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When Women Matter: The Relationship Between Women's Presence and Policy Representation in Western European States

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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In recent years, increasing women's participation in electoral politics has become a priority for a number of activists, politicians, and international governing organizations. This focus can largely be attributed to the belief that doing so provides normative benefits for women through increased policy representation. Despite the prevalence of this assumption, research connecting women's numeric and policy representation generates mixed results. At the same time, this work often fails to adequately theorize the link between the presence of female legislators and attention to women on the political agenda. Inspired by these policy debates, this dissertation asks when women's policy representation emerges in Western European countries and whether the presence of female politicians explains this phenomenon.

Beginning with the frequently espoused hypothesis of a direct relationship between women's numeric and policy representation, the theoretical framework underpinning the project outlines three more nuanced connections between the two forms of representation. First, the intervening relationship argues that the link between women's presence and policy representation is not direct, but instead occurs through women's increased access to political leadership positions. Second, the vote-seeking relationship posits that in order to explain women's representation, it is necessary to account

for parties' desire to appeal to female voters. Finally, the policy-stability relationship suggests that attention to women on the policy agenda may reflect parties' stable attitudes towards women's representation.

Following the introductory chapter, this theoretical framework linking women's numeric and policy representation is developed and tested in five empirical studies. To consider how these hypotheses might apply to parties' policy agendas, the second chapter presents qualitative case studies of the three major British parties. Drawing on these insights, the third chapter uses an original dataset measuring attention to women on the electoral manifestos of 52 parties to test the competing hypotheses. The fourth chapter builds on this work, assessing how variation in parties' internal organizations might influence which parties are explained by each of the four theories.

The final two empirical chapters shift the level of analysis from political parties to legislatures and governments. Mirroring the previous study, in the fifth chapter I return to the UK in order to assess the role of female MPs in influencing policy in the House of Commons. To test the theories developed in this analysis, in the sixth chapter I apply the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses to the expansion of parental leave provisions by 136 governments from across 15 countries over a 20 year period.

Taken together, these results demonstrate that the relationship between women's numeric and policy representation is more complicated than frequently assumed. In order to understand the emergence of policy for women in general—and the link between female legislators and policy representation in particular—it is necessary to consider which actors control women's (numeric and policy) representation and what factors motivate their behavior. In essence, this dissertation shows that it is not sufficient to simply theorize and test a direct relationship between women's presence and attention to women on the policy agenda.

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For my family, Andrew Womack and John, Anna, and Valerie O'Brien. Without them, none of this would have been possible.

Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1   Motivating the Dissertation Project

Concerns with gender equality in political representation have been at the heart of the modern women's rights movement. The need to increase women's presence in office received significant attention in both the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, for example. Bolstering women's participation in electoral politics has similarly become a priority for a number of international organizations, including the United Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the Council of Europe, among others (Krook, 2006).

In response to this growing movement emphasizing the need for gender equality in political decision-making, political parties and national legislatures in over one hundred countries have adopted policies mandating the selection of female candidates for political office (Krook, 2006). Beyond these compulsory requirements, a number of parties now use non-compulsory or informal measures to ensure the nomination of female politicians. Though the effectiveness of these strategies varies across cases,

taken together they have had a significant impact on women's presence in office. While in 1985 women on average held only 12 percent of seats in national assemblies, by the end of 2011 the worldwide mean had increased to almost 20 percent. Today, there are 27 parliaments in which the proportion of female legislators exceeds 30 percent of total representatives (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2012).

This widespread support for increasing women's access to political office is in turn linked to the expectation that women's numeric representation will heighten attention to women on the policy agenda. The *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*—a guiding document for the international women's rights movement—asserts that women's presence in legislative politics is instrumental for "redefining political priorities, [and] placing new items on the political agenda that reflect and address women's gender-specific concerns, values and experiences" (79).[1] Similar arguments have been applied to both developed and developing states. The European Commission's 2010 Women's Charter, for example, states that gender balance in political decision-making will "help Europe shape more effective policies [and] develop a gender-aware knowledge-based society" (4).[2] The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) likewise proclaimed that "higher numbers of women in parliament generally contribute to stronger attention to women's issues."[3]

In tandem with policy actors' heightened attention to women's numeric and policy representation, in recent years this topic has also received significant attention from women and politics scholars. However, while advocates of women's representation are quick to argue that increasing the number of female politicians will lead to greater

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[1]http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/index.html

[2]http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/president/news/documents/pdf/20100305_1_en.pdf

[3]http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/democratic_governance/facts_figures.php

policy representation for women, the results from research conducted in this field remain inconclusive. Though in some instances the percentage of female legislators is correlated with policy outcomes that benefit women (Bratton and Ray, 2002; Kittilson, 2008; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005), in others there are no clear changes to the political agenda (Grey, 2002; Tolbert and Steuernagel, 2001). The link between women's presence and policy representation thus appears to be less straightforward than assumed by many women's rights advocates.

Even in cases where women's presence and policy representation are correlated, the causal mechanisms connecting the two are not fully understood. Though a positive correlation may be evidence of female legislators' efforts to represent women, this is far from the only possible explanation. The link may emerge, for example, only after women have been promoted to positions of influence that provide them access to the policy agenda. Alternatively, the relationship may be epiphenomenal, with both forms of representation emerging from the aims of party elites. Before accounting for alternative theories, it is impossible to interpret the presence or absence of an

association between numeric and policy representation,[4] or assign any causal role to women's presence in office.

Motivated by the observation that the relationship between numeric and policy representation may be more complicated than often presumed, in this dissertation I examine *whether* there is a correlation between the presence of female legislators and attention to women on the policy agenda, while also asking *why* women's policy representation might emerge. Having broadly defined the research question, the next part of this introductory chapter reviews both normative and empirical studies linking the two forms of representation. Drawing on this work, in the following section I highlight the need for new theorizing about women's policy representation and briefly introduce the theoretical framework that forms the basis of the dissertation project. Finally, I conclude by explaining my case selection and providing a brief summary of the subsequent chapters.

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[4]In contrast to sub-disciplinary norms, I address women's presence in office as "numeric" rather than "descriptive" representation. Similarly, I refer to "policy" rather "substantive" representation. This decision is an effort to acknowledge that descriptive and substantive representation are each much broader concepts than those captured in the subsequent analyses. Numeric representation, for example, is operationalized as the number of seats held by women in parties' parliamentary caucuses and in the legislature. Descriptive representation, in contrast, captures features beyond women's numeric representation alone. As highlighted by Piscopo (2011), for example, the initial conception of descriptive representation outlined by Pitkin (1967) involves descriptive representatives providing information about constituents to whom they are similar. In my work, however, female representatives rendering the opinions and interests of women in society is an instance of policy (rather than descriptive) representation. In contemporary research, moreover, descriptive representation has come to address not only the number of women in office, but also which types of women are represented in these assemblies (Franceschet, Krook and Piscopo, 2012; O'Brien, 2012). My work does not address this diversity among female legislators. Similar issues arise with substantive representation. While Pitkin's definition does focus on the outcomes of representation, in practice the term has been applied to a much broader set of behaviors. This dissertation, however, does not address the myriad of ways in which female representatives "act for" women. Instead, I focus only on the adoption of policy related to women. The term substantive representation is thus misleading in this case. In essence, discussing the link between women's "presence" or "numeric representation," and their "policy representation" or "attention to women on the policy agenda," more accurately reflects the concepts being studied than the alternative terminology.

1.2 Previous Research Linking Women's Numeric and Policy Representation

The dramatic increase in the proportion of seats held by female legislators has led scholars to examine the consequences of women's representation for the broader political landscape. A central question motivating this research specifically addresses the link between women's presence and policy representation. In fact, the identification of factors explaining and mitigating this relationship arguably represents one of the most compelling subjects in the current study of women and politics, as is illustrated by the large body of work on this topic.

In this section, I draw on some of these works in order to motivate my theory and situate the project within the broader literature. I begin by reviewing four normative works on this topic that underpin much of the subsequent empirical research. Starting with Hanna Pitkin's foundational work distinguishing representation as "standing for" from representation as "acting for," I next turn to three more contemporary scholars that reconnect numeric and policy representation. These latter works, which set out arguments linking presence and policy representation, are built on assumptions about both the connection between representatives and the represented and the process by which policy is made.

Turning to a survey of the empirical literature, it becomes clear that while female and male legislators often do have different policy preferences, the link between numeric and policy representation remains contested. Though there are instances in which women's presence appears to lead to women's policy representation, this finding does not uniformly hold. On the one hand, women's policy representation sometimes fails to emerge despite the fact that female legislators hold a large proportion of seats. On the other hand, it sometimes manifests with even small numbers

of female representatives or can be attributed to factors beyond women's presence in office.

The literature presented in this section thus provides an overview of the existing research related to the dissertation. At the same time, in developing and applying my theory of women's policy representation, in each of the analyses presented in this project I draw on existing studies from the fields of women and politics and comparative politics. In this respect, the literature review is not limited to this introduction, but rather can be viewed as extending through the subsequent chapters. In this section, I aim simply to provide a basis for understanding the central problem addressed within my work.

1.2.1 Normative Literature Linking Women's Numeric and Policy Representation

Much of the normative and empirical research on women's representation traces its roots to Hanna Pitkin's seminal book, *The Concept of Representation* (1967). In her work, Pitkin posits four alternative conceptualizations of representation: *formalistic*, which focuses on authorization and accountability; *symbolic*, which considers the meaning the representative has for the represented; *descriptive*, which emphasizes the representative reflecting the characteristics of the represented; and *substantive*, which stresses the degree to which the representative "acts for" the represented.

Of these four types, Pitkin places primary emphasis on substantive representation. In her view, the proper relationship between the representative and the represented is one in which the represented is "logically prior" to the representative and the representative is responsive to her constituents and acts in their interests, rather than simply "standing for" them. This typically results in a convergence between

the desires of the represented and the action of the representative, with divergences demanding justification on the part of the representative.

Just as Pitkin prioritizes substantive representation, she also argues against emphasizing descriptive representation. In her view, it is neither possible to accurately mirror the represented, nor is it necessarily clear which characteristics merit representation. Among representatives, moreover, there is "no simple correlation" between their identity and behavior (89).

Descriptive representation, Pitkin claims, can in fact diminish accountability. Representatives cannot be held responsible for their fixed identities, and an overemphasis on descriptive representation can result in undue attention to the composition, rather than activities, of representative bodies. Thus, while she acknowledges that descriptive representation may be "appropriate and relevant" in assemblies in which information about constituents' preferences may be missing, Pitkin strongly argues that the best representatives are those who work to advance their constituents' interests, irrespective of their identity.

Though Pitkin indicates that descriptive representation is not necessary for—and can in fact be detrimental to—substantive representation, others posit that the two modes of representation cannot necessarily be separated. Within her work, Anne Phillips (1995) contrasts two types of politics: a politics of ideas and a politics of presence. The former focuses on formalistic models of representing policy positions, interests, and preferences within political institutions. The latter emphasizes identity and the need for representatives who reflect societal diversity. While these two types are often placed in opposition to one another, Phillips argues that both are necessary and often related. Ideas or interests cannot be wholly divorced from the constituents who hold these interests. Rather, it is in the "relationship between ideas and presence that we can best hope to find a fairer system of representation" (25).

In support of the politics of presence, Phillips (1995, 1998) identifies four alternative justifications for increasing women's access to political office: the *role model argument*, which asserts that the presence of female politicians empowers women within society and upsets traditional expectations about appropriate gender roles; the *justice argument*, which views the current distribution of power as fundamentally unfair; the *overlooked interests argument*, which posits that female politicians can represent the interests of women that would otherwise go unnoticed; and the *revitalized democracy argument*, which emphasizes women's different relationship to politics and the manner in which their presence will improve political life.

Of these justifications for increasing women's descriptive representation, within the context of this project the most salient is the overlooked interests argument. From Phillips' perspective, the notion of overlooked interests is most compelling when particular women's interests have not yet reached the political agenda, as female representatives can make these issues visible. At the same time, while Phillips agrees with the intuition that representatives' gender can shape their behavior, she acknowledges that electing more women is not in and of itself a guarantee that their interests will be represented. Rather, it is a "shot in the dark: far more likely to reach its target than when those shooting are predominantly male, but still open to all kinds of accident" (83). Thus, though efforts to increase women's presence in office can be justified in part based on the assertion that female representatives are more likely to act for women, this is far from guaranteed.

Like Pitkin, Mansbridge (1999) also enumerates criticisms of descriptive representation, including its potentially essentializing features and the possibility of reduced accountability, among others. Within her work, however, she also identifies four instances in which descriptive representation can be justified. These include providing greater legitimacy to representative assemblies, altering societal beliefs about the as-

criptive characteristics of a good politician, facilitating trust among groups that have traditionally been subordinated, and addressing "uncrystallized interests." This last point is especially relevant to questions of policy representation. With respect to this final justification, Mansbridge argues that descriptive representatives can draw on elements of their shared experiences with their constituents in order to explore the possible ramifications of emergent issues and speak with the authority of experience on those matters.

Mansbridge's arguments, in turn, place significant emphasis on the deliberative rather than aggregative function of democracy. When representatives are tasked with aggregating individual interests or preferences, reelection incentives and other forms of accountability encourage non-descriptive representatives to act in the same manner as descriptive representatives. There is thus no need for the representative to have shared the experiences of the represented. The deliberative function of democracy, in contrast, seeks to understand which policies are good for the polity as a whole and for the representative's constituents; elucidate the conflicts between interests; and transform interests and create commonalities that can be beneficial to all. Deliberation is improved, Mansbridge argues, by diversifying the perspectives voiced and by ensuring that no voice is in such a minority as to be effectively silenced. It is within the context of deliberation that the link between descriptive and substantive representation can therefore emerge.

Like Mansbridge, Melissa Williams (1998) also views descriptive representation as a mechanism by which historically marginalized groups can build trust and communicate with their governments, and through which these groups can voice a perspective that would otherwise be absent or ignored. Drawing on her understanding of "representation as mediation," Williams identifies three representative moments in which "self-representation" by marginalized groups may be especially necessary. With re-

spect to legislative decision-making, Williams focuses on the necessity of "voice." In particular, she argues that women must not only have the right to participate in politics, but must also have a place in legislative assemblies. This assertion is based on the epistemological assumption that "men lack deep knowledge of women's 'thoughts, wills and respective situations,' and so women must represent themselves" (137).

In William's framework, women's legislative presence is therefore necessary for women's perspectives to be fully integrated into the policy-making process. At the same time, in her view, the conventional bargaining or competitive model of representation cannot adequately accommodate the discursive exchanges required to reconcile and harmonize the competing interests of different groups. Like Mansbridge, she thus argues that true self-representation also necessitates a deliberative legislative process. Consequently, this "politics of perspective" seeks not only to give voice to historically excluded viewpoints, but also to transform the attitudes of privileged representatives towards the interests of marginalized groups.

1.2.2 Empirical Literature Linking Women's Numeric and Policy Representation

The normative literature reveals competing perspectives on both the merits of, and justifications for, women's descriptive representation. While it is clear that women's presence in office alone is not a sufficient condition for altering the nature of decision-making, Phillips, Mansbridge, and Williams each posit that self-representation may be necessary in order for previously marginalized perspectives to be made known. Across these works, however, it becomes clear that in order for "standing for" to translate into "acting for" at least two conditions must hold.

First, the preferences held by female representatives must reflect those of women in the electorate. Female politicians must, moreover, be more likely to give voice to these preferences than their male counterparts. Second, the political environment must allow these voices to be heard. If politicians' positions have already been clearly delineated, or the institutional context does not allow for deliberation, it is unlikely that descriptive representation will result in substantive representation.

Drawing on the conclusions generated by these normative studies, I next turn to the empirical literature on women's representation to see whether these preconditions hold. Studies comparing policy attitudes of male and female legislators largely support the first assumption. Male and female representatives often do express differing opinions on issues related to women. At the same time, these works also demonstrate that the institutional context does in fact matter greatly for the transmission of women's voice into actual policy adoption. Despite calls for more open and deliberative policy-making environments, in which female representatives can give voice to women's concerns, in practice institutional rules and norms limit the capacity of female legislators to represent women.

Female Legislators' Attitudes towards Women

Comparing the policy attitudes of male and female legislators indicates that women representatives often do hold different perspectives on women's issues than their male counterparts. In interviews, for example, female US state legislators claim that their gender makes them uniquely qualified to represent women. They are also more likely than their male colleagues to both describe themselves as representatives of women and to view women as an important constituency (Reingold, 1992). Surveys of state legislators further indicate that female representatives are more likely to

prioritize women's rights issues than their male counterparts (Thomas, 1994; Carroll, 2001), though the extent of these differences can vary across states (Reingold, 2000).

Beyond US state legislatures, gendered differences in politicians' policy attitudes and interests also emerge in other cases. Across the Nordic countries, for example, comparisons of public opinion data to elite surveys demonstrate that male parliamentarians consistently represent the views of male voters. The opinions of women representatives, moreover, are often similar to those of female voters (Narud and Valen, 2000). Female members of the Swedish Riksdag are also more likely than men to list traditionally feminine policy areas as personal interests and to address these issues (including social, family, and health care policy) in their electoral campaigns (Wängnerud, 2005). They further differ from male representatives in their attitudes towards women's issues, and are more likely to view themselves as champions of women than their male counterparts (Esaiasson and Holmberg, 1996; Esaiasson, 2000; Diaz, 2005).

Even in cases where legislators' attitudes are dictated almost entirely by partisanship, male and female representatives continue to express differing opinions on women's issues. In Argentina, Colombia, and Costa Rica, for example, while on almost all issues there are no significant differences between male and female copartisans, women do place a higher priority on women's equality and family issues (Schwindt-Bayer, 2006). Similarly, though in Brazil there is no evidence of a gender difference in legislators' support for abortion rights, women are more likely than men to support quotas and labor market regulations that promote gender equality (Htun and Power, 2006). Finally, in both Australia (McAllister and Studlar, 1992) and the United Kingdom (Lovenduski and Norris, 2003) female politicians are more liberal than their male copartisans on issues of women's advancement (though not on other social or economic policies).

Female Legislators' Representing Women

Across a number of systems, female legislators' consistently hold more liberal values on women's issues than their male colleagues. They are also more likely to prioritize policies in this area. There is further evidence that these differences in opinion influence legislators' behavior. Though gendered variation rarely emerge in roll call votes (Tamerius, 1995; Thomas, 1994; Vega and Firestone, 1995; Shomer, 2010), gender differences sometimes appear in earlier stages of the legislative process, including committee membership, bill introduction, and debate participation, among others. There is thus support for the notion that at least some female politicians make efforts to represent women in legislatures.

As committees have become increasingly important in modern parliamentary politics (Longley and Davidson, 1998; Mattson and Strøm, 1995), gender and politics scholars have identified systematic differences between male and female legislators' committee experiences. Not only do men and women behave differently during committee hearings (Kathlene, 1994; Rosenthal, 1997, 1998), but the committees to which they are assigned also vary (Heath, Schwindt-Bayer and Taylor-Robinson, 2005; Thomas, 1994; Towns, 2003). In particular, in both US state governments and Danish local councils, variation in committee assignments appears to reflect female members' desire to serve on social policy oriented committees that more directly relate to traditional women's interests (Bækgaard and Kjaer, 2011; Thomas, 1994).

Existing research also demonstrates that female representatives are more likely to introduce and cosponsor legislation that pertains to women. In the US House of Representatives, women are more likely to introduce bills in the areas of women's and family rights (Jones, 1997; Swers, 2002). Swers (2005), for example, shows that female legislators are more likely than their male colleagues to cosponsor legislation on edu-

cation, children-and-family, women's health, and gender health issues. These women also forward a disproportionally large number of women-related bills (as compared to the total number of bills they introduced) (Vega and Firestone, 1995).

Beyond the House of Representatives, analyses from US state legislatures further show that female representatives are generally more active than men in sponsoring legislation that focuses on women (Bratton, 2005). Similar results have also emerged in Latin America (Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008; Jones, 1997), though it is not always clear whether this behavior represents women's preferences or the marginalization of women within the legislative arena (Schwindt-Bayer, 2006).

These studies of bill sponsorship focus on assemblies in which representatives can introduce legislation (though admittedly with varying probabilities of success). In systems where legislators' policy-making authority is more constrained, female members of parliament (MPs) have found alternative strategies to draw attention to issues that pertain to women. Female parliamentarians in Canada, for example, have not only used private members' bills, but also parliamentary motions and statements, to highlight these concerns (Tremblay, 1998). Similarly, in the British House of Commons, female Labour MPs have used Early Day Motions to give voice to women's (and particularly feminist) interests (Childs and Withey, 2004).

Just as female politicians are more likely to introduce legislation that pertains to women than their male colleagues, a number of cases reveal gendered variation in participation in legislative debates. In comparison to debates on traditionally masculine policy areas, female legislators have been shown to participate more extensively in debates involving women and families (Taylor-Robinson and Heath, 2003). In the Nordic states, for example, women on both sides of the ideological spectrum have figured prominently in debates on childcare policy (Bergqvist, 1999). Similarly, female

legislators have been vocal on issues of child care and parental leave in parliamentary debates in New Zealand (Grey, 2002).

The percentage of interventions made by female parliamentarians in debates on women's issues also tends to be much greater than the proportion of total seats held by women. In Canadian parliamentary debates, for example, women MPs speak twice as often as men on women's issues (Tremblay, 1998). Analyses of Belgian budget debates similarly indicate that female representatives made a disproportionately large number of statements in favor of women. These interventions also covered a broader range of women's interests than those identified by male MPs (Celis, 2006). Finally, Piscopo (2011) finds that female legislators in Argentina were overrepresented in debates on proposals addressing women's rights.

Female Legislators' and the Absence of Women's Policy Representation

Taken together, these studies lend strong support to the link between the presence of female politicians and the articulation of women's issues within legislatures. In a number of institutions, and across a variety of legislative activities, female legislators aim to represent women's interests. At the same time, many other studies find that women's presence fails to alter legislative outcomes. In some cases, even a dramatic increase in the number of women in office does not yield changes in policy decisions (Grey, 2002). In others, it is associated with greater attention to women at early stages in the legislative process, but does not shift patterns in policy adoption (Devlin and Elgie, 2008; Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008).

Existing scholarship advances a number of claims as to why the presence of female representatives may fail to translate into increased policy representation. Franceschet, Krook and Piscopo (2012) identify three main sets of explanations presented in the literature: 1) the inability of female legislators to act for women until their numbers

have exceeded some arbitrarily large threshold (critical mass); 2) individual attributes that inhibit the propensity of legislators to act for women; 3) system-level factors that hamper women's policy representation.

Critical mass theory has evolved to focus primarily on the claim that women cannot influence legislative politics until they move from a few token individuals to a large minority, or "critical mass," of elected representatives (Childs and Krook, 2009). Thus, the key hypothesis driving this work is that increasing the proportion of seats held by women allows female legislators to form coalitions and promote policy related to women (Childs and Krook, 2008, 2009).

In studies of US state legislatures, some scholars do indeed find that gender differences in legislative style, policy priorities, and policy outcomes are more likely to be present in gender-balanced legislatures (Thomas, 1991, 1994). It has also been argued that gender differences in bill sponsorship do not emerge until at least 15 percent of seats are held by women (Saint-Germain, 1989). Other work, however, contradicts these findings, going so far as to argue that increasing the number of women in office can sometimes have adverse effects on women's representation (Bratton, 2002; Reingold, 1992; Kathlene, 1995).

Similarly mixed results have also been found in studies of national assemblies. Scholars have noted that changes in the legislative agenda sometimes manifest with even small numbers of female representatives (Ayata and Tütüncü, 2008; Towns, 2003; Vega and Firestone, 1995; Welch, 1985; Wolbrecht, 2000). These changes may also fail to emerge even with increased numbers of women (Childs, 2004; Grey, 2002; Lovenduski, 2001). The proportion of female representatives thus proves to be neither a necessary nor sufficient condition in accounting for attention to women on the policy agenda.

Given the shortcomings of the critical mass literature, a number of scholars have pointed to individual characteristics of female representatives that could account for the variation in the link between women's numeric and policy representation. Some argue, for example, that liberal opinions on gender issues often correspond more closely to party membership than sex (Dolan, 1997; Htun and Power, 2006; Tremblay and Pelletier, 2000). Thus, female members of conservative parties may be less likely to advocate for women than male representatives of left parties.

At the same time, while the literature often links numeric and policy representation, self-identification as a feminist has been found to be the most important determinant of a legislator's policy stance on issues that pertain to women (Tremblay and Pelletier, 2000). A legislator's attitudes may thus be more important than his or her sex for achieving feminist outcomes (Childs, 2004). Consequently, there is now a movement towards identifying the factors that motivate both male and female "critical actors" to represent women (Dahlerup, 1998; Childs and Krook, 2008, 2009).

Beyond individual level variation, there is also evidence that both societal and parliamentary contexts shape the relationship between numeric and policy representation (Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers, 2007). Some research, for example, points to the ways in which access to the policy agenda can shape representatives' behavior and legislative outcomes. In the US Congress, Swers (2002) finds that women are more likely to initiate social welfare proposals when they have access to the prerogatives of the majority party. Female legislators are unwilling to expend the political capital necessary to advocate for these policies, however, when their policy-making authority is constrained.

Outside of the US, legislators' policy-making authority is closely linked to the strength of political parties and their leaders. First, consider candidate selection. It has been argued that when party leaders dominate the nomination process, they are

unlikely to select female candidates who will deviate from the party line. Thus, the women that enter office are unlikely to make "feminist" demands that do not conform to the party's policy platform (Gotell and Brodie, 1991).

Within the legislature, moreover, discipline discourages cross-party alliances among female MPs and leads women to vote in accordance with the party line (Celis, 2008; Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008; Htun and Jones, 2002; Studlar and McAllister, 2002). In strong party systems it is therefore difficult for low-ranking female politicians to represent a distinctive set of perspectives (Lovenduski and Norris, 2003; Lovenduski, 2005a). Rather, Diaz (2005) argues that the party leadership is responsible for policy decisions and other members simply execute the will of the leaders.

Control of the agenda by party leaders, combined with strong executive dominance, has thus been viewed as limiting the role of rank-and-file female legislators in influencing policy outcomes (Childs, 2001; Cowley and Childs, 2003; Franceschet and Piscopo, 2008; Htun and Jones, 2002). While female MPs may represent women at earlier stages in the legislative process, the constraints on their policy-making authority mitigate the effectiveness of these interventions.

These institutional constraints have, in turn, resulted in skepticism about whether women's presence in office will lead to attention to women on the policy agenda. Female politicians are not elected by primarily female constituencies—which would incentivize female legislators to represent women. Their presence also does not necessarily change party leaders' expectations of how parliamentarians should behave. Consequently, female representatives cannot be expected to change patterns in women's policy representation (Cornwall and Goetz, 2005).

In some ways, these arguments are consistent with those forwarded by Phillips, Mansbridge, and Williams. While all three theorists argue that women's representation may be a necessary precondition for women's substantive representation, they

also acknowledge that this is most likely to occur when issue positions have yet to be formed and when representatives engage in a deliberative process. In reality, party leaders often dictate policy positions and legislators do not engage in the deliberations necessary to alter existing issue positions and build consensus around new policies. Within these constrained environments, it is not surprising that descriptive representatives are unable to successfully alter the policy agenda.

Women's Representation Beyond Female Legislators

Just as existing research indicates that the link between women's numeric and policy representation can be mitigated by individual and institutional characteristics, studies of policy adoption further demonstrate that attention to women can also be attributed to factors beyond women's presence in office. Dahlerup (2006), for example, theorizes that women's presence in legislatures is of only "minor importance" in influencing the adoption feminist public policies. Instead, she argues that gender and politics scholars should focus on "the political context, state feminist machineries, prevailing discourses, framing of the issue, coalition building, and movement strength, among others" when explaining policy representation (520).

In this vein, some scholars focus primarily on the actions of women outside of elected assemblies. Weldon (2002), for example, argues that women's movements and women's policy agencies are better able to influence government response to violence against women than female legislators. She also finds that after accounting for the strength of feminist civil society actors, women's presence in state legislatures has no influence on their responsiveness to violence against women (Weldon, 2004). While Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers (2007) are more optimistic about the link between numeric and policy representation, they also posit that women's public policy outcomes may be partially explained by pressure from public opinion and feminist movements.

They suggest, in fact, that these factors could even persuade male legislators to represent women.

In addition to these external forces, other scholars focus primarily on the incentives facing representatives and parties within the legislature. In her study of representatives' behavior in California and Arizona, Reingold (2000) argues that "many institutional norms encourage or simply allowed activity associated with...women's political representation" (230). These "institutional forces," including partisan and ideological coalitions and behavior norms, consequently led both male and female legislators in California to "act for" women.

The role of institutional factors has been further documented in subsequent studies of variation in women's policy representation across the US states. Caiazza (2004) finds, for example, that the adoption of women-friendly policy is explained by public support for women's political participation and Democratic party control, rather than women's numeric representation. Similarly, women-friendly health policies are associated with a large medical establishment and Democratic dominance, but not with women's presence among state legislators (Tolbert and Steuernagel, 2001).

Taken together, these works indicate that even in institutions where legislators enjoy significant policy-making authority, factors including party ideology, public opinion, and interest group politics may in some instances be better determinants of women's policy representation than the presence of female legislators. Thus, while some normative literature posits that "self-representation" may be a necessary (but not sufficient) condition for women's policy representation, empirical studies indicate that there are cases in which it is neither necessary nor sufficient. To the contrary, given the realities of the policy formation process, focusing on women's presence in office alone may not adequately explain attention to women on the policy agenda.

1.3 Introducing the Theoretical Framework

As the literature review indicates, the relationship between women's numeric and policy representation has generated a significant body of literature that spans the traditional subfields of political science, including political theory, American politics, and comparative politics. The link between women's presence and attention to issues that pertain to women thus represents one of the central questions motivating the contemporary study of gender and politics. The empirical research addressing this topic has, moreover, been instrumental in illustrating that the relationship between women's presence and policy representation is not as straightforward as advocates for women's representation may presume. Despite the growing body of work on this subject, however, there are also major issues that have yet to be addressed.

To begin with, it remains unclear whether a link between women's numeric and policy representation in fact exists. While in some instances a relationship appears to emerge, in others it fails to manifest. This uncertainty can be attributed in part to the fact that the existing research often focuses on a single case. The factors that shape the relationship are thus often speculative and have yet to be submitted to systematic analysis.

More importantly, within both the single- and multi-case analyses, there is a problematic tendency to assume a priori a direct link between women's numeric and policy representation. While some studies have shown that variation in women's presence in office fails to account for the adoption of women-friendly polices, the majority of work continues to hypothesize a direct relationship between the two. In essence, although the literature has done an excellent job of identifying the myriad of factors mitigating this relationship, with few exceptions it has largely settled on a single account

explaining any association between the presence and policy representation: women matter.

As a consequence of presuming a direct link between presence and policy representation, when studies fail to reject a null hypothesis of no effect, this is generally taken as support for a causal relationship. Though a positive correlation between women's presence and policy representation may be evidence of female legislators' efforts to represent women, this is far from the only possible explanation. Falsely assuming a direct link between numeric and policy representation can, in turn, have significant consequences for attempts to increase attention to women on the policy agenda. If the correlation is not explained by a direct relationship, actors focused on bolstering women's numeric representation as a means to greater policy representation may find that their efforts have only a limited effect.

Addressing the limitations of the existing literature demands careful analysis asking not only whether women's presence is correlated with attention to women, but also why this link emerges. Drawing on qualitative studies of British politics, as well as findings from both comparative politics and women and politics research, in the subsequent chapters I develop and test four alternative hypotheses linking numeric and policy representation:

i. **Direct Relationship**: There is a direct causal link between women's numeric and policy representation. Increasing the proportion of seats held by female legislators generates greater attention to women on the policy agenda.

ii. **Intervening Relationship**: There is a causal link between women's numeric and policy representation, but it is indirect and occurs through women's increased access to leadership positions in political institutions. This, in turn, increases attention to women on the policy agenda.

iii. **Vote-Seeking Relationship**: There is no causal link between women's numeric and policy representation. The elites who include women on the policy agenda are also influential in promoting women to office. These leaders advance both women's numeric and policy representation in an attempt to appeal to female voters.

iv. **Policy-Stability Relationship**: There is no causal link between women's numeric and policy representation. Both are manifestations of stable party attitudes towards women that are largely unchanging over time.

In order to evaluate the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses, in the subsequent chapters I apply this theoretical framework to both party agenda formation and the extension of parental leave policies in Western European states. Accounting for these alternative explanations allows for a more nuanced interpretation of the relationship between women's numeric and policy representation. This in turn helps to explain the cross-national and cross-party variation in the presence and absence of women's policy representation.

1.4 Case Selection: Why the United Kingdom and Western Europe?

While the following chapters draw on multiple methodological approaches and varying levels of analysis, they are united not only by their theoretical underpinnings, but also by their shared focus on both British politics in particular, and Western European politics more generally. To begin with, the dissertation includes qualitative assessments of the link between the presence of female MPs and attention to women on the policy agenda in the United Kingdom. The British case was selected because of

the unique insights it offers into women's representation within both parties and legislatures. These case studies are therefore used to develop the theoretical framework as it applies to both party platform formation and parliamentary policy adoption.

Within the UK, historically there was clear party-level variation with respect to the organizations' attitudes towards women's representation. During the last election, however, each of the major parties' manifestos contained strong commitments to women. Examining how these three parties came to attend to women on their policy platforms elucidates the alternative factors that can influence women's policy representation. The case studies also demonstrate why women's presence in parties' parliamentary delegations may not be a necessary condition for this representation to emerge. At the same time, legislators within the British Parliament are more constrained in their policy-making authority than representatives in other assemblies. Assessing the extent to which female MPs shape women's policy representation illustrates the strengths and limitations of the direct relationship often posited in the gender and politics literature.

While I use UK politics to inductively generate a theoretical framework explaining women's policy representation, I rely on statistical analyses of Western European parties' and governments' behaviors in order to test the alternative hypotheses. The decision to focus on Western Europe is motivated both by women's position within these states and by the broader policy-making environment in these parties and parliaments.

To begin with, Western Europe has arguably served as a model for the rest of the world with respect to women's representation. Political actors in European states have been at the forefront of contemporary efforts to bolster women's presence in national assemblies. Western European parties, for example, were among the first to voluntarily adopt positive discrimination measures aimed at increasing women's

access to political office (Krook, 2006). Today, the average region-wide proportion of female legislators is almost 30 percent. These countries are also among the most gender equal in the world. Of the 20 states with the smallest gender gap, 12 are in Western Europe.[5] No countries in the region are included among the 50 least gender equitable states (Hausmann, Tyson and Zahidi, 2011).

In part because Western European states have been at the forefront of advancing women's policy representation, studying this region has the added benefit of providing comparatively homogenous units of analysis. Existing survey research shows that European respondents' attitudes towards communitarian, human rights, and socio-economic issues do not differ markedly across sub-regions. This can be attributed in part to the decline of religiosity and spread of socio-economic development across the region in the latter half of the twentieth century (Blondel and Inoguchi, 2006).

Just as "basic societal values" do not significantly differ across Western European sub-regions (Blondel and Inoguchi, 2006, 153), women's rights advocates in Western Europe are arguably addressing relatively similar issues across different states. Consider, for example, the parental leave policies addressed in Chapter 6. Though there is variation among states, each country begins the time period under study with a baseline level of state-supported family leave. States then expand these policies in similar ways over subsequent years. Across all countries included in the analysis, the expansion of parental leave thus captures a similar phenomenon.

More generally, the issues women encounter within any given Western European state are more similar to those confronting women in other countries within the region, and quite different from those facing women in other parts of the world. Selecting

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[5]The gender gap is computed using 14 variables capturing women's political empowerment, economic opportunity, access to education, and health outcomes. For more information, see: http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-gender-gap.

a broader or more diverse set of cases—such as states with vastly different levels of socio-economic development—would introduce much greater unit heterogeneity into the analysis. This would, in turn, limit the conclusions that could be drawn from the study.

While Western European countries are relatively homogenous with respect to socio-economic development in general and gender equality in particular, there is still variation in women's numeric and policy representation both across these countries and within these states over time. Before 1980, parties in only two states had adopted affirmative action measures for female candidates, and women on average held under 10 percent of seats in national assemblies (Krook, 2006; Norris and Krook, 2011). Among the parties and parliaments included in my datasets, there are some observations with no or few women and others that approach gender parity.

Unlike numeric representation, women's policy representation is more difficult to capture. As the literature review indicates, there is no single or universal measure of this concept, and existing studies have considered parliamentary speech, the introduction of legislation related to women, and policy outcomes that can be considered advantageous to women, among other operationalizations. For the quantitative analyses, I use two different outcome variables capturing policy representation: attention to women on party platforms and the extension of parental leave provisions.

As was the case with women's numeric representation, among the observations included in these analyses there is also significant variation in these measures. Just as there are parties that do not use any words related to women on their manifestos, there are also party platforms that dedicate substantial attention to women. Similarly, while two-thirds of governments do not extend parental leave, one-third adopt legislation expanding these provisions. Focusing on Western European states thus provides

the variation necessary to test the theoretical framework explaining women's policy representation.

Beyond this variation in the variables of interest, the focus on Western Europe is advantageous because the policy-making process in these states is well understood. The existing literature on legislators', parties', and governments' behaviors thus offers useful insights for developing and applying the theoretical framework within this environment. At the same time, the Western European context arguably limits the number of policy actors that need to be considered when theorizing about the emergence of women's policy representation.

Though there is variation across parliaments, in most European democracies political parties have a great deal of power. There are also severe limits on the prerogatives and authority of individual legislators. This, in turn, allows me to focus on the behavior of a small number of political parties rather than the unique activities of hundreds of individual MPs. At the same time, almost all countries included in the analysis are parliamentary democracies. In "pure" presidential systems—like those found in the US and in much of Latin America—the executive and legislature are separated. The two branches are elected independently and have distinct powers. While the multiparty systems present in many Western European parliaments undoubtedly complicate the policy-making environment, the extensive oversight and constraint by multiple principals found in presidential regimes arguably makes it more difficult to build and test a general theory of women's policy representation in these systems.

Just as the policy-making environment is conducive to studying the process by which women's policy representation emerges, it also provides an ideal setting for assessing potential weaknesses in the frequently asserted direct relationship. The tendency to assume that the correlation between women's presence and policy representation reflects a causal relationship is arguably especially problematic within the

Western European context. While the women and politics research focuses primarily on the role played by female parliamentarians, the power of political parties and dominance of the executive within these systems results in female legislators having only limited access to the policy agenda. Given the constraints placed on legislators' actions, in order to understand the emergence of women's policy representation it is arguably necessary to consider alternative factors that can influence parties' and governments' behaviors beyond the gender makeup of the parliamentary delegation.

1.5   Outline of the Dissertation

While both practitioners and scholars have placed significant emphasis on connecting women's numeric and policy representation, a review of the existing research on this topic illustrates the need for additional theoretical and empirical work assessing the emergence of women's policy representation. Within this introductory chapter, I have briefly outlined a set of theories that move beyond the direct relationship to offer a more nuanced understanding of women's policy representation. In the following chapters, I both develop this theoretical framework in greater detail and also test its competing hypotheses using cross-national quantitative analyses of women's policy representation in Western European. Taken as a whole, the results reveal the complexities of the relationship between presence and policy representation.

Chapters 2 through 4 focus on women's representation within Western European parties. In order to motivate this component of the dissertation and lend support to theoretical framework, in the next chapter I describe women's numeric representation within the British Labour, Conservative, and Liberal Democrat parliamentary parties. I also examine changes in the parties' attitudes towards women's representation between the 2005 and 2010 general elections. Drawing on both an analysis of the

parties' policy platforms and interviews with MPs, I argue that variation in women's presence in parties' parliamentary delegations may not be the chief determinant of women's policy representation on these platforms. At the same time, I provide clear examples of the ways in which the presence of women among party elites, parties' vote-seeking aims, and stable party attitudes may shape these outcomes.

Following this theory-building study, Chapters 3 and 4 employ cross-national analyses of women's policy representation within parties. The third chapter further develops each of the hypotheses with specific reference to Western European party politics. Using attention to women on parties' electoral manifestos as a proxy for attention to women on their policy agendas, I then test the alternative hypotheses on an original dataset constructed from the platforms of over 50 parties in ten countries between 1980 and 2008. The results indicate that women's policy representation is primarily explained by the presence of female MPs among only a small number of parties. The majority of parties are better captured by the alternative explanations, with a plurality of organization being best explained by the policy-stability hypothesis. Moreover, among parties explained by these alternative theories, the substantive impact of women's numeric representation is limited.

Building on this analysis, the fourth chapter assesses whether variation in party-level characteristics can explain classification into the four alternative theories. In particular, I posit that differences in the rules governing agenda formation may in turn explain why parties are classified by the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, or policy-stability hypotheses. The results from the concomitant model demonstrate, however, that differences in party organization alone cannot explain the clusters generated by the previous analysis. In the conclusion of this chapter, I discuss why this may be the case.

Chapters 5 and 6 shift the level of analysis from political parties to legislatures and governments. Returning once again to the British case, I assess the role of female MPs in influencing policy in the House of Commons. After outlining arguments made by party activists and MPs concerning the importance of women's presence for the adoption of policy for women, I compared two cases in which women MPs sought to influence the Government's behavior. While in one case the women succeeded in their effort to quash a coalition proposal, in the other they were unable to defeat unfavorable legislation. This analysis further highlights the importance of women's access to ministerial positions, as well as cabinets' vote-seeking and policy aims.

As before, the final empirical chapter applies the theory outlined in the preceding qualitative analysis to Western European states more broadly. Focusing on efforts to expand family (or parental) leave provisions as a proxy for women's policy representation, I use logistic regression models with varying-intercept random effects in order to test these alternative theories on 136 cabinet-level observations from across 15 Western European countries between 1980 and 2000. The results strongly support the intervening relationship, while also showing that vote-seeking aims may sometimes influence governments' behavior. The direct relationship, however, is not supported by the data.

