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# **All the Single Ladies: Job Promotions and the Durability of Marriage**

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This paper addresses women's under-representation in top jobs in organizational hierarchies. We show that promotions to top jobs dramatically increase women's probability of divorce, but do not affect men's marriages. This effect is causally estimated for top jobs in the political sector, where close electoral results deliver exogenous variation in promotions across job candidates. Descriptive evidence from job promotions to the position of CEO shows that private sector promotions result in the same gender inequality in the risk of divorce. A description of male and female job candidates' household formations sheds some light on the mechanism behind this result. For most male candidates for top jobs, their promotion aligns with the gender-specialized division of paid and unpaid labor in their households. Many female candidates for top jobs live in dual-earner households and are married to older husbands who take a small share of parental leave. Divorce among women in top jobs occurs more often in couples with a larger age gap and a less equal division of leave, and in households in which her promotion shifts the division of earnings (further) away from the norm of male dominance. No divorce effect is found in couples that are more gender-equal in terms of having a smaller age gap and a more equal division of parental leave. We argue that norms and behavior in the marriage market hinder the closure of the gender gap in the labor market.

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# 1. Introduction

The economic and social roles of men and women have been converging in recent decades. Women in Western democracies have largely caught up with men in terms of labor force participation, tertiary education, and career expectations (Goldin 2006). What lags behind is women's *realization* of those career goals. In 2015, men accounted for 95% of CEOs in Forbes 500 firms and more than 75% of the world's parliamentarians ([www.fortune.org](http://www.fortune.org), [www.ipu.org](http://www.ipu.org)). Men's continued dominance at the top of organizational hierarchies translates into gender inequalities of status, voice, and earnings (e.g. Albrecht, Bjorklund, and Vroman 2003; Arulampalam, Booth, and Bryan 2007).

One potential reason for women's slower career progressions is that a job promotion for a woman causes more stress and strain on the household than the job promotion of a man. A substantive number of research articles have shown that the probability of divorce increases when women – but not men – enter the labor market or increase their earnings.<sup>1</sup> In surveys, women who "have it all" also report lower average scores on life satisfaction and emotional well-being than women who "only" have a family (Bertrand 2013). Recent research has even suggested that women hold back in their own careers to avoid becoming more successful than their husbands (Bertrand, Kamenica, and Pan 2015), and are more likely than men to refrain from seeking top jobs because of household pressures (Silberman 2015).

In this paper, we offer the first empirical analysis of how the promotion to a top job in the economy affects the marriage durability of men and women. We find that a promotion to a top job leads to an increased rate of divorce among women, but not among men. The second half the paper evaluates possible mechanisms for this finding. We characterize the household formations of male and female candidates for top jobs, and evaluate which of these characteristics are related to an increased probability of divorce. Our analysis is carried out using Swedish register data and targets promotions to three types of top jobs. Two of these jobs are at the pinnacle of power in the public sector – local mayors and national parliamentarians. The third type of job is in the private sector: CEOs of companies with more than 100 employees. These three positions typify "top jobs" in the economy because they have high status, long work hours, and average earnings in the top 5 percentile of the income distribution (authors' calculations, see Web Appendix Figure W1).

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<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Becker, Landes, and Michael 1977; Johnson and Skinner 1986; Weiss and Willis 1997; Oppenheimer 1997; Heckert, Nowak, and Snyder 1998; Jalovaara 2003; Liu and Vikat 2004; Kesselring and Bremmer 2010, but c.f. Rogers 2004; Newman and Olivetti 2015. Conversely, papers have also linked the negative economic shock of unemployment to an increased divorce risk when the unemployment hits the husband, but not when it hits the wife (Rege, Telle, and Votruba 2007; Charles and Stephens 2004; Eliasson 2012; Doiron and Mendolia 2012).

Our analysis of these promotions complements previous work on the link between labor market performance and marriage durability. Whereas previous work has examined increases in earnings and labor market participation, we target the event of the promotion itself. Previous studies have struggled with reverse causality, but our identification strategy allows us to estimate the causal effect of promotion on divorce.<sup>2</sup> Our causal identification strategy is applicable to the two political jobs (we use descriptive evidence to study private sector promotions), and relies on electoral results that deliver exogenous assignment of the promotions across observable job candidates.

Our paper uncovers tension between the development of gender equality in the labor market vs. the marriage market. We use detailed administrative data to characterize the household formations of male and female candidates for top jobs and find that they are strikingly traditional for both genders. In the households of both female and male candidates, the wife is younger and has taken the vast majority of the parental leave. Our descriptive analysis links the divorce impact of the promotion to couples for which the woman's progressive labor market behavior, that is, her promotion to a top job, conflicts with gender-traditional behavior in the household. Divorces are more likely to occur when the wife is younger than her husband by a greater margin, and where she took a larger share of the couple's total parental leave. Arguably, these are the couples where the promotion of the wife contrasts more with the expectations of future behavior at the time of couple formation (e.g. Becker, Landes, and Michael 1977).<sup>3</sup> Another interpretation is that the promotion caused the most stressful re-negotiation of economic and social roles in these households (e.g. Coverman 1989).

Another important finding comes from analyzing the distribution of earnings between the husband and wife. We define households as "traditional" if the husband make more than 60% of total earnings, "reverse traditional" if the wife makes more than 60%, and "dual-earner" if neither spouse earns more than 60 or less than 40%. The results do not link a greater likelihood of divorce to belonging to any one category prior to the promotion. What we find is, instead, a large gender difference in the correlation between the probability of a divorce and experiencing a promotion that shifts earnings from dual-earner into dominant earner territory. Among women whose promotions make them the dominant earner, i.e. making more than 60% of household income, more than 15% divorced within three years after the promotion.<sup>4</sup> In the corresponding group for men, only 3% had divorced. Both

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<sup>2</sup> for discussions of reverse causality between divorce, earnings, and labor market participation, see e.g. Greene and Quester 1982; Johnson and Skinner 1986; Stevenson 2007

<sup>3</sup> This interpretation is consistent with recent evidence that marriage durability is undercut by a (forced) shift in the division of parental investments away from the social norm of gender specialization (Avdic and Karimi 2016).

<sup>4</sup> The size of the promoted woman's increase in earnings – as a proportion of either her pre-promotion earnings level or total household income – is unlikely to be an underlying cause of this finding. Split-sample analysis shows no systematic variation between the probability of divorce and these two variables. To some extent, these

numbers stand out against the benchmark of divorces over time in the control groups of men and women who are not promoted, which is about 6% in each group. These results are in the spirit of Bertrand, Kamenica, and Pan (2015) by suggesting that social norms on relative earnings between the spouses are important for marriage utility.

There are many benefits of the administrative register data we use for our analysis. These registers contain a large number of socioeconomic variables for all candidates for mayor and MP and, for all married candidates, their spouses as well. We also know the precise year of every divorce. At no point are we forced to rely on self-reported or recall data for economic or relationship histories, and missing data are extremely rare. This rich and reliable data allow us to conduct detailed tests of the identifying assumption of our identification strategy. In other words, we can ensure that individual and household characteristics are balanced between the job candidates who were either treated (promoted) or not treated (not promoted). Yet another advantage is that the registers record annual data for a long time period, allowing us to rule out the existence of pre-trend marriage durability prior to the promotion event.

There are also several data limitations. There is no register variable for which spouse initiated the divorce. We also lack a good annual measure of the division of household work, meaning that we cannot examine spousal responses to the promotion along this dimension. Moreover, while Sweden diligently records all marriages, cohabitation is not measured accurately. We chose to focus only on marriages here, and leave cohabitants for future research, because nearly two-thirds of the job candidates in our sample were married the year before the promotion event.<sup>5</sup>

It is important to mention that Sweden has one of the most gender-egalitarian societies in the world. It is known for its strong ideational and policy support for dual-earner families. Universal, low-cost child care is available, and surveys of norms show top levels of popular support for gender equality (World and European Value Surveys, various waves). These policies and attitudes lead to high levels of labor force participation among married women (aged 20–59) – more than 80% since the early 1980s (Gustafsson and Jacobsson 1985). Recent research also shows that in Sweden, being a professional woman is (no longer) associated with giving up on having children (Boschini et al. 2011) or getting married (Bertrand et al. 2016). Therefore, we argue that developments in the Swedish labor and

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findings contradict previous theory and evidence on women's labor market entry, which is of course a different margin of labor market performance than the one studied here (e.g. Oppenheimer 1994; Becker, Landes, and Michael 1977; Edlund 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Contrary to popular belief, the institution of marriage continues to be prevalent in Sweden: it currently has the highest marriage rate in the European Union (Statistics Sweden 2015).

marriage markets can be interpreted as a sign of events to come in the more gender-equal futures of other countries.

Our study contributes to several research literatures in economics, political science, and sociology. In economics, we contribute to the growing discussion of the causes and consequences of career inequality by gender (e.g. Lazear and Rosen 1990; Bertrand, Goldin, and Katz 2010; Bjerk 2008; Booth, Francesconi, and Frank 2003; Smith, Smith, and Verner 2013). We also contribute to the sub-field of political economics with the (to our knowledge) first analysis of the non-monetary costs of holding political office.<sup>6</sup> In the political science literature, descriptive evidence abounds that female policy makers are more likely to be divorced or single than their male colleagues (e.g. Carroll and Sanbonmatsu 2013). We add a causal direction to this correlation. Our findings also suggest the theoretical point that gender differences in household formation, and norms related to that formation, could be an important supply factor and/or institution that shapes gender representation in politics (Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Krook and McKay 2011). For sociologists, our causal study of the impact of promotion contributes to the large literature on the drivers of marriage dissolution (see e.g. footnote 1; Amato and Previti 2003; Schwarz and Han 2014).

Finally, is the finding that job promotion causes divorce among women a good thing or a bad thing? We will argue that, although a divorce may well improve an individual woman's welfare, the implications for society are largely negative. Our argument is based on the assumption that human talent for top positions is evenly distributed among men and women in society. We also note that the vast majority of men and women put "family" at the top of their list of priorities for life satisfaction.<sup>7</sup> A situation in which a promoted woman's family becomes a source of tension, but a man's family may (even) be a source of support, implies that the most suitable individuals are not being channeled to society's top jobs. We provide some descriptive analysis that supports this reflection. Analyzing career developments after the promotion, divorce is found to be correlated with improved career performance among women but poorer career performance among men.

The paper is organized as follows. We start by describing the data and identification strategy for the two political promotions. We then characterize the individual and couple characteristics for the job candidates and test for a balance of traits across treatment and control groups. This is followed by empirical tests of the causal impact of the political promotion(s) on marriage durability and descriptive analyses of CEO promotions. The second half of the paper leaves identification behind as we delve

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<sup>6</sup> A number of papers have examined monetary costs either empirically (e.g. Eggers and Hainmueller 2009; Lundqvist 2015; Fisman, Schulz, and Vig 2014) or theoretically (e.g. Diermeier, Keane, and Merlo 2005; Mattozzi and Merlo 2008).

<sup>7</sup> Even in secularized countries like Sweden, more than 98% of women and men in the 2010 World Value Survey reported that "Family" is "important" or "very important" in their lives (WVS 2010).

deeper into possible mechanisms. By splitting the sample by household and individual characteristics, we look for factors that mediate the impact of promotion on divorce. A final empirical section makes a brief comment on the normative implications of our findings, and the last section of the paper concludes.

## 2. Swedish register data

Our dataset combines several administrative records kept by the Swedish government and recorded based on mandatory personal ID numbers. It covers the country's entire working-age population with yearly observations that span 21 years, 1991–2012. We use the Marriage Register to link spouses to each other and to determine whether they divorced. Sweden has no-fault divorce, and couples are not required to undergo mediation or a period of living separately. In most cases, divorce proceedings can be processed as quickly as within one month. If at least one spouse demands it, or if the couple has children below 16 years of age, the divorce law specifies a 6-month cooling-off period between filing for and finalizing a divorce. About 40% of the couples in our data have children under 18, meaning that some non-negligible proportion of the divorces in a specific year were initiated in the year before. After a divorce, the couple's assets are divided equally, but apart from child custody payments there is no alimony (maintenance/spousal support) to retroactively compensate spouses for labor market decisions within the household.

Co-habitation is not perfectly measured in Swedish registers. Joint family ID codes are assigned if the couple has a child together or lives together in a private home. Couples without children or who live in apartments are thus excluded. Our study does not extend to cohabitation for this reason, and also because a large share of individuals in our sample – 60% of women and 70% of men – are married prior to their promotion.

Our socioeconomic variables are taken from the longitudinal integration database for health insurance and labor market studies (LISA, according to its Swedish acronym). This database includes data from tax records on wage income, income from business ownership, and parental leave (variable definitions are discussed further in Section 5). Additional background variables taken from LISA are sex, birth year, birth region, education type and length, industry code, and occupation code.

We can identify all politicians because political parties must report all candidates (including their personal ID code) to the electoral authority. For each politician, we know their rank order on their party's electoral ballot in each election and whether or not they were elected. We can also identify CEOs with a special algorithm developed by Statistics Sweden and using a combination of register variables such as occupation codes, industry codes, and earnings (Andersson and Andersson 2009).

### 3. Empirical strategy

Our empirical strategy can be summarized as follows. We analyze the three promotions using two types of methods. We conduct a standard graphical event study for each, in which we choose a time window around the promotion event and plot the average probability of staying married to the same spouse over time, before and after the promotion. For the two political promotions, we also run formal regressions. The first half of the empirical effort is dedicated to examining how a promotion affects divorces among male vs. female candidates for the three top jobs. It consists of a graphical and formal analysis of the political promotions, and a graphical analysis of the private sector promotions. The second half explores the possible mechanisms underlying this impact. Due to the sample size, this is only done for the political promotions. We study mechanisms by splitting the sample of job candidates based on theoretically relevant background variables in order to determine whether the promotion effect on divorce is more salient in some circumstances than others. Focus is placed on split sample analysis based on i) the division of paid labor in the household, ii) the division of parental leave, and iii) the spousal age-gap. Graphical results for these split-sample analyses are shown in the main text; formal regression results are available in the Appendix.

The claim of causality in our empirical approach is based on the fact that electoral results sometimes deliver quasi-random variation in job promotions between two observable candidates. Some characteristics of the Swedish political system are important for the validity of this approach. We first consider the margin of random variation that we use for the position of *parliamentarian*. For this margin, it is important to note that candidates for political office are selected by political parties rather than by voters. Sweden has a list-based Proportional Representation, i.e. PR, electoral system in which political parties control the rank order of the electoral ballot(s), which represents the hierarchy of power within the party. Over time, a person climbs their way upward through the ranks, which is similar to climbing the career ladder of a private firm. The seats that the party wins in an election are then allocated starting at the top of this list. On each ballot in the 29 electoral districts, this gives us a potential margin of variation in promotion between the last elected person (i.e. the lowest-ranked candidate who got elected) and the first unelected person (the highest-ranked person who did not get elected).<sup>8</sup> For the vast majority of parliamentarians, getting elected represents a rise

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<sup>8</sup>Since 1998, Swedish voters can cast one voluntary preference vote for any candidate on the ballot of the party that they vote for. There are three reasons that this system does not impact on whom of the marginal candidates is elected and, therefore, unimportant for our analysis. First, only one third of the voters utilize their voluntary vote. Second, the vast majority of those who do, vote for top candidates on the ballot rather than marginal candidates. Third, the threshold of votes needed to win a seat is prohibitively high (see Folke, Person and Rickne 2016 for a detailed description).



in income and status. Lundqvist (2015) shows that getting elected raises an individuals' average lifetime disposable income by 20%.

In the case of promotion to *mayor*, another important characteristic of the political system comes into play to extract a margin of random variation in promotions. Each of Sweden's 290 municipalities has a mayor who is not directly elected by popular vote but is instead appointed by a specific political party according to the basic principles of parliamentary democracy with multiple parties. After the election, political parties come together to form a governing coalition, the largest of which appoints the mayor. Swedish political coalitions are usually formed by parties that belong to the same political bloc (i.e. left or right bloc) (Alesina, Roubini, and Cohen 1997). This means that there are two rivals for the position of mayor: the top politician from the largest party in the left bloc and the top politician from the largest party in the right bloc. Just as the process of climbing upward through the ranks of an electoral ballot over time is similar to upward career moves in a private company, the selection of the top name, the party leader, is comparable to the selection of a manager. In nine cases out of ten, the person who is appointed mayor is the first-ranked person on the electoral ballot of the largest political party in the governing coalition.<sup>9</sup>

Since the largest party in the governing bloc appoints the mayor, narrow electoral results between the blocs deliver as-good-as-random variation in which of the two rivals wins. If the left bloc wins the majority by a narrow margin, its top-ranked politician is promoted and the right bloc's top-ranked politician is not, and vice versa. The loser normally becomes the opposition leader, usually known as the vice mayor, a role that has substantially less influence, work hours, and responsibilities. On average over our sample period, a promotion from vice mayor to mayor causes an immediate increase in annual earnings of 25%.<sup>10</sup>

For both parliamentarians and mayors, we construct two variables that capture the degree of exogenous variation in the promotion, that is, how close the margin of victory was for the winning politician or political bloc. We name these variables "close" and "very close" elections. For the position of mayor, this variable captures how similar the two political blocs were in size. A close election is defined as when the winning bloc's win margin (that is, its share of the total vote) is below 5%. The win margin of a very close election is less than 2.5% of the vote. The details of how we calculate these variables are described in Section W1 of the Web Appendix. Calculating the margin of victory for

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<sup>9</sup> Using data from 1991–2010, we know which party appointed the mayor and can verify that when either bloc obtained more than 50% of the seats, the largest party in that bloc had a 90% probability of appointing the mayor. For 2006 and 2010 we also have the exact identity of the mayor and can also verify that this person was the top-ranked individual on the electoral ballot of the largest governing party in nine cases out of ten.

