

# Peacemakers or Iron Ladies?

## A Cross National Study of Gender and International Conflict

Madison Schramm  
PhD Candidate, Georgetown University  
mvs45@georgetown.edu

Alexandra Stark  
PhD Candidate, Georgetown University  
as3459@georgetown.edu

### *Abstract*

Conventional wisdom suggests that when women attain high political office they are more likely to act as peacemakers than their male counterparts. In contrast, this article argues that women political leaders may be more likely to initiate conflict than their male colleagues. The theory draws on insights from feminist theory, particularly the notion that gender is performative, to argue that the effects of a leader's gender on foreign policy decision-making vary with social and institutional context. In order to gain and maintain status in elite policy in-groups, female leaders are incentivized to perform gender by signaling their toughness and competence through initiating conflict. Statistical tests provide evidence that female heads of state in democracies are more likely to initiate conflict than their male counterparts, and that this effect is conditioned both by domestic political constraints and overall levels of women's political empowerment, thus providing evidence for the theorized causal mechanism.

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*“Ginger Rogers did everything that Fred Astaire did. She just did it backwards and in high heels.” - Ann Richards*

## INTRODUCTION

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of the UK, the original ‘iron lady,’ is commonly understood as the militaristic exception to the rule of peaceful women leaders. Yet of the relatively small number women heads of government since 1945, many have earned the “iron lady” title. Prime Minister Tansu Çiller, known as Turkey’s iron lady, led her country through the Imia/Kardak crisis with Greece, while Prime Minister Eugenia Charles, the ‘iron lady of the Caribbean,’ stood beside President Reagan as he announced the U.S. intervention in Grenada. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who later became known as the iron lady of India, intervened in the 1971 civil war in East Pakistan, even fighting with her generals, who opposed the intervention, in order to do so. Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir ordered Mossad to assassinate the suspected leaders of the massacre at the 1972 Munich Summer Olympics and lead Israel during the 1973 Yom Kippur War. These women leaders suggest that “iron ladies” may be the rule rather than the exception.

Are female heads of state more likely to initiate conflict than their male counterparts? Conventional wisdom suggests that women, once they attain high political office, are more likely to act as peacemakers, yet recent research has found no significant association between a leader’s gender and conflict initiation (Stam, Horowitz, and Ellis 2015). However, as Stam, Horowitz, and Ellis (2015) note, these findings may lack statistical significance because they include so few observations of female leaders (66). Their Leader Experience and Attribute Descriptions (LEAD) dataset extends from 1875 to 2004, and therefore does not include the women leaders who took office over the past decade.

Folk theories about gender and conflict largely ignore the extensive feminist IR scholarship, which argues that gender plays a more complex role in the initiation and conduct of war (for example see Enloe 2000; Tickner 1992, 2001; Sjoberg 2009a, 2009b). Feminist theory has shown that gender is not an objective, *a priori* category, but one that is culturally contingent, and that is socially produced and reproduced (e.g., see Butler 1990). Feminist theory also tells us that “the social construction of knowledge [is] also political—leaving women *and* gender issues outside of the most powerful political spaces,” suggesting that women leaders may behave differently than their male colleagues in ways that have been previously overlooked (Ackerly and True 2010, 18). In order to understand the different foreign policy attitudes and behaviors of male and female leaders, we need to take gender and context seriously.

We argue that gender does affect a leader’s propensity to initiate conflict. We draw on post-structural feminist understandings of gender to argue that a leader’s identity is both performed and interpreted, and that the adoption of certain attitudes and positions regarding security and military affairs is an important way in which political actors are incentivized to ‘perform’ gender. Heads of government achieve and maintain their office in part by winning the approval of policy elites in their state. We contend that domestic foreign policy elites within the executive and legislature, both within and outside of the head of government’s party, constitute a high-status in-group and that gender dynamics in foreign policy circles are shaped by intergroup bias. Specifically, gender works as a key marker of identity to maintain in-group—out-group boundaries within elite policymaking circles. In typical social contexts, post-structural feminist theory suggests that women tend to perform stereotypically feminine gendered traits while men tend to perform masculine ones. However, we argue that in this policy leadership setting, women actually perform stereotypically *masculine* gender behavior as a signal to elite policymakers that they possess traits that are associated with effective leadership. Characteristics typically associated with masculinity, including rationality, strength, and decisiveness, are used by policy elites as markers to exclude

individuals from the in-group. These stereotypically masculine behaviors allow women leaders to signal their fitness to elite policymaking in-groups. The military and security realm of foreign policy is perhaps the policy arena most strongly associated with masculinity and masculine behavior (Tickner 1992, 3). Thus, whether women are more likely to initiate conflict as a signal of such masculine characteristics constitutes an empirically observable implication of our theory.

If this behavior were due to performances of certain gendered traits rather than essentialist differences between men and women, we would expect them to vary across social and institutional contexts. We argue that there are certain institutional configurations and social contexts that more strongly incentivize women leaders to perform gendered behavior. With the inclusion of variables that account for the performative aspects of gender—specifically, political constraints and women’s political empowerment—we are able to more effectively assess the effects of gender on conflict initiation in different institutional and social contexts.

We conduct preliminary empirical tests to demonstrate first, that women leaders in democratic states are more likely to use the initiation of conflicts as a means of signaling competence to male-dominated elite policy in-groups, and second, that these behaviors vary across context. Specifically, we hypothesize that women leaders are more likely to engage in such conflicts when they are the leaders of governing systems with higher levels of constraint on the executive, meaning that the executive is more directly accountable to a body of representatives (typically a parliament). Women leaders are also less likely to initiate such conflicts in societies with higher levels of women’s empowerment where gender is therefore less likely to be a salient marker of certain leadership characteristics. Statistical models provide evidence for our theory that it is the performance of gender rather than biological or other essentialist differences between women and men that drives these conflict behaviors.

In this article, we synthesize theoretical insights from the literature on domestic political institutions, feminist IR, and gender theory and conduct empirical tests to demonstrate the plausibility of our theory. In the empirical section, we produce statistical models that demonstrate the ways in which a leader’s gender, domestic political institutions, and societal norms interact to affect a head of government’s propensity for initiating conflict. In doing so, we seek to contribute to efforts toward bridging feminist and conventional IR scholarship, adding to a “growing body of research that incorporates elements of gender and social justice into conventional IR theory using various methodologies, including a quantitative approach” (Caprioli 2004, 253). As McDermott (2015) notes, the feminist IR research agenda has been dominated by qualitative approaches. While these approaches have contributed a great deal to theoretical and empirical developments in feminist IR, quantitative methods as a means of empirically testing hypotheses about gender are relatively underexplored. Barkin and Sjoberg (2017) contend that methods texts in IR often assume a divide between on the one hand “neopositivist” research that is associated with quantitative methods, and on the other hand critical theories that are associated with qualitative and ethnographic work. However, while ‘quantitative methods’ and ‘constructivist and/or critical theorizing’ have previously been understood as “not only distinct but mutually exclusive” approaches, using quantitative methods to test critical or constructivist theories has opened up important new avenues of research; thus, contrary to previous assumptions, the discipline of political science “can benefit from a dialogue *without* either misusing quantitative methods or changing the basic epistemological assumptions associated with constructivist and critical theorizing” (3). We contribute to recent efforts to bridge this theoretical and methodological gap by demonstrating that critical theorizing can generate hypotheses that are testable through quantitative methods, and can even produce policy-relevant research findings.