Using both qualitative analyses of British politics as well as quantitative studies of party platforms and parental leave policies, Chapters 2 through 6 develop and test a new theoretical framework explaining women's policy representation. The seventh and final chapter of the dissertation aims to unite these individual studies. In the conclusion, I discuss the broader implications of my work for future research on both women's representation and studies of policy representation more broadly. This final chapter also outlines the lessons that women's rights activists may draw from the project and discusses additional research questions that emerge from these results.

1.6 Conclusion

While previous research has identified a number of factors that may mitigate female legislators' capacity to promote policy for women, it has largely failed to account for alternative explanations connecting the presence of women parliamentarians to attention to women on the policy agenda. In doing so, it risks falsely attributing a causal role to female representatives, when in practice the link may be explained by women's access to positions of power within parties, the vote-seeking aims of elites, or parties' stable policy positions. Wrongly attributing a causal role to women, in turn, has significant consequences for efforts to increase women's policy representation. When policy actors focus on bolstering women's numeric representation with the expectation that this will result in increased attention to women's policy representation, they may find that their efforts have only a limited effect.

In this dissertation, I do not assume that a correlation between the presence of female legislators and attention to women on the policy agenda is evidence of a causal relationship. Instead, I develop alternative hypotheses explaining women's policy representation and ask whether the direct relationship is supported even after allowing for other explanations. In doing so, my work not only explains the presence of a link between numeric and policy representation, but also sheds light on cases in which this relationship fails to emerge. If the vote-seeking or policy-stability hypotheses are the chief determinants of women's policy representation, for example, there is reason to believe that increasing women's numeric representation will not always lead to subsequent gains in policy representation. In light of the attention and resources that have been dedicated to promoting women's presence in office, understanding the expected outcome of doing so is crucial for scholars and policy actors alike.

Chapter 2

Women's Presence and Policy Representation in British Parties

2.1 Introduction

Arguments for increasing women's representation often move beyond notions of fairness or justice to further suggest that female politicians will fundamentally change politics. In particular, it is frequently claimed that women's presence is necessary to ensure that women's concerns will be represented. This supposition is in turn supported by much of the women and politics literature, with the correlation between women's numeric and policy representation being viewed as evidence that female representatives "play a vital role as policymakers" (Kittilson, 2008, 332).

At the same time, there is reason to believe that the relationship between presence and policy representation may be more nuanced than posited by this direct relationship. As demonstrated in the preceding chapter, there are instances in which women's policy representation fails to emerge despite women holding a large number of seats in the assembly. There are also cases in which policy representation occurs de-

spite women's low level of numeric representation or appears to be shaped by factors beyond women's presence in office.

What accounts for this variation in the relationship between women's numeric and policy representation in Western European states? In her assessment of European democracies, (Lovenduski, 2001, 91) points to the importance of parties, noting that arguments for feminizing politics "must first be won in political parties, which then take the ideas into government." The importance of focusing on parties when studying women's representation in Western Europe can arguably not be emphasized enough. While a large body of research focuses on the behavior of female parliamentarians once in office, in practice the majority of policies that are successfully adopted by these parliaments reflect the prerogatives of the governing parties, rather than those of individual legislators. If women's numeric representation is to lead to greater policy representation for women, this must occur through female politicians' efforts to transform their parties' policy agendas.

Within these parties, however, women's policy representation is undoubtedly influenced by factors beyond the presence of women in the parliamentary caucus. The parliamentary delegation is rarely the sole generator of policy, for example, and may in fact be marginalized in this process. Party-leaders, moreover, build their agendas with the desire not only to implement their preferred policies, but also to achieve other aims (including vote- and office-seeking goals) (Strøm, 1990; Müller and Strøm, 1999b).

The complexities inherent in decision-making within Western European parties demand additional theorizing about the link between women's presence and policy representation. In order to begin developing a more nuanced theoretical framework connecting the two, in this chapter I use qualitative case studies of the three major British parties to identify some of the alternative factors shaping this relation-

ship. Building on these analyses of the Labour party, Conservative party, and Liberal Democrats, in the subsequent chapter I place these hypotheses in the broader literature and test them using a quantitative cross-national study of party behavior.

2.2 Generating Theories from the British Case

Contemporary British party politics offers important insights into possible alternative explanations for the observed connection between women's presence and women's policy representation. Since the middle of the 1970s, British party politics has experienced a widely acknowledged transformation. Class dealignment and the decline of two-party dominance, among other developments, have resulted in the erosion of partisan affinity. The major British parties have thus been faced with declining party membership, and far fewer voters strongly identify with their preferred party. This has resulted in a greater proportion of the electorate exhibiting uncertainty at election time, and thus a growth in swing voters (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000, 45).

As partisan affinity has declined, the parties themselves have become more professionalized. The parties' central organizations have become increasingly powerful, for example, while local organizations have lost members. They are also now better-funded and more reliant on marketing and opinion research than in previous years (Webb, 2002). The evolution of British politics has thus resulted in professionalized and centralized parties that must increasingly compete for weakly affiliated and swing voters in order to win elections.

While experiencing this broader transformation, the parties' attitudes towards women have also evolved. Historically, British women were woefully underrepresented across all parties' parliamentary delegations. With the election of the "New Labour" government in 1997, however, Labour women's presence in the House of Commons

increased dramatically. At the same time, the party's policy agendas now also make explicit commitments to women. Just as the Labour party's attitude towards women's representation has changed, the partisan loyalties of women in the electorate have also shifted. Although they were traditionally more likely to support the Conservative party, on average female voters (especially younger women) have now moved to the left of the political spectrum.

Though Labour has arguably established itself as a more "female-friendly" party, recent elections have seen both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats attending to women's representation. The last general election, held in 2010, is thus particularly insightful for scholars interested in the relationship between women's numeric and policy representation within European parties. In the run up to the election, the media heralded the importance of middle class women, particularly mothers, as a swing constituency that would help determine the outcome. All three parties, in turn, dedicated a significant portion of their manifestos to women's issues (particularly those relating to family and work-life balance) (Campbell and Childs, 2010).

While the parties each made policy commitments that were specifically targeted at female voters, women's numeric representation among the three parties' parliamentary candidates and sitting MPs varied considerably. The convergence to similar levels of policy representation, combined with the variation in the parliamentary parties' gender makeup, together call into question the extent to which women's numeric representation alone influences parties' willingness to discuss women on their platforms. In order to further evaluate this relationship, in this chapter I describe the recent gender composition of the parliamentary parties and examine changes in party attitudes towards women's representation between the 2005 and 2010 general elections.

Using the parties' policy platforms and interviews with MPs, other politicians, and activists, I find relative stability within the Labour party, yet major changes among the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats.[1] Taken together, these cases illustrate that variation in women's representation within parties' parliamentary delegations may not be the principle determinant of women's policy representation. At the same time, the analysis draws attention to alternative factors that may be important in understanding both women's numeric representation and attention to women on parties' platforms more broadly.

2.3 The Labour Party

Since the late 1980s, women have made significant advances in their presence within both the Labour party's internal organizations and parliamentary delegations. At the same time, women now garner significant attention on the party's policy agenda (Annesley, Gains and Rummery, 2007; Childs, 2008). This feminization of the Labour party has been the subject of significant scholarly scrutiny, which has largely concluded that the evolution of the party's attitude towards women was motivated by factors both internal and external to the organization.

Before 1979, the party was dominated by the trade unions and thus dedicated scant attention to individual members. At the same time, there were few incentives to seriously consider women's numeric or policy representation (Childs, 2008). In the 1980s, however left-wing activists and feminists began a gender equality campaign

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[1]Interviews were conducted with 48 informants from across the three major British parties between January and March 2011. In accordance with the confidentiality requirements of the Institutional Review Board, all interviewees remain anonymous and all findings are paraphrased. In order to assist readers in interpreting the qualitative analyses that rely in part on these interviews, the appendix includes a short description of each respondent.

(Annesley, Gains and Rummery, 2007). The party was willing to partially acquiesce to of these demands, for example, by appointing of a women's officer and shadow minister for women's affairs. These women in turn parlayed this power into further opportunities to place gender equality issues at the forefront of the party's internal agenda (Kittilson, 2006).

Transformations in the economic and political environment simultaneously provided a window of opportunity for these campaigns to be seriously considered within the organization (Childs, 2008). The entrance of greater numbers of women into paid employment—particularly the service sector—made female voters a more viable constituency for the left-leaning Labour party (Annesley, Gains and Rummery, 2007; Russell, 2005). It became increasingly necessary, moreover, for the party to win women's votes in order to return to power. In particular, it was widely observed that had female voters not disproportionately favored the Conservative party, Labour would have won the closely contested 1992 general election (Annesley, Gains and Rummery, 2007).

These internal and external pressures to advance women's numeric and policy representation were in turn emerging during a period of broader reform within the party. In the mid-1980s, Labour began an ideological and organizational transformation that resulted in a more centrist and centralized organization (Heffernan, 2000, 71). The representation of women became connected to this the modernization movement, both because of the principles held by those involved in these efforts and the desire to win over female voters and deliver Labour's first general election victory since 1974. A strategic alliance between left women and male allies committed to modernization thus allowed for significant advances in gender equality efforts within the Labour party (Perrigo, 1999; Childs, 2008).

As a result of this feminization process, among the three major organizations the Labour party has been at the forefront of advancing women's presence in office. In 1989 the party adopted quotas for women in its internal organizations. In 1993, it introduced a positive discrimination policy ensuring the selection of a female candidate in half of the party's winnable seats. This all-women shortlists (AWS) policy resulted in a significant increase in women's representation in the parliamentary party.

In the two elections preceding the adoption of AWS, women gained only nine and fourteen percent of seats respectively. Following the partial implementation of the policy during candidate selection for the 1997 election, women gained 24 percent of the party's seats in the Commons. While women's representation slightly decreased when the AWS policy was not applied in the 2001 election, in both 2005 and 2010 female politicians continued to make gains within the party. Even though Labour lost over 90 seats in 2010, it still elected more women MPs than the other major parties combined. Women now represent 31 percent of the party's parliamentary caucus.

While initially contentious, in the years since it was first adopted positive discrimination has become firmly established as a central tenant of Labour party policy. With the exception of some minimal criticism,[2] it now enjoys widespread support within the party. When asked about the policy in interviews, MPs and members of the internal organization of both sexes praised AWS. They strongly believed that the party would continue to implement affirmative action policies for the foreseeable future.

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[2]Occasionally, criticisms of the policy do to surface. A Labour party respondent, for example, noted that some members of the youth organization protested the use of AWS in their elections. Similarly, members of Labour's National Executive Committee expressed concern that the application of AWS to constituencies with large black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) populations depressed the number of BAME representatives (as white female aspirants were selected over BAME men).

Women's representation has not only become entrenched in the culture of the Labour party, it has also been reaffirmed in the party's policy initiatives and intra-party rules. In its 2005 electoral manifesto, Labour cited the AWS policy as an example of its broader commitment to representing women. Before being ousted from office, moreover, in 2010 the party secured the extension of the 2002 Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act. This legislation, which provided an exemption to the sex discrimination law that allowed political parties to have all female or male candidate short-lists, was due to expire in 2015. The 2010 Equality Act extended this provision until 2030, allowing Labour to apply AWS through at least four more elections.

In addition to extending the period over which positive discrimination can be implemented in parliamentary elections, after entering the opposition the Labour party also opted to apply positive discrimination measures to the selection of its spokespersons (often refereed to as the shadow cabinet, shadow ministers, frontbenchers, or the frontbench team). To begin with, there was an informal affirmative action effort in the nomination of candidates for party leader. Though remaining neutral in the selection process, Interim Leader Harriet Harman nominated Diane Abbott because she wished to avoid an all male contest.[3] When interviewed, several of Abbott's sponsors within the parliamentary party noted that they supported her over their preferred nominees largely because she was a female and BAME representative.

In determining the rules for selecting the shadow cabinet, the parliamentary caucus further chose to adopt a formal positive discrimination policy. They mandated that six of the 19 elected members would be women. In the election, eight female MPs were chosen to sit on the Labour frontbench, exceeding the party's predeter-

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[3]http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/wintour-and-watt/2010/jun/08/harrietharman-diane-abbott

mined quota. Combined with the two women MPs and one peer who already had a place in the shadow cabinet, women hold 11 of these positions in total.

Just as women's numeric representation has become entrenched in the party, women's policy representation has also become relatively stable. Specifically, in contrast to the opposition parties, Labour's commitment to women remained comparatively consistent between its 2005 and 2010 platforms. The 2005 manifesto,[4] for example, focused on gender equality in the workplace, promising to introduce a "positive duty" on the public sector to encourage equality of opportunity between women and men. The 2010 platform[5] further reinforced this commitment, extending the duty and stating that the party would encourage employers to implement pay reviews and equality checks to eliminate wage gaps between men and women.

Like the party's consistent commitment to gender equality in the workplace, both the 2005 and 2010 policy platforms included promises to expand women's choices with respect to prenatal care and delivery. Additional continuity can be observed in the party's approach to parental leave. The 2005 manifesto made a commitment to increasing paid maternity leave to nine months. In 2010, the party promised to allow mothers to share this extended leave with fathers after a minimum of six months and proposed an additional two weeks of paternity leave. With respect to childcare, both the 2005 and 2010 manifestos offered an expansion of free nursery programs and an increased tax credit for working families raising children. In both platforms, the party also addressed violence against in women. In 2005, Labour promised to protect victims of rape and domestic violence through the introduction of victims' advocates

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[4]http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/13_04_05_labour_manifesto.pdf

[5]www2.labour.org.uk/uploads/TheLabourpartyManifesto-2010.pdf

and specialist courts. In 2010 the party reaffirmed its commitment to tackling this issue.

Virtually all of the policy commitments concerning women on Labour's 2010 platform represent an extension of promises made before the 2005 general election. In fact, across the two documents there are only two major areas of difference with respect to women's policy representation. First, the 2005 manifesto promised to address the disadvantages faced by female pensioners. By reducing the number of qualifying years needed to receive a state pension in the 2007 Pension Act, the Labour party addressed the criticisms it faced on this issue before the 2005 general election. While the party continued to address retirement benefits in its 2010 platform, it did not discuss them as a gendered issue. Second, like the other major parties, the 2010 manifesto contained a mandate to target international aid towards programs focused on the needs of women and girls. This provision had not been included in the previous platform.

Though the Labour party made similar commitments to women across the two elections, the extent to which women's numeric representation explains this behavior remains unclear. Over the past three decades, Labour's policy agenda has become more tightly controlled, potentially limiting the influence that female parliamentarians can wield over the party's positions. Beginning with the election of Neil Kinnock as party leader in 1983, Labour has become increasingly centralized. By the 1990s, it was already much more unified and disciplined than in the preceding years (Shaw, 1994). As party leader, Tony Blair further reinforced this movement towards tight party management. Though the Blair regime introduced reforms aimed at providing greater control over party policies to rank-and-file members, in practice these changes strengthened the power of the party leadership vis-à-vis activists and other traditional policy actors (Shaw, 2004; Seyd, 2002).

Blair's tenure as party leader was thus characterized by his strong command over Labour's organization, with the Prime Minister's Office and Treasury dominating the other elements of the party (Heffernan, 2000). Both the parliamentary delegation and the regional and local level organizations became channels for top down communication from the center, with little power over policy formation (Crouch, 2007). Similarly, the party's chief administrative body—the National Executive Committee–effectively lost is autonomous policy-making authority (Shaw, 2004). Even frontbench ministers and cabinet meetings became less important in Blair's "presidential premiership" (Crouch, 2007; Shaw, 2004; Thorpe, 2001).

Experienced Labour party MPs and activists confirmed that the sphere of influence within the party narrowed under Blair's leadership. Several respondents argued that the traditional policy-making machinery of the party "came undone" during his tenure as party leader and Prime Minister. Blair was widely described as relying on a small group of advisors and select high-ranking officials within the government. Thus, despite the presence of a formal policy-making process that incorporates a comparatively large number of female stakeholders, in practice respondents from across the party described the platform as authored by a small group of men who were primarily concerned with how the party's policies would be portrayed in the media. Former ministers went as far as to state that during both the Blair and Brown years, they were largely tasked with implementing five year policy programs over which they had little influence.

While there is broad consensus that policy-making was concentrated almost entirely in Downing Street, the origins of the party's commitment to women's policy representation remain unclear. Several of those interviewed attributed the feminization of the party's policies in part to Labour's vote-seeking aims. A gender equality consultant for the party cited its increasing reliance on data gathered from focus

groups and public opinion polls as instrumental in advancing women's representation. With polling data identifying women as "floating voters," she argued that Blair and the party leaders believed that targeting this constituency could offer Labour an electoral advantage. Similarly, a member of government during this period argued that the breakthrough for women's representation came when it was shown to "help the cause." A Blair advisor also agreed that the party's policies towards women were motivated in part by vote-seeking aims.

Though the party was clearly incentivized to adopt female-friendly policies in order to appeal to female swing voters, respondents noted that these commitments were also in keeping with the party's ideological tenants. The Blair advisor noted, for example, that the former Prime Minister was always socially liberal and receptive to policies that would be especially beneficial to women. Similarly, a former minister stated that the party's shift toward advancing gender issues was philosophically and ideologically motivated. From her perspective, vote-seeking incentives simply allowed these policies to garner more attention on the party's platform. A Labour peer and activist on women's issues was even offended by the suggestion that the party's behavior could be explained by strategic aims, arguing that it was wholly ideological.

Both vote-seeking incentives and ideological congruence created the groundwork for women's policy representation in the New Labour regime. Informants varied, however, in the degree to which they felt women's presence influenced policy representation. On the one hand, some informants believed that female politicians had little influence on the party's policies. On the other hand, other respondents noted that Blair surrounded himself with female advisors. One of these advisors, in turn, argued that these women were strong advocates for female-friendly policies. In her view, women's presence was important for women's policy representation, but the gender makeup of the parliamentary party and frontbench team were relatively unimportant.

Instead, it was the female political secretaries in Downing Street who influenced the party's commitments to these issues.

Other Labour women interviewed, in contrast, attributed a greater role to female politicians. A former party advisor, for example, perceived that vote-seeking incentives increased the perceived value of women within the party's organization. Female Labour politicians were then able to promote policies that advantaged women. A female Labour MP who has been active on women's issues noted that Blair would attend meetings of the parliamentary delegation's Women's Committee and that collectively female MPs could influence manifesto positions. Similarly, a female member of the party's frontbench team believed that women politicians heavily influenced the 2010 manifesto. Several respondents further cited Harriet Harman as an example of a female politician who was able to promote gender equality policies, particular with Blair's successor Gordon Brown.

Regardless of whether the increased attention to women emerged from vote-seeking incentives, ideological aims, the efforts of women within the party, or a combination of the three, Labour is likely to retain its commitment to women's policy representation in future elections. Respondents from across the three major parties agreed that Labour has positioned itself as an organization committed to women's numeric and policy representation. Since the other parties have recently increased their attention to this policy area, Labour will work to maintain ownership over these issues. The Blair advisor stated, for example, that it is now impossible to conceive of a Labour manifesto that did not include gender equality provisions. Thus, as the gender equality consultant noted, while the promotion of women-friendly policies may have begun as a vote-seeking effort buoyed by women's numeric representation, the party has now entered a period of policy stability.

2.4 The Conservative Party

Prior to the 2010 general election, the percentage of Conservative seats held by female MPs had never exceeded 10 percent of the party's parliamentary delegation. Moreover, between 1992 and 2005, women's representation remained relatively constant, increasing by less than three percent (from 6 to 8.6 percent). Over the course of these years, there were intermittent efforts to address the continued gender inequities within the party (Krook, 2009; Childs, 2008). Efforts to increase both women's numeric and policy representation markedly increased, however, after the Conservative loss in the 2005 election.

Between the 2005 and 2010 general elections, the Conservatives made clear efforts both to advance women's presence among the party's parliamentary candidates and to develop a policy platform that attended to women in the electorate. In part, these efforts can be attributed to well-placed women within the organization. In particular, Sarah Childs and her co-authors highlight the burgeoning efforts of Conservative female activists and party leaders (Childs, 2008; Childs, Webb and Marthaler, 2009; Childs and Webb, 2011).

At the 2005 party conference, for example, some attendees of the Conservative Women's Organization (CWO) fringe meeting argued for the adoption of affirmative action measures in order to increase the proportion of female candidates selected to stand for parliamentary elections. In the same year, a small group of Conservative women activists and MPs founded Women2Win, an organization aimed at increasing the number of female Conservative parliamentarians.

The attention these women dedicated to numeric representation was accompanied by an increased focus on the inclusion of women on the policy agenda. The chair of the CWO, Pamela Parker, publicly criticized the party's 2005 electoral platform, which

she believed was responsible for the Conservatives losing the female vote. Theresa May, a member of the Conservative shadow cabinet and self-described feminist, also became more vocal about the necessity of attending to gender equality issues.

Beyond the efforts of a small group of women within the organization, the election of David Cameron as party leader in December 2005 undeniably facilitated the feminization of the Conservatives. Upon gaining office, Cameron initiated wide-ranging reforms aimed at leading the party to its first electoral victory since its defeat by Labour in 1997. He sought to modernize the party by simultaneously distancing it from Margaret Thatcher's legacy and attracting a broader base of supporters (Evans, 2008b; Williams and Scott, 2011). To do so, he focused on shifting the party towards the middle ground of British politics, in large part by developing a more socially inclusive and compassionate Conservatism (Dorey, 2007). The need to increase women's representation in the parliamentary party was at the center of these reform efforts (Fielding, 2009; Williams and Scott, 2011), with Cameron even going as far as to promise to "change the face of the Conservative party by changing the faces of the Conservative party."[6]

Prior to the 2005 election, Conservatives remained divided on the question of affirmative action for female candidates. While some members encouraged the use of positive discrimination measures in order to guarantee the selection of more female candidates, these arguments gained relatively little traction within the party (Krook, 2009). Under Cameron's direction, however, the party adopted several strategies designed to elect more female and minority Conservative MPs. Reforms were made to the candidate selection process, for example, that were intended to reduce the barriers facing aspirants from traditionally underrepresented groups. These changes

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[6]http://www.conservativewomen.org.uk/howto_mp_intro.asp

included modifying vetting procedures and decreasing the power of party activists within the selectorate.

In addition to altering the rules of candidate selection, the most visible and controversial strategy was the adoption of the Conservative A-List. Cameron ordered the Conservative Central Office to compile a list of "priority" candidates to be selected by local party associations in winnable seats. Once completed, over fifty percent of aspirants included on this A-List were women. While supported by some within the party, Cameron's reforms were met with criticism from a number of activists and MPs. Local Conservative associations in London and the Southeast particularly resented the Central Office's interference in the candidate selection process and resisted priority list candidates (Evans, 2008*b*).

This adverse reaction led the party to effectively abandon the A-List in January 2007. Though Cameron tried to address this issue once again in 2009 by raising the possibility of all women's shortlists—a strategy that had been previously rejected by the Conservatives in 2006—the suggestion was derided by party members and quickly abandoned. Due to the opposition from party activists, Cameron's efforts to increase the number of female candidates consequently had a more limited impact on women's numeric representation than he had originally envisioned. In total, 24 percent of Conservative candidates in the 2010 election were women, a five percent increase from 2005. During the election, female candidates won 49 of the Conservatives' 306 seats in the Commons. Women's representation thus increased—though less than Cameron had initially hoped—and female politicians now hold 16 percent of seats in the parliamentary party.

While Cameron's efforts to increase women's numeric representation were partially thwarted by party members, in 2010 the Conservatives dedicated much greater attention to women on its policy platform than it had in the previous election. The 2005

electoral manifesto offered little in the way of women's policy representation.[7] The policy agenda made no explicit mentions of women, sex, or gender equality. Rather, women's representation was mentioned only in the context of the party's policies on "Flexible Childcare and School Discipline."

The party promised women greater options with respect to maternity pay, for example, allowing them to receive benefits over the course of either six or nine months. The Conservatives also committed to supporting workplace nurseries and clubs for older children. Similarly, they offered tax credits to working families with children under five, regardless of the form of childcare they selected. On the whole, there were few policies directly addressing female voters, and those that did focused exclusively on allowing women to balance their traditional role as caregivers with work outside the home.

In contrast to the 2005 platform, the 2010 electoral manifesto included a broader range of policies related to women.[8] As was the case in the previous platform, the party retained its commitment to providing families with "more control over their lives" with respect to childcare. In place of the 2005 agenda's focus on maternity leave, however, the new platform introduced flexible work schedules for parents and shared parental leave initiatives. The party also expanded its commitment to state supported childcare, promising that it would provide free care for preschool children.

In addition to expanding and strengthening provisions introduced in 2005, the party also made a number of new commitments to women. The Conservatives stated, for example, that they would prevent the closure of maternity wards and create local "maternity networks" in order to ensure that pregnant women could "safely access

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[7]http://www.conservatives.com/pdf/manifesto-uk-2005.pdf

[8]http://media.conservatives.s3.amazonaws.com/manifesto/cpmanifesto2010_lowres.pdf

the right care, in the right place, at the right time." With respect to women in the workforce, the party moved beyond policies that focused only on work-life balance to committing to forced equal pay audits for companies found to be discriminating on the basis of gender.

The Conservative platform even discussed women in previously gender-neutral policy areas. In its discussion of the criminal justice system, for example, the party promised to both increase funding for rape crisis centers and also ensure that schools instructed students on sexual consent. When outlining their framework for international development, moreover, the Conservatives promised to target aid to ensure women's access to basic services.

Given women's underrepresentation among both sitting MPs and newly selected candidates for office, how did women's policy representation emerge on the party's 2010 platform? Campbell, Childs and Lovenduski (2006) argue that the Conservatives' increased interest in women's representation could be attributed to a combination of the gender gap that emerged in the 2005 general election, the evolution of voters' attitudes towards women's representation, and lobbying by feminist women within the party. In particular, they point to a group of female elites tasked with shaping female-friendly policy.

The party's Shadow Minister for Women, for example, met with the chairs of the party's policy groups to request that they consider women's perspectives from the onset of their review processes (Childs and Webb, 2011). The Conservative party further established two groups that focused on the construction of female-friendly policy: the Women's Overview Group and the Women's Policy Group (WPG). The WPG offered suggestions to the policy review groups. It was also tasked with authoring an agenda-setting women's policy report in 2008, which was sent directly to the shadow cabinet and Cameron's policy team (Childs, 2008).

Despite these efforts, the extent to which the eventual inclusion of female-friendly policies on the Conservative platform in fact resulted from the actions of these female policy actors—rather than the preferences of Cameron and his advisors—remains ambiguous. When interviewed, Conservative respondents typically attributed women's policy representation to Cameron. Moreover, though these women may have helped to shape the eventual form of these initiatives, it was Cameron and his advisors who instituted the larger overhaul of Conservative party policy (Williams and Scott, 2011). Doubts remain, furthermore, about the authority granted to female policy actors. The Shadow Minister for Women and WPG, for example, received little administrative or research support from the party (Childs, 2008). The WPG report, moreover, was not widely publicized within the organization (Childs and Webb, 2011).

It thus remains unclear whether the primary impetus for women's increased policy representation came from elite women within the party or Cameron and his close circle of advisors and confidants. Regardless, it is evident that the advances in numeric and policy representation were top-down initiatives instituted by party elites, rather than emerging from female MPs within the parliamentary caucus. This finding is consistent with the broader understanding of the Conservative party as a hierarchical organization that is dominated by its leadership (Webb, 2000).

This ambiguity concerning the primary actors responsible for the discussion of women on the policy platform is in turn accompanied by multiple explanations concerning the party's motivations for doing so. Annesley, Gains and Rummery (2007) describe the Conservative party's efforts to bolster women's numeric and policy representation both as a response to the Labour governments' initiatives and as an attempt to attract female voters. Consistent with this explanation, many Labour party members perceived the party's efforts as a transparent strategy to win back female supporters.

Since the advent of the New Labour regime, women have increasingly shifted their support away from the Conservative party. In 2005, 38 percent of women supported Labour, while only 32 percent voted Conservative. Male voters, in contrast, were equally divided between the two parties. The Conservatives polled especially poorly among women under the age of 45,[9] and the policies on flexible parental leave and workplace equality were viewed as being aimed at these younger female voters. Several male Conservative MPs agreed with this assessment, arguing that the underrepresentation of women and minorities hurt the party among voters. They thus viewed the reforms as an effort to strengthen the party's position within the electorate.

Other respondents, in contrast, viewed the party's attention to women's representation not as strategy to gain votes per se, but as part of a broader effort to transform the party's image. A male former shadow cabinet minister, for example, saw increasing women's numeric and policy representation as an attempt to shed the Conservatives' "nasty party" reputation. Others argued that Cameron had viewed candidate selection as a potential "Clause IV moment"—a reference to the fundamental restructuring of Labour party principles under Blair. This "rhetoric of feminization" may thus represent the emergence of the Conservatives as a new organization, undeserving of their "nasty party" image (Childs, 2008; Williams and Scott, 2011).

Though most respondents noted the party's desire to change the way it was perceived among the public, many Conservative and Liberal Democrat informants also believed that the changes reflected Cameron's sincere beliefs concerning women's representation. The Conservative party leader has been described as personally committed to gender equality issues (Childs, 2008). In the month following his election to the post, for example, he noted his disapproval of the continued existence of a

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[9]http://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/poll.aspx?oItemId=2613&view=wide

gender pay gap. Equal pay for women subsequently became a Conservative campaign priority (Williams and Scott, 2011). Virtually all Conservative MPs, regardless of whether they supported his stance on these issues, reaffirmed this perception of Cameron. Their experiences with the party leader led them to believe that he views the promotion of women's numeric and policy representation as important tenants of the new Conservative party.

2.5   The Liberal Democrats

Like their Conservative counterparts, the Liberal Democrats have also struggled to increase women's representation in office. Since the merger of the Liberal party and the Social Democratic party in 1988, women have on average held 11 percent of the party's seats in the Commons. Women did make gains in the 2005 general election, winning 10 of the party's 62 seats—or 16 percent of total positions. In the 2010 election, however, women lost ground and now represent only 12 percent of the party's MPs.

As is consistent with the findings of Evans (2008a), when asked about women's numeric representation, Liberal Democrats often identify their third party status as the main obstacle to increasing the number of female candidates and legislators. Both MPs and party activists believed that in order to win elections, their candidates must campaign more rigorously than their Labour and Conservative counterparts. Nominees are thus forced to treat their candidacy as a "full time job," and women are perceived as being less willing or able to make this commitment. At the same time, as the alternative to the two major parties, members of the Liberal Democrats do not feel that there are any "safe seats" for the party. While Labour and the Conservatives can increase women's representation by running female candidates in

constituencies that they are guaranteed to win, the Liberal Democrats cannot make similar guarantees.

Though Liberal Democrats often point to the position of the party within the electorate as the major cause of women's underrepresentation, the failure of party to elect more women to the Commons can also be attributed in part to a 2001 decision not to introduce all women's shortlists (Shepherd-Robinson and Lovenduski, 2002; Childs, Lovenduski and Campbell, 2005; Evans, 2008a). Since the party's inception, the Liberal Democrats have mandated that each shortlist of three candidates for office must contain at least one aspirant of each sex. The party also implemented a "zipping" system for the 1999 European Parliament elections, alternating between men and women on their candidate list. Despite their experience with affirmative action, at the 2001 party conference members voted against positive discrimination policies. These measures were rejected on the grounds that they were illiberal and would cause women MPs to be viewed as "token" representatives.

Rather than mandating the selection of female aspirants, the party introduced the Gender Balance Taskforce (now known as the Campaign for Gender Balance) and adopted a target aiming to nominate women to 40 percent of contested seats (including those seats that were identified as "winnable"). Prior to selecting candidates to contest the 2010 election, the party further conducted a review of its selection procedures to ensure that women and other underrepresented groups were not facing undue discrimination. The Liberal Democrats also established a Diversity Fund to support women contesting winnable seats.

Despite these efforts, the party nominated and elected fewer women in 2010 than it had in 2005. This decrease in women's numeric representation led the party to once again discuss the issue at its September 2010 conference. At that point, the Liberal

Democrats declared that "achieving diversity in our parliamentary parties is an issue for the entire party, and must urgently be addressed at every level."[10]

While women's numeric representation decreased between 2005 and 2010, between the two elections the party dramatically increased its attention to women on its electoral manifesto. The discussion of women on the 2005 platform was limited, focusing primarily on older women.[11] This included the adoption of a "citizen's pension," which would provide support to female retirees who were receiving minimal benefits due to time spent away from paid work while caring for family. The Liberal Democrats further promised to end age discrimination within the NHS, citing as an example older women who were not invited for routine breast cancer screening. The platform contained only two overtures towards younger female voters. The first was a commitment to introducing a Single Equality Act to outlaw all unfair discrimination (including on the grounds of gender). The second was the party's promise to increase maternity benefits for the first six months of leave.

Before the 2010 election, in contrast, the almost entirely female Working Group on Women's Policy produced the 42-point "Real Women" manifesto. This platform included proposals on airbrushing in advertising, domestic violence, and year-long parental leave to be shared by mothers and fathers, among others. Building on this agenda, the party's electoral platform substantially increased its attention to women.[12] The party both introduced new policies, and also provided more detailed plans for their existing commitments. The largest and most comprehensive provision was a flexible working and shared parental leave policy. The party promised, for

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[10]http://www.libdems.org.uk/policy_motions_detail.aspx?title=party_Business%3A_
Diversity_-_carried&pPK=8db9c0e9-3189-4df7-9d45-53477c2a4ae6

[11]news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/LD_uk_manifesto.pdf

[12]www.libdems.org.uk/our_manifesto.aspx

example, to extend parental leave to 18 months and allow parents to divide this leave in whatever manner they preferred.

In addition to dedicating significant attention to parental leave, the party identified several additional strategies for improving the lives of women in the UK and abroad. These included several initiatives aimed at increasing gender equality in the public sphere, including a commitment to reducing the gender gap in scientific study, a promise to introduce name-blind job application forms, and fair pay audits for every company with over 100 employees. The party further promised to prioritize maternity services within the National Health Service system, regulate airbrushing in advertisements to protect young people from developing negative body images, and provide a week's respite for carers of sick relatives. Like the Conservative party, on the international stage the Liberal Democrats committed to targeting aid towards health and education programs that seek to promote gender equality in the developing world.

Why did the party increase women's policy representation, despite the decrease in women's numeric representation? As was the case for the other major parties, in order to understand the Liberal Democrats' commitment to women on their 2010 manifesto, it is important to account for the policy-making process within the organization. On the one hand, as a result of being a newly formed party with few MPs and little financial backing, the Liberal Democrats have traditionally been dependent upon their rank-and-file membership. The party's federal structure has thus afforded its members with much greater power with respect to policy-making than their counterparts in either the Conservative or Labour parties (Webb, 2000). Even today, the party conference continues to formally control the party's platform.

On the other hand, upon gaining more seats in parliament following the 1997 election, the Liberal Democrats began moving away from their activist oriented tradition and became more professionalized (Evans, 2008a). This has in turn been associated

with the centralization of power with the party's elites and the increased strength of the party leadership and bureaucracy (Evans, 2007; Russell and Fieldhouse, 2005). In their case study of the party's 2006 conference, for example, Russell, Fieldhouse and Cutts (2007) found that the vast majority of successful motions came from the Federal Conference Committee, MPs, and parliamentary candidates.

In particular, the party's Federal Policy Committee (FPC)—which is comprised of the party leaders, representatives of elected officials and regional parties, and directly elected members—has become especially important. It has not only taken on a substantial role in shaping the larger policy agenda, but also handles the day-to-day management of party policy (Russell and Fieldhouse, 2005). The FPC is responsible for producing policy papers that are debated in both local meetings and by representatives at the party conference. Based on the policies adopted at the national conference, and in consultation with the parliamentary party, the FPC is ultimately responsible for authoring the party's electoral manifesto.

Given the complexity of policy-making within the party, who is responsible for the increased discussion of women on its 2010 platform? Of the three major organizations, a direct relationship between women's numeric and policy representation is arguably most likely to hold for the Liberal Democrats. In comparison to the Conservative and Labour parties, they afford much greater policy-making authority to their parliamentary caucus. In addition to MPs introducing successful motions at party conferences, before entering government following the 2010 general election, the parliamentary party also held de facto veto power over the design of policy (Russell and Fieldhouse, 2005).

Were the Liberal Democrats to elect a greater number of female MPs committed to representing women, these legislators might be able to influence the party's direction on these issues. Women's numeric representation within the organization is so low,

however, that it seems unlikely that the activities of female parliamentarians alone can explain the shift in the party's platform. Indeed, when asked about this evolution in policy, former FPC members largely attributed the change not to the collective behavior of female parliamentarians, but rather to a top-down strategic effort to attract female voters.

Existing research has indicated that the Liberal Democrats were becoming concerned about the need for more female MPs. This stemmed not only from their belief that this was important for democracy more broadly, but also because of the concern that a male dominated slate of candidates would negatively affect the party's probability of success at the polls (Evans, 2008a). Consistent with this existing apprehensiveness about the electability of the party, the Liberal Democrats interviewed in 2011 indicated that attention to women on the policy platform in fact served as a substitute for women's presence in office.

Between 2005 and 2010, FPC members noted that the party became increasingly focused on winning national level elections. While the party had largely failed to actively court female voters in prior elections, the leadership began to think more strategically about women in the electorate. A former Federal Executive Committee (FEC) and FPC member, for example, cited Clinton's success among women in the United States as motivating UK parties to appeal specifically to women. Party members also felt that the Liberal Democrats were ideologically and intellectually "ahead of the game" on equality issues, but the homogeneity of the their MPs and activists with respect to race, class, and gender would hurt the party among voters.

In part as an effort to counteract the absence of women's numeric representation, the party thus opted for greater policy representation. It was the FPC, for example, that established the eight member Women's Policy Working Group charged with generating the women's manifesto. Of the issues included on the women's platform,

the FPC also decided which would be included in the electoral platform. While both MPs and former FPC members felt that the policies included on both manifestos reflected a sincere ideological commitment to gender equality, FEC and FPC leaders also explicitly stated that the party was seeking to compensate for the small number of female parliamentarians.

While women's policy representation acted as a substitute for women's numeric representation in 2010, there was consensus among those interviewed that the party must run more female candidates in 2015. Several members of the party's FEC noted that because they could no longer "hide behind the Conservatives"—who now surpass the Liberal Democrats in their proportion of seats held by female MPs—women's low numeric representation was especially problematic. Party Leader Nick Clegg even contacted a leading member of the FEC about this issue shortly after the election.

Previously, Clegg had stated that while he did not view positive discrimination as a long-term solution for women's underrepresentation, he would consider introducing all-women shortlists if the number of female parliamentarians did not increase following the 2010 election. Directly following the election, Clegg told an FEC member that the party needed to implement a positive discrimination policy because the small number of female MPs had become "embarrassing" for the party. Thus, while in theory women's representation is a concern for the party as a whole, in practice the party leadership—and those generally concerned with the electoral fortunes of the party—appear to be most interested in addressing these issues.

2.6 Broader Implications of the British Case

Prior to the most recent UK general election, each of the three major British parties published policy platforms that included a number of female-friendly provisions.

While the parties seemed to converge with respect to their attention to women on their 2010 manifestos, women's presence among the organizations' MPs and candidates varied considerably. To understand how parties with dissimilar levels of numeric representation can reach similar levels of policy representation, this chapter explored the parties' recent attitudes towards the two. Elucidating the factors that led each organization to attend to women on its most recent policy agenda, moreover, suggested some additional influences shaping women's policy representation.

Taken together, these three case studies generate two main insights relevant to the broader project. First, variation in women's representation within parties' parliamentary delegations is not the sole—or even principle—determinant of women's policy representation. Second, three alternative factors appear to be important in understanding both women's numeric representation and attention to women on parties' platforms: the presence of women among party elites; parties' vote-seeking aims; and stable party attitudes. These findings, in turn, provide useful insights for theorizing about women's representation in Western European parties more broadly.

While some Labour party respondents viewed women's presence in the parliamentary party as important for ensuring women's policy representation, most respondents from across the three major parties' pointed to alternative factors that led to the discussion of women on policy platforms. The case studies presented in this chapter thus demonstrate that women's presence in parties' parliamentary caucuses may sometimes fail to account for women's policy representation. At the same time, reviewing the policy-making processes within these three organizations further illustrates why this direct relationship may not emerge. In particular, it does not seem that female MPs simply choose not to represent women. Rather, within these organizations the parliamentary delegation as a whole often does not have access to its party's policy agenda.

In both the Conservative and Labour parties, there is broad consensus that policy-making authority is increasingly located with the party leadership and their advisors. Even the Liberal Democrats, who have traditionally been committed to internal democracy, have become more centralized. Women's policy representation thus appears to be largely motivated by the aims of party leaders (both within the organizations and the parliamentary delegations). While these aims may be influenced in part by the gender makeup of the parliamentary caucus, we cannot necessarily expect variation in women's numeric representation alone to explain women's policy representation. Instead, we must account for the range of party leaders' objectives.

Despite this finding, the qualitative analysis does not suggest the complete absence of a connection between women's numeric and policy representation. To the contrary, the two are often related. The link, however, is more complicated than posited by a direct relationship. The case studies indicate, for example, that while low-ranking female parliamentarians have only limited authority, women within the party elite are often influential in shaping parties' policy attitudes towards women. Female elites in the Labour party, for example, were integral to the initial feminization of the organization. In explaining the party's contemporary policy initiatives, some informants similarly emphasized the important role played by female advisors and ministers.

Unlike the Labour party, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats have had few female legislators in their parliamentary caucuses. The presence of a small number of well-positioned elite women, however, seems to have had at least some influence on women's policy representation within these organizations. Childs, Webb and Marthaler (2009), for example, note that established female Conservative politicians—including Shadow Cabinet Minister Theresa May—advocated for greater attention to both women's numeric and policy representation. In the Liberal Democrats, women

were well represented in the party's bureaucratic policy-making structures in the years preceding the 2010 general election. Both parties also recently established policy review groups focused on female-friendly issues, each of which were dominated by elite women within their respective organizations.

These results seem to indicate that increasing the number of female politicians may lead to greater attention to women on the policy agenda. In order for this relationship to emerge, however, female politicians must first ascend to positions of influence within the organization. While as newly elected legislators they are likely to have only limited capacity to shape their parties' positions, after rising through the ranks they can better advocate for women's policy representation. In essence, the connection between the presence of female legislators and attention to women on the policy agenda may be indirect, with female leaders acting as an intervening factor linking numeric and policy representation.

