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The Upshot
THE 2016 RACE

The 'Women's Card'? We Measured, and It's Not Worth Much

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As Donald Trump turns his attention to Hillary Clinton, he's trying out new attack lines. In his victory speech Tuesday evening, it was that "the only card she has is the women's card." He said that "if Hillary Clinton were a man, I don't think she would get 5 percent of the vote."

In his telling, the women's card confers an enormous advantage. Indeed, current head-to-head polls between Mrs. Clinton and Mr. Trump have her with 55 percent of the two-party vote, suggesting that he believes the women's card is worth 50 points. That's nearly enough to assure any female candidate of victory.

Yet this appears to be inconsistent with available data. Over the past decade, women have been elected to 17.5 percent of House seats, meaning that they're outnumbered by men by roughly five to one.

In fact, the women's card appears to be particularly unhelpful in the

United States. Women's success in politics — at least as measured by the proportion of seats they hold in the House compared with equivalent lower chambers in other nations — ranks below that of nearly every other rich country. The United States is positioned between Greece and Bangladesh.

Of course, Mr. Trump might object that he's not talking about House seats, but rather the presidency. Even there, the women's card appears quite unhelpful, as The Upshot's extensive search through United States data failed to locate a single woman who had ever been president.

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