November 26, 1911. Julieta Lanteri, the first woman that cast a ballot in Argentina and South America.

Looking Inside the ballot box: Gender Gaps in Presidential Elections.
Insights from the Argentine Experience

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MOTIVATION
THE GENDER GAP

- Gender gap in electoral decisions supported by several studies (Kaufmann, 2006)

- Also gender gap in the temporal conduct with women tending to change their voting preferences more often than men´s (Lott and Kenny, 1999)

MOTIVATION
THE GENDER GAP

Discussion on the electoral impact of female constituency emphasizes women's preferences rather incentives

Women have different preferences from men on issues such as:

- Redistributive policies (Abrams and Settle, 1999; Alesina and La Ferrara, 2005; Giger, 2009; Clots- Figueras, 2010)

- Religion (Blaydes, 2011; Blaydes and Linzer, 2014)

- Trade policies (de Bromhead, 2018)

- Education (Carrutheres and Wanamaker, 2015)

MOTIVATION
THE GENDER GAP

- **Fiscal policy**

  - Funk and Gathmann, 2006: relative to males, female voters oppose to defense expenditures raises and support environmental plans.

  - Aidt et al. (2006) and Aidt & Dallal (2008): social spending in Western Europe at the beginning of the 20th century increased because of the female enfranchisement

  - Krogstrup and Wälti (2011): female suffrage reduced deficits;

  - Bravo-Ortega et al. (2018) the introduction of female electoral rights did not increase, on average, the social and total government expenditure

MOTIVATION
THE EGOTROPIC VS SOCIOTROPIC CONTROVERSY

- **Men cast their vote following a self-interest set of preferences, (*egocentric behavior*),**

- **Women´s electoral choices are driven by social issues (*sociotropic behavior*) (Welch and Hibbing, 1992; Clarke et al., 2005).**

  - **Eisenberg and Ketcham (2004), sustain the opposite**

- **Kam (2009): both genders vote similarly regarding the performance of the economy.**

- **The egocentric vs sociotropic debate based on the view that there exists differences in values, as well as disparities in self perceptions of men and women, with men more likely to perceive themselves and other males as autonomous and independent and women considering themselves as more interrelated with people and things (Deaux, 1985).**

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DATA
SURVEY DATA VS. ACTUAL VOTING RECORDS

- **Most of the empirical studies that investigate difference in gender voting based their conclusions on surveys**

  - **Exceptions**

    - **Panzer and Paredes (1991) study the 1989 general election in Chile**

    - **Lewis (2004) uses actual voting records from the city of Santiago de Chile**

    - **Koppl-Turyna (2020) exploits a data set from the city of Vienna that recorded female and male ballots separately from 1954 to 1991**

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DATA
SURVEY DATA VS. ACTUAL VOTING RECORDS

- **Argentine case:**
  - Lewis (1971) uses data from 1958 to 1965 sorted by districts to study the influence of gender differences on the voting behavior
- From 1983 to 2007 women and men voted in different polling places and the records were kept separately
- From the presidential election held in 2011, electoral rolls were mixed, interrupting the availability of electoral data sorted by gender.
- Voting is mandatory in Argentina for citizen from 18 to 70 years old, so all citizens are automatically registered to vote but they must cast their ballot in the district where they have established their residence.

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WOMEN AT THE POLLS
ARGENTINA

- Women voted for the first time in Argentina on April 8, 1928, in municipal elections.

  - In 1927, under the administration of Aldo Cantoni (and the leadership of Federico Cantoni) the Constitution of the Province of San Juan was amended allowing female suffrage

- Women voted for the first time in national elections on November 11, 1951.

  - Under the first administration of Juan Perón, Law 13010 was passed on September 23, 1947, giving women the right to vote.

- In 1934, the lawyer Emar Acosta was the first elected woman in Latin America (Representative for the legislature of the province of San Juan).