While women's presence among the party elite may partially influence the adoption of female-friendly initiatives, the analysis of the three major British parties also demonstrates that party leaders' broader aims can shape their attitudes towards both women's numeric and policy representation. British parties, for example, have become highly professional and sophisticated organizations. Market research now wields significant influence over the parties' programmatic developments (Webb, 2000). Their campaign strategies have in fact been described as "well-researched and carefully executed attempts to influence the public agenda in order to shape election outcomes" (Green and Hobolt, 2008, 473).

In the run-up to the 2010 election, women were increasingly viewed as an important swing constituency, leading all three parties to compete for their votes. Campbell and Childs (2010) observe that this was a logical strategy for each organization. For Labour, its efforts represented an attempt to "maintain its advantage amongst

these women," while the Conservatives were trying to "win [women] back, conceiving [of] them as natural Conservative supporters." Like the Conservatives, the Liberal Democrats similarly "argue this is their territory too" (764–65).

The importance of parties' vote-seeking aims were further highlighted by the politicians and party activists interviewed, with respondents from across each of the three organizations articulating the importance of winning women's votes. To accomplish this goal, both the Labour and Conservative parties aimed to simultaneously increase women's numeric and policy representation. In both cases, these initiatives came after the party had been in opposition for several election cycles. The Liberal Democrats have also tried to change the gender makeup of their parliamentary delegation, but like the Conservatives they have struggled to do so in the absence of stronger affirmative action policies. For the Liberal Democrats interviewed, women's policy representation was thus viewed in part as a substitute for women's numeric representation. Their female-friendly policy platform can be at least partially described as compensating for the declining number of female candidates before the 2010 election.

In explaining the link between women's presence and policy representation on parties' platforms, both the existing research on UK politics and the perspectives offered by interviewees demonstrate the need to seriously consider parties' electoral incentives. In particular, in electoral arenas where there is a sizable gendered disparity in vote-share, this gender gap may encourage parties to appeal to female voters in order to either maintain their advantage (for female supported parties) or close the gap (for male supported organizations). These appeals can take the form of either increasing the number of female candidates or discussing women on the party's policy agenda, or a combination of the two strategies. Consequently, an association between the number of female legislators in the party and the adoption of female friendly policy

may in some cases be spurious, with both being attributable to parties' vote-seeking aims.

In addition to elucidating the importance of the intervening role played by female elites and the possibility of vote-seeking spuriousness, the case studies presented in this chapter also highlight two important points concerning party ideology and women's representation. First, the discussion of women on the three major parties' policy platforms demonstrates that parties' from across the ideological spectrum can (and sometimes do) strive to represent women. Thus, while left parties—including the British Labour party—were traditionally at the forefront of advancing feminist women's policy representation, women's issues cannot be viewed as solely within the purview of these organizations.

Beyond demonstrating that both left and right parties seek to represent women, the results further illustrate the possibility that both women's numeric and policy representation can at times be explained by parties' stable preferences. Consider, for example, the Labour party. Initially, both female politicians and vote-seeking elites were necessary for the advancement of women's representation. Women's inclusion in party politics, however, has now become a symbol of the party's modernity and central to the New Labour ethos (Perrigo, 1999; Russell, 2005).

The party thus appears to have entered a period of stability, in which it will continue to advance both women's numeric and policy representation. While both female elites and the parties' vote-seeking aims will continue to shape the form and content of the party's commitments to women, the presence of both female politicians and female-friendly policies is likely guaranteed in future elections. The correlation between women's presence and policy representation may thus at times be spurious, with both being attributable to parties' relatively stable attitudes.

The case studies presented in this chapter illustrate the possible limitations of the often-posited direct link between women's numeric and policy representation. At the same time, this analysis of the British parties also draws attention to other potential causal relationships explaining the connection between the two. These inductively generated explanations can, in turn, be used to develop four alternative hypotheses concerning both whether a correlation exists between numeric and policy representation and why this link might emerge.

While this chapter provides additional explanations for the relationship between the two forms of representation, more work is needed to test these competing theories. For each of the three parties, both existing research and interview data suggest several possible explanations for the organizations' attention to women on their platforms. This is particularly true of the Labour party, in which different respondents point to direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and ideological compatibility explanations.

In reality, some or all of these theories may account for women's policy representation. When focusing only on the three UK parties, however, this outcome variable is overdetermined. Attention to women on the policy platform appears to be influenced by multiple causes at once, and there are an insufficient number of party-level observations to test the explanatory power of these alternative explanations. This complex causality, moreover, makes it impossible to even approximate the counterfactual condition, which is necessary to make any causal claims about women's presence within parties' parliamentary delegations and policy adoption. In essence, without additional examination, it is impossible to determine which, if any, of these theories best accounts for women's policy representation.

In order to test the competing hypotheses, it is therefore necessary to expand the number of parties considered in the analysis. In this vein, the next chapter again focuses on both women's presence in parties' parliamentary delegations and attention

to women on their electoral platforms. I extend the study, however, to 52 Western European parties over multiple elections. As is suggested by the qualitative case studies presented in this chapter, this quantitative analysis does in fact demonstrate that the connection between women's presence and policy representation cannot be wholly explained by the direct relationship.

Chapter 3

Women's Presence and Attention to Women on Parties' Platforms

3.1 Introduction

In the months preceding the 2010 British general election, the platforms published by the three major parties each included commitments to women across a number of policy areas. Though the Liberal Democrats, Labour, and the Conservatives each converged on a similar level of policy representation, women's presence within their parliamentary delegations varied considerably. This variation indicates, in turn, that accounting only for the proportion of female politicians may not adequately explain attention to women on parties' policy agendas. In fact, my assessment of each organization's recent attitudes towards both women's numeric and policy representation reveals the importance of previously understudied influences, including the presence of women among party elites, as well as parties' vote-seeking aims and ideological preferences.

Beyond demonstrating that the connection between presence and policy representation may sometimes be more complicated than presumed by a direct relationship, the British case further draws attention to the importance of studying women's representation within parties. Much of the research on women's policy representation focuses on either the legislator or the legislature as the unit of analysis. Within the UK, however, political parties are the central actor shaping both women's numeric and policy representation.

To begin with, women's presence in the House of Commons is largely a function of intra-party candidate selection processes. Labour's commitment to affirmative action, for example, has resulted in women gaining a comparatively large proportion of seats in its parliamentary delegation. The Conservative party's reliance on local organizations to select candidates, in contrast, has limited women's numeric representation within the party's parliamentary caucus.

Just as the parties determine how many women enter the national assembly, their policy platforms serve as the basis for the legislative agenda implemented by the winning party once in government (Rallings, 1987; Rose, 1980). Thus, while most research on women's policy representation focuses on the behavior of female parliamentarians in the assembly, in reality the majority of successful legislation reflects the aims of the governing parties rather than the actions of individual MPs within the legislature.

Though the British case offers an extreme example of party dominance, these findings are indicative of the importance of parties in Western European governance more broadly. Just as in the UK, political parties in other states largely control the recruitment of candidates, determining both how many (and which) women enter the national assembly. These political parties, moreover, are "responsible for the life of the government," deciding both who will come into power and also structuring the

policy activities of parliaments (Katz, 1986; Woldendorp, Keman and Budge, 2000). Parties thus represent "*the* central mechanism" by which the democratic processes of delegation and accountability work in practice (Müller, 2000, 309, emphasis in the original).

While MPs are limited in their capacity to introduce successful legislation, if a member can influence her party's broader agenda, her policies are likely to be enacted once the party gains office. In Western European states, parties work to implement their electoral programs (Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge, 1994; Royed, 1996; Thomson, 2001; Walgrave, Varone and Dumont, 2006), and governing parties' bills are typically adopted by the legislature (Bräuninger and Debus, 2009; Mattson, 1995). A parliamentarian thus "attain[s] effective influence" on the policy agenda largely by "*act[ing] within the party group* to create support for his or her cause" (Mattson, 1995, 450). In essence, if women's numeric representation is to lead to greater policy representation for women, this must occur primarily through female politicians' efforts to transform their parties' policy agendas.

As parties determine both women's numeric and policy representation, it is necessary to study the link between the two at the party level. While both quantitative and qualitative studies of individual cases have examined this relationship, virtually all cross-national work takes the legislature as the unit of analysis (see, for example, Kittilson, 2008; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005). This, in turn, masks the role played by the party and limits the inferences that can be drawn about the link between women's presence and attention to women on the policy agenda.

At the same time, the results from the preceding chapter underscore the need to not only determine whether women's presence is correlated with attention to women within parties, but also to establish why this link emerges. The case studies of the three major UK parties demonstrate that these organizations sometimes have alter-

native motivations for promoting women's representation. In some instances, the presence of female leaders, ideological congruence, and electoral aims also appear to influence behavior. Thus, even if correlations between numeric and policy representation emerge, the latter may be explained by factors beyond the presence of female (or male) MPs advancing a female-friendly platform. Without considering alternative explanations, moreover, it is impossible to gauge whether attention to women can be attributed to female legislators.

In light of the myriad of factors potentially influencing party behavior, what accounts for the correlations that do emerge between women's numeric and policy representation within parties? Supplementing the inductive theory building presented in the second chapter with insights drawn from both the women and politics literature and comparative politics research, in this chapter I first apply the previously outlined hypotheses to European parties' policy agendas more broadly. As was the case with the qualitative analysis, the existing literature also provides some support for each of the alternative claims. This suggests that no one theory accounts for all observations. For some parties, the relationship between women's numeric and policy representation may be direct. For others, it may be indirect or even spurious.

Using attention to women on the electoral manifesto as a proxy for attention to women on the party's policy agenda, I then test these hypotheses using an original dataset constructed from the platforms of over 50 parties in ten Western European countries between 1980 and the present. The empirical analysis implements a novel methodological approach—finite mixture modeling—to classify parties as belonging to one of four non-nested components, each representing an alternative theoretical account. Comparing the number of parties that are well explained by each of the four components provides a principled measure of the explanatory power of the proposed

hypotheses. The results from this study show that for only a small number of parties is women's policy representation primarily explained by the presence of female MPs.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

As illustrated in the literature review in Chapter 1, much of the existing work linking women's numeric and policy representation is predicated on the assumption that the presence of female politicians results in greater attention to women on the policy agenda. At the same time, the results from Chapter 2 suggest other explanations for the emergence of women's policy representation. Building on my assessment of the major British parties, the following section outlines a theoretical framework that accounts for alternative factors linking the two forms of representation within Western European parties more broadly. After first assessing the possibility of a direct connection, I subsequently develop three more nuanced explanations for this relationship. Taken together, these four hypotheses better capture the link between women's numeric and policy representation than any single theory.

3.2.1 A Direct Relationship: Women MPs Shaping the Party Agenda

While few studies address the role of female representatives in shaping parties' policy agendas, there is some support for a direct relationship between the presence of female MPs and attention to women on parties' platforms. Lovenduski and Norris (2003) argue, for example, that even if observed female legislative behavior is similar to male behavior, women may still work effectively behind the scenes in order to influence party manifestos and legislative agendas. When asked about their influence

on the party agenda, some parliamentarians further state that female representatives shape women's policy representation. A survey of Swedish legislators revealed, for instance, that half of men and three quarters of women believed that parties had changed their policy positions (especially on social welfare issues) due to the entry of more women into politics (Diaz, 2005). Similarly, almost half of the leaders interviewed from the right-leaning Spanish *Alianza Popular-Partido Popular* (AP-PP) stated that women had played a significant role in the promotion of gender policies within the party (Jiménez, 2009).

Research on both legislators' behavior and policy adoption offer some support to these parliamentarians' assertions. Surveys of legislators in European regional assemblies, for example, reveal that female legislators are more likely to act in favor of women during party parliamentary group meetings (Erzeel, 2011). In her cross-national study of parties' manifestos, moreover, Kittilson (2011) finds that women presence among parties' parliamentary delegates is linked with greater emphasis on social justice issues. These results lend support to the hypothesis of a direct relationship between women's presence and policy representation.

Beyond the women and politics literature, this hypothesis is bolstered in part by the comparative politics research on parliamentary parties. Though parties constrain MPs' capacity to shape the legislative agenda, scholars of European politics are increasingly acknowledging the policy-making role played by individual MPs (Esaiasson and Holmberg, 1996; Esaiasson, 2000; Patzelt, 1997, 1999; Thomassen and Andeweg, 2004). Parliamentarians, for example, have been shown to work to secure benefits for specific interests or groups of constituents (Esaiasson 2000). Both formal rules and informal procedures provide these MPs with access to government ministers and civil servants (Norton, 1999; Thomassen and Andeweg, 2004). This access in turn allows

them to lobby ministers and articulate the views of these groups to party leaders (Norton, 1999).

At the same time, parties' internal division of labor also strengthens the position of individual parliamentarians (Thomassen and Andeweg, 2004). Party leaders do not have expertise in all relevant policy areas. By accumulating specialized knowledge, backbench MPs can become leaders in particular fields (Searing, 1994; Patzelt, 1999). Over time, this special knowledge can allow them to exercise considerable influence over party policy on these topics.

Finally, while parties typically behave as unitary actors during public parliamentary debates, these common positions do not emerge spontaneously. Rather, they are often the result of intense private debates within parliamentary party groups. These intra-party meetings provide "ample opportunity for individual MPs to bring particular interests to the attention of their colleagues" (Thomassen and Andeweg, 2004, 50). Belgian and Swedish MPs, for example, identified working within the party group as essential for influencing decisions made in the parliament (Diaz, 2005). Combined with the large body of women and politics research that identifies a correlation between women's presence and policy representation, these works suggest that female MPs may be able to work within their parties to generate greater attention to women on their policy platforms.

3.2.2 Alternative Theories

Though these finding indicate that women's numeric representation may generate attention to women on parties' policy agendas, it is also widely acknowledged that executive dominance and party institutionalization have together reduced the importance of legislators' individual actions in Western European governance (Norton,

1990). Parliamentarians are incentivized to adhere to the party line, lest they jeopardize their continued selection or future promotions. Even if MPs wish to shape—rather than simply react to—the policy agenda, it is difficult for them to do so. While parliamentary party groups have significant resources, individual MPs typically have limited support staff and constrained budgets. Consequently, they lack the capacity to gather the necessary information to independently influence the policy-making process (Uslaner and Zittel, 2009).

This alternative research calls into question the extent to which female MPs can influence policy adoption. These doubts are further reflected within the women and politics literature. While Kittilson (2011) found that greater numbers of women increased parties' attention to social justice themes, they exerted little direct effect on welfare and education policies. Similarly, though, Jiménez (2009) finds that the majority of AP-PP members surveyed believed that women's presence resulted in increased attention to women's issues, the opposite was true for the Portuguese social democratic party (PPD-PSD). More generally, research from Germany indicates that the majority of MPs do not believe their copartisans have much influence in their parliamentary groups (Patzelt, 1997). Like the qualitative research presented in preceding chapter, these mixed results indicate that the relationship between presence and policy representation may be more complicated than posited by the direct relationship. Developing the theories suggested by British case, the following subsections elucidate three alternative hypotheses explaining the link between women's numeric and policy representation.

An Intervening Relationship: The Role of Female Party Leaders

While in some parties female MPs may have a direct influence on policy attention to women, for others the link between numeric and policy representation may emerge

indirectly through female politicians' access to positions of power within the party. Increasing the number of female parliamentarians can alter both the supply of— and demand for—women in the party leadership. First, in terms of supply, MPs often constitute the pool from which the leadership is drawn, including members of the cabinet and the opposition frontbenches. Thus, changes in the composition of the party's parliamentary delegation may eventually alter the gender composition of the party leadership. Studies have established, for instance, that the percentage of women in the legislature is one of the chief determinants of both the proportion of female ministers (Davis, 1997; Siaroff, 2000; Krook and O'Brien, Forthcoming) and the ascension of female national leaders (Jalalzai, 2008).

In addition to altering the supply of potential leaders, increasing the number of female MPs can also have a more immediate impact by changing the composition of the selectorate for these positions. Though in recent years there has been a trend towards decentralized selection processes (Cross and Blais, 2012), the parliamentary caucus often plays an important role in choosing the party leader. Women's increased presence among backbench MPs may allow female candidates to gain access to positions of power within the party from which they were previously excluded.

In parliamentary systems, authority is located with the party leadership. Governments, for example, are established, sustained, and terminated based on the decisions of party leaders (Laver and Schofield, 1990). Thus, while legislators are important for the implementation of these decisions, it is the leaders who are empowered to control the agenda and make nearly all policy decisions. Given the importance of the leadership, Katz (1986) argues that to understand party government it is necessary to focus on individuals rather than on the parties as institutions, paying particular attention to the goals being pursued by party leaders.

Like Katz, Harmel et al. (1995) posit that changes in party leadership influence party behavior. Leaders play a critical role in assessing their party's recent electoral performances and devising strategies for future contests. Different leaders bring different talents and visions to their parties, and thus react differently to external and internal stimuli. Beyond responding to the political environment, leaders often seek to leave a legacy within the organization. Their own policy aims can thus lead to changes in electoral platforms.

Evidence from the women and politics literature further supports the notion that female leaders promote women's representation. Women's participation as party activists and internal officeholders increases attention to women's issues within the party (Caul, 1999, 2001; Sainsbury, 1993, 2004). The greater the number of women on parties' executive committees, for example, the more likely a party is adopt a quota policy and discuss social justice issues on its the party platform (Caul, 2001; Kittilson, 2011). Similarly, the absence of women within the party leadership can inhibit women's policy representation. In her study of German political parties, for example, Meyer (2003) argues that after Hildegard Hamm Brücher left the Free Democrats in 2002, there were "no female members of great influence... who could promote women's rights" (408).

The potential significance of female party leaders draws additional support from Childs and Krook (2009), who argue that rather than focusing on a "critical mass" of female MPs, scholars should instead look for "critical actors" who "initiate policy proposals on their own and/or embolden others to take steps to promote policies for women, regardless of the numbers of female representatives" (138). Though Childs and Krook focus on rank-and-file MPs as critical actors, women within the party leadership have a greater capacity for inserting attention to women on the policy agenda. Having a single well-placed female politician who is motivated to promote women's

concerns may therefore be more important for platform shifts than the presence of a larger number of female MPs.

As noted in the previous chapter, for example, many Labour party activists and MPs in the United Kingdom identified high-ranking women within the party as instrumental in advancing policy for women. Many of these women—including Yvette Cooper, Maria Eagle, and Fiona Mactaggart, among others—initially entered parliament in 1997, following Labour's adoption of its all-women shortlist policy designed to increase women's presence in its parliamentary caucus. Bringing these women into the parliamentary delegation has arguably had long-term consequences for women's policy representation, as they now serve in the shadow cabinet and help to formulate the party's policy agenda.

A Vote-Seeking Relationship: Accounting for Parties' Electoral Aims

The direct and the intervening hypotheses posit a causal relationship between women's presence and attention to women on the policy agenda. In other cases, the association between the two forms of representation may be dependent on the vote-seeking behavior of the (male or female) party leadership. Beginning with the Downsian model of party politics—in which parties "formulate policies to win elections, rather than win elections in order to formulate policies" (Downs, 1957, 28)—the link between electoral demands and policy positioning has been widely studied.

In particular, empirical analyses of party manifestos often explicitly connect programmatic shifts to vote-seeking behavior. Janda et al. (1995), for example, argued that electoral defeat was a necessary condition for producing major change in parties' subsequent electoral manifestos. Similarly, Budge (1994) showed that past election results were correlated with ideological shifts among a subset of parties. Both movement in left-right ideological position (Somer-Topcu, 2009) and changes in kurtosis

scores (Walgrave and Nuytemans, 2009) are more frequent among parties that have lost votes in the previous election. Case study research also indicates that parties shift their ideological position in response to competitors' vote shares (Nagel and Wlezien, 2010).

Though parties wish to gain supporters from both sexes, the gendered ideological and cultural shifts that began in the 1970s created additional incentives to target female voters. First, a broader trend of partisan dealignment was accompanied by an ideological shift among women. While traditionally more conservative (Almond and Verba, 1963), by the 1990s female voters in Western European nations tended to be significantly more left-leaning than men (Inglehart and Norris, 2000, 2003). Thus, parties of the right may have been incentivized to work to retain (or regain) support among women, while parties of the left sought to cultivate this new constituency.

This gender realignment, moreover, can be at least partially attributed to changing social and political values. Since the 1970s, advanced industrial democracies have witnessed a decreased prioritization of class politics and concerns with physical security among voters. This is accompanied with a growing interest in "postmaterialist values" that prize self-expression, freedom, and gender equality (Inglehart, 1977, 1990, 1997). The emergence of a group of voters committed to post-materialist ideals created a new set of issues that parties could use to court electoral support. While the ideological divides between parties are still largely determined by "old politics" and class-based cleavages, this "new politics" has become increasingly salient (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000). This cultural shift placed issues like equal opportunities, reproductive choice, and family structures on the political agenda (Inglehart, 1990, 1997).

Together, the ideological realignment of female voters and politicization of gender issues created a political environment in which women's representation was increas-

ingly salient. The nomination of female candidates and/or discussion of policy for women may now be used to not only mobilize those who were already voting on the basis of gender, but also to win over female voters who may not have used this issue in their previous voting decisions. Unlike many policy positions, moreover, women's issues are accessible to all parties. While a clear relationship has emerged between feminism and left-wing politics, women have not been wholly captured by left parties. To the contrary, attending to women can be in keeping with either conservative or progressive values.

Examining manifestos from Spanish parties illustrates that gender politics is not simply the purview of the left. In keeping with its communist and eco-socialist heritage, the Spanish United Left used the word "feminist" over five times in its 2000 electoral manifesto. The conservative Spanish People's Party, in contrast, does not use language that references far left women's concerns—such as feminism or the rights of lesbians—but does address women in its platforms. Before the 2004 election, for example, the party made over 15 references to mothers. It also mentioned issues that are particularly relevant to older (and traditionally more conservative) female voters, such as osteoporosis and menopause. As the Spanish case demonstrates, parties with starkly different ideological stances can both advance "women's issues" without betraying their underlying policy positions.

Clearly, organizations from across the spectrum can credibly appeal to female voters. In many respects, moreover, using gender-based appeals is consistent with existing findings on party competition. Though research on manifestos shows a link between parties' electoral fortunes and platform change, the relationship is not as strong as vote-seeking aims might dictate. This is in part because positional shifting is costly and difficult to accomplish. Moving away from established policy preferences can jeopardize party loyalty among voters, activists, and donors (Adams et al.,

2004; Somer-Topcu, 2009; Wilson, 1994). The electorate also often fails to update perceptions of parties' positions in response to ideological shifts (Adams, Ezrow and Somer-Topcu, 2011).

Given that parties along the ideological spectrum can credibly appeal to female voters, focusing on women's representation allows them to respond to electoral demands without assuming the risk associated with shifting their left-right positions. Capturing even a small percentage of female voters can, in turn, influence election results. As a result of these comparatively low costs and potentially large benefits, parties may have an electoral incentive to address women on their platforms.

Though existing research has not posited that the association between women's numeric and policy representation may arise from the vote-seeking aims of parties, it has illustrated that both forms of representation are shaped by electoral incentives. Parties have long acknowledged the strategic importance of women voters. In France, for example, Socialist leader François Mitterrand claimed he would have won both the 1965 and 1974 presidential elections had he captured the support of female voters (Northcutt and Flaitz, 1985).

This recognition of the importance of women in the electorate has, in turn, been linked to efforts to increase women's numeric representation. During the 1970s, both the French socialist (PS) and communist (PCF) parties sought to mobilize women. The decision of the PS to adopt a quota policy for female candidates has been attributed to this vote-seeking behavior (Northcutt and Flaitz, 1985). Similarly, male PS party leaders later supported France's parity legislation in part because they believed it would attract female voters to the party (Opello, 2006).

Research from other advanced industrialized democracies supports the findings from the French case. Several studies suggest that when peripheral left parties gain an electoral advantage after nominating greater numbers of women, elites in center-

left parties recognize the strategic value of advancing female candidates. This, in turn, leads to a "contagion effect" wherein greater attention to women's numeric representation emerges as a consequence of inter-party competition (Caul, 2001; Matland and Studlar, 1996; Meier, 2004; Saxonberg, 2002).

In addition to increasing women's numeric representation, parties have simultaneously responded to electoral pressures by increasing women's policy representation. Beckwith (1985), for example, argues that while the Italian Communist Party (PCI) always viewed women as critical to the success of the post-war republic in Italy, it was not until it realized that women were shifting to the left that it made explicit overtures to female voters. After recognizing the importance of women's votes, the party began nominating women to candidate lists and intra-party leadership positions. At the same time, it began holding symposia on women's issues and dedicating significant attention to the "women question" in PCI publications. While an increase in the percentage of female MPs may have been correlated with greater policy representation, Beckwith's analysis implies that this association may be explained by the vote-seeking aims of the party.

A Policy-Stability Relationship: Considering Parties' Policy Attitudes

The vote-seeking hypothesis notes that parties are often reluctant to reposition themselves on the ideological spectrum. Theoretically, this may encourage some parties to advance women's representation (in a manner that is consistent with their left-right position) as a lower cost mechanism for attracting women's votes. Alternatively, this reluctance to alter policy positions may indicate that, for at least some parties, policy stability shapes both women's numeric and policy representation.

Among "female-friendly" organizations, women's presence in the parliamentary caucus is a single manifestation of a broader commitment to representing women.

Even in the absence of female parliamentarians, these parties would continue to promote women's policy representation. Similarly, parties that are hostile towards—or simply indifferent to—women may have few female MPs and little attention to women on their electoral programs. Though this leads to a correlation between women's numeric and policy relationship, this association does not result from the presence of female politicians per se. Moreover, after accounting for the party's baseline attention to women, variation in women's presence in the parliamentary caucus should have only a limited impact on attention to women among policy stable organizations.

A number of studies have noted that party policy positions are relatively stable over time. In their study of 18 countries between 1945 and 1998, Budge et al. (2001) argue that parties are ideologically rigid and demonstrate limited responsiveness to both electoral and external concerns. Walgrave and Nuytemans (2009) use the Baumgartner and Jones (2005) concept of "friction" to demonstrate that electoral platforms are strongly resistant to change. They find that parties rarely adapt their manifestos, and when they do so these changes tend to be dramatic rather than incremental. Parties adhere to their previous platforms both because of the costs involved with moving away from the status quo and their uncertainty about the electorate's reaction to policy change (Budge, 1994). While some policy shifts are associated with vote gains, others result in vote losses (Tavits, 2007).

In addition to illustrating parties' risk aversion, existing research also lends support to the notion of greater policy stability among a subset of political parties. Adams et al. (2006), for example, demonstrate that niche organizations are more ideologically rigid than their mainstream counterparts and thus do not readily respond to changes in public opinion. This non-responsiveness is particularly pronounced among peripheral left parties (Adams, Haupt and Stoll, 2009). In addition to these marginal organizations, mainstream left parties have also historically been judged as

81

less ideologically flexible than their non-left competitors (Kitschelt, 1994; Przeworski and Sprague, 1986). This leads them to be less responsive to short-term shifts in both public opinion and global economic circumstances than parties of the right (Adams, Haupt and Stoll, 2009).

Though the possibility of policy-stability has not been explicitly articulated in the women and politics literature, existing research often notes the link between women's representation and left-wing parties. When women's movements have allied with political parties, they have typically done so with socialist, communist, social democratic, or labor organizations (Beckwith, 2000; Lovenduski, 2005c). The traditional institutional ties between socialist and communist parties and feminist movements often located these parties among the first supporters of women's representation (Gelb, 1989; Klein, 1987; Lovenduski, 1986).

A correlation between left parties and women's numeric representation in parliaments has thus been well documented (Caul, 2001; Duverger, 1954; Kenworthy and Malami, 1999; Reynolds, 1999; Rule, 1987). Women's movements have also been more successful in pursuing policy goals through left parties (Beckwith, 2000; Caul, 2001; Jenson, 1982). Stetson and Mazur (1995), for example, finds that the most effective women's policy agencies were created under social democratic governments, while (Lovenduski, 2005c) argues that activists and women's policy agencies are more likely to be successful when the left is in power.

Policy-stability may be especially likely among the "left-libertarian" parties that formed in the 1970 and 1980s (Kitschelt, 1988). These new parties drew young, educated, and middle class adherents to post-materialist values, including environmentalism, the peace movement, and feminism (Kitschelt, 1985). These ideological commitments were often accompanied by a desire to upend traditional party structures, including a concern with openness and participation in decision-making (Fran-

kland and Schoonmaker, 1992; Kitschelt, 1988). These parties thus simultaneously expressed a commitment to gender equality and acted as early proponents of parity policies for candidate lists. The Austrian Green Alternative, for example, both articulated a policy commitment to women's rights and adopted a 50 percent quota for women's representation upon its founding in 1986 (Köpl, 2005).

For some parties, the commitment to women's representation thus appears to be a manifestation of a broader platform supporting minority rights and social equality (Dalton, 1988; Caul, 1999). Among these parties, the dual promotion of women's numeric and policy representation is a central tenant of their platforms. While the two forms of representation are thus correlated, the relationship is spurious and explained by the party agenda.

This spurious link does not negate the important role played by women. Leftist movements are not necessarily committed to gender equality. These parties have restricted feminist activities (Jenson, 1996; Jenson and Ross, 1984; Lovenduski and Randall, 1993; Rowbotham, 1996; Stetson and Mazur, 1995) and relegated women and women's issues to the periphery of the movement (Ferree, 1987; Gelb, 1989). To overcome these obstacles, women within the movement often had to engage in hard fought battles to place gender equality on the agenda (Lovenduski, 1986). The policy stability hypothesis does, however, suggest that the work done by women at the time of agenda formation may have solidified a commitment to gender equality on the party platform. Once the party becomes associated with women's policy representation, it may continue to promote female-friendly policies regardless of the presence or absence of female MPs. At the same time, those parties that have established themselves as reluctant to address women on their agenda may be unlikely to later change their position, even if the number of women in the parliamentary caucus increases.

3.3 Empirical Analysis

Drawing on both the gender and politics and comparative politics literatures, I identified four possible explanations linking women's numeric and policy representation. Using an original dataset capturing attention to women on parties' manifestos, the empirical analysis seeks to determine whether any (or all) of these hypotheses are supported by the data. I also aim to establish which (if any) theory explains attention to women among the largest number of parties. In doing so, I test whether the direct hypothesis best accounts for variation in attention to women even after allowing for alternative explanations. At the same time, the analysis examines the impact of women's numeric representation on policy representation for intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stable parties.

Testing the theoretical framework presents a challenge for standard regression techniques. As opposed to previous research, which tacitly assumes that the direct hypothesis accounts for all observations, I posit causal heterogeneity among parties. While some organizations respond to women in the parliamentary caucus, for the others women's policy representation is explained by alternative factors. This indicates that parties are drawn from different populations.

The standard regression approach treats all observations as if they are drawn from a single population, assuming that each explanatory factor will operate similarly across all parties. If subpopulations do exist in the data, this produces biased results. Thus, though conventional wisdom suggests estimating a single model and using predicted values to identify the covariates with the largest impact on policy representation, this method is problematic for two reasons. First, the predicted values are based on biased coefficient estimates, and therefore generate unreliable results. Second, even if the results were unbiased, this approach cannot be used to determine

the hypothesis supported by the majority of the data. To the contrary, a large effect can be driven by a small number of observations.

The presence of subpopulations within the sample indicates that rather than a single model, separate models should be used to test each of the four hypotheses. Conducting four separate analyses, however, is not an option. Though the theory posits that Western European parties are drawn from different underlying populations, these groups are not known a priori. In fact, the grouping of parties cannot be determined before estimating the coefficient values of the covariates capturing each of the hypotheses. These values, on the other hand, cannot be estimated without knowledge of the groupings. The presence of subpopulations that (if they exist) are not known in advance leaves the conventional approach at an impasse.

The issues inherent in the standard regression approach are resolved with the use of a finite mixture model. Finite mixture models are designed to accommodate data in which observations arise from more than one group and these group affiliations are not known by the researcher (Everitt and Hand, 1981; McLachlan and Peel, 2000). A model is specified for each hypothesized subpopulation. This model simultaneously tests whether clusters exist within the data and estimates the parameter values for each model in the mixture. Traditionally finite mixture models are used to allow parameter values to vary across unobserved clusters, therefore increasing the flexibility of the model. Imai and Tingley (2012), in contrast, propose specifying a set of non-nested regression models, each of which captures an alternative theory. Comparing the proportion of observations that are statistically significantly consistent with each model provides a measure of the explanatory power of the proposed hypotheses.

The finite mixture model thus offers several clear advantages over the conventional approach. First, by modeling the subpopulations within the data, it provides unbiased estimates of the parameters of the models for each group. Second, because the finite

mixture model estimates the probability that each party is consistent with each of the four hypotheses, it offers a principled metric for comparing the competing theories. If most parties are classified by the direct hypothesis with high probability, for example, this provides clear support for this standard account. If most observations fail to be well classified by any model, this indicates that none of the posited theories explain the variation in attention to women.

The results from the finite mixture model can also help direct future research. If no subpopulations emerge—for example, the direct hypothesis classifies most parties— then researchers do not need to seriously consider causal heterogeneity among parties. On the other hand, if the model does identify subpopulations within the data, future work should both account for these groupings and elucidate the factors that explain which parties are best explained by the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability theories.

3.3.1 Data and Operationalization

In the gender and politics literature, this project represents the first effort to model attention to women's policy representation at the party-level across both multiple countries and elections. To do so, I constructed an original dataset containing 52 parties across multiple elections in 10 countries. In total, it includes 260 observations drawn from elections held between 1981 and 2008 in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden. These cases were selected based on both the availability of party manifestos and in an effort to maximize variation in the explanatory variables of interest. Both the outcome variable and covariates are outlined in greater detail below.

The Outcome Variable: Measuring Women's Policy Representation

For this project, I operationalize women's policy representation as attention to women on parties' election manifestos. Electoral programs outline the legislative priorities parties intend to implement upon gaining office and offer the "only statement of policy issued authoritatively on behalf of the whole party" (Budge, 1994, 450). These manifestos typically receive an endorsement from an intra-party representative body or convention (Budge et al., 2001). They also reflect the policies that parties communicate to the electorate via other methods, including "campaign advertisements, party elites' campaign speeches, and media interviews" (Adams, Ezrow and Somer-Topcu, 2011, 372).

Existing research indicates that parties use these platforms to make specific pledges on the policy themes they emphasize most (Mansergh and Thomson, 2007). The policies outlined in manifestos are also correlated with party behavior once in office (Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge, 1994; Royed, 1996; Thomson, 2001; Walgrave, Varone and Dumont, 2006). Given that parties are committed to implementing their manifestos, the extent to which women are addressed in these documents provides a reasonable approximation of partisan commitments to women's policy representation.

In addition to reflecting parties' interest in women's policy representation, election platforms provide the additional benefit of offering the proper level of analysis for this study. Alternative measures of the outcome variable—for example, the introduction or adoption of legislation related to women—cannot capture the link between presence and policy representation at the party level. In Western European parliaments, the government introduces the majority of legislation. When the government is comprised of a coalition—rather than a single party—it is difficult to assess the relationship

between women's numeric representation (which is determined at the party level) and women's policy representation (which emerges from multiple parties).

As the same time, because opposition parties' capacity to legislate is highly constrained, it is impossible to accurately measure their commitment to policy for women. This, in turn, means that the relationship between women's presence in the parliamentary caucus and attention to women on the party agenda could not be measured for parties once they no longer held office. Using electoral platforms, in contrast, allows for the analysis of partisan commitments to women both across parties and countries, but also within a given party over time. That is, the manifestos allow us to evaluate parties as if they were in office in terms of their policy commitments.

While party manifestos are a widely used tool in the study of party politics, they have received only scant attention in the women and politics literature. Though there has been some research on attention to women on the manifestos of individual parties (Campbell and Lovenduski, 2005; Childs and Krook, 2008; Childs, Webb and Marthaler, 2010; Freeman, 2002; Jiménez, 2009; Wolbrecht, 2000), to date only one study has attempted a cross-national analysis of the influence of women's numeric representation on variation in party platforms (Kittilson, 2011). The absence of research on partisan attention to women's policy representation can be explained in large part by the coding scheme developed by the Manifesto Research Group/Comparative Manifestos Project (MRG/CMP).

The Manifesto Project has analyzed the election programs of parties in over 50 countries as far back as 1945, and virtually all of the cross-national research on party platforms is based on this data. The CMP manually classifies quasi-sentences in parties' election platforms into varying categories (such as military: positive, protectionism: negative, democracy, etc.). Given the original aims of the project, a category for women's issues was not included in the classification scheme. The categories that

are included—such as non-economic demographic groups, social justice, and welfare expansionism—are so broad that they are of questionable use to scholars of women's policy representation.[1]

Using manifestos to measure women's policy representation thus raises questions about the breadth of issues that should be included in the measure. The CMP variables capturing attention to education, social justice, and welfare are somewhat in keeping with research that defines women's policy representation as encompassing traditionally "feminine" issues related to the private sphere of social life. Legislation dealing with education, health, and poverty, for example, has been identified as addressing women's issues (Reingold, 2000; Swers, 2002). Many scholars, however, eschew these broader definitions in favor of a more restrictive classification. These have included policies specifically directed towards women (Wolbrecht, 2000), with consequences that will disproportionately impact women (Carroll, 1984), or that seek is to increase the autonomy of women (Bratton and Haynie, 1999; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003; Sapiro, 1981; Wängnerud, 2000). For scholars in this latter tradition, the CMP coding scheme is certainly too broad. Even for those who expand the purview of women's issues, the breadth of topics included in most categories far exceeds even the most inclusive conceptualization of women's policy representation.

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[1]The measure of positive mentions to *non-economic demographic groups*, for example, includes women, but also the elderly, young people, and linguistic groups, among others. Similarly, the coding of *social justice* includes quasi-sentences related to ending sexual discrimination, but also those mentioning the "concept of equality," "need for fair treatment of all people," etc. While both variables capture aspects of women's policy representation, they encompass too many concepts to be reliable measures of attention to women. Additionally, topics that might be defined as women's issues sometimes span competing categories. The *traditional morality: negative* category, for example, includes support for divorce and abortion, both arguably women's issues. The *traditional morality: positive* classification, on the other hand, captures maintenance of the family and thus may include parties' support for women as mothers. These examples, among others, demonstrate that limited utility of the CMP data for studying women's policy representation.

Even if the CMP employed a more nuanced classification scheme, its utility for studying women's policy representation would still be the subject of debate. Though most studies define women's issues a priori, others have voiced skepticism about this approach. As gender is a cross-cutting cleavage, the heterogeneity among women calls into question the existence of a single set of shared policy objectives that transcend divisions such as class, race, and ideology. In deemphasizing women's differences, the issues identified by researchers may fail to capture the diversity of women's interests and ascribe policy concerns to women that they do not themselves express (Molyneux, 1985; Wängnerud, 2000). Thus, these a priori definitions may further essentialize and reify gendered identities (Celis, 2006; Celis et al., 2008). Given these limitations, Celis et al. (2008) argue that women and politics scholars should consider redefining substantive representation as the performance of claim-making (Saward, 2006). "Acting for women" can thus be operationalized inductively, through the examination of claims to represent women or the "framing [of] issues as being of importance to women" (106).

In response to both the limitations of the CMP coding and the arguments forwarded by Celis et al. (2008), I choose not to focus on "women's issues" per se. Instead, I define women's policy representation as attention to women on the party manifesto. Rather than identifying a set of topics that can be considered "women's issues" across time and space, I look for words that frame a subject as particularly relevant to female voters. The political party thus determines the form and content of women's policy representation.

Relying on issue framing may of course lead to the omission of women's interests that are not explicitly articulated as such by the party. Moreover, this coding scheme may lead to the inclusion of issues that are framed as women's concerns but do not reflect the interests of most women (or women's advocacy organizations). Despite these

limitations, this operationalization of women's policy representation clearly captures variation in party's attention to the female electorate, while also allowing for spatiotemporal and ideological variation in the definition of women's issues.

In order to identify policy representation, the manifestos of each party were searched for instances of attention to women. The text analysis was based on a dictionary containing almost one hundred words signaling feminine issue framing. This dictionary was drafted from close readings of out-of-sample party platforms. It was then expanded based on *The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, a comprehensive agenda for women's empowerment that emerged from the Fourth World Conference on Women held in 1995.

Many of these words signaling feminized issue framing are obvious and frequently occurring, such as "women," "gender," and "mothers." Others are clearly female-oriented, yet less commonly used (for example, "uterine," "menopause," and "lactate").[2] The volume of text to be analyzed—over five million words in total— precluded the manual coding of each platform. Instead, the party programs were download from the Political Documents Archive (Benoit, Bräuninger and Debus, 2009), translated into English, and then subjected to an automated search for terms signaling claim-making on behalf of women. Based on this analysis, the final measure of women's policy representation is a count of the number of feminine framing words in the party manifesto. Though this approach is new to the gender and politics literature, a number of studies estimating parties' ideological positions have measured

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[2]See the Appendix for the full dictionary.

91

word frequencies on manifestos based on predefined coding "dictionaries" (Laver and Garry, 2000; Garry, 2001; De Vries and Mansergh, 2001).[3]

The data generated by this text analysis approach are summarized in Figure 3.1. Unsurprisingly, as compared to the total number of words in the manifesto, the percentage of words for women is small. The mean percentage is just 0.19. Though the average percentage of words for women is low, the standard deviation is comparatively large (0.17 percent). As the plot illustrates, there is significant variation in attention to women both across parties and within parties over time. Among the 260 observations, for example, there are 25 in which there is no explicit attention to women or gender issues. At the same time, there are two instances of parties dedicating over one percent of words on their manifesto to women. These include the Green Party in Austria and the Vänsterpartiet, a socialist and feminist political party in Sweden.

