

Representational Effects of Electoral Quotas

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Mona Lena Krook
Assistant Professor
Department of Political Science
Washington University in St. Louis
Campus Box 1063
One Brookings Drive
St. Louis, MO 63130
mlkrook@wustl.edu

Abstract

The past two decades have witnessed unprecedented gains in women’s access to elected office around the world, largely as a result of the introduction of electoral gender quotas. The expanding literature on these measures focuses almost exclusively on questions of design, adoption, and numerical impact. Yet, even a cursory look at quota campaigns reveals that these policies are not simply linked to concerns to increase women’s numbers. Advocates suggest that such provisions will increase diversity among the types of women elected, raise attention to women’s issues in policy-making processes, change the gendered nature of the public sphere, and inspire female voters to get more politically involved. In contrast, opponents express concerns that quotas will facilitate the election of ‘unqualified’ women, bring women to office with little interest in promoting women’s concerns, reinforce stereotypes about women’s inferiority as political actors, and deter ordinary women’s political participation. Despite their prevalence, the empirical validity of these claims has not yet been systematically addressed – and thus, the potential ramifications of quotas for other political processes are not yet well-understood. This paper develops a series of hypotheses, focusing on how electoral reforms like gender quotas may affect trends in candidate recruitment, legislative behavior, and public opinion and mass mobilization.

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The past two decades have witnessed unprecedented gains in women's access to elected office. This trend has occurred in all major regions of the world, leading to dramatic increases in the proportion of women in parliament in countries as diverse as Rwanda, Sweden, and Argentina. A major reason for these shifts has been the adoption of various types of electoral gender quota policies aimed at expanding the number of women selected as political candidates. These measures take three main forms: *reserved seats*, which set aside a number of places for women; *party quotas*, which seek to increase the proportion of women among party candidates; and *legislative quotas*, which require that all parties nominate a percentage of women on their electoral slates. While the first quotas were adopted as early as the 1930s, these policies became increasingly popular in the 1990s and 2000s, such that today more than 100 countries now have some type of electoral gender quota. The recent and global nature of these developments has sparked both scholarly and popular interest in their origins and effects, leading research on gender quotas to become the fastest growing area of research on women and politics (Krook 2006b), as well as key focus of the gender-related programming of many international organizations and transnational networks (Krook and True forth.). As the widest reaching electoral reforms of recent years, the emergence of gender quotas has also more recently caught the attention of non-gender scholars writing on topics like candidate selection and electoral performance (Bhavnani 2009; Fréchette, Maniquet, and Morelli 2008), dynamics of internal party democracy (Rahat, Hazan, and Katz 2008), and patterns of mass political engagement (Karp and Banducci 2008). These patterns suggest that quotas are the subject of a rich and expanding literature, but that their potential ramifications for other political processes are not yet well-studied and understood.

To date, most research on gender quotas has revolved around questions related to their adoption and numerical impact. To explain why quotas have been introduced in countries that are otherwise quite diverse, scholars point to the mobilization of women's groups (Bruhn 2003; Dahlerup 2006; Kittilson 2006), the strategic incentives of political elites (Davidson-Schmich 2006; Matland and Studlar 1996; Meier 2004), the role of reigning norms of equality and representation (Meier 2000; Opello 2006), the priorities of international organizations (Krook 2004b; Krook and True forth.), and the exchange of information across national borders (Krook 2006b; Krook 2008). They account for the fact that some quotas are more effective than others by pointing to the details of the measures themselves (Jones 2009; Schmidt and Saunders 2004; Schwindt-Bayer 2009), the institutional frameworks in which they are introduced (Htun and Jones 2002; Matland 2006; Tremblay 2008), and the balance between actors for and against quota implementation (Baldez 2004; Jones 2004; Murray, Krook, and Opello 2009; cf. Krook 2007). Recent studies have been especially concerned with answering this latter question

because, while quotas ostensibly aim to elect more women, their mere advent has not resulted in a uniform rise in the proportions of women elected to national parliaments. Rather, some countries have experienced dramatic increases following the adoption of quota regulations (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005; Kittilson 2006; Longman 2006), while others have witnessed more modest changes (Murray 2004; Siregar 2006) and even setbacks (Araújo 2003; Verge 2008) in women's representation.

Until recently, cumulative research has been limited by the fact that most scholars have analyzed these questions in the context of a single case. My past research has sought to overcome this shortcoming by engaging in explicit comparisons of cases within and across world regions. In several articles and a recent monograph entitled *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender and Candidate Selection Reform Worldwide* (Oxford University Press, 2009), I drew on evidence from around the globe to elaborate a framework for explaining the spread and impact of quota policies, which I then illustrated through paired comparisons of reserved seats in Pakistan and India, party quotas in Sweden and the United Kingdom, and legislative quotas in Argentina and France. On the basis of my research, I argued that quota policies may have many sources, but usually originate in alliances among actors in civil society, the state, and/or the international and transnational spheres, who may each pursue quotas for distinct, and sometimes even contradictory, reasons. I explained variations in quota effects with reference to how these measures, as institutional reforms, disrupt existing institutional configurations in ways that facilitate or undermine women's access to political office. In addition to combining within- and cross-case analysis, my work also exploited recent advances in qualitative political methodology by focusing on equifinality, or the possibility that there may be multiple routes to the same outcome, and the importance of causal combination, or the notion that the effects of one factor may depend upon the presence or absence of other conditions (cf. Ragin 2000).