This article proceeds as follows: first, we briefly review previous research on gender, leader characteristics, domestic political institutions and conflict initiation. Next, we outline our hypotheses and provide preliminary statistical evidence in support of our hypotheses. Specifically we find that female

heads of state in democracies are more likely to initiate Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs) than their male counterparts. However, and perhaps more importantly, we find statistical evidence that this effect is conditioned both by domestic political institutions and women's political empowerment within societies. The finding that this effect is conditioned by domestic political institutions and norms provides evidence for our theory that women leaders are more likely to be pushed to perform gender in certain contexts than others. It also suggests that these differences are due to gendered behaviors, which are likely to vary across social and institutional contexts, rather than biological or essential difference between women and men that we would expect to be stable across context. We conclude by outlining potential avenues for an empirical research program suggested by our findings on the salience of gender identity and foreign policy outcomes.

### **GENDER AND LEADER ATTRIBUTES**

A long tradition in feminist IR scholarship, which itself builds on the large and inter-disciplinary field of feminist theory, has demonstrated that gender is everywhere in international politics. As Ann Tickner's groundbreaking work argues, the arena of 'high politics' is socially constructed as a masculinized realm--it is therefore critical to "introduce gender as a category of analysis" in order to build a true understanding of international politics (Tickner 1992, 5; also see Hutchings 2008 and Sjoberg 2009b for summaries of this literature and its impact on IR theorizing). While some feminist IR scholars have an explicitly normative orientation, with a commitment to an agenda of women's emancipation and empowerment, others have sought to use gender as a variable or analytical category to "understand the world as it is" (Carpenter 2005, 165). Inspired in part by this burgeoning feminist IR scholarship, researchers have increasingly sought to understand the effects of gender in international life and in particular in the arena of security and conflict.

In recent years, IR scholarship has also begun to return to individual-level explanations for international political outcomes. While many prominent IR scholars in the 1960s and 1970s focused on individuals to assess international behavior, in the wake of Waltz's *Man, the State, and War* (1958), the discipline began to turn to the international system as the primary explanation of international political outcomes (Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza 2009; Ellis, Horowitz, and Stam 2015). Since then, IR scholarship has largely given short shrift to first image analyses, favoring explanations at the level of the state and the international system. Nevertheless, in recent decades, several studies have focused on how domestic institutions and an incumbent office holder's desire to stay in power affect the initiation, dynamics, and termination of interstate war (e.g., Fearon 1994, de Mesquita et al 1995, 1999; Chiozza and Goemans 2004, 2011; Debs and Goemans 2010; Croco 2011). There is also a large and rapidly growing literature that applies insights from psychology to explain policymakers' decision-making regarding interstate conflict (e.g., Jervis 1976, Goldgeier and Tetlock 2001, McDermott 2004, Yarhi-Milo 2014, Holmes 2013, Kertzer 2016). Still, because of the historical emphasis placed on the international system or the state as the primary unit of analysis in IR, "[c]urrent scholarship generally understates the importance of leadership in determining countries' foreign policy goals and strategies" (Stam, Horowitz, and Ellis 2015, 25).

Building on this research on individual-level explanations for conflict, recent studies have begun to use quantitative approaches to assess how the characteristics of individual leaders affect the likelihood of conflict initiation, suggesting that background, experience, and other individual characteristics shape "leaders' attitudes toward the use of military force" (Stam, Horowitz, and Ellis 2015, 13). Building on the Archigos dataset (Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza 2009), Stam, Horowitz, and Ellis' (2015) LEAD dataset codes information about leaders' background and experiences. Analyzing data from their LEAD dataset, Stam, Horowitz, and Ellis (2015) find that there is no statistically significant difference between female and male leaders in terms of their propensity for conflict initiation, although men are slightly less likely to initiate MIDs. However, as they note, these findings may lack statistical significance because they include so few observations of women leaders (66). The LEAD dataset extends from 1875 to 2004.

By extending the MID data forward by hand through 2008, we are able to include several additional leader-year observations of women leaders in our statistical analysis (see Appendix B for a list of all women heads of government in our dataset).

### **CONDITIONING VARIABLES: DOMESTIC POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND GENDER NORMS**

We argue that two variables—domestic political institutions and gender norms—condition the effect of a leader’s gender on conflict initiation. First, there is a vast literature exploring how domestic institutions condition states’ propensity to initiate conflict. In brief, one finding of this research is that institutional constraint affects conflict propensity: heads of government of democracies face higher levels of institutionalized constraint over the authority of the executive than do autocracies, thus making conflict initiation more difficult (e.g., Maoz and Russett 1993). This finding suggests that institutional constraints on decision-makers are a key source of variation in conflict propensity and a factor that moderates foreign policy behavior.

Second, research suggests that variation in gender norms between societies can explain differences in states’ propensity to initiate conflict. Caprioli (2003) finds that “states characterized by higher levels of gender equality are less likely to use force first in interstate disputes” (205). Similarly, Caprioli and Boyer (2001) demonstrate that states with higher levels of gender inequality also display higher levels of violence in international disputes. Hudson et al. (2009) find a strong empirical relationship between an index of the physical security of women within societies and several measures of state peacefulness and security: states where women are more secure are also more peaceful (also see Hudson 2013). This body of research therefore provides evidence that societal gender norms affect a state’s likelihood of initiating conflict.

### **ARE WOMEN LEADERS MORE LIKELY TO INITIATE CONFLICT?**

Both scholars and policymakers have argued that women are more likely to act as peacemakers. For example, Steven Pinker (2011) writes, “over the long sweep of history, women have been and will be a pacifying force. Traditional war is a man’s game: tribal women never band together to raid neighboring villages” (527). Research within IR that provides some evidence that physiological differences between women and men—sex—may have an effect on conflict initiation. Experimental evidence has established a relationship between sex and aggressiveness in simulated crisis scenarios, suggesting that female leaders may display differences in terms of their propensity to initiate conflict with other states (e.g. McDermott and Cowden 2001, Johnson et al 2006). Scholarly findings also suggest that men tend to behave more aggressively than women. McDermott and Cowden (2001) find that men are much more likely to both acquire weapons and exhibit aggressive behavior in a crisis simulation with male and female participants. Johnson et al (2006) find that in experimental war games, men are more likely to exhibit over-confidence, and are therefore more likely to attack. Research in evolutionary psychology notes that “intergroup conflict may have affected the evolved psychologies of men and women differently. As a consequence, this aspect of human coalitional psychology may be more pronounced among men” (Van Vugt 2009, 126). Van Vugt (2009) provides evidence that men are more likely than women to participate in real world “competitive intergroup encounters” (Van Vugt 2009, 128). However, Tickner (1992) argues that the “association between women and peace” is a “myth” that “has been imposed on women by their disarmed condition” (59). Likewise, we argue that women leaders may not be inherently more peaceful.

As McDermott (2015) has noted, “arguments that men and women are more or less likely to fight appear too simplistic; rather, it is worth considering that men and women may possess different motivations for fighting, and fight under different circumstances and for different reasons” (755). In contrast with the conventional wisdom that women are more peaceful than men, we argue that gender hierarchies encourage the performance of stereotypically masculine traits and behavior by female policy elites who seek a leadership role in politics, an arena that is universally male-dominated.