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WOMEN AT THE POLLS
REGISTRATION, TOTAL VOTES AND POSITIVE VOTES: RATIO OF WOMEN TO MEN: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 1983-2007

Category	1983	1989	1995	1999	2003	2007	Average
Registration	1.032	1.036	1.036	1.044	1.049	1.039	1.039
Total Votes	1.069	1.060	1.057	1.061	1.068	1.078	1.065
Positive Votes	1.073	1.059	1.059	1.066	1.059	1.084	1.067

On average, women outnumbered men by 3.9% in registration rolls and by 6.5 % and 6.7% in total and positive votes, respectively, showing the potential importance of women in defining close elections.

Regional differences: men outnumber women in Patagonian and some northern provinces

Source: own calculations based on data from *Dirección Nacional Electoral*
Note: Due to missing data, the ratios for Total and Positive Votes were computed using 24 districts for 1983; 20 districts for 1989 and 1995; 18 districts for 2003, 17 districts for 1999 and 20 districts for 2007.

WOMEN AT THE POLLS
TURNOUT. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 1983-2007
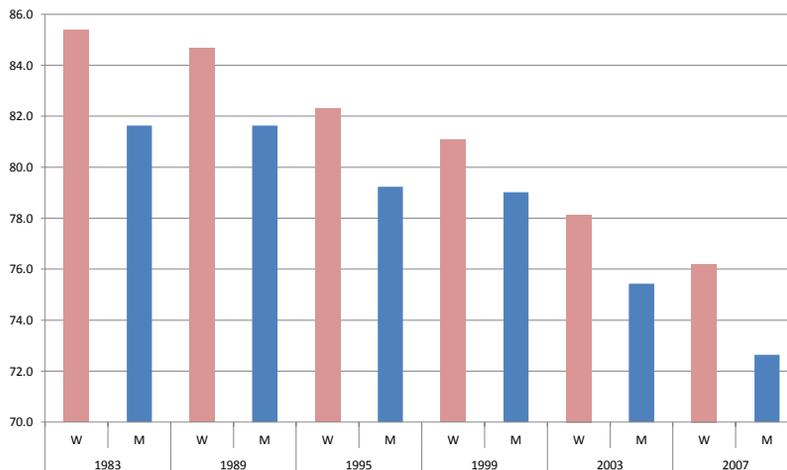
Women participation as percentage of total registered women

Men participation as percentage of total registered men

In all six presidential elections, women turnout more than men

Turnout men > turnout women

Only 9 cases

- Catamarca 1989 & 2003
- Chubut 1989
- La Pampa 1999
- Santa Cruz 1995
- Santa Fe 1999
- CABA 1995, 1999 & 2003 (narrow difference)

WOMEN AT THE POLLS
VOTING FOR NO ONE: BLANK. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 1983-2007

Women Blank votes as percentage of total women votes

Men Blank votes as percentage of total men votes
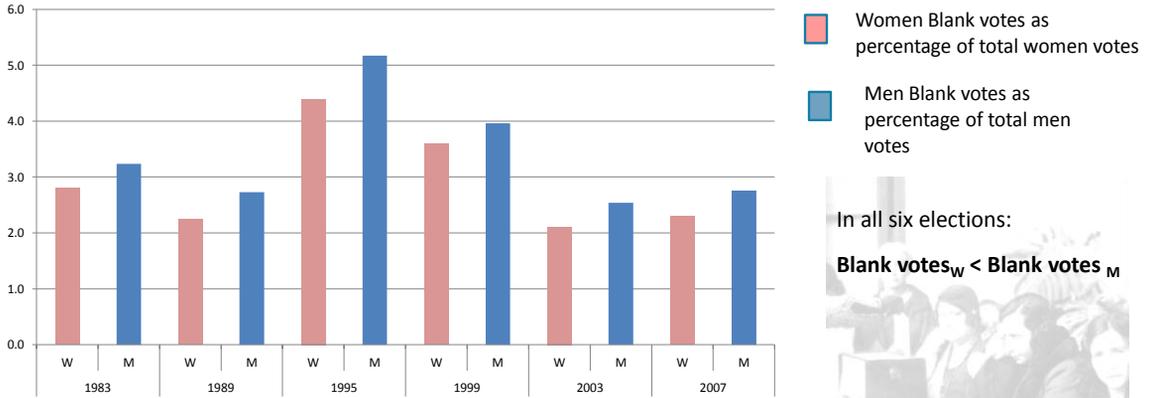
In all six elections:

