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### At the Intersection of Transgender Attitudes, Identity Politics, and Vote Choice

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A photograph of two flags waving against a clear blue sky. On the left is a transgender flag with horizontal stripes of light blue, pink, white, light blue, pink, and white. To its right is a rainbow flag with horizontal stripes of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The flags are attached to a silver pole on the left side of the frame.

# At the Intersection of Transgender Attitudes, Identity Politics and Vote Choice

Amy Howard    Dr. Wesley Wehde, Assistant Professor  
East Tennessee State University

# One step forward, another step back

- LGBTQ+ political representation at all-time high
  - 410 LGBTQ+ candidates running in 2021 (Jackson 2021)
  - >1000 LGBTQ+ candidates in office in 2021 (Goldmacher 2021)
  - President Biden declares March 31 “Transgender Day of Visibility” (2021).
- Regressive legislation
  - Florida’s “Don’t Say Gay or Trans Bill,” “Stop WOKE Act”
  - 266 anti-LGBTQ+ bills in state legislatures 2021 (125 anti-transgender)
  - Equality Act of 2017 stalled in Senate

# Protecting a vulnerable community

- LGBTQ+ youth at increased risk for bullying, suicide (Ahuja, et al. 2015)
- Discrimination and harassment in workplace, health care (Center for American Progress)
- Transgender 4X more likely to be victims of violent crime than heterosexual (UCLA).
- Higher murder rates for Black and Hispanic transgender women (Dinno 2017)

# Why study intersectional bias in vote choice?

- Evidence exists of ballot box penalties for gender and sexual minority candidates, especially transgender candidates (Magni and Reynolds 2021).
- Attitudes toward lesbian, gay, bisexual men, bisexual women, MtF and FtM transgender individuals should be analyzed separately (Worthen 2013).
- Media coverage of bisexual and transgender women in politics is more negative than bisexual and transgender men in politics (Deese 2020, Scott 2020; Burns 2019).

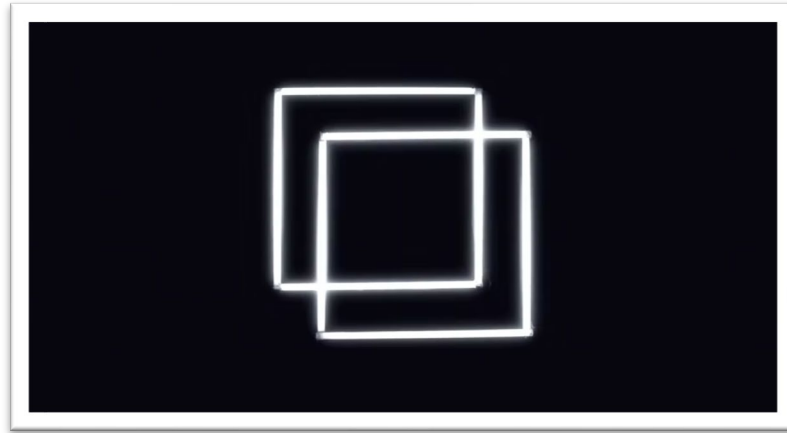
# Hypotheses\*

- **H1:** Transgender females will experience a ***larger*** vote penalty than other minoritized gender identities, including transgender males.
- **H2:** Penalties for bisexual candidates will be ***larger*** for bisexual female (both cis and transgender) candidates than bisexual male (both cis and transgender) candidates.

\*See pre-registration here: [OSF Registries | At the Intersection of Transgender Attitudes, Identity Politics, and Vote Choice](#).

# Conjoint Survey Experiment Data

- Qualtrics survey platform
- Quota-based, nationally representative sample of 2200 respondents
  - LUCID Theorem – for academics, \$1 per respondent



# Conjoint Survey Benefits

- Separate effects of correlated candidate attributes, such as gender identity and sexual orientation, on vote choices (Horiuchi, et al. 2020)
- Improve causal inference for multidimensional preferences or choices, randomizing attributes across multiple choice options (Hainmueller, et al. 2014)
- Possibly reduce social desirability bias (Horiuchi, et al. 2021)
- Respondents can perform multiple tasks without loss of data quality (Bansak, et al. 2018).
- Smaller sample sizes can still yield appropriately powered results (Bansak, et al. 2018).