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[3]An additional advantage of automating the text analysis is that it is easier to replicate than manually coded data. The manifestos and code will be made freely available, so scholars wishing to use narrower or broader definitions of women's policy representation will be able to do.
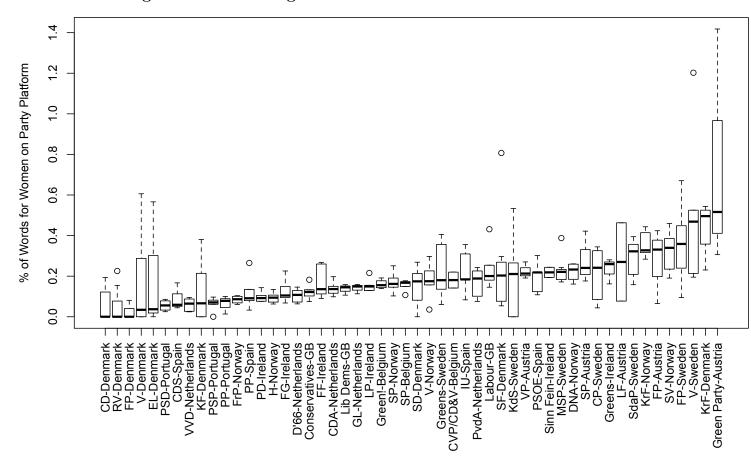
Figure 3.1: Percentage of Words for Women on Parties' Manifestos

Notes: The plot graphically depicts the proportion of words in parties' manifestos related to women across 12 Western European democracies using five-number summaries: the smallest observation (sample minimum), lower quartile, median, upper quartile, and largest observation (sample maximum). The dots represent observations that may be outliers.

Across all manifestos, the most frequently occurring female framing word is "women" (and its variants), which appears over 2,730 times.[4] The use of this word far outpaces that of all other terms included in the dictionary. The next most frequently occur-

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[4]The text analysis accounts for singular and plural words, as well as common variants. I also sought to exclude statements that do not specifically address the position of women. Consequently, words in this subset were included in the final count only if they occurred independently from their masculine counterpart. For example, claims for both men and women are excluded from the analysis.

ring word, for example, is "gender." It is found only 639 times across all platforms. Similarly, if we consider the number of documents on which each word appears at least once, the term "women" remains dominant. Of the 260 manifestos, 187 (or 72 percent) use the word "women" at least once. The next most prevalent word is "child care" and its variants, which is referenced on 172 platforms. Three other female framing words occur on over 100 policy agendas. The term "gender" on 135 manifestos, and the words "maternal" and "maternity," which are each found on 113 documents.

The Explanatory Variables: Measuring Competing Causal Claims

Together, the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability relationships capture the link between women's numeric and policy representation. The finite mixture model therefore has four components, each containing a measure of the percentage of women in the party's parliamentary caucus and unique covariates designed to capture one of the hypotheses. The number of parties that are classified by each of these component models, in turn, determines the usefulness of these theories.

The Direct Effect Hypothesis: The direct relationship argues that even when accounting for a party's goals and the presence of women among intra-party leaders, women's policy representation is best explained by the gender makeup of the parliamentary delegation. In order to determine the extent to which this direct relationship holds, the finite mixture model includes a component measuring the *percentage of the women among the party's parliamentary caucus.* As party manifestos are written prior to the election, this variable is lagged. For the 2005 British election, for example, data on the percentage of female MPs in the Conservative, Labour, and Liberal Democratic parties is taken from the results of the 2001 UK general election. Though the number of seats held by women in the legislature is widely available, no single

source disaggregates this information by party. As such, this information was gathered from party and legislative archives, as well as secondary sources. A full list of citations is available in the project codebook.

The Intervening Hypothesis: While the intervening hypothesis also posits a causal relationship between women's numeric and policy representation, it argues that this link emerges only after women gain positions of power within the party. Women's numeric representation exercises limited immediate influence on their policy representation, but can have long-term consequences as women advance within the party. In order to represent the intervening relationship, an additional component of the model contains an indicator variable for the presence of a *female party leader*.[5] This variable was constructed using information taken from Zárate's Political Collection's (ZPC) "World Political Leaders 1945-2005" database (de Zárate, 2011).

The Vote-Seeking Hypothesis: Irrespective of the number of female legislators, vote-seeking parties will not increase attention to women until there is a perceived electoral advantage in doing so. In an effort to increase support among female voters, these parties may advance women's numeric and/or policy representation. Though this attempt at transforming the image of the party can lead to a correlation between women's presence and attention to women, the two are not causally linked. Thus, even if women's representation among MPs remains constant or increases over time, women's policy representation will decrease if these electoral incentives diminish.

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[5]A possible alternative measure capturing the intervening hypothesis is the percentage of women on parties' National Executive Committees (NECs) (Kittilson, 2011). This measure was rejected for two reasons. First, the role and position of NECs varies across parties, as well as within parties across time. This variability makes this measure difficult to interpret. Second, NEC data is difficult to acquire and including this variable would introduce substantial missingness into the dataset.

In order to account for vote-seeking spuriousness, the third component of the model uses a measure of the differences among male and female voters in their support for the party. The trichotomous variable uses a difference of proportions test to distinguish between parties that received greater support from female than male voters (vote-keepers), greater support from male than female voters (vote-seekers), and those for whom there was no difference between male and female support in the previous election.

Due to the breadth of countries and elections included in the study, this data had to be gathered from multiple sources. The analysis relies primarily on public opinion data available in the Mannheim Eurobarometer trend file (Schmitt and Scholz, 2005), but is supplemented with data from the European Values Study (European Values Study Group; World Values Survey Association, 2006) and the European Voter Database (Thomassen, 2005). For those parties included across multiple surveys, the measure was calculated based on the pooled data.

While differences in gender support alone may influence attention to women, parties may be more likely to appeal to women voters when they have been losing support among the electorate. The model therefore also includes a covariate capturing the lagged change in party vote share. Using data from the ParlGov database (Döring and Manow, 2010), this measure calculates the difference between the percentage of votes won by the party at the previous election (at time $t - 1$) from the vote share of the preceding election (at time $t - 2$). For example, the change in vote share for the UK Labour Party in 2005 is the percentage of votes won in 1997 subtracted from the vote share in 2001. As the party won 43.2 percent of votes in 1997 and 40.7 percent in 2001, the change in vote share is -2.5, reflecting its modest loss of support. Taken together, the *interaction of gendered voting and change in vote share* captures party

vote-seeking incentives.

The Policy-Stability Hypothesis: The first three theories assert that partisan policy attention to women varies based on intra- and inter-party stimuli. The final hypothesis, in contrast, posits that policy stability determines both forms of representation. Women-friendly parties consistently support both women's numeric and policy representation. Organizations that are hostile towards (or indifferent to) women have few female MPs and little attention to women on their manifestos. Once accounting for these stable policy preferences, women's presence in the parliamentary delegation will have little influence on variation in policy representation.

Parties explained by the policy-stability hypothesis are thus expected to maintain a constant level of commitment to women's policy representation. Changes in the gender makeup of their parliamentary caucus, the position of women within the party, or vote-seeking incentives should not account for their behavior. To capture this relationship, the fourth component of the model contains the log of the *number of words for women on the first available manifesto* minus the log of the total number of words in the document. For parties well classified by this component, their base-line level of attention to women is the best predictor of subsequent behavior.

3.3.2 Modeling Strategy

Drawing on the four explanations posited by the theoretical framework, the population of parties is assumed to have $J = 4$ subpopulations. The first is associated with the direct hypothesis, the second the intervening hypothesis, the third the vote-seeking hypothesis, and the fourth the policy-stability hypothesis. Formally, finite mixture distributions are described by

$$\mathbf{y}_p | \pi_1, \ldots, \pi_4 \sim \sum_{j=1}^{4} \pi_j F_j(\mathbf{y}_p)$$

where p is the political party, π_j is the proportion of parties that can be described by distribution F_j and the F_j are distributions for different groups within the population.

Parties are clustered into the four models based on the posterior probability, $\zeta_{p,j}$ that observation p is consistent with theory j. Specifically,

$$\zeta_{p,j} = Pr(Z_p = j | \Theta, \Pi, \{X_p, Y_p\}_{p=1}^{N}) = \frac{\pi_j f_j(Y_p | X_p, \theta_j)}{\sum_{j'=1}^{4} \pi_{j'} f_{j'}(Y_p | X_p, \theta_{j'})}$$

where $\Theta = \{\theta_j\}_{j=1}^{4}$ is the set of all model parameters, $\Pi = \{\pi_j\}_{j=1}^{4}$ is the set of all model probabilities, and f_j is the pmf (or pdf) of distribution F_j. These posterior inclusion probabilities are obtained through a simple application of Bayes' Rule since $\pi_j = Pr(Z_p = j | \Theta, \Pi, \{X_p\}_{p=1}^{N})$.

The posterior inclusion probabilities are used to weight the observations when fitting the components. Observations with a higher probability of belonging to a component exert greater influence on its coefficient estimates than those with a lower inclusion probability. These inclusion probabilities are also used to compare the competing theories. If almost all observations are consistent with a single cluster, this provides strong support for the hypothesis operationalized via this model. In contrast, if most observations fail to be well classified by any model, this indicates that none of the posited theories explain the variation in women's policy representation. Following Imai and Tingley (2012), observation p is classified as statistically significantly consistent with theory j for a given misclassification rate α if $\zeta_{p,j} > \lambda$, where λ is defined as

$$\lambda = \inf \left\{ \lambda : \frac{\sum_{p=1}^{P} \sum_{j=1}^{4} (1 - \zeta_{p,j}) \mathbf{1}\{\zeta_{p,j} \geq \lambda\}}{\sum_{p=1}^{P} \sum_{j=1}^{4} \mathbf{1}\{\zeta_{p,j} \geq \lambda\} + \prod_{p=1}^{P} \prod_{j=1}^{4} \mathbf{1}\{\zeta_{p,j} < \lambda\}} \leq \alpha \right\}$$

This method for selecting λ allows for the classification of as many observations as possible while ensuring that the rate of false positives does not exceed a reasonable level.

Finally, as the outcome variable is a count of the number of words on the party manifesto addressing women, it is modeled with a Poisson distribution.[6] The log rate for each observation includes an offset term, l_{pi}, controlling for the log length of the document. Each component contains unique coefficients for the intercept and the

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[6]The assumption that word frequencies are generated by a Poisson process is consistent with existing research (see, for example, Slapin and Proksch, 2008). The model was also estimated with a negative binomial distribution in JAGS. The shape parameter of the negative binomial was very close to one, with a small standard error. Given that there is no evidence of over or under dispersion, the Poisson distribution is appropriate.

percentage of women MPs, as well as covariates describing the specific hypothesis. Specifically,

$$\mathbf{y}_p | z_p = j \sim F_j(\mathbf{y}_p)$$

$$z_p | \pi_1, \ldots, \pi_4 \sim Cat(\pi_1, \ldots, \pi_4)$$

$$F_j(y_{pi}) = Pois(y_{pi} | \lambda_{pi,j})$$

$$log(\lambda_{pi,j}) = \mu_{pi,j}$$

$$\mu_{pi,1} = \beta_{0,1} + \beta_{MP,1} X_{pi,MP} + l_{pi}$$

$$\mu_{pi,2} = \beta_{0,2} + \beta_{MP,2} X_{pi,MP} + \beta_{FLC} X_{pi,FLC}$$

$$+ \beta_{FLE} X_{pi,FLE} + l_{pi}$$

$$\mu_{pi,3} = \beta_{0,3} + \beta_{MP,3} X_{pi,MP} + \beta_{GS} X_{pi,GS}$$

$$+ \beta_{VS} X_{pi,VS} + \beta_{GSVS} X_{pi,GS} X_{pi,VS} + l_{pi}$$

$$\mu_{pi,4} = \beta_{0,4} + \beta_{MP,4} X_{pi,MP} + \beta_{FW} X_{pi,FW} + l_{pi}$$

This finite mixture model was fit using the `flexmix` package in R (Grün and Leisch, 2008; R Development Core Team, 2012).

3.4   Results and Discussion

The finite mixture model classifies parties into one of four models representing the alternative theoretical accounts of women's policy representation. Comparing the posterior inclusion probabilities generated for each party offers a measure of the explanatory power of the four hypotheses. The number of parties in each cluster—as well as the number of poorly clustering parties—demonstrates the extent to which the direct hypothesis explains the data as compared with the alternative theoretical

frameworks. Using a misclassification rate of $\alpha = 0.05$, the threshold is $\lambda = 0.44$. By this metric, 49 of the 52 observations were consistent with one of the four theories, with only three parties failing to fit any theory well.

As Table 3.1 shows, no one explanation accounts for a majority of parties. The direct hypothesis captures eight parties, explaining only 15 percent of the total number of parties well. Each of the additional hypotheses classified a greater number of parties. Ten parties were well explained by the intervening hypothesis, while 14 parties clustered with the vote-seeking hypothesis. Finally, almost one-third of all parties included in the dataset—17 in total—were captured by the policy-stability component.

Table 3.1: Posterior Inclusion Probabilities for All Parties Separated by Cluster

Party	$\zeta_{p,1}$	$\zeta_{p,2}$	$\zeta_{p,3}$	$\zeta_{p,4}$
	Direct (Cluster 1)			
FrP Progress Party-Norway	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
V Liberals-Denmark	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
CDS Centre Democrats-Spain	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
PP Popular Party-Spain	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Green Party-Austria	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Vp Left Party-Sweden	1.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
MSP Moderate Coalition Party-Sweden	0.990	0.000	0.001	0.000
LF Liberal Forum-Austria	0.984	0.000	0.009	0.007
	Intervening (Cluster 2)			
SP Centre Party-Norway	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
CD Centre Democrats-Denmark	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
GL Green Left-Netherlands	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
PvdA Labour Party-Netherlands	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
D'66 Democrats 66-Netherlands	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
FP Freedom Party-Austria	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
PD Progressive Democrats-Ireland	0.000	1.000	0.000	0.000
V Liberal Party-Norway	0.000	0.992	0.001	0.007
Greens Ecology Party/Green Party-Ireland	0.000	0.977	0.023	0.000
KF Conservative People's Party-Denmark	0.000	0.583	0.001	0.416
SP Flemish Socialist Party-Belgium*	0.000	0.343	0.315	0.342
	Vote-Seeking (Cluster 3)			
Green Ecology Party-Sweden	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000
DNA Labour Party-Norway	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000
KrF Christian People's Party-Norway	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000
SD Social Democratic Party-Denmark	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000
IU United Left-Spain	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000
PSOE Socialist Workers' Party-Spain	0.000	0.000	1.000	0.000
VP People's Party-Austria	0.001	0.000	0.999	0.000
SP Social Democratic Party-Austria	0.000	0.000	0.999	0.001
LP Labour Party-Ireland	0.000	0.017	0.983	0.000
SF Socialist People's Party-Denmark	0.000	0.000	0.952	0.048
Fine Gael-Ireland	0.000	0.157	0.843	0.000
Fianna Fail-Ireland	0.000	0.191	0.809	0.000
CVP/CD&V Christian Democrats-Belgium	0.121	0.155	0.721	0.003
KdS Christian Democratic Community-Sweden	0.351	0	0.649	0.000
LDP Liberal Democratic Party-Great Britain*	0.013	0.241	0.378	0.367
	Policy-Stability (Cluster 4)			
FP Liberal People's Party-Sweden	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
SV Socialist Left Party-Norway	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
H Conservative Party-Norway	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
AGALEV/Green!-Belgium	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
VVD People's Party-Netherlands	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
PSP Socialist Party-Portugal	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
PSD Social Democratic Party-Portugal	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
Conservative Party-Great Britain	0.000	0.000	0.000	1.000
SdaP Social Democratic Party-Sweden	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.999
Labour Party-Great Britain	0.000	0.000	0.008	0.992
CDA Christian Democrats -Netherlands	0.000	0.013	0.000	0.987
RV Radical Party-Denmark	0.000	0.014	0.000	0.986
FP Progress Party-Denmark	0.000	0.034	0.001	0.965
KrF Christian People's Party-Denmark	0.021	0.000	0.035	0.945
CP Centre Party-Sweden	0.000	0.001	0.096	0.903
PP Popular Party-Portugal	0.195	0.000	0.000	0.805
Sinn Fein Ourselves III-Ireland	0.000	0.387	0.000	0.613
EL Red-Green Unity List-Denmark*	0.000	0.258	0.303	0.439

Notes: The posterior inclusion probabilities, $\zeta_{p,j}$ represent the probability that observation p is consistent with theory j. For each party, the table presents the probability that the observation is consistent with the Direct ($\zeta_{p,j1}$), Intervening ($\zeta_{p,2}$), Vote-Seeking ($\zeta_{p,3}$), and Policy-Stability ($\zeta_{p,4}$) hypotheses. Parties marked with an * fail to meet the threshold ($\lambda = 0.44$) to be considered statistically significantly consistent with any theory at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level.

In addition to clustering parties across the four hypotheses, the inclusion probabilities are used to generate weighted coefficient estimates and standard errors (see Table 3.2.)

Table 3.2: Finite Mixture Model of Poisson GLMs of Attention to Women on Party Manifestos
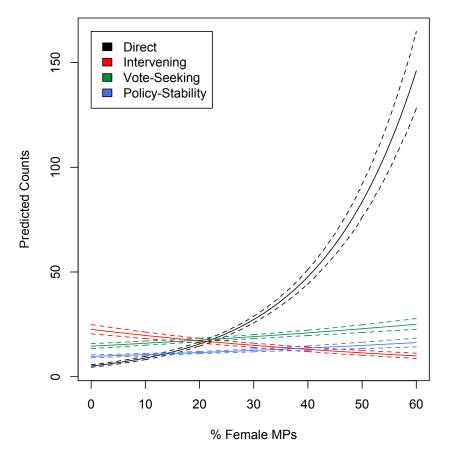
	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr($>$|z|)
	Direct (Component 1)			
Intercept	-7.54	0.06	-127.39	<0.001
% Women MP	0.06	0.00	31.32	<0.001
	Intervening (Component 2)			
Intercept	-6.31	0.05	-129.88	<0.001
% Women MP	-0.01	0.00	-8.94	<0.001
Ever Fem Leader	0.26	0.06	4.56	<0.001
Current Fem Leader	0.05	0.07	0.64	0.530
	Vote-Seeking (Component 3)			
Intercept	-6.50	0.04	-155.90	<0.001
% Women MP	0.01	0.00	6.91	<0.001
Male Supported Parties	0.24	0.04	5.83	<0.001
Vote-Share	-0.01	0.00	-3.41	<0.001
Fem Supported Parties	0.31	0.05	6.13	<0.001
Male Supported Parties:Vote-Share	-0.09	0.01	-7.15	<0.001
Fem Supported Parties:Vote-Share	0.05	0.01	4.76	<0.001
	Policy-Stability (Component 4)			
Intercept	-3.23	0.19	-17.33	<0.001
% Women MP	0.01	0.00	5.75	<0.001
Women Words 1st Manifesto	0.53	0.03	20.36	<0.001

Notes: The outcome variable is a count of the number of words related to women in the party's electoral manifesto. Coefficient estimates are weighted based on the posterior inclusion probabilities presented in Table 3.1. For the third component, the baseline category is gender-neutral observations.

As Figure 3.2 illustrates, women's presence in the parliamentary delegation is positively correlated with attention to women on the manifesto for three of the four party-types. The effect of women's numeric representation, however, varies across these clusters. For parties explained by the direct hypothesis, increasing the percent-

age of women MPs from the first to the third quartile (from 7 to 32 percent female) is associated with a comparatively large increase in the predicted count of words related to women on the party manifesto (from 8 to 31 words for women). Among these parties, the effect of women's representation is even greater for values above the third quartile. At this point, comparatively small increases in women's presence are associated with large gains in policy representation.

Figure 3.2: Predicted Attention to Women on Manifesto (% Women MPs)

Notes: These predicted probabilities were generated holding all other variables at their median or modal values. The dashed lines represent 95 % confidence intervals around these values.

The impact of female MPs is more limited for the other party types. Holding all other variables constant, for vote-seeking parties moving from the first to third quartile of female representation increases the predicted count by four (from 16 to 20 words for women). The effect is even smaller among policy-seekers. For parties explained by this component, when women's representation increases from 10 percent of the parliamentary caucus to 35 percent, the predicted count increases from 11 words to 13 words related to women. Finally, while for the direct, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses women's numeric representation is positively correlated with attention to women, for parties best explained by the intervening model the association is negative. As women's presence increases from the first to the third quartile, the predicted count decreases from 18 to 12 words.

In addition to the percentage of women MPs in the parliamentary caucus, the other components of the finite mixture model also include covariates to capture the alternative theoretical accounts. Turning first to the intervening hypothesis, Figure 3.3 illustrates that the presence of a female leader is positively associated with attention to women on the manifesto. Holding the percentage of female MPs at its mean, a party that has never had a female leader has a predicted count of 12 words for women. Parties in which women have ever held the top position have an expected count of 15 words, while parties that currently have a female leader have a predicted count of 16 words related to women.
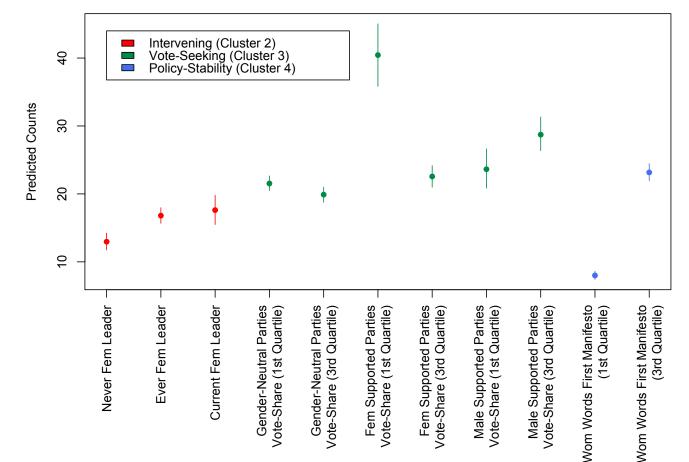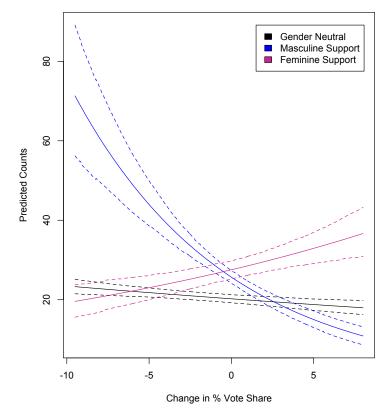
Figure 3.3: Predicted Attention to Women on Manifesto (Other Covariates)

Notes: These predicted probabilities were generated holding all other variables at their median or modal values. The bars represent 95 % confidence intervals around these values.

While the direct and intervening hypotheses both place primary emphasis on the role of women within the party, the vote-seeking theory argues that attention to women is better explained by parties' electoral fortunes. As Figure 3.4 illustrates, changes in vote share are not only correlated with attention to women, but the size and direction of the association is influenced by the party's position among male and female voters. For general-neutral parties—those in which the difference in support among men and women is non-significant—having lost votes in the previous election

is associated with a small but significant increase in attention to women. When comparing the third quartile (a one percent increase in vote share) to the first quartile (a four percent decrease in vote share), the predicted count increases by two, from 22 to 24 words for women. Even among parties that receive comparable support from male and female voters, electoral losses appear to encourage appeals to female voters.

Figure 3.4: Predicted Attention to Women on Manifesto (Δ Vote-Share)

Notes: These predicted probabilities were generated holding all other variables at their median or modal values. The dashed lines represent 95 % confidence intervals around these values.
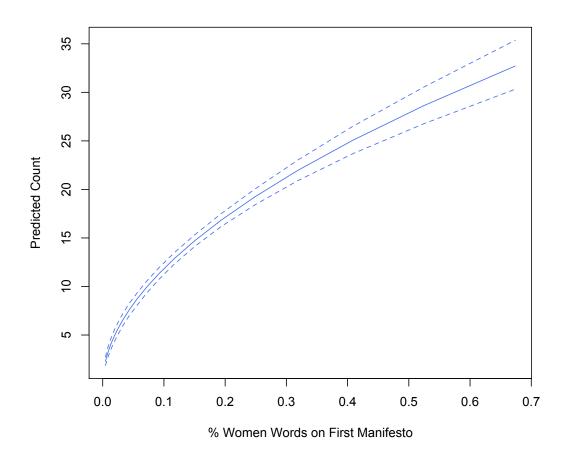
The relationship between changes in vote share and attention to women is even greater when considering parties that receive both more and less support from women. Among parties that have more male than female supporters, a loss in vote share is

associated with significantly more attention to women on the party manifesto. Moving from the third to the first quartile increases the predicted counts by 16, from 20 to 36 words. These organizations thus appear to be behaving as "vote-seekers," aiming to capture female supporters after suffering losses.

In contrast to both gender-neutral and masculine parties, parties that receive significantly more support from female voters are less likely to mention women when they have lost vote shares. Moving from a one percent gain in vote share to a four percent loss decreases the predicted counts from 29 to 24 words related to women. For these female supported parties, losing electoral support appears to discourage subsequent attention to women on the policy agenda. Having gained support after advancing women's representation, on the other hand, encourages these parties to further seek to represent women. Though previously unexamined in the women and politics literature, these vote-seeking incentives clearly deserve greater study.

Finally, of the four hypotheses, the policy-stability component classifies the greatest number of parties. For this cluster, attention to women on the first available manifesto is positively correlated with the subsequent use of words for women. As Figure 3.5 shows, moving from the first to the third quartile in the percentage of words dedicated to women in the earliest available manifesto is associated with an increase from 8 to 24 words for women. Thus, for a plurality of parties, attention to women is relatively unresponsive to the endogenous and exogenous changes posited by the other hypotheses. Moreover, comparing Figure 3.2 to Figure 3.5 illustrates that even when accounting for women's numeric representation, attention to women on the first available manifesto explains much more variation in women's policy representation.

Figure 3.5: Predicted Attention to Women on Manifesto (Attention to Women on 1st Manifesto)

Notes: These predicted probabilities were generated holding all other variables at their median or modal values. The dashed lines represent 95 % confidence intervals around these values.

Taken together, three principle findings emerge from the empirical analysis. First, the results clearly justify the modeling strategy. Had the parties been largely explained by a single cluster—or not well explained by any cluster—the finite mixture model would be of questionable merit. Of the 52 parties, however, 49 are well classi-

fied by one of the four components. Each component, moreover, captures at least 15 percent of the parties in the dataset.

The value of the model becomes even clearer when considering the results from standard Poisson regression models. As a comparison to my approach, I first fit a model that included only the measure of women's numeric measure, comparing the direct relationship to the null hypothesis of no effect. The results from this analysis, which are included in the appendix, indicate that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between women's presence in parties' parliamentary delegations and attention to women on their platforms. Failing to account for the alternative relationships thus generates the false assumption that women's numeric representation explains women's policy representation.

In addition to this basic analysis, I fit a second model that included the covariates capturing the three alternative hypotheses but that did not account for the sub-populations within the data. The results offer support to all four hypotheses (see appendix). This model, however, offers no metric for adjudicating their relative importance. Without the finite mixture model, it is essentially impossible to compare the explanatory power of the alternative theories. In combination with the much larger BIC value of the standard model—$4,268$ as compared with $2,424$—the finite mixture model clearly represents both a theoretical and methodological advancement.

Second, this support for the finite mixture model demonstrates the causal heterogeneity underlying women's policy representation. Though 49 of the 52 parties were well classified by the theoretical framework, no single hypothesis accounts for even a majority of observations. This causal heterogeneity, in turn, has implications for both scholars and advocates of women's policy representation.

The results indicate that testing the direct relationship against a null hypothesis is clearly insufficient. Given that almost 80 percent of parties were well explained by

110

alternative causal relationships, failing to account for these intervening and spurious variables generates incorrect and misleading results. Additionally, it can neither be assumed that a single strategy for increasing attention to women will be appropriate in all settings, nor that parties will respond similarly to women's increased presence. In fact, 60 percent of parties are classified by the vote-seeking and policy-stability hypotheses, which account for party dynamics that are not easily altered by activists.

Third, beyond illustrating the causal complexity underlying women's policy representation, the results also cast doubt on the explanatory power of the direct hypothesis. Of the four components, the direct relationship model classifies the smallest numbers of parties (only eight of the 52 total party-level observations). The majority of organizations are better explained by alternative theoretical accounts. For these other party-types, moreover, the substantive effect of the covariate measuring the lagged percentage of female MPs indicates that women's numeric representation is not the best predictor of women's policy representation. While the influence of women's presence is large for the direct relationship component—especially as women approach parity in the parliamentary delegation—it is much smaller for the vote- and policy-stability components and negative for the intervening component. Together, the inclusion probabilities and weighted coefficient estimates thus indicate that the presence of women MPs does not exercise a large independent effect on attention to women on parties' policy agendas.

3.5 Conclusion

The analysis of the British parties presented in the preceding chapter illustrated the possible limitations of the often-posited direct hypothesis. At the same time, this qualitative research drew attention to other causal relationships that might explain

the connection between women's numeric and policy representation. While these case studies suggested the need to develop more nuanced hypotheses linking the two forms of representation, they could not be used determine which (if any) of the alternative factors identified best explained the link between women's presence and attention to women on the policy agenda.

Just as the qualitative analysis was necessary for theory building, testing these theories demanded a study that included many more parties so as to overcome issues of overdetermination and confounding. To this end, the four hypotheses were tested using an original dataset measuring attention to women on the electoral manifestos of parties across ten Western European countries between 1980 to the present. As no one hypothesis was expected to account for all observations, the standard generalized linear model could not be applied. Instead, the empirical analysis required a modeling strategy that allowed parties to be drawn from these four different subpopulations but did not demand that the party groupings be known a priori. I therefore used a finite mixture model to estimate the probabilities that the four hypotheses—each represented by a unique set of covariates—clustered each of the 52 parties.

While the previous chapter casts doubt on the direct relationship, the results from this analysis clearly demonstrate that although this theory accounts for a small subset of parties, the majority are better explained by the alternative hypotheses. Moreover, though a high level of women's representation is correlated with large gains in women's policy representation among parties explained by the direct relationship, the substantive impact of female legislators is much smaller for other party types. At the same time, though the direct hypothesis does not receive much support from the empirical analysis, taken together the newly theorized hypotheses are well supported by the data.

These findings are important for academics and activists alike. For scholars of women and politics, the results demonstrate the need to seriously consider the alternative causal mechanisms that could link numeric and policy representation. The gender and politics literature focuses primarily on the role of female rank-and-file MPs, in part because women have largely been excluded from leadership roles within parties. Consequently, while significant attention has been dedicated to identifying the factors that may mitigate the relationship between women's presence and policy representation, no work has systematically considered the reasons why (beyond a direct relationship) this correlation may emerge.

The support the model lends to the alternative hypotheses, however, draws attention to the need for considering the role of parties not only in tempering the relationship between numeric and policy representation, but in explaining attention to women. Future work should be careful not to a priori ascribe an important role to representatives. Instead, it should ask why the link between women's presence and policy representation might emerge.

As well as contributing to the study of women and politics, the results also offer insights for the broader comparative politics literature. The existence of heterogeneity among parties is widely acknowledged within this research. Parties differ not only on the basis of ideology, but also in terms of internal organization (Katz and Mair, 1995), the goals they prioritize (Müller and Strøm, 1999a), the way in which they alter their platforms in response to inter-party competition (Budge, 1994; Laver, 2005), etc. Though researchers posit that parties' have variable reactions to internal and external stimuli, with standard regression techniques it is difficult to test these theories or accurately distinguish parties as belonging to different types. The method advanced in this chapter, however, can be used to test for the existence of causal heterogeneity

among parties. It can also determine which (and how many) organizations fall into each category.

In addition to accounting for this heterogeneity among parties, the finite mixture model can also be expanded to not only test for the existence of subpopulations within the data, but also to explain these groupings. Beyond the relevance to scholars of party politics more broadly, the findings generated by these more complex models can also be useful for practitioners. In this vein, in the next chapter I use information on the formal rules concerning intra-party decision-making to try to explain parties' probability of inclusion in each of the four component models. Identifying the factors that influence group membership can in turn help women's rights advocates alter their approach based on party-type, allowing them to more successfully generate attention to women on the policy agenda.

Beyond this subsequent analysis, the results from this chapter alone also have clear implications for practitioners committed to promoting women's representation. In recent years, increasing women's access to political office has become a priority for a number of policy actors, largely based on the assertion that women's presence generates attention to women on the policy agenda. The results, however, show that there is significant heterogeneity in parties' responses to women's numeric representation. While for a small subset of organizations the percentage of women in the parliamentary caucus is positively associated with greater attention to women, for most the effect of women's presence is minimal. The consequences of this finding are twofold.

The limited support for the direct relationship first indicates that arguments for women's numeric representation should not be linked to policy representation. There are reasons to strive for gender parity in legislatures beyond the expectation of increased attention to women. Given that factors outside of the control of women MPs

are often the most important predictors of women's policy representation, arguing for women's presence on this basis may ultimately hinder their access to political office. When women's presence is predicated on the assumption that female MPs "matter" for policy representation, their failure to do so undermines efforts to advance numeric representation.

Beyond the need to separate the goals of numeric and policy representation, the results also demonstrate that there is no single strategy for heightening political attention to women. Instead, it is necessary to consider how women's policy representation complements parties' broader aims. For a large subset of organizations, women's policy representation is relatively stable. Among these parties, increasing women's participation without additional efforts to convince these organizations to attend to women is unlikely to generate change. Once policy for women reaches the agenda, however, it is likely to remain there over time. Vote-seeking parties, on the other hand, change their behavior based on their electoral fortunes. For these organizations, making attention to women a politically viable strategy for winning votes is the best approach for bolstering women's policy representation. Thus, though these results in some ways complicate efforts for fostering attention to women on the political agenda, taken together they also clearly illustrate that focusing solely on increasing women's numeric representation is rarely optimal.

Chapter 4

Party Organization and Women's Representation

4.1 Introduction

The analysis of women's representation within the three major British parties suggested that the relationship between women's presence in parties' parliamentary delegations and the adoption of female-friendly policy might be may complicated than often assumed. The quantitative analysis presented in the previous chapter, in turn, illustrated that while the direct relationship captures a small subset of parties, the intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses each account for a greater number of organizations. While the absence of strong support for the direct relationship is an important finding in and of itself, the results from this analysis raise additional questions concerning the relationship between women's presence and policy representation.

On the one hand, the finite mixture model helps to explain both whether a correlation exists between numeric and policy representation and also why this link might

emerge. On the other hand, it does not describe which parties are likely to be classified by each of the four competing hypotheses before their behavior is observed. Thus, though the results indicate that most parties are unlikely to be explained by the direct relationship, they do not elucidate the types of organizations that might be best described by this theory versus the alternative hypotheses.

The model can be expanded, however, to not only test for the existence of subpopulations within the data, but also to explain these groupings. Identifying the factors that influence group membership can in turn help practitioners and activists alter their approach based on party-type. This would allow them to more successfully generate attention to women on parties' policy agendas.

There are a number of party- and system-level characteristics that might influence party classification. The literature explaining changes in party manifesto position often focuses on factors such as party ideology, size, and position in government, among others (Adams and Somer-Topcu, 2009; Somer-Topcu, 2009; Walgrave and Nuytemans, 2009). As the previous model focuses on the link between women's presence in parliamentary caucuses and attention to women on parties' policy agendas, in this initial analysis I consider the relationship between the formal rules governing intra-party decision-making and classification into each of the four clusters representing the alternative hypotheses. Specifically, I assess whether variation in the actors who are primarily responsible for the policy agenda can distinguish direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability parties.

4.2 The Importance of Parties' Internal Organizations

Though research on electoral manifestos often treats parties as unitary actors, there is a large body of literature dedicated to the study of intra-party politics. In particular, a number of scholars have tried to make sense of the complexities of party structures, classifying parties based on their organizational features. Duverger (1954), for example, distinguished between cadre parties—elite dominated parties with only limited organization outside of the parliamentary delegation—and mass political parties, which maintain well developed organizations aimed at recruiting a significant proportion of their voters as party members.

The distinction between cadre and mass parties has now become less clear, as former cadre parties have become more organized and mass parties have faced difficulties maintaining their large memberships (Katz and Mair, 1994). Ware (1987) consequently refined Duverger's classifications differentiating elite-centered from mass-membership parties. While elite-centered parties can maintain a large membership, they are controlled by a small group of politicians at the center of the organization. In contrast, rank-and-file members retain some control in membership-based political parties. Koole (1994), on the other hand, points to the possibility of modern-cadre parties. Professional politicians dominate these organizations, yet the party retains some degree of internal democracy and the leaders are accountable to the membership.

Building on Kirchheimer's 1966 catch-all party, Panebianco (1988) classifies parties as either mass-bureaucratic or electoral-professional organizations. Mass-bureaucratic parties are controlled by representatives or elected bureaucracies. These parties also tend to emphasize their membership and to prioritize ideological concerns. Professionals, in contrast, dominate the electoral-professional organization. Elected represen-

tatives are key actors within the organization, which has weak ties to it membership and prioritizes electoral concerns. In Panebianco's view, these electoral-professional parities are superseding mass-bureaucratic organizations.

Though these works generate different classification schemes, they each draw attention to the variation in the internal life of parties. They also posit that party organization shapes parties' campaigning strategies and the strength of their ideological commitments, among other factors. The women and politics literature has similarly argued that party organization matters both for women's numeric and policy representation. With respect to women's numeric representation, Caul (2001) argues that party centralization and institutionalization, as well as the level at which candidate selection occurs, each influence the nomination of female candidates. Lovenduski and Norris (1993) and Matland and Studlar (1996) point to similar factors when explaining women's access to political office.

In examining the feminization of Canadian and American political parties, Young (2000) further draws attention to the importance of variation in parties' organizational forms in explaining both presence and policy representation. In particular, Young focuses on parties' internal cohesion and their permeability to outside interests. American political parties are highly permeable, and are therefore more open to feminist engagement. The centralization and cohesion of Canadian parties, in contrast, makes them less open to the interventions of the women's movement. Though Young argues that organization alone cannot wholly explain the feminization of parties, she notes that it remains an important factor in accounting for women's presence and policy representation.

The existing research thus demonstrates that there is significant variation in parties' internal organizations. It also suggests that this variation may influence many facets of party behavior, including women's numeric representation and attention to

119

women on parties' policy agendas. The case studies of the British parties presented in the second chapter further draw attention to the potential importance of party organization in shaping the link between women's presence and policy representation.

Among the British Labour and Conservative parties, the adoption of female-friendly policies appears to have been largely motivated by the aims of party leaders. This can be explained in part by the concentration of policy-making authority with the party leadership and their advisors. The absence of a direct relationship, moreover, is not indicative of the attitudes of female representatives towards women's policy representation. Rather, it reflects the fact that the parliamentary delegation as a whole often does not have access to the party's policy agenda.

Given the realities of policy formation within the British parties, one might predict that these organizations should not be classified by the direct relationship. The results from the finite mixture model indeed support this supposition. Beyond the British case, however, does the relationship between agenda control and classification by the four components apply more broadly?

In order to address this question, I first theorize the ways in which control by the parliamentary caucus, party leader, and the party congress (which is comprised of party activists and rank-and-file members) should differently influence classification into the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses. Then, using data gathered primarily from Katz and Mair (1992), I refit the model from Chapter 3 with concomitant variables capturing variation in agenda control. The results show that the posited relationships largely fails to emerge. Consequently, in the conclusion I speculate as to why this may be the case and posit alternative factors that should be explored in future work.

4.3 Theoretical Framework

Existing research draws attention to variation in parties' internal structures, indicating that these differences can shape not only parties' broader behavior, but also women's representation within these organizations. Among the British parties studied in Chapter 2, moreover, female parliamentarians' access (or lack thereof) to their parties' policy platforms seemed to affect the relationship between women's numeric and policy representation. Drawing on these findings, the following section considers how variation in these organizational features may influence party classification by the four alternative hypotheses developed and tested in the preceding chapters.

4.3.1 The Direct Relationship: MPs Shaping the Party Agenda

The results from the finite mixture model indicated that 15 percent of parties were well classified by the direct relationship. For these organizations, variation in women's policy representation is explained by women's presence in the parliamentary delegation alone, rather than by the alternative factors capturing the intervening or spurious relationships. Given its focus on the role of female parliamentarians, classification by this theory may be especially influenced by variation in MPs' access to their parties' policy platforms.

In particular, women's presence in parties' parliamentary delegations may have the greatest effect on women's policy representation when MPs have a direct role in drafting the manifesto. In contrast, when legislators have little influence over the policy platform, variation in women's presence in the parliamentary caucus should be less important than women's presence among party leaders, vote-seeking incentives, and stable policy preferences. The probability of classification by the direct rela-

tionship may therefore be highest among parties in which the parliamentary caucus controls the policy agenda.

In addition to direct control, legislators can also have an indirect influence on the policy platform. In some organizations, for example, the parliamentary caucus selects party leaders who in turn compose the manifesto. Among these parties, variation in the number of female representatives may influence attention to women on the agenda. Though the women MPs are not authoring the manifesto per se, the party leader is a representative of, and responsive to, his or her selectorate. Increasing the number of women within this group may thus incentivize the leader to attend to women on the organization's policy platform. More generally, granting policy control to a party leader or leaders chosen by legislators indicates that the parliamentary caucus plays an important role within the broader party organization. Though they may not formally influence the policy platform, they are likely to have an informal role in shaping the agenda.

Even when policy platforms are drafted by the party congress, there may be cases in which women's presence in the parliamentary delegation influences women's policy representation. In particular, some organizations afford voting rights to representatives of the parliamentary party at the party conference. As the proportion of female parliamentarians increases, women may be more likely to represent the party during these meetings. This would give them direct access to the policy platform. Guaranteeing legislators' influence at the party convention may more broadly indicate that the organization values MPs' perspectives when shaping its agenda. As with parties in which manifestos are written by legislators or the leaders they elect, these organizations may also be more likely to be classified by the direct relationship.

4.3.2 Alternative Theories

While the direct hypothesis captured eight parties, explaining 15 percent of the total number of observations in the dataset, the three alternative hypotheses each classified a greater number of organizations. Thus, just as it is important to assess how parties' internal organizations may influence the direct relationship between women's numeric and policy representation, it is also necessary to consider how variation in agenda control may explain clustering by these alternative theories. In particular, in the following sections I theorize about how the influence granted to party leaders and the party congress may affect party inclusion in the intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability components.