<sup>10</sup> In-depth descriptions of the positions of mayor and vice mayor can be found in Nilsson 2001; Jonsson 2003; and Montin 2007

parliamentary elections has two elements of complexity. First, the parliamentary seats are allocated in two rounds, at the district and national levels, and the seat allocation is proportional to the national vote share. Second, the win margin measured in vote share should be interpreted as a closer win margin in a large party than in a small party. We follow Freier and Odendahl (2015) and adopt a pure simulation approach to calculate the margin. A close election is defined as a party losing its last (marginal) seat in at least 30% of the simulations, and very close if it loses that seat in at least 40% of the simulations. A detailed description of this approach is available in Section W1 of the Web Appendix.

Armed with our variables that define close elections, we specify a sample of married individuals who have not previously held either job (described in the next section). We then run a regression in which the outcome variable is a dummy for remaining married to the same spouse three years after the "promotion event" – that is, the election that assigned the top job to either one of the candidates. The independent variable of interest is a dummy that takes a value of 1 for promoted individuals, and 0 for those who ran for the office but lost. Estimations are conducted for both men and women together, using an interaction model, and in split samples of men and women separately. For the convenience of the reader, the regression specification is described in detail in conjunction with the results (see Section 7.2).

An important aspect of our empirical approach is that we consider the split-sample analysis by gender as an estimate of a causal effect, but not the estimates for the interaction model. To phrase this differently, we do not expect that gender mediates the effect of promotion on divorce, so that the estimate on the interaction variable is an impact of *sex per se*. Instead, we expect that women and men who become candidates for top jobs may have different, for example, different divisions of paid and unpaid labor at the household level, and which can explain why a top promotion has a differential impact. This is precisely the type of mechanisms that we target when we split the sample by background characteristics in the latter half of the paper, but the empirical evidence in this section consists of correlations rather than causal estimates.

A final note relates to the empirical approach of the degree to which an analysis of political appointments has external validity outside political organizations. In addition to the previous discussion of career ladders and the role of voters in proportional electoral systems, another important point of comparability with the private sector is that the family life of Swedish politicians is generally kept private. In this party-centered electoral system, campaign funds come from the government's coffers instead of being raised by individuals. With the exception of national party leaders, the private lives of individual politicians are rarely mentioned in the media. This is due to both media norms that keep family life out of the public eye and to the smaller role of individuals in a system in which parliamentary votes nearly always follow party lines.

## 4. Sample selection

We will now describe how we select the estimation sample of job candidates for the two political positions. The parliamentary candidate sample includes every pair of marginal candidates from all the electoral ballots of all parties in all elections (1991–2010). We only omit the extremely small proportion of electoral ballots from which preference votes alone resulted in the election of at least one parliamentarian. The mayoral candidate sample includes all top-ranked persons on the municipal electoral ballots of the two largest parties in both political blocs. The vast majority of local political parties only have one ballot per election. We drop the remaining cases, i.e. parties that offer more than one ballot, which comprise less than 2% of the sample.

Parties' electoral fortunes can shift over time to allow politicians to first win, then lose, and then recapture the top job. To correct for this, we only include persons in the estimation sample who have never held either of the two political jobs in the past. We allow close losers to appear in the dataset more than once, but cluster the standard errors at the level of the individual. While a robustness check shows that the main result is not sensitive to excluding these "repeating losers," the analysis in which we split the main estimation sample based on background characteristics quickly suffers from small-sample issues. We therefore keep the repeating losers throughout to avoid going back and forth between different estimation samples.

Swedish elections are held in September, and new positions are assumed in January of the following year. We denote the election year  $t = 0$  and the first year that the person holds the position as  $t = 1$ . Because we are interested in the impact of divorce on the durability of marriages, we restrict the estimation sample to persons who were married to someone at  $t = 0$ . Starting from the sample of all elections (close and not close), this restriction removes 35% of the women and 25% of the men. Each of the two political jobs has a term of four years. The last year of this term is our comparison point for changes in the durability of a marriage. It is denoted  $t = 3$  and is the last year of the election period before the next election takes place.

Politicians do not have a formal retirement age, but many retire at Sweden's formal retirement age of 65. We drop politicians who reach this age before the end of the estimation window (before  $t = 3$ ) to avoid confounding the estimated effect with impacts on marriage durability from labor market exit. The non-retirement restriction removes an additional 10% of women and men, respectively. The final sample size is 642 women and 1,293 men.

## 5. Descriptive statistics and balance of pre-promotion traits

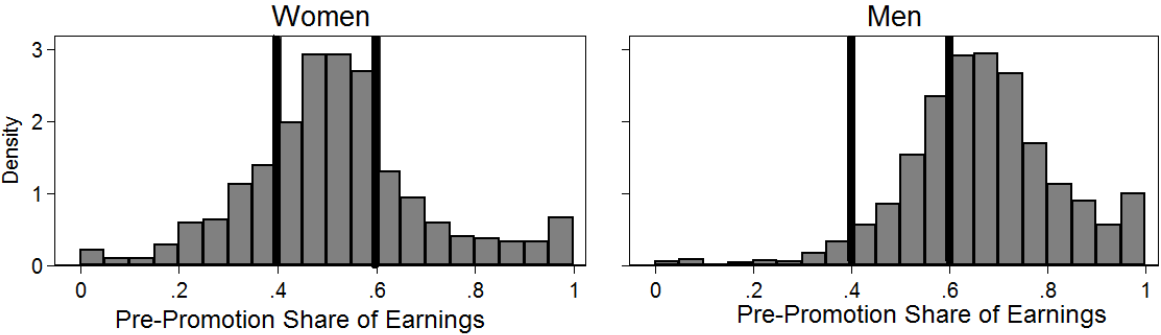
This section compares the descriptive traits of men and women who are candidates for the two top jobs in politics. We want to test the identifying assumption that job promotions are randomly assigned. If the assumption is correct, the treatment and control groups should not differ on observable or unobservable characteristics that are related to marriage durability.

The second aim is to explore why, while there are largely no differences in descriptive characteristics between close winners and losers *within* genders, there are certainly differences *between* genders. Men and women who become candidates for top jobs are similar on some dimensions and different on others. As we discussed in the introduction, the marriage market and the division of unpaid labor has not shown the same speed of progressive developments as the paid labor market. Moreover, and as also mentioned above, these differences preclude us from interpreting the interaction effect between female sex and promotion as a causal estimate, but they are highly relevant for our analysis of the mechanisms behind our main result. We present three measures that capture differences between men's and women's couple formation and division of paid and unpaid labor.

We start by describing the distribution of paid labor within the household, basing the comparison on annual earnings, measured as the sum of deflated annual earnings from jobs and business ownership. For each person, we then take the average of these sums over the three years prior to the election ( $t = -3$ ,  $t = -2$ , and  $t = -1$ ). Using this average rather than a single year provides a more stable measure of earnings, which balances out year-to-year variability from temporary labor market absences or from events such as temporary unemployment, sickness, or parental leave.

We compute the politician's earnings as a share of total household earnings and show the distribution of this variable in Figure 1. We also introduce a stylized division of household types to illustrate gender differences. These types are defined based on the degree of gender-based specialization (following e.g. Becker, Landes, and Michael 1977; Becker 1981; Lundberg and Pollak 2007). When the husband is the dominant earner, this specialization complies with traditional gender norms and is therefore labeled a "traditional" household (e.g. Fortin 2005; Bertrand, Kamenica, and Pan 2015). When the woman is the dominant earner, we label the household "reverse traditional." Dominant earners are defined as making more than 60% of household income. The remaining households, in which neither spouse makes less than 40% or more than 60% of total earnings, are defined as "dual earner." In Figure 1, household types are delineated with vertical black lines.

The distribution of household types in Figure 1 shows that about half of the female politicians are in dual-earner households, 25% are in traditional households, and 25% in reverse traditional households. Of the men, nearly 75% are in traditional households, 20% in dual-earner households, and 5% are in reverse traditional households. In sum, the women who become candidates for top jobs have relatively progressive divisions of paid labor in their households, while most male candidates have traditional divisions of paid labor.



**Figure 1.** Distribution of the politicians’ pre-promotion share of total household earnings

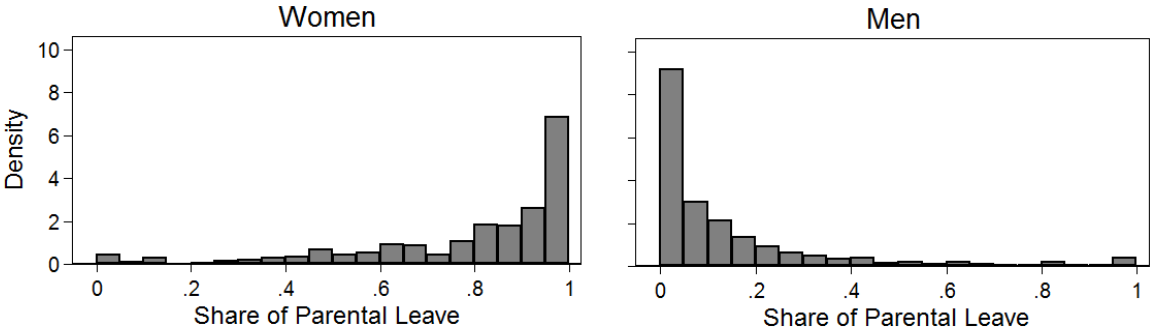
Notes: the black lines represent divisions of household types. If the woman makes less than 40% of total earnings, the household is defined as "traditional"; if neither spouse earns more or less than 40-60% of earnings, the household is defined as "dual earner"; and if the wife makes more than 60% of total earnings, the household is defined as "reverse traditional".

As noted in the paper's introduction, women's entry into the paid labor force has generally not involved men taking on a greater share of household duties. Instead of sharing in household work, women have largely taken on the household as a "second shift," as famously documented by Hochschild (1989). High-earning women are not immune: they have repeatedly been found to take on an even greater share of the household duties than women who earn less (e.g. Bittman et al. 2003, Kleven, Landais, and Sogaard 2015).

While we cannot measure how couples divide the totality of their household responsibilities in each year, we can calculate how they shared their parental leave. In Sweden, parental leave is a large time investment. The insurance covers 480 days of paid leave per child, 390 at a wage-replacement rate of 80% and the remaining 180 days at a fixed payment rate of 20 euro. Uptake is also high: in 2005, the average mother had used 342 days (71% of the total) by the time that the child had turned two years old, and the average father had used 53 days (11% of the total) (Statistics Sweden 2016). In our sample, about 85% of the men and women have at least one child with their spouse at the time of promotion. Our dataset includes a variable for the amount of parental leave insurance paid to each person in each year. From 1993, it also includes the number of days of leave. To minimize missing values, we compute the politician's share of total leave as his or her share of total insurance payments.

Payments are summed for the three first years of each child's life and, if the couple has more than one child, averaged out across all children. This calculation is only done for joint children, not for children from previous relationships. Section W2 of the Web Appendix shows that the division of leave based on payments is highly correlated with the division of leave measured in days, which we can compute for children born from 1993 and after.

The division of parental leave can be thought of as an indicator of the subsequent division of household labor. But given the weak correlations in previous studies of men's parental leave and other household tasks (reviewed by Dearing 2015), it is probably a better indicator of the specialization behaviors of the household in the early phase of the relationship. Clearly, the distribution in Figure 2 shows a high prevalence of gender-based specialization in both men's and women's marriages. The vast majority of the women have taken more than 80% of the family's parental leave, and the vast majority of the men have taken less than 20%. Figure W5 in the Web Appendix sub-divides the sample by the household division of earnings (traditional, dual earner, or reverse traditional). Perhaps surprisingly, the degree of gender-based specialization in parental leave is highly similar in families with more traditional and progressive divisions of paid labor.

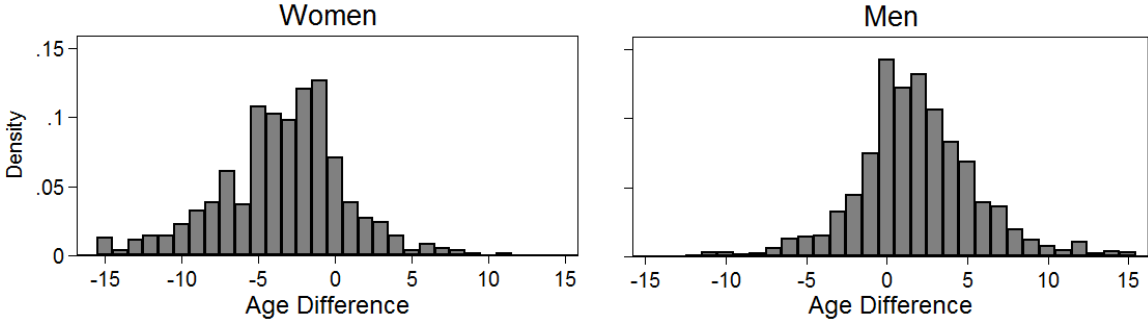


**Figure 2.** The political job candidate's share of total parental leave

A third description of the households is based on the age gap between the husband and wife. A larger age gap may indicate that the family is organized around gains from specialization, that is, an economic organization where the spouses specialize in the roles of homemaker and provider (Becker 1981). In the case that the wife is younger, that specialization also conforms to social norms about the wife being the homemaker and the husband the provider (Eagly 1987).<sup>11</sup> A larger age gap -- in either direction -- could also be an indicator of match quality (Becker 1973, 1974).

<sup>11</sup> in terms of social exchange theory, the couple is organized to benefit from social exchanges that transfer economic resources from the husband to the wife and resources such as sex and children from the wife to the husband (following Thibaut and Kelley 1959).

The distribution in Figure 3 shows that our sample of job candidates is matched in a traditional fashion. More than 80% of the women are married to a man who is older than them (persons born in the same year are considered to be the same age). Of the men in the sample, 65% are married to someone younger.



**Figure 3.** Age difference between the political job candidate and his or her spouse

We now compare traits to check the identifying assumption that treated and untreated men and – separately – women are similar on observable characteristics that are correlated with the outcome. Table 1 compares numerous pre-promotion traits within genders between persons who were (subsequently) promoted and those who were (subsequently) not. A simple regression is used to detect statistically significant differences at the 5% level.<sup>12</sup> The comparison is shown for the full count of elections (left-hand side) and for the sample of close elections (right-hand side). Web Appendix Tables W1 and W2 separate the promotions of mayors and parliamentarians.

Apart from the three household characteristics described above, we extract other relevant traits from academic research on the drivers of divorce (see e.g. Becker, Landes, and Michael 1977; Weiss and Willis 1997; Amato and Previti 2003). These include both individual and household characteristics. Individual measures include age, age at marriage, earnings, and a dummy variable for having completed tertiary education. At the household level, we include a dummy for whether the politician's earnings are higher than the spouse's earnings, marriage length, a dummy for whether the marriage is not the politician's first one, a dummy for whether both spouses were born in Sweden, and two dummies for whether the household has children, one including at least one child aged 0-17 and the other for having at least one child aged 0–6. Earnings are computed in the same way as before. Because none of the other variables can be affected by the election/campaign work, they are measured in the election year ( $t = 0$ ).

<sup>12</sup> We run a regression instead of a t-test so that we can cluster the standard errors at the level of the individual politician.