# Conjoint Survey Limitations

- Realism of fully randomized conjoint experiments may be limited.
- Concerns about external validity (De la Cuesta, et al. 2022)



# Conjoint Survey Attributes and Levels

**Table 1: Full Conjoint Experiment Design**

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Levels</b>
<b>Gender Identity</b>	Woman, Transgender Woman, Man, Transgender Man, Non-Binary
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Gay, Straight, Bi-Sexual
<b>Political Affiliation</b>	Moderate Republican, Far-Right Republican; Moderate Democrat, Far-Left Democrat
<b>Age</b>	35, 44, 56, 71
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	White, Black, Latino, Asian, Native American
<b>Religion</b>	Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Non-Religious, Atheist
<b>Education</b>	High School, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree
<b>Political Experience</b>	No previous experience, State legislature, US House of Representatives

# Conjoint Survey Tasks

Imagine that the Democratic Party is considering the following two people as possible candidates for the House of Representatives in your district. Then answer the questions below about these candidates. We are going to show you several pairs of candidates. Please be as honest as possible, and remember, all answers are completely anonymous.

	<b>Candidate A</b>	<b>Candidate B</b>
<b>Religion</b>	Non-religious	Christian
<b>Ideology</b>	Moderate	Far Left
<b>Age</b>	44	44
<b>Race</b>	White	Native American
<b>Education</b>	Master's degree	Master's degree
<b>Previous experience</b>	State legislature	No previous political experience
<b>Gender</b>	Transgender woman	Transgender woman
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Straight	Bisexual

Imagine that the Republican Party is considering the following two people as possible candidates for the House of Representatives in your district. Then answer the questions below about these candidates. We are going to show you several pairs of candidates. Please be as honest as possible, and remember, all answers are completely anonymous.

	<b>Candidate A</b>	<b>Candidate B</b>
<b>Religion</b>	Non-religious	Non-religious
<b>Age</b>	71	56
<b>Education</b>	Bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree
<b>Previous experience</b>	State legislature	State legislature
<b>Ideology</b>	Moderate	Far-Right
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	Bisexual	Gay
<b>Gender</b>	Transgender man	Transgender man
<b>Race</b>	Asian	Asian

# Conjoint Survey Questions

Which of these two candidates would you be more likely to vote for?

Candidate A

Candidate B

Would not vote for either

You have been gifted \$100 to donate to a political campaign. How much would you donate to Candidate A? How much would you donate to Candidate B?

