

Letter

Do Women Make More Protectionist Trade Policy?

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Women have more protectionist trade preferences than men do. We assess whether this well-documented relationship between gender and protectionism in the mass public carries over into a relationship between women's political representation and (a) party platforms, and (b) governments' trade policy choices. Looking across countries and over time, we demonstrate that with an increase in women's representation, political party trade policy positions become more protectionist. For government trade policy choices, we identify more nuanced results. The protectionist effect of women's representation is limited to the most visible products: consumption goods. Women's representation has no effect on intermediate inputs, where firm demands for trade liberalization are more pronounced and policy makers are thus constrained in implementing a protectionist agenda. These findings contribute to scholarship on the descriptive–substantive representation link, add a new dimension to our understanding of trade politics, and demonstrate the importance of applying a gendered lens to international political economy research.


Women and men have divergent policy preferences across many issues. One of the most consistent gender divides in public opinion is in trade politics, where women are more protectionist than men are—a difference observed across scores of countries in an array of research designs (Guisinger 2016; Mansfield and Mutz 2009; Mayda and Rodrik 2005). Taking this well-established gender gap in citizens' trade preferences as given,¹ we ask whether women's representation affects the trade policy positions of political parties and the trade policy choices of governments.

We present results from two studies. First, exploiting differences in the gender composition of political parties, we analyze party manifestos from three samples of elections to show that women's representation is associated with more protectionist party platforms. Second, we gather data on applied tariff rates and the share of seats held by women in the legislature and cabinet for 141 countries over almost three decades. Building on recent trade policy literature (Anderer, Dür, and Lechner 2020; Baccini, Dür, and Elsig 2018; Betz and Pond 2019; Osgood 2018) and work on corporate lobbying (e.g., Hillman and Hitt 1999), we document differential effects across product categories. For the products most visible to citizens—consumption products—increasing women's representation is associated with higher tariffs. This relationship does not hold for less visible products—intermediate inputs—where demands for trade liberalization from politically powerful firms place tight constraints on a protectionist agenda, and citizens are less likely to recognize and reward protectionism.

Our work draws on, and contributes to, scholarship on women's descriptive and substantive representation (Aldrich and Lotito 2020; Atchison 2015; Clayton and Zetterberg 2018; O'Brien and Piscopo 2018, 2019; Weeks 2022) and research linking inequalities in representation and economic globalization (Baccini and Weymouth 2021; Rickard 2015). We show that women's representation leaves an imprint even on issues that are not overtly gendered. At the same time, there are limits to these effects: the influence of descriptive representation is confined to products where

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¹ Our design is agnostic about the source of the gender gap in trade preferences, which is an ongoing scholarly debate. In the conclusion, we discuss how our results address explanations posited in the literature.

observability is high and opposition from business interests is muted. Our findings also contribute to the literature in international political economy. Whereas traditional frameworks emphasized the role of firms in driving protectionism and of voters in pushing free trade, recent scholarship increasingly views large, politically influential firms as sources of trade liberalization and voters as advocates of protectionism (e.g., Betz and Pond 2019). We point to the visibility of products as a determinant of trade policy and identify political conditions that facilitate the implementation of a protectionist agenda. Finally, our study paves the way for future work on the gender gap in trade policy preferences and the effects of women's representation on economic and foreign policy.

THE GENDER GAP IN TRADE PREFERENCES

The gender gap in mass attitudes toward protectionism was identified at least as early as Holsti (1996). Because lowering trade barriers exposes domestic producers to international competition and therefore creates new wage pressures and displacement risk for domestic workers, subsequent efforts to explain this gap have focused on gender differences in observed labor market risk or participation (e.g., Mayda and Rodrik 2005). However, the gap persists even when accounting for these factors, suggesting that the divide may be driven by differences in *perceptions* of the consequences of international trade. For example, women might be less exposed to economic ideas about the benefits of free trade and thus perceive trade as more threatening (Mansfield and Mutz 2009).

Disentangling informational explanations, Guisinger (2016) shows that different risk perceptions, rather than differences in knowledge about trade, are at the core of the gender gap in trade preferences. Brutger and Guisinger (2022) trace this gender gap to different responses to the labor market volatility induced by trade. Trade policy is often perceived as a main lever in the trade-off between prices and employment, and women tend to accept higher prices in exchange for reduced labor market volatility (Scheve 2004). Complementary work indicates that this increased risk sensitivity may be driven by gendered differences in competitiveness or willingness to relocate for employment (Mansfield, Mutz, and Silver 2015), and experiences of labor market discrimination (Guisinger and Kleinberg 2021).² Indeed, both women workers and entrepreneurs³ may enjoy fewer benefits from globalization.