Blank votes$_W$ < Blank votes $_M$

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WOMEN AT THE POLLS
VOTING FOR NO ONE: NULL. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 1983-2007

Women Null votes as percentage of total women votes

Men Null votes as percentage of total men votes
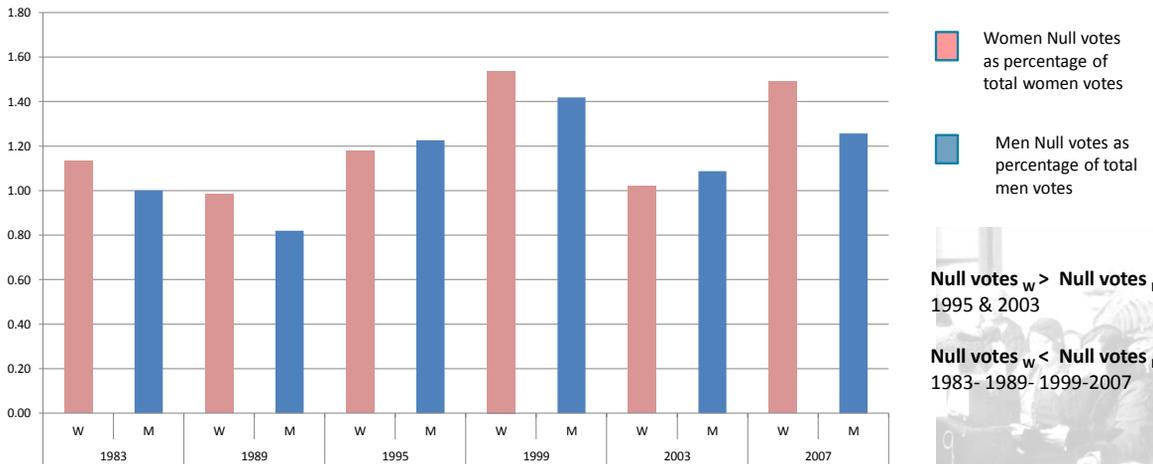
Null votes $_W$ > Null votes $_M$
1995 & 2003

Null votes $_W$ < Null votes $_M$
1983- 1989- 1999-2007

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WOMEN AT THE POLLS
ARE WOMEN MORE PERONISTS THAN MEN?   NO!!

Women votes to PJ as percentage of total women votes

Men votes to PJ as percentage of total men votes

In all six elections:

Votes PJ$_W$ < Votes PJ$_M$
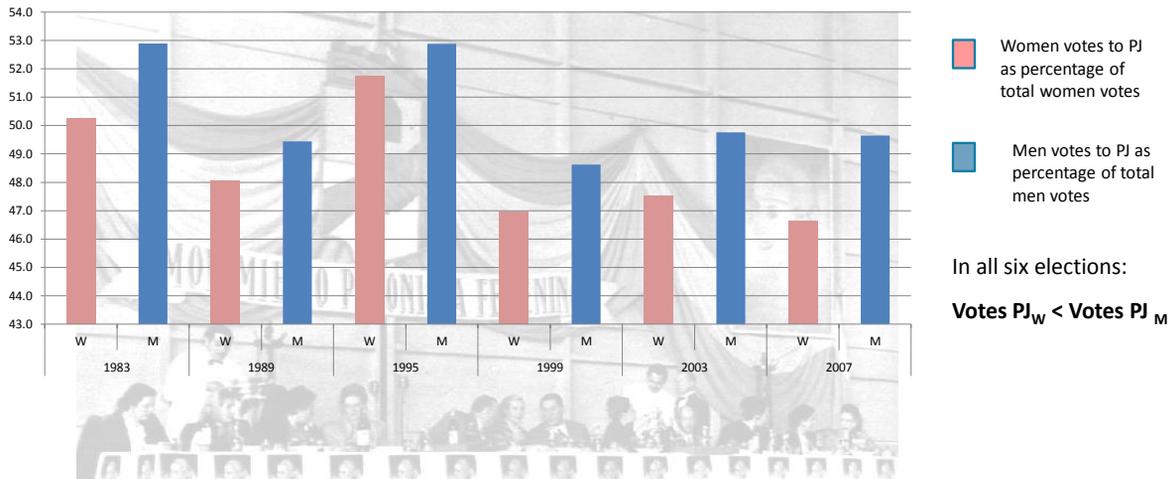
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WOMEN AT THE POLLS
GENDER GAP IN ARGENTINA: EXTREME VALUES IN *PRESIDENTIAL* ELECTIONS: 1983-2007

