

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

The Daughters Vote

THE SOURCE: "Female Socialization: How Daughters Affect Their Legislator Fathers' Voting on Women's Issues" by Ebonya L. Washington, in *American Economic Review*, March 2008.

POLITICAL SCIENTISTS HAVE spent decades weighing the factors that sway individual votes in the U.S. House of Representatives: party affiliation, constituent preferences, and a legislator's personal opinions and characteristics. Ebonya L. Washington, an economist at Yale University, has identified another influence: daughters. Each female child a member of the House has, Washington found, significantly increases the likelihood that the legislator will cast a liberal vote, particularly on reproductive rights issues.

Washington used the voting scorecards compiled by the American Association of University Women, the National Organization for Women (NOW), and the National Right to

Life Coalition to gauge the impact of having a female child on votes related to women's issues. All but a few of the legislators were men. Among House members with two children, those with one daughter earned an average score from NOW nine points higher than that of lawmakers with two sons (out of 100 total points). Members with two daughters and no sons scored 18 points more than those with just one daughter. Washington found a similar effect among both Democrats and Republicans, regardless of which organization's scorecard and which Congress she examined. All of the scores were from the 1997–2004 period.

When looking at a legislator's entire voting record, Washington found that having female children was correlated with a propensity to take the liberal side, and the strongest effect was always on legislation concerning reproductive rights. She speculates that legislators think about how their votes will affect people they know personally, so it's not too surprising that people who call them Daddy have a powerful influence.

trickiest to pull off, convince your constituents to vote *against* the sitting president's reelection. Though it may seem counterintuitive, Taylor reports that "states that gave the president less of their popular vote in his reelection received significantly more procurement dollars per capita in his second term." Why? Stressing that his theory is "highly speculative," Taylor thinks the answer may have to do with the peculiar nature of lame-duck politics. Second-term presidents may steer federal dollars toward particular states to "buy legislative votes—rather than popular ones—in support of their agenda." Legislators from states that didn't support the president are "predisposed to oppose the administration," which may make them all the more receptive to procurement pressure. They will support the president—in return for those lucrative contracts—and still reap all the credit from the voters they represent. More pork, anyone?

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

Unmasking the Surge

THE SOURCE: "The Price of the Surge" by Steven Simon, in *Foreign Affairs*, May–June 2008.

EVEN THE MOST PARTISAN Democrats in Washington acknowledge that last summer's "surge" of

troops has reduced the killing in Iraq, and some Republicans say the strategy has finally cleared the way for victory. But the tactics that have made Iraqis safer in the short run may have the opposite effect over time, says Steven

Simon, senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

The surge has lessened the violence only in tandem with home-grown developments, such as the "grim successes" of ethnic cleansing that have driven warring Sunni and Shiite Muslims from mixed neighborhoods and villages, Simon writes. The troop buildup also coincided with a breakdown in the alliance between Sunni tribes and Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia. In the months