² Part of the observed gender gap in survey responses is also driven by gendered differences in nonresponse probability (Kleinberg and Fordham 2018).

³ Internationalization can benefit women-owned enterprises if they are able to access markets where discrimination is significantly lower than at home (Osgood and Peters 2017). But, systemic barriers limit women's ability to engage in, and fully benefit from, trade liberalization. For example, although almost 40% of small and medium-sized

Although there is consensus that there is a gender gap in trade policy preferences, whether and how these differences affect policy outcomes is an open question. The only related research on the topic asks how women's suffrage reshaped trade policy and yields competing results. Hall, Kao, and Nelson (1998) argue that women gaining the franchise in the United States led to a reduction in trade barriers, whereas De Bromhead (2018) examines 30 countries during the interwar period and concludes that women's suffrage led to an increase in trade barriers. Neither examines the effects of women's representation in parties or government.

LINKING WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION AND PROTECTIONIST POLICY

Existing research suggests that women politicians should be more likely than men to support protectionism. First, women elites are more apt to share the policy preferences of women citizens (Clayton and Tang 2018; Wängnerud 2000). Indeed, our analysis of surveys of Members of the European Parliament and candidates running in national parliamentary elections in 11 countries suggest that, like women in the electorate, women politicians are more protectionist than men are (see Appendix SI.2). Second, even if women in the electorate and women elites have different policy preferences, mandate effects lead women in government to act on the specific interests of women in the polity (Franceschet and Piscopo 2008). For example, the only research to date on women's representation and trade policy shows that women in legislatures represent women's interests by using their influence to ameliorate gender-discriminatory apparel tariffs (Betz, Fortunato, and O'Brien 2021). Though women in the electorate are unlikely to support specific tariffs that actively discriminate against them, they do prefer protectionism *overall*. Women elites, in turn, should advance more protectionist platforms and policies. An analysis of roll-call votes on free trade agreements in the US House of Representatives lends individual-level support to this expectation (see Appendix SI.2).⁴

We begin by examining the effects of women's representation on parties' policy platforms. Women's influence here is a necessary condition for their influence on government trade policy—party platforms are antecedent to government action. This analysis also

enterprises worldwide are women-owned businesses, only 15% of exporting firms are led by women (WTO 2017).

⁴ As noted by an anonymous reviewer, women politicians may instead/also be representing the concerns of women entrepreneurs—who are less likely to benefit from globalization—and may thus be less focused on reducing barriers to trade as compared with male representatives. Regardless, these preferences for protectionism may only manifest if women in parties and government are both willing and able to influence trade policy platforms and outcomes. We also note the possibility, raised by a second reviewer, that this relationship may be a function of positive selection by voters—that voters recognize a gender gap in trade preferences among politicians and then select more women into office to increase protectionism. This account subsumes our more limited explanation.

allows us to evaluate, across many countries and years, whether gender differences in trade preferences survive the political selection process. Given existing research on the influence of women's presence in parties on their policy positions (e.g., Greene and O'Brien 2016; Kittilson 2011; Weeks 2022), we expect that *women's representation is associated with more protectionist statements on party policy platforms*.

We next examine whether gender differences in representation leave a mark on real trade policy outcomes, focusing on tariffs. Here, existing work offers less conclusive expectations. On the one hand, a large body of research finds correlations between women's descriptive and substantive representation, and documents women legislators' (Barnes 2016; Barnes, Beall, and Holman 2021; Betz, Fortunato, and O'Brien 2021; Clayton and Zetterberg 2018; Franceschet and Piscopo 2008) and cabinet members' (Atchison 2015) efforts on behalf of women. On the other hand, trade policy can be subject to intense political conflict. Even if gender differences in the mass public result in differences in party platforms, women's descriptive representation may have a more limited effect on government policy.

