN IN THE MASS MEDIA (Gaye Tuchman et al. eds., 1978).


10. Watson, supra note 9, at 6.
acclaim for their knowledge of, and involvement in, the political agenda, these women have also received the most criticism for their roles as “co-presidents.”11 That is, until now.

Michelle Obama, wife of President-elect, Senator Barack Obama, contravenes conventional stereotypes of presidential candidates’ wives. First, she has been direct and plain spoken — described as “tough, and even a little steely.”12 In February of 2008, Republicans branded her as unpatriotic.13 The critique stemmed from her comment during a discussion of the level of political engagement she was witnessing among Americans: “For the first time in my adult lifetime, I am really proud of my country.”14 Second, when asked about what role she saw for herself as the potential First Lady, she noted that work-family balance would be one of her top priorities.15 This is not surprising given that she seems concerned about empowering women. Speaking of that broader concern, during a speech she gave in Las Vegas, she noted, “We sat back too long, suffering in silence, avoiding these challenges. We can’t do that any longer. We need a man,” stopping to correct herself, “a person who happens to be a man, who is ready to help us turn the page to bring a new conversation to the table, to change the lives of women and children across America.”16

Mrs. Obama also was not shy about expressing her views on race issues. At Princeton, Mrs. Obama was interested in social change and ran a literacy program for local neighborhood children.17 She also wrote her senior sociology thesis on “Princeton-Educated Blacks and the Black Community.”18 In it she wrote, “[Princeton] made me far more aware of my ‘blackness’ than ever before.”19 She went on to write, “Regardless of the circumstances under which I interact with Whites at Princeton it often seems as if, to them, I will always be Black first and a student second.”20 As a student at Harvard Law School, she protested that institution’s paucity of minority students and professors.21 On the campaign trail, she noted her awareness that some voters were concerned about Senator Obama’s

11. G.D. Wekkin, Role Constraints and First Ladies, 37 SOC. SCI. J. 601-10 (2000); Gil Troy, Mr. & Mrs. President? The Rise and Fall of the Co-Presidency, 37 SOC. SCI. J. 591-600 (2000).
14. Wangsness, supra note 13, at B1 (Mrs. Obama later clearly indicated that what she meant was that she was “proud of this country, and I’m proud of the fact that people are ready to roll up their sleeves and do something phenomenal.”).
17. Wolffe, supra note 12, at 5.
18. Id.
19. Id.
20. Id.
21. Id.
electability due to his race. In response, she was more than willing to draw parallels between Senator Obama’s candidacy and Black freedom fighters of the past. She also was quite willing to indicate that such hesitance is “the bitter legacy of racism and discrimination and oppression in this country.”

Mrs. Obama is an ardent supporter and fierce defender of her husband. After one of his debates, she called his campaign team and bluntly made her concerns clear. She indicated that Senator Clinton had packed the crowd with her supporters, and that as a result, Senator Obama had been booed whenever he criticized Senator Clinton. She told Senator Obama’s aides that she did not want that to happen again. One senior Obama aide who attended the meeting described the incident as one of “a spouse saying, ‘Do not do this to my husband again.’”

Despite her support for her husband, Mrs. Obama is no “traditional Stepford booster, smiling vacantly at her husband and sticking to a script of carefully vetted blandishments.” She was, in her words, making sure Senator Obama was “keeping it real.” She did this by holding him accountable for his responsibilities, even the most mundane, as a husband and father. For instance, she insisted that Senator Obama return to Chicago despite being on the campaign trail to attend his daughters’ ballet recitals and parent-teacher conferences. Additionally, she has poked fun at her husband — commenting on his snoring, morning breath, failure to put his socks in the hamper, and leaving the butter out after breakfast. When introduced at a speech in Wisconsin, the woman who introduced Michelle accidentally said she was “honored to introduce the next president!” Mrs. Obama stepped to the podium with a big smile and told the crowd, “I like that promotion that I got. I don’t know if Barack knows yet. We can announce it on the news tonight. He’s going to be the First Lady.” Her tactic, in her words, was to humanize her husband for the public, so when he turns out not to be perfect, they will not be disappointed. Ultimately she scaled back such comments, realizing that some supporters believed her comments were emasculating.

In addition to her outspokenness, Mrs. Obama’s educational and

23. Margaret Talev, Obama’s Wife Reaches Out to Black Women, CHARLOTTE OBSERVER, Nov. 22, 2007, at 7A.
24. Wolffe, supra note 12, at 33.
25. Id.
26. Id.
27. Id.
29. Wolffe, supra note 12, at 29.
31. Id.
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professional background is also notable. She grew up on the South Side of Chicago to working-class parents. She excelled in school, skipping second grade and went on to earn her undergraduate degree from Princeton and a law degree from Harvard. After law school, she practiced law at the Chicago offices of the law firm Sidley Austin and most recently worked as a vice president of Community Relations for the University of Chicago Hospitals. By all accounts, Mrs. Obama is an unconventional spouse to a presidential candidate and will likely be so as First Lady.

Part II of this Article investigates the role that explicit attitudes about race and gender play on voting decisions and the way they intersect in employment decisions. Scholarship from the areas of political science and law illustrate the challenges that Michelle Obama faced as a candidate’s spouse and soon-to-be First Lady. Part III investigates implicit (“unconscious”) race and gender biases and the role they play in behavior, including voting and employment discrimination. Despite the racial progress the United States has made, scholarship from the areas of cognitive and social psychology as well as law illustrate the deep-seated biases Mrs. Obama likely faced and will continue to face. Part IV investigates the role of third-party employment discrimination, where employees (typically White) are discriminated against because of the race of their associates (typically Black). We extrapolate from jurisprudence in this area to make some inferences about how attitudes about Michelle Obama may have worked against her husband’s candidacy for the presidency of the United States. We conclude by exploring why negative attitudes about Mrs. Obama may have dissipated over the course of Senator Obama’s presidential run and the role her presence in the White House will have in de-biasing people— at the implicit level — about Black women.

II. RACE AND GENDER: INTERSECTIONALITY IN EMPLOYMENT AND VOTING DISCRIMINATION

Race and gender are powerful variables that influence people’s decision making and behavior in a variety of contexts. Politics and employment are among them. However, in addition to these variables in isolation, their intersection has multiplicative predictive value.

A. EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

If we assume Senator Clinton’s assessment that elections are like

33. Id.
“hiring decisions,” then voter discrimination becomes an analog of employment discrimination. In this context, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is implicated by the roles of race and gender in the 2008 presidential election. Under Title VII, employers may not discriminate because of — among other factors — race, color, and sex. The landmark cases that provide the litmus test for race and sex discrimination in the workplace are McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Green and Price Waterhouse v. Hopkins, respectively. Under the burden-shifting framework of McDonnell Douglas, a complainant establishes a prima facie case for racial discrimination when he shows that: (i) he is a racial minority; (ii) he applied and was qualified for a job for which the employer was seeking applicants; (iii) despite his qualifications, he was rejected; and (iv) after his rejection, the position remained open and the employer continued to seek applicants with the complainant’s qualifications. If the complainant establishes his prima facie case, the burden then shifts to the employer to articulate a legitimate, nondiscriminatory reason for rejecting the applicant. The employer cannot, however, use the applicant’s conduct as pretext for discrimination nor may the employer engage in racial double-standards. The burden then shifts back to the applicant to demonstrate that the reason proffered by the employer was pretextual — that is, was not the true reason for the employment decision. Rather, the employer’s true motive for rejecting the candidate was discriminatory. This may be done directly by demonstrating that a discriminatory reason more than likely motivated the employer’s decision or indirectly by showing that the employer’s proffered explanation is unworthy of credence. In Price Waterhouse, the Supreme Court found clear signs that some of the company’s partners reacted negatively to a female employee’s personality because she was a woman. Partners described her as “macho,” suggested that she “overcompensated for being a woman,” and advised her to take “a course at charm school.”

34. Acosta, supra note 3.
39. Id. at 802-03.
40. Id. at 804.
41. Id. at 804-805.
44. Id.
Most significant was the statement from one board member as to what the employee needed to do in order to improve her chances to be promoted to partner. He advised her to “walk more femininely, talk more femininely, dress more femininely, wear make-up, have her hair styled, and wear jewelry.” Social psychologist Dr. Susan Fiske, an expert witness, testified “that the partnership selection process at Price Waterhouse was likely influenced by sex stereotyping.” Her testimony focused on the overtly sex-based comments of partners as well as on the gender-neutral remarks made by partners who knew Hopkins only slightly, but were intensely critical of her. According to Fiske, Hopkins’ status as the only woman in the pool of candidates, combined with the subjectivity of the evaluations, made it likely that the sharply critical remarks resulted from sex stereotyping. The Court found that in previous years, other female candidates for partnership were also evaluated in sex-based terms. Those who maintained their femininity were viewed favorably while “women’s lib[er]” was used as a pejorative term for other female employees.

The Court held in Price Waterhouse that sex-stereotyped remarks in the employment setting “do not inevitably prove that gender played a part in a particular employment decision.” The employee “must show that the employer actually relied on her gender in making its decision.” “In making this showing, stereotyped remarks can certainly be evidence that sex played a part.” The Court went on to hold that in a mixed-motive case (where there is both a possible legitimate as well as a discriminatory motive for the employment decision) the employer must show that its legitimate reason, standing alone, would have induced it to make the same decision.