Questions on the design, adoption, and implementation of quota provisions remain crucially important: the number of countries adopting quotas continues to grow, at the same time that – confronted with the failures of existing policies – many parties and legislatures have revised, or considered revising, earlier measures. Yet, even a cursory look at quota campaigns reveals that these measures are not simply linked to concerns to increase the numbers of women in elected office. Arguing their case for quotas, advocates around the world have suggested that such provisions will increase diversity among the types of women elected, raise attention to women's issues in policy-making processes, change the gendered nature of the public sphere, and inspire female voters to get more politically involved. At the same time, opponents have expressed concerns that quotas will facilitate access for 'unqualified' women, bring women to office with little interest in promoting women's issues,

reinforce stereotypes about women's inferiority as political actors, and deter ordinary women's political participation. These varied expectations indicate that quota adoption may have a host of positive and negative effects, above and beyond its impact on the numbers of women elected. However, despite their prevalence in quota debates, the empirical validity of these claims has not yet been systematically addressed. Although a growing number of scholars have signaled the need to go 'beyond numbers' (Franceschet and Piscopo 2008; Sacchet 2008; Tinker 2004; Zetterberg 2009), most of their work has involved single case studies that use a range of different theories and measures to evaluate the impact of gender quota policies.

To gain greater leverage on these questions, the present project proposes to engage in a theory-building exercise that develops common concepts for analyzing quota impact and tests the resulting hypotheses via a large-*n* dataset of quota campaigns and in-depth case studies from three regions of the world: Western Europe, Latin America, and Sub-Saharan Africa. The goal is to assess whether and how quotas achieve a range of different objectives to establish whether gender quotas constitute a step forward for democracy and for women, or alternatively, serve to perpetuate existing patterns of domination and inequality. To this end, the investigation is organized around three major facets of political representation: *descriptive representation*, or the basic attributes of those elected; *substantive representation*, or attention to group interests in policy-making; and *symbolic representation*, or the cultural meanings and ramifications of the representative process (cf. Pitkin 1967; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005). Placing questions of political representation at the center of analysis, however, does not simply present an opportunity to determine whether gender quotas produce the consequences anticipated by advocates or those feared by opponents. It also provides an entry into exploring how these reforms speak to a variety of literatures in political science, affording a chance – for example – to link otherwise disparate literatures by analyzing how electoral reforms may affect candidate recruitment and nomination, policy-making and legislative behavior, and public opinion and mass mobilization. The project will pursue these aims during the five years of the NSF Career Award through an integrated program of research, educational, and outreach activities.

Earlier Research on Political Representation

Political representation is a central topic in political science, with scholars seeking to explore questions related to who represents what (Dovi 2002; Mansbridge 1999; Phillips 1995; Pitkin 1967; Saward 2006) and where, when, and why representation can be said to occur (Manin 1997; Plotke 1997; Rehfeld 2006; Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson 1995; Urbinati 2000; cf. Celis, Childs, Kantola, and Krook

2008). The research on women in relation to these issues asks why so few women are elected to political office, whether women in politics represent 'women' as a group, and how the presence or absence of women in politics affects voter opinions and activities. The first topic has received by far the most attention in comparative work on women's political representation, stemming at least in part from the fact that it is relatively straightforward to count the numbers of women in national legislatures and then to compare these percentages across countries. The second has been the focus of a large body of single case studies and a growing number of comparative analyses. The fact that most focus on individual countries is not surprising: monitoring the effects of women's presence requires in-depth study of the dynamics behind policy-making processes, and scholars need specialized knowledge in order to gauge how women may be able to intervene, as well as whether or not they do, to promote women's concerns in the formulation of public policies. Comparative studies of the third topic, in contrast, are much less common, due partially to the fact that scholars disagree in their definitions and symbolic effects are the least tangible of all three aspects of political representation (Krook 2010).

Empirical studies of women's descriptive representation have focused on cross-national variations in the numbers of women holding elected office. Scholars have explored the impact of three types of variables: institutional or 'demand side' factors, like electoral rules and candidate selection procedures; structural or 'supply side' factors, such as women's share of the workforce and women's educational achievements; and cultural or ideational factors, like beliefs about the suitability of women for leadership roles, influencing the likelihood that voters will support female candidates. The findings of large-*n* statistical analyses and small-*n* case studies, while sometimes mixed, signal the importance of dynamic relationships among these factors. In terms of institutional variables, research finds that the percentage of women in parliament tends to be higher in countries with PR electoral systems than in those with majoritarian arrangements (McAllister and Studlar 2002; Rule 1987; Salmond 2006). Women also tend to fare better in parties with clear and centralized candidate selection procedures (Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Matland 2004; Norris 1997). In terms of structural factors, many, although not all, studies observe strong correlations between women's representation and women's overall rates of education and labor force participation (McDonagh 2002; Rosenbluth, Salmond, and Thies 2006), as well as levels of national development (Matland 1998). Finally, in terms of ideational variables, the literature uncovers close connections with cultural attitudes towards equality. The proportion of women in elected positions is typically higher in Protestant countries (Kaiser 2001; Reynolds 1999; Rule 1987) and in countries where citizens are more open to women in leadership positions (Inglehart and Norris 2003; Paxton and Kunovich 2003).

Research on women's substantive representation, in contrast, aims to understand the degree to which women seek, and are able, to promote women's issues once elected. Demonstrating these effects is rarely straightforward. While scholars often detect distinct policy priorities among male and female legislators (Barrett 1995; Swers 1998; Thomas 1991), they also find that these differences do not always translate into policy gains for women as a group. The literature focuses on three types of factors that may account for these findings: the proportion of women elected, individual factors, and institutional and contextual variables that may affect the propensity to act for women. Studies on the role of proportions assume that as women's numbers approximate a 'critical mass,' attention to women's policy concerns will grow (Childs and Krook 2008). However, the diverse range of outcomes associated with women's increased presence (Ayata and Tütüncü 2008; Bratton 2005; Carroll 2001; Thomas 1994) has led to calls to move beyond attention to mere numbers (Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007; Childs and Krook 2009). Some point to individual-level variables, finding that legislators in left parties and those with feminist attitudes are more likely to prioritize women-friendly policy initiatives (Htun and Power 2006; Tremblay and Pelletier 2000; Vega and Firestone 1995). Others note, however, that party ideology may be less important than party affiliation, especially in places where it plays a role in determining access to political patronage (Goetz and Hassim 2003), while self-identifying as 'feminist' is not necessary, as women in conservative parties – who often eschew the feminist label – are more progressive on gender issues than their male counterparts (Carroll 2001; Swers 2002). Other work highlights institutional and contextual factors, like parliamentary rules and practices (Dodson 2006; Hawkesworth 2003; Lovenduski 2005a), degree of party discipline (Childs 2004), legislative seniority (Norton 1995), the presence of women's caucuses (Reingold 2000; Thomas 1994), and the influence of women's movements (Lovenduski 2005b; Weldon 2002).

