

CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER AND POLITICS

Race and Gender in the 2008 Democratic Presidential Nomination Process

Comparison and Intersection

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The 2008 election was remarkable in many ways. One small part of its historic nature was that it pushed forward explicit comparative and intersectional analyses of race and gender. One cannot think about the election without thinking about race. One cannot think about the election without thinking about gender. And one cannot think about the election without considering the intersection of the two. Our project as scholars was made crisper, and moved farther along, in confrontation with an election that demands this comparative and intersectional focus.

The authors in this Critical Perspectives section take up this explicitly comparative and explicitly intersectional analysis in a range of provocative ways. Ange-Marie Hancock focuses on racing-gendering the election, asking what we know when we think of Hillary Clinton as racialized and Barack Obama as gendered. Leonie Huddy and Tony E. Carey, Jr., ask about the place of group solidarity in creating racial divides and gender gaps in the election. Jane Junn worries about whether the election reified notions of gender, race, and leadership, where women leaders are white and black leaders are men. Jennifer Lawless offers a portrait of the place of gender stereotyping and sexism in the election. The comparative and intersectional possibilities for the field of the ideas they sketch here are tremendous.