B. VOTING BEHAVIOR

Voting is not always based on rational choice; emotions also play a significant role. William Christ, for example, found that emotional responses to candidates accurately predict voter preferences for more than ninety percent of decided voters and eighty percent of undecided voters.

45. Id.
47. Id.
48. Id.
49. Id. at 235-36.
50. Id. at 236.
51. Id.
52. Id. at 251.
53. Id.
54. Id.
55. Id. at 252.
Most political advertisements are designed to either inspire voter enthusiasm, by motivating their political engagement and loyalty, or induce fear, by stimulating vigilance against the risks some candidates supposedly pose.\(^{58}\) Other research shows that political advertisements that provoke anxiety stimulate attention toward the campaign and discourage reliance on habitual cues for voting; in other words, advertisements of this type can induce crossover voting.\(^{59}\) Likeability also affects voting. One study has shown that disengaged voters who watched entertainment-oriented talk show interviews of Al Gore and George W. Bush were more likely to vote against their party loyalties when they found the crossover candidate likeable.\(^{60}\) As with most decisions, both passion and reason influence voting, so it is no surprise that emotionally evocative concepts like race and gender impact voting.

1. Race and Voting

Race has long held currency among Americans in their determinations of whom to elect to public office. Because Black and White voters typically prefer candidates of their own race in elections where one candidate is Black and the other is White, Black candidates rarely succeed outside of political jurisdictions in which Blacks are a majority of the voters.\(^{61}\)

Experimental research supports the idea that Black candidates face significant hurdles in gaining support from White voters. In one study, Nayda Terkildsen found that given two fictitious candidates described

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61. See Lucius J. Barker et al., *African Americans and the American Political System* 247 (1999); Hanes Walton, Jr. & Robert C. Smith, *American Politics and the African American Quest for Universal Freedom* 178-81 (2000). At the state level, only one of the fifty “elected” state governors is Black (Deval Patrick of Massachusetts); Senator Obama is the only Black member of the U.S. Senate. Up to year the 2000, only four Blacks had ever served in the U.S. Senate, and only two since Reconstruction. *Id.* The House of Representatives is more representative, with nearly ten percent of its members being Black, but this success is attributable to racial gerrymandering of House Districts. In areas dominated by Whites, Black electoral success is rare. This relationship between racial make-up of districts and electability of Blacks has been well-demonstrated. See David A. Bositis, *The Future of Majority-Minority Districts and African-American and Hispanic Legislative Representation*, in *Redistricting and Minority Representation: Learning from the Past, Preparing for the Future* 9-42 (David A. Bostis ed., 1998); Lisa Handley et al., *ELECTING MINORITY-PREFERRED CANDIDATES TO LEGISLATIVE OFFICE: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MINORITY PERCENTAGES IN DISTRICTS AND THE ELECTION OF MINORITY-PREFERRED CANDIDATES*, in *Race and Redistricting in the 1990s* 13-38 (Bernard Grofman ed., 1998).
identically on dimensions other than race, White voters are more likely to vote for the White candidate over either a dark-skinned or light-skinned Black candidate.\footnote{Nayda Terkildsen, \textit{When White Voters Evaluate African-American Candidates: The Processing Implications of Candidate Skin Color, Prejudice, and Self-Monitoring}, 37 \textit{AM. J. POL. SCI.} 1032, 1040 (1993).} Furthermore, racially prejudiced White voters expressed more negative attitudes about Black candidates than less prejudiced White voters.\footnote{Id. at 1043.}

Experimental research by Donald Kinder and David Sears demonstrates the mechanism through which race can influence voting.\footnote{Donald R. Kinder & David O. Sears, \textit{Prejudice and Politics: Symbolic Racism Versus Racial Threats to the Good Life}, 40 \textit{J. PERSONALITY & SOC. PSYCHOL.} 414 (1981).} Kinder and Sears tested competing theories of White prejudice against Blacks — realistic group conflict theory (emphasizing tangible threats that Blacks might pose to Whites’ private lives) and symbolic racism (emphasizing moralistic resentment of Blacks) — as predictors of Whites’ voting behavior. Specifically, they tested these theories in light of the 1969 and 1973 Los Angeles mayoral campaigns in which Thomas Bradley (Black/liberal) and Samuel Yorty (White/conservative) were the candidates.\footnote{Id. at 417.} They found that more prejudiced individuals supported Yorty and that symbolic racism better predicts White voting behavior than group conflict theory.\footnote{Id. at 421-26.}

The success of Black candidates is related to several factors. First, Whites are less likely to engage in racial cross-over voting (in mayoral, city council, or congressional elections) when the incumbent is White.\footnote{Charles S. Bullock, III, \textit{Racial Crossover Voting and the Election of Black Officials}, 46 \textit{J. POL.} 238, 247 (1984).} They are also less likely to vote for Black candidates who run for higher level (i.e., top (city)) positions.\footnote{Id.} Furthermore, Whites are less likely to engage in cross-over voting in general elections or run-off elections.\footnote{Id.} They are also less likely to engage in cross-over voting when the local press does not endorse the Black candidate.\footnote{Id.}

Second, few Blacks vis-à-vis Whites at the community level have a negative impact on Whites’ cross-over voting.\footnote{Thomas M. Carsey, \textit{The Contextual Effects of Race on White Voter Behavior: The 1989 New York City Mayoral Election}, 57 \textit{J. POL.} 221, 225-27 (1995); Lisa C. DeLorenzo et al., \textit{The Impact of Cross-Racial Voting on St. Louis Primary Election Results}, 33 \textit{URB. AFF. REV.} 120, 125-30 (1997).} Presumably, as close...
inter-racial interactions increase, “the probability that [Whites] will adopt political attitudes and behaviors similar to those [Blacks] with whom they interact increases.” Conversely, at the macro-level (e.g., statewide), with more Blacks vis-à-vis Whites, the perception of racial threat provokes negative reactions to Black candidates among Whites. Among the factors that seem to enhance such sentiments are the size of the Black population, the history of race relations in the community, and the salience of racial issues in the campaign.

2. Gender and Voting

Blatant and widespread discrimination among the electorate against female candidates has diminished considerably in recent years. Moreover, compared to race, gender has been a less divisive issue. Some studies have found that voters harbor little bias against women, and in some instances, women candidates may have an advantage over their male counterparts. Once on the ballot, women are as successful as men at being elected into office.

This is not to say that there are no gender divisions among the electorate. Since Ronald Reagan’s first presidential term, a partisan gender gap has existed in national elections; women voters disproportionately favor Democratic candidates, and men generally lean toward Republicans. Furthermore, women voters frequently favor Democratic Party policies. However, this has not led candidates to engage in a gender analogue to race-baiting. The reason for this may be that most successful women politicians are themselves people whose profiles are counter-stereotypical. As such, they do not seem as vulnerable to subtle efforts to invoke stereotypes. And there is no contemporary history of an

72. Carsey, supra note 71, at 223.
73. Id. at 222.
74. V.O. Key, Jr., Southern Politics in State and Nation 5 (Alfred A. Knopf ed., Vintage Books 1949) (indicating that Whites fear maintenance of control over Blacks where Blacks are a large part of the population).
77. Id.
78. Id.
79. See id.
81. Id.
83. See Parks & Rachlinski, supra note 2.
analogous “Bradley Effect” in elections involving women. The Bradley Effect, which has come to define Black politician electoral losses when wins are expected but wins by smaller margins than expected occur, is attributed to White voters lying to pollsters about who they are likely to vote for in elections where one candidate is Black and the other is White. Yet, scholars find that gender stereotyping linked to traditional sex-roles still pervades electoral politics. Experimental research by Leonie Huddy and Nayda Terkildsen, for example, finds that women candidates who demonstrate stereotypically female characteristics are at a great disadvantage. Similarly, voters who prioritize issues such as terrorism, homeland security, and United States involvement in Iraq are more likely to believe that a man would better handle these issues as President. Furthermore, party leaders (who are as much aware of the stereotypes as researchers) focus primarily on finding winning candidates. Party leaders believe there is a greater tendency toward increased uncertainty over a woman’s electability than a man’s.

C. RACE AND GENDER IN THE 2008 CAMPAIGN

Gregory Parks and Jeffrey Rachlinski address the various ways in which race and gender have expressly manifested themselves in the 2008 election. Their research provides a great deal of context and nuance to this issue and connects these forms of bias in the campaign with Title VII case law. Exit polls, however, provide the clearest and most concise indication of race and gender bias.


85. See Patrick Reddy, Does McCall Have a Chance?: Yes, He Does, but African-American Candidates for Top State Offices Face an Uphill Climb, BUFF. NEWS, JAN. 20, 2002, at H1; Jenkins & Melton, supra note 84.

86. Deborah Alexander & Kristi Andersen, Gender as a Factor in the Attributions of Leadership Traits, 46 POLI. RES. Q. 527 (1993); Kathleen A. Dolan, Voting for Women: How the Public Evaluates Women Candidates, 8, 9, 59-67 (2004); Richard Logan Fox, Gender Dynamics in Congressional Elections 173-75 (1997); David Niven, Party Elites and Women Candidates: The Shape of Bias, 19 WOMEN & POL. 57, 75 (1998); Kira Sanbonmatsu, Gender Stereotypes and Vote Choice, 46 AM. J. POL. SCI. 20, 28-30 (2002).