We thus expect a nuanced relationship between women's representation and tariff rates. Specifically, we posit that women's presence has different effects across products, depending on their visibility to citizens. Visibility is highest for consumption products, such as automobiles, which citizens encounter in their daily lives. It is lowest for intermediate inputs used by firms in the production process, like drive-axles or airbag inflators, which citizens rarely observe directly. Visibility in turn shapes the politics surrounding trade policy on consumption products and intermediate inputs for two related reasons.

First, because of their visibility, consumption products are the most politically expedient place to implement a protectionist agenda. It is easier for politicians to portray protectionism as benefiting domestic producers of tangible goods familiar to consumers than the producers of inputs that most consumers never encounter directly. Of course, higher tariffs on consumption products might lead to higher household expenditures and therefore a preference for lower tariffs. Yet, the consumption effects of trade frequently play only a limited role in citizens' evaluations of trade policy (Bearce and Moya 2020; Hiscox 2006), likely because few are aware of the link between tariffs and prices (Davenport, Dorn, and Levell 2021; Rho and Tomz 2017) and many (including women in particular) are supportive of higher prices in exchange for economic stability (Scheve 2004). These findings suggest that policy makers can implement a protectionist agenda without fear of immediate reprisals from price-conscious citizens—and instead garner increased support from protectionist voters.

Second, firm lobbying tends to be more intensive and effective on intermediate inputs, which places more constraints on a protectionist agenda. Recent work shows that multinationals and importing firms dominate lobbying on trade policy, including in the context of trade agreements, pushing for lower tariffs for

intermediate inputs in their production process (Osgood 2018).⁵ This is also reflected in trade policy choices. Across countries, both in the context of unilateral trade policy and in reciprocal trade agreements, we observe lower tariffs and faster tariff cuts on intermediate inputs than on consumption products (Anderer, Dür, and Lechner 2020; Baccini, Dür, and Elsig 2018; Betz and Pond 2019; Shapiro 2021).

Several explanations account for this pattern. In contrast to consumer goods, production inputs are frequently sourced by a small number of large firms (Bernard et al. 2018). The concentration of benefits on a small set of firms solves collective action problems in support of trade liberalization, and, relative to consumption products, tilts the political environment against protectionism. Reinforcing these effects, and related to our argument, firm lobbying tends to be more effective for less visible policy issues, where policy makers face fewer constraints from the public (Hillman and Hitt 1999). Of course, individual wholesalers and retailers have lobbied for lower tariffs on behalf of, and in concert with, consumers. An example is the efforts by US retailer, JoAnn Fabrics, to rally support against tariffs during the US–China trade war.⁶ Yet, these cases are rare. For many consumer goods, firms are able to pass on the costs from higher tariffs (Amiti, Redding, and Weinstein 2019)—reducing the incentives for firms to lobby for lower tariffs on these goods. For policy makers who are pursuing a protectionist agenda, this implies greater constraints on higher tariffs on (less visible) intermediate inputs and more political opportunities for tariffs on (visible) consumption products. Therefore, we expect that *women's representation is associated with higher tariffs on consumption products and that this effect decreases for intermediate inputs*.

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION AND PROTECTIONISM IN PARTY PLATFORMS

We begin by assessing the relationship between women in political parties and parties' trade preferences in three different samples.⁷ Our first analysis examines party platforms in 81 national elections across 20 democracies from 1996 to 2017 (474 total party

⁵ Similarly, for the United States, Kim (2017) shows that the role of large firms in lobbying for tariff reductions falls mostly on differentiated products and products with low substitution elasticity; this stands in contrast to consumption products, which are often homogeneous. Although trade agreements also may create support among exporting firms for tariff cuts on consumption products at home in exchange for improved market access abroad, the higher credibility of trade policy choices in trade agreements is particularly attractive to multinationals (Pierce and Schott 2016) and thus draws their political support for lower tariffs on inputs.

⁶ See, e.g., Bloomberg News, *Retailer Joann Calls on Crafters to Oppose Trump's Tariffs*, August 8, 2018. We thank an anonymous reviewer for pointing us to this case.

⁷ For data and code to reproduce all of the following results, see Betz, Fortunato, and O'Brien (2022).

platforms).⁸ We combine data on women's descriptive representation in parties' parliamentary delegations taken from Adams et al. (2022)⁹ with estimates of parties' trade preferences based on content codings of their electoral manifestos provided by Volkens et al. (2020). Following Lowe et al. (2011), we aggregate all positive and negative statements regarding trade, where higher values reflect a preference for greater trade restrictions (including domestic protections, quotas, tariffs, etc.).