**Table 1.** Comparison of pre-promotion traits

	Full sample				Close elections (<5% win margin)			
	Women		Men		Women		Men	
Subsequently promoted	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<i>Couple characteristics</i>								
*Politician's share of earnings (%)	<b>0.57</b>	<b>0.53</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.66</b>	<b>0.59</b>	<b>0.54</b>	0.69	0.65
*Politician's share of parental leave (%)	0.82	0.81	0.13	0.15	0.82	0.81	0.14	0.15
*Age difference (politician-spouse)	-3.59	-3.99	1.80	1.91	-4.20	-4.16	1.73	2.18
Politician out-earns spouse (%)	<b>0.66</b>	<b>0.52</b>	0.90	0.87	0.67	0.57	0.90	0.89
Marriage length (years)	19.72	19.24	19.59	19.37	19.21	18.32	18.92	19.04
Second marriage (%)	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.00
Same birth region (%) (1)	0.89	0.91	0.94	0.93	0.90	0.91	0.94	0.94
Has children (0–17)	0.41	0.39	0.50	0.45	0.41	0.42	0.51	0.45
Has children (0–6)	0.12	0.12	0.14	0.14	0.12	0.16	0.15	0.13
<i>Individual characteristics</i>								
Politician's age	48.29	48.17	<b>49.35</b>	<b>50.34</b>	48.18	47.73	49.18	49.97
Politician's age at marriage (2)	28.56	28.93	<b>29.76</b>	<b>30.96</b>	28.97	29.41	30.26	30.93
Politician's earnings (3)	<b>334.5</b>	<b>286.5</b>	<b>367.9</b>	<b>338.3</b>	<b>354.9</b>	<b>303.0</b>	372.6	360.1
Politician's tertiary education (%)	0.65	0.68	0.53	0.53	0.65	0.72	0.55	0.53
Spouse's age	51.90	52.14	47.55	48.40	52.39	51.89	47.45	47.80
Spouse's earnings	280.9	289.0	173.2	177.6	293.4	280.5	173.5	186.5
Spouse's tertiary education (%)	0.41	0.48	0.55	0.52	0.45	0.49	0.55	0.57
Observations	231	414	516	783	133	169	325	278

Notes: Bold letters represent differences between promoted and non-promoted individuals of the same sex at the 5% level or lower, using ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions with standard errors clustered at the individual level.

(1) The variable takes the value 1 if the two spouses are from different birth regions, and zero otherwise. The categorization of birth regions consists of: Sweden, Other Nordic countries, EU27 excluding Nordic countries, Asia (including the Middle East), Europe excluding Nordic countries and EU27, South America, Africa, North America, Soviet Union and Oceania.

(2) We only know the exact year of marriage for persons who married after 1979. For those married before 1979 we define the year of marriage as the year that the couple's first child was born. For couples already married in 1979 and with no children born before that year, we count 1979 as the year of marriage. This approximation was previously used by e.g. Ginther and Sundström (2010).

(3) All measures of earnings are in units of 1,000s SEK (1 SEK  $\approx$  0.12 USD).

Table 1 shows that traits are largely balanced. Only a handful of traits is unbalanced in the full sample, and the differences are not large in absolute terms. In the close elections sample, only two



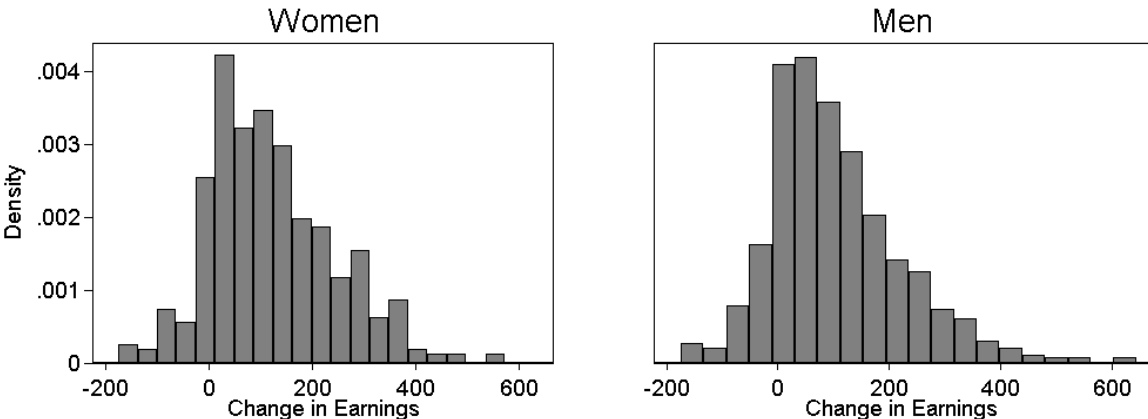
traits remain unbalanced in the female sample (in practice, only one trait since the politician's share of household earnings is a function of her own earnings). As an extra precaution, we control for these pre-promotion traits as a robustness check in the main analysis.

Together with the description of household types, which were clearly different between the men and women in our sample, the description in Table 1 shows that men and women are also very similar on other traits. They have similar age at promotion, age at marriage, order of marriage, marriage length, level of earnings before the promotion, probability of having children, and probability of being in a marriage where the spouses are born in different regions of the world.

### 6. Comparing men's and women's promotions

Our analysis of mechanisms for gender differences in the impact of promotions on divorce will focus on household characteristics. Although this analysis is not causal, it is worth checking whether there are other significant differences that could be driving the result, for example that women and men receive different *kinds* of promotions. To assess this possibility, we plot the distribution of the increase in earnings that comes with the promotions of men and women in our data.

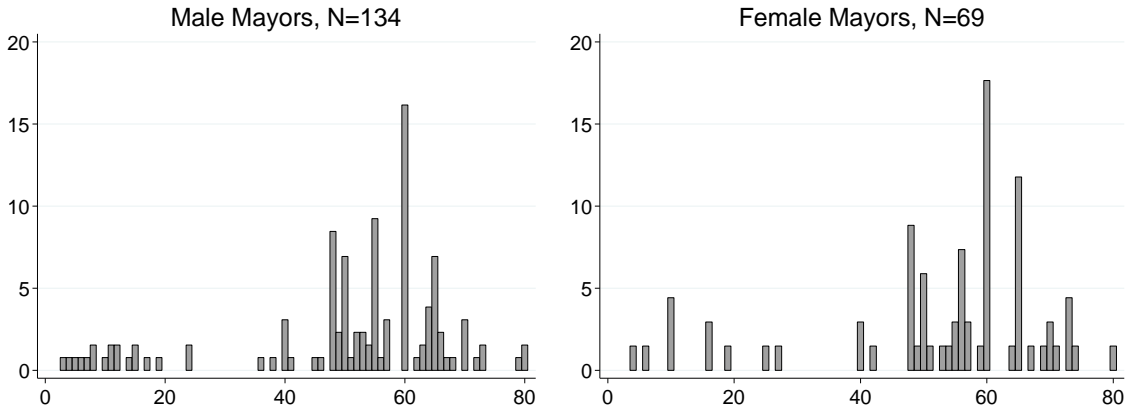
For each promoted person, we compute the pre-promotion earnings as the average earnings in the three years prior to the promotion, and the post-promotion earnings as the average of the first three years on the job. In Figure 4 we plot the differences between these two measurements for women and men separately. The two distributions are highly similar to each other, showing that women and men receive largely similar distributions of pay raises from their job promotions.



**Figure 4.** Distribution of changes in earnings before and after promotion (1,000 SEK)

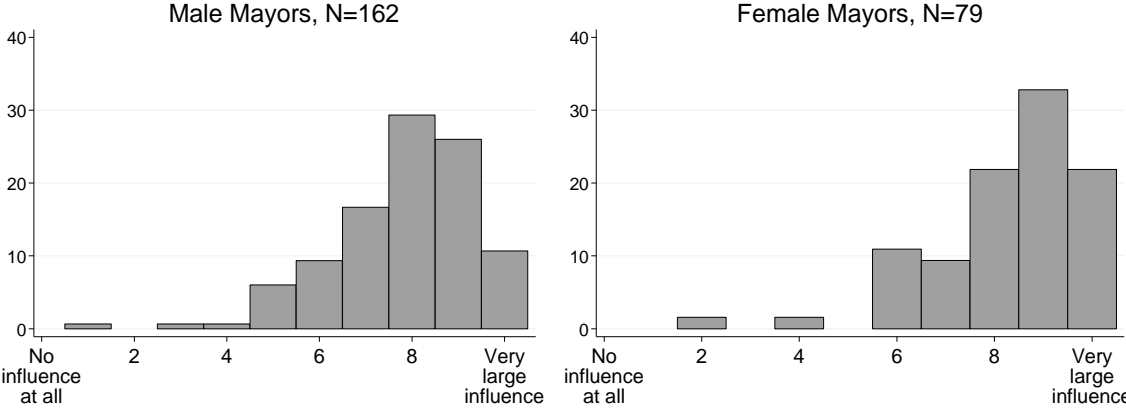
Notes: Pre-promotion earnings are measured as the average of annual earnings during the election period prior to the promotion, and post-promotion earnings are measured as the average of annual earnings in the election period after the promotion. The figure plots the difference between these two measures.

Another aspect of the promotions is the workload of the new job. For municipal politicians, we surveyed mayors to assess their workloads. The distribution of self-reported weekly work hours was highly similar between female and male mayors (Figure 5). Using data from the 2012 survey of Swedish local politicians (Kommun- och Landstingsfullmäktigeundersökningen, KOLFU, Karlsson and Gilljam 2014), we can also verify that the distributions of male and female mayor's self-perceived political influence are highly similar (Figure 6).



**Figure 5.** Self-reported work hours in a typical week by male and female mayors

Notes: Data from the authors' own survey of mayors, conducted in 2013 and with a response rate of 70%, 203/290.



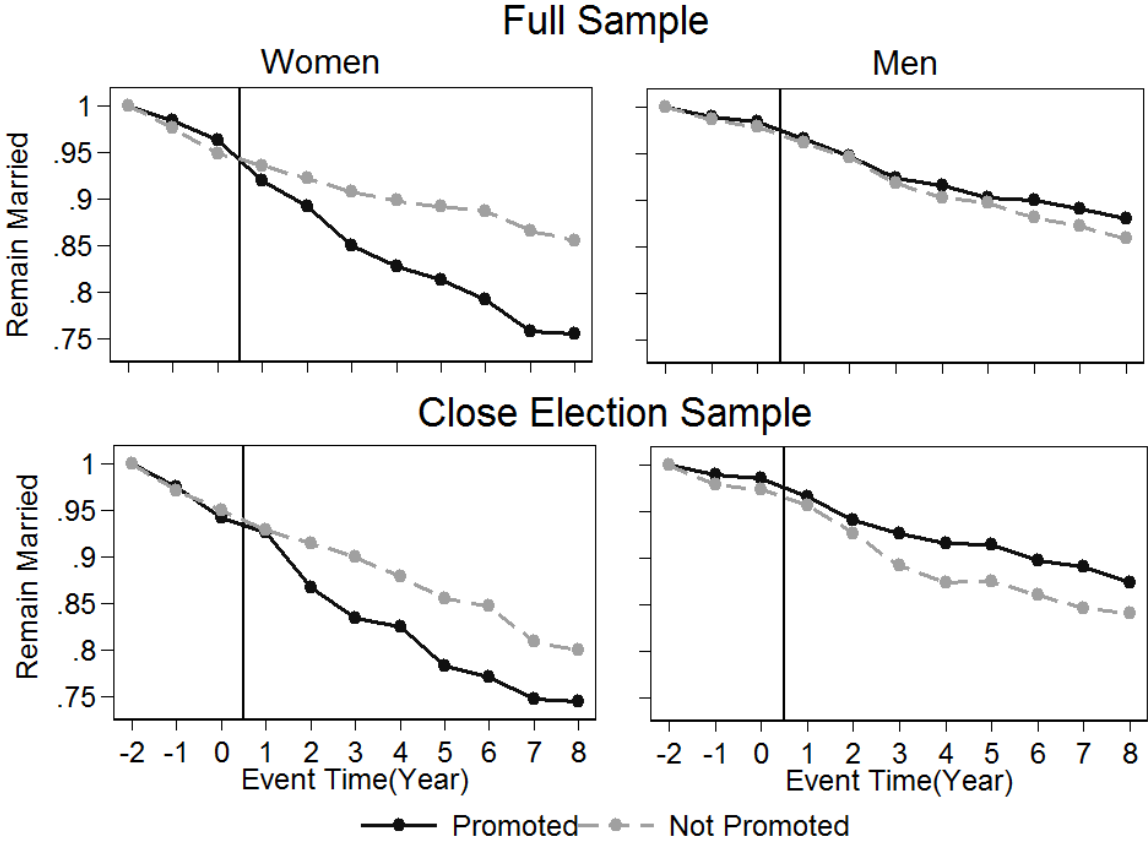
**Figure 6.** Comparison of male and female mayors' self-perceived political influence

Notes: Data from the 2012 KOLFU survey (Karlsson and Gilljam 2014) sent to all municipal politicians. Response rate among mayors is 83%, 241/290.

## 7. Baseline results for political promotions

We start with the results of the graphical analysis, which we report in Figure 7. This analysis is carried out separately for men and women, and in both the full sample and the close election sample. The

lines in the figure represent the share of persons who remain married to their spouse in two groups: those who are promoted (black lines) and those who are not promoted (gray lines). Both lines start at the value "1" at the left-hand side of the graphs at  $t = -3$ , three years prior to the election. The value 1 indicates, of course, that our sample consists of 100% married individuals (also recall that the election takes place in time period  $t = 0$  and the person's first year in office is  $t = 1$ ).



**Figure 7.** Marriage durability and divorce among men and women

Over time, all lines slope downward as some proportion of marriages falls apart each year. Before the promotion event, which is marked in the figure by a vertical black line, the rate of divorce is highly similar between the winners and losers of the (subsequent) promotion contest. The main result is the fact that in the first three years after the promotion, the black and gray lines diverge in the plots for the sub-sample of women, but not in the sub-sample of men. Among women, the rate of divorce increases among the promoted women compared to those who were not promoted to create a difference of about 7 to 8 percentage points three years after the promotion event. These groups do not reconverge later. The absence of different divorce rates between the (subsequently) promoted and unpromoted women before the promotion event strongly suggests that this is a causal effect. Furthermore, the pre-trends are highly similar in the full sample of elections, which suggests that later analysis that relies on the full sample does not suffer from serious endogeneity problems.

Next, we move to the regression analysis, in which we want to estimate the size of the independent effects for women and men. We also want to test if the difference in size between these two effects is statistically significant. We do this by estimating the interaction model:

$$Y_{i,t} = \beta_1 P_{i,t} + \beta_2 W_i + \beta_3 (P_{i,t} * W_i) + (S_{i,t} * W_i) + S_{i,t} + (\tau_t * W_i) + \tau_t + \varepsilon_{i,t} \quad (1)$$

where sub-index  $i$  denotes individuals and sub-index  $t$  the election period in which a candidate either wins or loses. The outcome variable is a binary indicator that takes a value of 1 for persons who remained married to their spouse three years after the promotion event, and 0 for persons who divorced. The variable  $P_i$  takes a value of 1 for promotion winners and 0 for losers. Its estimate ( $\beta_1$ ) captures the difference in the proportion of winners and losers that remained married to the same partner after three years on the job. In the split-sample analysis, this is the effect that we report, i.e. the differences in the durability of marriage in the two groups over a four-year period.

By adding an interaction term between female sex,  $W_i$ , and the promotion indicator, we let the estimate  $\beta_3$  capture the treatment effect of promotion on women's marriage stability relative to that of men. The equation also includes a control for belonging to the parliamentary sample –  $S_{i,t}$  – which is interacted with female sex in the interaction model. Fixed effects for each election,  $\tau_t$ , which also are interacted with female sex in the interaction model, are included to flexibly capture the aggregate-level time trend in marriage durability.

The results from estimating Equation (1) are presented in Table 2, which is divided into three panels. The top panel (A) shows the results for the interaction model using the full sample of men and women. The second and third panels (B and C) split the sample to show results for women and men separately. Within each panel we show the robustness of the results across seven different subsamples of promotion types and electoral win margins. The first column contains all observations from both promotions (mayor and parliamentarian) and all elections. The second and third columns include both the close and very close elections. The fourth and fifth columns contain promotions to parliamentarian only and the sixth and seventh contain only promotions to mayor.

The estimates in Table 2 corroborate the graphical findings. The results in the upper panel show that the gender difference in the impact of the promotion is about 7 to 10 percentage points and statistically significant. Comparing the estimates across columns, we see that the gender difference is larger for close elections. We can also see from the last four columns that the effect is larger for a promotion to parliament when we use the full sample, but similar in size to the promotion of mayor in the close election sample(s). Finally, pooling the two samples is important for increasing the precision of the estimates, since statistical significance is lost when we use close elections for mayor (Column 7).