90. Id. at 28-29.

91. Parks & Rachlinski, supra note 2.

92. Id.

93. See app., tbl.1-2.
As illustrated by the accompanying tables, blatant and express racial attitudes played a significant role in the 2008 presidential primary race. Table 1 demonstrates that in twenty-eight out of thirty-seven primaries/caucuses for which we have exit poll data, Whites voted for Senator Clinton in higher numbers than for Senator Obama. Asian and Latino Americans also voted for Senator Clinton in higher numbers in eight out of eleven of those primaries/caucuses. Furthermore, as illustrated in Table 2, where voters indicated that race influenced their voting decisions, a higher percentage of individuals voted for Senator Clinton in sixteen states compared to twelve states for Senator Obama. When we subtract from Senators Clinton’s and Senator Obama’s columns those states that they would likely have won due to their roots there — Arkansas and New York for Clinton and Illinois for Obama — Senator Clinton still benefits. This was most pronounced in West Virginia and Kentucky. Such preference of a White candidate over a Black candidate simply because of race implicates Title VII.

As illustrated in Table 1, in twenty-six out of thirty-seven primaries/caucuses for which we have exit poll data, men voted for Senator Obama in higher numbers than Senator Clinton. As illustrated in Table 2, however, in states where voters indicated that gender was a deciding factor in their decision to cast their votes, only six out of twenty-nine went to Senator Obama. Among these states, one was Illinois, while the other five were states with sizeable Black populations. These results suggest that though gender was a factor in the 2008 presidential primary campaign, it was not as large a factor as race. Openly acknowledged male support for Senator Obama, at least, seems to be complicated by home-state advantage and votes arising from racial solidarity.

These findings are in a sense unremarkable. There is a lingering question that emanates from the 2008 Presidential Primary campaign: Are Americans more racist or more sexist? Despite Gloria Steinem’s assertion that “gender is probably the most restricting force in American

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94. See app., tbl.2.
95. App., tbl.1.
96. Id.
97. App., tbl.2.
98. Id.
99. Id.
100. App., tbl.1.
101. App., tbl.2.
102. Id.
life,” at least in this section, the data suggest that race was more of a driving force. Such findings amplify those of Jeffrey Timberlake and Sarah Estes, who demonstrate that where race and gender are analyzed together — in particular with regard to stereotyping — race provides greater predictive power.

D. INTERSECTIONALITY AND EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

Race and sex are two classifications on which a prima facie case of employment discrimination may be based. Although color is yet another classification for a prima facie showing of employment discrimination, colorism claims (discrimination based upon gradations in skin color) are one example of the more complex race discrimination claims courts face. Racism (including colorism) and sexism are interconnected systems of discrimination and oppression. The juncture at which they intersect provides a fruitful and unique area of discrimination study.

A number of employment discrimination cases have wrangled with the intersection of race and gender, particularly regarding Black women. Some circuits fail to demonstrate an appreciation of this race-gender interaction. For example, in DeGraffenreid v. General Motors Assembly Div., five Black women sued their former employer charging, among other things, that the company’s seniority system and “last hired-first fired” layoff policy was discriminatory. The plaintiffs sought to represent a class of exclusively Black women who were the victims of GM’s alleged discrimination. The Eighth Circuit held that the plaintiffs were not

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105. Gloria Steinem, Op-Ed, Women Are Never Front-Runners, N.Y. TIMES, Jan. 8, 2008, at 23A (“I’m not advocating a competition for who has it the toughest.”).


107. 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(a) (2000). The statutory language expressly provides “[i]t shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer . . . to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.”

108. Id.


110. See Caldwell, supra note 4, at 371-72 (stating, “[r]acism and sexism are mutually-reinforcing components of a system of dominance rooted in patriarchy.”)

111. Id. at 372 (“No significant and lasting progress in combating [racism or sexism] can be made until . . . the perspectives gained from considering their interaction are reflected in legal theory and public policy.”).


113. Id.
allowed to create a “super-remedy” by combining both race and sex discrimination. In *Payne v. Travenol Laboratories, Inc.*, Payne, a Black woman, and several other plaintiffs sued their employer for discrimination based on differential referrals of men and women to certain positions and the absence of Black employees above a certain level. The Fifth Circuit held that the interests of the Black women plaintiffs conflicted with those of Black men, since the plaintiffs attempted to prove that men were promoted at women’s expense despite the court’s finding of racial discrimination. In *Moore v. Hughes Helicopter, Inc.*, Moore, a Black woman, filed suit on behalf of a class of Black women employees alleging discrimination in the selection of employees for various labor grades and positions. The Ninth Circuit upheld a district court decision refusing to allow Moore to represent either White women employees or Black male employees. The Court of Appeals agreed with the lower court that Moore was an inadequate representative of white women employees, not because she did not claim sex discrimination, but rather because she was also Black. Similarly, Moore was not allowed to represent Black male employees, not because she did not allege race discrimination but because she was also a woman.

Other circuits, however, have acknowledged the realities of intersectionality. In *Jenkins v. Blue Cross Mutual Hospital Insurance, Inc.*, Jenkins, a Black woman, sued her employer on her own behalf and on behalf of a class. The suit alleged denial of promotion, better assignments, and ultimately termination for “race, sex, and black styles of hair and dress.” After relying on *Vuyanich v. Republic National Bank*, the Seventh Circuit held that the plaintiff was eligible to represent a class of Blacks and women.

In *Jefferies v. Harris County Community Action Assoc.*, Jefferies, a Black woman, sued her employer on the grounds that during the nearly four

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115. *Payne v. Travenol Lab., Inc.*, 673 F.2d 798, 805 (5th Cir. 1982).
116. *Id.* at 810-12.
118. *Id.* at 480.
119. *Id.*
120. *Id.*
122. *Id.*
123. *Vuyanich v. Republic National Bank*, 409 F. Supp 1083, 1089 (N.D. Tex. 1976) (holding that the plaintiff could sue on race and gender inasmuch as her superior told her that she (a Black woman) “probably did not need a job anyway, because her husband was a Caucasian,” since that statement discriminated against both Blacks and women, as it could not be made to either a white person or a male).
124. *Jenkins*, 538 F.2d at 169.
years she was employed, she failed to receive any promotions. When she applied for a field representative position during her fourth year with the company, a Black man was promoted over her. In looking to the specific language of Title VII, the Fifth Circuit construed “or” to imply congressional “intent to prohibit employment discrimination based on any or all of the listed characteristics.”

E. THE RACE/GENDER Nexus And Michelle Obama

Political science and legal scholarship illustrates two important challenges for Michelle Obama. With regard to gender, a significant challenge for Mrs. Obama is to not wield too much power or influence. As much progress as women have made in electoral politics, the role of First Lady has evolved more slowly. Historically, First Ladies have served conventional roles. Not only did they serve as the official hosts to the White House, they also reached out to women during their husbands’ campaigns. In addition, they served as a liaison between the White House and women’s organizations and promoted the administration’s women-oriented programs and policies. However, First Ladies are now faced with the paradox of traditional, aristocratic demands that they act like “ladies” and more modern demands that they be models of social concern and actively involved in the political agenda. Failure to conform to these constrained gender roles incites critical media reaction. In other words, the more politically active the First Lady, the more negative press coverage she receives. Being outspoken and recognized for her critical role in her husband’s campaign, voter attitudes towards Michelle Obama were likely influenced by gender.

With regard to race, Mrs. Obama may be perceived as “too Black.”

125. Jeffries v. Harris County Cmty. Action Ass’n, 615 F.2d 1025, 1029 (5th Cir. 1980).
126. Jeffries, 615 F.2d at 1029.
127. 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(a) (2000). Title VII provides a remedy against employment discrimination based upon an employee’s “race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.” (emphasis added by authors).
128. Jeffries, 615 F.2d at 1032.
132. See id. at 137-218.
133. See id. at 219-63.
134. See Wekin, supra note 11, at 601-08.
To some degree, this idea may be taken literally. People have long held more negative attitudes towards darker-skinned Blacks vis-à-vis those who are fairer-skinned.\(^{137}\) For instance, light-skinned Blacks are perceived as more attractive than dark-skinned Blacks, which is particularly true in the case of Black women.\(^{138}\) As such, Black women’s closer approximation to Whiteness is deemed to be a particularly feminine characteristic among Blacks\(^{139}\) and may be so among Whites as well. Similarly, intersectionality affects Whites’ perception process, which leads to gender categorization errors for Black women.\(^{140}\) Consequently, “Blackness” and “maleness” are highly associated for Black men and women.\(^{141}\) Furthermore, women are deemed as unattractive commensurate with their perceived masculinity, leading Whites to rate Black women as less attractive than other women.\(^{142}\)

More fitting, however, is a less literal and more philosophical assessment of Michelle Obama’s blackness. Blacks who downplay their race and attempt to assimilate with the larger White society are deemed to be less threatening by Whites than those who assimilate less.\(^{143}\) Furthermore, Blacks who assimilate more are, in turn, viewed as “good Blacks” by Whites.\(^{144}\) Preference for a White over Black is neither a dichotomous issue nor a simple matter of skin color. Perceptions about a Black person’s racial ideology, on a continuum, may also provoke discrimination. In the employment context, for example, *Gordon v. JKP Enterprises, Inc.* held that a Black plaintiff was discriminated against by her employer for being “too ethnic” or “pro-Black.”\(^{145}\) Thus, because she has been more pointed about racial issues (or at least more so than Senator Obama) voters’ negative attitudes about Mrs. Obama may be largely influenced by race.