Attempts to discern the shape and effects of women's symbolic representation, finally, have approached questions of how women's presence affects voter opinions and activities in two main ways. One explores how the election of women alters constituents' beliefs about the nature of politics as a 'male' domain, while the other examines how it affects the perceived legitimacy of political bodies. Results thus far have been mixed due to difficulties in defining and measuring the cultural meanings of political representation. In terms of beliefs about politics as a 'male' domain, several studies probe the symbolic importance of female legislators for women's political behavior. They argue that women's increased presence sends important signals to female citizens that lead them to become more politically involved or feel more politically efficacious (Atkeson 2003; Atkeson and Carrillo 2007; Campbell and Wolbrecht 2006; Childs 2004; Hansen 1997; High-Pippert and Comer 1998; Wolbrecht and Campbell

2007), especially when women's issues are highlighted during election campaigns (Koch 1997). Others find, however, that the election of women appears to have only weak effects on trends in women's political engagement (Karp and Banducci 2008). Addressing questions of legitimacy, studies find that both male and female respondents believe that government is more democratic when more women are present (Alexander 2009; Karp and Banducci 2008; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005). In contrast, those focused on women exclusively report that women represented by women were generally more positive about their representatives, but this did not lead them to be more positive about politics in general (Lawless 2004).

Research Questions and Initial Hypotheses

This rich and varied literature provides a starting point for exploring how quotas affect existing dynamics of political representation. However, sustained controversies over quotas in many countries (Bacchi 2006; Krook, Lovenduski, and Squires 2009) suggest that a direct application of the insights generated by non-quota cases may be misguided. A central concern with quota policies, and measures of affirmative action in general, is that the promotion of individuals based on ascriptive group identities like sex, race, or ethnicity may violate the principle of merit, potentially overlooking more qualified applicants who are members of dominant groups. This objection, however, perpetuates what Iris Marion Young describes as the "myth of merit." In her view, "the criteria used for evaluating and ranking individuals is usually value-laden, as well as normatively and culturally specific...[thus] practices of certifying people's qualifications, and ranking those qualifications, are always *political*" (1990, 210, emphasis in original). In other words, criteria regarding 'merit' are culturally constructed, usually by members of dominant groups as they are often in positions of power to define these standards. This argument is supported by studies revealing that male elites tend to view individuals with stereotypically 'male' characteristics as 'better' candidates (Niven 1998; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Yet, the validity of these criteria is undermined by the fact that voters not only vote for male and female candidates at equal rates, but even vote in greater numbers for women over men (Black and Erickson 2003; Lawless and Pearson 2008; Norris, Vallance, and Lovenduski 1992). In some cases, this is because gender stereotypes give women an advantage, leading voters to view them as political outsiders who may 'do' politics differently than men, signaling a departure from politics-as-usual (cf. Carroll 2001; Childs 2004). These various dynamics indicate that questions of 'merit' may be heightened in contexts where quotas are applied, producing mixed expectations of who these women are, what they will do, and what their presence means for constituents as a whole and for women in particular.

These controversies suggest three sets of hypotheses with regard to the impact of quotas on women's descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation. The first relates to questions about the *types of women elected*. On the one hand, the sudden need to find a greater number of women to put forward as candidates may require elites to lower their standards and nominate the first women that become known to them. This is the classic scenario feared by opponents, in which subpar candidates are 'fast-tracked' ahead of more qualified ones. On the other hand, the introduction of quotas may enable very qualified women inside the party to finally be selected as candidates who were overlooked when traditional criteria were applied. In this case, quotas may improve the overall caliber of candidates and potentially facilitate political renewal by incorporating a more diverse group of individuals. A third possibility is that the qualities of 'quota women' may be no different from those of their non-quota counterparts. The types of candidates nominated before and after the quota may be roughly the same, meaning that quotas simply re-entrench existing standards. These three hypotheses may be expressed in this manner:

H1: The introduction of gender quotas will result in non-favorable differences in the qualifications of quota women versus men and women elected prior to the quota policy (hereafter: 'non-quota women').

H2: The introduction of gender quotas will result in favorable differences in the qualifications of quota women versus men and non-quota women.

H3: The introduction of gender quotas will result in few or no differences in the qualifications of quota women versus men and non-quota women.

Sorting through these hypotheses, while addressed in some of the existing literature, is somewhat tricky given normative ideas about the qualifications required to hold political office. Contrary to the standards in place for other professions, as Anne Phillips observes, "being a politician is not just another kind of job" (1995, 64). Assessments of a 'good' politician may focus on a host of qualities, like charisma, effectiveness, or representativity (cf. Dovi 2007), such that desired qualities may depend fundamentally on the audience in question. Further, the ability of individuals to achieve the necessary standards – like a requisite level of political experience – may be profoundly gendered (as well as raced and classed). A recurrent finding, for example, is that women who accede to office via quotas tend to have less political experience when compared with men and non-quota women (Kolinsky 1991; Murray 2010; Franceschet and Piscopo 2009). Yet, the very reason that these women have less political experience is due to the fact that women have generally been excluded from positions of political

power, and therefore have not had the opportunity to accumulate the same level of experience as many men. At the same time, the backgrounds that women do bring to politics have long been shown to be different from those of men: female politicians tend to be older when first elected, come from a broader array of occupations, have a longer history of activism inside and outside their parties, be unmarried and less likely to have children, and have higher levels of education and professional credentials (Black and Erickson 2000; Dubeck 1976; Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2009; Saint-Germain 1993).