We derive our causal explanation using insights from theories of social identity and feminist theories of gender performativity. Feminist theory suggests that gender is not essential but is constituted by actions, or performance: in the words of Simone de Beauvoir, “one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (1973, 301). Likewise, West and Zimmerman (1987) argue that gender is “an accomplishment, an achieved property of situated conduct” (126). Rather than a distinction that is rooted in biological difference, gender is constituted by the set of actions and the social contexts in which these behaviors are produced and reproduced. Judith Butler’s theory of gender performativity suggests that

Gender is not a noun, but neither is it a set of free-floating attributes, for we have seen that the substantive effect of gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence. Hence, within the inherited discourse of the metaphysics of substance, gender proves to be performative—that is, constituting the identity it is purported to be. In this sense, gender is always a doing (1990: 34).

Applying Butler’s theory of gender performativity to politics, Jones (2016) shows that the demands of gender performance shape the behavior of women political leaders. Jones notes that for a woman politician, “this performance factors into her strategic self-presentation. It is tied to the societal expectations and electoral constraints she perceives as well as the institutional norms of behavior that shape interaction and impact her ability to achieve her goals” (Jones 2016, 627).

However, post-structuralist feminist accounts argue that women tend to perform gender in stereotypically feminine ways while men perform gender by adhering to masculine stereotypes. In contrast, deriving insights from social identity theory, we argue that in the elite realm of high-level policymaking, due to the pressure that members face to adhere to the standards of the in-group, women leaders often behave in the opposite way: by performing typically masculine behaviors. More specifically, we argue that displaying competence in security and military affairs is one of the ways that women political leaders are incentivized to perform gender in order to gain access to elite male policy-making circles. In an arena where competence is equated with traditionally masculine attributes such as resolve, toughness, and risk-acceptance, the initiation of conflicts serves as a useful mechanism for women leaders to prove their mettle. Conflict initiation is therefore a crucial way for women leaders to perform gender, and therefore gain in-group status in elite policymaking circles.

Social identity theory points to the ways in which elite groups of policymakers use stereotypically masculine behaviors as a heuristic for in-group status to protect their own elite status as members of the in-group. As Henry Tajfel (1971, 1981) has argued, “intergroup discrimination is a feature of most modern societies” (96); that is, humans tend to form social groups that individuals identify with in a psychologically meaningful way. Individuals have a special affinity for other members of the in-group and to discriminate against members of the out-group, a phenomenon that has been used to explain pervasive forms of prejudice along racial, ethnic, religious, and gender lines (Tajfel 1971, Brewer 1999). This phenomenon, known as intergroup bias, “refers generally to the systematic tendency to evaluate one’s own membership group (the in-group) or its members more favorably than a non-membership group (the out-group)” (Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis 2002, 576). As a result, group membership status colors how members perceive and interact with group members and non-members. In-group members extend “trust, positive regard, cooperation, and empathy to in-group, but not out-group, members” (Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis 2002, 578). Intergroup bias also “protects relatively high in-group status” (Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis 2002, 580; see also Hogg and Abrams 1990, Rubin and Hewstone 1998). Social psychology studies have found that high-status groups exhibit higher levels of bias than lower-status groups (Hewstone, Rubin, and Willis 2002, Brewer and Brown 1998, Bettencourt et al 2001).

We contend that domestic foreign policy elites constitute a high-status in-group and that gender dynamics in foreign policy circles are shaped by intergroup bias. As feminist IR theorists have shown, around the

world gender appears as a key marker of identity to maintain in-group—out-group boundaries within elite policymaking circles. According to Tickner (1992), there is a pervasive belief

That military and foreign policy are arenas of policy-making least appropriate for women. Strength, power, autonomy, independence, and rationality, all typically associated with men and masculinity, are characteristics we most value in those whom we entrust the conduct of our foreign policy and the defense of our national interest...even women who have experience in foreign policy issues are perceived as being too emotional and too weak for the tough life-and-death decisions required for the nation's defense (3).

Characteristics stereotypically associated with masculinity, especially the ability to decisively and effectively wage war, are celebrated while characteristics associated with femininity like peacefulness and cooperative behavior are denigrated. The male in-group uses gendered language and standards to exclude women from participating in policymaking circles and to preserve male status. There is significant evidence suggesting that stereotypically 'male' qualities associated with conflict, such as aggression, decisiveness, and command, are identified with the in-group of policy elites, while traditionally 'female' qualities such as cooperation, passiveness, or reconciliation are associated with the out-group.

Scholars have found evidence that male policymakers in different contexts form a social in-group that systematically attempts to exclude women. In a study of political discourse, Poggio (2004) finds that male politicians discursively situate women as 'the Other' vis-à-vis themselves using rhetorical strategies such as "negation and exclusion, the blaming of women themselves for their exclusion...gender differences are simultaneously denied and exploited" through a process of othering that necessarily "entails marginalization and/or subordination" (341). Media coverage of elections is also used to police the gendered space of elite policymaking. Several studies have demonstrated that women candidates and officeholders typically receive less coverage in the media than their male colleagues (Gingras 1995, Kahn 1994, Norris 1997). Ross and Sreberny (2000) find that "the way in which politics is reported is significantly determined by a male-oriented agenda that privileges the practice of politics as an essentially male pursuit," framing stereotypically male qualities as the status quo and "women politicians as novelties" (93).

Furthermore, there is a great deal of research that finds that the way that women leaders are perceived is conditioned by gendered expectations, strongly suggesting that gender affects the way that policy elites view women heads of government. Research has found that "the image of a leader is strongly associated with men and masculinity" (Ayman and Korabik 2010, 161; also see, Heilman 2001, Schein 2001), and that such stereotypes can impede women from being selected for leadership roles (Korabik 1997). This is in part because there are two sets of gendered stereotypes regarding the way that leaders are evaluated: communality and agency. Women are seen as more "communal," meaning that they are nurturing, kind, warm, etc., while men are more "agentic," or dominant, aggressive, ambitious, and so forth (Brescoll 2016). Agentic, and therefore masculine, behaviors are likely to be seen as more suitable for decision-making in the military and security arenas. Additionally, in a meta-analysis of gender and leadership evaluation, Eagly, Karau, and Makhijani (1995) find that "men were more effective than women in [leadership] roles that were defined in more masculine terms" (125). These findings suggest that women leaders in stereotypically masculine realms like security and military affairs who adopt masculine, agentic traits may be perceived as more effective leaders. Studies have also found that women are more likely to be perceived as "emotional" as making decisions based on emotion rather than rationality (Heilman, Block, and Martell 1995). This perception is consequential for women leaders because observers may believe that there is a tradeoff between the ability to control an outward display of emotion on the one hand and the ability to make considered, rational, and objective decisions on the other, and are therefore more likely to value the latter characteristics in a leader, and to punish or disapprove of leaders that engage in 'feminine' displays of emotion (Shields 2002). Because the military and security realm of

foreign policy is strongly associated with masculinity and masculine behavior (Tickner 1992), engaging in conflict may be a mechanism that female leaders use to signal stereotypically masculine qualities like rationality and emotional control.

Statements by women leaders themselves provide evidence that gender affects the way that women political leaders are perceived. Former Prime Minister of France Edith Cresson notes that “Even if [a man] does not succeed in accomplishing anything, it does not matter, because he asserts a certain number of things, or he presents himself as a leader in a way which...corresponds to tradition. People expect of a woman results, and quick ones, if possible” (quoted in Liswood 1995, 21). Furthermore, women leaders report experiencing attempts by members of the in-group of elite policymakers to exclude them on gendered lines. According to Eugenia Charles, former Prime Minister of Dominica, “I really had a tough time, and they *tried*—it was really a baptismal fire. I mean they were trying everything to denigrate me as a *woman*” (quoted in Liswood 1995, 72). Of all of the issue areas within politics, it is the most stereotypically male realm—the military and national security arenas—where this effect is most apparent.