The Intervening Relationship: Leaders Shaping the Party Agenda

While the direct relationship focuses on women in the parliamentary party, the intervening relationship addresses the importance of the party leadership in influencing women's policy representation. This second component of the finite mixture model, which accounted for the presence of female party leaders, classified 11 of the 52 parties in the sample. To understand why these parties were well explained by this theory, the role of the leadership in shaping the manifesto may once again become salient.

The results from the finite mixture model indicate that among the intervening observations, the presence of a female party leader is positively associated with greater attention to women on the party's policy agenda. The presence or absence of female leaders may be most important for women's policy representation in organizations that concentrate power within the party elite. Among organizations in which the

123

leadership is chiefly responsible for generating the party's policy platform, the probability of being classified by the intervening relationship may thus increase.

The Vote-Seeking Relationship: MPs and Leaders Shaping the Party Agenda

The vote-seeking spuriousness hypothesis explains variation in women's policy representation by focusing on the interaction between parties' electoral fortunes and gendered support among voters. In total, the finite mixture model classified 14 parties into this third theory, accounting for almost 30 percent of the data. In explaining classification by the vote-seeking theory, it may be important to distinguish parties in which the manifesto is written by parliamentarians or party leaders from those in which it is drafted by the congress.

While all party members balance vote-, office-, and policy-seeking objectives, vote-seeking aims may be more likely to explain the behavior of parliamentarians and party leaders than other representatives within the party congress. MPs and party elites are particularly concerned with maximizing vote-share, as these votes dictate whether they will be reelected (and, if they win a sufficient number of seats, whether they can satisfy their office-seeking aims). The parliamentary delegation and party leaders are thus especially sensitive to the position of the party among the boarder electorate.

If charged with composing the party platform, parliamentarians and party leaders may use it to strategically pursue female voters who are not party members. They may therefore be more likely than party activists to attend to women in a calculated effort to gain their support. The broader membership of the party conference, in contrast, may prefer to advance their policy-seeking aims rather than strategically pursue voters. In contrast to parties in which the manifesto is controlled by the party conference, organizations in which parliamentarians and leaders determine the platform are thus more likely to be classified by the vote-seeking theory.

This argument about vote-seeking aims and parties' organizational structures is broadly consistent with the theory posited by Wolinetz (2002). In classifying parties based on their overarching aims, he argues that organizations that are primarily concerned with electoral success are likely to constrain the influence of their rank-and-file members. While the membership may have some say on the selection of candidates, they are likely to have little influence on party policy. Instead policy is likely to be determined by the aims of the leadership and the electoral opportunity structure.

The Policy-Stability Relationship: Congress Shaping the Party Agenda

Of the four theories, the component capturing parties' stable preferences towards women's policy representation classified the largest number of cases, explaining one-third of all observations. In considering which types of parties might be well explained by this theory, the role of the party congress in determining the policy platform may once again be relevant. The congress is comprised of representatives of the rank-and-file membership. Conference attendees may represent geographic constituencies or interest groups within the party. Socialist party congresses, for example, frequently include labor leaders representing union members. Parties also often ensure that delegates from intra-party organizations (such as women's and youth groups) are included.

Allowing the platform to be drafted by the congress increases the probability that activists within the party will have greater control over the policy agenda. While party leaders and elected officials may be especially responsive to changes in the composition of the parliamentary party or electoral gains or losses, this is less likely to be the case among policy-motivated interest group representatives. In advancing the needs of

their constituents, these activists may be strongly committed to a particular set of policies from which they are unlikely to deviate.

In classifying policy-seeking parties, for example, Wolinetz (2002) argues that these organizations will have an active (though not necessarily large) membership that has influence over party policy. These parties will also assume highly consistent policy positions. Thus, by empowering policy-motivated actors to shape the agenda, control by the party congress increases the probability of the party remaining stable with respect to women's policy representation. This should, in turn, increase the probability of the party being classified by the fourth hypothesis, particularly if members of the parliamentary delegation are not represented on these bodies.

4.4   Empirical Analysis

Influenced both by the literature highlighting the importance of party organization and the case studies presented in the second chapter, I posit that the formal rules governing intra-party decision-making will help to explain classification into each of the four clusters representing the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy stability hypotheses. In order to test this assertion, I collected information on agenda control for the 52 parties included in the original dataset. As before, the empirical model contains four components, each consisting of a measure of the percentage of women in the party's parliamentary caucus and covariates designed to capture one of the alternative hypotheses. The analysis is extended, however, to include concomitant variables incorporating the additional information on party structure into the model.

These concomitant variables are used to estimate the probability that a party is consistent with each of the four theories based on its organizational form (before observing its outcome). As all observations for a given party are classified by a single

component, the concomitant measures are specific to the party—rather than its individual observations—and constant within a single organization over time. Fitting a finite mixture model with concomitant variables to the 52 party-level observations thus allows me to test whether party structure does in fact account for parties' clustering into the components representing the competing theories. Counter to the expectations outlined above, the results demonstrate that the posited relationships largely fail to emerge.

4.4.1 Data and Operationalization

In order to account for intra-party variation in agenda control, I distinguish between five party-types. First, parties in which the parliamentary caucus plays a major role in platform formation. Second, parties in which the leadership is largely responsible for the platform and the parliamentary delegation selects the leader. Third, parties in which the party congress drafts the platform and parliamentarians are voting members of the congress. Fourth, parties in which the leadership is largely responsible for the platform and parliamentarians do not select the party leader. Finally, the last category captures parties in which the congress drafts the platform and parliamentarians are not afforded voting rights on this body. This measure therefore accounts for the locus of power within the party (parliamentary party, leadership, or congress), as well as the degree to which legislators influence platform formation (directly, indirectly, or not at all).[1]

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[1]Given that the aim of the project is to understand whether, and to what extent, women's numeric representation shapes women's policy representation, it is important to distinguish parties in which legislators have any agenda control from those in which they have none. As such, in cases where two of these groups control the agenda—for example, both the parliamentary party and the congress–I classified these parties as granting legislators control over the manifesto.

To construct this measure, I began with information compiled by Katz and Mair (1992) in *Party Organizations: A Data Handbook on Party Organizations in Western Democracies*. Within this volume, the authors provide detailed summaries of the functions and membership of each party's congress, as well as their leadership selection processes. This data was then supplemented with information gathered from qualitative case studies in three additional volumes: *Western European Political Parties: A Comprehensive Guide* compiled by Jacobs (1989), and the 1999 and 2006 versions of the *World Encyclopedia of Political Systems and Parties*. Taken together, these handbooks provided information on agenda control for almost all of the parties included in the analysis.[2]

As with many intra-party organizational features, the process of manifesto authorship may change over time. Not only may parties alter the formal rules governing agenda control, but this power may also gradually and informally shift from the party congress to the parliamentary party and its leaders. Katz and Mair (1995) argue, for example, that parties have transformed from "bottom-up" mass organizations, to "top-down" catch-all parties, and finally into cartel parties in which the membership and the elite are largely independent from one another. Data on these transfers of power are not readily available, however. Moreover, the empirical analysis classifies all observations from a single party into one of the four posited theories. Consequently, it is necessary to devise a measure of agenda control that can be applied to parties over time.

Given these constraints, I classify parties based on the rules governing platform formation as of 1990 (or at the first election, for parties entering the dataset after this year). Though these organizational features may change over time, this measure still

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[2]Drawing on additional party- and system-level covariates, missing data was imputed using the `mice` package in `R`.

provides a reasonable approximation of party norms concerning agenda control. If in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the leadership or parliamentary delegation authored the platform, this indicates that party elites have traditionally had an especially powerful role in the agenda-setting process. They are unlikely, moreover, to surrender this position over time. At the same time, even if power has gradually moved away from party congresses, a history of providing representatives of the rank-and-file party membership with agenda control makes it more likely that these groups will continue to hold some sway over the policy platform.

4.4.2 Modeling Strategy

The mixture model presented in the previous chapter has four components, each representing a different theory linking women's numeric and policy representation. As noted in Chapter 3, the mixture distribution for a party p is given by a weighted sum over these four components, where each component's weight is the marginal probability that party p is consistent with the theory j. In this standard finite mixture model, the marginal probability that a party is consistent with a theory is simply the proportion of the population explained by that theory.

It is possible, however, to use information about the party to predict its behavior (Dayton and Macready, 1988; Wedel, 2002). The probability that party p is consistent with theory j (before observing its outcome) is thus modeled using concomitant variables describing party-level characteristics. The coefficient of a specific concomitant variable for a particular component represents the effect of that variable on the relative probabilities of parties belonging to that theory. Thus, concomitant modeling

allows us to identify the types of parties that are most (or least) likely to be influenced by women's numeric representation alone.[3]

Extending the previous model, the finite mixture distributions with concomitant variables are described by

$$\mathbf{y}_p|\pi_1(W_p),\ldots,\pi_4(W_p) \sim \sum_{j=1}^{4} \pi_j(W_p)F_j(\mathbf{y}_p)$$

where W_p is a vector of concomitant variables. As before, p is the political party and $\pi_j(W_p)$ is the marginal probability that a party with concomitant variable W_p can be described by distribution F_j. Finally, the F_j are distributions for different groups within the population.

Parties continue to be clustered into the four models based on the posterior probability, $\zeta_{p,j}$ that observation p is consistent with theory j. Specifically,

$$\zeta_{p,j} = Pr(Z_p = j|\Theta, \Gamma, \{X_p, Y_p, W_p\}_{p=1}^{N}) = \frac{\pi_j(W_p|\gamma_j)f_j(Y_p|X_p, \theta_j)}{\sum_{j'=1}^{4} \pi_{j'}(W_p|\gamma_{j'})f_{j'}(Y_p|X_p, \theta_{j'})}$$

where $\Theta = \{\theta_j\}_{j=1}^{4}$ is the set of all model parameters for the components of the mixture, $\Gamma = \{\gamma_j\}_{j=1}^{4}$ is the set of all concomitant parameters, and f_j is the pmf (or pdf) of distribution F_j. Therefore, the posterior inclusion probabilities take into

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[3]To build intuition for the concomitant model, consider an example from research on market segmentation. Markets are comprised of groups of customers with different needs from one another. These groups can be identified by variables that are often costly to obtain, such as survey responses. It is possible, however, to simultaneously profile groups based on survey responses and to use concomitant variables—such as measures capturing demographic information—to predict group membership based on characteristics like sex, race, and age. Once these groups are identified, new subjects can be classified using only their demographic information. In the model presented in this chapter, groups of parties are identified based on measures capturing the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses. Membership in these groups is predicted based on organizational characteristics.

account both the X_p—which are used to explain behavior by the components of the model—as well as the W_p, which provide additional information for clustering the observations.

As the $\pi_j(W_p)$ are probabilities that must add to one, they are modeled using multinomial logistic regression. This reflects standard practice for analyzing the marginal inclusion probabilities using concomitant modeling. Like the model presented in the preceding chapter, the outcome variable remains the count of the number of words on the party manifesto addressing women. It is thus modeled with a Poisson distribution. The log rate for each observation once again includes an offset term, l_{pi}, controlling for the log length of the document. Each component contains unique coefficients for the intercept and the percentage of women MPs, as well as covariates describing the specific hypothesis.

Formally, the model can be written as,

$$\mathbf{y}_p | z_p = j \sim F_j(\mathbf{y}_p)$$

$$z_p | \pi_1(W_p), \ldots, \pi_4(W_p) \sim Cat(\pi_1(W_p), \ldots, \pi_4(W_p))$$

$$\pi_j(Wp) = \frac{e^{W_p \gamma_j}}{\sum_{j=1}^{4} e^{W_p \gamma_j}}$$

$$F_j(y_{pi}) = Pois(y_{pi} | \lambda_{pi,j})$$

$$log(\lambda_{pi,j}) = \mu_{pi,j}$$

$$\mu_{pi,1} = \beta_{0,1} + \beta_{MP,1} X_{pi,MP} + l_{pi}$$

$$\mu_{pi,2} = \beta_{0,2} + \beta_{MP,2} X_{pi,MP} + \beta_{FLC} X_{pi,FLC}$$

$$+ \beta_{FLE} X_{pi,FLE} + l_{pi}$$

$$\mu_{pi,3} = \beta_{0,3} + \beta_{MP,3} X_{pi,MP} + \beta_{GS} X_{pi,GS}$$

$$+ \beta_{VS} X_{pi,VS} + \beta_{GSVS} X_{pi,GS} X_{pi,VS} + l_{pi}$$
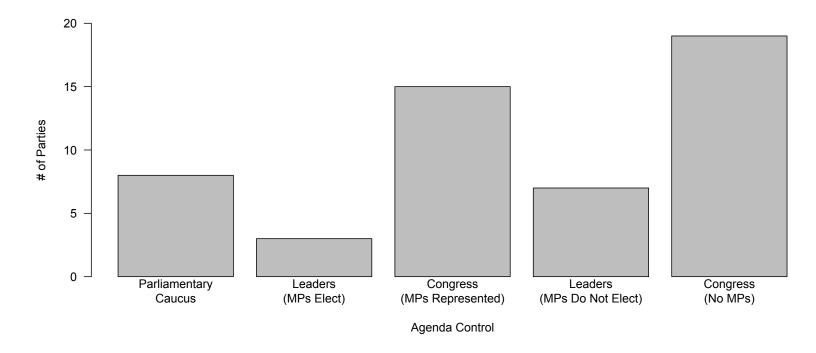
$$\mu_{pi,4} = \beta_{0,4} + \beta_{MP,4} X_{pi,MP} + \beta_{FW} X_{pi,FW} + l_{pi}$$

Here $\gamma_1 = 0$, making the direct hypothesis the reference group for the multinomial logistic regression. This extended finite mixture model with concomitant variables was fit using the `flexmix` package in `R` (Grün and Leisch, 2008; R Development Core Team, 2012).

4.5   Results and Discussion

In assessing the degree to which variation in agenda control determines classification into the four alternative hypotheses of women's policy representation, I first included a concomitant measure distinguishing the five types of party organizations. As illustrated in Figure 4.1, however, several of these categories classify only a small

number of parties. In 65 percent of cases, the agenda is determined by the party congress, either with (29 percent) or without (36 percent) influence from the parliamentary delegation. Parliamentarians, moreover, hold agenda control in only eight parties. Finally, in ten organizations primary responsibility for policy platform formation is given to the leadership. Among this last set of cases, in only three did the parliamentary party select the leadership.

Figure 4.1: Cross-Party Variation in Agenda Control

With only three parties falling into the second category—in which leaders who are elected by the parliamentary party control the agenda—there were too few cases to be classified across the four theories. Regardless of the relationship between this measure of agenda control and the marginal inclusion probabilities, at least one of the four clusters cannot possibly contain a party that takes this value. In particular,

the results from the concomitant model indicated that the direct hypothesis classified no parties of this type. The marginal inclusion probability of classification by the direct hypothesis was thus zero for these three parties, and exclusion was perfectly predicted by this measure. As can be the case when multicollinearity exists between explanatory variables, this resulted in inflated and unreliable coefficient estimates and standard errors. Thus, no inferences can be drawn using this more nuanced five-part measure.

To overcome these limitations, I employed two coarser measures of agenda control. The first distinguishes organizations in which the policy platform is determined by the party congress from those in which it is controlled by either the parliamentary delegation or the party leadership. With respect to the four theories of women's representation, parties in which the congress is dominant are expected to have a greater probability of being classified by the policy-stability hypothesis. As illustrated by both Table 4.1 and Figure 4.2, however, variation in the location of power does not seem to exert a strong influence on classification.[4]

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[4]The posterior inclusion probabilities for the parties and coefficient estimates for the covariates capturing the alternative hypotheses were largely unaffected by the addition of the concomitant modeling. In this section, I therefore present only the results for the concomitant variables.
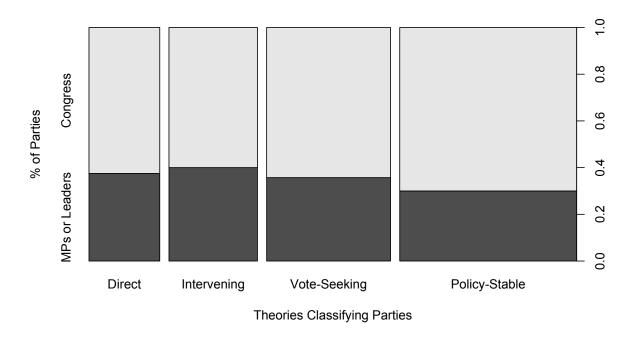
Table 4.1: Coefficients of Concomitant Variables Predicting Inclusion (Location of Power)

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr($>|z|$)
Intervening (Component 2)				
MPs and/or Leader	0.37	0.79	0.46	0.64
Congress	0.24	0.60	0.40	0.69
Vote-Seeking (Component 3)				
MPs and/or Leader	0.35	0.77	0.45	0.65
Congress	0.56	0.58	0.95	0.34
Policy-Stability (Component 4)				
MPs and/or Leader	0.54	0.78	0.70	0.49
Congress	0.79	0.54	1.47	0.14

Notes: The coefficient estimates and standard errors were generated by a multinomial logistic regression model. The baseline category is the direct relationship component. N=52.

The standard errors of the concomitant variables are large compared to their coefficient estimates, and thus cannot be distinguished from 0. Differences in the concomitant variables, moreover, generate only small changes in the marginal inclusion probabilities.

Figure 4.2: Prior Classification of Parties into Four Theories Based on Location of Policy Formation

Notes: The plot contains information from each of the 52 parties included in the analysis. The x-axis denotes the theory into which each party was classified (prior to observing its outcome) based on the concomitant analysis. The y-axis shows the proportion of parties within each component that can be described as either dominated by MPs/leadership or controlled by congresses.

Only minimal difference are revealed when comparing the predicted marginal inclusion probabilities of organizations dominated by the party conference to other party-types. For both sets of organizations, the predicted marginal inclusion probabilities favor the policy-stability relationship. As expected, the inclusion probability is slightly higher among parties relying on conferences (0.35), than those concentrating power with parliamentarians or leaders (0.31). Similarly, when MPs and leaders dictate the policy agenda, the predicted marginal probability of classification by the intervening hypothesis is 0.26. It drops to 0.20 when congresses are in control. Though

this suggests some small effect of parties' internal organizations on their behavior towards women's representation, these differences are not large enough to draw any definitive conclusions.

While the first measure of agenda control concentrates on the location of power, the second concomitant model employs a measure distinguishing organizations in which the parliamentary delegation has control over the agenda (through direct or indirect influence) from those in which it does not. As illustrated in Table 4.2, the differences between party-types are once again minimal. Figure 4.3, moreover, shows that the results from this model are largely counter to the expectations posited in the theory section.

Table 4.2: Coefficients of Concomitant Variables Predicting Inclusion (Delegation's Control Over Policy Platform)
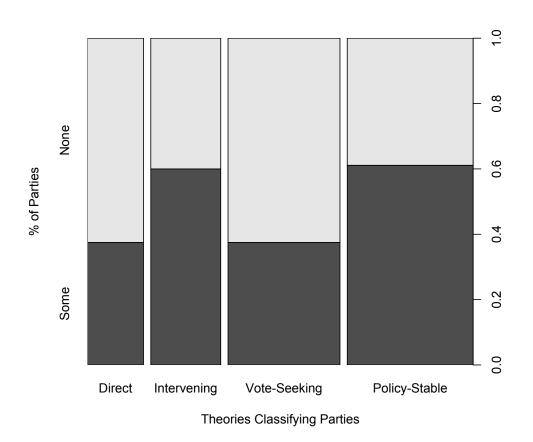
	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
	Intervening (Component 2)			
Parl. Party Some Control	0.85	0.73	1.17	0.24
Parl. Party No Control	-0.24	0.67	-0.37	0.71
	Vote-Seeking (Component 3)			
Parl. Party Some Control	0.65	0.75	0.87	0.39
Parl. Party No Control	0.34	0.60	0.56	0.57
	Policy-Stability (Component 4)			
Parl. Party Some Control	1.23	0.67	1.83	0.07
Parl. Party No Control	0.20	0.63	0.31	0.75

Notes: The coefficient estimates and standard errors were generated by a multinomial logistic regression model. The baseline category is the direct relationship component. N=52.

Though the findings for the intervening relationship are as expected —with congress-dominated organizations being less likely to be classified by this cluster—the opposite is true for the remaining theories. The predicted marginal inclusion probabilities indicate, for example, that parties are more likely to be classified by the direct hypothesis

when the congress is dominant (0.23) than when the parliamentary caucus has agenda control (0.12).

Figure 4.3: Prior Classification of Parties into Four Theories Based on Parliamentary Delegation's Control Over Policy Platform

Notes: The plot contains information from each of the 52 parties included in the analysis. The x-axis denotes the theory into which each party was classified (prior to observing its outcome) based on the concomitant analysis. The y-axis shows the proportion of parties within each component that can be described as either granting some or no power to MPs.

The policy-stability and vote-seeking theories also yield unexpected results. While authorship by the party conference was expected to lead to a greater marginal inclusion probability in the stable policy preferences cluster, the results from the con-

138

comitant model suggest that the opposite relationship holds. Parties in which parliamentarians hold agenda control have a predicted marginal inclusion probability of 0.28 in this cluster, as opposed to 0.13 for congress-dominated organizations. Similarly, while control by the parliamentary delegation was expected to be associated with vote-seeking behavior, in fact parties are more likely to be classified by the vote-seeking component when the party congress is dominant (0.32 versus 0.22 when parliamentarians influence the platform).

4.6   Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to provide a means of predicting parties' inclusion in the four theories introduced in the preceding chapters before the parties' behavior was observed. The results from the finite mixture models with concomitant variables cast doubt on the extent to which variation in parties' internal organizations explains classification into each the clusters capturing the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses respectively. The coefficient estimates for these concomitant variables are generally non-significant. When comparing the predicted inclusion probabilities, moreover, the differences are often small and sometimes counter to theoretical expectations.

Given these findings, the formal rules governing agenda control of the do not appear to explain the relationship between women's presence and attention to women on parties' platforms. Just as the previous chapter demonstrated that increasing women's presence in office will not necessarily guarantee women's policy representation, the results from this analysis further suggest that policy actors seeking to influence women's representation should not focus exclusively on political parties' internal structures.

What accounts for the apparent absence of a relationship between agenda control and classification of parties into each of the four competing hypotheses? There are at least two possible explanations for these null results. On the one hand, party organizations may in fact influence clustering. The concomitant measures included in this analysis, however, may not be sufficiently nuanced so as to capture this relationship. The sample size, moreover, may not provide adequate power to generate statistically significant results. On the other hand, this chapter's focus on the formal mechanisms governing decision-making within parties may be misguided. Instead, it may be necessary to focus on alternative factors that might better explain party behavior with respect to both women's presence and policy representation. In the remainder of this chapter, I briefly discuss these two alternative explanations.

To begin with, the number of parties included in my sample may not be sufficiently large so as to accurately test the importance of intra-party variation in policy-making authority for women's policy representation. While including over 50 parties would generally provide sufficient power in standard regression analyses, the sample may provide too few observations to generate statistically significant results when clustering parties into four unique components. This issue is further compounded by the low-level of variation in parties' internal procedures. The vast majority of these parties' agendas are formally controlled by congresses, with far fewer organizations granting control to the parliamentary caucus and the leadership. To more accurately test the theories advanced in this chapter, more observations are needed in these latter categories.

The large number of parties identified as controlled by their congresses may be indicative of an even greater obstacle facing any analysis of party behavior based on organizational characteristics. In particular, among those parties in which agenda control is formally held by the congress, there may be significant variation in the de-

gree to which party activists and rank-and-file members actually influence the manifesto. Briefly returning to the British parties analyzed in the second chapter further demonstrates that the location of policy-making authority captured by my measures may not actually account for the realities of platform formation.

Consider, for example, the Labour party. Labour introduced reforms aimed at providing greater control over party policies to rank-and-file members. In practice, however, these changes strengthened the power of the party leadership vis-á-vis activists and other traditional policy actors (Shaw, 2004; Seyd, 2002). Moreover, while both the party congress and parliamentary party are supposed to influence the manifesto, a number of respondents noted that it was authored by a small group of party leaders. While these leaders consider the demands made by stakeholders within the organization—including the parliamentary delegation—they are also likely to account for both vote- and policy-seeking aims.

A similar divergence between the theory and practice of policy-making is visible among the Liberal Democrats. Within the party, policy-making authority is formally held by the federal conference. In the years following its formation, moreover, the party offered much greater power to its rank-and-file membership than either Labour or the Conservatives. As previously noted, however, Russell, Fieldhouse and Cutts (2007) have found that the parliamentary party and the party leaders are increasingly dictating policy. In fact, they explicitly argue that the influence of Liberal Democrat parliamentarians in contemporary politics "stretches beyond their constitutional remit" (97).

The realities of agenda control within the Labour Party and Liberal Democrats illustrate that formal rules may not necessarily reflect informal norms concerning platform formation. While the parliamentary party and its leadership may hold significant policy-making authority, they may be highly responsive to the demands of

activists within the organization. Similarly, party leaders or parliamentarians could dominate this process even though in theory the party congress controls the manifesto.

Though these cases indicate that focusing only on the reported location of policy-making authority may be unsatisfactory, they also demonstrate the difficultly of measuring agenda control within parties. In order to construct the concomitant measures, I drew on information compiled by country experts from multiple volumes. Even with expert knowledge, however, it is hard to fully capture parties' policy-making processes. This is in part because there is often no consensus even among party members as to who can (and cannot) influence the policy platform. Interviews with Labour party politicians and activists, for example, revealed disagreements concerning the influence held by female parliamentarians and party leaders over the inclusion of female-friendly policy on the party's manifestos.

Even if the concomitant variables were able to perfectly capture differences in agenda control, they may not adequately account for women's representation within parties over time. The analysis, for example, posits that parties' dominated by their congresses are most likely to be policy-stable. This assumes that both the composition of the congress and its attitude towards women's representation each remain relatively consistent over the period of study.

In practice, however, just as women's presence in parties' parliamentary delegations differs across elections, women's access to parties' internal decision-making bodies may also vary over time. If women gain access to positions of power within the congress during the years included in the analysis, then these parties may not be policy-stable (despite being controlled by their conferences). To the contrary, women's presence may be especially important for women's policy representation, but only when these women are included in the parties' decision-making organs.

The possibility that women's presence on the party congress may in some cases shape women's policy representation suggests an alternative conceptualization of the direct relationship hypothesis. The extent to which these types of parties' are likely to be classified by this component, however, depends on whether women's presence in the congress covaries with their representation in the parliamentary caucus. In the absence of a positive correlation between the two forms of numeric representation, these parties are likely to be poorly classified by both the direct and policy-stability clusters. Future work may therefore need to incorporate information on women's presence on these bodies into the concomitant model.

On the one hand, the findings from the concomitant models may reflect the difficulty of capturing agenda control within parties. On the other hand, the results may indicate that focusing solely on the role of parliamentarians, party leaders, and party congresses in shaping the electoral manifesto is misguided. Instead, in future analyses it may be useful to shift the focus to other factors that might influence classification into each of the four components representing the competing hypotheses.

Expanding on the notion that women's participation in party congresses may influence classification, one potential avenue for future research may be to consider the relationship between women's rights activists and political parties. In the preceding chapter, I posited that some parties (particularly left-leaning organizations) might be best explained by the policy-stability hypothesis. In particular, I observed that the dual promotion of women's numeric and policy representation had become a central tenant in some parties' platforms.

At the same time, I noted that even within ideologically leftist organizations, these outcomes were not inevitable. Rather, women within the organizations often had to engage in hard fought battles to place gender equality issues on the agenda (Lovenduski, 1986; Lovenduski and Norris, 1993). This suggests, in turn, that the

manner and extent to which female activists have (or have not) been able to penetrate party politics might help to explain party classification.

Weldon (2002) argues that autonomous women's movements can improve the representation of women in the policy-making process. If a party is not connected to women's movement actors, however, then it may be more likely to respond to demands for women's numeric and policy representation if doing so can advance its vote-seeking aims. Indeed, in her study of American and Canadian parties, Young (2000) notes that when women's movement organizations appeared to facilitate political parties electoral success, these parties have adopted the movement's issues as their own. In the absence of these vote-seeking incentives, these parties may remain relatively stable with respect to both women's numeric and policy representation.

Among parties that have ties to women's movement activists, the extent to which they are explained by the policy-stability versus direct or intervening hypotheses may vary based on the extent to which these activists have penetrated the organization. When the demands of the women's movement come into conflict with those of other policy actors within the party, the presence of female politicians—either within the parliamentary caucus or the leadership—may be crucial for the inclusion of these concerns on the party's policy agenda. If, on the other hand, the claims made by women's rights activists have been widely accepted within the organization, then policy stability may be expected to persist.

The connection between women's movements and political parties offers a potential alternative theory that may better explain classification into each of the four hypotheses outlined in the preceding chapters. Nonetheless, this is not the only other factor that may explain which parties are clustered into the components representing the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses. To the contrary, it is possible to posit a number of explanations for party clustering, including (but

not limited to) the informal norms concerning policy-making that cannot be easily measured. While this chapter thus offers only weak support for the assertion that policy-making authority explains party classification by the four alternative hypotheses, it also suggests that this is a fruitful topic for future research.

Chapter 5

Women's Presence and Policy Representation in the House of Commons

5.1 Introduction

Despite the prevalence of arguments positing a link between women's numeric and policy representation, the preceding chapters demonstrate that the gender makeup of parties' parliamentary delegations alone rarely explains attention to women on their policy platforms. Rather, alternative factors, including women's access to positions of power within parties, vote-seeking incentives, and stable policy attitudes often better account for policy representation. These findings, in turn, call into question the extent to which increasing women's presence within parties' parliamentary caucuses can be expected to shape these organizations' policy aims.

Though women's presence within parties' parliamentary delegations may not always alter their broader agendas, female politicians may still shape women's policy

representation. In particular, advocates linking women's numeric and policy representation posit that female representatives will act for women within legislative assemblies, facilitating the adoption of bills that benefit women. Much of the existing literature on this topic, moreover, highlights the ways in which female politicians represent women throughout the legislative process. In essence, while parties' agendas provide the basis for the policies proposed in Western European parliaments, including women in the legislative process is presumed to generate outcomes that benefit women.

In order to better understand whether, and to what extent, the presence of female parliamentarians influences policy-making within national assemblies, the remaining empirical chapters shift the level of analysis from political parties to legislatures and governments. Mirroring the previous analyses, in this chapter I return to the British case. As compared to other Western European governments, the British executive enjoys particularly strong policy-making authority. Representatives within the House of Commons, on the other hand, have comparatively little influence over the legislative agenda. In spite of the limits placed on parliamentarians, a number of studies point to the role played by female MPs in representing women's interests in the UK.

While interesting in and of itself, the study of women's policy representation within the House of Commons also offers broader insights into the adoption of legislation benefitting women. To begin with, if the presence of female parliamentarians is in fact associated with women's policy representation in the UK, this offers strong support for the notion of a direct relationship between numeric and policy representation more generally. Essentially, if female MPs can generate policy for women even in an institution where legislators have little policy-making authority, this relationship should certainly be expected to emerge in assemblies where parliamentarians are more able to shape the form and content of legislative initiatives.

At the same time, though the British case represents an extreme example of the constraints placed on parliamentarians in the policy-making process, the primacy of the executive in the UK is similar to other parliamentary systems. Consequently, by determining the factors that influence the current British Government's attitude towards women's policy representation, it may be possible to generate hypotheses that can be applied and tested elsewhere.

Using data gathered from interviews with parliamentarians[1] and qualitative text analysis of parliamentary debate transcripts, in the following sections I assess the role of female MPs in influencing policy in the House of Commons. After providing a brief overview of the existing literature, I evaluate whether, and to what extent, female MPs can influence legislative outcomes. Interviews with party activists and parliamentarians demonstrate that there is widespread disagreement about the extent to which the gender makeup of parties' parliamentary delegations shapes policy. While some informants believe that the presence of female MPs is largely irrelevant, others maintain that women representatives can, and do, affect women's policy representation.

In an effort to reconcile these competing arguments, the third section compares two cases in which women MPs sought to influence the Government's behavior. While in one case the women succeeded in their effort to quash a coalition proposal, in the other they were unable to defeat unfavorable legislation. These case studies demonstrate how female MPs use the limited tools available to them in an attempt to influence policy outcomes. They also show how the broader political context can facilitate and constrain the relationship between women's presence and policy representation.

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[1]More information about these interviews is available in the appendix.

Like the second chapter, the results thus illustrate that the link between women's presence and policy representation is not as straightforward as often presumed. The analysis, moreover, generates alternative theoretical expectations concerning the relationship between women's presence and policy representation within legislative assemblies. This work thus provides the foundation for the final empirical chapter, in which I place these hypotheses within the broader literature and test them in a cross-national framework.

5.2   Generating Theories from the British Case

Much of the literature on UK policy-making focuses on the central role played by the "core executive" of the British government—the Prime Minister, the Cabinet, and related governmental departments and organizations (Dunleavy and Rhodes, 1990; Rhodes and Dunleavy, 1995). This core executive comprises the key institutions and actors charged with developing policy and delivering public goods (Smith, 1999, 1). It is therefore widely considered to be the "driving force" of UK politics (Holliday, 2000, 8).

The dominance of the executive, also referred to as the government, can be attributed in large part to its capacity to control the legislative process. Unlike active assemblies that enjoy extensive powers over the introduction of legislation—such as the US Congress—Westminster systems are reactive assemblies that do not initiate policy (Mezey, 1979). Thus it is the executive, rather than the legislature, that introduces the overwhelming majority of legislation (Mattson, 1995; Bräuninger and Debus, 2009). Döring (1995b) and Siaroff (2003) further identify a series of institutional characteristics that facilitate the concentration of power within the government

vis-à-vis other actors. Among the advanced industrialized parliamentary democracies considered, the British executive holds the greater policy-making authority.

There are a number of dimensions along which British governments gains power at the expense of rank-and-file legislators. The government, for instance, retains control over the plenary agenda (Döring, 1995a). Legislative committees in the Commons are also comparatively weak (Damgaard, 1995; Mattson and Strøm, 1995), and there are strong restrictions on the introduction of private members' bills (Mattson, 1995). Each of these intra-cameral rules and procedures, in turn, advantage the government at the expense of both opposition party spokespersons (also known as shadow ministers) and backbenchers (those MPs who are not members of the government or shadow cabinet).[2]

The British women and politics literature acknowledges the importance of the prime minister and cabinet in the policy-making process (Annesley and Gains, 2010; Lovenduski, 2005b). Despite the constraints facing MPs, however, a number of studies dedicate significant attention to the behavior of female backbench representatives. Taken together, this research suggests that female parliamentarians do act for women.

Studies of female Labour MPs entering office following the 1997 general election, for example, revealed that half of those parliamentarians interviewed explicitly linked women's presence in office and the representation of women's concerns and perspectives (Childs, 2002, 2004). Almost one-third of these women articulated a shared affinity with, and felt a responsibility to act for, women as a constituency. When interviewed three years later, almost two-thirds of the female Labour MPs further stated that they had represented women in the House of Commons. Many of

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[2]The terms "frontbencher" and "backbencher" reflect the seating arrangements in the House of Commons. Government ministers and their official opposition spokespersons sit on the frontbenches, with their supporters, or backbenchers, sitting behind them. The "frontbench team" thus refers to parties' parliamentary leaders, while "backbench representatives" are rank-and-file members.

these respondents argued that women's concerns would not have been addressed, or would have taken a different form, had it not been for their presence in office. These self-assessments indicate that female representatives believe that they give voice to women's concerns within parliament.

Beyond self-assessments, there are cases in which female backbench MPs appear to have shaped policy outcomes. Christine McCafferty's campaign to reduce the value added tax (VAT) on sanitary products, for example, was an important factor in the Labour Government's decision to reduce this VAT from 17.5 percent to 5 percent (Childs and Withey, 2006; Childs and Krook, 2009). Along with female ministers and advisors, as well as women's groups, female MPs also lobbied to ensure the adoption of the 2001 Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act. In fact, female MPs from all parties were the primary participants in the plenary debates on the merits of the legislation (Childs, 2006).

In addition to these specific instances in which women MPs appear to have influenced policy outcomes, female backbenchers also act as advocates of women's policy representation more broadly. Though constrained in their policy-making capacity, these women report that they have represented women's interests in informal lobbying of party leaders and ministers, Early Day Motions, debates, select committee meetings, and intra-party gatherings (Childs, 2002, 2004; Childs and Withey, 2004; Lovenduski, 2001). Women MPs are also more likely than men to mention "women" or "gender" in parliamentary questions. Nearly half of all female parliamentarians posed a written or oral question related to women, as compared to only one-fifth of male MPs (Bird, 2005).

The existing literature thus generates competing expectations concerning the extent to which women's presence in office should be assumed to generate women's policy representation. On the one hand, research on policy-making in both the House

of Commons and parliamentary systems more broadly shows that backbench representatives have little policy-making authority. This literature thus suggests that in order to understand women's policy representation, it is necessary to focus on the aims of the executive. On the other hand, analyses of women's policy representation in the Commons dedicate significant attention to the activities of backbench representatives. These works indicate that female MPs seek to represent women and can sometimes influence policy.

5.3 The Impact of Women's Presence on Women's Policy Representation

Interviews with politicians similarly revealed contrasting beliefs about the influence of female parliamentarians on the adoption of policy for women. Most respondents agreed that increasing women's numeric representation would be beneficial for their respective parties. There was significant disagreement, however, concerning whether women's presence on the backbench influenced the introduction and adoption (as well as form and content) of policies related to women. A number of informants stated that the gender makeup of the parliamentary party was irrelevant, in large part because backbench MPs are so constrained in their policy-making authority. At the same time, other respondents believed that female MPs could influence parliamentary outcomes, and identified strategies used by both male and female parliamentarians to shape policy. Given these varied responses, the following sections address the arguments made by informants on both sides of the issue.

5.3.1   The Irrelevance of Women's Numeric Representation

When asked whether women's presence in the parliamentary delegation mattered for women's policy representation, one set of respondents was skeptical that *any* backbench parliamentarians could (or even should) influence policy. Consequently, they felt that the presence or absence of women MPs on the backbench was largely irrelevant. While a number of other MPs had described formal and informal mechanisms through which they could influence government policy, former members of both the Conservative and Labour frontbench teams argued that these measures were "futile."

As is consistent with the literature on executive dominance, experienced MPs felt that the government was especially powerful vis-à-vis parliament. Former shadow ministers further noted that in their experience the frontbench rarely adopted policy initiatives forwarded by backbench representatives. While ministers might discuss policy with members of the parliamentary caucus, this was only because they were obligated to do so, and not because they intended to alter their positions. In addition to doubting whether MPs could shape government policy, a number of parliamentarians did not believe that it was even their place to do so. Instead, they viewed their role as representing the interests of their constituents and/or scrutinizing government behavior.

Even though some respondents view scrutiny as the chief role of backbench MPs, serious doubts exist as to whether parliamentarians have either the incentives or capacity to truly hold the government accountable. Experienced backbench MPs were skeptical that more recently elected parliamentarians were willing to truly scrutinize government behavior. A Labour informant, for example, believed that aspirants who were more likely to defy the government—due to strong commitments to their constituencies or interest groups such as trade unions—were less likely to be selected as

candidates in the first place. Similarly, an experienced Conservative MP felt that many of his newly elected copartisans had been selected because of their commitment to Cameron. Thus, though candidates are selected by local party organizations (Hazan, 2006), some MPs felt that the politicians who were most likely to stand for office, and subsequently win selection and election contests, were likely to be strong adherents to their parties' policy programs.

Beyond candidate selection, the aim of promotion to the frontbench also limits legislators' incentives to criticize the policies of their party leaders. Legislators are often motivated by the desire to gain leadership positions within the party (Müller and Strøm, 1999b; Huber and Shipan, 2002). In the Commons, governing parties can thus control their backbenchers through the carrot of ministerial promotion (Benedetto and Hix, 2007). While some newly elected MPs argued that ministerial aspirations in no way shape their behavior, those MPs who were not interested in serving in the Government strongly believed that the "high-flyers" who were likely to be promoted were also unlikely to voice opposition to the party.

Beyond these informal constraints, there are also formal limitations placed on backbench parliamentarians seeking promotion. Serving as a Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) is widely viewed as the first step to gaining a ministerial position, and there are currently almost 50 PPS among the backbench representatives. While a PPS is not a member of government—and receives no additional salary for her work—she is viewed as part of the "payroll vote" and thus cannot vote against the party line. As a PPS, the MP also cannot make speeches or ask questions related to her minister's department. She is further expected to never publicly criticize the government. Together, these informal and formal constraints dissuade MPs who are seeking advancement from truly scrutinizing government policy.

Even among those backbenchers that were willing to hold the government to account, several MPs believed that it was impossible for them to truly alter policy once it had been introduced. Two members of the Panel of Chairs—the group of senior backbench MPs responsible for chairing committee hearings and debates—explicitly stated that parliamentary scrutiny was irrelevant. Both committee and plenary debates on legislation are often subject to strict time limits, making it impossible for legislators to "talk a bill dead."

Parliamentary committees, moreover, are viewed as especially weak. Each proposed bill is assessed by a unique committee whose membership is determined by the party whips.[3] Since the whips control which MPs will be charged with reviewing each piece of legislation, they will not assign a member to a committee unless they are confident that she supports the party's position. Thus, while MPs are formally tasked with scrutinizing bills, in practice there is very little they can do to alter proposed legislation.

In addition to their limited authority to shape bills' contents, it is not clear that even with greater authority female MPs would choose to represent women. Among the MPs interviewed, female Labour party informants were the most likely to argue that women's presence on the backbench mattered for women's policy representation. They were also the respondents who most frequently identified gender equality as a policy concern. Conservative women, on the other hand, appeared to be more ambivalent about the importance of gender in shaping legislative behavior or outcomes.