Assessing whether the women promoted through quotas have lower, higher, or similar qualifications to men and non-quota women is thus a complicated task. The available evidence points in several directions. Support for H1 is found in a number of countries, where the small number of women involved in party activities induces party selectors to recruit female relatives of male politicians to the necessary spots (Bird 2003; Thomas 2008). While coming from a political family may afford these women some political skills, this trend has often led observers to suggest that such women serve as proxies and tokens for their male family members (Abou-Zeid 2006; Chowdhury 2002; Pupavac 2005). Other studies that might be taken to substantiate these claims are those revealing that quota women tend to have lower levels of education and lower status occupations as compared with their non-quota counterparts (Baldez and Catalano 2008; Schwartz 2004), as well as close loyalties to party leaders (Cowley and Childs 2003; Tripp 2006) and few connections to feminist or other grassroots women's groups (Baldez 2004; Piscopo 2006; Goetz 2003; Tripp, Konaté, and Morna 2006). Evidence in favor of H2 is less present in existing research but is nonetheless suggested by work showing that quota women in fact have higher levels of education than their male colleagues (Sater 2007). Further, a string of recent studies find that the introduction of quotas increases the overall diversity of political bodies by leading to the election of more ethnic minority women (Hughes 2008; Mehta 2002) and women who are relatively young (Britton 2005; Burness 2000; Marx, Borner, and Caminotti 2007; Murray 2010). There is no literature that finds support for H3, but it remains a possibility in a more comprehensive study. The advantage of attending to a wide range of background features is that it expands the content of descriptive representation beyond sex, enabling a broader look into the impact of quotas on traditional patterns of candidate recruitment and nomination.

A second set of hypotheses concerns the effects of quotas on *attention to women's issues and interests in policy-making*. As Susan Franceschet and Jennifer Piscopo (2008) note, being elected through quotas may have contradictory effects on the perceived need among quota women to propose, debate, and pass policies on behalf of 'women' as a group. On the one hand, politicizing gender as a political identity during quota debates may create a 'mandate effect,' leading quota women to sense a

special obligation to act as advocates for women and their interests, in light of the fact that they are elected *because* they are women. On the other hand, the belittling of women elected through quotas as ‘unqualified’ may generate a ‘label effect,’ causing quota women to seek to avoid the stigma of quotas by disavowing women’s issues entirely in an attempt to show that they are ‘serious’ politicians. A third potential scenario is convergence in men’s and women’s legislative behavior, albeit for different reasons than the label effect. Whereas the former anticipates that quota women will change their policy activities to approximate those of men, the latter proposes that men – and possibly also non-quota women – will move to take up women’s issues as a result of women’s increased presence. These hypotheses may be formulated in the following way:

H4: The introduction of gender quotas will lead to greater efforts among quota women than among men and non-quota women to propose, advocate, and vote for policies on behalf of women as a group.

H5: The introduction of gender quotas will lead to fewer efforts among quota women as compared to men and non-quota women to propose, advocate, and vote for policies on behalf of women as a group.

H6: The introduction of gender quotas will lead to similar positive efforts among quota women, men, and non-quota women to propose, advocate, and vote for policies on behalf of women as a group.

A growing number of studies address the effects of quotas on women’s policy representation, but until recently, most have framed their contribution in relation to research on substantive representation, not the literature on gender quotas (Chaney 2006; Childs 2004; Opello 2008; Rai 2007; Thomas 2004). Yet, efforts to incorporate quotas into the analysis also confront some complications. Scholars must not only consider whether quotas change the expectations of what quota women will do, but must also navigate varied normative arguments with regard to links between descriptive and substantive representation, as well as a series of on-going debates about how best to analyze substantive representation (Franceschet and Krook 2008). Scholars highlight main three normative arguments for increasing women’s political presence: arguments from ‘justice,’ which hold that women comprise half the population and for reasons of fairness alone should occupy half of all political seats; arguments from ‘interests,’ which propose that female representatives are more likely to promote issues of concern to women which have been ignored in parliaments composed mainly of men; and arguments from ‘resources,’ which suggest that women bring different values which when included in the political process lead to improved outcomes overall (Phillips 1995; cf. Mansbridge 1999; Williams 1998). These arguments offer distinct prognoses of the impact of women’s increased presence: justice-

based arguments contend that women's participation is an issue of fairness, and as such, do not necessarily anticipate policy change, while those relying on consequentialist logic suggest – and, indeed, appear to require – that women would behave differently from men in terms of their priorities and policy styles (Bird 2008; Sawer 2000; Skjeie 1991).

At the same time, debates over how best to study substantive representation have revolved around three central themes: the usefulness of the concept of 'women's interests' given diversity among women, the meaning of substantive representation in practice, and the impact of increased numbers of women on the policy process. The notion of 'women's interests' has long been a source of contention among feminists (Sapiro 1981; Jonasdottir 1988; Molyneux 1985; Phillips 1995). A major concern is that the concept essentializes women as a group by assuming that there is an objective and knowable set of interests shared by all women, which denies heterogeneity and the multiple and often competing interests that emerge from the intersection of sex with other aspects of identity such as race and class (Hancock 2007; Spelman 1989; Weldon 2002). Nonetheless, many feminist scholars are also unwilling to abandon the concept altogether given its utility in making claims for women's political inclusion and in constructing strategic solidarities among women for projects of political change (Celis 2006; Fuss 1988; Mansbridge 1999; Spivak 1988).

A second area of debate concerns the most suitable aspect of the policy-making process to study (Celis, Childs, Kantola, and Krook 2008; Tamerius 1995). Researchers have focused on legislator attitudes and priorities (Childs and Withey 2004; Htun and Power 2006; Schwindt-Bayer 2006), patterns of bill introduction and co-sponsorship (Bratton 2005; Swers 2005; Wolbrecht 2000), debate participation (Bird 2005; Catalano 2009), voting tendencies (Cowley and Childs 2003; Vega and Firestone 1995), and policy adoption (Bratton and Ray 2002; Geisler 2000). A third and final set of questions involves the relationship between numbers and outcomes. The intuition behind the notion of a 'critical mass' is that women are unlikely to have an impact until they grow from a few token individuals into a considerable minority of all legislators (Dahlerup 1988; cf. Childs and Krook 2008), at which point they are able to work together more effectively for women-friendly policy change (Flammang 1985; Saint-Germain 1989). While this line of reasoning is supported by some (Bratton 2005; Thomas 1994; Vega and Firestone 1995), it has been subject to increased criticism in recent years by work showing that women can make a difference even when they form a small minority (Crowley 2004; Reingold 2000) and that a jump in the number of women may in fact *decrease* the likelihood that female legislators will act on behalf of women as a group (Carroll 2001; Schwindt-Bayer 2006; Towns 2003).

