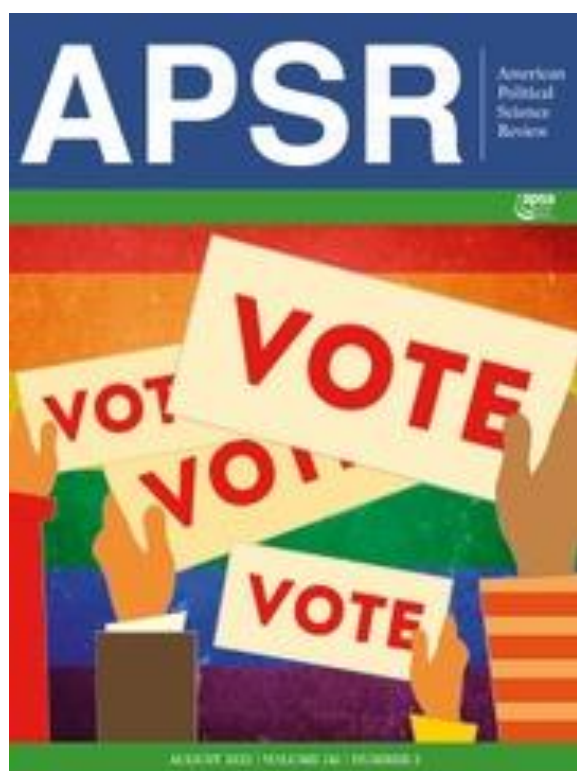


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ABSTRACT:

Women in Congress are highly effective legislators. Yet, if women are more likely than men to be interrupted during committee work, they may face a gender-related impediment. We examine speech patterns during more than 24,000 congressional committee hearings from 1994 to 2018 to determine whether women Members are more likely to be interrupted than men. We find that they are. This is especially true in Senate committees—where women are about 10% more likely to be interrupted. Furthermore, in hearings that discuss women’s issues, women are more than twice as likely to be interrupted than while discussing other issues. We see a similar pattern for rapid-fire “interruption clusters,” an aggressive form of interruption. We further consider a range of moderating factors, which yields little evidence that women change their communication strategy as they gain experience in Congress. We also find suggestive evidence that interruptions are driven by mixed-gender interactions.

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