Much research on discrimination has focused separately on the effects of race or gender, ignoring the reality that Black women must deal with the joint effects of dual minority statuses, originally termed

\(^{137}\) See generally Banks, *supra* note 109, at 1714-24; see also Jones, *supra* note 109.


\(^{139}\) Id. at 80.


\(^{141}\) Id. at 397-401.

\(^{142}\) Id.


\(^{145}\) *Gordon v. JKP Enter. Inc.*, No. 01-20420, 2002 WL 753496, at *1, *10 (5th Cir. April 9, 2002).
Interactive models utilize the concept of “multiple jeopardy,” further accounting for Black women’s unique social location at the intersection of many different status hierarchies (including race, gender, and class), which produces experiences distinct from those of White women. Such models highlight the challenges faced by Michelle Obama. Specifically, the intersection of Michelle Obama’s racial and gender identity and politics — discussing issues of race, critiquing her husband openly and honestly, and discussing work-family balance for women — could ultimately leave voters fearing that she is an “angry Black woman” or wondering and critiquing, “Why is she so womanish?”

III. IMPLICIT BIAS AND VOTER/EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

Undeniably, Americans have made tremendous progress with regards to attitudes about race and gender in the past several decades. This progress, however, has occurred primarily at a surface level within society. Research on implicit attitudes, which are judgments that are automatically activated without a person’s awareness or intention, suggests that negative, stereotypical attitudes about Blacks and women are still pervasive. These attitudes are evidenced in both voting and employment decisions.

A. IMPLICIT ATTITUDES

People’s reports of their cognitive processes are often not consistent with their judgments. Many influences on judgment seem to operate

146. FRANCIS BEALE, Double Jeopardy: To be Black and Female, in THE BLACK WOMAN: AN ANTHOLOGY 111-114 (Toni Cade, ed., 1970).
outside of people’s awareness. Combining this observation with contemporary research on thought processing, psychologists now argue that people rely on parallel cognitive systems of judgment: one is rapid, intuitive, and unconscious; the other is slow, deductive, and deliberative. The intuitive system often dictates choice, with the deductive system lagging behind, struggling to produce reasons for a choice that comports with the accessible parts of memory. Thus, an intuitive, gut reaction against a candidate can dictate choice. The rational account follows later and might not provide a fully accurate account of the decision.

Research on implicit bias indicates that race and gender biases can influence unconscious, emotional processes, wholly apart from the conscious, rational ones. Psychologists term these unconscious, emotional influences “implicit biases”—attitudes or thoughts that people hold but might not explicitly endorse. These attitudes might conflict with expressly held values or beliefs. Many people who embrace the egalitarian norm that skin color should not affect their judgment of a job or political candidate also unwittingly harbor negative associations about minorities. People might not even be aware that they hold these attitudes. Even so, these implicit cognitions influence how people evaluate others. The implicit cognitive processes might heavily influence the final choice of a voter who does not otherwise clearly embrace one candidate over another.

Over the last ten years, psychologists have identified ways to measure implicit cognitions. These methods have proven to be particularly useful for studying bias against Blacks or stereotypes about women. This is so for two key reasons. First, when explicit measures are used, individuals may not reveal their true attitudes or preferences because of social desirability

152. See id.
154. Id. at 153.
160. See infra notes 165 to 227 and accompanying text.
biases, thus not elucidating the actual magnitude of the relationship that would exist between attitudes and, for example, political outcomes. The second comparative advantage is that individuals may not even be aware of their true preferences or attitudes and thus cannot report them if asked.

The Implicit Association Test ("IAT") has rapidly become the most widely used measure of implicit bias. The IAT is a procedure that seeks to assess latent attitudes by measuring their underlying automatic evaluation. Using cognitive priming procedures, it measures the relative strength of associations between pairs of concepts to determine automatic affect or attitude. In the initial IAT task, participants are required to separate different images into categories (e.g., race, gender, weight, etc.). Next, participants are required to sort different attributes as pleasant or unpleasant in meaning. In the next steps, the images and attributes are superimposed, pairing images with closely associated and not-so-closely associated attributes. The more closely associated two concepts are, the easier it is to respond to them as a pair. Thus, the IAT measures relative strength of associations between targets and certain attributes based on the difficulty (i.e., response time) of the sorting process.

1. Race

Research on the IAT, which pairs White and Black faces with positive and negative words, shows that roughly seventy percent of Whites harbor anti-Black/pro-White biases. Web-based IAT samples with thousands of participants reveal strong biases with several characteristics: People associate light skin with good and dark skin with bad; White faces with harmless objects and Black faces with weapons. The proper interpretation of these results has been a matter of some debate, but most scholars conclude that the IAT can measure implicit biases.

A study by Leslie Ashburn-Nardo and colleagues shows just how broad-based implicit biases can be. In this study, participants found it

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162. Kam, supra note 161, at 345.
163. See Lane et al., supra note 159, at 430 (noting that techniques that assess response times are the most widely used methods for ascertaining implicit attitudes).
164. See Greenwald & Banaji, supra note 150, at 4-5.
169. Lane et al., supra note 166, at 72, 91.
easier to associate their in-group (i.e., American names) with pleasant words and the out-group (i.e., Surinamese names) with unpleasant words than they found it to make reverse pairings, even though participants lacked experience with Suriname. 170 Even with equally unfamiliar exemplars for both in-group and out-group, they nevertheless displayed a pro-in-group IAT bias. Thus, even with only minimal experiential or historical input, peoples’ minds are prepared to display bias effortlessly. 171

A study by Thierry Devos and Mahzarin Banaji found that individuals make no distinction between Blacks and Whites on explicit measures of “Americanness.” 172 On implicit measures, however, participants more easily paired American symbols with White faces than with Black faces. 173 In a second study, Devos and Banaji used photos of eight Black and eight White United States track and field athletes who participated in the 2000 Olympics. 174 The assumption was that Blacks who represented their country in the Olympics should appear more American than those who did not. 175 On the measure of familiarity, participants reported being more familiar with Black athletes than with White athletes. 176 Taking the two explicit self-report measures together, participants were both more familiar with Black than White athletes and reported a stronger association between Black athletes and American than White athletes and American. 177 On the IAT, however, the reverse was found, with White athletes being more strongly associated with the category “American” than Black athletes. 178

White and Asian Americans associated Whites with the concept “American” to a greater extent than Blacks. 179 Furthermore, in a study by Melissa Ferguson and colleagues, they found that when Whites and Asians were primed with the American flag (shown subliminal images), their attitudes toward Blacks become even more negative. 180

A study by Phillip Goff and colleagues investigated the relationship

171. See Ashburn-Nardo, supra note 170, at 794-95. See also Nilanjana Dasgupta et al., Automatic Preference for White Americans: Eliminating the Familiarity Explanation, 36 J. EXPERIMENTAL SOC. PSYCHOL. 316, 321-23 (2000) (finding that positive attributes were more strongly associated with White than Black Americans even when: (a) pictures of equally unfamiliar Black and White individuals were used as stimuli; and (b) differences in stimulus familiarity were statistically controlled).
173. Id.
174. Id.
175. Id.
176. Id.
177. Id.
178. Id. at 455.
179. Id. at 459.
180. Melissa J. Ferguson et al., The American Flag Increases Prejudice Toward African-Americans, 4-28 (unpublished manuscript)(on file with authors).
between implicit racial attitudes and dehumanization of Blacks. In their first study, individuals were subliminally shown images of Black faces, White faces, or neutral images. 181 Then they were shown fuzzy images of animals (apes and non-apes), which gradually became clearer. 182 Individuals were instructed to indicate the point at which they could identify the image. 183 Goff and colleagues found that both Whites and non-Whites more quickly associated Blacks, as compared to Whites, with apes. 184 In a second study, individuals were first subliminally shown images of ape line drawings or jumbled line drawings. 185 Second, they were given a facial interference task designed to gauge how distracted participants would become when presented with faces prior to a test measuring their attentional bias to Black and White faces. 186 Their results indicated that priming individuals with images of apes demonstrated more attentional bias towards Black faces. 187 Moreover, Goff and colleagues found that implicit anti-Black biases predicted this ape-Black association. 188

These biases generally begin at an early age. Baron and Banaji assessed White American six-year-olds, ten-year-olds, and adults using a child-oriented version of the IAT. Remarkably, even the youngest group showed implicit pro-White/anti-Black bias, with self-reported attitudes revealing bias in the same direction. 189 The ten-year-olds and adults showed the same magnitude of implicit race bias, but self-reported racial attitudes became substantially less biased in older children and vanished entirely in adults, who self-reported equally favorable attitudes toward Whites and Blacks. 190 It seems that people learn bias early but only later learn to cover the bias by publicly embracing more egalitarian norms.