Dollars

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Candidate A

Candidate B

**Total:** **0**

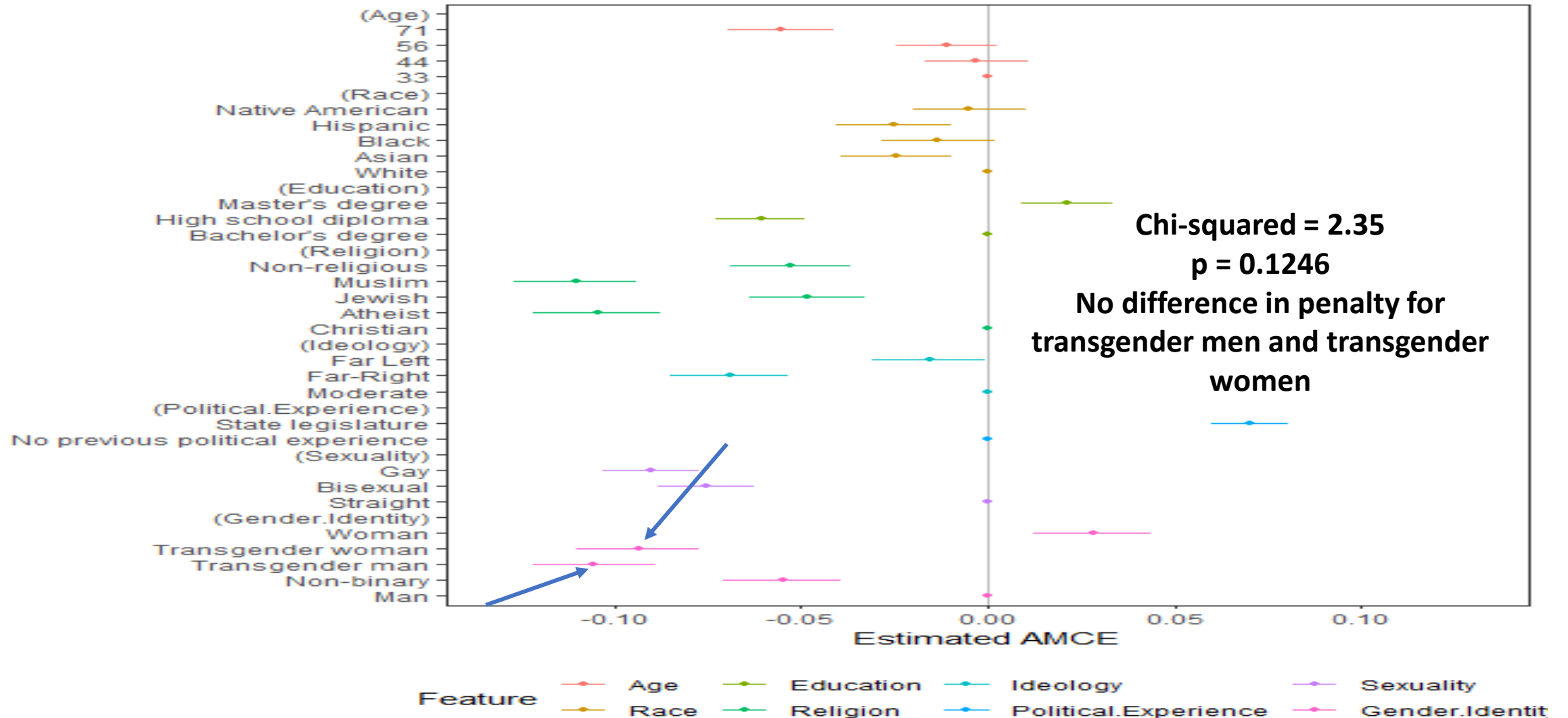
In your opinion, which of these candidates...

	Candidate A	Candidate B	Neither
...is more liberal?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...is a stronger sign of social progress?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...is a bigger threat to traditional values?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...would you prefer to have as a neighbor?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
...has better chances to win the election?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