We estimate ordinary least squares models using party platforms as our unit of analysis and constraining estimates to within-election (e.g., Israel 1996) variation using fixed effects. This holds constant the effect of potential confounders that vary over time and space (e.g., trade integration, unemployment) on both predictor and outcome, identifying the estimate only with variation in women's representation and trade preferences across parties within a given election. We also distinguish between mainstream and "niche" parties, as niche parties are substantially more likely to make hostility toward trade (and immigration) a central focus of their platforms.¹⁰

The results in Table 1 support our first expectation. We find a significant, positive association between women's representation and the level of protectionism in the party's platform. The effect of increasing the proportion of women in the party by 20 percentage points (i.e., from 30% of the legislative delegation to 50%) is 0.12, which is larger than the difference between the 50th and 75th percentile on the dependent variable.

Comparing parties in national elections across space and time suggests that women are influencing the platforms of their parties, making them more protectionist on average. At the same time, these results are subject to typical concerns about design and inference. We thus supplement the cross-national results with two additional analyses, drawing on the 2014 European Parliamentary (EP) election and national elections in postwar Sweden. Studying the EP election allows us to observe multiple parties within several countries competing in a *single contest* for the same policy authority.¹¹

⁸ Countries included are: Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Although the national governments of EU member states do not make trade policy directly, control of the national government means seats on the European Council, which endows parties with the power to propose European Commissioners. In other words, national government control grants EU trade policy influence.

⁹ Data on women's representation comes from the previous election. For example, for the 2013 German parliamentary election, data on the gender composition of political parties is taken from 2009.

¹⁰ Following Meguid (2005), we identify niche parties with the Manifesto Project's "party family" variable, including: "agrarian," "ethnic and regional," "nationalist," and "special issue" parties. See Appendix SI.3 for models including estimates of the parties' general economic and social preferences.

¹¹ 2014 is the only election after the EP gained its current role in the making of trade policy for which manifesto data are presently available.

TABLE 1. Women's Representation within Parties and Protectionism in Party Platforms

	National elections	European election	Sweden
Women's share of party seats	0.620*** (0.212)		
Women's share of party list		1.568** (0.754)	
Gender parity quota			0.312* (0.166)
Niche Party	0.219** (0.093)	0.714*** (0.185)	
Fixed effects	Election	Country	Party, year
Observations	425	102	137
R ²	0.176	0.511	0.430

Note: Larger values of the dependent variable indicates stronger support for trade barriers. Coefficient estimates, standard errors in parentheses; * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$, two-tailed tests.

The Swedish case allows us to estimate a causal effect, via difference-in-differences, of the imposition of a gender parity rule by three major parties.

We once again combine information on parties' stated trade preferences with information on women's descriptive representation. For the EP, data on women's representation come from Aldrich (2020), who measures women's share of the party list. Euro-manifesto data come from Schmitt et al. (2016) and protectionist trade positions are measured as above.¹² Swedish quota data are taken from IDEA (2009). Quotas mandating gender parity ("50/50" split) in party lists were adopted by the Social Democratic Party and the Left Party in 1993 and by the Green Party in 1997; the remaining parties (Centre, Christian Democrats, Moderates, New Democrats, People's Party, and the Sweden Democrats) are the control group.¹³ Here, we again use manifesto codings from Volkens et al. (2020) to measure preferences for protectionism and we analyze parties' positions in 23 elections between 1944 and 2018.

As before, the results are found in Table 1. These analyses further support the expectation that women's representation increases parties' preferred level of protectionism. The 2014 EP analysis, which constrains estimates to within-country variation, shows a significant and positive association between women's representation on party lists and protectionism. In this case, the effect of increasing the proportion of women in the party by 20 percentage points is 0.31, which is larger than the difference between the 50th and 80th

¹² We combine anti-free trade vectors $per_{v_1 406a}$, $per_{v_2 406a}$, and $per_{v_3 406a}$ with pro-free trade vectors $per_{v_1 406b}$, $per_{v_2 406b}$, and $per_{v_3 406b}$.