The latter point shows the striking divergence between explicit attitudes towards race and measures of implicit bias. 191 Although explicit and implicit measures of bias are related, even people who openly embrace egalitarian norms often harbor very negative associations concerning Blacks. 192 Even participants who are told that the IAT measures

182. Id. at 295.
183. Id.
184. Id. at 296.
185. Id. at 297.
186. Id.
187. Id. at 298-99.
188. Id. at 301.
189. Baron & Banaji, supra note 157, at 55.
190. Id. at 56.
191. See Lane et al., supra note 166.
192. See generally Baron & Banaji, supra note 156 (indicating that whereas seemingly egalitarian views about race emerge over time, implicit racial attitudes stay the
undesirable racist attitudes and who explicitly self-report egalitarian attitudes find it difficult to control their biased responses. These findings suggest that the explicit and implicit studies measure somewhat different cognitive systems. The explicit measures show that most adults have learned the importance of egalitarian norms — or at least the importance of embracing such norms publicly.

2. Gender

The research on implicit bias also indicates that most people hold implicit biases about gender. People misattribute high status more readily to unknown men than to unknown women. They associate “male” with “hierarchical” and “female” with “egalitarian” and evaluate male authority figures more favorably than their female counterparts. Priming people to think about dependence or aggression influences their judgments of men and women. They judge women, but not men, as more dependent while thinking about dependence and judge men, but not women, as more aggressive while thinking about aggression. Men also automatically associate maleness with power.

Not surprisingly, these attitudes towards men and women translate directly into evaluations of potential careers. Web-based IAT studies reveal that people more closely associate men with science and women with humanities. People more easily associate “engineer” with men and “elementary school teacher” with women than the opposite pairing. In one study, participants primed with words associated with historically male roles (like “doctor”) tended to categorize a subsequent gender-neutral pronoun as being male, while participants primed with words associated with historically female roles (like “nurse”) tended to categorize a

subsequent gender-neutral pronoun as being female. Like studies of racial bias, even participants who explicitly reject gender-based stereotypes concerning careers carry these implicit biases. Web-based IAT studies also reveal that both men and women tend to link “male” with “career” and “female” with “family.” Among men, this connection is consistent with their explicit statements about gender stereotypes, although women explicitly reject such connections as inconsistent with their beliefs.

Like implicit race biases, many of the associations involving gender cast men in a more favorable light. However, the relationship involving gender is somewhat more complicated. Women reveal a strong automatic preference for female words (e.g., “her” or “she”) over male words (e.g., “him” or “he”), whereas men harbor no preference. Moreover, women’s automatic in-group bias is much stronger than men’s in-group bias, although this tendency is most pronounced among women who have positive self-esteem. Rudman and Greenwald captured the essence of this phenomenon with two phrases characterizing women and men, respectively: “If I am good and I am female, females are good,” and “Even if I am good and I am male, men are not necessarily good.” Rudman and Greenwald also discovered, in two other studies, that individuals harbor a pro-female bias to the extent that they favor their mothers over their fathers and associate maleness with violence, all at the implicit level.

**B. IMPLICIT BIAS AND POLITICAL ATTITUDES/BEHAVIOR**

Research has shown that implicit attitudes influence prejudice and intergroup discrimination in a variety of contexts, including voting processes. Social scientists who have failed to find racial polarization in voters’ candidate preferences have readily acknowledged “covert

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202. Id. at 138-39.


204. Id. at 109.


207. Id. at 498.

208. Id. at 500-01.

209. Id. at 502-03.

racism” or voter “misreporting” as explanations for why they failed to detect results in their studies. Research on implicit bias and political attitudes and behavior, however, seems to provide a better link between people’s racial attitudes and their voting behavior. For example, people who endorse right-of-center political views also tend to associate Black with bad and White with good on the IAT. Similarly, political conservatism is associated with White in-group favoritism on both implicit and explicit measures.

Implicit attitudes affect how people vote. In one study, Kam examined the impact of an implicit measure of attitudes towards an ethnic group on citizens’ willingness to support a minority candidate. She either identified the candidates’ party affiliations or omitted that information. Kam found that for the implicit measure, Democrats who held the most favorable views towards Hispanics were nearly four times as likely to prefer the Hispanic candidate compared with their counterparts who held the least positive implicit views towards Hispanics. Implicit measures of attitudes towards Hispanics were much less relevant when party cues were available, however. Even participants who expressed highly negative implicit attitudes towards Hispanics nevertheless voted for Hispanic candidates identified as being from the political party that they favor. This suggests that Democrats can overcome their implicit biases in an effort to vote for a Democrat regardless of race. This theory, however, may only extend to minority candidates who are not Black —assuming Whites harbor more animosity toward Blacks than other racial minorities.

Recent, unpublished research by Albertson and Greenwald links implicit attitudes with the Bradley Effect. Their study (conducted before the 2008

216. Id.
217. Id.
218. Id.
219. Id.
220. Id.
221. ScientificBlogging.com, Implicit Association Test Creator Says Political Polls
primaries began) measured both implicit and explicit preferences by voters for three Democratic hopefuls — Clinton, Edwards, and Obama. When voters were asked whom they supported, Obama won handily, forty-two percent to thirty-four percent and twelve percent for Clinton and Edwards, respectively. But Obama came in third, with twenty-five percent on implicit measures, with Clinton and Edwards capturing forty-eight percent and twenty-seven percent of the participants’ support. This study, while preliminary, provides the most direct evidence that Senator Obama faces a gap between what voters will tell pollsters and how they will vote.

Other research has explored the implicit association between the categories of White and American in the 2008 election. Devos and colleagues found that people more easily associated Senator Clinton and even Tony Blair with the category “American” than they did Senator Obama. In another study by Melissa Ferguson and colleagues, when Whites and Asians were primed with images of the American flag, their attitudes toward Democrats were not altered, but their attitudes toward Blacks generally, and Senator Obama specifically, became more negative. In fact, when primed with the American flag, eligible voters (i.e., college students) were less inclined to vote for Senator Obama over other candidates.

C. IMPLICIT ATTITUDES AND EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

In recent years, implicit bias has been imported into legal scholarship. The role of implicit bias in employment discrimination was advanced by Linda Hamilton Krieger almost a decade and a half ago. In her seminal work, Krieger presented three broad ideas. First, stereotyping is not intent-driven but evolves from social cognition theory, which assumes that, quite naturally, “cognitive structures and processes involved in categorization and information processing can in and of themselves result in stereotyping and other forms of biased intergroup judgment previously attributed to motivational processes.” Furthermore, it is not only “bad” people who stereotype; as part of “normal cognitive functioning,” all

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222. ScientificBlogging.com, supra note 221
223. Id.
224. Devos & Banaji, supra note 172.
226. Ferguson, supra note 180, at 9.
227. Id. at 8-12.
people categorize and stereotype natural objects as a way “to simplify the task of perceiving, processing, and retaining information about people in memory.” Second, stereotypes unintentionally bias people’s judgment about members of other groups. Third, stereotypes are triggered and operate outside of one’s own conscious awareness.

Krieger, in turn, applied these principles to the area of Title VII jurisprudence. Her contention and critique revolved around certain assumptions that Title VII cases make about human inference and judgment. The first erroneous assumption is that discriminatory motive or intent drives intergroup discrimination. Currently, under Title VII, a disparate treatment plaintiff must prove that purposeful or intentional discrimination resulted in differential treatment. In the context of race, discrimination results from the decision-maker’s racial animus toward members of plaintiff’s racial group. Few Title VII cases acknowledge unconscious race bias, whereas cases have acknowledged the role of unconscious gender stereotyping. Krieger

229. Krieger, supra note 228, at 1188.
231. Id.
232. Id. at 1166-67.
233. See, e.g., St. Mary’s Honor Ctr. v. Hicks, 509 U.S. 502, 506-07 (1993) (“[The plaintiff has] the ultimate burden of persuading the court that she has been the victim of intentional discrimination.”) (quoting Tex. Dep’t of Cmty Affairs v. Burdine, 450 U.S. 248, 256 (1981)). Accord EEOC v. Flasher Co., 986 F.2d 1312, 1314 (10th Cir. 1992) (holding that plaintiff had to prove termination of employment was the result of intentional discrimination based on plaintiff’s national origin); Warren v. Halstead Indus., Inc., 802 F.2d 746, 752-53 (4th Cir. 1986) (holding discriminatory intent means actual motive and cannot be presumed based upon a factual showing of less than actual motive); Smith v. Honeywell, Inc., 735 F.2d 1067, 1068-69 (8th Cir. 1984) (holding that an individual alleging disparate treatment has the burden of showing not only a difference in treatment, but that he is a victim of intentional discrimination), cert. denied, 469 U.S. 1077 (1984); Smithers v. Bailar, 629 F.2d 892, 898 (3d Cir. 1980) (holding disparate treatment plaintiff is required to prove not only disparate treatment, but that such disparate treatment was caused by purposeful or intentional discrimination).
234. See EEOC v. Flasher Co., 986 F.2d 1312, 1321 (10th Cir. 1992) (“Merely finding that people have been treated differently stops short of the crucial question: why people have been treated differently.”); Minority Police Officers Ass’n v. City of S. Bend, 617 F. Supp. 1330, 1338 (N.D. Ind. 1985) (“Mere conclusory allegations of discrimination are clearly not sufficient to prove discriminatory intent.”); Gomez v. Med. Coll., No. 92-5048, 1994 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 11274, *9 (E.D. Pa. 1994) (“A plaintiff may not prevail on a mere showing that the defendant’s proffered reasons are false, but must prove a discriminatory animus.”).
235. But see EEOC v. Inland Marine Indus., 729 F.2d 1229, 1236 (9th Cir. 1984) (holding that racial discrimination occurs where subjective employment criteria embody racially discriminatory attitudes, even where intent is not established), cert. denied sub nom. Inland Marine Indus. v. Houston, 469 U.S. 855 (1984).
236. See, e.g., Sweeney v. Bd. of Treasurers of Keene State Coll., 604 F.2d 106, 113 n.12 (1st Cir. 1979) (affirming judgment for plaintiff in sex discrimination case because the district court could have reasonably concluded that the decision not to promote plaintiff was “determined by a subtle, if unexpressed, bias against women.”).
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argues that there is a logical connection between implicit biases and intentional discrimination in three ways. First, stereotypes bias decision making through the conscious use of race and sex as a proxy for some other characteristic stereotypically associated with group membership. Second, evidence of stereotyping suggests discriminatory intent if stereotypes are understood as one’s expectations about how members of a particular group should behave. Third, statements reflecting stereotyped views represent discriminatory animus, where discrimination is seen as resulting from prejudice where prejudice consists of “a cognitive component (stereotypes), an affective component (aversion or dislike), and a behavioral component (discrimination aimed at creating or enforcing social distance).”