Maria Aquino, former President of the Philippines, reported that her state’s military command found it “extremely difficult to accept a woman commander-in-chief” (Liswood 1995, 88). In an overview of the history of women presidents and prime ministers, Skard (2014) notes that women leaders often face pressure to behave like men, but to an exaggerated degree: “to be a top leader, it was required that women politicians should be at least as competent as male [politicians],...and pursue the same policies that men usually pursued. At the same time, it was often said that women had to make a *difference* to justify their leadership position—behave differently and ‘better’ than men” (486). Anecdotal evidence therefore suggests that women political leaders often face pressure, especially in the military and security arenas, to behave in a manner that is ‘more masculine’ than men to justify their inclusion in the elite policymaking in-group. The moniker “iron lady” is a revealing short-hand for the performance of gender that many women leaders are required to give in order to gain access to the highest political office in their country. The “iron lady” label connotes a woman leader who does “not conform to idealized feminine stereotypes... [implying] that traits that are valued in leaders—strength, determination, and authority—are uncommon or anomalous in women” (Jones 2016, 627) (see iron lady profiles in Appendix A).

We argue that in contrast with the perception that iron ladies are exceptions to the rule, the “iron lady” is a performance of gender shared by many women heads of government.

## **HYPOTHESES**

The hypotheses that follow from the theory set forth above address two related questions: first, does gender affect a leader’s propensity to initiate conflict? Second, under what conditions is that effect more likely?

An observable implication of the theory is that women heads of government will initiate disputes to perform gender as a signal to fellow domestic foreign policy elites. These differential effects do not, however, extend to full-scale war and are unlikely to be noticed by the broader electorate. MIDs are, therefore, a useful signaling mechanism below the level of more costly and widely visible forms of conflict. One observable implication of our theory is that the performance of gender will be affected by both domestic institutional and normative constraints. Because our theory speaks to gendered perceptions and how they affect a leader’s behavior, we expect that this behavior will vary across contexts. In contrast, if differences between women and men leaders’ behavior were driven by biological differences due to sex, we would expect these differences in behavior to remain static across contexts.

First, we expect that the extent to which domestic political institutions constrain the executive will affect the degree to which women leaders are compelled to perform gender by initiating disputes. The literature on institutions and conflict has found that “democratically elected executives...share decision-making



power with other political bodies; and they face highly institutionalized political competition. These constraints make it more difficult for a chief executive to make unpopular political decisions” (Leeds and Davis 1999, 6). Democracies with fewer veto players and/or less institutional constraints on the executive are systems where the executive has considerable latitude to act on her own authority in decision-making. In these systems it is usually difficult for the legislature to remove the executive from office (most often through impeachment, typically a lengthy and rare process) once her tenure has begun. However, in systems where domestic institutions constrain the head of government—typically parliamentary systems—the legislature has equal or greater authority than the executive and can more easily remove the executive before the end of her term, for example through a vote of no confidence or through a coalition partner withdrawing support and forcing elections. Because a leader’s position in systems with more veto players and institutional constraints is more tenuous, we argue women leaders in these systems will be more likely to perform masculinity by initiating conflict as a signal of their competence. Alternatively, in systems where the head of government has more institutional power and has fewer veto players to contend with, the leader is less likely to be vulnerable to the perceptions of other policymaking elites; women leaders will therefore be less likely to perform gender in this way<sup>1</sup>. Our first hypothesis is therefore as follows:

*Hypothesis 1: Women heads of government in constrained democracies are more likely to initiate MID than their male counterparts.*

Additionally, feminist theory suggests that the level of women’s political empowerment in society will condition the extent to which women leaders are incentivized to perform gender. In societies where women are comparatively more empowered, the presence of more women in political office would normalize women, lessening the effect of gender identity on in-group-out-group dynamics. In other words, this “threshold effect” argument suggests that greater numbers of women in politics would mitigate the association of masculine characteristics with competent leadership in the security and military arena, making the performance of gender less crucial for women leaders to gain access to elite policymaking circles. The need to signal competence in the security arena through signaling will therefore be mitigated.

Our second hypothesis is therefore as follows:

*Hypothesis 2: In governments that include a higher percent of women, the effect of a leader’s gender on conflict propensity will be dampened.*

We provide empirical evidence for the mechanisms linking a leader’s gender and his or her likelihood of initiating conflict by testing the conditioning effects of two variables: domestic institutional constraints on the executive, and women’s political empowerment.

## **METHODS AND ANALYSIS**

We use multivariate logistic regressions to test our hypotheses on Maoz’s dyadic militarized interstate dispute data (Maoz 2005). *Conflict* is our dependent variable coded “1” if in a given year Country A initiated a MID against any country and “0” otherwise.

Our dataset is limited to democracies, as defined by Polity. We test our claim specifically on democracies because 1) quantitative measures of political constraints are better calibrated to evaluate democratic regimes and 2) the vast majority of female heads of state have been in democracies (only two women

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<sup>1</sup> Notably, this hypothesis is in contrast with the Democratic Peace literature, which finds that executive constraint constrains democracies from engaging in conflict. We expand on this in the conclusion.

have been the head of government in an autocracy) and so we are not losing many observations by limiting our claim. We would expect this finding to hold within autocratic regimes that had a more constrained executive.

Our primary explanatory variable is *Gender*, accounting for the gender of the head of government initiating the dispute. This variable refers to the gender of the head of government,” taken from the Democracy and Dictatorship Revisited” (DD) data (Cheibub et al 2010); hereafter referred to as “head of government.”<sup>2</sup> We hand-coded female heads of government using a dichotomous measure, where female heads of government are coded as “1” and male heads of government as “0” and confirmed this information using data from DD (Cheibub et al 2008). Using data from the Varieties of Democracy (VDem) dataset, we include a measure for *Women Political Empowerment* (Coppedge et al 2016). As controls, we include *Capabilities of State A and B* and the time between disputes (coded as *Peace Years*), variables from the literature that may affect the likelihood of international conflict. Political scientists have long argued that material capabilities inform states’ conflict propensities (Waltz 1979). To account for possible regional biases, we control for region (*Region A* and *Region B*) using classifications from the United Nations (UNSD Methodology). Countries that have more recently gone through a regime change or transition have been shown to be more conflict prone (Mansfield and Snyder 2005), we control for this using Polity IV’s Durable score (Marshall and Jaggers 2016). Additionally, as theorists have previously argued that trade interdependence can decrease the likelihood of conflict (Keohane and Nye 1977; Oneal and Russett 1997; Gartzke 2007), we control for trade interdependence between states A and B. This is calculated as state A’s total imports from and exports to state B as a percentage of state A’s GDP (Gleditsch 2002) we also include polynomials of *Peace Years* to control for temporal dependence as (Carter and Signorino 2010). Robust standard errors are adjusted for by clustering by directed dyad ID.

### Results

Models 1 and 2 in Table 1 replicate results from other studies using similar data. Table 1, Model 1 examines the effects of the gender of the head of government on conflict initiation across all states. *Gender of Head of Government State A* does not have a significant independent effect on conflict initiation, which reflects the substance of Stam, Horowitz, and Ellis’ (2015) findings that, across all types of states, women leaders do not behave in a way that is significantly different than men when it comes to conflict initiation. In Model 2, we find, similar to Hudson et al (2009), that the level of *Women Political Empowerment* in state A has a negative effect on conflict initiation—that is, states with higher levels of women’s political empowerment are less likely to initiate conflict. However, in Model 3, we begin to constrain state A to democracies. Here we find initial support for our first hypothesis, that *Gender of Head of Government State A* may have an effect in more constrained systems. In Model 3, the level of *Women Political Empowerment* in *State A* continues to have a negative effect on conflict initiation.