¹³ Treated parties also adopted informal, internal quotas in 1978 and 1981. Using these dates recovers similar estimates, but we focus on formal policy implementation, as these quotas had "teeth" (O'Brien and Rickne 2016). The Moderates also adopted a gender quota, but not parity and only for EP elections.

percentile on the dependent variable. For the Swedish study, we apply the typical two-way (party and year) fixed effects specification. The estimate shows evidence for a positive, causal effect of the gender parity rule on protectionism—once women are granted equal representation within parties, their parties' policy preferences grow significantly more protectionist ($p = 0.06$, two-way test). The effect of the quota, about 0.31, is larger than the difference between the 50th and 90th percentile on the dependent variable. Taken together, these three analyses provide strong evidence that women's presence in parties' legislative delegations drives those parties to adopt more protectionist trade policy.¹⁴

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION AND PROTECTIONIST TARIFFS

We next assess whether women's representation in government is associated with more protectionist policy choices. The analysis combines data on women's political representation with tariffs at the level of Broad Economic Categories (BEC) for 141 countries from 1991 to 2019.¹⁵ We focus on representation in the legislature (using log-transformed seat shares) and in the executive (using the log-transformed share of women in the cabinet), taken from Hughes et al. (2017) and Nyrup and Bramwell (2020).¹⁶ Because we posit differential effects for women's representation for consumption products and intermediate inputs, we distinguish between the two product categories using the BEC classification with a dummy variable, derived from end-use classifications from the System of National Accounts (United Nations Department of Statistics and Social Affairs 2002).¹⁷ Accordingly, our dataset is in the country-year-product category format. The dependent variable is the (log-transformed) applied tariff rate from the World Bank's World Integrated Trade Solution.

We estimate linear regression models, with standard errors clustered by country. All models include logged GDP, GDP per capita, unemployment rates, and polity scores. All models also include year and country fixed effects. Our research design thus takes advantage of country-specific changes in women's political representation over time and assesses their differential effects across product types while accounting for global trends in women's representation and tariff rates. We can therefore rule out that our results are driven by

country-specific preferences for—or global trends toward—protectionism and women's representation.

Table 2 reports results for the association between women's representation and tariff rates. Odd columns report results for legislatures, even columns for executives. The findings suggest that a higher share of women legislators and cabinet members translates into more protectionist trade policy on higher-visibility consumption products. As posited, this effect does not hold for lower-visibility intermediate inputs, which are also subject to greater lobbying for trade liberalization. Columns 1 and 2 present the results from the base model, with the control variables mentioned above included. An increase in women's legislative seat shares of 10% is associated with an increase in tariff rates of about 1.40%. For cabinet members, the effect is about half as large, with an increase of about 0.72%. At the same time, the interaction terms indicate that women's representation has small and statistically insignificant effects on the tariff rates of intermediate inputs ($p = 0.71$ for legislatures, $p = 0.21$ for cabinet members).

The remaining models indicate similar effects. Columns 3 and 4 show the results when incorporating political variables: the electoral rule, system of government, and partisanship of the largest party in government¹⁸ (from Cruz, Keefer, and Scartascini 2021). In columns 5 and 6, we include secondary school enrollment, to capture skill levels of the work force (from the World Bank); the Women, Business, and Law Index, an index of eight indicators of how legal rules shape women's economic opportunities (from the World Bank); and women's labor market participation (from the International Labour Organization), to account for the correlation between women's participation in economic and political markets. The substantive results hold: women's representation has positive effects on the tariff rates of consumption products and small and statistically insignificant effects on the tariff rates of intermediate inputs, and the difference between the two effects remains statistically significant. Consistent with our emphasis on the role of politically influential pro-trade firms, and confirming earlier work, the results also show that intermediate inputs indeed have lower tariffs than consumption goods.

The appendix includes a series of additional results, three of which we highlight here. First, in SI.4 we present results from additional fixed effects specifications, such as including fixed effects for higher-order BEC groups (e.g., "food and beverages"),¹⁹ fixed effects for each product category, and country-year fixed effects. The results remain robust to these demanding fixed-effects models.

Second, in SI.5, we account for demand-driven explanations of protectionism and women's representation, showing that our results are robust to import shocks and to limiting the sample to years after 2001, when the

¹⁴ We note that the Swedish design yields the largest relative standard error estimate. This may be a function of the sharper design, as noted by an anonymous reviewer, but is also attributable to less observed variability in both the outcome and predictor in the Swedish analysis.

¹⁵ See SI.1 for more information. We obtain similar results when disaggregating the data to Harmonised System six-digit products.