The second erroneous assumption is that unless employers harbor discriminatory intent or motive, they will be rational actors. As such, proving discriminatory intent in the employment context is a high hurdle to overcome. Under the analytical framework established by Texas Dept of Community Affairs v. Burdine and McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Green, proof of disparate treatment is evinced in three steps. First, pretext analysis begins when the plaintiff presents a prima facie case of discrimination. In response, the defendant has the burden of producing legitimate, nondiscriminatory reasons to justify the adverse employment action against the plaintiff. Second, the plaintiff can prevail only by proving that the defendant’s proffered reason was not the “true reason” for the decision, but merely a “pretext for discrimination.” According to Krieger’s research:

[T]he most common method of proving pretext is to show that the employer’s proffered reason is not worthy of credence either because it appears implausible in light of data upon

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237. Krieger, supra note 228, at 1173. Cases in which plaintiffs have prevailed under this theory are more frequently seen in the age, vis-à-vis race, context. See, e.g., Hazen Paper Co. v. Biggins, 507 U.S. 604, 611 (1993) (“The employer cannot rely on age as a proxy for an employee’s remaining characteristics, such as productivity, but must instead focus on those factors directly.”).

238. Id.

239. Id. at 1174.

240. Id. at 1167.

241. See Riodan v. Kempiners, 831 F.2d 690, 697 (7th Cir. 1987) (indicating that “[p]roof of such discrimination is always difficult”).


243. See, e.g., St. Mary’s Honor Ctr. v. Hicks, 509 U.S. 502, 506-07 (1993); Burdine, 450 U.S. at 254; McDonnell Douglas, 411 U.S. at 802.

244. Burdine, 450 U.S. at 253.

245. Hicks, 509 U.S. at 515-516; Burdine, 450 U.S. at 254-56; see also McDonnell Douglas, 411 U.S. at 804.
which such an employment decision should have been based, or because it appears inconsistent with decisions reached in

similar cases involving employees outside of plaintiff’s protected class. 246

The third erroneous assumption is that disparate treatment jurisprudence accounts for the fact that race and sex categorization “may distort perception, memory, and recall for decision-relevant events such that, at the moment of decision, an employer may be entirely unaware of the effect of an employee’s group membership on the decision-making process.” 247 In essence, according to Krieger, current disparate treatment jurisprudence wrongly construes how discriminatory motivation accounts for judgmental strategies that employers use in decision making. This occurs in three ways. First, it assumes that discrimination occurs when a decision maker refuses to consider an individual for a particular position. 248 Further, it assumes that the decision arises out of antipathy for that individual’s social group or because placing the individual in the position in question violates role expectations for members of the individual’s social group. 249 Second, disparate treatment jurisprudence assumes that stereotypes can cause discrimination when group status is consciously used as a “proxy” for some other job-relevant trait. 250 Third, it assumes that discrimination occurs at the precise moment of the employer’s decision making. 251

Another assumption of disparate treatment jurisprudence is that decision-makers possess adequate access to their own thoughts as to why they will make or have made certain decisions. 252 As such, it assumes that decision-makers are aware of the reasons they will make, or have made, employment decisions. 253 With such knowledge, well intentioned decision-makers comply with Title VII. 254

246. Krieger, supra note 228, at 1179. Krieger goes on to provide examples: (1) Evidence that the objective data maintained by the defendant did not support the result reached by the decision-maker; (2) Evidence that the decision-maker seemed to undervalue or ignore facts favorable to the employee; (3) Evidence that the decision-maker made a judgment about the plaintiff without being able to point to specific events which would reasonably support such a judgment; or (4) Evidence showing that similarly situated Anglo employees were on occasion treated more favorably.

Id. at 1180.


248. Id. at 1181-82.

249. Id.

250. Id. at 1182.

251. Id. at 1183.

252. Id. at 1167.

253. Id. at 1185.

254. Id.
with bad intentions know when they are taking an employee’s group status into account; when challenged, they design “pretexts” to cover their tracks.\textsuperscript{255}

Though it may not be routine for courts to analyze employment discrimination through an unconscious bias lens, such analysis is not new. Courts have refused to grant defendant-employers summary judgment in Title VII cases given employers’ “hidden or unconscious [discriminatory] motives.”\textsuperscript{256} In fact, Shaw \textit{v. Cassar} highlighted that:

Overt and blatant discrimination is a relatively rare phenomenon. . . . It is intentional discrimination in its covert hidden form that now poses the real problem. Evidence of illicit intent may be extremely difficult to obtain, whether the responsible individuals are conscious of their bias, and therefore likely to try to hide it, or whether they are expressing unconscious bias through some discretionary decision-making process.\textsuperscript{257}

Courts have similarly found that unconscious race bias\textsuperscript{258} and gender stereotyping\textsuperscript{259} may be implicated under Title VII. Parks and Rachlinski’s research suggests that unconscious race bias, and to some degree gender stereotyping, were pervasive in the 2008 presidential campaign.\textsuperscript{260} And such biases are analogously manifested under Title VII case law.\textsuperscript{261}

D. \textsc{Unconscious Voter Bias and Evaluation of Michelle Obama}

Given espoused societal norms of fairness and egalitarianism in the United States, explicit racism and sexism are not likely to underlie most citizens’ attitudes about Mrs. Obama. Implicit bias research findings, however, suggest that voters’ negative attitudes about her likely arise from

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{255} Id at 1185.
\item \textsuperscript{256} Oxman \textit{v. WLS-TV}, 609 F. Supp. 1384, 1387 (N.D. Ill. 1985).
\item \textsuperscript{258} Bush \textit{v. Commonwealth Edison Co.}, 990 F.2d 928, 931-32 (7th Cir 1993) (holding that an employer’s failure to adhere to its own set of rules invites “subjective determinations likely to reflect unconscious racial bias . . .”).
\item \textsuperscript{259} Thomas \textit{v. Eastman Kodak Co.}, 183 F.3d 38, 61 (1st Cir. 1999) (holding that gender stereotyping includes “subtle cognitive phenomena which can skew perceptions and judgments”).
\item \textsuperscript{260} Parks & Rachlinski, supra note 2, at 46.
\item \textsuperscript{261} Id. at note 2, at 41-44; See, \textit{e.g.}, EEOC \textit{v. Inland Marine Indus.}, 729 F.2d 1229, 1236 (holding that racial discrimination occurs where subjective employment criteria embody racially discriminatory attitudes, even where intent is not established); \textit{See, e.g.}, Sweeney \textit{v. Bd. of Tr. of Keene State College}, 604 F.2d 106, 113 (sex discrimination case affirming judgment for plaintiff because the district court reasonably concluded that the decision not to promote plaintiff was “determined by a subtle, if unexpressed, bias against women”).
\end{itemize}
unconscious attitudes about race and gender. Such unconscious bias is
evident in two ways. First, critiques of Michelle Obama provide a glimpse
into voters’ attitudes toward her. Second, exit polls from the Democratic
primaries, coupled with voting behavior for Senator Clinton or Senator
Obama, provide additional indicia of such biases.

Critiques of Mrs. Obama on blogs and in website news story
comments, for example, arguably do not reflect a systematic sampling of
likely voters’ attitudes about her. As a result, they are simply stray
remarks, which provide little useful insight into the pervasiveness of any
racially or gender-biased attitudes. In employment discrimination cases
where plaintiffs produce evidence of comments made by a non-decision-
maker or a decision-maker unrelated to the employment action to
demonstrate pretext, courts dismiss such “stray remarks.”262 Some circuits,
however, reject the “stray remarks” doctrine.263 Further, in Reeves v.
Sanderson Plumbing Products, Inc., the Supreme Court suggested that
even where stray remarks are not made in the context of the employment
decision, they are still probative in assessing discriminatory animus.264
Thus, stray remarks should be probative, particularly in light of people’s
implicit biases.265 In the context of elections, voters actually serve as
decision-makers and the decisions they make (i.e., through voting) are
ultimately related to the critique that their decisions are race-based, gender-
based, or both. As such, with regards to the 2008 election primary,
comments by voters fall outside of the stray remarks paradigm.