[Table 1 about here]

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<sup>2</sup> According to the DD codebook, “Effective heads are: 1) presidents in presidential democracies; 2) prime ministers in parliamentary and mixed democracies, except in the cases of Djohar in Comoros and Preval in Haiti; 3) general-secretaries of the communist party in communist dictatorships, except in the case of Deng Xiaoping in China; 4) kings, presidents, and de facto rulers in non-communist dictatorships, except in the cases of Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar where the effective head is sometimes the prime minister; and 5) military or other figure when sources indicate nominal head is puppet figure” (Cheibub et al 2009, 8).

The models in Table 2 provide support for hypothesis one, that female heads of state in more constrained democratic states may be more inclined to initiate conflict than their male colleagues. We use three different variables from Cheibub et al 2010 to account for constraints within democracies: 1) vote of no confidence, 2) popular selection, and 3) constitutional system. Each of these variables is an indicator of the extent to which fellow policy elites are able to constrain the head of government. Heads of government that are subject to assembly confidence can be held accountable through a vote of no confidence. When initiated by the legislature, a vote of no confidence is one key mechanism that governments can use to remove the head of government between elections. In the analysis, “Vote of No Confidence” is measured dichotomously. The second variable, popular selection, indicates whether the head of government is chosen directly through popular election (versus selected indirectly through parliamentary elections, for example). We would expect in those states where the leader is *not* popularly elected for the leader to be more inclined to signal to other foreign policy elites, because potential heads of government in these systems must gain the vote of their fellow policymakers rather than the direct vote of the country’s citizens. This variable also measured dichotomously. Finally, democratic constitutional systems vary, among other ways, in their levels of constraint on the executive and constitutional powers afforded to the head of government. This variable is treated trichotomously, where State A is identified as either presidential, semi-presidential, or parliamentary. We would expect the head of government to be more constrained by other policy elites in parliamentary and mixed or semi-presidential systems as compared to presidential systems.

Table 2, Model 1 constrains state A to democracies with a vote of no confidence while Model 2 includes only democracies that *do not* have a vote of no confidence. In Model 1, when the state has a formal mechanism for a vote of no confidence, *Gender of Head of Government State A* is again positive and significant, suggesting that in democratic systems where the executive can be removed at any time through a vote of no confidence, women leaders are more likely to initiate conflict than their male colleagues. Alternatively, in Model 2, when state A is constrained only to democracies that *do not* have this mechanism, the effects of *Gender of Head of Government State A* are washed out. The same pattern is repeated in Models 3 and 4, constraining state A to democracies whose leaders are popularly selected to those who are not. We would not expect MIDs to suffice as effective signalling mechanisms to the broader electorate as these are low-level and often unpublicized events. When state A is constrained to democratic states whose leaders are not popularly selected, the results from Model 3 indicate that female heads of state may be more inclined to initiate conflict than their male colleagues. Alternatively, when state A is limited to states whose leader is popularly selected, *Gender of Head of Government in State A* has no effect. Models 5 and 6 compare Parliamentary and Semi-Presidential Systems to Presidential Systems. In Model 5 state A is constrained to Parliamentary and Semi-Presidential Systems and again we find that female heads of government may be more inclined to initiate conflict than their male colleagues within these constitutional arrangements. Alternatively, in Model 6, we find that if we limit State A to presidential democracies, female heads of government are not more or less likely to initiate conflict than their male counterparts. These models provide support for the theory that that within systems with more veto players, female heads of government may initiate more conflict than their male counterparts. Additionally, in these models we include the control for *Women’s Political Empowerment*. In the more constrained systems, *Women’s Political Empowerment* seems to have a consistently strong negative effect on the initiation of conflict.

[Table II about here]

Next we turn to hypotheses two, that the salience of a leader's gender in conflict initiation decision-making is conditional on normative context as well as political institutional context. In Table 3, Model 1, we look within democracies and add in the control for *Women Political Empowerment*. Here again gender of head of government in state A has a positive and significant effect while *Women's Political Empowerment State A* has a negative and significant effect on the likelihood of conflict initiation. Models 2 through 4 examine the effects of *Gender of Head of Government State A* conditional (interacted with) *Women Political Empowerment State A*. We find in a full, trimmed (using only significant variables from the full model), and bivariate model that female heads of government are less likely to engage in conflict conditional on women's political empowerment than their male colleagues. We argue that these differential effects are the result of a threshold effect. Although the errors are very large, Figure 1 below provides *tentative* support that there may be a threshold of at which female heads of government are not incentivized to signal foreign policy competence. This reinforces the theory that this finding is motivated by intergroup dynamics, rather than the inherent peacefulness of women.

[Table III about here]

[Figure 1 about here]

We ran several robustness checks to further prod these findings, including dropping the UK as the initiator (Appendix B Table 1, Model 1), since the “iron lady” title is often stereotypically associated with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher; altering our coding of democratic states to include states with a Polity scores of 7 or higher (Appendix B Table 1, Model 2); using Cheibub et al.'s (2010) coding of democracy (Appendix B Table 1, Model 3); including non-democracies in the analysis (Appendix B Table 1, Model 4); using a monadic version of the data (Appendix B Table 2, Models 1-3); using a fixed effects model (Appendix B Table 1, Model 1) and a random effects model (Appendix B Table 3, Model 2). In all models, the main finding—that the interaction between Gender of Head of Government and Female Political Empowerment is negative and statistically significant—held.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

In this article, we develop a new theory and provided empirical evidence about the role of gender in conflict initiation. We find that contrary to popular wisdom, women democratic leaders may be more likely to initiate conflict than their male counterparts in some contexts. Women leaders are more likely to initiate conflict in political systems with more constraint on the executive, and in societies with lower levels of women's empowerment and political participation. These findings suggest that context shapes the conditions under which women leaders face pressure to perform gender.

These findings could form the basis for a broader research program that investigates the conditions that affect the performance of gender in politics, and in turn how gender performance shapes political outcomes. Here, we briefly outline some ideas for future research.

The fact that there are relatively few cases of women heads of government and that statistical methods are poorly suited to assess causal processes means that this research could benefit from qualitative case studies. Paired case studies of women heads of government and their male predecessors or male leaders from the same political parties could be used to look for evidence of this causal mechanism, and to further explore the gendered dynamics of leadership and conflict initiation more generally.

Additionally, there is research in the leadership literature that suggests that when women leaders do display traditionally masculine, agentic rather than feminine, communal behaviors, “they often experience backlash effects because they are also seen as insufficiently communal” (Brescoll 2016, 416; also see Heilmand and Okimoto 2007, Okimoto and Brescoll 2010). In a similar vein, female leaders are “particularly likely to be devalued when they adopt stereotypically masculine leadership styles, [and] when they [are] in male-dominated leadership roles” (Ayman and Korabik 2010 163). Women leaders’ performance of gender can be a double-edged sword: in an overview of women presidents and prime ministers, Skard (2014) finds that “If the women were persistent and strong, they could be criticized for being ‘unfeminine’ and ‘arrogant.’ If they were cooperative and ‘weak,’ they affirmed their femininity, but proved at the same time that they were unable to govern” (486). Future research should consider whether women heads of government are negatively perceived for taking on masculine leadership styles, and in turn whether these perceptions affect how women leaders leave office.