In the face of these varied perspectives, both normative and analytical, evaluating whether women elected through quotas engage in greater, lesser, or similar efforts to pursue women-friendly policies as compared with men and non-quota women requires careful attention to definitions and choices made with regard to the form and content of policy-making. As alluded to above, a range of activities may 'count' as modes of substantive representation, including policy priorities, proposals, sponsorships, and behind-the-scenes mobilization, as well as the more public acts of debating, voting, and enacting legislation. Similarly, the policies defined as 'women's issues' may not only be time- and country-specific, but they may also vary depending on decisions to opt for feminist or non-feminist interpretations. Despite these complexities, a general overview of the quota literature lends some support for the first two hypotheses. Evidence for H4 can be found in several studies, in which quota women have reported feeling compelled to act for women as a group (Schwartz 2004; Skjeie 1991), inspiring them to bring new issues to the political agenda (Kudva 2003; Thomas 2004). Yet, disaggregating the policy process reveals a more nuanced picture: quotas are associated with a sharp rise in women-friendly policy proposals, but have rarely altered policy outcomes (Devlin and Elgie 2008; Franceschet and Piscopo 2008).

Support for H5, in contrast, emerges in research showing that quota women take deliberate steps to disassociate themselves from the quota by focusing their legislative activities on less explicitly gendered policy areas (Childs 2004). Other evidence comes in the form of studies noting the greater loyalty of quota women to party leaders as compared to men and women who win open seats (Cowley and Childs 2003; Tripp 2006). One explanation for this is that the application of quotas is often not rooted in processes of constituency formation (Burnet 2008; Hassim 2008; Pupavac 2005), which prevents quota women from gaining political skills that would make them less vulnerable to manipulation (Chowdhury 2002; Cornwall and Goetz 2005). Another is that quota women may support women's rights legislation but tread carefully in response to harassment, intimidation, or general security concerns (Longman 2006; Tamale 2000; Wordsworth 2007). These various patterns lead some scholars to suggest that women might be more effective in non-quota environments (Archenti and Johnson 2006; Walsh 2008), although others view these dynamics as problems faced by women in politics more generally, not related to quota provisions (Zetterberg 2008). Research has not yet addressed the potential for convergence expressed in H6, but this dynamic has been observed in earlier studies of men's legislative behavior after increases in the numbers of women elected (Flammang 1985; Reingold 2000). Exploring all three potential scenarios is crucial not only for assessing the impact of

quotas, but also for gaining greater insight into the dynamics of policymaking and legislative behavior more generally at both the individual and aggregate levels.

A third group of hypotheses, finally, explores the impact that quotas may have on *public attitudes* and *women's political empowerment*. One subset relates to what quotas symbolize for *all citizens*. On the one hand, quotas may alter gendered ideas about the public sphere, which have traditionally associated men with politics and women with the realm of the home and the family. By electing more women, quotas may raise awareness of what women can achieve and legitimate women as political actors, unraveling at least to some degree previously accepted gender roles. On the other hand, quotas may change how citizens feel about government more generally. The increased presence of women may lead them to judge democratic institutions as more just and legitimate. In addition, citizens may view these institutions as qualitatively improved, stemming from stereotypical expectations that women will be less corrupt and more oriented toward the general welfare of society. A second subset of hypotheses concerns what quotas symbolize for *female citizens in particular*. As gender-related reforms, quotas may have different meanings for women as compared with the population at large. On the one hand, quotas may – in the course of undermining traditionally gendered notions of the public sphere – encourage women as a group to become more politically involved as voters, activists, and candidates. On the other hand, the greater inclusion of women as a result of quotas may enhance the legitimacy of the polity in the eyes of women, who may thereby feel more connected to the political process. These hypotheses may be articulated thus:

H7: The introduction of gender quotas will increase public acceptance of women in politics.

H8: The introduction of gender quotas will improve public trust and evaluations of government.

H9: The introduction of gender quotas will increase women's political engagement.

H10: The introduction of gender quotas will improve women's trust and evaluations of government.

Although evaluating the symbolic effects of quotas might be viewed as crucial, and indeed central, to understanding their broader meanings, relatively few studies address the impact of quotas on public attitudes and women's political empowerment. One difficulty in assessing such effects is that the public may not be aware of the presence of quotas, undermining the potential for symbolic change (Zetterberg 2009). A second challenge concerns whether to focus on short-, medium-, or long-term effects. Because quotas may be particularly controversial when they are first applied (Krook, Lovenduski, and Squires 2009; Squires 1996; cf. Meier 2000), several election cycles may be necessary to witness

major attitudinal, behavioral, and/or cultural shifts (cf. Freidenvall 2006; García Quesada 2005). At the same time, negative experiences may provoke a later backlash against quotas and quota women (Cutts, Childs, and Fieldhouse 2008; Goetz and Hassim 2003; Hassim 2009). As such, choosing to focus on one period as opposed to another may produce distinct, and possibly even conflicting, results. While analyzing diverse samples, existing research offers insights into the validity of these four hypotheses.