**Table 2.** Estimated effect of promotion on the probability of remaining married

Parliamentarian Mayor	Sample selection of promotion types and electoral closeness						
	All (1)	Close (2)	Very close (3)	All (4)	Close (5)	All (6)	Close (7)
<b>Panel A: All</b>							
Promoted	-0.75 (1.31)	0.98 (1.91)	4.74** (2.40)	0.35 (2.96)	-0.47 (3.90)	-1.08 (1.46)	1.25 (2.18)
Promotion *Woman	-6.92*** (2.68)	-8.96** (3.79)	-10.32** (5.00)	-11.11** (5.13)	-10.87* (6.43)	-3.81 (3.17)	-6.56 (4.73)
Obs.	1,935	898	542	599	306	1,359	600
<b>Panel B: Women</b>							
Promoted	-7.66*** (2.34)	-7.98** (3.29)	-5.58 (4.42)	-10.76** (4.19)	-11.34** (5.12)	-4.89* (2.82)	-5.32 (4.25)
Obs.	642	299	192	279	140	374	163
<b>Panel C: Men</b>							
Promoted	-0.75 (1.31)	0.98 (1.91)	4.74** (2.39)	0.35 (2.96)	-0.47 (3.89)	-1.08 (1.46)	1.25 (2.17)
Obs.	1,293	599	350	320	166	985	437

Notes: The table contains results from estimating Equation (1) on varying samples of electoral closeness, defined in Section 3, using OLS. Standard errors clustered at the individual level are in parentheses. \* significant at 10%; \*\* significant at 5%; \*\*\* significant at 1%.

Turning to the split samples by gender (Panels B and C), we can see that the differential effect observed in Panel A is, as expected, mainly driven by a decreased probability of remaining married among women, rather than an increased probability of remaining married among men. The promotion reduces the probability that women will remain married by 5 to 11 percentage points. This effect is substantively important. If we use the control group of unpromoted women as a benchmark of the "normal" divorce rate over time (6% over four years), a point estimate of 7 percentage points implies that the divorce probability more than doubles because of the promotion over this relatively short time period. With the exception of one positive and statistically significant estimate, the point estimates suggest that men's marriage durability is not affected.

We run several sets of robustness tests. A first test adds controls for all the predetermined characteristics and traits that were examined in Table 1 (with the exception of the division of parental leave, which is missing for the 45% of the sample that does not have joint children born after 1980). The results are available in Table W3 of the Web Appendix. The point estimates for all of the close election specifications are highly robust to this addition of a wide range of relevant controls. The

estimates for the full sample are marginally reduced, which is not surprising given that we did not have balance for the full set of control variables in this sample.

A second robustness test consists of excluding all persons who have previously competed for one of the political positions but lost, that is, the "repeating losers." The results can be found in Table W4 of the Web Appendix. The sizes of the point estimates are not affected by this change in estimation sample, which provides further evidence of the robustness of our baseline estimates. But as we lose about a fourth of the sample in this estimation, standard errors increase and some estimates are no longer statistically significant at the 5% level.

The third robustness check consists of yet another change of estimation sample. Instead of departing from the sample of persons that was married in the election year ( $t = 0$ ), we instead depart from those who were married the year prior to the election year ( $t = -1$ ). This means that we lose persons who got married in the election year, but gain persons who divorced during the election year. The results are found in Table W5 of the Web Appendix. Neither the sizes of the estimates nor the standard errors are sensitive to this change in the sample. If anything, we find a larger negative effect of the promotion in the sample of women.

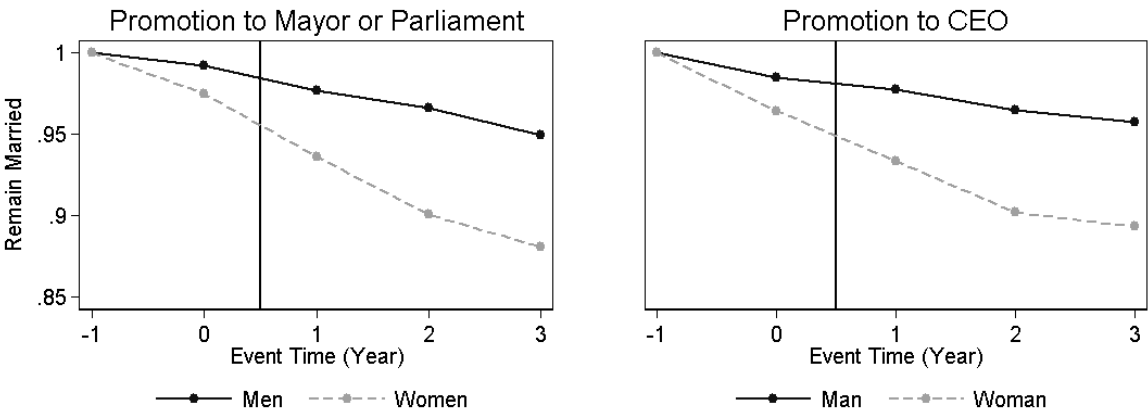
## 8. Graphical results for CEO promotions

For the job of CEO we do not have information about unsuccessful job applicants. The analysis is therefore restricted to a description of marriage durability among promoted men and women. Within any firm, the position of CEO is clearly the most prestigious, and is typically the pinnacle of a career within that organization. Our data include information on all CEO appointments in all Swedish firms between 2002 and 2012. We limit the sample to firms with more than 100 employees to make sure that we capture top positions in the economic structure of Swedish society. The average annual earnings of these CEOs lie well above the 99th percentile of the distribution of earnings in the working-age population of employed persons (authors' own calculations, see Web Appendix Figure W1). Pre-promotion descriptive statistics for those who were promoted to CEO show strong similarities to the political job candidates in terms of the average divisions of paid labor, spousal age gap, and division of parental leave (the full set of descriptive statistics can be found in Table W6 in the Web Appendix).

We select a time window of -1 years to +3 years around each CEO promotion. The smaller window compared to the sample of politicians is chosen to accommodate the shorter sample period (10 years instead of 19). As previously, we exclude people who reach the age of 65 within this window. Of the remaining persons, we chose those who are married in the first year of the time window, 72% of the men and 63% of the women. The final sample includes 226 women and 1,674 men.

Figure 8 plots the proportions of men and women that remain married to their spouse in each year. As a reference, and to ensure readers that the shorter time window is not affecting our results, we also show the corresponding plot for political promotions. The two sets of results are strikingly similar. Promoted female CEOs are more than twice as likely to have gotten divorced three years after their promotion compared to the promoted men.

Although the descriptive event study of CEO promotions does not permit causal inference, the similarity to the political promotions suggests that the baseline finding does indeed extend to the private sector. Running a simple regression for the CEO sample shows that the gender difference in the divorce rate three years after the promotion is statistically significant at the 1% level.



**Figure 8.** Event study of promotions and marriage durability for politicians (left) and CEOs (right)

Extending the analysis to more sectors is difficult because promotions are not readily measurable in register data. We attempted to generalize the findings by performing a cross-occupational comparison of the development over time of the divorce probability in cohorts of graduates from large education programs. We then compared the proportion of divorced people in these cohorts by gender and by career success 20 years after graduation. Because this method differs considerably from our main approach, it is relegated to the Web Appendix (see Section W3). The description shows higher divorce rates among high-performing women compared to low-performing women in the professions of medical doctors, priests, and police professionals, but not among pharmacists. Among the high-performing men, whose earnings were above the median in their cohort after 20 years in the labor market, had a lower rate of divorce than the low-performing men across all four professions.

### 9. Mechanisms

This section discusses possible mechanisms for why a promotion is destabilizing in women's marriages but not in men's. To maximize the number of observations, we use the full sample of political

promotions and perform graphical split-sample analysis. The corresponding regression evidence can be found in the Web Appendix. We focus on the three household-level variables presented in the descriptive statistics: household type in terms of the division of paid labor, division of parental leave, and spousal age gap. We also discuss various other heterogeneity results in relation to these findings. This includes split-sample analysis based on whether the couple has small children in the household, the promoted person's age at marriage, and different varieties of the politician's earnings increase at promotion, both as a percentage of their own prior earnings and as a percentage of the household's total earnings.

Our sample size unfortunately makes it uninformative to split the sample by more than one variable at a time. Nevertheless, pair-wise correlation coefficients between these three household variables are all below 0.10 (the matrices of coefficients for each gender are available in Tables W7 and W8 in the Web Appendix).

### **9.1. Division of paid labor**

The descriptive analysis in Section 5 showed that the women and men in our sample came from households with different divisions of paid labor between the spouses prior to the promotion. Promoted women were over-represented in dual-earner households and men in traditional households. In this section we consider whether divorce is more common in some divisions of earnings than others.

Family economics suggests that households derive utility from different sources. Under specialization, spouses gain from production complementarities as each of them becomes an expert in his or her own domain (Becker 1974, 1981; Parsons 1949). In dual-earner households, spouses derive gains from consumption and leisure complementarities, that is, spending leisure time together and consuming things that they both like (Lam 1988; Stevenson and Wolfers 2007). When the promotion takes time away from joint activities, it would plausibly reduce the gains from marriage more in dual-earner families.<sup>13</sup>

The promotion itself may also move the division of earnings in the household in a more or less specialized direction and, in turn, affect the utility from the marriage. Related to such moves, recent work on identity economics has argued that individuals receive utility by complying with norms and lose utility when they break norms (Akerlof and Kranton 2000; Bertrand, Kamenica, and Pan 2015). Because the norm in the marriage market is to have a traditional division of earnings, moves in this

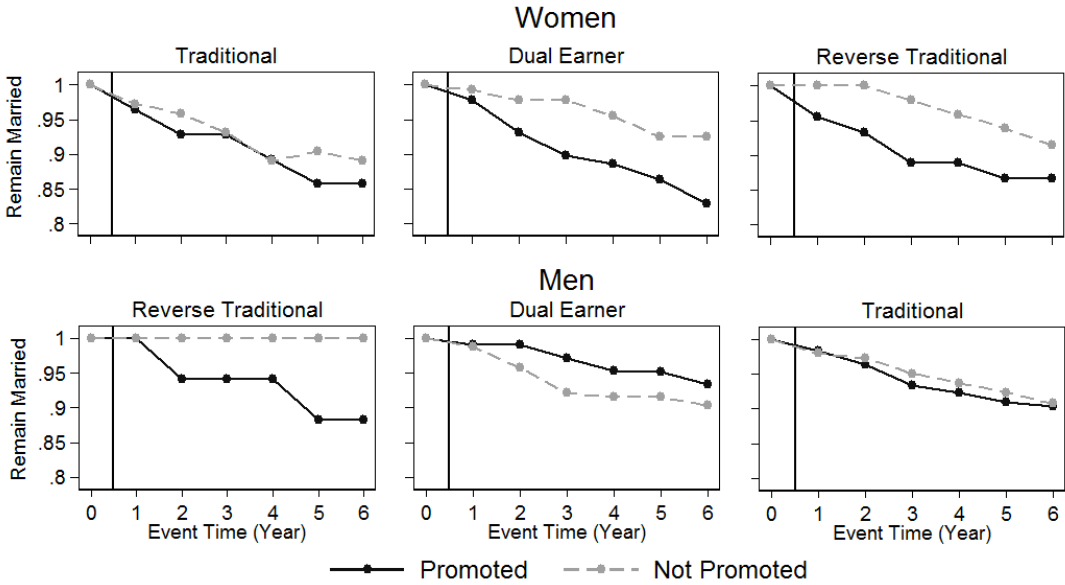
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<sup>13</sup> But note that an increase in household income from the promotion would be expected to raise utility more in dual-earner families, as it expands the scope for the consumption complementarities (Lam 1998; Lundberg 2012).



direction could make the marriage more durable, and moves in the reverse traditional direction could make it less durable. Yet another expectation is that any promotion that increases the degree of specialization in paid and unpaid labor would make a marriage more durable, simply because specialized marriages are more durable than unspecialized ones (e.g. Becker 1973, 1974, 1981).

A first empirical test is devised to examine whether divorces are more common in dual-earner than in specialized households. We divide the sample by the three household types – traditional, dual earner, and reverse traditional – and run the graphical split sample for each sub-sample. The results are shown in Figure 9 (the regression results can be found in the Web Appendix Table W9). Focusing on the dual-earner graphs in the middle column of plots, we can see that the results for men and women appear to differ. Women in dual-earner households divorce more often after they are promoted, while men in dual-earner are, if anything, *less* likely to divorce after they are promoted. In addition, women's divorces are not concentrated in the dual-earner category but seem about as common in reverse traditional families, in which she is the dominant earner.<sup>14</sup> In sum, we find little support that the baseline finding stems from a particular sensitivity of dual-earner families to the promotion of one of the spouses.

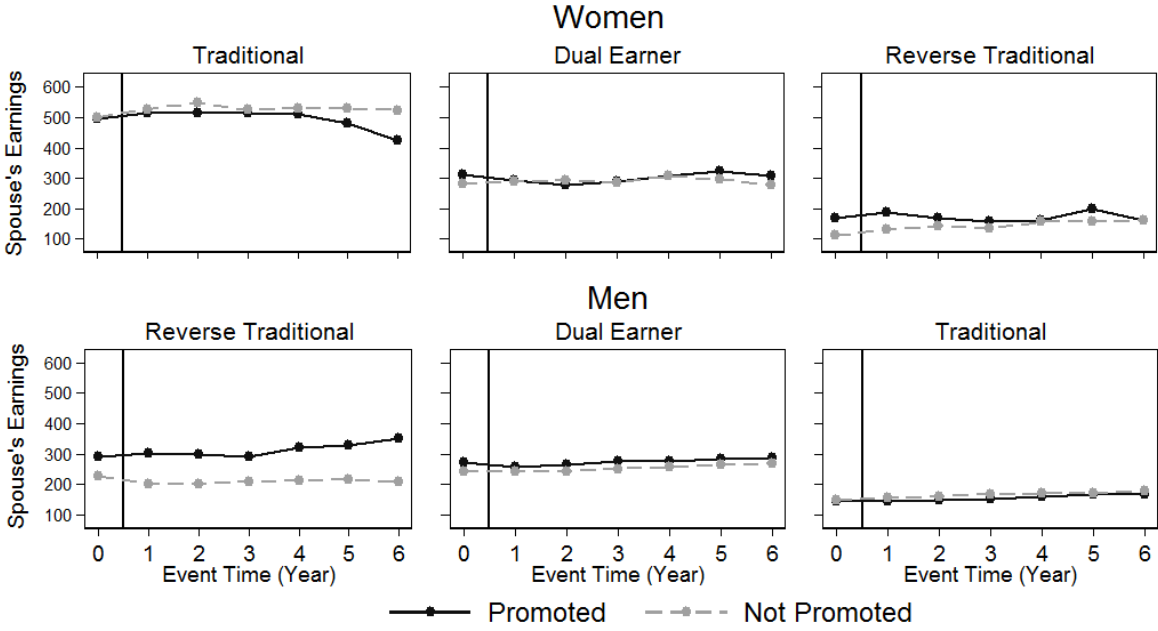


**Figure 9.** Marriage durability effect by pre-promotion household type

A second empirical test explores whether couples change their division of earnings after the promotion, and that the distribution of these shifts may be associated with more or less divorces. This

<sup>14</sup> The figure also shows what appears to be a divorce effect among male politicians who are in reverse traditional households prior to their promotion. The small number of men in this category (N = 55) and large standard errors of the regression estimate (Table W9) indicate, however, that this heterogeneity should be interpreted with some caution.

analysis necessarily starts with observing how the husbands and wives of the promoted politicians adjust their own labor supply after the promotion (e.g. Newman and Olivetti 2015).<sup>15</sup> We insert the spouse's annual earnings as the outcome variable in our graphical analysis and show the results in Figure 10.<sup>16</sup> We restrict the sample to couples that remain married three years after the promotion, i.e. at  $t = 3$ . This is of course an endogenous variable, but the patterns of spousal labor adjustments are the same if we include both divorced and married couples.



**Figure 10.** Spousal adjustments in paid labor to the promotion

The flat trend lines throughout Figure 10 show a striking absence of spousal adjustments. To some extent, this is a research finding in itself. It shows that we can rule out (gender differences in) spousal responses, or the lack thereof, as a major mechanism behind our baseline findings. It also means that families do not respond to promotions by large shifts in labor market specialization (future studies could get examine this question in greater depth by also studying shifts in home production, which is not permitted by our data). The lack of responses implies that in the majority of cases, the rise

<sup>15</sup> In contrast to Newman and Olivetti (2015), most recent empirical research has not found evidence of large intra-household adjustments. Over time, women's labor supply has become less reactive to their husband's income (Devereux 2004; Blau and Kahn 2007). Analysis of time use data has mostly showed little or no adjustment among wives, and no adjustment among men, when their partner increases his or her earnings or work hours (e.g. Klevermarken and Hallberg 2003; Connelly and Kimmel 2009).