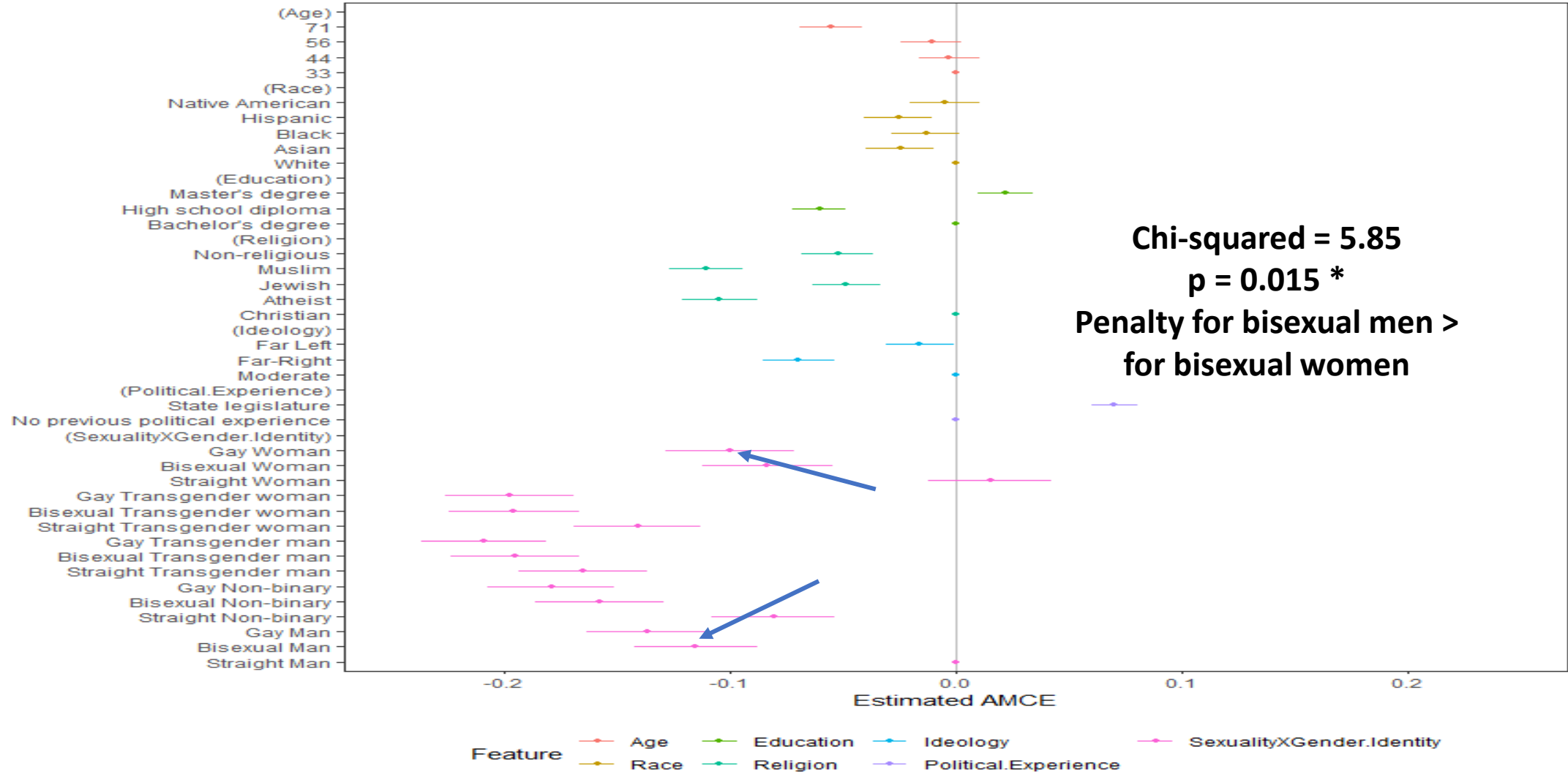
# Additional Measures

- Kinder Sanders Racial Resentment scale (Kinder and Sanders 1996)
- Centrality of Religiosity Scale (Huber and Huber 2012)
- Attitudes Toward Transgender Men and Women scale (Billard 2018)

# Hypothesis 1 (AMCEs)



# Hypothesis 2 (AMCIES)



# Summary

- Similar to Magni and Reynolds (2021) with effects on age, education, previous experience; transgender and gay penalties
- Larger penalty for gay than bisexual candidates
- No statistically significant difference between transgender man and transgender woman in voting behavior
  - Larger penalty for transgender woman compared to non-binary and cisgender woman
  - Larger penalty for transgender men than non-binary and cisgender woman.
- Statistically significant difference between bisexual man and bisexual woman in voting behavior—larger penalty for bisexual man
- Non-binary candidates penalized less severely than other transgender candidates



# Discussion

- How and why do voters perceive bisexual candidates differently than gay ones?
- What explains voter ambivalence toward non-binary candidates?
- Does the public perceive non-binary candidates as transgender?

Emphasizes importance of understanding *nuanced* effects of candidate gender identity and sexual orientation on voting behavior and how that matters for LGBTQ+ political representation.

# QUESTIONS?

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