Election Year	Incumbent Party	Incumbent President	Largest Gender Gap (Men vote to incumbent - Women vote to incumbent)	
			District	**Gap (%)**
1983	-	Bignone (Military)	Santa Cruz	-9.2*
1989	UCR	Alfonsín	CABA	-7.3
1995	PJ	Menem	Río Negro	-6.3
1999	PJ	Menem	Tierra del Fuego	3.9
2003	PJ	Duhalde	Santiago del Estero	-5.1
2007	FPV	Kirchner	La Rioja	4.7

Source: own calculations based on data from *Dirección Nacional Electoral*.
Notes: Gender Gap is computed from total votes to the incumbent.
PJ= Partido Justicialista; UCR= Unión Cívica Radical; CABA= Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires.
* Since there was no party allied with the military, we compute the gender gap of the votes received by UCR party, the winner of the 1983 election.

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WOMEN AT THE POLLS.

Percentage of Women and Men Votes obtained by the incumbent in *Presidential* elections

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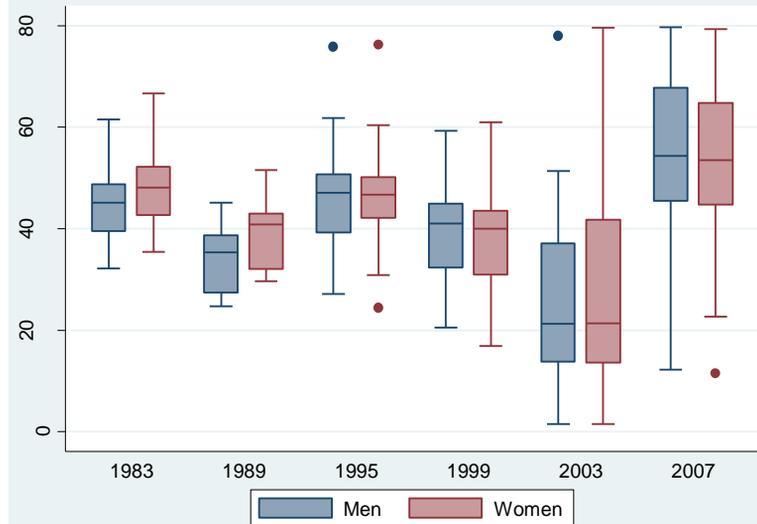
EMPIRICAL SPECIFICATION
MODEL

$$GenderGap_{it} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 H_{it}^W + \alpha_2 H_{it}^M + \alpha_3 Controls_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \qquad \textbf{(I)}$$

Gender gap defined as the difference between the percentage of votes obtained by the political party of the incumbent president in men's ballot boxes V^M, and the percentage of votes obtained by the political party of the incumbent president in women's ballot boxes V^W,

$$GenderGap_{it} = V_{it}^M - V_{it}^W$$

Our objective: explore variables that increase or decrease the gap, regardless the incumbent was punished or benefited by a particular gender → we compute the ***absolute value of Gender Gap*** as our dependent variable

EMPIRICAL SPECIFICATION
MAIN VARIABLES OF INTEREST

Household^M and *Household^W*,
percentage of men (M) and women (W),
ages 14 and over, respectively, that are
Head of Household.