<sup>16</sup> For this estimation we exclude couples for which the spouse of the politician reaches retirement age at some point in the time window from the graphical analysis. The motivation is, of course, to not confuse drops in earnings from retirement with responses to the promotion, which could happen if the age of the spouse is correlated with the earnings division in the household. The fact that the results look very similar when retiring spouses are kept in the sample suggests that this is not the case, however.

in earnings that comes with the promotion (recall Figure 4) gives both male and female politicians a higher share of household earnings.

Next we examine the transitions in the balance of household earnings that are triggered by male and female politicians' promotions, and relate these to the proportion of divorces. Table 3 analyzes data for promoted persons only, and shows descriptive statistics for how the promotion shifted the division of household earnings in the sample. The columns show the pre-promotion type and rows indicate the post-promotion type. For women, transitions between groups are typically from traditional to dual earner and, more commonly, from dual earner to reverse traditional. There are far fewer transitions for men, as most maintain a traditional division of earnings, but there are instances of men moving from a dual-earner to a traditional division.

**Table 3.** Divorce rates and transitions between household types

		Promoted female politicians			Promoted male politicians			
		Pre-promotion type			Pre-promotion type			
		T	DE	RT	T	DE	RT	
Post-promotion type	T	-	-	-	T	7% N = 335	3% N = 72	-
	DE	5% N = 20	6% N = 53	-	DE	6% N = 17	6% N = 47	-
	RT	-	15% N = 54	10% N = 50	RT	-	-	-

Notes: "T" stands for a traditional division of household earnings, where the husband makes more than 60%. "DE" stands for a dual-earner division in which neither spouse makes more than 60% or less than 40%, and "RT" stands for reverse traditional households in which the wife makes more than 60% of the earnings. Blank cells indicate n < 10.

The cells in Table 3 contain the proportion of promoted politicians that divorced in the first three years after getting promoted. This reveals a pattern in which some transitions are associated with more divorces than others. Women who start out in dual-earner households are more likely to divorce when they move into reverse traditional territory (15%) than if they remain in a dual-earner household (6%). For men it is the opposite: those who transition from a dual-earner household to a traditional household have a lower divorce rate (3%) than those who remain in the dual-earner category (6%).<sup>17</sup> The finding that a move toward being the family's dominant earner is associated with more divorces for women and less divorces for men suggests two things. First, it tentatively implies that increased specialization is not a universally positive factor for marriage durability. Second, it suggests that shifting

<sup>17</sup> We also analyzed the margin of whether the promoted person edges by their spouse and starts making more money, that is, testing if breaking the norm that "the husband should earn more" serves as a trigger point of divorce, following Bertrand, Kamenica, and Pan (2015). In our data, we do not find any apparent shift in the probability of divorce when the promotion is associated with passing this particular point.

household earnings *in accordance* with the norm of male-dominated household earnings may be positive for marriage durability, while shifting the division *against* the norm is a source of reduced marriage utility.

There is a potential caveat that applies to the interpretation of norms. The probability to make a shift between household types is correlated with the size of the politician's salary increase from the promotion, which could in turn be independently related to the probability of divorce. This could be true for both the politician's earnings increase relative to his or her pre-promotion earnings, and relative to the household's total pre-promotion earnings. But both these factors are – arguably – less important when we examine promotions to jobs at the top of the earnings distribution.<sup>18</sup> We can conduct further split-sample analyses to produce rudimentary evidence to support this alternative explanation. We compute the rate of new divorces three years after the promotion based on the two variables of interest: (1) the politician's post-promotion earnings as a proportion of his or her earnings before the promotion and (2) the politician's post-promotion earnings as a proportion of total household earnings before the promotion. Perhaps surprisingly, the divorce rates do not differ when we split the sample based on these variables. One possible explanation for this is that the increase in the wife's economic independence, or the decrease in the husband's exit costs (Edlund 2006) – both of which should be associated with higher divorce rates – is counteracted by lower stress levels and more consumption resulting from the higher income. Moreover, economic independence is perhaps a less relevant theoretical concept when people are promoted to society's top jobs, since they were likely already making enough money to be economically independent before the promotion.

## **9.2. Traditional at home, progressive at work: A recipe for divorce**

The women in our dataset have attained jobs in the top 5% of the earnings distribution, which demonstrates their progressive behaviors in the labor market. Yet in the descriptive statistics on household types (Section 5) we also saw that these women displayed quite traditional behaviors in terms of the spousal age gap and division of parental leave. Several theories speak to the possible

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<sup>18</sup> The early literature on the impact of (unexpected) increases in earnings for men and women found a positive impact on marriage stability from increases in the earnings of men, and a negative impact from increases for women (Becker, Landes, and Michael 1977; Weiss and Willis 1997). These findings were interpreted against the low level of earnings of women in these datasets. Because of women's low pre-promotion salary, the same percentage increase in their earnings implied a smaller surplus for the household relative to the same percentage increase for the husband. Women's low pre-promotion salaries were also important for the interpretation of divorce as the result of an "economic independence effect" for the wife (e.g. Oppenheimer 1997). Later papers have related the probability of divorce to various measurements of changes in the absolute and relative earnings of men and women. Such studies have largely found greater sensitivity to women's economic outcomes than to those of men (Heckert, Nowak, and Snyder 1998; Jalovaara 2003; Liu and Vikat 2004; Kesselring and Bremmer 2010; c.f. Rogers 2004). An in-depth review of the sociological literature can be found in Rogers (2004).

impacts on marriage stability of the (possibly toxic) mix of a marriage market match of gender specialization and a (subsequent) successful female career.

According to key works in family economics, labor market events that change the performance of spouses in relation to what was expected at the time of couple formation may shift the balance of utility from the marriage vs. the utility of being single. One interpretation of the mix of traditional and progressive behaviors in women's households is therefore that the wife's successful career achievements are more likely to contradict initial expectations than men's achievements. For men, a successful career would confirm, while a woman's career would contradict, the gender specialization at the outset, as indicated by the age gap and the division of parental leave (e.g. Becker, Landes, and Michael 1977; Weiss and Willis 1997). This predicts, of course, that we should see more divorces in families in which women have a larger spousal age gap and take a larger share of the parental leave.

Sociological research on the stress and strain of the interactions between work environments and intimate relationships predicts the same pattern. This literature has claimed that critical transition points in a person's career (i.e. promotions or demotions) can cause particularly high levels of stress and strain if a promotion triggers a renegotiation of the spouses' roles in the household and on the paid labor market (e.g. Coverman 1989). Such renegotiation, or "role cycling," could be more common in promoted women's relationships than in men's, since the women initially took on a greater share of household responsibilities.

We divide the sample into three groups based on the spousal age gap: (1) the politician is younger, (2) the age gap is relatively small (three years or less),<sup>19</sup> and (2) the politician is older (Figure 11). We also divide the sample according to the wife's share of parental leave (Figure 12). The sample cut-off is set to the median share of the wife's parental leave in our sample of women, 90%. Regression evidence for the age gap and parental leave sub-samples are shown in Tables W10 and W11 of the Web Appendix.

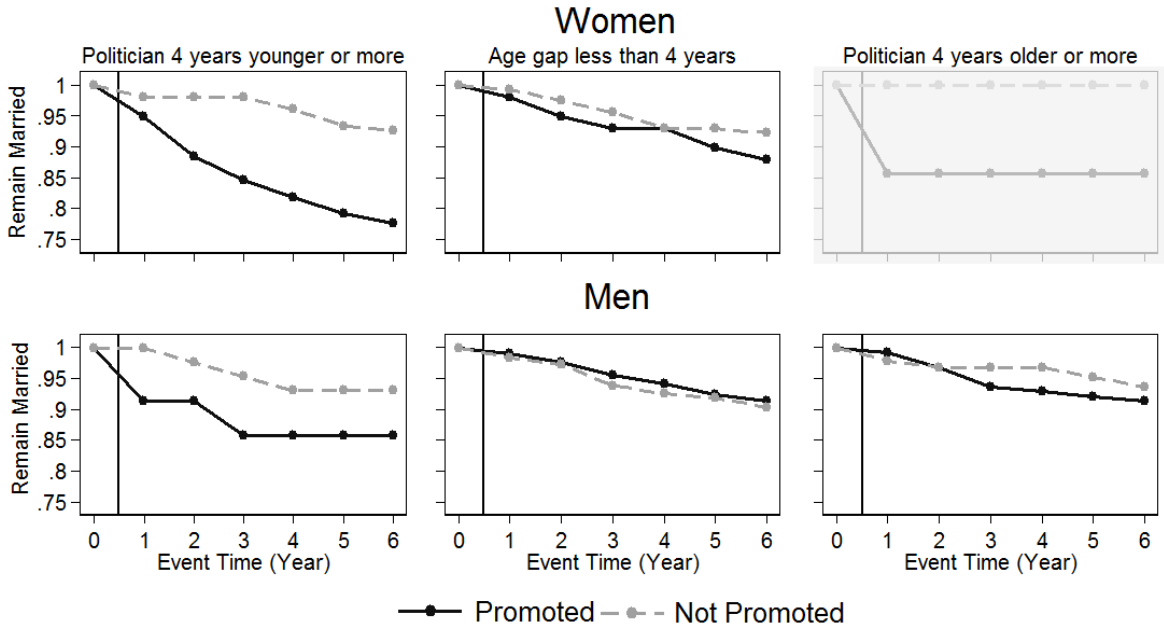
Figures 11 and 12 show that divorce is more likely to occur in couples in which the promoted woman (1) is younger by her spouse by a larger margin and (2) took a relatively larger share of the parental leave. Strikingly, we find no divorce effect for couples that are closer in age, or where the husband took out relatively more parental leave. The results of the regression analysis of the age gap substantiate these patterns (Table W10). The sample size is smaller for the division of parental leave, and estimates lack statistical significance at conventional levels (Table W11).

The finding that divorce is more common where female politicians experience more gender inequality in the age-gap vis-a-vis their partner and in their parenting responsibilities aligns with the

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<sup>19</sup> The empirical findings remain the same if we change the cut-off points by one year in either direction.

two theoretical frameworks outlined above. In these relationships, women's advancement to the top job could be more contrary to their husband's (and their own) expectations at the time of household formation. To the extent that the age gap and parental leave division can be seen as an approximation of the role orientations of the husband and wife, these couples would also be the ones for which the stress of role negotiation at promotion is the most intense. An interesting finding that lends further credibility to these interpretations of the mechanism behind the baseline results is the analysis of promoted *men* who are younger than their spouses. In this sub-sample, promotion has a positive effect on divorce, which is nearly the same size as for women and is even statistically significant at the 10% level in the full sample of elections in the regression analysis (Table W10).



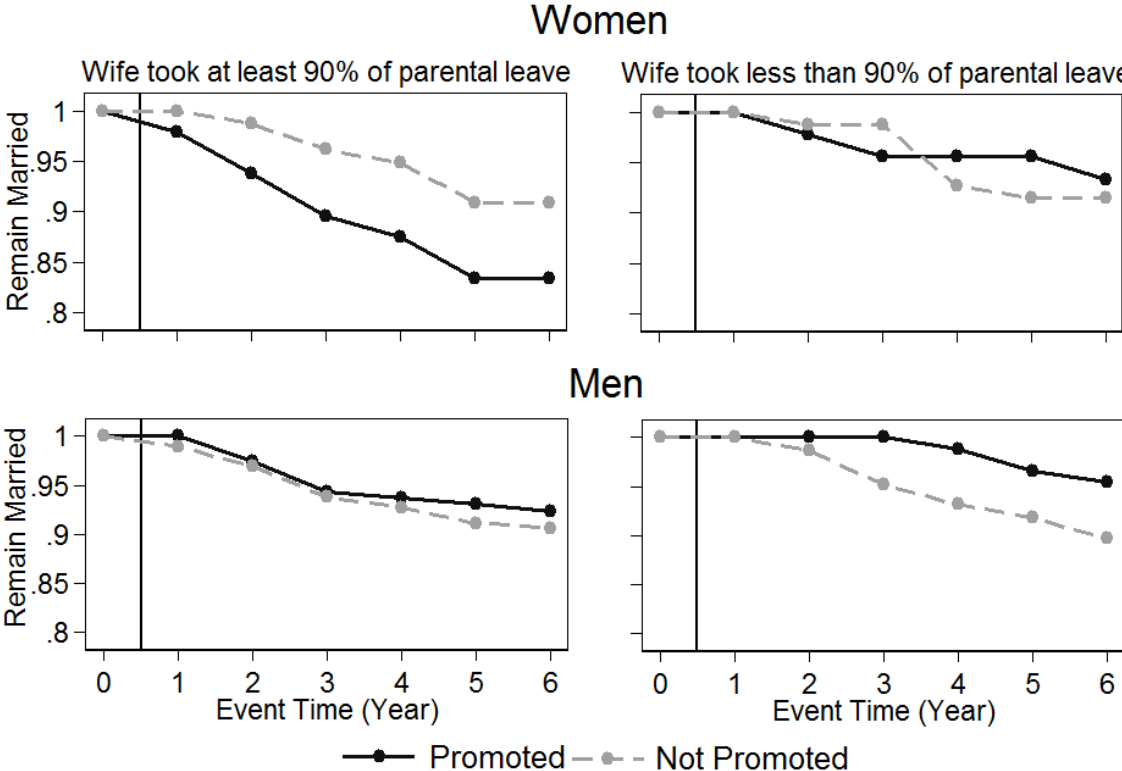
**Figure 11.** Marriage durability and promotions by the marriage age gap

Notes: The gray shade on the top right graph indicates an unreliable result due to the small sample size ( $n < 25$ ).

It is, however, difficult to fully interpret the results without commenting (again) on social norms. Why are most women married to older spouses, and why do they take the majority of parental leave in the first place? Norms on “who marries who” and women's responsibilities for care work underpin the results in this section. Because couples tend to follow these norms, women's advancement to the top of organizational hierarchies is more likely than men's advancements to contradict initial expectations and to introduce higher levels of role cycling.

There are alternative ways of interpreting the results in this sub-section. One is that a larger spousal age gap indicates a worse match quality, i.e. that the spouses were not able to be very picky in their partner choice, making the union more sensitive to changes in outside conditions. This

interpretation is not supported, however, by the lack of an increase in divorce for couples in which the promoted husband is substantially older than his wife. Another possible (but also unlikely) explanation is that the average man is less productive in household work than the average woman (along the lines of Mincer 1962). According to this mechanism, a promotion that shifts household work from the wife to the husband decreases the productivity of household work and crowds out leisure time. But given modern household technologies and the opportunities to outsource various household services, substantial levels of efficiency loss would seem unlikely.



**Figure 12.** Marriage durability and promotions by the wife's share of total parental leave

**9.3. Children and age at marriage**

Two variables that are theoretically relevant as potential mechanisms are (1) the presence of children in the household and (2) the politician's age at marriage. But in neither case does a split-sample analysis reveal variation that forwards our understanding of the link between promotion and divorce. Most people in our dataset are parents, but most of these parents have children over 18, with less intense parenting responsibilities than for younger children. Only a small number of people in the data have children under the age of six, which reduces the relevance and statistical precision of a split-sample analysis based on this variable. Web Appendix Figure W7 splits the sample by whether the couple has

joint children under 18; it does not reveal more (or fewer) divorces in families with children. One interpretation could be that older children are less relevant as a measure of total household and care work in a family. Another interpretation is that forces related to the presence of children are pulling on marriage durability in opposite directions. Children imply a larger workload, accentuating the impact of the promotion on total work, but families with children also strive to avoid divorce.

Age at marriage is sometimes used to approximate the amount of information that spouses have about each other when they get married. At a younger age, information is less informative for predicting a person's future earnings trajectory. Information may also be of lower quality and thereby result in a worse-quality match. We split the sample by the median age at marriage for our sample of women job candidates: 29 years of age. Figure W8 in the Web Appendix shows that if anything, promotions lead to more divorces when a couple married at an older age. Moreover, only including people's first marriages does not alter this picture. Given the small substantive size, the lack of statistical significance, and the counter-theoretical direction of these estimates, they are not pursued further.

## **10. A brief comment on divorce and future well-being**

To better understand the consequences of divorce, we collect some descriptive statistics in Table 4 in order to describe what happens after a divorce in the labor and marriage markets of those who divorce and those who do not. We examine three outcomes: (1) future political success (defined as being re-elected as MP or re-appointed as mayor in the next election period (at  $t = 4$ ), (2) future earnings (measured as the average of the annual earnings in the following election period (average of  $t = 5, 6, \text{ and } 7$ ), and (3) whether divorced politicians or their former spouses have remarried six years after the promotion (at  $t = 6$ ).

The first thing that stands out in Table 4 is that divorced women have better future career outcomes than those who remain married. Our finding that women who divorce do not, on average, suffer a career penalty further supports the existence of a trade-off between marriage and career for women. For men, we see the opposite: those who stay married have better career outcomes than those who divorce. Viewed jointly, these descriptive statistics suggest that marriages provide men with an important career function, such as functional and emotional support, while this is not the case for women.