Gender is also not just about women; men are also affected by gendered norms: men as well as women perform gender. Although empirically we have focused in this article on women policymakers, gender norms and expectations also affect the behavior of male policymakers. Indeed, feminist IR scholarship has established that masculine norms affect, for example, military recruitment and narratives about war-fighting (Belkin 2012, Enloe 2000, Tickner 2001, Evangelista 2011). Future research should analyze the effect of gendered performance on male policymakers and the conditions under which such a male gendered performance may be relevant. Future statistical or qualitative work can add to our understanding of how male policymakers perform gender and how this performance varies according to context.

In addition to gender, future research might ask about the conditions under which other elements of a leader’s identity or background, such as racial, ethnic, or linguistic minority status, become salient in terms of foreign-policy decision-making.

Finally, this research adds to the feminist IR literature that demonstrates that gender matters. As Tickner (1988) points out in her feminist critique of Morgenthau’s six signposts of realism, IR theorizing that ignores gender and the implications of gendered social dynamics constitutes “a partial description of international politics because it is based on assumptions about human nature that are partial and that privilege masculinity” (431).

To take one example, much of the Democratic Peace literature suggests that as institutional constraints increase, the likelihood of democratic dispute initiation decreases (Schultz 2001). In contrast, we find that the opposite is the case when the leader is female—under certain conditions, higher levels of constraint on the executive may actually *compel* leaders to engage in certain types of conflict initiation. If democratic institutions actually incentivize women leaders to engage in conflict initiation, this finding suggests that the constraining effects of institutions may be conditional upon the individual attributes of a leader, including her gender. Our findings therefore demonstrate how bringing in feminist theory can complicate the findings of mainstream IR, suggesting that it is not possible to truly understand international politics without taking gender into account. Our findings add to calls from feminist IR scholars who argue that IR research must come to terms with theorizing about gender in order to provide a more complete vision of the world of international affairs.

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## TABLES AND FIGURES

Table I: Gender of Head of Government and Women Political Empowerment

EQUATION	VARIABLES	(1) Gender of Head of Government	(2) Women's Political Empowerment	(3) Gender of Head of Government in Democracies
Conflict	Gender Head of Government State A	0.289 (0.258)		0.827*** (0.252)
	Capabilities State A	9.995*** (1.300)	10.63*** (1.378)	7.390*** (1.376)
	Capabilities State B	8.532*** (1.114)	8.417*** (1.212)	7.673** (3.188)
	Region State A	0.000657 (0.000928)	0.00524*** (0.00122)	0.00105 (0.00167)
	Region State B	0.000977 (0.000910)	0.00104 (0.000965)	0.000834 (0.00151)
	Durable State A	0.00272 (0.00196)	0.00499* (0.00235)	0.00784*** (0.00235)
	Durable State B	0.00540** (0.00161)	0.00511** (0.00172)	0.00551 (0.00342)
	Trade Dependence	31.50*** (4.186)	39.06*** (4.664)	24.09*** (6.108)
	Peace Years	-0.360*** (0.0194)	-0.386*** (0.0202)	-0.355*** (0.0337)
	Peace Years2	0.0123*** (0.00107)	0.0138*** (0.00114)	0.0116*** (0.00185)
	Peace Years 3	-0.000133*** (1.63e-05)	-0.000152*** (1.76e-05)	-0.000120*** (2.71e-05)
	Women Political Empowerment State A		-2.445*** (0.360)	
	Constant	-4.854*** (0.141)	-3.789*** (0.195)	-5.418*** (0.278)
	Observations		815,148	668,809

Robust standard errors in parentheses  
 \*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, †p<0.1

Table II: Gender of Head of Government in Constrained Systems

EQUATION	VARIABLES	(1) Full Model With Vote of No Confidence	(2) Full Model With NO Vote of No Confidence	(3) Full Model Only Not Popularly Selected	(4) Full Model Only Popularly selected	(5) Full Model Only Parliamentary and Semi- Presidential Systems	(6) Full Model Only Presidential Systems
Conflict	Gender Head of Government State A	0.501* (0.253)	-0.0515 (0.703)	0.596* (0.251)	0.135 (0.699)	0.516* (0.255)	-0.166 (0.699)
	Capabilities State A	28.78*** (6.616)	6.255** (2.274)	30.09*** (6.347)	2.485 (2.491)	29.98*** (6.731)	6.160** (2.147)
	Capabilities State B	7.056 <sup>†</sup> (3.951)	8.681* (4.080)	7.886* (3.984)	7.542 <sup>†</sup> (4.230)	7.233 <sup>†</sup> (4.109)	8.859* (3.994)
	Region State A	0.00914** (0.00293)	-0.00908* (0.00398)	0.00981** (0.00308)	-0.00580 <sup>†</sup> (0.00300)	0.0100** (0.00300)	-0.00880* (0.00371)
	Region State B	0.00405* (0.00196)	-0.00551* (0.00275)	0.00451* (0.00203)	-0.00491* (0.00241)	0.00430* (0.00194)	-0.00596* (0.00280)
	Durable State A	0.00820* (0.00378)	0.00608 (0.00387)	0.00321 (0.00331)	0.0114** (0.00383)	0.00798* (0.00392)	0.00516 (0.00378)
	Durable State B	0.00558 (0.00465)	0.00752 (0.00471)	0.00388 (0.00516)	0.00902* (0.00444)	0.00478 (0.00487)	0.00786 (0.00491)
	Trade Dependency	15.06 (14.36)	23.95 <sup>†</sup> (12.74)	16.40 (13.86)	27.94 (22.89)	14.00 (14.16)	31.20 (28.51)
	Women Political Empowerment State A	-3.803*** (0.903)	2.541* (1.239)	-3.268*** (0.880)	0.308 (0.926)	-3.897*** (0.937)	2.442* (1.132)
	Peace Years	-0.375*** (0.0459)	-0.357*** (0.0502)	-0.326*** (0.0506)	-0.440*** (0.0464)	-0.362*** (0.0468)	-0.379*** (0.0501)
	Peace Years2	0.0138*** (0.00245)	0.00990*** (0.00301)	0.0111** (0.00284)	0.0149*** (0.00272)	0.0133*** (0.00248)	0.0107*** (0.00301)
	Peace Years3	-0.0002*** (3.57e-05)	-8.74e-05 <sup>†</sup> (4.47e-05)	-0.0003** (4.33e-05)	-0.00015*** (4.00e-05)	-0.0002*** (3.60e-05)	-9.66e-05* (4.48e-05)
	Constant	-3.878*** (0.627)	-6.203*** (0.724)	-4.320*** (0.598)	-4.665*** (0.662)	-3.998*** (0.644)	-5.914*** (0.691)
	Observations	178,695	88,453	163,154	103,994	180,627	86,521