The intuition expressed in H7 has been subject to the most extensive study. Theoretical work suggests that quotas may pose a radical challenge to politics-as-usual because they involve a fundamental renegotiation of the public sphere by re-gendering who is and should be included (Sgier 2004). Some evidence supports this claim by showing that exposure to female leaders over time as a result of quotas weakens stereotypes about gender roles and eliminates negative bias in how the performance of female leaders is perceived among male constituents (Beaman et al 2008). Yet, other work reveals that outward acceptance of the legitimacy of quotas may often mask continued resistance at the micro-level. This may be especially true among male elites, many of whom continue to attribute women's underrepresentation to choices made by individual women, rather than to structural patterns of discrimination (Holli, Luhtakallio, and Raevaara 2006; Meier 2008). In contrast, H8 has been the topic of only one paper to date, which finds, however, that quotas do appear to have important symbolic effects on the public at large. The authors uncover a strong statistical relationship between the increased presence of women in parliament via the mechanism of quotas and improved public perceptions of the quality of public services, the quality of the civil service and its political independence, the quality of policy formulation and implementation, and the credibility of the government's commitment to such policies (Bauer and Wilson 2008).

Turning to the impact of quotas on women, a growing but diverse range of evidence lends support to H9. For example, various case studies indicate that the introduction of quotas appears to increase the rate at which female voters contact their political representatives (Childs 2004; Kudva 2003). Others find that the adoption of quotas has the effect of encouraging women to begin a political career, acquire political skills, and develop sustained political ambitions (Geissel and Hust 2005). Still others observe that quotas help build support for women's movement organizing more generally (Sacchet 2008). At the same time, however, a number of other analyses conclude that quotas have little or no effect on women's political activities, such as their willingness to sign petitions or participate in protests (Zetterberg 2009). Even more troubling, some scholars suggest that the presence of quotas may in fact be associated with the decreased strength (Britton 2005) and increased repression of women's groups (Hassim 2009; Longman 2006). Virtually nothing is known of the possibilities signaled by H10,

beyond the studies cited for H9. These, however, do provide some indirect evidence of women's greater trust and evaluations of government, in the sense that women's increased engagement might be taken as a sign of women's improved confidence in government institutions. While all four hypotheses require further empirical investigation, probing how quotas may erode resistance to female politicians and increase evaluations of democratic legitimacy and 'good governance' may thus offer a new contribution to work seeking to understand trends and changes in patterns of public opinion and mass mobilization.

Case Selection

These hypotheses will be analyzed using a range of data, both quantitative and qualitative, to be collected over the course of the NSF Career Award. Although a large dataset on quota campaigns and quota policies will be assembled (see below), the core focus of the project will be in-depth case studies of nine countries, three in each of three regions of the world. The cases are chosen to maximize the potential for comparison across countries with different kinds of quota policies, paths to quota adoption, and degrees of success in increasing the numbers of women elected. In addition, the sample includes cases with a range of political, social, economic, and cultural characteristics, which may point to the importance of contextual variables and serve as a means to eliminate alternative explanations. They include four cases analyzed in my book (Argentina, France, Sweden, and the United Kingdom) and five where I have extensive research contacts (Brazil, Mexico, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda).

In each region, one type of gender quota predominates: party quotas in Western Europe, legislative quotas in Latin America, and reserved seats in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, at least one case in each regional sample includes a second quota type (France, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa), thus facilitating comparisons within and across quota categories. Within each world region, one country reflects a slow and gradual trajectory of quota reform (Sweden, Brazil, Uganda), a second reflects an intermediate path (United Kingdom, Argentina, South Africa), while a third involves more recent change (France, Mexico, Rwanda). Finally, within each group, one case results in low (France, Brazil, Uganda), medium (United Kingdom, Mexico, South Africa), and high numbers of women elected (Sweden, Argentina, Rwanda). In light of these variations, the project does not include a selection of cases in Asia, despite the fact that the two other cases examined in my book were India and Pakistan. India was dropped from the current study because its quotas regulate local government. Pakistan was abandoned due to safety concerns, along with Afghanistan and Iraq. Other cases in Asia were considered, including Taiwan and Indonesia, but I later concluded that it was not possible to devise a sample that 'added value' to the nine-country comparison.

Country	Quota Policy	Year Adopted	Electoral System	Party System	Women in Parliament
<i>Western Europe</i>					
France	30% PQ	1996	Majoritarian	Two/Multi	18% (2007)
	50% LQ	1999-2000	Majoritarian	Two/Multi	18% (2007)
Sweden	40-50% PQ	1972-1993	Proportional	Multi	45% (2010)
United Kingdom	50% PQ	1993	Majoritarian	Two	22% (2010)
<i>Latin America</i>					
Argentina	30% LQ	1991	Proportional	Two	39% (2009)
Brazil	30% PQ	1986	Proportional	Multi	9% (2010)
	30% LQ	1996-2000	Proportional	Multi	9% (2010)
Mexico	20-30% PQ	1993-1996	Mixed	Multi	26% (2009)
	30% LQ	1996-2002	Mixed	Multi	25% (2009)
<i>Sub-Saharan Africa</i>					
Rwanda	30% RS	2003	Proportional	One/Multi	56% (2008)
South Africa	30% PQ	1994	Proportional	One/Multi	45% (2009)
Uganda	13-14% RS	1987-1995	Majoritarian	One/Multi	31% (2006)
	21% RS	2001	Majoritarian	One/Multi	31% (2006)

Data Collection

The case studies will be structured so as to collect comparable data, both quantitative and qualitative, on each country that can in turn be used to evaluate the hypotheses outlined above. The project will employ a host of different techniques, including statistics, interviews, focus groups, and content analysis. It will also make use of a diverse array of research materials, including parliamentary yearbooks, websites, archives, surveys, newspaper articles, editorials, parliamentary debates, court decisions, and biographies. The research will be conducted almost entirely in the original languages.