Here, in describing her physical features, one commentator on the
Huffington Post indicated that Mrs. Obama was reminiscent of Zira — one
of the characters on Planet of the Apes.266 This comment, if not a blatantly
racial attack, which it did not seem to be, is explainable by Goff and
colleagues’ research on Whites’ unconscious association of Blacks with
apes.267 The use of the ape image in depicting Blacks has been held to be
probative in employment discrimination cases.268
Whites’ unconscious attitudes about Mrs. Obama, however, likely go beyond her physical appearance to her philosophical leanings. For example, the fact that she is a Black person may be less of an issue for some White voters than the fact that she has a strong racial identity. Preference for greater approximation to the majority, phenotypically speaking, happens even at the unconscious level. Analogously, it may also be the case with regards to ideology. In the employment context, defendants have been held to have discriminated against Black employees for being deemed “too ethnic” or “pro-Black.”

Regarding gender there may also be an unconscious underpinning to voters’ conscious expectations about what roles their First Lady can and should assume. For example, voters may have an unconscious expectation that Mrs. Obama fit within a certain gendered paradigm, philosophically. Being an opinionated Ivy League graduate and lawyer may not fit these expectations. Though Price Waterhouse v. Hopkins did not speak in terms of unconscious gender stereotyping, it was clear that the plaintiff in that case walked a tightrope, having to be masculine enough to compete in a male-dominated environment for a promotion on the one hand and not be too masculine on the other hand.

Additionally, even where critiques of Mrs. Obama have been more substantive — e.g., questions about her patriotism — these criticisms, too, fall within the implicit bias paradigm about race and Americanness. Under Title VII, courts have held that excluding employees beyond the bounds of patriotism, but based on race, establishes a prima facie case for employment discrimination.

Finally, Democratic primary exit polling data also suggest that implicit biases (primarily race and gender) influence voters’ decisions.

is essentially a caricature of a jungle beast goes far beyond the unflattering; it is degrading and humiliating in the extreme); Reedy v. Quebecor Printing Eagle, Inc., 333 F.3d 906, 909 (8th Cir. 2003) (plaintiff was threatened with drawings of an ape accompanied by the phrase “all niggers must die”); Spriggs v. Diamond Auto Glass, 242 F.3d 179, 182 (4th Cir. 2001) (plaintiff was called a “monkey”); Jeffries v. Metro-Mark, Inc., 45 F.3d 258, 260 (8th Cir. 1995) (plaintiff was called a “monkey”); Daniels v. Pipelayers’ Ass’n Local Union No. 597, 945 F.2d 906, 910 (7th Cir. 1991) (plaintiffs were called “porch monkeys” and “baboons”). The use of primates as a racial slur was used to intimidate Blacks in other contexts. Morgan v. McDonough, 540 F.2d 527, 531 (1st Cir. 1976) (in a school desegregation case, White students harassed Black students by chanting “assassinate the nigger apes”).

269. Lane, supra note 166, at 62.
270. See supra notes 143 to 144 and accompanying text.
272. See supra notes 129 to 136 and accompanying text.
273. See supra notes 43 to 55 and accompanying text.
274. See supra notes 172 to 180 and accompanying text.
276. See app., tbs.1-2.
conservativism is associated with unconscious in-group bias.\(^{277}\) This is particularly true of race and is disambiguated from mere conservative ideology.\(^{278}\) This should be no surprise given that “[o]ne major criterion continually reappears in distinguishing left from right: attitudes toward equality. The left favors greater equality, while the right inevitably sees society as hierarchical.”\(^{279}\) Nonetheless, liberalism and conservativism should not be viewed as dichotomous categories, but rather should be viewed on a continuum. In this way, there are relative conservatives on the Left and relative liberals on the Right — those slightly left or right of center. Thus, across the political spectrum, individuals may harbor racial or gender biases. For example, despite the fact that Liberals explicitly report greater racial egalitarianism than Conservatives,\(^{280}\) at the implicit level, they both have high levels of subconscious anti-Black bias — 61.1 percent for Liberals and 73.6 percent for Conservatives.\(^{281}\) To gauge political conservativism among Democratic primary voters, we used proxies. Age, education, and socio-economic status have long predicted political orientation, with those who are older,\(^{282}\) less educated,\(^{283}\) and poorer\(^{284}\) being more politically conservative. As illustrated in Table 1, those who voted for Senator Clinton over Senator Obama tended to be older, poorer, and less educated than Senator Obama’s supporters. This does not suggest that gender and race were not simultaneously driving forces in how Democrats cast their ballots. As previously noted, despite the fact that racism and sexism are opposite sides of the same coin, when analyzed simultaneously, race tends to be more of a driving force.\(^{285}\)

IV. THIRD-PARTY STANDING AND VOTER/EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

No empirical research has been conducted on the role of candidates’ third-party associations and individuals’ attitudes and voting behavior.


\(^{280}\) Greenwald & Krieger, supra note 277.

\(^{281}\) Id.


\(^{284}\) Id. at 612.

\(^{285}\) Timberlake & Estes, supra note 106.
towards those candidates. However, it stands to reason that negative depictions of (potential) First Ladies reflect not only upon them but upon their spouses as well. As commentators expressly noted in discussing Michelle Obama, “in modern politics, the marriage partnership is integral to the quest for the presidency, as voters evaluate a candidate in light of the relationship with his or her spouse.”

As such, in this section we seek to shed light on this position by exploring the treatment of associative discrimination under Title VII law.

A. THIRD-PARTY ASSOCIATIVE DISCRIMINATION

In McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Green, the Supreme Court delineated the requirements for a prima facie case of discrimination under Title VII. This standard, requiring that the plaintiff be a member of a protected class, is not uniformly easy to plead, especially when the plaintiff’s claim of discrimination is associative. Third-party associative discrimination is discrimination against individuals due to their relationship with Title VII protected class members. This type of discrimination claim is difficult to make, because the plaintiff is not necessarily a member of a protected class. Strictly construed, none of the Title VII categories are broad enough to protect discrimination against third-party actors. In fact, the statutory language seems to limit claims under Title VII to instances that arise “because of such individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.”

Early cases dealing with third-party associative discrimination under Title VII held that plaintiffs lacked standing. In 1973 an Alabama district court held in Ripp v. Dobbs House, Inc. that a White man who was terminated from his job due to his association with Black co-workers lacked standing. The court indicated that the plaintiff was “not a ‘person aggrieved’ within the contemplation of the Act.” In 1981, the Northern District of Georgia decided in Adams v. Governor’s Committee on Postsecondary Education that the White plaintiff, who alleged employment discrimination for having a Black

One of the first cases to sustain a cause of action for third-party associative discrimination was the 1975 case of \textit{Whitney v. Greater New York Corp. of Seventh-Day Adventists}.\footnote{Whitney v. Greater N.Y. Corp. of Seventh-Day Adventists, 401 F. Supp. 1363 (S.D.N.Y. 1975).} In \textit{Whitney}, a White plaintiff sued her employer after she was allegedly fired for having a social relationship with a Black man.\footnote{Id. at 1365.} Rejecting the \textit{Ripp} analysis, the Southern District of New York held that “the plaintiff’s race was as much a factor in the decision to fire her as that of her friend.”\footnote{Id. at 1367.} In addition to other district courts,\footnote{See Rosenblatt v. Bivona & Cohen, 969 F. Supp. 207 (S.D.N.Y. 1997) (determining that White male plaintiff, who believed he was discriminated against because he had a Black wife and bi-racial child, had third-party standing based on racial discrimination under Title VII); Schutt v. County of Napa, No. C-94 2115 SC, 1995 WL 494588, at *1 (N.D. Cal. Aug. 15, 1995) (determining that White female plaintiff, who believed she was discriminated against for becoming pregnant by a Black co-worker, had third-party standing based on racial discrimination under Title VII); Probst v. Reno, No. 94-C-691, 1995 WL 613129, at *1 (N.D. Ill. Oct. 17, 1995) (holding for a White male plaintiff, who believed she was discriminated against for being romantically involved with a Black male co-worker); Erwin v. Mister Omlet of Am., Inc., No. C-89-529-WS, 1991 WL 32248, at *1-*3 (M.D.N.C. Jan. 15, 1991) (determining that White female plaintiff, who believed she was discriminated against for being romantically involved with a Black co-worker, had third-party standing based on racial discrimination under Title VII); Gresham v. Waffle House, Inc., 586 F. Supp. 1442, 1445 (N.D. Ga. 1984) (holding for a White female plaintiff, who believed she was discriminated against because she had a Black husband); Holiday v. Belle’s Restaurant, 409 F. Supp. 904, 905, 908-09 (W.D. Pa. 1976) (determining that White female plaintiff, who believed she was discriminated against for being married to a Black man, had third-party standing based on racial discrimination under Title VII).} various circuit courts have also affirmed third-party associative standing. In 1998, the Fifth Circuit, in \textit{Deffenbaugh-Williams v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.}, held that Title VII prohibits employment discrimination based on interracial relationships.\footnote{Deffenbaugh-Williams v. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., 156 F.3d 581, 589 (5th Cir. 1998).} In \textit{Deffenbaugh-Williams}, the plaintiff was a White female manager discriminated against because of her relationship with a Black male sales associate.\footnote{Id. at 585.} A year later in \textit{Tetro v. Elliott Popham Pontiac, Inc.}, Tetro (a White male employee) indicated that he began to be treated differently by his employer once his employer noticed
that Tetro had a bi-racial daughter. 303 The Sixth Circuit held that Tetro’s discharge was within the scope of Title VII. 304 In 1996, the Tenth Circuit, in Zeigler v. K-Mart Corp., held for the plaintiff, a Black woman, who married a White male employee and had a child by him. 305 Under Title VII and the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, the court found that K-Mart discriminated against the plaintiff based upon her interracial marriage and ensuing pregnancy. 306 When Parr v. Woodmen of the World Life Insurance Co. reached the appellate level, Parr (a White man) sued under Title VII, asserting that he was fired because he was married to a Black woman. 307 The Eleventh Circuit expressly repudiated Ripp and held for the plaintiff. 308