**Table 4.** Future career and marriage market developments by gender, promotion, and divorce

	Women				Men				
	<i>Divorced</i>	Not promoted		Promoted		Not promoted		Promoted	
		<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>yes</i>
Future top job (1)	0.13	0.30	0.50	0.62	0.17	0.11	0.50	0.4	
Future earnings (2)	334.9	415.7	419.5	463.6	344.8	365.8	406.0	382.7	
Remarried		0.20		0.19		0.33		0.24	
Spouse remarried		0.33		0.12		0.09		0.08	

Notes: (1) Future top job is a dummy variable for being elected to parliament or appointed mayor in the next election after the promotion event, i.e. in  $t = 4$ . (2) Future earnings are defined as the average of annual earnings in the next election period after the one that follows the promotion event (i.e. in  $t = 5$ ,  $t = 6$ , and  $t = 7$ ). Remarriage is measured at six years after the promotion event.

Turning to the marriage market, the description shows that women who divorce after their promotion do not have either better or worse chances of having remarried six years after the promotion. Their likelihood of remarrying is lower than among promoted and divorced men, but the size of the difference is not striking (19% for women and 24% for men). This description suggests that gender differences in the improved outside options in the marriage market is not a likely mechanism behind our baseline findings. But they do not provide clues as to which spouse initiated the divorce in women's dissolved relationships. Their former spouses are neither more nor less likely to have found a new spouse than they are.

## 11. Conclusions

We study women's and men's mobility to top jobs from the perspective of the household. We find that such promotions destabilize women's marriages but do not affect men's marriage durability. One reason for this, we argue, is that the marriage market and behavior in the early phases of relationships continue to be highly traditional, even in families in which the wife advances to one of the top jobs in the economy. In our dataset of candidates for top jobs, women are usually younger than their spouses, while men are older, and women take the vast majority of parental leave. Both of these factors, which are likely shaped by norms on couple formation and household obligations, mean that a man's promotion aligns with the expectations and roles assumed by the spouses at couple formation. For women, the promotion instead creates a mismatch between expectations and outcomes, and triggers more stress when roles need to be renegotiated. This argument about mechanisms is supported by

the over-representation of divorce among women in couples with a larger spousal age gap in which the wife took the bulk of the parental leave.

Another important mechanism is the impact of the promotion on the balance of household earnings, and how this impact shifts the division away from social norms. We find that divorce is more common in households in which the wife's promotion shifted the division of earnings (further) away from the norm of male dominance. Further supporting this interpretation is the fact that we found the lowest proportion of divorces of any sub-sample analysis for couples in which a man's promotion moved them from a dual-earner to a traditional household.

Neither women's nor men's marriages are destabilized when households are more egalitarian in terms of having a small spousal age gap and a more gender-equal split of the parental leave. This contributes to the discussion on the roots of (and remedies for) the persistent gender divide in career performance (Goldin 2014; Esping-Andersen 2016). It also suggests that social norms on specialization in the marriage market are not permitting women to form the types of marriages that are the most supportive of a top career. Recent surveys of graduates from top management schools in the United States suggest that this situation is not likely to change soon (Ely, Stone, and Ammerman 2014). Even in recent generations of graduates, extremely few students of both sexes expect the woman's career to take precedence in their (future) household. Until social norms permit reversed gender specialization with a female dominant earner, our results suggest that a gender-equal match in terms of age gap, earnings division, and parental responsibilities is the best way for women to avoid conflicts around their progressive career choices.

Our paper also speaks to the research on people's cost–benefit analysis in deciding whether to apply for a top job (e.g. Diermeier, Keane, and Merlo 2005; Matozzi and Merlo 2008). Our findings suggest that marriage durability may enter differentially into women's and men's cost–benefit analyses regarding whether to seek a top job. For men, the family may be a source of career support, while for women it may be a source of work–family tension. When we examine the future career developments of women and men in our data who divorce after a job promotion, women's careers develop in a positive direction while those of men tend to be negatively affected. This descriptive evidence also suggests that a divorce can be a positive life development for a "career woman" who is struggling to combine family demands and household obligations. But for the majority of women in society who are planning ahead for their careers, the prospect of this trade-off would likely be far less attractive.

Our conclusions about the trade-offs that women face between marriage and a career somewhat contradict recent arguments that this trade-off has been minimized in Scandinavian

countries. For all three of our top jobs, the women who hold them are nearly twice as likely to be divorced than the men who do. We also find that a woman's promotion to a top job nearly doubles the rate of divorce in the three years following the promotion, compared to women who sought but did not get the job. One reason for these discrepancies is that we measure the occurrence of divorce, while others have assessed the marriage–career trade-off according to whether women *ever* marry (Bertrand et al. 2016). Another reason could be that trade-offs linger in the very top jobs, while having been reduced at lower career levels. For future studies, it would be of interest to trace women's and men's marriage durability and career paths over a longer span of their careers. This would be particularly relevant for assessing how the presence of young children in the household is related to this trade-off, which is less relevant for the age group studied in this paper, i.e. persons in the latter stages of their careers.

Future research could also delve deeper into the components of job promotions for affecting marriage durability, such as the salary raise, as well as increases in status, workload, or travel. Tentative probing of our data on parliamentarians (not reported in the paper) suggests that MPs who live closer to Stockholm are more likely to have small children than those who live further away. Another avenue for future work could be to examine heterogeneity based on individuals' specific working conditions, moving in the direction of recent arguments that flexible work conditions can alleviate work–life tensions and close gender gaps in wages and career achievements (Goldin 2014).

Finally, the fact that our results come from Sweden is relevant for their external validity. The Swedish welfare state and gender egalitarian norms should provide an ideal environment for equal career opportunities. Household labor is more equally divided than in most other countries, and affordable universal child and elder care relieves career-oriented families of substantial demands on their time. Our finding that the family is a source of tension for women who look to combine a career and family in this context suggests that this situation applies to women with this ambition in other contexts with less generous policy conditions or (even) more traditional norms on couple formation.

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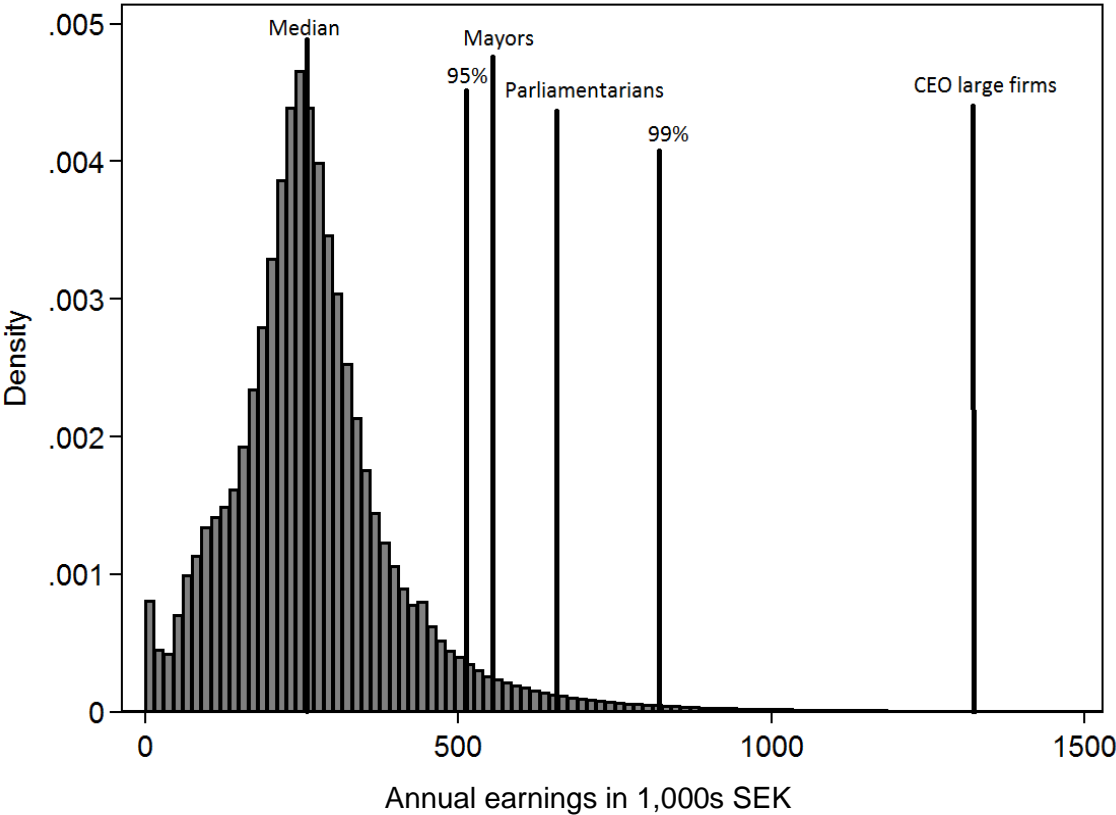
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# Web Appendix



**Figure W1.** Placement of jobs in the distribution of annual earnings, 2011

Note: Data for the full Swedish working-age population (20–65) that was employed in the year 2011.

## Section W1. Defining close elections in PR systems

There are complexities to measuring close elections in a proportional representation (PR) system. One challenge is that the seat share of a single party, or bloc of parties, is not a deterministic function of the vote share. The seat share of a party or bloc is instead jointly determined by the allocation of votes among parties. To measure the closeness of elections, we therefore rely on two different methods: one for municipal elections and another for parliamentary elections.

### Municipal elections

To measure electoral closeness at the municipal level, we use a simulation-based approach that builds on Fiva et al. (2016). The approach and code developed in this paper has also been applied in Folke et al. (2016). This approach constructs a forcing variable, which is continuous (rather than discrete, as the seat share), and which does not give sorting or a low density of observations close to the threshold of winning more than 50% of the seats. This simulated forcing variable takes two important features of

the electoral system into account. The first feature is that a municipality may contain multiple electoral districts of different sizes. The second is that shifting a vote to (or from) one bloc to the remaining parties has a different impact on the seat share of the bloc winning (or losing) the vote, depending on which party within the winning and losing bloc won or lost it, respectively.

Our simulation departs from data on electoral outcomes. We want to measure how close the election is by capturing which shift of votes to or from a political bloc would have caused (1) a winning bloc to lose its seat majority or (2) a losing bloc to gain a majority of seats. In each election, we will thus have two forcing variable values, one for each bloc. When we measure closeness for a certain bloc, the other bloc always includes local parties.<sup>20</sup> The two closeness variables are measured in percentage terms, answering the question "which percentage of votes was needed, in a specific election, to give (or take) the seat majority from each of the two political blocs?"

For a bloc that won a seat majority, we start from the electoral result in the relevant election and move successively in the negative direction, incrementally *removing* 0.01 percentage points of the bloc's votes, starting from 0.01, 0.02, etc. For a losing bloc, we do the opposite, adding small increments of votes. The goal is to find out, for each bloc at the time, how large a percentage of votes we need to move in order to shift the seat majority to the other bloc.

How does our simulated shift in votes affect the distribution of seats? The impact will of course differ between countries depending on the electoral system. In the Swedish case, seats are distributed based on the Highest Averages Method, using a modified St. Lagu  formula. After shifting a small proportion of votes either to or from a bloc, we use this formula to compute the new seat distribution. For each shift of votes, we randomly simulate 1,000 alternatives for how that specific percentage of votes, for example 0.02%, shifted in terms of receiving and losing (1) parties and (2) districts. Each time, we also compute the new allocation of seats. In this simulation, we assume that large parties have a greater variance in their vote shares than small parties, but that the variance is not 100% proportional. The simulations also abstract from the fact that votes can shift between parties within a bloc.<sup>21</sup> Having computed the new seat allocation in each of the 1,000 shifts of the vote distribution, we

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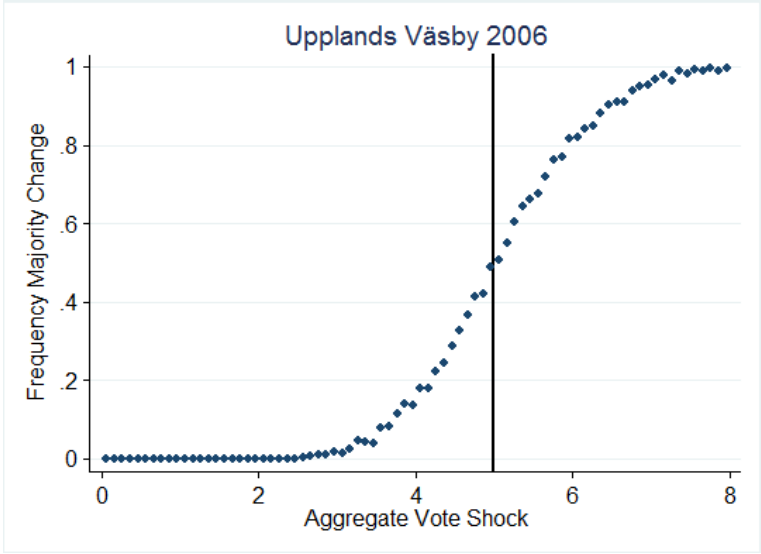
<sup>20</sup> In the Swedish case, local parties – defined as not having representation in parliament – hold, on average, 2% of the municipal assembly seats.

<sup>21</sup> In detail, the simulations are carried out as follows. First, we take a random number between 0 and 1 for each party in the giving and receiving blocs. We then multiply this random proportion by the party's vote share plus a constant of 0.1. For a party with a random shock of 0.4 and a 20% vote share, we thus calculate  $0.4 \cdot (0.2 + 0.1)$ . We call this variable  $q$ . Within each bloc, we then normalize the parties'  $q$  values so that they sum to 1, calculating  $q_w = \frac{q_p}{\sum_1^p q_p}$  where  $q_p$  are the initially computed party shocks and  $q_w$  are the normalized shocks.

The next stage is to subtract fractions of the vote shift, for example 0.01 percentage points of the total votes, from one bloc and reward it in fractions to the other parties in a way that corresponds to the randomly drawn shocks. Finally, a new vote allocation is used to calculate the seat allocation, using the Swedish election formula.

tally the number of times that the bloc either lost (for winning blocs) or won (for losing blocs) the seat majority under the new distribution. Out of all the simulations for each shift in the vote share, we then set the value of the forcing variable to the size of the smallest vote shift that caused a shift in the bloc’s majority status in at least 50% of the 1,000 vote shifts.

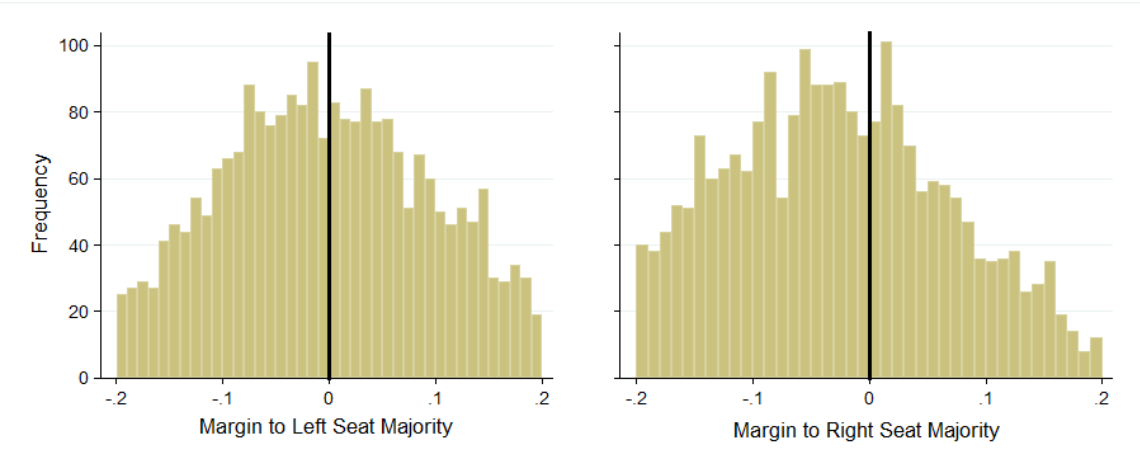
Figure W2 illustrates the process of creating the forcing variable for a specific municipality and election, the municipality of Upplands Väsby in 2006. In this municipality, the center-right bloc won the governing majority, receiving 52.7% of the votes and 54.9% of the seats. The left bloc won 42.9% of the votes and 43.1% of the seats. Suppose that we want the value of the forcing variable for the left bloc, i.e. the minimum proportion of votes that the bloc would need to win to gain a majority of seats. The x-axis in the figure shows the proportion of votes shifted, and the y-axis shows the proportion of times, out of our 1,000 simulated vote shifts, that caused the left bloc to win 50% of the seats or more. The upward slope of the line indicates that the larger the proportion of votes shifted to the bloc, the greater the probability of a 50% seat shift. As illustrated by the vertical line, the left bloc gains a seat majority in about half of the simulations when we give it an additional 5.0 percentage points of the votes. This assigns the value of the forcing variable to 5.0% for the left bloc in this election.