One of these female MPs, for example, stated that women mattered insofar as they brought different backgrounds to the Commons. At the same time, for her the more important distinction was between representatives who had a "passion for

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[3]Whips are MPs selected by the party leadership to ensure cohesion among the parliamentary caucus (Norton, 2010; Rogers and Walters, 2006).

their constituencies" and the metropolitan elite selected by Cameron. The other Conservative women interviewed also generally viewed themselves as representatives of their constituents, rather than of women more generally.

Newly elected Conservative MPs were in fact somewhat concerned about being viewed as representatives of a particular demographic group. A newly elected Conservative woman, for example, chose not to pursue the Education Select Committee, despite having previous experience in the field. Her decision was shaped in part by her worry that focusing on education would restrict her to operating in a policy area that was perceived as more feminine. Similarly, though there are a number of openly gay male MPs in the Conservative party, only one of those interviewed viewed himself as a representative of the homosexual community.

The fear of being viewed only as representatives of their ascriptive identities, and thus marginalized within the parliamentary party, may thus limit the extent to which some women MPs wish to advocate for women. The direct relationship between women's numeric and policy representation may consequently be hampered not only by the limited capacity of MPs to influence policy related to women, but also by the absence of their desire to do so.

5.3.2 The Importance of Women's Numeric Representation

While some informants were skeptical about the connection between numeric and policy representation, others believed that women's presence among backbench MPs could lead to attention to women on the policy agenda. Among these respondents, there were two distinct groups. The first believed that women's presence had some limited direct influence, but was primarily important because it allowed women to ascend to positions of power within the government. The second group, comprised

primarily of female Labour MPs, believed that women's presence not only directly influenced policy outcomes, but was also essential in order for women's representation to emerge.

The Indirect Relationship between Presence and Policy Representation

Several respondents pointed to the gradual ascension of women to positions of influence within the government as the primary mechanism by which women's numeric representation could influence policy representation. Since frontbench members are largely recruited from the backbenches, women's presence within the parliamentary caucus was perceived as essential to their access to ministerial portfolios. Given the executive's policy-making authority, once in government these women could exert some influence over the legislative agenda.

Labour respondents, for example, identified the advancement of female MPs to the frontbench as one of the primary benefits of women's presence in office. Others, including female peers and a senior female MP, viewed this as the only mechanism through which women could influence the policy agenda. Across many interviews, particularly those with Labour party members, politicians and activists repeatedly cited Deputy Leader Harriet Harman's presence among the party elite as instrumental for advancing women's policy representation.

Beyond Harman, many informants highlighted the feminist leanings of several women currently in the Labour party shadow cabinet. Across multiple interviews, respondents named frontbenchers who in their view sought to ensure the representation of women within the party, including: Shadow Home Secretary and Shadow Minister for Women and Equalities, Yvette Cooper; Shadow Leader of the House of Commons, Angela Eagle; Shadow Secretary of State for Transport, Maria Eagle; and Shadow Minister for London and the Olympics, Tessa Jowell. The presence of these women

was perceived as essential for ensuring that, while in opposition, Labour continued to prioritize gender equality and challenge the Government's legislative initiatives that disproportionately disadvantage women.

Several Conservative male MPs posited similar arguments to those made by Labour respondents. While women's increased presence in the party's parliamentary delegation was unlikely to have any immediate effect, these men believed that by altering the pool of candidates for cabinet positions, women's numeric representation could eventually influence the policy formation process. Just as Labour women ascended to the top ranks of government, respondents from across all parties were optimistic about the future of the newly elected Conservative women. Multiple interviewees stated that the women in the Conservative party's new-intake were especially "talented." Thus, though the Government is currently predominantly male, they expected that some of these women would be promoted in the coming years.

The Direct Relationship between Presence and Policy Representation

In contrast to those informants who voiced skepticism about the role of backbench MPs in shaping policy, several parliamentarians and activists from across both the Conservative and Labour parties believed that women's representation "mattered on the margins." A number of newly elected conservative men spoke positively of gender diversity, for example, but did not offer specific examples of how, and in what ways, women's presence mattered. Other respondents simply noted that diversity was essential to having a "good team."

Consistent with previous research, in which female MPs report having a different style of politics than their male colleagues (Bochel and Briggs, 2000; Childs, 2004), several informants also felt that women's presence changed the "way the chamber feels" and the tone or style of debate. A female Liberal Democrat party leader and

peer argued, for example, that increasing the presence of women MPs would alter the culture, but not the policy, of the parliamentary party.

Beyond these intangible effects, some legislators believed backbenchers could shape policy outcomes. In particular, female Labour party MPs almost uniformly stated that the presence of women parliamentarians mattered for women's policy representation. These informants argued that women's presence was essential for ensuring that women's concerns reached the policy agenda. Without female legislators, they felt these issues would remain unnoticed by male parliamentarians and ministers.

When asked to recall specific examples, a female former junior minister pointed to both parliamentary debates about breast cancer, and the adoption of legislation on domestic violence, as instances of female MPs exerting power over the policy-making process. Other respondents indicated that female parliamentarians were important not only at the policy formation stage, but also in ensuring that women's policy would reach, and remain on, the parliamentary agenda. As a case in point, a current member of the Labour frontbench team argued that without women MPs, the Equality Act of 2010 might have been dropped from the party's policy agenda in the run-up to the general election.

Several female Labour MPs further argued that in order to affect policy it was necessary to have women as representatives on both the front and backbenches. This allows female politicians to address issues from multiple angles. Female backbenchers, moreover, can offer support to women on the frontbench team. A former Blair advisor noted, for example, that women's presence within the parliamentary party had made a difference for the female ministers. There are also clear examples of backbench MPs bolstering female cabinet members in the Commons. When asked about a question she tabled for Lynne Featherstone (Minister for Equalities), a female Liberal Democrat MP responded that the question was designed to show her support for the

minister and provide Featherstone with the opportunity to make a point about the issue at hand.

Finally, Labour's backbench women stressed the importance of female MPs in holding the government publicly accountable on issues related to women. An experienced female Labour MP, for example, claimed that her mere presence in the room during select committee debates altered ministers' behavior. When a women's rights activist is present, she argued, cabinet members know that they will be questioned about women's issues and prepare a response in advance.

Several female Labour parliamentarians further noted that now that the party was in opposition, women's presence on the backbench was especially important. As the party cannot legislate, its chief role is to challenge policies with which it disagrees. Female MPs can, in turn, play an important role in drawing attention to legislation that disadvantages women. When asked about a Westminster Hall Debate she had sponsored, for example, a female Labour MP stated that while she did not expect to alter the Government's policy, she wanted to have "Cameron's broken promises" to a group of female constituents on the record.

5.4   The Success and Failure of Women MPs in Influencing Government Policy

On group of informants argued that women's presence among parties' parliamentary caucuses was irrelevant for women's policy representation, or mattered only insofar as those women could be promoted to the parties' frontbench teams. Another group felt that backbench MPs in general—and female parliamentarians in particular—could shape policy. Some of these respondents even recalled specific cases

in which women on the backbench were able to represent women's interests. In light of these competing accounts of the role played by backbench parliamentarians, this section analyzes the influence of female legislators' behavior in two distinct policy debates during the first months of the new Government.

The following case studies illustrate how female MPs attempt to shape government policy. They reveal that neither the proponents nor detractors of backbench MPs are wholly correct. While in one case female MPs were able to successfully alter the coalition's position, in the other they were unable to do so. By comparing the two cases, the analysis demonstrates the conditions under which women's presence on the backbenches can shape policy and those in which it cannot.

5.4.1 Women MPs and the Defeat of Rape Anonymity

Following the 2010 general election, representatives from the Liberal Democrats and the Conservative party met to devise a coalition agreement outlining the new Government's policy program. When published on May 12, 2010, it came to light that the entirely male coalition negotiating team included a provision in the agreement that would extend anonymity to defendants in rape cases in England and Wales.[4] This policy, which had previously been adopted at the Liberal Democrat party conference in 2006, would allow those accused of rape to remain anonymous until they were convicted. Proponents argued that this would prevent those falsely accused of rape from suffering the stigma associated with the crime, which they believed often was not alleviated even in cases where the charges were dropped or the defendants found not guilty.

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[4]http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/coalition_programme_for_government.pdf

Though officially a policy of the Liberal Democrats, the anonymity provision had not been included in either of the governing parties' electoral manifestos. It was thus an unexpected addition to the coalition agreement, and once made public it became the subject of substantial criticism from rape-prevention advocates. In the UK, conviction rates for rapes—which have frequently been reported as among the lowest in Western Europe–have been the subject of considerable political and media attention (Stern, 2010). In light of the perceived inability of the state to adequately punish rapists, a large number of women's organizations viewed this policy as only further exacerbating this problem. End Violence Against Women—a coalition of almost 50 organizations, including the largest women's groups in the UK—spoke out against the provision. Like other opponents, they argued that it would deny other victims information that might encourage them to come forward, limit police efforts in apprehending suspects, and provide unfair protections to accused rapists that were not available to suspects of other serious crimes.[5]

The rape anonymity provision generated an immediate reaction from women within the Labour party. One of the first criticisms came from Harriet Harman in her official response to the Government's proposed legislative program. While the policy was not mentioned in the Queen's Speech outlining this program, in her comments following the address Harman requested that the Government reconsider the proposal. Her arguments against it were wholly consistent with those made by women's organizations.[6] Harman once again raised the issue the following week dur-

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[5]http://www.endviolenceagainstwomen.org.uk/

[6]http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100525/debtext/
100525-0003.htm

ing the first Prime Minister's Questions.[7] In response, Cameron defended the policy, noting that it would later be brought forward to the House of Commons so that it could be debated and discussed.[8]

While Harman was drawing public attention to the rape anonymity issue, female Labour MPs had already begun a sustained campaign against the policy. The day before Harman's first mention of rape anonymity, Labour MP Fiona Mactaggart sponsored an Early Day Motion (EDM) calling on the Government to withdraw the proposal.[9] EDMs, which are formal motions tabled for debate in the House of Commons by backbench MPs, provide parliamentarians with an opportunity to express their opinions and gather support on issues (Norton, 2010; Rogers and Walters, 2006).

Though their impact on policy remains contested,[10] Mactaggart's motion—which was cosponsored by five other Labour women— drew a large number of supporters (106 in total). In fact, 40 percent of the Labour party's parliamentary caucus registered their support for the motion. This EDM was thus useful insofar as it drew parliamentarians' attention to the issue and demonstrated Labour's opposition to

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[7]For half an hour each week, the British Prime Minister answers oral questions from MPs during Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs). PMQs receive significant media attention and serve as a key venue for the opposition to challenge government policy.

[8]http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100602/debtext/100602-0002.htm#1006029000529

[9]http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2010-12/105

[10]On average, over 1,500 EDMs are introduced per parliamentary session. These motions cover a wide range of issues, from relatively trivial matters to serious policy concerns. Because of the larger number of EDMs, they are rarely debated in the Commons. Consequently, there is no clear consensus as to whether these motions influence government behavior. On the one hand, some view them as "parliamentary graffiti" and argue that their impact is limited. On the other hand, many MPs (and many outside the House) value them as a means for expressing opinions and believe that they are a useful source of political intelligence for the whips (Norton, 2010; Rogers and Walters, 2006). Thus, while a small number of informants believed that EDMs were valueless, and now refuse to sponsor or sign these motions, parliamentarians from across all parties had used them to draw attention to events and causes. These MPs believed that EDMs garnering a large number of supporters—typically described as over 100 MPs—could attract ministerial attention.

the policy. The motion illustrated, moreover, that female Labour MPs in particular disagreed with the rape anonymity provision. While women hold under one-third of seats in the parliamentary party, they comprised 54 percent of those supporting the EDM.

In contrast to EDMs, which do not require a response from the government, written and oral questions can be used to force ministers to address the concerns raised by backbench MPs. Oral questions are asked and answered on the floor of the House of Commons during departmental Question Time, while responses to written questions are sent directly to the MP. The rules governing the two forms of questions differ, with significantly more restrictions being placed on oral questions. Both types of questions, however, receive a response from a minister, with the question and response being subsequently printed in the Hansard (the official report of the proceedings of parliament).[11]

In total, the rape anonymity issue was raised on 16 different days, often repeatedly in the same day. Initially, questions were directed primarily at the Under-Secretary of State for Justice, Crispin Blunt, as his remit was most directly related to the policy. Over time, the MPs broadened their reach, tabling questions to Kenneth Clarke (Secretary of State for Justice), Lynne Featherstone (Under-Secretary for Equalities), and Dominic Grieve (Attorney General). When asked about these efforts, two female MPs who had raised questions responded that they aimed to force the Government

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[11]A survey of 167 MPs revealed that parliamentarians have a number of motivations for posing questions, including: to research issues and elicit information; to make points relevant to their constituents or help with local campaigns; to get the government's position on record; and finally, to place pressure on ministers (Rogers and Walters, 2006). In particular, written questions are a way of holding the government to account on the details of particularly policies (Rogers and Walters, 2006), while oral questions are often used to elicit statements on government policy that MPs believe may help (or, if the MP is in the opposition, embarrass) the government (Norton, 2010). Tabling a question, moreover, can be a first step in a broader campaign to influence the policy agenda (Rogers and Walters, 2006). Consequently, when interviewed many MPs cited specific cases in which they had used oral and/or written questions as part of their efforts to raise policy concerns.

to address the rape anonymity proposal and illustrate that the adoption of the policy would draw widespread criticism from women on the left.

Of the female Labour MPs involved with the anti-anonymity campaign, Caroline Flint was one of the most vocal opponents of the policy. Flint not only tabled more questions about the proposal than any other MP, she also requested that a half-hour adjournment debate be held on the issue. These debates, which are conducted at the end of the business day, are designed to provide backbench members with the opportunity to raise issues of concern with the appropriate minister. While most are sparsely attended—with some including only the MP and minister— they occasionally garner significant attention from parliamentarians, ministers, and even the media.[12]

Though her debate did not begin until 10:49 PM, it drew over 30 Labour MPs, the vast majority of whom were women.[13] In order to heighten the impact of the debate, on the same day Flint also published an editorial in *The Independent* condemning the Government's policy.[14] The comparatively large number of attendees, combined with Flint's article, allowed the adjournment debate to capture some media attention. It was reported by the *BBC*[15] and *The Guardian*,[16] among others.

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[12]Half-hour adjournment debates allow an MP, chosen by a ballot, to raise an issue of concern. The relevant (junior) minister then responds to the points made. These short debates are extremely popular with backbench MPs (Norton, 2010; Rogers and Walters, 2006), and several informants viewed them as a mechanism by which to bring policy concerns to the government's attention.

[13]http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100607/debtext/100607-0024.htm

[14]http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/caroline-flint-anonymity-is-an-enemy-of-justice-1993154.html

[15]http://news.bbc.co.uk/democracylive/hi/house_of_commons/newsid_8725000/8725707.stm

[16]http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/jun/07/nick-clegg-rapeanonymity-rethink

While previously stating that the rape anonymity legislation was unlikely to be brought forward in the near future, the degree of scrutiny applied by female Labour MPs forced the Government to hold a debate on the issue on July 8.[17] Both Blunt and Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice, Jonathan Djanogly, were tasked with defending the Government's position. Five fellow Conservative men joined them in supporting the anonymity policy. Three male Liberal Democrats offered more ambivalent responses, with one explicitly noting that the policy should be extended to cover all crimes. As expected, the Labour party took a strong stand against the proposal. Of the twelve Labour MPs criticizing anonymity for accused rapists, 10 were women. These included Shadow Minister for Justice, Maria Eagle, and Shadow Minister for Women, Yvette Cooper.

More surprising than the arguments forwarded by Labour women—and arguably more problematic for the Government—were the objections raised by Conservative women MPs during the debate. Despite the deterrents faced by backbench MPs with respect to opposing the government, four newly elected Conservative women voiced their concerns about the policy during the debate. Anna Soubry, for example, criticized the Government for "singling out rape," arguing instead that the provision should be extended to cover most crimes. Louise (Bagshawe) Mensch and Nicola Blackwood also argued that by focusing only on those accused of rape, the Government was sending a "negative signal about women" and the "wrong message to rape victims." Finally, drawing on her experience as a medical examiner, Sarah Wollaston claimed that many rapists were serial offenders and warned against adding a "further barrier" to women coming forward to make allegations.

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[17]A complete transcript of the debate is available at: `http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100708/debtext/100708-0002.htm#10070875001226`

The objections raised by these women illustrate their deep skepticism of the coalition agreement's focus on anonymity only in the case of rape. These criticisms, moreover, reflected the divisiveness of the policy for members of the governing parties. The Labour MPs who were active in the anti-anonymity campaign believed that many women within the Liberal Democrats and the Conservative party disapproved of the policy, yet felt they should not take a public stand against the coalition.

This supposition is at least partially supported by statements made by Kenneth Clarke. During Question Time, he conceded that there were "arguments on both sides" of the policy and stated that he believed that all parties would "prefer a fairly free vote on the issue," because he did not believe that there was consensus within the organizations.[18] By allowing a free vote, in which legislators are allowed to vote in accordance with their conscience rather than an official party line, the Government may have been acknowledging that they were likely to face a rebellion on the issue from their own backbenchers. Indeed, during her speech Soubry thanked Blunt for listening to the objections forwarded by the "many of us who do not support all of the Government's proposals in this matter."

While Conservative MP Gareth Johnson warned against viewing the proposal as a "gender issue" or "battle of the sexes," in reality opinions appear to have largely divided based on gender, rather than party lines. The protests from women on both sides of the House of Commons seem to have in turn swayed the coalition's position on the rape anonymity policy. Following the debate, the Government quietly announced that it was abandoning the proposal. In a written ministerial statement, Blunt noted that in the absence of "clear and sound evidence" justifying the policy,

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[18]http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100615/debtext/100615-0002.htm

the Government had concluded that it did not stand on its merits and would not be pursued further.[19]

5.4.2 Women MPs and the Elimination of the Health in Pregnancy Grant

In 2007, the Commons adopted legislation providing a one-time payment of £190 to women in their 25th week of pregnancy.[20] Though initially introduced as a child development initiative aimed at encouraging expectant mothers to maintain a healthy diet, upon adoption the Health in Pregnancy Grant (HiPG) was framed simply as a measure to offset the extra costs incurred by women during pregnancy. While the grant was conditional on receiving health advice from a medical professional, there were no other restrictions attached to the provision. After the policy came into effect in 2009, all women (regardless of income) could receive the grant, and expectant mothers could spend the money however they deemed fit.

Neither the Conservatives nor the Liberal Democrats addressed the HiPG in their 2010 electoral manifestos, nor was this grant mentioned in the coalition agreement. Both parties had, however, promised public spending cuts in order to control the deficit. In the coalition program, moreover, the parties pledged to introduce an emergency budget outlining a plan for deficit reduction that would include £6 billion in cuts. When this emergency budget was introduced in June 2010, Chancellor of

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[19]http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101112/wmstext/101112m0001.htm

[20]http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media/1/0/healthinpregrancygrantdraftregs070108.pdf

the Exchequer George Osborne announced that the Government would eliminate the "poorly-targeted" HiPG policy.[21]

As was the case with the rape anonymity proposal, the coalition's policy once again drew immediate criticism from Harman in her official response as acting Labour party leader. In her reply to Osborne, Harman framed the elimination of the grant and other cuts as "unfair on families," presenting the policy as directly contradicting Cameron's previous promise that the Conservatives would be the most "family friendly government" in the country's history.[22] Harman's attack represented the beginning of sustained criticism of the Government from Labour MPs. Between the introduction of the budget in June and the repeal of the policy in December 2010, they repeatedly raised the issue during debates and with written and oral questions.

The backbench Labour women once again began a coordinated campaign attacking the policy via written questions. In total, over 20 written questions were tabled concerning the policy, 19 of which were asked by female Labour MPs. The overwhelming majority of these questions took the same form, with each female MP asking how many grants had been issued to women in her constituency. In each case, the minister replied that the cost of gathering this information was prohibitive, and thus the question could not be answered. After the first ministerial response, these Labour women knew that they would not receive the information requested. When asked about her question, a female Labour MP responded that her aim was not to gather information per se, but rather to demonstrate that the cut had not been well researched.

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[21]http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100622/debtext/100622-0005.htm

[22]http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2010/01/David_Cameron_Mending_our_Broken_Society.aspx

Just as Caroline Flint requested an adjournment debate addressing the rape anonymity policy, on September 6th Labour MP Diane Abbott held an adjournment debate focusing on the impact of public expenditure reductions on women.[23] The elimination of the HiPG was cited, in turn, as a key example of the ways in which the spending cuts disproportionately affected women. Once again, a number of female Labour parliamentarians attended the session in support of Abbott's position.

Following almost three months of scrutiny via questions and debates, the Government introduced legislation repealing the HiPG on September 15 and the bill had its second reading on October 26.[24] The second reading of a bill provides MPs with their first opportunity to debate the main principles of the legislation. After this stage, the Commons votes on whether the bill should proceed to committee. During the debate, a large numbers of Labour MPs came forward to criticize the bill, with 17 female and 19 male Labour backbenchers speaking against the spending cut. Attendance by coalition backbenchers was much lower, with only eleven Conservatives and two Liberal Democrats speaking in favor of the legislation.

While slightly more Labour men than women attended the debate, analyzing the content of those speeches demonstrates that female MPs were more likely to directly address the HiPG. Their male counterparts, in contrast, largely focused on the provision in the bill cutting child trust funds. The female legislators also made more references to the effects of the policy on women. In total, eleven backbench Labour women spoke directly about the grant and/or the impact of cuts on women, as compared to only five men (one of whom was the shadow minister officially representing

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[23]http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100906/debtext/100906-0004.htm#10090716003361

[24]http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101026/debtext/101026-0002.htm

the opposition). The gender imbalance in debate participation was even more evident on the Government's benches. There were only two women among the coalition MPs speaking in favor of the legislation. Of these women, moreover, only one voiced support for eliminating the HiPG.

In conversations about the debate, the Labour representatives who had participated continued to voice their criticisms of the Government's policy, which they viewed as a key example of the way in which the coalition "hurt women." These informants also argued that the poor attendance by Government MPs was indicative of a general lack of enthusiasm for the policy (especially among Liberal Democrats). In particular, they believed that the near total absence of female MPs speaking in favor of the spending cut underscored the unpopularity of the policy among coalition women.

Interviews with Conservative participants reveal some support for the Labour MPs' assertions. The male MPs who had spoken in favor of the legislation expressed strong support for the repeal of the HiPG. While when interviewed they typically stated that the Conservatives cared deeply about women's health, given the economic crisis they felt that the grant was no longer feasible. They further pointed to the timing of the grant late in pregnancy, the universal (rather than mean's tested) nature of the provision, and the absence of restrictions on how the money could be spent as evidence that the initial policy had been poorly formulated. Consequently, they were more than willing to defend the elimination of the grant.

The Conservative women interviewed were more ambivalent about the HiPG, and did not voice the same concerns about the policy as their male colleagues. Instead, they viewed the elimination of the grant as a byproduct of a financial crisis that forced the Government to make unpopular spending cuts. Thus, while they were not glad to see the end of the HiPG, they understood the motivation behind the legislation.

The female MP who spoke in favor of the spending cut at the debate, moreover, was much less resolute than her male colleagues. While she did not disagree with the proposal, she also did not feel strongly enough about the legislation to defend it publicly. Shortly before the debate, however, a Conservative whip had asked her to speak in favor of the Government's position. As a newly elected representative she wanted to help the party and thus obliged.

Following the second reading, the bill progressed to a Public Bill Committee (PBC). The party whips determine the composition of these committees, and in this case both the Government and opposition seem to have been particularly sensitive to the gendered nature of the legislation being considered. While Labour men and women had spoken at the second reading in equal numbers, of the seven MPs the party assigned to the PBC, six were women. The only male Labour representative was a shadow minister, whose presence was predetermined by his position within the party.

Similarly, just as a Conservative party whip recruited a female MP to defend the elimination of the HiPG, the whips also appear to have wanted women to sit on the PBC. While only two Conservative backbench women had spoken in favor of the legislation during the debate, four Conservative female MPs were assigned to the committee. Interestingly, when interviewed one of these women stated that she had not expressed any interest in serving on this PBC, while a Conservative male MP noted that he had specifically asked the whips to be assigned yet was not selected.

With the inclusion of a female representative from Northern Ireland's Social Democratic and Labour party, in total 11 of the committee's 18 members were female. While women's presence is often linked to women's policy representation, in this case partisanship rather sex was the key determinant of legislators' behavior. The Labour MPs—led by newly appointed Shadow Minister to the Treasury, Kerry McCarthy—

introduced a series of amendments designed to mitigate the effects of the legislation on women.[25] These included a cost-benefit analysis of the repeal, delayed implementation of the legislation, and provisions asking the Government to consider adopting a voucher system or mean's tested grant to replace the HiPG. Each of these was rejected by the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats, and in each case the Conservative women voted in accordance with the party line. Thus, despite fierce opposition from female Labour MPs and the initial ambivalence expressed by Conservative women, in this case the Government prevailed.

Despite the majority female membership, the PBC returned the Government's desired outcome and the bill moved forward largely unaltered. The coalition's success at the committee stage was indicative of the relative ease with which the legislation would now be adopted. While Labour MPs continued to criticize the bill following the PBC hearings, the legislation passed through the remaining stages of legislative scrutiny with few problems. The final bill was adopted in December of 2010 and the HiPG was eliminated in April 2011.

5.4.3   Explaining Contrasting Outcomes

Taken together, these case studies illustrate the strategies employed by backbench women to influence government policy. Though British parliamentarians have limited policy-making authority, female MPs used Early Day Motions, written and oral questions, and debates to publicly voice their opposition to both Government policies. At the same, comparing these cases demonstrates that while in some instances women's presence can shape women's policy representation, in others female MPs

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[25]http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmbills/073/pro0730211p.1-2.html

cannot influence parliamentary outcomes. Though the Government abandoned the unfavorable rape anonymity policy, it refused to offer even minor concessions on the elimination of the HiPG. What accounts for these contrasting outcomes?

When interviewed, members of the Labour party were quick to claim responsibility for the demise of the rape anonymity policy. In reality, the Government's decision was likely influenced by both the opposition women's sustained campaign against the proposal and the dissent among women on its own backbenches. In fact, in response to a final written question tabled by Caroline Flint, Blunt explicitly noted that the Government was further delaying actions on non-statutory measures in order to properly address the "many questions that have been raised, in particular those raised in the debate on 8 July."[26] His statement illustrates the effectiveness of women MPs cross-partisan opposition in thwarting the proposal before it could be drafted as legislation.

Women in the Labour party also launched a campaign against the elimination of the Health in Pregnancy Grant. Female MPs within the governing parties, moreover, did not appear to be enthusiastic about rescinding the grants. No female Liberal Democrats ever spoke in favor of the elimination of HiPG, and the Conservative women interviewed seemed ambivalent about the policy. Even those women who publicly defended the bill appear to have done so at the request of the whips. Nonetheless, coalition women were not willing to defy the Government on this policy, as they had been on the rape anonymity proposal. Without the threat of a rebellion, the Government had no incentive to alter the policy to mitigate its impact on women.

Both the readiness of coalition MPs to dissent from the party line, and the willingness of the Government to acquiesce to backbench opposition, are each in turn

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[26]http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm100727/text/100727w0002.htm

shaped by the governing parties' policy priorities. Neither the rape anonymity proposal nor the elimination of the HiPG were included in the Conservative's or the Liberal Democrats' manifestos or the coalition agreement. The coalition had, however, committed to reducing the deficit through spending reductions. Once the emergency budget promised the elimination of the grants, there was little that backbench MPs could do to sway the Government's position. Thus, even if female coalition MPs disagreed with the spending reduction, speaking against it would not have saved the policy. Rather, it would only harm their prospects of promotion within their parties.

The rape anonymity proposal, in contrast, was not included in the Queen's Speech outlining the coalition's legislative agenda. In a debate on the issue, Clarke further made it clear that it was not a priority for the Government. Women on the Conservative backbenches could thus voice their opposition to the proposal without jeopardizing a major coalition policy initiative. Their dissent therefore posed less risk to their careers as parliamentarians. At the same time, because the policy was not viewed as of primary importance, the Government was willing to acquiesce to women's demands on this issue.

Just as the Government was more inclined to change its position on a low- than high-priority policy proposal, electoral concerns also made it more willing to concede to women MPs on the rape anonymity provision than the pregnancy grants. Though both initiatives are unfavorable for women, the HiPG could be framed as irresponsible Labour spending. Under the cover of deficit reduction, the Government could clearly justify the elimination of this non-mean's tested welfare policy. Assuming that the economic situation will improve before the next election, the Government appears to believe that female voters will overlook these early spending cuts and attribute the recovery to coalition policies.

175

While the adoption of the rape anonymity policy may have appealed to activists within the Liberal Democrats, this provision was not likely to strengthen either party's support among the swing voters that determine elections. In fact, the outcry by both Labour and Conservative female MPs illustrated that the policy would likely be poorly received by women in the electorate. As the Government was already introducing a package of deep public spending cuts that disproportionately affected women, there was no reason to move forward with legislation that would only further damage the parties' support among female voters.

The comparison of these two cases thus illustrates how the direct relationship is highly conditional on the broader policy-making environment. After proposing the elimination of HiPG in the emergency budget, the Government was unlikely to back down from this cost-cutting measure. In contrast, the coalition was more willing to acquiesce to women MPs on the rape anonymity proposal, as it was a low-priority issue that offered no clear electoral advantage to the governing parties. If the demands of female MPs are in conflict with the cabinet's major initiatives, governing parties will thus likely use the disciplinary tools available to them to constrain legislators' behavior. Consequently, regardless of female parliamentarians' commitments to representing women, we cannot presume that their presence in legislative assemblies will always result in greater policy representation.

5.5   Broader Implications of the British Case

When asked about the British policy-making process, some politicians and party activists argued that women's presence among parties' parliamentary caucuses was irrelevant for women's policy representation, or mattered only insofar as those women could be promoted to the frontbench. Their arguments, in turn, are consistent with

the literature highlighting executive dominance in the UK. In contrast, others felt that female parliamentarians in particular (and backbench MPs more broadly) could shape policy. These arguments also find support in the broader literature on the role of parliamentarians in influencing government behavior. Webb (2000), for example, argues that parliamentarians not only determine the broad ideological parameters in which their leaders operate, but can also help to shape the political agenda and occasionally exert independent influence on the development of public policy. Similarly, Rogers and Walters (2006) also claims that MPs have the opportunity to contribute to the development of party policies.

In light of these competing accounts of the role played by backbench parliamentarians, this chapter analyzed the influence of female legislators' behavior in two distinct policy debates during the first months of the coalition. These case studies illustrate that there are many female politicians (particularly within the Labour party) who aim to advance women's policy representation. While British parliamentarians have limited policy-making authority, female MPs used Early Day Motions, written and oral questions, and debates to publicly voice their opposition to both Government policies. At the same time, they also shed light on alternative factors that appear to influence women's policy representation within parliamentary assemblies.

As women were able to block the introduction of legislation that was opposed by women's rights activists, the first case study supports the assertion of a direct relationship between women's presence and policy representation. Women's inability to garner even minor concessions from the Government with respect to the HiPG, however, draws attention to the alternative considerations influencing women's policy representation. In particular, the results demonstrate the power of the Government vis-à-vis the parliament.

In the HiPG case, Labour women actively opposed eliminating the provision. Even some female backbench MPs from the governing coalition seemed hesitant about the legislation. Nonetheless, there were limits to what these women could achieve given their minimal policy-making authority. While women can block the introduction of legislation in some circumstances, it is much more difficult for backbench MPs to alter a bill once it has been introduced. It is virtually impossible, moreover, for these female parliamentarians to initiate alternative legislation that would benefit women.

Though female parliamentarians are largely reacting to government initiatives, members of the frontbench team are directly responsible for shaping the form and content of the government's legislative agenda. The comparative strength of the executive (and weakness of the legislature) in turn suggests that it may be especially important that women be represented in cabinets. If female politicians are in fact more likely to represent women, their inclusion within the government is more likely to lead to attention to women on the policy agenda than their presence on the backbench.

The absence of women from positions of power may similarly limit women's policy representation. With respect to the rape anonymity policy, for example, it is possible that this issue may not have been raised at all were it not for the total absence of women on both parties' coalition negotiating teams. Including a provision that specifically protected accused rapists was inevitably going to draw the ire of women's organizations. Given that the Conservative party in particular had actively worked to court female voters, the inclusion of this policy seems antithetical to efforts to rehabilitate its image among women within the electorate. Though it is impossible to observe the counter-factual condition, had any woman been present in the coalition negotiations, she might have drawn attention to the fact that the inclusion of this provision—which was present in neither parties' manifesto—would likely result in an otherwise easily avoidable controversy.

It is therefore possible that increasing the number of female politicians may lead to the adoption of policy for women. In order for this relationship to emerge, however, female politicians must first ascend to positions of influence within the executive. While as backbench legislators they are likely to have only limited capacity to influence the government's agenda, after entering the cabinet they can better advocate for women's policy representation. In essence, the connection between the presence of female legislators and attention to women on the policy agenda may be indirect, with female leaders acting as an intervening factor linking numeric and policy representation.

Comparing the rape anonymity and HiPG proposals further indicates that governments' policy preferences may strongly affect the extent to which female representatives may influence legislative outcomes. As was the case with the rape-anonymity proposal, female politicians may be able to exert influence in areas that are of low-priority for the governing parties or in which their commitments are ill-defined. Their behavior is less likely to alter the executive's attitudes on deeply held policy commitments, however, such as the deficit reduction policy that led to the elimination of the pregnancy grants. Accounting for these commitments—by considering governing parties' broader manifesto pledges, for example—may in turn explain the presence or absence of attention to women on the policy agenda.

While governing parties seek to implement their preferred policies, they are also sensitive to how legislation will be perceived by voters. Women's policy representation may, in turn, be partially shaped by parties' electoral incentives. The rape anonymity proposal, for example, represents a case in which the coalition chose to forgo a policy that might hurt its standing among female voters. At the same time, it is also possible that governing parties may sometimes explicitly adopt legislation in order to gain the support of women in the electorate.

Consider, for example, the introduction of the HiPG by the last Labour Government. In interviews, Labour MPs argued that the provision was part of a larger initiative to boost healthcare spending in the UK to levels comparable to other Western European states. The timeline for implementing the policy, however, also meant that a subset of women who are often viewed as potential swing voters would receive a cash benefit from the Government—with almost no stipulations attached—in the year preceding the general election. While governments' broader policy aims obviously shape the legislation they introduce, they also seek to win reelection. Women's policy representation may consequently be influenced in part by these vote-seeking aims.

The case studies presented in this chapter indicate that while female legislators may seek to represent women, women's policy representation is also shaped by factors beyond their presence in parliaments. Though in other Western European assemblies legislators have more influence over policy, major initiatives almost always emerge from the government. Thus, if female politicians do not have access to ministerial positions—or their demands are in conflict with cabinets' policy or vote-seeking aims—their presence may not result in the adoption of policy for women. In essence, because women MPs are operating within a constrained policy-making environment, even if there is a strong link between women's numeric and policy representation, we cannot uniformly expect this relationship to emerge.

While the presence of female legislators alone may not explain the adoption of legislation for women, this chapter suggests alternative mechanisms that may account for women's policy representation. At the same, as was the case in the previous qualitative analysis, focusing only on two policy debates results in an overdetermined outcome variable. Within these two cases, moreover, there is clear confounding between the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-oriented explanations. Though

this chapter adds nuance to our understanding of women's representation within the legislative arena, in the absence of further study it is impossible to determine which, if any, of these theories best accounts for the adoption of policy for women.

In order to test the competing hypotheses, it is therefore necessary to expand the number of observations included in the analysis. To this end, the next chapter implements a quantitative study of the adoption of legislation related to women. Specifically, I consider the extension of family leave provisions by 136 governments across 15 Western European countries over 20 years. As is suggested by the qualitative case studies presented in this chapter, this statistical analysis confirms that the relationship between women's presence and attention to women on the policy agenda is more complicated than indicated by the direct relationship.

Chapter 6

Women's Presence and the Adoption of Policy for Women

6.1   Introduction

Evidence from the British House of Commons indicates that at least some female parliamentarians seek to represent women's interests within parliament, and that they often do so at higher rates than their male counterparts. Female Labour party MPs state, moreover, that women's presence is necessary for women's policy representation. Analyzing their behavior further demonstrates that they do give voice to women's interest during parliamentary debates and in Public Bill Committee hearings. Taken together, these findings provides some support for the assertion of a direct relationship between women's presence and policy representation within national assemblies.

At the same time, the British case draws attention to the importance of the executive, rather than the legislature, in shaping women's policy representation. In the UK the majority of legislation reflects the prerogatives of the government rather than individual representatives. Though female MPs were able to prevent the introduction

of legislation that was arguably of minimal importance to the coalition, they were neither able to force the Government to abandon a bill that had been introduced nor capable of proposing alternative legislation that was favorable to women.

Though less extreme, similar constraints on agenda control exist across Western European parliamentary systems. Given the significant constraints on the agenda-setting capacity of female legislators in these assemblies, what accounts for the adoption of policy related to women's interests by these parliaments? In spite of the limitations placed on female MPs, it is possible that women's policy representation is explained by the direct relationship posited in the existing literature. Alternatively, the theoretical framework introduced and assessed in the preceding chapters may also be useful in explaining legislative outcomes in Western European parliaments more broadly. As is the case with attention to women on parties' policy platforms, the intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses may better account for variation in the adoption of policies aimed at women than the direct relationship alone.

In order to address this possibility, in this chapter I shift the level of analysis to consider the adoption of policy related to women in Western European parliaments. To begin, I explain how the four theories apply to government behavior by supplementing the insights drawn from the British case with existing comparative politics and women and politics research. Concentrating on parental and family leave provisions in 15 Western European countries over a 20 year period, I then assess whether the four alternative hypotheses can account for the extension of these policies. The results show that when failing to consider these alternative explanations, women's presence in office appears to largely explain women's policy representation. Focusing on other explanations, however, reveals the limitations of the direct relationship.

6.2 Theoretical Framework

Building on my study of policy-making in the House of Commons, the following section applies the broader theoretical framework to the adoption of policy for women by Western European governments. As in Chapter 3, I first account for the possibility of a direct relationship between women's presence in parliament and government behavior. I then apply the intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses to this new level of analysis. Taken together, these four hypotheses provide a more nuanced and complete assessment of the emergence of women's policy representation than can be generated by any single theory.

6.2.1 A Direct Relationship: Women MPs Shaping the Policy Agenda

Variation in the presence and prevalence of women-friendly policies is typically attributed to differences in women's presence in office. Beyond the research presented in the first chapter, additional work on gendered policy outcomes consistently finds a positive and statistically significant relationship between the proportion of legislative seats held by women and policies that are beneficial to women. Cross-national analyses, for example, show a positive correlation between the number of female legislators and measures of political, economic, and social gender equality (O'Regan, 2000; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler, 2005).

Studies of parental leave (Kittilson, 2008) and childcare coverage (Bratton and Ray, 2002) further reveal that women's presence in legislatures is associated with polices that advantage women. Analysis of public goods provisions in India also illustrates that female leaders invest more in infrastructure that is directly relevant to the needs of women (Chattopadhyay and Duflo, 2004). In addition to these more

conventional measures of women's policy representation, Koch and Fulton (2011) demonstrate that increases in women's numeric representation are associated with decreases in conflict behavior and defense spending—policy outcomes that are favored by female voters. Beyond the research on women in office, scholars examining the political representation of other traditionally marginalized groups in the US—including African-Americans (Bratton and Haynie, 1999), Hispanics (Hero and Tolbert, 1995), and homosexuals (Haider-Markel, Joslyn and Kniss, 2000)—find similar results.

Taken together, these studies suggest that female parliamentarians may influence the adoption of policies promoting women's interests. Within the Western European context, this can be achieved in part through legislators' access to the party's broader policy agenda. As illustrated in Chapter 3, for a subset of organizations attention to women on the policy platform is explained by women's presence in parties' parliamentary delegations alone. Moreover, for most parties there is a positive (if small) relationship between numeric and policy representation, even when accounting for other factors influencing policy formation. Assuming that female legislators can influence party policy formation—and that cabinet ministers act as reliable agents of their parties once in office (Laver and Shepsle, 1994)—the government can in turn be expected to implement policies shaped by backbench women MPs.

In addition to influencing their party's policy agenda, MPs may directly affect ministers' behavior once in office. The parliamentary party is often closely tied to the party in government. In some cases—including Belgium, Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden, among others—it even has substantial influence over the behavior of the executive (Laver and Shepsle, 1994, 301). Even in states where the parliamentary delegation is more subordinate to the party in government, Lovenduski and Norris (2003) argue that women backbenchers can play an important role in "developing and debating public policy, shaping and revising legislation, scrutinising the actions

of government departments, and linking citizens and government" (99). Thus, by shaping and constraining the behavior of frontbench members, women's presence among backbench parliamentarians may influence women's policy representation.

The capacity of MPs to influence government behavior may be partially determined by intra-party norms or rules, with some leaders maintaining closer connections to their parliamentary parties than others. At the same time, the authority granted to backbench representatives can be expected to vary based on the institutional rules governing legislative politics. In particular, legislatures vary with respect to their internal concentration or dispersion of authority (Döring, 1995a; Siaroff, 2003). Legislators' capacity is influenced, for example, by the strength of the prime minister, representatives' access to the legislative agenda, restrictions on the introduction, amendment, and debate of legislation, and the strength of the committee system, among other factors (Bowler, 2000; Bräuninger and Debus, 2009; Damgaard, 1995; Döring, 1995a; Mattson, 1995; Siaroff, 2003).

The preceding chapter demonstrated that female legislators in the House of Commons are extremely constrained in their capacity to shape legislation. They could not, for example, use the committee system to change the provisions in the Health in Pregnancy Grant in order to make them more favorable to women. They did not have the capacity, moreover, to alter legislation via amendments or plenary debates.

In contrast, the countries in which the parliamentary party can influence the executive—as identified by Laver and Shepsle (1994)—also often have assemblies that grant legislators much greater authority. In these states, for example, the government has only moderate or weak control over the plenary agenda (where in the UK the government retains strong agenda control). These assemblies also place fewer restrictions on the introduction of private members' bills and legislative debates, and enjoy stronger committee systems than the Commons.