One of the first steps of the project will be the compilation of a large cross-national dataset on quota campaigns and policies. This dataset will build on the work that I did together with other researchers for the Quota Project (<http://www.quotaproject.org>), which recorded the basic details of quotas in those countries where they have been adopted. It aims to replace the Quota Project as the definitive source on quota measures by (1) expanding the focus from countries with quotas to countries with and without quotas, including those where quotas have been proposed but not yet approved; (2) documenting the respective roles of various actors in quota debates, including women's movements, party elites, members of parliament, state agencies, heads of state, and international organizations; and (3) incorporating more specific details on quota measures, including their date of passage and the

presence of sanctions and placement mandates. This dataset will be used to establish the actors involved in quota introduction, as well as the details and outcomes of individual policies, in order to situate the case studies within the broader context of quota reform, while also providing data for later large-*n* statistical analyses. The collection of this data will not only facilitate further studies of quota adoption and implementation, but will also enable the first global studies of how quotas affect broad trends in descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation, once put together with the data gathered in the later years of the project. A key question is whether quotas resulting from grassroots mobilization versus elite imposition lead to the election of greater numbers of women, who are diverse in their backgrounds, are committed to pursuing women's interests, change stereotypes about women in politics, and inspire ordinary women to get more politically involved.

Data for the nine cases will then be collected in the following way, primarily during years 2 through 4 of the NSF Career Award. Much of the information regarding the effects of quotas on *women's descriptive representation* will be collected in advance of field work, as parliaments in all nine countries contain profiles of sitting members (MPs) on their official websites, recording details on such features as sex, age, education, profession, party affiliation, memberships, prior political experience, party leadership positions, and – in reserved seats systems – whether the MP is elected to a reserved or open district seat. However, some of this information is more complete than others (for example, recent elections in South Africa means that current profiles are not yet available), and few websites include data on prior MPs (Mexico and Uganda being the major exceptions). Some parliamentary handbooks can be accessed via Inter-Library Loan, but it will be necessary to collect some of this data from parliamentary records on-site. Where data is missing or appears to be unavailable, questions along these lines will be included in interviews with MPs and political parties conducted during the fieldwork. To ensure that it is possible to separate out the effects of quotas per se, data will be assembled for the period before quotas were introduced, as well as for each session of parliament after their implementation. It will be collected for men as well as women in order to see if their profiles differ in any way, as a means to evaluate, apart from gender, whether quotas reproduce or disrupt existing patterns of political recruitment.

A considerable proportion of the data needed to investigate the impact of quotas on *women's substantive representation* can also be collected ahead of the field research. To ensure valid tests of the hypotheses, the goal will be to collect information on policy proposals, debates, and outcomes in the parliamentary sessions before and after quotas were adopted. Although on-line resources vary, parliamentary websites in all nine countries contain databases or links to access current and prior bills,

transcripts of parliamentary debates, and the text and voting records for all laws passed. In almost all cases, the records extend beyond the period before quotas were introduced (the major exceptions being Rwanda, which includes data only on the most recent laws, and South Africa, which only provides on-line materials from 1999 onwards). In these cases, and in the event that there are problems with any of the databases, additional materials will be collected on-site from the parliamentary libraries. Sensitive to concerns about a priori definitions of 'women's interests,' the project will remain open to cross-national variations: while policies on maternity leave and abortion rights may be important to women in some countries, access to water and land rights may be the main concern of women in others (cf. Childs and Krook 2006b; Tripp 2001). We will instead scan the parliamentary record for issues that appear especially relevant to women and supplement these by priorities identified in focus groups and interviews with women's organizations in each country.

The data on proposals, debates, and outcomes will be collected in the following way. Proposals will be analyzed with reference to their language and the sex, party, and seniority of the bill's sponsors. To ensure that we do not under- or over-estimate the participation of quota women, the research will take variations in legislative processes across cases into account (i.e., by noting distinct legislative traditions whereby bills are initiated by presidents versus by governing parties and/or individual legislators). The reception of these bills will then be examined using transcripts of parliamentary debates. We will analyze these with reference to the arguments made for and against each bill, as well as the sex, party, and seniority of each participant. The aim will be to capture the respective roles of male and female MPs to determine how quotas shift the balance – or not – in the passage of bills on women's concerns. Using the data collected in the previous step, these discussions will be compared with the content of the bills that do not reach the floor, because they are blocked by a legislative committee or introduced too late in the parliamentary session. This data will be supplemented with questions on these various bills in interviews with MPs and political parties, as a means to gain a better sense of the dynamics at work 'behind the scenes' to promote or block particular policy initiatives. Lastly, information will be assembled on the bills that pass and do not pass at the end of this process. These bills will be coded with respect to their content, which will be compared to their initial wording and goals, and the balance of votes for and against them, which will be broken down in terms of the party and sex of their advocates and opponents.

Much of the information required to gauge the impact of quotas on *women's symbolic representation*, finally, is also available on-line and can be collected in advance of the field research in the form of the responses to the five waves of the World Values Survey (<http://www.worldvaluessurvey>).

[org/](#)). This dataset includes a long battery of questions that can help assess stability versus change in public attitudes towards women in politics and trends in women's political empowerment. The instrument contains more than 200, but for the purposes of this study, we will evaluate the impact of quotas on public attitudes by focusing on answers to questions on confidence in parliament (V140), confidence in government (V138), confidence in political parties (V139), having a democratic political system (V151), having a strong leader (V148), democraticness in own country (V163), and the assertion that women have the same rights as men (V161). To assess the effects of quotas on women's political attitudes and activities, we will disaggregate the previous findings by sex, as well as analyze trends in responses regarding interest in politics (V95), signing petitions (V96), attending demonstrations (V98), and voting in recent parliamentary elections (V234). In both analyzes, we will control for a variety of demographic factors, including sex (V235), age (V236), marital status (V55), number of children (V56), highest level of education (V238), profession (V242), social class (V252), size of town (V255), and ethnic group (V256). For the most part, the data in the WVS covers periods before and after quotas are introduced in each country: Argentina in 1984, 1991, 1995, 1999, and 2006; Brazil in 1991, 1997, and 2006; France in 1981, 1990, 1999, and 2006; the UK in 1981, 1990, 1998, 1999, and 2006; Mexico in 1990, 1996, 2000, and 2005; South Africa in 1990, 1996, 2001, and 2007; and Sweden in 1982, 1990, 1996, 1999, and 2006. Unfortunately, data is available for Rwanda only in 2007 and for Uganda only in 2001. However, this can be supplemented to some degree with some data from the Afrobarometer, which includes questions related to democracy, governance, and participation for Uganda in 2000, 2002, 2005, and 2008. While the focus will be on gathering data for the nine countries under investigation, possibilities for larger-*n* studies using this information will also be explored, in hopes that it might be combined with the dataset on quota campaigns (see above).

