

# Chapter 12

## A Critical Discourse Analysis of “Minority Women for Trump” Campaigns on Social Media

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### ABSTRACT

*Political communication in the digital age has brought new insights and challenges to American citizens across parties, genders, and ethnicity. The 2016 Presidential election has drawn global attention just as previous US presidential campaigns. Moreover, with two opposing and controversial candidates for the presidency, voters are divided across a wide range of issues. This chapter is interested in various minority women for Trump campaigns on social media sites, in the time frame when Trump’s lewd comments about women were made headlines before the third Presidential Debate until Election Day. Selective and sampled posts from Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are analyzed. How did minority women position themselves in Trump’s campaign on social media discourse? How did minority women make decisions to support Trump’s campaign? How did minority women relate to Trump’s lewd comments about women? These research questions are answered to offer readers insights of minority women’s political engagement.*

### INTRODUCTION

On October 8, 2016, four weeks before Election Day, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump’s lewd comments about women made headlines. Despite protests from feminists and other activist groups and additional controversies, Trump

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won the election to become the 45<sup>th</sup> president of the United States. The majority of Trump’s voter base consisted of White males and he won with the lowest number of minority votes in decades (Kahn, 2016). However, despite insulting women in several recorded instances, Trump won a significant percentage of women’s votes, especially those of minority women. News sources indicate that 54% of women voted for Hillary Clinton and 41% of women voted for Donald Trump. Among Trump’s college educated women supporters, 6% were African American, 28% Hispanic, 19% non-White, and 45% White. The percentage of non-college graduated women voters of Trump were 3% African American, 25% Hispanic women, 16% non-White, and 62% White (CNN, 2016; BBC, 2016; New York Times, 2016).

## **BACKGROUND**

From 1980 to 2012, American women voters have typically shown support for Democratic candidates. Women are 8% more likely than men to vote for a Democratic candidate (Chaturvedi, 2016). Women’s votes greatly influenced U.S. politics in the past two decades. In recent presidential elections, among Asian Pacific Islanders, Blacks, Hispanics, and Whites, the number of female voters have exceeded that of male voters (American Women and Politics, 2015). In 2012, 2.1 million Asian women as compared to 1.8 million Asian men, 10.4 million Black women as compared to 7.4 million Black men, 6 million Hispanic women as compared to 5.2 million Hispanic men, and 51.8 million White women as compared to 46.3 White men voted. Women outnumbered men as registered voters and have higher turnout rates. Omero and McGuinness (2012) believe that women’s votes have changed the outcome of American elections.

Hillary Clinton was the first female presidential candidate in American history. Polls before the election consistently predicted that Clinton would win, but results were otherwise. Clinton won the popular vote by 3 million, but Trump won the electoral votes. The 2016 election raised many questions. This study examines minority women’s standpoint on a campaign which did not seem to represent minority women’s best interests. The implication behind the voters’ decision-making is worthy of critical scrutiny. Women’s participatory roles in democratic society are becoming more and more important in modern American politics. Minority women’s voting behaviors, the ideologies they follow, and their political discourses in a hegemonic political system deserves attention.

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