The position of MPs may thus be doubly strengthened in states that offer legislators' greater policy-making capacity. First, parliamentarians are more able to influence policy outcomes through their actions as legislators, by placing issues on the agenda or altering legislation once it has been introduced. Second, the institutional strength of MPs may encourage frontbench representatives to be more attentive to the demands of their parliamentary caucuses. Rather than facing intra-party opposition within the chamber, they may be more likely to consult the caucus when drafting policy positions. In either case, it is plausible that female MPs are better able to influence policy outcomes when they enjoy greater policy-making authority. Thus, as posited by the traditional direct relationship, the presence of female MPs alone may shape female-friendly policy adoption. This may only occur, however, when the institutional framework allows female legislators to effectively champion women's interests.

6.2.2 Alternative Theories

The gender and politics literature often attributes women's policy representation to the presence of female parliamentarians. While some studies lend support to this claim, other work indicates that this relationship is more complicated than implied by the direct relationship. Research assessing female legislators' behavior, for example, generates mixed results. As is consistent with a direct relationship between numeric and policy representation, studies from the United States find that women introduce more bills addressing women than their male counterparts (Bratton and Haynie, 1999; Bratton, 2005; Saint-Germain, 1989; Swers, 2005; Thomas, 1994; Vega and Firestone, 1995). In contrast to the US—in which legislators have significant agenda-setting

powers—the connection between women's presence and policy representation in parliamentary systems is less clear.

Existing research demonstrates that female parliamentarians are more likely to introduce motions (Childs, 2004) and private members' bills related to women (Tremblay, 1998). They are also more likely to sit on committees that pertain to women (Bækgaard and Kjaer, 2011) and to speak for women during debates (Celis, 2006; Grey, 2002; Tremblay, 1998). While this work demonstrates that male and female parliamentarians behave differently with respect to women's policy representation, the extent to which these activities in turn influence policy adoption remains uncertain. In particular, given the dominance of the executive in policy-making, it may not be reasonable to expect women's presence in legislatures to directly influence women's policy representation. Consequently, the following sections elucidate three alternative hypotheses explaining the emergence of women's policy representation.

An Intervening Relationship: The Role of Women in Cabinets

Rather than the proportion of seats held by female legislators, the intervening relationship posits that variation in women's policy representation may be better explained by women's presence among the party elite. Specifically, in Western European democracies, agenda control is located in the cabinet, which is comprised of a "set of politically appointed executive offices involved in top-level national policy-making" (Müller and Strøm, 2000, 11). Cabinet ministers thus formulate policy and dictate which bills are introduced to the legislature, while MPs have minimal control over policy adoption. In fact, legislators typically cannot influence which bills are brought to a vote (Müller, 2003), and are expected to support the cabinet's policy priorities (Laver and Shepsle, 1994).

Given the dominance of the executive over the parliament, it is unlikely that women's presence in legislatures directly influences women's policy representation. Rather, the relationship is likely to be indirect and occur through women's access to positions of power within the cabinet. Cabinet ministers are typically drawn from senior MPs (Blondel and Thiébault, 1991; De Winter, 1995), and existing research indicates that women's representation in the legislature is one of the best predictors of women's presence in the executive (Davis, 1997; Reynolds, 1999; Siaroff, 2000; Whitford, Wilkins and Ball, 2007). Thus, having greater numbers of women among backbench representatives is important not because they shape the policy agenda, but because they increase the supply of potential female ministers. Once in the cabinet, these women can in turn shape women's policy representation.

Within the cabinet, each minister (with a portfolio) directs a government department that controls a single policy area (Laver and Shepsle, 1994, 1996; Martin, 2004). The degree to which these ministers can exercise independent control over policy related to their portfolio remains disputed. On the one hand, the theory of ministerial government argues that the difficulty of effective cabinet oversight allows ministers to implement polices corresponding to their own (or their party's) ideal point (Laver and Shepsle, 1996). On the other hand, most parliamentary democracies operate on the basis of a doctrine of collective cabinet responsibility, and ministers cannot simply ignore or defy cabinet decisions (Laver and Shepsle, 1994). Case studies of cabinets across Western Europe indicate that governments operate via consensus (Laver and Shepsle, 1994), and empirical analysis shows that ministerial behavior is influenced by the preferences of coalition partners (Martin, 2004).

Women's access to cabinet positions may be important for women's policy representation, regardless of whether the agenda reflect the aims of the minister (or party) holding a particular portfolio or emerges from consensus among members of

the government. Within the ministerial government framework, female cabinet members can exercise significant influence over their policy portfolios. They can shape legislation that represents women and prevent the introduction of bills that disadvantage women. As female ministers are more likely to be allocated portfolios with "feminine" characteristics (Davis, 1997), their remit is likely to include policy areas that have traditionally been associated with women's interests. If the policies emerge from consensus between ministers—who are often representing competing parties— women in cabinets can influence policy beyond the scope of their portfolio. These ministers may make the case for women's representation and remind parties of their commitments to women on their electoral platforms.

Though their presence within the cabinet may influence the timing and content of legislation, female cabinet members may also exercise control over women's policy representation though the process of party platform formation. Within the literature on cabinets, ministers are assumed to simply promote party policy. Thus, portfolio allocation matters only between (and not within) parties, as any party member can be expected to operate in accordance with her organization's policy aims (Laver and Shepsle, 1994). If ministers act only as agents of their parties, then parties' agendas wholly dictates women's policy representation.

This agenda, however, is not developed independently from cabinet members. To the contrary, the legislators who are selected to serve in the government are often senior members of parliament (Blondel and Thiébault, 1991; De Winter, 1995). These politicians may therefore have greater access to the policy platform than either junior members of the parliamentary party or representatives of the rank-and-file membership. These cabinet ministers also develop expertise with respect to their portfolios, to which other party members may defer. As platform formation becomes increasingly centralized and (formally or informally) controlled by party leaders (Katz and

Mair, 1994), the position of frontbench MPs is only further strengthened. Thus, even if ministers are wholly constrained by their party's policy agenda, it is an agenda they may have helped to construct.

Finally, though most existing research in this area focuses on women's presence in the legislature, there are studies that acknowledge the potential importance of women in cabinets. Annesley and Gains (2010) argue, for example, that in order to understand the link between women's numeric and policy representation it is necessary to first identify the "appropriate institutional venue for policy change" (925). In their view, in Westminster-style democracies this venue is the "core executive" rather than parliament.

In this vein, when studying the impact of female politicians on female-friendly economic policy, O'Regan (2000) includes either female legislators' or female cabinet members, depending on the political system. Similarly, Atchison and Down (2009) explicitly posit that female ministers are the central actors explaining variation in parental leave policies in Western Europe. Both studies find a positive correlation between female held portfolios and the presence of policies that can be considered advantageous to women.

Vote-Seeking and Stable-Policy Preferences: Party Aims and Policy Representation

The women and politics literature posits that variation in women's policy representation is largely a function of the gender composition of political institutions. The literature on parliamentary governance, in contrast, focuses on parties as unitary actors. Parliamentarians are viewed simply as agents of the party who work to implement its goals. The intra-party composition of both the cabinet and parliamentary delegation are consequently perceived as largely irrelevant (Laver and Shepsle, 1994).

Efforts to understand the nature of the policy agenda instead focus on the goals and capabilities of the parties in the government (Martin, 2004).

Though not wholly incompatible with the causal relationships posited by the direct and intervening hypotheses, the broader literature on cabinets suggests that women's policy representation may emerge from party aims that cannot be attributed to the gender makeup of parliaments or cabinets. As is the case with attention to women on parties' electoral platforms, the adoption of legislation related to women may be explained by governing parties' vote-seeking aims or stable policy preferences. Accounting for these alternatives, in turn, offers a more complete assessment of the extent to which women's presence in the legislature accounts for women's policy representation.

Political parties are largely motivated by vote-seeking aims. While parties always face incentives to behave strategically in order to increase their base of support, this is especially true for governing parties in parliamentary systems. Whereas in the United States incumbents enjoy an electoral advantage, in Western European parliaments governing parties consistently lose votes over time (McDonald and Budge, 2005; Rose and Mackie, 1983). Moreover, though there is variation among parties within the same government, on average individual parties have performed as poorly as governments overall (Damgaard, 2008). Due to the electoral costs associated with serving in office, governing parties may seek to offset potential losses by strategically adopting legislation that appeals to potential party supporters. In particular, when governing parties perceive that they are losing public support and that there are gender differences in voting behavior, they may adopt policy for women in order to manipulate the gender gap to their own advantage.

In addition to their vote-seeking aims, once in office parties also seek to enact their preferred policy positions. While the direct and intervening hypotheses argue that

these policy positions are influenced by the number of women in the parliamentary party and on the frontbench respectively, it is possible that these preferences are in fact relatively fixed over time. As women's movements began engaging with formal politics in the 1960s and 1970s, political parties may have developed beliefs regarding women's policy representation. After this initial period of uncertainty and policy instability, they may be unlikely to vary their positions based on the presence or absence of female politicians. The analysis from Chapter 3, for example, demonstrates that attention to women on the first policy platform explains attention to women on subsequent electoral manifestos for a plurality of parties. Drawing on this finding, once parties enter office it is possible that stable preferences, rather than women's presence or vote-seeking incentives, account for women's policy representation.

6.3 Empirical Analysis

While existing research finds strong support for the assertion that women's presence in legislatures predicts women's policy representation, I posit that policy adoption may be better explained by the intervening, vote-seeking, or policy-stability relationships. As expected, the results of the empirical analysis demonstrate that when accounting for alternative theories of women's policy representation, the direct relationship is not supported by the data.

6.3.1 Data and Operationalization

In order to test the competing hypotheses, the empirical analysis examines women's policy representation across 15 Western European states: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. As the executive is primarily responsible

for introducing legislation, I use the cabinet as the unit of analysis. Including governments from across these 15 states between 1980 and 2000 yields 136 cabinet-level observations.[1] Given the large number of countries and years included in the analysis, it is necessary to find a measure of women's policy representation that can be applied across the region and over time. As explained in the following section, I use the extension of parental leave policies as a proxy measure capturing this broader concept.

The Outcome Variable: Measuring Women's Policy Representation

Testing the competing explanations of women's policy representation in Western European parliaments demands a measure of women's policy representation both across countries and within countries over time. In the previous chapters, which focused on women in parties, policy representation was operationalized as attention to women on electoral platforms. A similar measure, however, cannot be easily implemented for the introduction or adoption of legislation for at least two reasons.

First, the legislative corpus is available only for a select number of countries and sessions. As the unit of analysis is the cabinet, the available texts yield a small number of observations and do not provide adequate variation in the explanatory variables of interest. Second, beyond the limits of data availability, it is also difficult to assess the directionality of this legislation. Parties rarely propose restrictions on women's rights in their electoral platforms, and over the period studied women often gained greater protections from the state. At the same time, bills introduced in parliament can (and sometimes do) entail cutbacks and structural changes involving individualization or

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[1]Following Strøm, Müller and Bergman (2008), a new cabinet is formed when any of the following conditions are met: 1) the set of parties holding cabinet membership changes (where cabinet members are defined as parties that have designated representatives with voting rights within the government); 2) the prime minister changes; 3) there is a general election.

privatization of risk (Immergut and Abou-Chadi, 2010). These bills, in turn, may limit the benefits women receive from the state. Without determining the content of each bill related to women, this measure cannot be used.

This chapter thus requires a measure of women's policy representation that neither limits the analysis to a small number of cases nor unintentionally includes instances of restrictions in women's benefits. To construct this measure of women's policy representation, I focus on government efforts to expand family (or parental) leave provisions. Family leave consists of both maternity and childcare leave. The former is connected to the birth of a child and is almost always reserved for women. The latter typically provides extended time-off from paid work. This break can be taken at some point after maternity leave and can be applied to either one or both parents.

Previous research on family leave seeks to explain variation in the duration of, and benefits provided by, these policies (Kittilson, 2008; Atchison and Down, 2009). This project, however, does not aim to explain the quality or quantity of parental leave benefits per se. Rather, family leave is employed as a proxy measure for women's policy representation. Thus, drawing on Gauthier and Bortnik's database of family leave provisions, the outcome variable is a binary measure that captures the *expansion of parental leave policies* during the government's tenure in office. Family leave is extended when governments increase the duration of maternity leave—either prior to or after childbirth—or lengthen the time period of gender-neutral childcare leave. The measure also includes cases in which the government increased the cash benefits associated with parental leave. In total, there are 41 instances of parental leave extensions in the dataset.

As a measure of women's policy representation, the expansion of family leave is useful because it represents a clear case in which the state provides tangible benefits for many women in society. Most obviously, paid maternity leave mitigates the

economic penalties suffered by women who must temporarily leave the workplace in order to have a child. Extended childcare leave is similarly important for women. When taken by mothers, it provides women with the option of spending additional time in the home while protecting their positions should they choose to return to paid work. When used by men, it allows women to share the burden of parenting and can contribute to the destigmatization of parental leave among both employers and employees.

On the whole, family leave policies have offered women greater autonomy and protected them from having to abandon paid work entirely (Kittilson, 2008). At the same time, it is important to recognize that feminist scholars do not uniformly support these provisions. Policies that are too long or short in length can discourage women's reentry into the workforce, for example. Legislation that focuses primarily on female-leave can also reinforce the traditional gendered division of labor in the home (Morgan, 2009; Gelb and Palley, 1996). Certain family leave policies could thus be reformed to further benefit women. Despite these shortcomings, it is also true that in the absence of these protections women would we be less willing or able to take paid employment (Dahlerup, 1994). Even if imperfect, the extension of these provisions thus represents a clear instance of women's policy representation.

Indeed, though viewed with skepticism by some feminist scholars, the extension of maternity and parental leave policies was in fact an aim of the women's movement (Einhorn, 1991; Lister, 2007). The 1979 *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW), for example, explicitly calls for paid maternity leave.[2] At the same time, when surveyed about family leave, an overwhelming majority of female respondents support the extension of these policies.

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[2]http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/text/econvention.htm

Though popular among both sexes, women are also more likely to approve of these provisions than men (Hyde, Essex and Horton, 1993; Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2010). Delgado and Leskovac (1987) even go so far as to argue that women are most united on "workplace issues," including parental leave and childcare. These issues, they claim, have a "nearly solid front of proponents and few detractors among women" (1031).

Given that the extension of family leave both provides benefits to—and seems to be widely supported by—women in society, it is an appropriate proxy for women's policy representation. In fact, these policies fit virtually all conventional definitions of a "women's issue." They are at once specifically directed towards women (Wolbrecht, 2000), with consequences that will disproportionately impact women (Carroll, 1984), and aimed at increasing the autonomy of women (Bratton and Haynie, 1999; Lovenduski and Norris, 2003; Sapiro, 1981; Wängnerud, 2000).

Beyond the theoretical rationale, measuring changes in parental leave also provides three additional benefits. First, parties from across the political spectrum can support family leave policies. Unlike the expansion of abortion rights, for example, parental leave can be consistent with leftist arguments concerning women's participation in the workforce and conservative commitments to families.

Second, there was significant legislating on this issue over the period of study. As demonstrated in Figure 6.1, since 1980 parental leave policies have been strengthened in each of the states included in the dataset. Across all observations, almost one-third of cabinets initiated some extension of family leave. This is consistent with the description of women's policy representation on parties' platforms presented in the third chapter. Terms related to parental leave—including "maternity" and "childcare"— were among the most frequently occurring words for women across parties' manifestos.
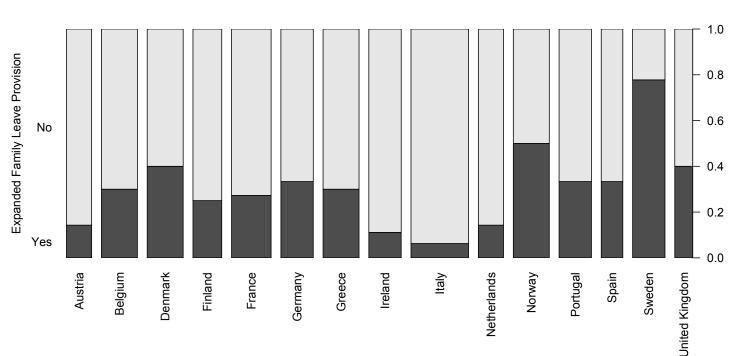
Figure 6.1: Proportion of Cabinets Extending Parental Leave Provisions between 1980 and 2000

Notes: This figure highlights the prevalence of parental leave extensions among Western European governments. The vertical access represents the proportion of cabinets in each state that enacted legislation expanding these benefits. For each country, its width on the horizontal access varies based on the total number of governments over the 20-year period.

Though under the period of study there was significant legislating on family leave, a third benefit of analyzing these policies is the variation in extension of these provisions. At the beginning of this period, each of the countries studied provided women with access to paid maternity leave. The extent to which governments in these states extended these provisions and/or strengthened parental leave nonetheless varies considerably. Of Italy's 16 governments during this period, only one adopted legislation extending these policies. Austria and Ireland had similarly low levels of policy adoption in these areas. On the other hand, half of Norwegian cabinets and seven of the nine Swedish governments expanded family leave.

The comparatively high-level of policy extension among Nordic countries is not surprising, given that these states have been at the forefront of introducing sex-equality policies. The dominance of Sweden, in particular, is consistent with its status as the country with the single most "comprehensive and reasoned policy on women" (Lovenduski, 1986, 277). This association between the extension of parental leave benefits and a broader set of female-friendly policy commitments in fact offers some face validity to the measure.

Instances of family leave expansion cannot, however, be attributed solely to high-commitments states continuously legislating in this area. The United Kingdom, for example, is among the countries in which at least one-third of all governments adopted new legislation in area. Yet, unlike the Nordic states, at the beginning of the 1980s it had comparatively modest family leave provisions.

The expansion of family leave also does not emerge solely from low-commitment states attempting to close benefit gaps. As noted above, for example, Sweden, has continually strengthened its parental leave benefits. It has done so, moreover, even though it began the period with more generous provisions than many states provide even today. As preexisting commitments alone do not appear to explain policy adoption, the variation across states calls for a careful assessment of the factors associated with the extension of family leave policies.

The Explanatory Variables: Measuring Competing Causal Claims

Women's policy representation—operationalized as the extension of parental leave policies—may be explained by the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and/or policy-stability relationships. The model therefore includes measures designed to capture each of these hypotheses.

The Direct Relationship Hypothesis: The direct relationship argues that even when accounting for the aims of governing parties and the presence of women in the cabinet, women's policy representation is best explained by their presence within the legislature. In order to determine whether the direct relationship holds, the model includes a covariate measuring the percentage of the seats within national assemblies held by women. This data was taken from information compiled by Paxton, Green and Hughes (2008).

An alternative measure of the direct relationship could focus on the proportion of seats held by women within the governing parties' parliamentary delegations. The decision to focus on the percentage of seats held by women in the legislature, rather than in parties in cabinet, was motivated by both theoretical and pragmatic concerns. First, the existing gender and politics research positing a direct relationship focuses on the proportion of female representatives in the assembly as a whole. Given that this chapter aims to compare this dominant theory to alternative explanations, this operationalization was selected so as to remain consistent with the literature.

Second, focusing on the proportion of seats held by women in the assembly, rather than governing parties, offers a more complete and reliable measure of women's numeric representation. Party-level information on women's presence in office is unavailable for a number of observations. In particular, for coalition governments, information on at least one governing party is frequently lacking. Using this measure would thus introduce substantial missingness into the data. Focusing on the proportion of women in the legislature allows me to avoid this issue.

Additionally, the theory section acknowledges that the capacity of female parliamentarians to shape legislation may be influenced by variation in legislators' policy-making authority. Of course, women from governing parties are always expected to have greater access to the policy agenda than women in the opposition. Systems that

200

grant legislators greater capacity to shape legislation, however, may allow women in non-governing parties to make some inroads. They may exert some influence through committee hearings, for example, or during debates. Thus, it is reasonable to focus on women's presence in the legislature more broadly.

In order to gauge legislators' capacity to shape policy outcomes, I consider differences in the intra-cameral rules of each national assembly in question. Drawing on Döring (1995b) and Hicken and Stoll (2010), and using data from (Siaroff, 2003), I constructed an additive scale based of ten institutional characteristics that facilitate the concentration of power within the government. On each dimension, rules that facilitate the government power are scored a two, their absence is scored a zero, and intermediate cases are scored a one. Higher scores thus denote a greater concentration of policy-making authority in the cabinet. Lower scores, in contrast, indicate that authority is dispersed, thereby providing greater influence to backbench representatives.[3]

In order to operationalize the direct relationship, the model thus includes a measure capturing the *interaction of the percentage of the seats in the legislature held by women and legislative authority in the policy-making process.* If the direct relationship holds, across all institutions women's presence in parliament should be associated with greater policy representation for women. Women's numeric repre-

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[3]Similar to the measure in Hicken and Stoll (2010), national assemblies in which power is most concentrated with the government receive a score of two on each of the following measures, resulting in a total score of 20: 1) powerful prime minister; 2) government control over the plenary agenda; 3) "money bills" are a prerogative of the government ; 4) strong restrictions on private members' bills; 5) debate on a bill can be curtailed; 6) assembly determines the principles of a bill before it goes to committee; 7) government control over selection of committee chairs; 8) committees lack power to rewrite legislation; 9) committee members do not influence party positions; 10) lack of standing committees (fewer than 10) to oversee government departments. Legislatures in which parliamentarians have the most influence on the policy-making process receive a zero on each of these measures, for a total score of zero. Across the parliaments included in this study, the average score is 9.

sentation should, however, have a greater influence on women's policy representation when government control over the policy-making is minimal (and legislative authority is thus increased). In contrast, when the government dominates policy-making, the effect of female parliamentarians should be more limited.

The Intervening Hypothesis: While the intervening hypothesis also posits a causal relationship between women's numeric and policy representation, it argues that this link emerges only after women gain positions of power within the executive. In order to represent the intervening relationship, the model includes a measure of the *percentage of cabinet positions held by women.* This variable was constructed using information from *The Europa Handbook* (Europa Publications, 1981–2006) and verified against data collected by Atchison (2010).

The Vote-Seeking Hypothesis: If women's policy representation is explained by vote-seeking behavior, then it should emerge only when it is perceived as offering an electoral advantage to governing parties. Existing research indicates that poor economic performance can negatively impact governing parties' vote-shares in subsequent elections (Powell and Whitten, 1993; Duch and Stevenson, 2008). In order to account for vote-seeking behavior, the model thus includes a measure of change in the unemployment rate during governments' time in office. As unemployment increases, governing parties may opt to expand parental leave policies for two reasons.

First, family policies provide tangible economic benefits to women, allowing parties to gain or retain female supporters by mitigating their negative assessments of government performance. Second, the extension of parental leave policies may be viewed as a strategy for lowering unemployment rates. Allowing caregivers to stay home for longer periods—either by extending the length of maternity or childcare leave or in-

creasing paid benefits to make absences from work more economically viable—creates jobs for others workers. These provisions open both temporary employment opportunities for replacement workers as well as permanent positions—as parents (especially mothers) can be discouraged from returning to full-time work after extended leave. Existing case study analyses offer support for this instrumental explanation for the adoption of extended parental leave policies. This work suggests, for example, that the expansion of family leave in Denmark, France, and Germany was motivated by government concerns about unemployment rates (Morgan and Zippel, 2003; Morgan, 2009).

While increases in the unemployment rate alone may influence the adoption of new parental leave policies, the expansion of family leave may be especially likely in cases where there is a gender disparity in support for the parties in government. As women are the primary beneficiaries of these provisions, parties that receive more or less support from women than men can use these policies to retain or capture female voters respectively. At the same time, by primarily removing women from the workforce, governments create vacancies that can be filled by male workers. In cases where the government receives less support from men than women, parental leave can be a mechanism by which to appeal to (or at least mitigate losses with) male voters.

Drawing on this theory, vote-seeking incentives are operationalized as the *interaction of gendered cabinet support and change in the unemployment rate*. To account for changes in the unemployment rate, I use information gathered from the Comparative Parliamentary Democracy Data Archive (Strøm, Müller and Bergman, 2008) to calculate the difference between unemployment at the beginning and end of each government's term in office.

To capture gender differences in support for the government, I use a trichotomous variable that distinguishes between governments that receive greater support from

female than male voters, greater support from male than female voters, and those for whom there was no difference between male and female support in the year preceding cabinet formation. As the dataset includes a number of observations in which multiple parties hold ministerial portfolios, the covariate captures whether any party in cabinet received greater or less support from female than male voters (based on difference in proportions tests). The analysis relies primarily on public opinion data available in the Mannheim Eurobarometer trend file (Schmitt and Scholz, 2005), but is supplemented with data from the European Values Study (European Values Study Group; World Values Survey Association, 2006) and the European Voter Database (Thomassen, 2005).

The Policy-Stability Hypothesis: Once accounting for governing parties' stable policy preferences, the final hypothesis posits that changes in the gender makeup of the assembly, the number of female ministers, and vote-seeking incentives should have little influence on variation in the expansion of parental leave policies. To test this theory, the model includes two measures related to policy stability. The first captures parties' baseline attitudes towards the welfare state, while the second accounts for prior support for family leave.

In contrast to the broader trend of welfare state retrenchment (Pierson, 1996; Huber and Stephens, 2001), since the 1970s family leave policies have been a source of welfare state innovation and expansion (Daly, 1997; Kittilson, 2008; Morgan, 2009). Governments comprised of parties that have historically expressed a commitment to introducing, maintaining, and extending the welfare state may, in turn, be more likely to support family leave policies than those consisting of parties that traditionally favored limiting state expenditures. Support for parental leave may thus reflect stable policy preferences concerning the expansion of social services. Regardless of variation

in the presence of female politicians or electoral pressures, once in office party behavior with respect to family leave may be governed by these policy aims.

To measure partisan welfare state support, I use data compiled by the Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP) (Volkens et al., 2011). The CMP analyzes parties' election programs, manually categorizing quasi-sentences in order to determine the policy content of these platforms. One of these categories, welfare state expansion, captures the percentage of the party manifesto dedicated to increasing social security and public service, including childcare provisions. Though the CMP calculates new values for this measure at each election, the policy-stability hypothesis aims to capture stable attitudes that do not vary based on the presence of women within the parties' decision-making organs. For this reason, I consider governing parties' baseline preferences towards social spending. Thus, for each party, I use its *support for welfare state expansion at the beginning of the period of study* (or in the first election, for organizations formed after 1980). To generate a cabinet-level measure of welfare state support, I computed governing parties' average scores, weighted by the size of the party in the legislature.

Though falling under the rubric of welfare state expansion, support for parental leave policies may be shaped by a more narrow set of preferences that do not relate to support for other spending, including health care, elder care, housing, etc. Instead, the best predictor of expanded family leave may be previous experience in this policy area. Once governing parties have advanced parental leave policies, they may be more likely to do so again. This may emerge from a "sincere" desire to promote women's policy representation or an effort to maintain ownership over this issue. Regardless of the motivation, accounting for party history may explain subsequent variation in the expansion of parental leave. To measure previous support, for each

cabinet I determined whether the dominant party had *previously expanded parental leave*, looking as far back as 1970.

6.3.2   Modeling Strategy

The empirical analysis includes three logistic regression models of the expansion of family leave policies. In order to account for the covariance between cabinets within a given country and to capture baseline differences in countries propensity to extend parental leave, the models also include varying-intercept random effects. These random effects allow me to account for idiosyncratic country-level behavior that may influence the expansion of family leave policies, such as baseline fertility rates (Gauthier and Hatzius, 1997), the number of veto points in the political system (Henderson and White, 2004), and union density (Kittilson, 2008).

Formally, the model is defined as:

$$\mu_i = \alpha_{j[i]} + \beta x_i, \text{ for cabinets } i = 1, \ldots, n$$

$$\alpha_j = a + b u_j + \eta_j, \text{ for countries } j = 1, \ldots, J.$$

Here, x_i and u_j represent predictors at the cabinet and country-levels respectively. Additionally, the η_j are independent normal error terms that have variance σ_a^2 and are also independent of the observations. The models are fit in `R` using the `lme4` package (Bates and Maechler, 2010).

6.4   Results and Discussion

The coefficient estimates and standard errors from the binomial logistic regression models are displayed below. Taken together, two key results emerge from the analy-

ses of family leave policies. First, both women's access to positions of power within government, as well as increasing unemployment rates coupled with gendered gaps in cabinet support, are positively associated with women's policy representation. Second, neither women's presence in the legislature nor stable policy preferences influence the expansion of parental leave. The models thus lend support to the intervening and vote-seeking hypotheses, while casting doubt on the explanatory power of both the direct and policy-stability theories.

As illustrated in Table 6.1, when excluding alternative explanations of women's policy representation, there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between women's presence in the legislature and the adoption of family leave policies.[4] This relationship holds, however, only within systems that provide parliamentarians with the capacity to influence legislative outcomes.

Table 6.1: Logistic GLM of Extension of Parental Leave Policy (Direct Relationship Only)

Fixed Effects	Parameters	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	$\Pr(>|z|)$
	Intercept	-2.04	0.79	-2.60	0.01
Direct Relationship	% Seats Held by Women	0.06	0.04	1.70	0.09
	Legislators' Policy-Making Authority	0.05	0.06	0.73	0.47
	% Women × Policy-Making Authority	0.00	0.00	-0.48	0.63
Random Effect	Country Level Std. Dev	0.00			
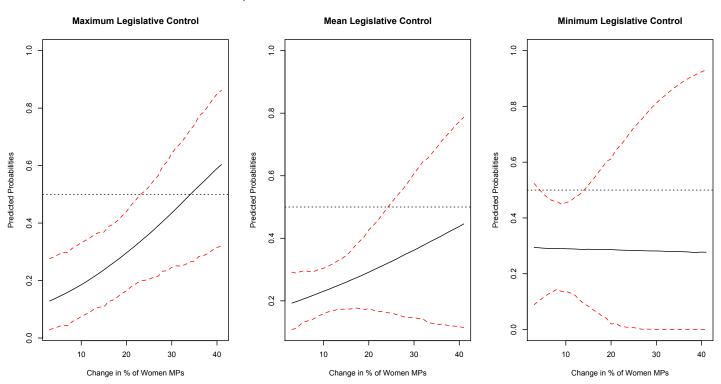
Notes: The outcome variable is a binary measure that distinguishes between governments that extended parental leave provisions and those that failed to do so. Number of Observations= 136; Number of Groups=15.

Figure 6.2 compares the impact of variation in women's numeric representation on policy representation across systems in which legislators have maximum, mean, and minimum levels of policy-making authority. In systems that grant MPs the greatest authority, the probability of extending family leave provisions is positively

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[4]The $\alpha = 0.1$ threshold is used throughout the chapter when assessing statistical significance.

associated with increases in women's numeric representation. Comparing women's presence in office at the first to the third quartile values—7.2 percent and 26.2 percent respectively—increases the probability of policy adoption by 0.21, from 0.16 to 0.38 (90% CI:0.03, 0.39).[5] In systems that constrain parliamentarians' capacity to influence policy, in contrast, similar changes in women's presence among backbench MPs are not associated with significant increases in the probability of extending family leave benefits.

Figure 6.2: Predicted Probabilities of Family Leave Expansion (% Women MPs)

Notes: These predicted probabilities were generated holding all other variables at their median or modal values. The black dashed line at 0.5 represents the cutoff between the proportion of women MPs at which the model predicts no extension of family leave (p<0.5) and the proportion at which the model predicts family leave extension (p>0.5). The red dashed lines represent 90% confidence intervals around these values.

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[5]All predicted values are generated by holding other variables at their mean or modal values.

While at first these results appear to be partially consistent with the direct relationship, once accounting for the intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability theories, the effect of women's presence in parliament on policy adoption is greatly diminished. As the results presented in Table 6.2 indicate, even in systems in which legislators have maximum policy-making authority, variation in women's numeric representation does not have an effect.

Table 6.2: Logistic GLM of Extension of Parental Leave Policy (All Measures, Orthogonalizing % Women in Cabinet to % Women in Parliament)

| Fixed Effects	Parameters	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr($>$|z|)
	Intercept	-1.72	1.09	-1.58	0.11
Direct Relationship	% Seats Held by Women	0.04	0.04	0.98	0.33
	Legislators' Policy-Making Authority	0.00	0.07	0.02	0.99
	% Women $\times$ Policy-Making Authority	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.99
Intervening Relationship	% Women in Cabinet (Orthogonalized)	0.06	0.03	1.80	0.07
Vote-Seeking Relationship	Fem Supported Parties	-0.10	0.55	-0.18	0.85
	Male Supported Parties	-0.28	0.60	-0.47	0.64
	Δ Unemployment	0.08	0.10	0.77	0.44
	Fem Supported $\times$ Δ Unemployment	0.55	0.39	1.41	0.16
	Male Supported $\times$ Δ Unemployment	0.17	0.25	0.69	0.49
Policy-Stability Relationship	Previously Extended Leave	0.18	0.44	0.40	0.69
	Baseline Commitment to Welfare State	0.01	0.07	0.11	0.91
Random Effect	Country Level Std. Dev	0.00			

Notes: The outcome variable is a binary measure that distinguishes between governments that extended parental leave provisions and those that failed to do so. For the vote-seeking measure, the baseline category is gender-neutral parties. Number of Observations= 136; Number of Groups=15.

Comparing the predicted probabilities for the minimum and maximum percentage of seats held by women when legislators' authority is held at its maximum value, for example, shows that the difference is not statistically significant. Taken together, these results cast doubt on the direct effect hypothesis. At the same time, comparing Models 1 and 2 illustrates that excluding alternative explanations can generate the

false conclusion that the percentage of seats held by women MPs chiefly accounts for women's policy representation.

While women's representation among backbench parliamentarians is not associated with women's policy representation, this second model demonstrates that the presence of women in cabinets is correlated with the expansion of family leave policies. Of course, these two measures may be positively correlated—with greater numbers of female legislators being associated with a larger proportion of female ministers. Nonetheless, this analysis illustrates that the positive relationship between women in the executive and policy adoption holds even after accounting for the proportion of women in the parliamentary delegation. This is achieved by orthogonalizing the women in cabinets variable to the measure of women in parliaments. This approach allows the women in cabinets covariate to capture the effect of the intervening relationship only beyond that explained by the direct relationship.
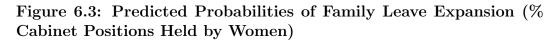
To further examine this association, Table 6.3 presents the results from the third model, which includes the original measure of women in cabinets while orthogonalizing the measure of women in parliaments to this covariate. This analysis captures the variation due to the presence of women in cabinets independent of women's presence in the legislature.
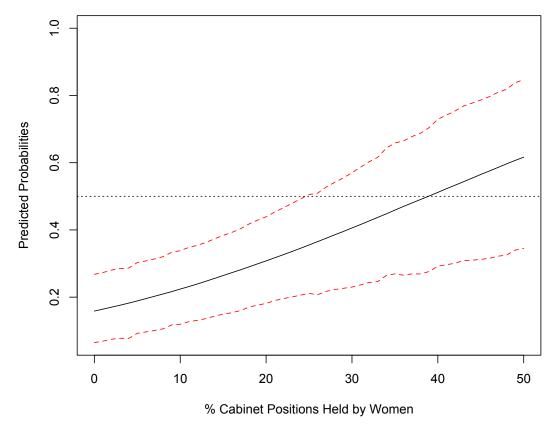
Table 6.3: Logistic GLM of Extension of Parental Leave Policy (All Measures, Orthogonalizing % Women in Parliament to % Women in Cabinet)

Fixed Effects	Parameters	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
	Intercept	-1.55	0.98	-1.59	0.11
Direct Relationship	% Seats Held by Women (Orthogonalized)	-0.11	0.07	-1.44	0.15
	Legislators' Policy-Making Authority	0.01	0.04	0.17	0.87
	% Women × Policy-Making Authority	0.01	0.07	1.48	0.14
Intervening Relationship	% Women in Cabinet	0.05	0.02	1.98	0.05
Vote-Seeking Relationship	Fem Supported Parties	0.01	0.56	0.01	0.99
	Male Supported Parties	-0.34	0.60	-0.58	0.57
	Δ Unemployment	0.08	0.10	0.84	0.40
	Fem Supported × Δ Unemployment	0.56	0.38	1.48	0.14
	Male Supported × Δ Unemployment	0.12	0.25	0.47	0.63
Policy-Stability Relationship	Previously Extended Leave	0.13	0.44	0.30	0.76
	Baseline Commitment to Welfare State	-0.01	0.07	-0.19	0.85
Random Effect	Country Level Std. Dev	0.00			

Notes: The outcome variable is a binary measure that distinguishes between governments that extended parental leave provisions and those that failed to do so. For the vote-seeking measure, the baseline category is gender-neutral parties. Number of Observations= 136; Number of Groups=15.

As Figure 6.3 further demonstrates, women's presence in cabinets is clearly associated with the adoption of family leave policies. Based on the coefficient estimates and standard errors from the third model, increasing the percentage of cabinet positions held by women by one standard deviation (13 percent) almost doubles the odds of expanding parental leave. Correspondingly, when the percentage of women in government is held at its minimum value (no women), the predicted probability of policy expansion is 0.16. In contrast, the predicted probability at the maximum value—50 percent female—is 0.61. The analysis thus offers strong support to the intervening relationship.
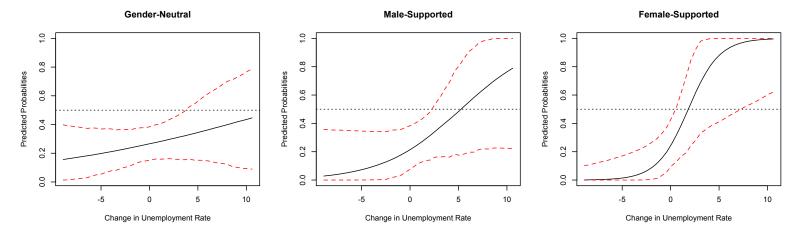
Figure 6.3: Predicted Probabilities of Family Leave Expansion (% Cabinet Positions Held by Women)

Notes: These predicted probabilities were generated holding all other variables at their median or modal values. The black dashed line at 0.5 represents the cutoff between the proportion of women MPs at which the model predicts no extension of family leave (p<0.5) and the proportion at which the model predicts family leave extension (p>0.5). The red dashed lines represent 90% confidence intervals around these values.

Though the direct and intervening hypotheses both place primary emphasis on the role of women within the party, the vote-seeking theory argues that attention to women is better explained by governments' expectations about their electoral fortunes. As Figure 6.4 illustrates, increased unemployment is positively correlated with the adoption of family leave policies. This relationship only holds, however, for governments with at least one party that is more supported by female voters.

Figure 6.4: Predicted Probabilities of Family Leave Expansion (Δ in Unemployment Rate by Cabinets' Gender Support)

Notes: These predicted probabilities were generated holding all other variables at their median or modal values. The black dashed line at 0.5 represents the cutoff between the proportion of women MPs at which the model predicts no extension of family leave ($p<0.5$) and the proportion at which the model predicts family leave extension ($p>0.5$). The red dashed lines represent 90% confidence intervals around these values.

Increases in the unemployment rate fail to result in changes in the probability of expanding parental leave policies in both gender-neutral and male supported governments. In gender-neutral cabinets— those in which governing parties are neither more supported by men nor women—the difference between the first quartile value (a 0.60 percent decrease in unemployment) and the third quartile value (a 1.03 percent increase in unemployment) is non-significant (0.02, 90% CI:$-0.03, 0.08$). Similar results hold for cabinets with at least one party that has more male than female supporters (0.06, 90% CI:$-0.03, 0.15$). Moreover, holding all other variables at the their median and modal values, the probability of policy adoption is not expected to exceed 0.5 in either case. Even as unemployment rates increase dramatically, neither gender-neutral nor male-supported cabinets are expected to extend parental leave.

In contrast, Figure 6.4 illustrates the presence of a vote-seeking effect for those cabinets that are more supported by female than male voters. Comparing the first and third quartiles of the unemployment values illustrates a significant difference in the predicted probability of expanding family leave, which increase from 0.18 to 0.38 $(0.20, 90\% \text{ CI}:0.01, 0.38)$. Only among these female-supported cabinets, moreover, does the probability of policy adoption significantly exceed 0.5. Thus, vote-seeking behavior is most likely to emerge in cabinets when unemployment levels increase and at least one governing party is more supported by women than men.

The findings are partially consistent with the expectations concerning governments' vote-seeking incentives. While growing unemployment should always increase the probability of adopting parental leave policies, this effect should be particularly apparent among female supported cabinets. These policies provide tangible benefits to female supporters, possibly allowing governing parties to keep their female voters in the next election despite poor economic performance.

At the same time, having greater support from women indicates that the party is performing comparatively worse among male voters. With respect to the vote-seeking hypothesis, I noted that extended parental leave provisions can encourage women to stay out of the work force for longer periods of time following childbirth. Some scholars have thus posited that parental leave policies are adopted in times of higher unemployment in order to decrease the number of job seekers. If extending parental leave is expected to create job openings—which may be taken by male workers—then policy adoption can allow governing parties that are less supported by men to bolster support among, or at least mitigate losses with, male voters.

Though the models lend support to both the intervening and vote-seeking hypotheses, they undermine the policy-stability claims. Models 2 and 3 shows no relationship between the expansion of family leave policies and the measures of historic

support for paternal leave or welfare state expansion. A likelihood ratio test comparing the full model to a nested model removing the policy stability variables also fails to support the explanatory power of this hypothesis. The full model performs no better than the parsimonious model that excludes these covariates. These results indicate that when accounting for alternative explanations, governments comprised of parties that have traditionally supported family leave and/or welfare state expansion are no more likely to extend parental leave than other cabinets.

At the same, though Figure 6.1 showed large variation in the adoption of family leave policies across countries, in all three models the group level residual variance (τ^2) is effectively zero. This indicates that almost all of the variation is captured at the cabinet-level. The state-level random effects are not accounting for unobserved heterogeneity within the data. I further compared the deviance from the random effects model to the more parsimonious pooled model excluding these country-level random effects. This supports the conclusion that country-level differences—beyond those captured by the fixed effects—do not explain the adoption of family leave policies.