B. WHAT THIS MEANT FOR SENATOR OBAMA’S CANDIDACY

Although associative discrimination has not received specific attention in social science literature, the findings of social identity theory highlight categorization processes that motivate intergroup attitudes and behavior. 309 Because individuals are assumed to have a desire to maintain a high level of self-esteem, 310 the theory suggests that people engage in social comparisons with others to seek a positively valued distinctiveness for the social categories to which they belong as compared to other categories. 311 As individuals define themselves in terms of specific group memberships, they come to view and evaluate themselves based on the prototypical characteristics of the group. 312 By engaging in social comparisons, people differentiate between their in-groups and relevant out-groups and are able to evaluate their social identities. 313 Beyond such differentiation, social identity research also demonstrates that people tend to hold differential expectancies about the behavior of in-group and out-group members. In particular, they expect in-group members to display more desirable, and

304. Tetro, 173 F.3d at 995.
308. Parr, 791 F.2d at 891-92.
311. Id.
312. See generally SOCIAL IDENTITY AND INTERGROUP RELATIONS (Henri Tajfel ed., 1982).
fewer undesirable, behaviors than out-group members. Moreover, they are more likely to infer negative dispositions from undesirable out-group behaviors than from undesirable in-group behaviors and are less likely to infer positive dispositions from desirable out-group behaviors than from desirable in-group behaviors.

Such associative discrimination has been observed within political contexts. For example, during Jesse Jackson’s 1984 presidential run, there was tremendous pressure on him to reject and denounce a person who ultimately became a litmus test for many Black leaders — Minister Louis Farrakhan. Similarly, during the current campaign, Senator Obama had to “reject and denounce” Minister Farrakhan simply because Minister Farrakhan made some positive remarks about Senator Obama. Senator Obama has also received considerable criticism for his association with his former pastor, Reverend Jeremiah Wright, whom some Whites perceive to be racist and unpatriotic.

In light of these occurrences, Michelle Obama may have brought a considerable amount of baggage to her husband’s campaign. Given implicit attitudes based on gender and/or race, voters may hold negative perceptions of Mrs. Obama. However, ultimately, the person who bore the burden of these voters’ concerns was Senator Obama, as voters’ attitudes about Michelle Obama may indirectly have affected their decision to support Senator Obama’s candidacy. Optimistically, the findings of research exploring the reputations of women who were associated with United States Presidents suggest that this might not be the case. According to Simonton’s study, the direct association between Presidents’ and First Ladies’ reputations can be described as a “reflected-glory effect,” as the President’s reputation was found to contribute to the First Lady’s reputation although there was no reciprocal effect. Because the study’s sample only included First Ladies up to Nancy Reagan, however, we have little insight into the effects of gender roles and attitudes post-1989 on the

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320. Id. at 330.
study’s findings. Further, the influence of race might represent an important boundary condition to the study’s findings. Thus, voters’ perceptions of Michelle Obama, and the subsequent influence on Barack Obama’s candidacy, have important implications for understanding the associative discrimination phenomenon.

V. CONCLUSION

Americans have made remarkable gains with regard to race and gender issues. However, even as late as 2008, the reality of color and gender equality and blindness is still illusive. Moreover, despite the fact that the forty-fourth President of the United States will be a Black person and despite Senator Clinton’s historic run, the candidacies of Senators Obama and Clinton highlight the realities of implicit bias in politics. This implicit bias, though, is not bound by the four corners of presidential campaigning. An appropriate corollary is the employment sphere given the analogous decision-making processes in both. Just as courts and commentators have begun to think about the role of the intersection of race and gender, implicit bias, and third-party associative discrimination in Title VII cases, it seems fitting that all three should be applicable to the 2008 presidential race with Michelle Obama being the point of analysis.

This is where we are. A more forward looking approach, in light of Michelle Obama, raises the question of how the inclusion of groups in spheres where they have typically been excluded is beneficial to society. Michelle Obama’s presence during Senator Obama’s run for the White House and her future role as First Lady has and will go a long way towards undermining stereotypes about Black women. For centuries, Black women have been subject to any number of stereotypical images. Under the mammy image, Black women have been stereotyped as loyal domestic servants to Whites who cared for White families more than their own. Under the sexual siren image, Black women have been portrayed as sexually aggressive, uncaring whores concerned with nothing but their own sexual satisfaction. Under the welfare mother or queen image, Black women have been seen as nothing more than “breeding animals who have no desire to work, but are content to live off the state . . . .” Under the matriarch image, they have been stereotyped as mother within the Black home — “a controlling, emasculating Black woman who dictated to both

321. Id. at 313. This is significant because, quite possibly, the most controversial First Lady was Senator Hillary Clinton and the most controversial potential First Lady was Theresa Heinz-Kerry. And both of these women emerged on the national scene after Nancy Reagan.


323. Id. at 272.

324. Id. at 273.
her children and her man their place in the home.”  

A variant of the latter, the angry Black woman, is “achievement-oriented, kind of no-nonsense, overworked, exhausted, not particularly kind or compassionate, but very driven.”  

Historically, positive public images of Black women have helped to undermine these stereotypes.

Within the workplace, as well as other domains, efforts to embrace and encourage diversity are meant to overcome the thumb on the scale that implicit biases place against women and minorities in the present. Hiring or promoting people to prominent positions that are contrary to their stereotypes can force people to confront their implicit biases.  

Voters in the Democratic primaries and caucuses at least had to confront the prospect of voting for a woman or Black man, which is something they never have had to seriously face in years past. The same was true in the general election. Making the choice might have inspired voters who harbor implicit biases to become aware of these biases and make efforts to reduce them, or at least eliminate their influence on judgment. This may be particularly so where the First Lady is a Black woman.

Current models of prejudice and stereotype reduction support the view that the 2008 election and its result will reduce the effect of implicit biases overall. This work reveals that what helps people avoid the influence of implicit biases are: 1) awareness of their bias; 2) motivation to change their responses because of personal values, feelings of guilt, compunction, or self-insight; and 3) possession of the cognitive resources necessary to develop and practice correction. Regardless of the outcome, the 2008 election may have facilitated all of these factors. Exposing people to examples that run counter to stereotypes reduces the level of implicit

325. Id. at 271.

326. Vanessa E. Jones, The Angry Black Woman: Tart-tongued or Driven and No-nonsense, She is a Stereotype that Amuses Some and Offends Others, BOSTON GLOBE, April 20, 2008, at F1.


331. Id.

invidious bias.\textsuperscript{333} For example, showing people images of esteemed Blacks reduces the anti-Black bias on the IAT.\textsuperscript{334} Much the same is true gender.\textsuperscript{335} Indeed, simply imagining people that are contrary to invidious implicit stereotypes reduces the bias.\textsuperscript{336} In light of this research, a prospective look at Michelle Obama’s roles as First Lady suggests that it will work to undermine both non-Black and Black peoples’ stereotypes of Black women.

\textsuperscript{333} Dasgupta & Greenwald, supra note 332, at 806.
\textsuperscript{334} Id.
\textsuperscript{335} Social environments can undermine automatic gender stereotypic beliefs expressed by women. Results revealed that when women are in social contexts that expose them to female leaders, they are less likely to express automatic stereotypic beliefs about their in-group. They also found that the frequency of exposure to women leaders (i.e., female faculty) mediates the long-term effect of social environments (women’s college versus coed college) on automatic gender stereotyping. Additionally, some academic environments (e.g., classes in male-dominated disciplines like science and math) produce an increase in automatic stereotypic beliefs among students at the coed college but not at the women’s college. This effect was mediated by the sex of the course instructors. See Nilanjana Dasgupta & Shaki Asgari, Seeing Is Believing: Exposure to Counterstereotypic Women Leaders and Its Effect on the Malleability of Automatic Gender Stereotyping, 40 J. EXPERIMENTAL SOC. PSYCHOL. 642, 647-48, 650-53 (2004).
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Table 1. Democratic Primaries/Caucuses

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Within each category, numbers indicate percentage points won by Clinton/Obama

Race: B = Black; A = Asian; L = Latino(a); W = White

Sex: M = Male; F = Female

Age: 18-24 = youngest age group; 65+ = oldest age group

Education: Low = lowest index of education (high school graduate); High = highest index of education (postgraduate study)

Winner: O = Obama; C = Clinton

Primary/Caucus: † = Black population of 30% or more

(SC = 55, AL = 51, GA = 51, LA = 48, MD = 37, VA = 30, MS = 50, NC = 34)
Table 2. Express Gender and Race Influence in the 2008 Democratic Primary

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<td>51/42</td>
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</table>

338 Voters were asked, “In deciding your vote for president today, was the race of the candidate [important]?” Supra note 337. Voters were also asked, “In deciding your vote for president today, was the gender of the candidate [important]?” Supra note 337.