The percentage of women head of
household grew, on average, 104.7%
during the period under study, going from
8.6% in the presidential period 1984-1989
to 17.6% in 2004-2007.

Percentage of individuals that are Head of households classified by gender in each presidential period

Presidential Period	Head of Household			
	Men		Women	
	Avg	Std dev	Avg	Std dev
1984-1989	36.3	6.30	8.6	2.19
1990-1994	36.3	5.41	9.5	2.23
1995-1999	41.1	4.75	13.0	2.68
2000-2003	40.4	5.08	15.2	2.65
2004-2007	39.2	5.46	17.6	2.91

Note: averages over the presidential period

- *Conjecture*: females and males facing comparable incentives are likely to have similar evaluations of the incumbent performance and, as a result, their behavior toward the vote should not diverge.
- Hence, as the percentage of women head of household increase, we expect the absolute value of gender gap to decline

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CORRELATIONS
MAIN VARIABLES OF INTEREST

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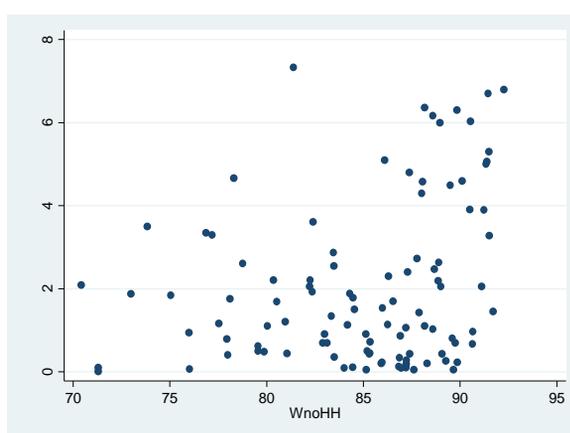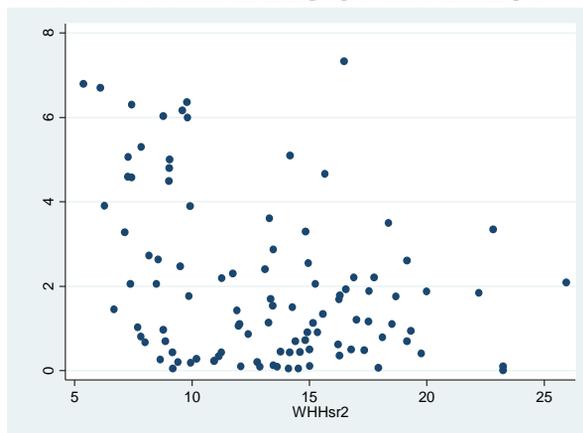
EMPIRICAL SPECIFICATION
CONTROL VARIABLES

Socioeconomic

- *Unemploymen^M ; Unemployment^W,*
- Real Gross Regional Product per capita (*GRP*)
- Property Crime Rate per 100,000 inhabitants (*Crime*)
- Homicide Rate per 100,000 inhabitants (*Homicide*)
- Infant Mortality rate (*Mortality*).

Political

- *Opposition,* dummy that takes the value 1 in the home districts of women running for president of opposition parties at election t, and 0 otherwise.
- *Incumbent* dummy that takes the value 1 in the home districts of women running for president of incumbent parties at election t, and 0 otherwise.
- *Party^M* and *Party^W* "normal" share of men and female votes for the incumbent party in each province (coded), reflecting the incumbent party's baseline level of electoral support (the result of party identification, ideological affinity, and clientelistic networks).

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EMPIRICAL SPECIFICATION
ESTIMATION METHOD AND DATA

- Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) with robust standard errors.