6.5   Conclusion

In order to assess the link between women's presence and attention to women on the policy agenda, in this chapter I identified and tested four alternative theories explaining the adoption of policy related to women. The empirical analysis offers strong support to the intervening relationship, finding that the proportion of cabinet positions held by female ministers is associated with the expansion of family leave provisions. The interaction of voting behavior and change in the unemployment rate is also positively correlated with policy adoption for female-supported cabinets. This

suggests that vote-seeking incentives may in some instances influence government behavior. At the same time, the results undermine the direct and policy-stability hypotheses. Neither the proportion of female MPs nor stable policy preferences influence the extension of these policies.

Taken together, these results clearly justify the broader theoretical framework, which demands that greater attention be paid to the alternatives factors that may account for women's policy representation. When including only the measure of the direct relationship, it appears as if women's presence in national assemblies explains women's policy representation. This finding supports the conclusions that have previously been espoused in the gender and politics literature. Once including measures capturing the intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability theories, however, the impact of women's presence in parliament on policy adoption is greatly reduced. Even in systems that grant parliamentarians significant policy-making authority, variation in women's numeric representation does not have an effect. For women and politics scholars, the implications of these findings are twofold.

First, while the existing literature tends to focus on female parliamentarians representing women's interests, the results indicate that at least in Western European states, it is more important to focus attention on female politicians' access to positions in the executive. Given that ministers are often drawn from the parliament, moreover, the two measures are likely to be correlated. Failing to acknowledge the importance of women's presence in the cabinet is thus likely to generate misleading conclusions about the importance of female backbench parliamentarians.

At the same time, these findings draw attention to the ways in which governing parties' broader aims—which may be largely unrelated to women's representation— can influence attention to women on the legislative agenda. This, in turn, demonstrates the need to account for the broader political environment when explaining

women's policy representation. In particular, and as is consistent with the vast literature pointing to the importance of vote-seeking behavior, the results highlight the need to address the strategic motivations that may encourage governing parties to attend to women on the political agenda.

Beyond the implications for women and politics scholars, these findings are also important for women's movement actors. For those concerned with women's policy representation, the finding represents cause for both concern and optimism. Consider first, for example, the finding that policy-stability does not account for the expansion of parental leave benefits. On the one hand, these results indicate that activists cannot rely on past commitments in order to ensure future policy representation. It does not appear to be the case that once a party has adopted policy on a traditional women's issue that it can be expected to do so in subsequent governments.

On the other hand, as women's policy representation is not fixed at the party- or state-level, women's rights activists may be able to make inroads even with governments comprised of parties that are not traditionally associated with these policies. Put another way, were the policy-stability measures and/or state-level random effects important determinants of family leave extension, it would appear that the adoption of policy for women was governed by largely immutable factors. As it stands, however, activists may be able to achieve policy gains by focusing on the factors that shape governments' attitudes towards women's representation.

To begin with, for activists seeking to promote the adoption of policy aimed at women, the results from this chapter underscore the gains that can be made by framing these policies as benefiting the parties in government. The findings indicate that some governing parties are more likely to extend family leave policies if doing so can help to address economic concerns and aid their electoral aims. If actors within the women's movement can frame their policies as not only helping women in society,

217

but also as increasing parties' prospects of winning reelection, then they will be more likely to achieve their goals and see their desired legislation enacted.

The results have further implications for the popular strategy of increasing women's policy representation via numeric representation. Of the mechanisms available for increasing attention to women on the policy agenda, bolstering the number of women backbenchers is one of the most seemingly straightforward solutions. Given the large number of voluntary and statutory quota policies, this has also arguably been one of the most popular approaches for advancing women's policy representation. The results from this study indicate, however, that focusing on women's numeric representation alone is insufficient. Quotas thus cannot be viewed as a panacea with respect to promoting women's policy representation.

At the same time, the absence of a direct relationship does not in turn suggest that positive discrimination policies should be abandoned. To the contrary, the results imply that women's presence among backbenchers may be a necessary (if not sufficient) condition for facilitating women's policy representation. Specifically, the models lend strong support to the relationship between women's presence in government and the extension of family leave policies. For women to ascend to positions in which they can shape the legislative agenda, however, it is often first necessary for them to be represented within parties' parliamentary caucuses. Increasing women's presence—for example, via quota policies—may therefore generate long-term effects as women enter the executive branch.

Though the results in some ways support measures bolstering women's presence in elected office—with the hope that they will later ascend to the cabinet—it is also important to recognize the limits of the conclusions that can be drawn from observational data. On its face, the positive correlation between the proportion of cabinet positions held by women and the expansion of family leave policies indicates

that women's presence in government leads to women's policy representation. This is further bolstered by the finding that this relationship holds even when accounting for vote-seeking aims and stable-policy preferences. At the same time, it is impossible to wholly dismiss the potential for a spurious relationship between women's presence and policy representation.

When interpreting the results, it is necessary to recognize that cabinet ministers are not randomly assigned. Governments with few women ministers may thus be fundamentally different from those with many female members. To address this issue, the analysis does include measures controlling for governing parties' policy preferences. Nonetheless, it is possible that parties that promote women to positions in government are also more likely to advance policies that benefit women. Parsing out this causal relationship is difficult, however, because it is impossible to define the "female-friendliness" of a party in government without accounting for its efforts to promote women's numeric and policy representation. This, in turn, leads to a tautological argument: the party advances women's representation because it is female-friendly; we know that it is female-friendly because it advances women's representation.

Even if an analysis were to control for the commitments made on parties' electoral platforms preceding government formation, this would not necessarily offer a baseline measure of the underlying "female-friendliness" of the organizations in power. As noted previously, these platforms are not exogenous to the makeup of the parliamentary caucus and its leadership. The presence of female leaders within the organization may lead to manifesto promises that are later implemented at the same time women come to power in the cabinet. Without knowing the factors shaping platform formation for each party in government across all elections, it is difficult to determine whether female leaders generate policy for women or whether both forms of representation reflect broader partisan aims and beliefs.

While it is important to recognize the limits of the inferences that can be made based on this analysis, these shortcomings do not negate the significance of the findings presented in this chapter. To the contrary, the absence of a direct relationship, coupled with the importance of women's presence in cabinets, together represent an important finding. In particular, these results indicate that those concerned with promoting women's policy representation should not focus exclusively on the gender makeup of national assemblies. Instead, they should work to elect parties that can be expected to appoint female ministers if they gain office, as cabinets comprised of these parties are more likely to include policy for women on the government's agenda. Regardless of whether they are motivated by the actions of female ministers, an underlying female-friendly ethos, or a combination of the two, the result is likely to be the adoption of legislation that benefits women in society.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

7.1 Introduction

In recent years, increasing women's participation in electoral politics has become a priority for a number of activists, politicians, and international governing organizations. This focus can largely be attributed to the belief that doing so provides normative benefits for women through increased policy representation. Despite the prevalence of this assumption, research connecting women's numeric and policy representation generates mixed results and often fails to adequately theorize the link between the presence of female legislators and attention to women on the political agenda.

Inspired by these policy debates, in this dissertation I explored both when women's policy representation can be expected to emerge in Western European countries and whether the presence of female politicians explains this phenomenon. I began by observing that a positive correlation between numeric and policy representation may not necessarily result from the efforts of female legislators' to promote women's inter-

ests. To the contrary, though the direct relationship may account for these findings, there are a number of plausible alternative explanations.

Focusing solely on the presence or absence of a correlation between female parliamentarians and policy representation, however, obscures the role played by these other factors. It also makes it difficult to assign any causal role to female politicians. Even if a direct relationship exists in some cases, we cannot be confident that this theory holds without testing it against reasonable alternative explanations.

Expanding on the frequently espoused hypothesis of a direct relationship between women's numeric and policy representation, I developed a theoretical framework that outlines three more nuanced links between the two forms of representation. First, the intervening relationship argues that the link between women's numeric and policy representation is not direct, but instead occurs through women's increased access to leadership positions. Second, the vote-seeking relationship posits that in explaining women's representation, it is necessary to account for parties' desire to appeal to female voters. Finally, the policy-stability relationship suggests that attention to women on the policy agenda may reflect parties' stable attitudes towards women's representation.

Though broadly applicable, for this project I chose to apply and test the theoretical framework in two Western European contexts: party agenda formation and the extension of parental leave policies. I began by focusing on political parties, which determine both candidate selection and the platforms that will eventually be taken up by governments within Western European states. These powers give these organizations control over both women's presence in office and attention to women on the policy agenda. It is therefore impossible to assess the relationship between women's numeric and policy representation without also accounting for other determinants of party behavior on both fronts.

In addition to studying party dynamics, I also sought to determine whether the alternative explanations might also apply to the expansion of family leave by Western European parliaments. As is the case with attention to women on parties' policy platforms, the proportion of seats held by female legislators may not be the sole determinant of the passage of this legislation benefiting women. Rather, given the policy-making environment, it may be more important to attend to the factors shaping governments' attitudes towards policy for women.

To answer the motivating questions, the preceding empirical chapters drew on multiple methodological approaches and varying levels of analysis. Nonetheless, the shared focus on comparing the direct relationship to the alternative intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses unifies these studies. Within this final chapter, I first summarize the findings from each of the individual components of the dissertation. I then discuss the implications of the project as a whole, not only for scholars but also for women's rights activists. Finally, I conclude by discussing some of the questions generated by this project that should be addressed in future research.

7.2 Summary of Results

The first three empirical chapters focused on the link between women's presence and attention to women on parties' policy agendas. To assess this relationship, I first presented qualitative case studies of the three major British parties. This second chapter drew on both an analysis of the parties' policy platforms and interviews with MPs, other politicians, and activists. For each party, I first described women's numeric representation within its parliamentary delegations. I then examined changes in the party's attitude towards women's representation between the 2005 and 2010

general elections. This analysis revealed relative stability within the Labour Party, yet major changes among the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats.

Taken together, these three case studies generated two important insights into the relationship between women's numeric and policy representation. First, variation in women's presence in parties' parliamentary caucuses may not be the chief determinant of women's policy representation. Second, there are at least three alternative factors that appear to be important in understanding both women's numeric representation and attention to women on parties' platforms: the presence of women among party elites; parties' vote-seeking aims; and stable party attitudes.

Drawing on the insights provided by the qualitative analysis, as well as literature on both women and politics and party politics, in the third chapter I theorized about women's representation in Western European parties more broadly. This study aimed to test both whether a correlation exists between numeric and policy representation and why this relationship might emerge. To do so, the four theories were tested using an original dataset measuring attention to women on the electoral manifestos of parties from across ten Western European countries between 1980 and 2008.

No one of these four hypotheses was expected to explain the behavior of all parties. Thus, the standard generalized linear model could not be applied. Instead, the empirical analysis required a modeling strategy that allowed parties to be drawn from these four different subpopulations, but did not demand that the party groupings be known a priori. To this end, I used a finite mixture model to estimate the probabilities that the four hypotheses—each represented by a unique set of covariates—clustered each of the 52 parties.

The results from this model indicated that the direct relationship accounts for only a small subset of parties. In fact, it classified only 15 percent of organizations. The vast majority of parties, in contrast, were better explained by the alternative hypothe-

ses. At the same time, while a high level of women's representation is correlated with large gains in women's policy representation among parties explained by the direct relationship, the substantive impact of female legislators was much smaller for other party types. The model thus lent strong support to the new theoretical framework. This draws attention to the role parties play not only in mitigating the relationship between numeric and policy representation, but also in explaining attention to women on the policy agenda.

The fourth chapter moved beyond asking whether and why women's numeric and policy representation might be linked. Instead, it considered which parties were likely to be classified by each of the four competing hypotheses. Influenced in part by the qualitative analysis presented in the second chapter, I assessed whether variation in parties' organizational structures explained clustering into the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability components. To do so, I refit the model from the third chapter with concomitant variables capturing the influence of the party congress, party leadership, and parliamentary delegation on party platform formation.

The results from these models indicated that the rules governing agenda control do not appear to explain the relationship between women's presence and attention to women on parties' platforms. In the chapter's conclusion, I first posited that this may reflect the possibility that the formal procedures determining manifesto authorship do not reflect the realities of agenda formation. Alternatively, it may be necessary to consider other factors that might better explain classification by the four theories. Regardless of which explanation holds, the results suggest that when devising strategies for advancing policy for women, activists should not focus only on political parties' internal structures.

The final two empirical chapters shifted the level of analysis from political parties to legislatures and governments. Mirroring the previous analyses, in the fifth chapter

I returned to the British case. In this study, I assessed the role of female MPs in influencing policy in the House of Commons. Interviews with party activists and parliamentarians revealed that there was widespread disagreement concerning the degree to which the presence of female legislators shaped policy outcomes. In an effort to reconcile these competing arguments, I compared two cases in which women MPs sought to influence the Government's behavior. In one case, the women succeeded in their effort to quash a coalition proposal. In the other, they were unable to defeat the unfavorable legislation.

As was the case with the second chapter, the results from this analysis demonstrated that the link between women's numeric and policy representation is more complicated than frequently assumed. On the one hand, female MPs did use the limited tools available to them in an effort to influence policy outcomes. On the other hand, it was clear that the broader political context both facilitated and constrained the relationship between women's presence and policy representation. In particular, the results from these case studies drew attention to the importance of women's access to ministerial positions, as well as governments' vote-seeking and policy aims.

The sixth chapter supplements these insights drawn from the British case with insights from the existing literature in order to better understand the adoption of legislation for women. In particular, I applied the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses to the expansion of parental leave policies. To test these competing theories, I used multi-level models to explain instances of policy extension by 136 governments from across 15 Western European countries over a 20 year period.

The empirical analysis demonstrated that when failing to account for the alternative hypotheses, the proportion of seats held by female legislators was positively associated with the expansion of parental leave policies in some assemblies. Account-

ing for the other theories, however, mitigated the influence of the direct relationship. The models indicated, for example, that vote-seeking aims may in some instances influence government behavior. The intervening relationship—operationalized as the proportion of cabinet positions held by female ministers—was also associated with the extension of these policies. These results suggested that policy actors may want to focus their efforts on electing parties that are likely to promote female politicians to the cabinet upon gaining office.

7.3   Implications for Women and Politics Scholars

In the preceding chapters, I developed and tested a more nuanced theoretical framework accounting for the association between women's numeric and policy representation. Taken together, the results from these analyses clearly justify this attention to the alternatives factors that may explain women's policy representation. This in turn has important implications for women and politics scholars.

The women and politics literature focuses primarily on the role of female rank-and-file MPs in explaining women's policy representation. This attention can be explained in part by the belief that the presence of female legislators will fundamentally alter politics. It can also be attributed to the fact that women have historically been excluded from leadership roles within parties and cabinets. Scholars have thus focused on the proportion of seats in legislatures held by female representatives, as these represent the political positions that women have been most able to access.

Emphasizing only the presence or absence of female legislators, however, makes it easy to overstate the relationship between women's numeric and policy representation. Consider the results generated when excluding the measures capturing the intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability theories from the quantitative analy-

ses. Both attention to women on parties' platforms and the extension of parental leave policies appear to be explained by women's presence in office. More nuanced accounts of women's policy representation are revealed, however, when including the alternative hypotheses.

Focusing exclusively on the direct relationship can thus lead women and politics scholars to overlook key causal mechanisms explaining women's policy representation. At the same time, the absence of a more complete theoretical framework may obfuscate the factors that mitigate the relationship between women's presence and attention to women on the policy agenda. In considering only the behavior of—and constraints facing— female MPs, we may inadvertently ignore the important role parties' preferences play not only in contributing to, but also tempering, women's policy representation.

Future work should thus be careful not to a priori ascribe an important role to backbench representatives. Instead, it should ask why the link between women's presence and policy representation may emerge. In this regard, it is especially important to both determine the location of policy-making authority and to consider the incentives facing these policy actors with respect to women's representation.

In Western European politics, parties and their governments wield significant influence. I therefore focused on women's access to positions of power within these entities, as well as alternative factors that may shape party behavior. The policy-making process differs across states, however. In other systems, scholars may need to concentrate on different actors and revise the theoretical framework to better reflect these political realities.

In the parliamentary systems considered in this study, for example, the origins and survival of the legislature and executive are linked. The regimes are thus largely characterized by the interdependence of the parliament and cabinet. Presidential systems,

in contrast, are characterized by the separation of legislative from executive powers. Among presidential and semi-presidential regimes, moreover, there is variation in the relationship between the executive and the legislature. The specific legislative powers of presidents also vary enormously (Shugart and Carey, 1992).

When operationalizing the alternative theoretical relationships, the separation of powers and variation in executive policy-making authority may require scholars to focus on different actors. Consider, for example, the intervening hypothesis. In systems in which the executive is the chief policy actor, it may be necessary to focus on women's presence in high-prestige cabinet positions. Where the legislature is dominant, it may be more important to account for women's inclusion in positions of power within the assembly. In these cases, scholars may benefit from considering women's access to high-profile committee assignments and other leadership positions within the party or chamber.

Beyond the parliamentary/presidential distinction, variation in other institutional features can further influence the relevance of particular hypotheses for explaining women's policy representation. In assemblies where backbench representatives have greater policy-making authority, the direct relationship deserves greater attention. In these cases, researchers should consider the institutional rules that incentivize individual legislators to represent women's interests. Similarly, the policy-stability hypothesis may be unreasonable in systems where mandate switching is common and parties' are unlikely to implement their manifesto promises. Instead, it may be more important to focus on the aims of individual party leaders with respect to women's representation.

The nature of policy-making authority clearly varies across states. The theoretical framework presented in this project may thus be more readily transported to some systems than others. The operationalization and applicability of the alterna-

tive hypotheses, moreover, may vary based on institutional configurations. In fact, other settings may generate new alternatives beyond the intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability theories.

Despite these caveats, the broader conclusion continues to hold. In order to understand the emergence of policy for women in general—and the link between female legislators and policy representation in particular—it is necessary to consider which actors control women's (numeric and policy) representation and what factors motivate their behavior. In essence, it is not sufficient to simply theorize and test a direct relationship between women's presence and attention to women on the policy agenda.

7.4   Implications for Minority Politics Scholars

Like women and politics researchers, scholars examining the political representation of historically marginalized groups have also found a correlation between group members' presence in political office and their policy representation. My reassessment of the relationship between numeric and policy representation offers theoretical insights that can be generalized to these groups. The results from this dissertation may therefore also be relevant to those interested in the representation of other ascriptive identities.

Just as the direct relationship can obscure alternative explanations for the correlation between women's numeric and policy representation, similar patterns may hold for other minority groups. In particular, scholars of minority politics may find that the intervening hypothesis is applicable to understanding variation in policy representation. Future work may thus benefit from assessing whether these representatives have access to positions of power within parties and governments. Their presence or

absence in agenda-setting roles may in fact better explain policy representation than the proportion of seats in the assembly held by group members.

As well as the possibility of an intervening relationship, the policy-stability hypothesis may be particularly relevant for some historically marginalized groups. Factors such as their comparatively smaller size, geographic concentration, or historic affiliation with particular parties may lead some minority groups to be captured by a single party. Once associated with this organization, parties' baseline attitudes towards the group may be the best predictors of both its numeric and policy representation.

An ethic minority group, for example, may be affiliated with a single party that both selects group members as candidates and advances the group's interests. As a consequence of this association, other parties may neither nominate minority candidates nor attend to the group on their policy agendas. In this case, presence and policy representation are clearly correlated. However, both are explained by stable preferences that may not be responsive to changes in numeric representation alone.

Accounting for policy-stability may be especially important for understanding the correlation between minorities' numeric and policy representation. At the same time, further analysis may reveal that the vote-seeking hypothesis is less applicable to these cases. With respect to their party identification, women are a particular heterogeneous identity group. While gender gaps do emerge in voting behavior, in no instance have female voters been wholly affiliated with a single party. Organizations from across the ideological spectrum can thus hope to appeal to women in the electorate.

Vote-seeking behavior may also help to explain policy representation for minority groups that are similarly divided among parties. For groups that are largely associated with a single organization, however, this relationship is less likely to emerge. If other

parties' believe that their competitors have captured the group—and that they are therefore unlikely to win members' electoral support—they may be less willing to nominate group representatives or attend to these groups on their policy platforms. Given the importance of parties' vote-seeking behavior in explaining women's policy representation, future research should assess whether the presence or absence of these aims shapes the quality of representation offered to other historically marginalized groups.

7.5   Implications for Comparative Politics Scholars

The central finding of this work—that women's policy representation is often explained by factors beyond numeric representation—has clear implications for both gender and minority politics scholars. Beyond these contributions, this dissertation provides additional insights for the broader study of comparative politics. In particular, the results underscore the importance of accounting for both party composition in particular, and causal heterogeneity more generally, when explaining political behavior.

The literature on parliamentary governance generally conceives of parties as unitary actors. Legislators and ministers are considered to be agents of the party who work to implement its goals. The intra-party composition of both the cabinet and parliamentary delegation are thus perceived as largely irrelevant (Laver and Shepsle, 1994). The women and politics literature, in contrast, posits that variation in women's policy representation is largely a function of the gender makeup of political institutions. My findings demonstrate that the gender and politics scholars are not wholly correct. At the same time, the results also call into question the assumption that the composition of parties is inconsequential for explaining their behavior.

The findings from the finite mixture model show that 15 percent of parties are well classified by the direct hypothesis. Another 21 percent are clustered by the intervening theory. The percentage of women MPs also has a significant (if small) effect on women's policy representation among vote- and policy-seeking parties. The proportion of seats in the cabinet held by female ministers, moreover, is positively associated with the extension of parental leave policies. This relationship holds even when accounting for governing parties' baseline attitudes towards welfare state enlargement and previous commitments to expanding parental leave provisions.

Taken together, these results suggest that variation in intra-party composition can in some cases influence party behavior. In particular, the findings from the analysis of parental leave policies illustrate that it may be important to move beyond viewing cabinet members solely as agents of their parties and/or accounting only for which parties hold office. Instead, research should also focus on which intra-party interests are represented in the cabinet.

While my work focuses on women's representation, addressing intra-party factions may also be relevant for other traditionally underrepresented groups (as well as for interests that are not based on ascriptive identities). Comparative politics scholars should thus consider who controls particular ministries and how this affects policy adoption. With this in mind, future work should account for cabinet portfolio allocation within parties. It should also consider whether, and to what extent, different groups within these organizations are able to access these ministries.

As well as drawing attention to the importance of the makeup of parties and governments, the results also reinforce the need to account for causal heterogeneity when explaining party behavior. Within my work, I posit that the mechanisms shaping parties' attitudes towards women's representation are not constant across parties. To the contrary, these factors are expected to differ across organizations.

Existing research acknowledges the possibility of heterogeneity among parties. Müller and Strøm (1999a), for example, posit that while some organizations are motivated mostly by vote-seeking incentives, others prioritize office- or policy-seeking aims. This suggests that parties are drawn from different populations. Nevertheless, the standard regression approach treats all observations as if they are drawn from a single population. That is to say, it assumes that each explanatory factor will operate similarly across all parties.

Despite the assumption of homogeneity, the results from the analysis of electoral manifestos indicate that the mechanisms shaping party behavior do in fact differ across subpopulations within the data. This suggests that when scholars believe that parties' do not uniformly respond to the same stimuli, they should eschew traditional regression approaches in favor of more sophisticated methods of theory testing. More generally, the results highlight the need for scholars to seriously question whether all observations within their sample should be expected to react similarly to the explanatory variables of interest. Just as there is heterogeneity in parties' attitudes towards women's representation, there is likely to be causal complexity in political behavior more broadly.

7.6   Implications for Women's Policy Advocates

The growing body of research linking women's presence to women's policy representation in many ways reflects the attention dedicated to this issue by policy actors in recent years. Increasing women's access to political office has become a priority for many women's rights activists. These efforts are at least partially based on the assertion that bolstering the number of female politicians generates attention to women on the policy agenda. The results from this dissertation show, however, that women's

policy representation is often influenced by factors beyond women's presence in parties' parliamentary delegations alone. In addition to the theoretical and empirical contributions to the academic literature, this research therefore also has implications for policy actors committed to promoting women's representation.

The limited support for the direct relationship first indicates that arguments for women's numeric representation should not be linked to policy representation. There are reasons to strive for gender parity in legislatures beyond the expectation of increased attention to women. The presence of female politicians, for example, may offer symbolic representation that empowers women within society and upsets traditional expectations about appropriate gender roles (Campbell and Wolbrecht, 2006; Wolbrecht and Campbell, 2007). Beyond the impact of numeric representation on either policy or symbolic representation, the current distribution of power is arguably fundamentally unfair and unjust. Gender parity in political office can thus be important in and of itself (Phillips, 1995, 1998).

Justifying women's presence in politics based on the assumption that female MPs "matter" for policy representation, however, may ultimately inhibit their access to office. The qualitative case studies of British legislators' behavior illustrate that some female MPs do in fact seek to represent women. Nonetheless, they are often severely constrained in their capacity to do so. The quantitative analyses demonstrate, moreover, that factors beyond of the control of women MPs are often the most important predictors of women's policy representation.

These studies show that the absence of a direct relationship between women's numeric and policy representation does not necessarily reflect the failure of women MPs. Instead, it is a consequence of the realities of the policy-making process. Assuming that women's presence and policy representation will be linked consequently places

unrealistic expectations on female legislators. When women politicians cannot meet these demands, we risk undermining efforts to advance numeric representation.

Beyond the need to separate the aims of numeric and policy representation, the results further indicate that parties' attitudes towards women's policy representation can be influenced by factors beyond the presence of women in their parliamentary delegations. Simply increasing the proportion of seats held by female politicians, moreover, is unlikely to change the behavior of parties and governments. In reality, there is probably no single approach that can guarantee the inclusion of women's concerns on the policy agenda.

On their face, these results may be somewhat disappointing for advocates of women's policy representation. Among the strategies available for facilitating attention to women on the policy agenda, increasing the proportion of women in parties' parliamentary delegations is one of the most seemingly straightforward solutions. Bolstering the number of female backbenchers has, in fact, been one of the most popular approaches for advancing women's policy representation. This work indicates, however, that focusing on women's numeric representation alone is insufficient.

In light of these findings, what strategies should advocates of women's interests use to promote women's policy representation? The best tactic for ensuring that parties attend to women's interests may be to confer some control over intra-party politics to women's rights activists. Many parties already have internal women's organizations. The composition and strength of these groups, however, varies across parties (Kittilson, 2006). If women's organizations were not only controlled by members who were committed to promoting women's interests, but also invested with significant influence over party decision-making, then this might result in consistently high levels of attention to women on the policy agenda.

In the best possible policy-making environment, women's organizations would have some influence over parties' agenda formation. Minimally, they would be consulted during the process of manifesto authorship. Preferably, these organizations would be provided the necessary resources to develop policies relevant to women's interests. Ideally, they would also have the capacity to ensure that some of these policies were included in the final manifesto.

Providing women's organizations with some influence over intra-party leadership contests would likely further strengthen women's policy representation. The chapter studying the extension of parental leave provisions illustrates that the presence of female ministers is positively associated with policy adoption. Offering women's groups a modicum of control over leadership selection would likely result in the promotion of a greater number of party leaders who support policies for women. This may then lead to the adoption of more female-friendly policy when the party is in office.

Even if party leaders did not hold "pro-female" sentiments, offering women some say over leadership selection would incentivize candidates for these positions to commit to representing women's interests. Party elites seek to win (re)election to these internal leadership positions. Having to rely, at least in part, on the women's organizations in order to retain their power may thus lead to greater responsiveness to this constituency. This would likely lead to more attention to women on the policy agenda, regardless of the makeup of the parliamentary delegation, the party's stable policy preferences, or the presence or absence of broader vote-seeking aims.

The ideal strategy for women's rights activists may be to penetrate political parties' internal organizations. The aim would be to take control of women's groups and ensure that these bodies are invested with significant power over both policy formation and leadership selection. In practice, however, parties are unlikely to cede control to activists. Such reforms are therefore difficult to enact. Given this reality, what

steps can advocates of women's interests take that do not demand fundamentally restructuring parties?

To begin with, women's rights activists should campaign to ensure that female politicians have direct access to the policy agenda. Though it is impossible to draw definitive conclusions from observational data, the chapter on parental leave policies illustrates that the proportion of cabinet positions held by women is strongly associated with the adoption of these female-friendly policies. This finding holds even when accounting for the direct, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses. For a subset of parties, moreover, attention to women on the policy agenda is best explained by the presence of a female party leader.

Taken together, these results indicate that in order to advance women's policy representation, women's rights advocates should identify the dominant policy actors and work to ensure that female-friendly politicians have access to these roles. In the Western European parliamentary systems analyzed in this dissertation, policy-making authority is largely centered with the party leadership and cabinet. Women's rights advocates in these states should thus work to ensure the promotion of female politicians to these posts.

In other systems in which the executive branch is dominant, it remains important to advocate for the placement of women in positions in which they can influence the head of government. In some presidential systems, for example, this may include encouraging parity cabinets that incorporate female ministers in high-prestige positions. Women's policy advocates may also wish to directly lobby the president and his or her cabinet members.

In systems in which legislators have significant policy making authority, in contrast, advocates of women's policy representation should continue to support measures aimed at increasing the proportion of seats held by female representatives. At the

same time, they must focus additional attention on ensuring that women are placed in positions of power within the assembly. These efforts can take many forms. Women's rights activists may work with female politicians to ensure that they have the skills and resources necessary to advance within the party hierarchy. In institutions in which party leaders control promotion to desirable positions in the legislature—such as committee chairs—they should also pressure these elites to promote women to these posts.

As well as increasing female politicians' access to positions of policy-making authority, advocates of women's policy representation should consider working closely with "pro-female" parties. The party-level analysis indicates that for a plurality of organizations, women's policy representation is a function of policy stability. That is, parties' attention to women in the initial time period predicts future levels of policy representation. The cabinet-level analysis further shows that governments with a higher proportion of female ministers are more likely to extend parental leave provisions.

Taken together, these results indicate that women's policy activists may benefit from supporting parties that are "female-friendly," insofar as they have traditionally attended to women on their platforms and are likely to include women in the cabinet if they enter government. These female-friendly organizations can be expected to advance women's policy representation irrespective of the gender makeup of the parliamentary party or the presence of vote-seeking incentives. In this respect, they represent natural allies for actors concerned with the advancement of women's interests. Consequently, women's rights advocates should lend their support to these organizations and seek to ensure that they garner a sufficient number of votes to gain political office.

Finally, activists may also increase attention to women on the policy agenda by mobilizing women within the electorate. Existing women and politics research has not systematically accounted for parties' vote-seeking aims. Both the analyses of parties' platforms and government policy adoption, however, draw attention to the importance of electoral incentives in influencing women's policy representation.

The case studies of the British parties, for example, illustrate that their behavior with respect to women's representation is shaped in part by electoral concerns. The vote-seeking hypothesis further accounts for almost 30 percent of parties included in the quantitative analysis of electoral platforms. These aims are also positively associated with the extension of parental leave policies. In combination, these studies demonstrate that political parties are often responsive to gender differences in voting behavior among the electorate.

Women are obviously a heterogeneous constituency, and it is impossible to expect all female voters to converge on a single party. Nonetheless, because there are so many women in the electorate, the behavior of even a small percentage of female voters can influence election results. Thus, in addition to working with political parties to promote attention to women on the agenda, advocates concerned with policy representation should also seek to mobilize women on these issues. Regardless of the gender makeup of their parliamentary delegations and internal leadership, political parties aim to win elections. If even a subset of female voters are shown to be responsive to parties' inclusion of women's interests on the policy agenda, other organizations are likely to react by bolstering women's policy representation.

7.7 Future Research

In addition to providing new insights for both scholars and activists, this dissertation also points to a number of additional research projects that can advance our understanding of women and politics. Most obviously, as noted at the end of the Chapter 4, there is need for additional theory building and testing with respect to the factors that explain parties' classification in the direct, intervening, vote-seeking, and policy-stability hypotheses. Identifying the determinants of clustering is especially important for practitioners and activists. This information could allow them to alter their approach to women's representation based on party-type.

Beyond refining the concomitant model, additional analyses will consider how different sets of parties address women's interests. In the second chapter, I provided anecdotal evidence suggesting that ideologically left and right parties may use different types of words when attending to women on their platforms. In future research, I will consider whether the female-centric vocabulary used by parties varies based on whether they are classified as direct, intervening, vote-seeking, or policy-stability organizations. It may be the case, for example, that vote-seeking organizations are unlikely to address potentially controversial or polarizing issues (such as sexuality and abortion).

Within countries, it may also be insightful to track the emergence of particular topics over time. In particular, this may reveal that women's numeric representation is important for policy representation because the presence of female politicians brings previously ignored women's interests to the policy agenda. The results from the dissertation show that the amount of women's policy representation is often determined by factors beyond the presence of female parliamentarians. Parties with more women in both the parliamentary delegation and among the leadership may be

more likely, however, to introduce "new" women's issues. Depending on the success of these parties, these issues may then be adopted by other organizations.

In addition to extending the analysis of the outcome variable introduced in the second chapter, the predictors used in the analyses in both Chapters 3 and 6 also deserve further study. In this project, for example, measures of the presence of female party leaders and women in cabinets are included as explanatory variables capturing the intervening hypothesis. However, these also represent comparatively understudied measures of women's numeric representation that deserve to be explored in their own right. Using the data on female party leaders—and drawing on the theoretical framework developed for this project—subsequent research will address the circumstances that allow female politicians to ascend to the party leadership.

In this vein, this work will assess whether the presence of female leaders can be explained by party ideology and/or the presence of female parliamentarians. At the same time, I will consider whether the position of the party in government and among the electorate influences women's capacity to enter leadership. Parties may be more likely to select female leaders, for example, when in opposition or losing vote share.

Drawing on the fourth chapter of the dissertation—which focuses on parties' internal organizations—in future work I will also consider whether variation in the mode of leadership selection can explain the ascension of female party leaders. As briefly noted in that chapter, differences in candidate selection mechanisms have been shown to influence women's presence in parties' parliamentary delegations. Building on these theories, additional projects will consider whether decentralizing leadership selection (and thus disempowering party activists) has similarly aided female candidates for leadership positions within parties.

In addition to researching female party leaders, in future work I also hope to revisit the measure of women's presence in cabinets. Existing research has consid-

ered women in cabinets cross-nationally (Krook and O'Brien, Forthcoming; Reynolds, 1999; Siaroff, 2000; Whitford, Wilkins and Ball, 2007). The over-time research on women in the executive in now outdated, however. The literature on women in parliamentary governments, moreover, could be further refined. While much of this work focuses on macro-level explanations, it could be strengthened by integrating the broader research on coalition formation processes. This would elucidate the circumstances that are most conducive to the inclusion of women in the executive.

The current literature also generally considers only the percentage of cabinet positions held by women, illustrating that most leaders fail to appoint gender equal cabinets. It does not consider, however, the ratio of female ministers to the proportion of seats held by women in either the legislature or the governing parties' parliamentary delegations. We therefore do not know which systems are likely to under (or over) represent women in the executive in relation to their presence among the pool of potential ministers.

Beyond drawing attention to the importance of women's presence in leadership positions within parties and governments, both the quantitative and qualitative analyses demonstrate that vote-seeking aims play an important role in explaining women's policy representation. In particular, these studies show that parties' behavior can be influenced by the presence of a gender gap in partisan support. Much of the research on this gender gap focuses on long-term trends, illustrating that women have gradually become more left-leaning (Inglehart and Norris, 2000, 2003). Nonetheless, the data collected for this project suggest that the presence and prevalence of the gender gap varies not only across states, but also within states over time. Additional research in thus necessary to explain these short and medium term variations in male-female voting divides.

Using the information collected for this project, future work will explore the connection between women's representation and the gender gap. This work, for example, may consider the possibility of an endogenous relationship between the two. A party may initially create gender differences in electoral support by attending to women's numeric and/or policy representation. Other parties may subsequently respond to the loss of female voters by adopting these strategies. At the same, the extent to which this diffusion occurs may be dependent on the competitiveness of the party system. It may also be further influenced by the extent to which female voters can hold parties in government accountable for implementing policy for women.

This project represents one study in a long line of research on the relationship between women's presence and policy representation. Building on this existing work, I have shown that the link between the two is more complicated than often assumed. At the same time, as this section on future research has made clear, these results certainly do not conclude the study of either women's numeric or policy representation. To the contrary, the additional questions raised by this project alone demonstrate that these will be promising fields of inquiry for years to come.

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Appendix

Between January and March of 2011, with support from the National Science Foundation (Grant No.: SES-1024388) I conducted 48 interviews with Liberal Democrat, Labour, and Conservative party members. My informants included parliamentarians, activists, and members of internal governing boards, among others. In accordance with the confidentiality requirements of the Institutional Review Board, all interviewees remain anonymous and all findings are paraphrased. In order to aid readers in interpreting the qualitative analyses drawn from these interviews, the following list provides a brief description of each informant:

1. Female Labour Party Activist; Former Government Appointee on Gender Equality Issues; Peer in the House of Lords

2. Female Labour Party Organizer; Former Government Appointee on Gender Equality Issues; Peer in the House of Lords

3. Female Liberal Democrat MP and Member of Government; Party Leader on Gender Equality Issues

4. Male Liberal Democrat MP

5. Male Conservative Party MP

6. Female Labour Party MP; Former Member of Government

7. Male Liberal Democrat Party Board Member; Peer in the House of Lords

8. Former Government Advisor; Former Member of Women's Ministry; Peer in the House of Lords

9. Male Labour Party MP

10. Female Labour Party Board Member

11. Male Labour Party MP

12. Female Labour Party Activist; Former Government Appointee on Gender Equality Issues

13. Male Liberal Democrat MP; Former Member of Shadow Cabinet

14. Female Labour Party Consultant on Gender Equality Issues

15. Female Labour Party MP; Former Member of Women's Ministry

16. Male Conservative Party Board Member

17. Female Labour Party MP and Shadow Member of Government; Former Member of Women's Ministry

18. Male Conservative Party Board Member

19. Male Conservative Party MP

20. Female Conservative Party MP

21. Male Conservative Party MP

22. Female Liberal Democrat MP

23. Male Conservative Party MP; Former Member of Shadow Cabinet

24. Female Conservative Party MP

25. Female Liberal Democrat Party Board Member; Peer in the House of Lords

26. Female Labour Party MP

27. Female Labour Party Activist; Former Member of Women's Ministry; Former Government Appointee on Gender Equality Issues; Peer in the House of Lords

28. Female Labour Party MP; Former Member of Women's Ministry

29. Male Conservative Party MP

30. Male Labour Party MP

31. Male Conservative Party MP

32. Female Labour Party MP; Former Member of Government

33. Male Labour Party MP

34. Female Liberal Democrat Party Board Member; Peer in the House of Lords

35. Female Conservative Party MP

36. Female Conservative Party MP

37. Male Conservative Party MP

38. Female Liberal Democrat Activist

39. Male Labour Party MP

40. Male Conservative Party MP; Former Member of Shadow Cabinet

41. Female Conservative Party MP

42. Male Conservative Party MP

43. Male Conservative Party Board Member

44. Male Conservative Party MP; Former Member of Shadow Cabinet

45. Male Liberal Democrat MP

46. Male Conservative Party MP

47. Male Labour Party MP; Former Party Board Member

48. Male Labour Party Board Member

Content Analysis Dictionary Capturing Attention to Women on Political Parties' Electoral Manifestos[1]

Abortion	Flextime	Pay Equity
Alimony	Gender	Pay Inequity
Antenatal	Genital	Pay Inequality
Birth Control	Girl[2]	Platform for Action
Breast	Gynecologic	Pornography
Burqa	Her	Postnatal
CEDAW	Hijab	Postpartum
Cervix	Historically Male	Pregnancy
Chador	Homemaker	Prenatal
Childbearing	Housewife	Prostitute
Childbirth	Incest	Rape
Childcare	Lactate	Reproductive
Child Maintenance	Lady[2]	Scarf
Child Minder	Lesbian[2]	Sex[2]
Child Support	Lone parent	Sexism
Contraception	Male-dominated	Sexist
Crèche	Mammogram	Single Parent
Daughter[2]	Maternal	Spousal Violence
Daycare	Maternity	Stay-at-home
Domestic Violence	Menopause	Traditionally Male
Domestic Worker	Midwife	Trimester
Dominated by Men	Miscarriage	UNIFEM
Dowry	Mother[2]	Uterine
Equal Pay	Niqab	Uterus
Family Maintenance	Nursery	Veil
Family Planning	Obstetrics	Wage Discrimination
Female[2]	Osteoporosis	Wage Gap
Feminine	Ovary	Widow[2]
Feminism	Pap Smear	Wife[2]
Fertility	Parental Leave	Woman[2]

[1]The text analysis accounts for plural words and variation. For example, in addition to "mother," the outcome variable also includes mentions of "mothers," "motherhood," and "mothering." The analysis also sought to capture spelling variations, for example recording both "flextime" and "flexitime."

[2] As the text analysis sought to exclude statements that do not specifically address the position of women, words in this subset were included in the final count only if they occurred independently from their "masculine" counterpart. For example, claims for both "men and women" (as well as "sons and daughters," "girls and boys," etc.) are excluded from the analysis.

Table 1: Poisson GLM of Attention to Women on Party Manifestos (Accounting Only for the Direct Relationship)

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
Intercept	-6.70	0.02	-334.32	<0.001
% Women MP	0.01	0.00	21.40	<0.001

Notes: The outcome variable is a count of the number of words related to women in the party's electoral manifesto. N=260.

Table 2: Poisson GLM of Attention to Women on Party Manifestos

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(>|z|)
Intercept	-5.10	0.09	-59.00	<0.001
% Women MP	0.01	0.00	12.36	<0.001
Ever Fem Leader	-0.07	0.03	-2.40	0.02
Current Fem Leader	0.16	0.04	4.39	<0.001
Male Supported Parties	0.06	0.05	1.15	0.25
Vote-Share	0.00	0.00	-0.49	0.63
Fem Supported Parties	0.19	0.05	3.84	<0.001
Male Supported Parties:Vote-Share	0.00	0.00	0.59	0.56
Fem Supported Parties:Vote-Share	0.00	0.00	0.54	0.59
Women Words 1st Manifesto	0.23	0.01	18.91	<0.001

Notes: The outcome variable is a count of the number of words related to women in the party's electoral manifesto. For the vote-seeking measure, the baseline category is gender-neutral parties. N=260.