**Figure W2.** Proportion of seat majority shifts to the left bloc in Upplands Väsby municipality in the 2006 election (y-axis) depending on 1,000 simulations of shifting a certain proportion of votes (x-axis) from the center-right to the left bloc

A general concern with regression discontinuity designs is that the density of the forcing variable is not smooth across the threshold. A higher density of observations on either side of the seat threshold indicates that the treatment is not random, or that the forcing variable is wrongly

specified in some way. In Figure W3, we show that this is not the case for our analysis. For both forcing variables, the frequency of observations is smooth as we cross the seat-majority threshold.



**Figure W3.** Frequency of observations, as a function of the margin to a seat majority for the left bloc (left-hand graph) and the right bloc (right-hand graph)

Note: Each bar corresponds to 0.01 units of the margin to the seat majority

**Parliamentary elections**

To define close elections for parliamentary seats we follow the simulation approach suggested by Freier and Odendahl (2015) and use simulations to define close elections. There are two reasons for not using the same approach as at the municipal level. First, the seats are allocated in two rounds at two different levels, which makes it very technically complicated to implement our municipal-level approach. Second, using the vote share to define close elections would also mean that we would have to adjust the interval to define close elections for the smallest parties.

This approach is similar to the method we use at the municipal level. We start with the actual seat and vote allocation. We then simulate a large number (10,000) of likely vote changes, which allows for vote changes at both the national and local levels.<sup>22</sup> For each new vote allocation, we calculate the

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<sup>22</sup> In detail, the simulations are carried out as follows. First, we start with the actual vote share of a party at the national level. We then add a vote shock at the national level. This shock is normally distributed with a mean of zero and a standard deviation that is defined as the vote share of the party times 0.2 a constant of 2%. For a party with a 10% vote share, the standard deviation of the vote shock will thus be 4 percentage points.

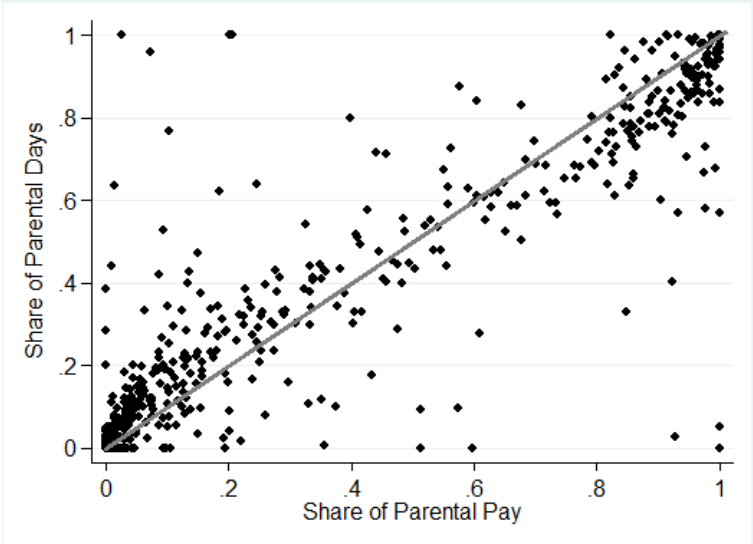
In the next step, we allocate this vote shock to the districts by multiplying the districts’ share of the parties’ vote share multiplied by a random number that has a uniform distribution between 0 and 1. This gives us the variable *q*. For each party, we then normalize the *q* values across districts so that they sum up to 1. These normalized *q* values decide how large a share of the national vote shock goes to a district.

We then add a shock at the district level. This shock is also normally distributed with a mean of zero and a standard deviation that is defined as the vote share of the party times 0.2 a constant of 2%. For a party with a

seat allocation. The closeness of the election is measured by the frequency of seat changes. If a party loses a seat in at least 30% of the simulations, we define that party as being close to losing a seat, and if it loses a seat in 40% of the simulations we define it as being very close to losing a seat. See Freier and Odendahl (2015) for a more detailed description of this approach.

### Section W2. Measuring the division of parental leave

Ideally, we would like to measure the division of parental leave in terms of the division of time away from work. But because our dataset only includes this variable from 1993, we approximate the division of leave using the parent's share of total payments from the parental leave insurance program. Figure W4 shows the correlation between these two variables for the time period for which we have access to both (after 1993). The figure shows a clear positive correlation, with most observations clustered close to the 45-degree line. The correlation between the two measurements is 0.815.



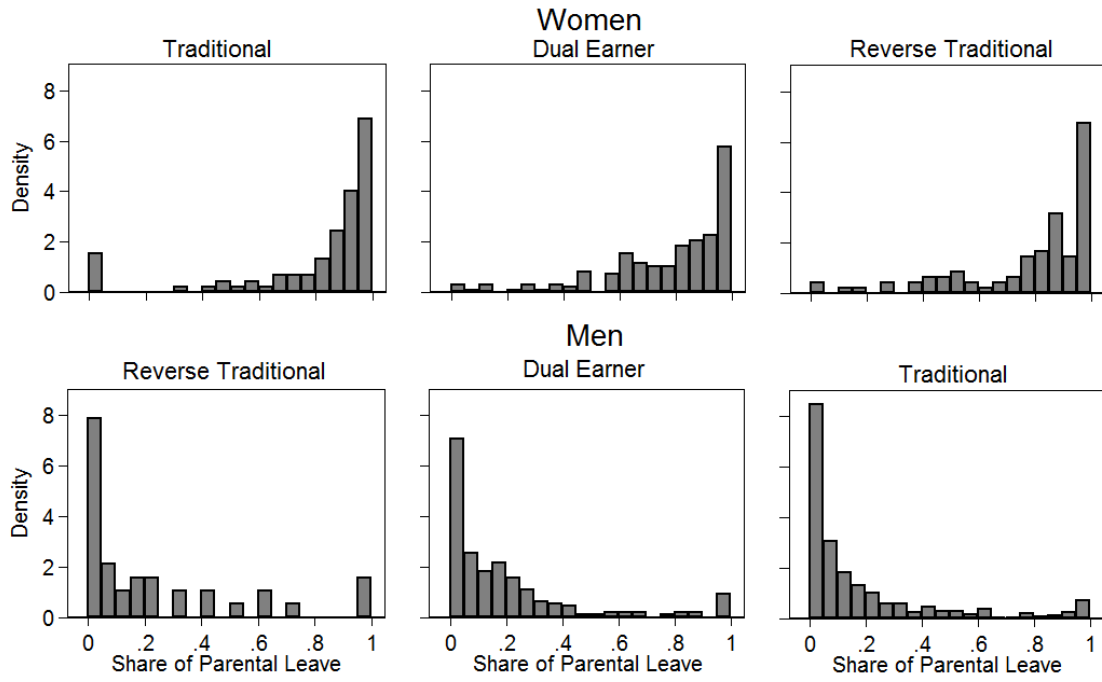
**Figure W4.** The politician's share of total payments to the household from the parental leave program (x-axis) and the politician's share of the household's total days of parental leave (y-axis)

Notes: N = 677. The number of days is the "net days;" half days are merged into full days by the Swedish Insurance Agency.

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10% vote share, the standard deviation of the vote shock will thus be 4%. Within each district, we normalize the shocks across parties so that the total vote change in the district is zero.

We then add the national vote shock and the district-level vote shock to the initial votes. Finally, we distribute the seats according to the new vote distribution, using the Swedish election formula, and calculate how often the party gains or loses a seat.



**Figure W5.** Politician's proportion of total parental leave by the division of paid labor

**Table W1.** Comparison of pre-promotion traits among mayoral candidates

	Full sample				Close elections (<5% win margin)			
	Women		Men		Women		Men	
Subsequently promoted	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<i>Couple characteristics</i>								
*Politician's share of earnings (%)	0.58	0.56	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.66</b>	0.60	0.56	<b>0.69</b>	<b>0.65</b>
*Politician's share of parental leave (%)	0.84	0.81	0.13	0.15	0.83	0.79	0.13	0.16
*Age difference (politician-spouse)	-3.82	-3.54	1.83	1.83	-4.47	-3.72	1.74	2.15
Politician out-earns spouse (%)	0.65	0.59	0.90	0.88	0.66	0.61	0.89	0.90
Marriage length (years)	20.61	21.75	19.83	20.32	19.49	20.51	19.43	19.57
Second marriage (%)	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.00
Same birth region (%)	0.91	0.92	0.94	0.94	0.95	0.95	0.96	0.95
Has children (0–17)	0.39	0.37	0.47	0.41	0.38	0.39	0.49	0.43
Has children (0–6)	0.12	0.10	0.12	0.11	0.12	0.13	0.14	0.13
<i>Individual characteristics</i>								
Politician's age	48.72	50.14	<b>49.66</b>	<b>51.27</b>	48.96	49.50	49.52	50.59
Politician's age at marriage (1)	28.11	28.39	<b>29.84</b>	<b>30.95</b>	29.47	28.99	30.09	31.01
Politician's earnings (2)	319.1	304.9	<b>361.4</b>	<b>335.6</b>	340.8	329.0	360.8	354.1
Politician's tertiary education (%)	0.55	0.57	0.48	0.48	0.55	0.60	0.47	0.49
Spouse's age	52.57	53.67	<b>47.84</b>	<b>49.41</b>	53.42	53.22	47.78	48.44
Spouse's earnings	264.9	279.3	169.9	175.4	276.7	287.8	<b>167.0</b>	<b>190.5</b>
Spouse's tertiary education (%)	0.33	0.36	0.50	0.46	0.36	0.32	0.47	0.53
Observations	148	228	390	600	73	92	194	247

Notes: Bold letters represent differences between promoted and non-promoted individuals of the same sex at the 5% level or lower, using ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions with standard errors clustered at the individual level.

(1) The variable takes the value 1 if the two spouses are from different birth regions, and zero otherwise. The categorization of birth regions consists of: Sweden, Other Nordic countries, EU27 excluding Nordic countries, Asia (including the Middle East), Europe excluding Nordic countries and EU27, South America, Africa, North America, Soviet Union and Oceania.

(2) We only know the exact year of marriage for persons who married after 1979. For those married before 1979 we define the year of marriage as the year that the couple's first child was born. For couples already married in 1979 and with no children born before that year, we count 1979 as the year of marriage. This approximation was previously used by e.g. Ginther and Sundström (2010).

(3) All measures of earnings are in units of 1,000s SEK (1 SEK ≈ 0.12 USD).

**Table W2.** Comparison of pre-promotion traits among candidates for parliament

	Full sample				Close elections (<5% win margin)			
	Women		Men		Women		Men	
Subsequently promoted	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
<i>Couple characteristics</i>								
*Politician's share of earnings (%)	0.56	0.51	0.68	0.65	0.58	0.53	0.69	0.66
*Politician's share of parental leave (%)	0.79	0.81	0.14	0.15	0.81	0.81	0.15	0.15
*Age difference (politician-spouse)	<b>-3.05</b>	<b>-4.42</b>	1.62	2.10	-3.86	-4.54	1.74	2.07
Politician out-earns spouse (%)	<b>0.63</b>	<b>0.47</b>	0.91	0.87	0.68	0.55	0.94	0.87
Marriage length (years)	17.53	16.36	17.69	17.23	18.55	16.13	17.34	17.66
Second marriage (%)	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.00
Same birth region (%)	0.84	0.91	0.91	0.90	0.84	0.88	0.90	0.90
Has children (0–17)	0.45	0.42	0.62	0.56	0.45	0.45	0.58	0.52
Has children (0–6)	0.14	0.14	0.22	0.19	0.14	0.18	0.18	0.14
<i>Individual characteristics</i>								
Politician's age	47.09	45.88	47.62	47.82	47.05	45.66	48.18	48.15
Politician's age at marriage (1)	29.56	29.52	29.93	30.59	28.50	29.53	30.84	30.49
Politician's earnings (2)	<b>352.1</b>	<b>274.5</b>	377.5	358.5	<b>367.5</b>	<b>281.0</b>	401.7	383.5
Politician's tertiary education (%)	0.81	0.81	0.69	0.71	0.76	0.84	0.73	0.66
Spouse's age	50.14	50.27	45.98	45.72	50.91	50.20	46.42	46.08
Spouse's earnings	311.6	297.1	186.6	182.4	311.5	275.5	190.5	176.2
Spouse's tertiary education (%)	0.60	0.60	0.77	0.70	0.58	0.67	0.77	0.69
Observations	69	182	76	184	53	78	66	69

Notes: See Table W1.



**Table W3.** Estimated effect of promotion on the probability of remaining married, including control variables

Parliamentarian Mayor	Sample selection of promotion types and electoral closeness						
	All	Close	Very close	All	Close	All	Close
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
<b>Panel A: All</b>							
Promoted	0.47 (1.15)	1.60 (1.81)	3.55 (2.29)	2.94 (2.41)	1.53 (3.59)	0.02 (1.34)	1.52 (2.16)
Promotion *Woman	-4.43* (2.29)	-8.82*** (3.39)	-10.27** (4.40)	-7.45* (4.35)	-10.65* (6.17)	-3.59 (2.78)	-7.33* (4.21)
Obs.	1,898	883	532	584	298	1,337	593
<b>Panel B: Women</b>							
Promoted	-3.21* (1.91)	-6.56** (2.91)	-7.32* (3.92)	-5.02 (3.64)	-9.02* (5.21)	-2.84 (2.37)	-5.57 (3.60)
Obs.	627	293	187	272	137	366	160
<b>Panel C: Men</b>							
Promoted	0.50 (1.15)	1.29 (1.82)	3.40 (2.32)	3.03 (2.50)	0.99 (3.75)	0.00 (1.33)	1.53 (2.18)
Obs.	1,271	590	345	312	161	971	433

Notes: The table contains results from estimating Equation (1) on varying samples of electoral closeness, defined in Section 3, using OLS. Standard errors clustered at the individual level are in parentheses. \* significant at 10%; \*\* significant at 5%; \*\*\* significant at 1%.

**Table W4.** Estimated effect of promotion on the probability of remaining married (for first-time candidates)

Parliamentarian Mayor	Sample selection of promotion types and electoral closeness						
	All (1)	Close (2)	Very close (3)	All (4)	Close (5)	All (6)	Close (7)
<b>Panel A: All</b>							
Promoted	-0.77 (1.57)	0.96 (2.40)	4.66 (3.15)	-0.36 (3.44)	-2.79 (4.83)	-0.60 (1.75)	2.28 (2.75)
Promotion *Woman	-6.76** (3.10)	-8.38* (4.34)	-8.49 (5.80)	-10.80* (5.75)	-7.25 (7.07)	-4.10 (3.73)	-7.62 (5.56)
Obs.	1,467	674	398	469	229	1,012	449
<b>Panel B: Women</b>							
Promoted	-7.53*** (2.68)	-7.42** (3.64)	-5.58 (4.42)	-11.16** (4.61)	-10.04* (5.17)	-4.70 (3.32)	-5.34 (4.88)
Obs.	507	243	192	219	106	296	139
<b>Panel C: Men</b>							
Promoted	-0.77 (1.56)	0.96 (2.39)	4.66 (3.14)	-0.36 (3.44)	-2.79 (4.82)	-0.60 (1.74)	2.28 (2.73)
Obs.	960	431	246	250	123	716	310

Notes: The table contains results from estimating Equation (1) on varying samples of electoral closeness, defined in Section 3, using OLS. Standard errors clustered at the individual level are in parentheses. \* significant at 10%; \*\* significant at 5%; \*\*\* significant at 1%.

**Table W5.** Estimated effect of promotion on the probability of remaining married, among those married in the year before the election ( $t = -1$ )

Parliamentarian Mayor	Sample selection of promotion types and electoral closeness						
	All (1)	Close (2)	Very close (3)	All (4)	Close (5)	All (6)	Close (7)
<b>Panel A: All</b>							
Promoted	-0.13 (1.42)	1.63 (2.03)	5.59** (2.61)	1.90 (3.14)	-0.52 (4.03)	-0.87 (1.58)	2.05 (2.34)
Promotion *Woman	-8.16*** (2.98)	-10.04** (4.15)	-11.84** (5.36)	-14.73** (5.77)	-13.60* (7.16)	-4.12 (3.42)	-5.24 (4.84)
Obs.	1,924	885	532	591	299	1,354	594
<b>Panel B: Women</b>							
Promoted	-8.29*** (2.62)	-8.41** (3.64)	-6.25 (4.72)	-12.83*** (4.84)	-14.11** (5.93)	-4.99 (3.05)	-3.19 (4.28)
Obs.	645	298	189	279	141	376	161
<b>Panel C: Men</b>							
Promoted	-0.13 (1.42)	1.63 (2.03)	5.59** (2.60)	1.90 (3.14)	-0.52 (4.03)	-0.87 (1.58)	2.05 (2.33)
Obs.	1,279	587	343	312	158	978	433

Notes: The table contains results from estimating Equation (1) on varying samples of electoral closeness, defined in Section 3, using OLS. Standard errors clustered at the individual level are in parentheses. \* significant at 10%; \*\* significant at 5%; \*\*\* significant at 1%.