In addition to information from these mass surveys, several further sources will be consulted – mainly during the fieldwork, but ahead of time where possible – in order to help ‘triangulate’ the research such that its findings are more robust. To supplement the study of public opinion, we will analyze public discussions on gender quotas and the degree to which quotas are framed as legitimate and central to the quality of democracy, or alternatively, as problematic and even as a threat to democratic values. This data will come from articles and editorials in national newspapers, debates in parliament and party congresses, and – when appropriate – court actions and decisions on the legality and application of quotas. These sources will be accessed in national and party archives, as well as transcripts and published decisions of the courts. During the field research, we will also survey MPs and political parties. In contrast to the two previous methods, which involve collecting data – as far as this is

possible – from periods before and after quotas are introduced, this analysis will focus on the present but include questions on elite opinion before quota adoption. The aim will be to assess elite views and support for gender quotas, as well as their relation to ideas about democracy, disaggregated according to sex, party, and seniority. The logic of this comparison will be to see whether quotas are associated with a broader shift in values regarding the need for more women in politics, or if they remain controversial, especially among male politicians, following their implementation.

To determine how quotas shape women’s political empowerment, we will scan the same articles, debates, and decisions for information on the range of interventions made by women and women’s groups in these debates. These will be coded in terms of their content and the degree to which they refer to changes in women’s connection to political processes. Special attention will be paid to evidence offered in support of these claims with reference to voter turnout, protest activities, and propensity to run for political office. In parallel to the elite surveys, we will organize a series of focus groups with women’s groups in each country. While not necessarily representative of all women, members of these groups are likely to be the most attuned to dynamics ‘on the ground’ in terms of women’s political engagement following the introduction of quotas. Focus groups will be employed in place of interviews on the grounds that a collective forum may prompt recollections and foster the sharing of ideas as to why quotas have, or have not, changed ordinary women’s relationships to politics.

Intellectual Merit

To date, gender quota policies have received relatively little attention from the broader political science community, despite constituting the widest-reaching electoral reforms of recent years. Yet, as signaled in the literature review and the discussion of the hypotheses, it is not difficult to imagine how the adoption and implementation of quotas may affect a wide range of political dynamics, and by extension, several key literatures in political science. The main focus of this proposal has been work on political representation, but questions related to descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation also touch on concerns raised in literatures on political recruitment, legislative behavior, and political attitudes and activities. Points of intersection are perhaps most obvious with research on race and ethnicity in American politics, which for several decades has asked questions about the impact of racial redistricting – a policy aimed at guaranteeing the election of African Americans and Latinos in the U.S. House of Representatives – on minority policy representation and political mobilization. Like the preliminary literature review offered here, the results of this work are also mixed.

In terms of substantive representation, the increased presence of minorities has been found to have both positive (Canon 1999; Tate 2003; Whitby 1998) and negative (Cameron, Epstein, and O'Halloran 1996; Lublin 1997; Swain 2006) effects on the policy interests of minority citizens. At a symbolic level, they have also been associated with positive (Banducci, Donovan, and Karp 2004; Barreto, Segura, and Woods 2004), modest (Gay 2001; Gay 2002; Pantoja and Segura 2003), and even negative (Brace et al 1995) effects on levels of political alienation among group members. An intriguing but somewhat troubling discovery, worth investigating as well in the case of gender quotas, is that the participation of majority citizens may also decrease with increased minority representation, affecting the gap in degrees of group mobilization (Barreto et al 2004; Gay 2001). In contrast, few scholars have explored diversity within descriptive categories, beyond noting differences in the legislative priorities and activities of male and female minority representatives (Barrett 1995; Hawkesworth 2003; Philpot and Walton 2007; Smooth 2001), or more rarely, assessing whether minority legislators are more similar demographically to minority constituents or to majority office-holders (Tate 2003). The proposed study would therefore contribute to a broader discussion of the impact of various measures aimed at facilitating the political incorporation of previously underrepresented groups. This, in turn, would help initiate a dialogue across research on race and gender, as well as across the subfields of American and comparative politics. The goal, crucially, is not simply to extend similar questions to gender quotas. Rather, the aim is to open up the analysis to a broader range of categories of representation and shed some light on the contradictory findings of the race literature.

The ambitions of the study, however, are not limited to an engagement with the findings on race and ethnicity. Rather, a major objective is to inform and link together a group of literatures that overlap but rarely 'speak' to one another and, in common, often completely overlook the contributions of research on race and gender (Childs and Krook 2006a; see for example Powell 2004). This includes work on political recruitment that discusses the trajectory of political careers without considering the impact of negative stereotypes on the supply of and demand for certain types of candidates (Canon and Sousa 1992; Mattozzi and Merlo 2008; Scarrow 1997; cf. Norris 1997), studies of legislative behavior that posit a generic policy actor rather than exploring why some actors may have different policy priorities and are more able to achieve their policy ends than others (Cox 1990; Cox 1999; Kitschelt 2000; McDonald, Mendes, and Budge 2003; Przeworski, Stokes, and Manin 1999; cf. Crisp et al 2004), and the literature on political participation that views differences in light of socio-economic resources and mobilization capacities rather than in terms of signals of inclusion and exclusion embodied in certain political institutions (Verba, Nie, and Kim 1978; cf. Banducci, Donovan, and Karp 1999; Jackman 1987). A

dual aim, therefore, is (1) to integrate issues of political identity, especially gender, into traditionally non-gendered areas of political science, and (2) to ask larger questions about the connections between electoral reforms like quotas and trends in political recruitment, legislative behavior, and political attitudes and activities. A view of the 'bigger picture' – including dynamics at work *across* recruitment, behavior, and attitudes – has the additional advantage of offering an opportunity to ask – and answer – bold new questions that have as yet not been a major focus of research.

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