- We include province-fixed-effects to pick up time-invariant heterogeneity between the provinces and time-fixed-effects to control for common unobserved time effects in voting behavior

Descriptive statistics

Variables	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Dependent variables					
Gender Gap (%)	104	-0.40	2.76	-7.33	4.66
Gender Gap (Absolute value) (%)	104	2.02	1.91	0.01	7.33
Main variables of interest					
Head Household- Men (%)	115	38.6	5.8	28.2	55.6
Head Household- Women (%)	114	13.0	4.3	5.4	25.9
Socioeconomic Control variables					
Unemployment rate (men) (%)	115	9.7	4.2	1.7	19.7
Unemployment rate (women) (%)	115	10.6	4.8	1.3	21.7
GRP per capita (pesos of 2004)	115	394.3	287.7	94.6	1765.0
Property Crime Rate (Offenses per 100,000 inhabitants)	115	1871.9	946.5	540.0	4795.5
Homicides (Offenses per 100,000 inhabitants)	115	7.9	7.2	0.0	39.7
Infant Mortality Rate (‰)	115	20.1	6.8	8.2	38.4
Political Control variables					
Party support – Men (%)	101	36.1	11.7	8.7	67.7
Party support – Women (%)	101	36.6	12.2	7.8	69.6
Incumbent (dummy)	115	0.009	0.932	0	1
Opposition (dummy)	115	0.035	0.184	0	1

DETERMINANTS OF GENDER GAP IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

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Variable	Full model (i)	Only socioeconomic controls (ii)	Only political controls (iii)
Household^W	-0.2910**	-0.2559*	-0.2386*
	(0.1288)	(0.1281)	(0.1371)
Household^M	-0.0115	-0.0108	-0.0143
	(0.0644)	(0.0546)	(0.0591)
Unemployment^W	-0.1193	-0.0804	
	(0.0831)	(0.0670)	
Unemployment^M	0.0865	0.0627	
	(0.0872)	(0.0936)	
GRP	0.0024*	0.0025*	
	(0.0014)	(0.0012)	
Crime	-0.0004	-0.0002	
	(0.0004)	(0.0003)	
Homicide	0.0307*	0.0249	
	(0.0173)	(0.0179)	
Mortality	-0.1242*	-0.1581**	
	(0.0650)	(0.0647)	
Party^W	-0.0845		-0.0600
	(0.0835)		(0.0784)
Party^M	0.0711		0.0478
	(0.0872)		(0.0823)
Incumbent	1.3236**		1.0841*
	(0.5577)		(0.6189)
Opposition	-0.2813		-0.0597
	(0.4870)		(0.5326)
Constant	8.1690***	6.8762***	5.1124*
	(2.7530)	(2.1534)	(2.5639)
R -Sq within	0.5752	0.5252	0.5151
R - Sq between	0.1433	0.2398	0.0643
R - Sq overall	0.3071	0.3151	0.2681

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FINAL REMARKS

- Our paper departs considerable from the predominant literature on gender gap that rely mostly on surveys and stresses differences in values, as well as disparities in self perceptions of men and women, to explain the electoral gender gap

- The egocentric-sociotropic framework implies a stereotyped view of genders and provides mixed and sometimes confusing results

- As in Montgomery and Stuart (1999), Eisenberg and Ketcham (2004) and Strom (2014), our paper emphasizes the importance of the labor market, in particular, the percentage of women that are head of household, to explain the electoral gender gap

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FINAL REMARKS

- Similar economic incentives induce to comparable electoral behavior:

  - as women change their role from being just a family member to become head of the household, they face analogous incentives to men (that have maintained a high proportion of head of households in the period under study), and their evaluation of the incumbent performance and their policies tend to be similar to males leading to a reduction in the gender gap.

- Our results show that it is hard to sustain the argument that intrinsic differences between men and women spurs their unequal electoral behavior.

- Their conduct may differ with respect to different issues but the underneath reasons of such dissimilarities, and their voting responsiveness, are the uneven incentives they face. Once those incentive converge, so does the electoral behavior.

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Thank you!!

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