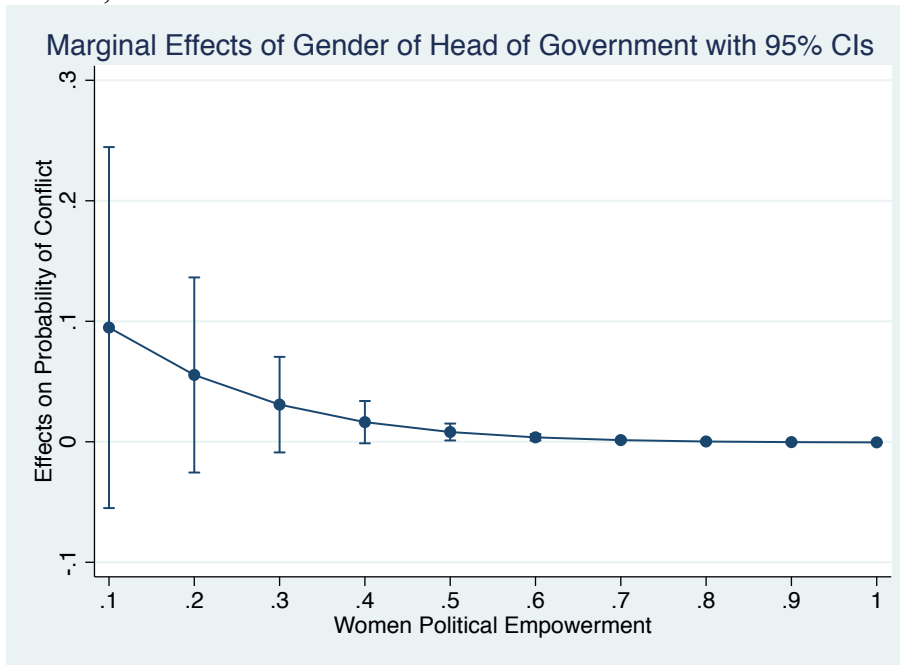
Robust standard errors in parentheses  
\*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, <sup>†</sup>p<0.1

Table III: Gender of Head of Government Conditional on Women's Political Empowerment

EQUATION	VARIABLES	(1) Full Model	(2) Full Model Interacting Gender with Women's Political Empowerment	(3) Trimmed Model Interacting Gender with Women's Political Empowerment	(4) Bivariate Model Interacting Gender with Women's Political Empowerment
Conflict	Gender Head of Government State A	0.750** (0.252)	4.347*** (1.054)	4.344*** (1.101)	2.912*** (0.814)
	Women Political Empowerment State A	-1.662* (0.766)	-1.507* (0.760)	-0.920 <sup>†</sup> (0.550)	-1.553** (0.469)
	Gender Head of Government State A X Women Political Empowerment State A		-5.218** (1.590)	-5.238** (1.665)	-3.990** (1.160)
	Capabilities State A	6.191*** (1.309)	6.013*** (1.311)	5.595*** (1.369)	
	Capabilities State B	7.208* (3.245)	7.166* (3.220)	7.435* (3.150)	
	Region State A	0.00299 (0.00225)	0.00308 (0.00224)		
	Region State B	0.000863 (0.00154)	0.000846 (0.00154)		
	Durable State A	0.00942*** (0.00233)	0.00981*** (0.00233)	0.00923*** (0.00226)	
	Durable State B	0.00604 <sup>†</sup> (0.00344)	0.00612 <sup>†</sup> (0.00341)	0.00606 <sup>†</sup> (0.00336)	
	Trade Dependence	25.90*** (5.855)	25.69*** (5.840)	22.00*** (4.991)	
	Peace Years	-0.372*** (0.0341)	-0.372*** (0.0343)	-0.377*** (0.0337)	
	Peace Years2	0.0125*** (0.00188)	0.0125*** (0.00190)	0.0128*** (0.00187)	
	Peace Years 3	-0.0001*** (2.77e-05)	-0.000131*** (2.81e-05)	-0.000135*** (2.75e-05)	
	Constant	-4.296*** (0.482)	-4.425*** (0.485)	-4.509*** (0.451)	-5.394*** (0.379)
	Observations	267,148	267,148	270,572	434,060

Robust standard errors in parentheses  
\*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, <sup>†</sup>p<0.1

Table 3, Model 2





# Peacemakers or Iron Ladies?

## A Cross National Study of Gender and International Conflict

### *Appendix A: Iron Lady Profiles*

While many think of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher when they hear the term “iron lady,” several other women leaders have earned the title as well. Here, we briefly profile four of those leaders: Indira Gandhi, Golda Meir, Tansu Çiller, and Eugenia Charles.

Indira Gandhi, who later became known as the iron lady of India, was the daughter of India’s first Prime Minister and served as Prime Minister herself on and off between 1966 and 1984 when she was assassinated. She led India against Pakistan in the 1971 war in East Pakistan, and even fought with Field Marshall Sam Manekshaw, Chief of Staff of the Army, when Gandhi wanted to invade Pakistan and Manekshaw resisted (*Economist* 2008). After her decisive victory in 1971, Gandhi was lauded for “liberating the people of Bangladesh, cutting Pakistan down to size and making India the preeminent power in the region” (Skard 2014, 23). Gandhi was called “the only man in a government full of ladies,” but also referred to as a “dumb doll” and “mere chit of a girl” by fellow members of her party (Skard 2014, 26).

Golda Meir, who was posthumously labeled the iron lady of Israeli politics, served as Prime Minister of Israel from 1969 to 1974 (Burkett 2008). She was appointed Foreign Minister in 1956 under Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, who famously described her as “the only man in the Cabinet” (Butt 1998). She helped plan Israel’s military involvement in the 1956 Suez Crisis as Foreign Minister, and was “known for her uncompromising stance in the conflict with the Arabs” (Skard 2014, 34). As Prime

Minister, she ordered the Mossad to track down and assassinate the suspected leaders of Black September after the massacre at the 1972 Munich Summer Olympics and lead the country during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, resigning the following year (Shenker 1978).

Tansu Çiller, “Turkey’s iron lady,” became prime minister of Turkey in 1993 (Pope 1993). Çiller sought to align herself more closely with military leadership and held militaristic policies towards the Kurds and regional rivals, including Greece (Cizre 2002). She led Turkey during the 1996 Imia/Kardak Crisis, a dispute with Greece over islands in the Aegean Sea that became the most severe crisis in the enduring rivalry between Turkey and Greece since 1975 (Heraclides 2010). A *Los Angeles Times* profile of Çiller as she assumed office (telling titled “Turkey’s First Female Prime Minister is No Wallflower”) noted that Çiller had declared “I have never lost any major battle I have entered” during her first debate on live television (Pope 1993). Known as “the iron lady of the Caribbean,” Eugenia Charles served as prime minister of Dominica from 1980 to 1995 while also holding the Foreign Minister’s portfolio from 1980 to 1990 and serving as chair of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and survived two coup attempts (Skard 2014, 255-262). After the 1983 coup in Grenada, Charles urged the U.S. to militarily intervene, and gained global attention when she stood beside U.S. President Ronald Reagan at the White House as he announced the U.S. invasion of Grenada (Associated Press 2005).

## *Appendix B*

In “Peace Makers or Iron Ladies,” we use logistic analysis to support our claim that the gender is an important and under-theorized variable that can help explain conflict initiation. This data appendix provides additional information and tables for which there was insufficient space in the published article.

Figure 1 provides a list of all *effective* democratic female heads of state from 1946 to 2007 (Cheibub et al, 2010).

Tables 1 2, and 3 present robustness tests. In particular, we tried: dropping the UK as the initiator (Table 1, Model 1); altering our coding of democratic states to include states with a Polity scores of 7 or higher (Table 1, Model 2); using Cheibub et al.’s (2010) coding of democracy (Table 1, Model 3); including non-democracies in the analysis (Table 1, Model 4); using a monadic version of the data<sup>1</sup> (Table 2, Models 1-3); using a fixed effects model (Table 1, Model 1) and a random effects model (Table 3, Model 2). In all of these tests, that the interaction between *Gender of Head of Government State A* and *Female Political Empowerment State A* is negative and statistically significant

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<sup>1</sup> Results presented here constrain state B to the US, although we additionally constrained state B to China and Canada with similar substantive results.