**Table W6.** Comparison of pre-promotion traits among CEO candidates

Subsequently promoted:	Women Yes	Men Yes
<i>Couple characteristics</i>		
*Politician's share of earnings (%)	0.58	0.78
*Politician's share of parental leave (%)	0.78	0.09
*Age difference (politician-spouse)	-3.05	1.78
Politician out-earns spouse (%)	0.62	0.95
Marriage length (years)	13.37	13.5
Second marriage (%)	0.11	0.07
Same birth region (%)	0.89	0.90
Has children (0–17)	0.74	0.71
Has children (0–6)	0.31	0.33
<i>Individual characteristics</i>		
Politician's age	43.76	45.5
Politician's age at marriage (1)	30.99	31.98
Politician's earnings (2)	624.2	796.1
Politician's tertiary education (%)	0.82	0.73
Spouse's age	46.82	43.75
Spouse's earnings	527.5	209.4
Spouse's tertiary education (%)	0.67	0.64
Observations	228	1,208

Notes: See Table W1.

## Section W3. Career success and divorce in four occupations

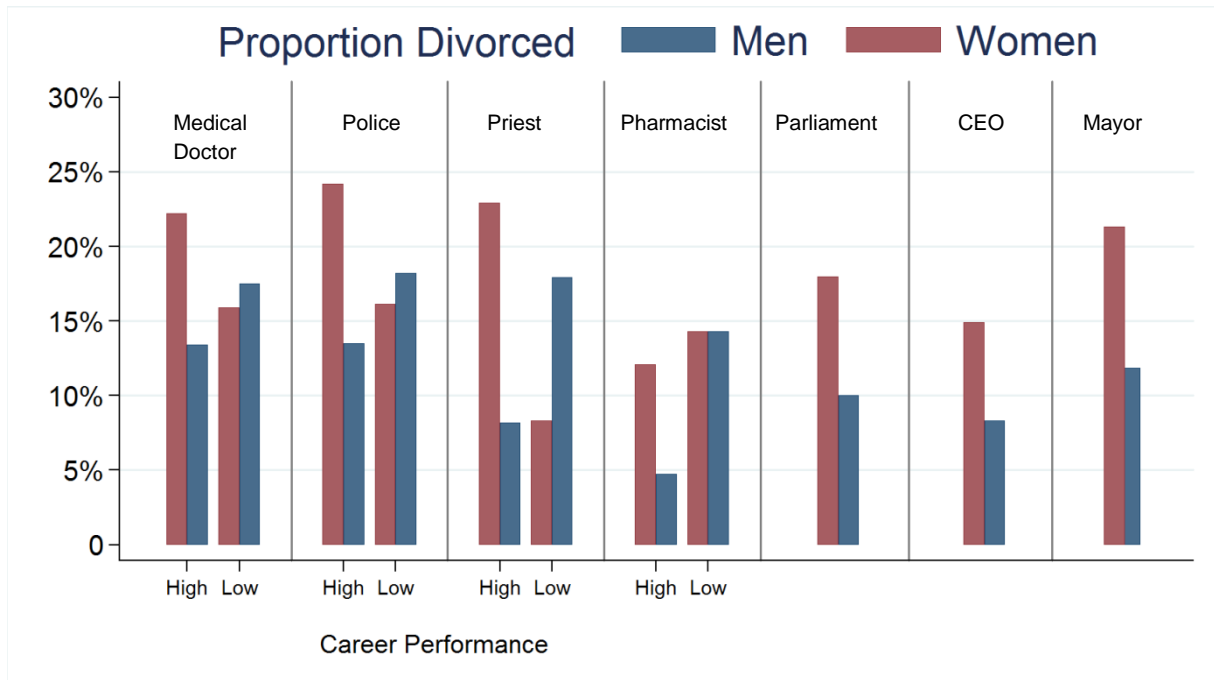
To examine the external validity of our finding that women with successful careers are more likely to divorce than men with successful careers, we turn to four additional occupations in which, arguably, persons with the same education type have comparable career paths that occur within the same types of organizations: medical doctors, police, priests, and pharmacists.<sup>23</sup> Although we cannot measure the exact timing of promotion events for these occupations, we can use income to measure who has had a successful career or not. As a comparison, we also report the proportions of divorced men and women in the occupations analyzed above: CEOs, mayors, and parliamentarians.

From our dataset that covers the full Swedish working population, we select all individuals who graduated from the relevant education programs between 1989 and 1993. In order to only compare the career trajectories of persons who remained in the occupation, we drop those who earned a degree in another field at any point until the year 2012. We also remove individuals who retired before 2012.

Divorce rates and career outcomes are measured within occupation-gender groups 20–23 years after graduation. Within each occupation, we compute the median of annual earnings in 2010–2012. We then benchmark each individual's average annual earnings to those of his or her peers. We denote persons who have reached a level of annual earnings above the median as having had a "high" career performance, and those below the median as having had a "low" performance. We compute the proportion of divorced persons by gender and occupation, divided by their career performance (high or low) and report these proportions in Figure W6.

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<sup>23</sup> We use industry codes for the post-graduation period to check if this is the case. The data show that for medical doctors, 92% of the year-individual observations have industry codes within medical care (2-digit SNI92 of 85). For the Police Academy, 93% of the observations are found in the police force industry code (4-digit SNI92 of 7425). Priests are found in religious organizations, as 75% of the observations occur in the 4-digit code of 9131. Finally, for pharmacists, 57% of the data is found in the 3-digit code 244 (medical companies) or the 5-digit code of 52310 (pharmacies).



**Figure W6.** Proportion of divorced individuals by gender, occupation, and career performance

Notes: For the first four occupations, career performance and divorce are measured in the 20–23rd year of the individual’s career. Parliamentarians and mayors form a pooled sample of the 1991–2010 election periods. CEOs in firms with more than 100 employees represent a pooled sample for 2002–2012.

The descriptive statistics indicate that our baseline findings reach beyond the political sector. Among all the professions, women are more likely to be divorced. But there is a striking gender difference between persons who have reached high and low levels of earnings. For men, the divorce rate is consistently higher among those with below-median earnings and across all four occupations. For women, divorce is instead more common among high earners than low earners within the same profession. The only profession that does not show this pattern for women is pharmacists.

**Table W7.** Correlation matrix for household heterogeneity variables in the sample of women

	PE %	AD	PPL %	PPE	SPE	PEC %	HEC %	Child
Politician's earnings (%)	1							
Age difference	-0.02	1						
Politician's parental leave (%)	-0.01	0.00	1					
Politician's previous earnings	0.45	0.07	-0.01	1				
Spouse's previous earnings	-0.65	0.07	0.06	0.17	1			
Politician's earnings change (%)	-0.29	-0.11	-0.24	-0.25	0.01	1		
Household's earnings change (%)	-0.13	-0.09	-0.21	-0.47	-0.21	0.63	1	
Has children (0-17)	-0.15	-0.08	0.14	-0.08	0.04	0.10	0.14	1

**Table W8.** Correlation matrix for household heterogeneity variables in the sample of men

	PE %	AD	PPL %	PPE	SPE	PEC %	HEC %	Child
Politician's earnings (%)	1							
Age difference	0.03	1						
Politician's parental leave (%)	-0.07	-0.04	1					
Politician's previous earnings	0.39	0.02	-0.07	1				
Spouse's previous earnings	-0.65	-0.02	0.05	0.24	1			
Politician's earnings change (%)	-0.39	0.01	-0.02	-0.42	0.02	1		
Household's earnings change (%)	-0.18	-0.04	0.00	-0.45	-0.15	0.69	1	
Has children (0-17)	0.03	0.08	-0.22	-0.01	-0.07	0.09	0.08	1

**Table W9.** Estimated effect of promotion on the probability of remaining married, sample divided by pre-promotion household type

Election sample	Politician made less than 40 % of Household income		Neither spouse made more than 60 % of Household income		Politician made more than 60 % of Household income	
	All	Close	All	Close	All	Close
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<b>Panel A: All</b>						
Promoted	-2.52 (7.22)	2.25 (15.45)	2.56 (2.73)	3.13 (4.11)	-1.09 (1.68)	2.25 (2.53)
Promotion *Woman	1.65 (8.75)	-8.15 (17.84)	-9.51** (4.05)	-10.44* (5.94)	-6.94 (4.61)	-11.35* (6.67)
Obs.	175	76	607	271	983	473
<b>Panel B: Women</b>						
Promoted	-0.87 (5.55)	-5.90 (9.68)	-6.94** (3.07)	-7.31* (4.16)	-8.03* (4.78)	-9.10 (7.50)
Obs.	120	52	280	126	132	70
<b>Panel C: Men</b>						
Promoted	-2.52 (4.38)	2.25 (10.99)	2.56 (2.67)	3.13 (4.21)	-1.09 (1.65)	2.25 (2.43)
Obs.	55	24	327	145	851	403

Notes: The table contains results from estimating Equation (1) on varying samples of electoral closeness, defined in Section 3, using OLS. Standard errors clustered at the individual level are in parentheses. \* significant at 10%; \*\* significant at 5%; \*\*\* significant at 1%.



**Table W10.** Estimated effect of promotion on the probability of remaining married, sample divided by marriage age gap

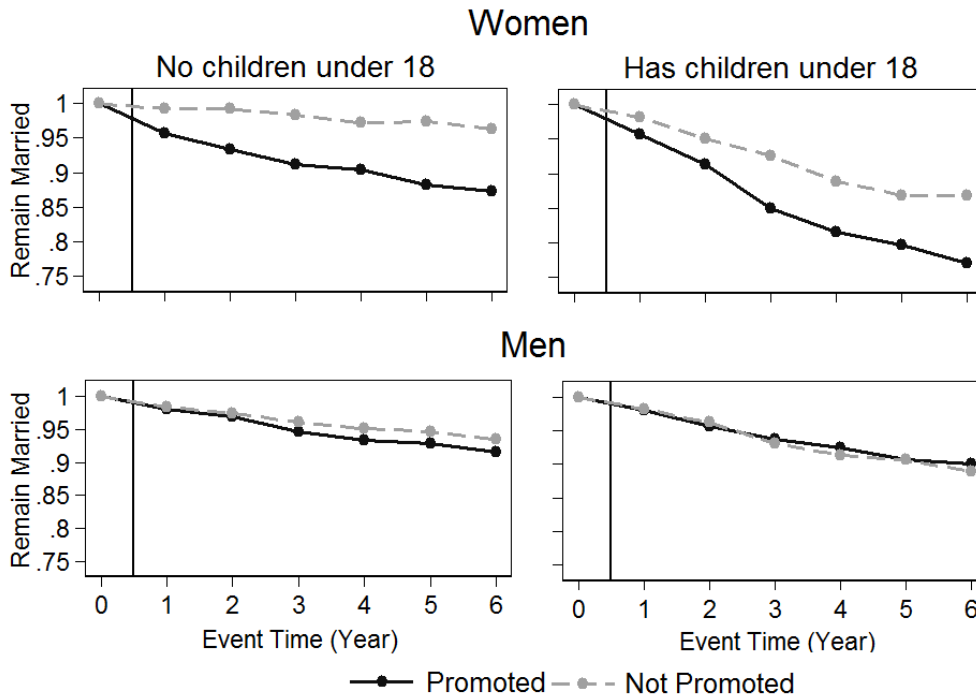
Election sample	Politician at least 4 years younger		Age difference is less than 4 years		Politician at least 4 years older	
	All (1)	Close (2)	All (3)	Close (4)	All (5)	Close (6)
<b>Panel A: All</b>						
Promoted	-13.22** (6.70)	-15.99 (9.87)	2.24 (1.64)	3.87 (2.50)	-5.01** (2.27)	-4.37 (3.44)
Promotion *Woman	0.85 (7.38)	3.80 (10.82)	-4.85 (3.20)	-8.42* (4.82)	-6.95 (10.04)	4.37 (22.08)
Obs.	376	180	1,154	532	397	183
<b>Panel B: Women</b>						
Promoted	-12.37*** (3.02)	-12.18*** (4.39)	-2.61 (2.90)	-4.55 (4.42)	-11.96 (9.58)	0.00 (0.00)
Obs.	301	145	314	144	23	9
<b>Panel C: Men</b>						
Promoted	-13.22* (7.38)	-15.99 (10.37)	2.24 (1.61)	3.87 (2.44)	-5.01** (2.27)	-4.37 (3.47)
Obs.	75	35	840	388	374	174

Notes: The table contains results from estimating Equation (1) on varying samples of electoral closeness, defined in Section 3, using OLS. Standard errors clustered at the individual level are in parentheses. \* significant at 10%; \*\* significant at 5%; \*\*\* significant at 1%.

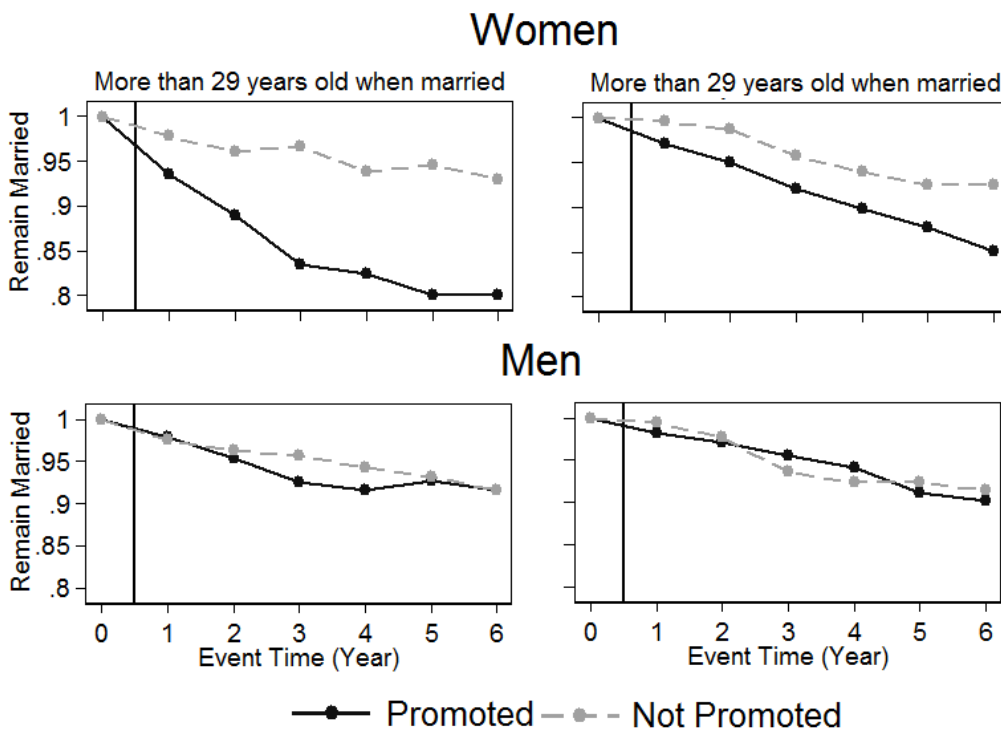
**Table W11.** Estimated effect of promotion on the probability of remaining married, sample divided by division of parental leave

Election sample	Wife took at least 90 percent of parental leave		Wife took less than 90 percent of parental leave	
	All (1)	Close (2)	All (3)	Close (4)
<b>Panel A: All</b>				
Promoted	0.78 (2.29)	2.41 (3.78)	4.71** (2.19)	4.36 (2.79)
Promotion *Woman	-6.04 (4.47)	-9.89 (6.81)	-4.53 (3.64)	-4.80 (4.40)
Obs.	616	298	458	212
<b>Panel B: Women</b>				
Promoted	-5.27 (4.00)	-7.49 (6.10)	0.19 (3.23)	-0.44 (3.45)
Obs.	175	93	175	85
<b>Panel C: Men</b>				
Promoted	0.78 (2.25)	2.41 (3.65)	4.71** (2.04)	4.36 (2.76)
Obs.	441	205	283	127

Notes: The table contains results from estimating Equation (1) on varying samples of electoral closeness, defined in Section 3, using OLS. Standard errors clustered at the individual level are in parentheses. \* significant at 10%; \*\* significant at 5%; \*\*\* significant at 1%.



**Figure W7.** Marriage durability and promotions by having children or not.



**Figure W8.** Marriage durability and promotions by the politician's age at marriage.

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