Figure 1: Effective Heads of Government in Democracies, 1946-2007

<b>Years</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Leader Name</b>
2007	Argentina	Cristina Elisabet Fernández de Kirchner
1974-1975	Argentina	Isabel Martínez de Perón
1991-1995; 2001-2005	Bangladesh	Khaleda Zia
1996-2000	Bangladesh	Sheikh Hasina Wazed
1994	Bulgaria	Reneta Indzhova
2006-2007	Chile	Verónica Michelle Bachelet Jeria
2005-2007	Germany	Angela Merkel
1997-1998	Guyana	Janet Jagan
1990	Haiti	Ertha Pascal-Trouillot
1966-1976; 1980-1983	India	Indira Gandhi
2001-2003	Indonesia	Megawati Sukarnoputri
1969-1973	Israel	Golda Meir
2006	Jamaica	Portia Simpson Miller
2006-2007	Liberia	Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
1997-1998	New Zealand	Jenny Shipley
1999-2007	New Zealand	Helen Elizabeth Clark
1990-1996	Nicaragua	Violeta Barrios de Chamorro
1986-1988; 1990-1995	Norway	Gro Harlem Brundtland
1988-1989; 1993-1995	Pakistan	Benazir Bhutto
1999-2003	Panama	Mireya Elisa Moscoso de Arias
1987-1991	Philippines	Corazon Aquino
2001-2007	Philippines	Maria Gloria Macapagal Arroyo
1992	Poland	Hanna Suchocka
1979	Portugal	Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo
2001	Senegal	Mame Madior Boye
1960-1964; 1970-1976	Sri Lanka	Sirimavo Bandaranaike
2007	Switzerland	Micheline Calmy-Rey
1999	Switzerland	Ruth Dreifuss
1993-1995	Turkey	Tansu Çiller
2007	Ukraine	Yulia Volodymyrivna Tymoshenko
1979-1989	United Kingdom	Margaret Thatcher

Table I: Dropping UK and Different Regime Measures

EQUATION	VARIABLES	(1) Dropping UK	(2) Polity Score of 7 or Higher	(3) Democracy and Dictatorship Metric	(4) Including Non- Democracies	
Conflict	Gender Head of Government State A	4.311*** (1.103)	4.442*** (0.996)	4.309*** (1.168)	2.811** (1.067)	
	Women Political Empowerment State A	-1.286 (0.839)	-1.520* (0.756)	-1.145 <sup>†</sup> (0.625)	-2.461*** (0.362)	
	Gender Head of Government State A X Women Political Empowerment State A	-5.121* (1.724)	-5.389*** (1.532)	-5.300** (1.764)	-3.366* (1.569)	
	Capabilities State A	6.410*** (1.318)	6.239*** (1.319)	6.383*** (1.324)	10.55*** (1.381)	
	Capabilities State B	7.675* (3.325)	6.992* (3.275)	7.007* (2.733)	8.400*** (1.202)	
	Region State A	0.00228 (0.00255)	0.00333 (0.00227)	0.00190 (0.00218)	0.00527*** (0.00122)	
	Region State B	0.000113 (0.00165)	0.00157 (0.00155)	-0.000102 (0.00153)	0.00103 (0.000964)	
	Durable State A	0.00881*** (0.00242)	0.00925*** (0.00240)	0.00821*** (0.00233)	0.00518* (0.00235)	
	Durable State B	0.00546 (0.00349)	0.00680 <sup>†</sup> (0.00350)	0.00678* (0.00310)	0.00517** (0.00171)	
	Trade Dependence	27.86*** (5.587)	22.57*** (6.377)	30.58*** (5.975)	39.21*** (4.684)	
	Peace Years	-0.386*** (0.0356)	-0.388*** (0.0354)	-0.388*** (0.0323)	-0.386*** (0.0202)	
	Peace Years2	0.0130*** (0.00199)	0.0133*** (0.00196)	0.0131*** (0.00182)	0.0139*** (0.00114)	
	Peace Years3	-0.0001*** (2.93e-05)	-0.000141*** (2.88e-05)	-0.000139*** (2.73e-05)	-0.000152*** (1.76e-05)	
	Constant	-4.427*** (0.517)	-4.406*** (0.489)	-4.387*** (0.398)	-3.791*** (0.197)	
	Observations		260,941	241,365	289,817	668,809

Robust standard errors in parentheses  
\*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, <sup>†</sup>p<0.1

Table II: Monadic Models<sup>2</sup>

EQUATION	VARIABLES	(1) Full Model Interacting Gender with Women's Political Empowerment	(2) Trimmed Model Interacting Gender with Women's Political Empowerment	(3) Bivariate Model Interacting Gender with Women's Political Empowerment
Conflict	Gender Head of Government State A	2.059* (0.964)	2.696** (0.820)	4.852*** (1.349)
	Women Political Empowerment State A	0.206 (0.323)	0.347 (0.323)	-0.905 (0.898)
	Gender Head of Government State A X Women Political Empowerment State A	-2.620 <sup>†</sup> (1.376)	-3.360** (1.086)	-5.910** (1.744)
	Capabilities State A	12.31*** (3.415)		
	Region State A	0.00147 (0.00118)		
	Durable State A	0.000989 (0.00152)		
	Peace Years Monadic	-7.203*** (1.479)	-7.287*** (1.481)	
	Peace Years Monadic2	1.545*** (0.394)	1.561*** (0.395)	
	Peace Years Monadic3	-0.0910*** (0.0254)	-0.0918*** (0.0255)	
	Constant	-0.125 (0.231)	0.0761 (0.276)	-1.176 (0.743)
Observations	2,686	2,702	2,702	

Robust standard errors in parentheses  
\*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, <sup>†</sup>p<0.1

Table III: Fixed and Random Effects Models

<sup>2</sup> Results presented here constrain state B to the US, although we additionally constrained state B to China and Canada with similar substantive results.

EQUATION	VARIABLES	(1) Fixed Effects	(2) Random Effects	
Conflict	Gender Head of Government State A	3.963* (1.674)	3.519* (1.616)	
	Women Political Empowerment State A	-1.207 (1.513)	-1.503* (0.621)	
	Gender Head of Government State A X Women Political Empowerment State A	-6.660** (2.526)	-5.488* (2.422)	
	Capabilities State A	-3.169 (3.210)	5.009** (1.787)	
	Capabilities State B	-24.66 <sup>†</sup> (13.10)	9.954** (2.860)	
	Durable State A	0.00577 (0.00969)	0.0133*** (0.00242)	
	Durable State B	0.00410 (0.00605)	0.00585* (0.00296)	
	Region A	Omitted	0.00246 (0.00157)	
	Region B	Omitted	0.000808 (0.00154)	
	Trade Dependence	-47.68 (31.24)	31.43* (14.16)	
	Peace Years	-0.0682 <sup>†</sup> (0.0352)	-0.217*** (0.0315)	
	Peace Years2	-0.00142 (0.00228)	0.00676*** (0.00177)	
	Peace Years3	9.71e-05* (3.88e-05)	-6.64e-05* (2.57e-05)	
	Constant		-8.127*** (0.498)	
	Observations		5,779	267,148

Robust standard errors in parentheses  
\*\*\*p<0.001 \*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05, <sup>†</sup>p<0.1