¹⁶ We log the variables, following Betz, Fortunato, and O'Brien (2021), to capture decreasing returns to scale. For all variables, we replace zeros with small positive numbers to allow for the log transformation. We obtain nearly identical substantive results when using untransformed variables.

¹⁷ We consider capital goods as part of intermediate inputs and drop three ambiguous categories.

¹⁸ Nonclassified parties are the omitted category.

¹⁹ These results allow us to identify the estimates from the difference between consumption products and intermediate inputs within, for example, the category of "food and beverages."

TABLE 2. Women's Representation and Protectionism in Trade Policy

	Base model		Political institutions		Socioeconomic factors	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Log seat share women	0.135*** (0.040)		0.109* (0.059)		0.186*** (0.047)	
× intermediate inputs	-0.149*** (0.025)		-0.146*** (0.040)		-0.175*** (0.026)	
Log cabinet share women		0.072** (0.029)		0.092*** (0.030)		0.066** (0.033)
× intermediate inputs		-0.107*** (0.029)		-0.085*** (0.028)		-0.115*** (0.030)
Intermediate inputs	-1.227*** (0.063)	-1.148*** (0.075)	-1.240*** (0.084)	-1.134*** (0.073)	-1.279*** (0.071)	-1.176*** (0.082)
Polity score	-0.082 (0.117)	-0.111 (0.108)	-0.230* (0.127)	-0.245* (0.127)	-0.107 (0.120)	-0.142 (0.116)
Log GDP	-0.036 (0.201)	-0.047 (0.178)	-0.093 (0.259)	-0.123 (0.249)	-0.126 (0.266)	-0.186 (0.244)
GDP per capita	-0.216 (0.175)	-0.178 (0.187)	-0.238 (0.210)	-0.184 (0.215)	-0.452** (0.212)	-0.444** (0.219)
Unemployment rate	-0.598 (1.862)	-1.215 (1.807)	-1.334 (1.923)	-1.725 (1.821)	-0.839 (2.058)	-1.427 (1.941)
Right-wing party			0.254** (0.116)	0.279** (0.111)		
Center party			0.402* (0.221)	0.439** (0.216)		
Left-wing party			0.170 (0.113)	0.180* (0.107)		
Plurality rule			-0.164 (0.181)	-0.174 (0.168)		
Presidential system			-0.011 (0.132)	0.097 (0.162)		
Secondary school enrollment					-0.004 (0.005)	-0.003 (0.005)
Women, Business, and Law Index					-0.011 (0.007)	-0.009 (0.007)
Women labor force participation					-0.032** (0.013)	-0.030** (0.012)
Constant	4.351 (4.916)	4.495 (4.332)	5.643 (6.315)	6.286 (6.053)	9.300 (6.746)	10.234* (6.173)
Number Obs.	36,338	36,335	32,246	31,973	25,195	25,579
R ²	0.490	0.492	0.498	0.503	0.435	0.433
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note: Coefficient estimates, standard errors clustered by country in parentheses; * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$, two-tailed tests.

“China shock” led to a protectionist turn across countries (Colantone and Stanig 2018). Drawing on survey data from Pew, we also show that our results are not explained by a growing preference for protectionist policies in the population.

Third, in SI.6, we show that consumption products and intermediate products do not differ systematically in their reliance on women as employees, suggesting that our results reflect support for protectionist trade policy that extends beyond its immediate labor market effects on women.

CONCLUSION

One of the most consistent findings in the scholarship on gender and political economy is that women are

more protectionist than men. Our analyses show that these well-documented gender differences in the trade preferences of the mass public also manifest in parties' policy platforms and ultimately in trade policy outcomes. We also identify limits to these effects, which are plausibly driven by opposition from business groups to protectionist policies on intermediate inputs, as well as the fact that citizens are less likely to recognize and reward protectionism on less visible products.

For gender and politics scholars, our results contribute to a large body of work linking women's descriptive and substantive representation. Taking the novel approach of examining both party platforms and government behavior—and considering a large set of countries over time—our letter suggests that women's presence “matters” even on issues that are not overtly gendered. Likewise, for political economy researchers,

the different effects for consumer goods and intermediate inputs provide further evidence that distinct factors explain trade policy choices across these product categories.

Our study also has implications for future research. It is notable, for example, that gender gaps in trade preferences survive selection into legislative and executive seats, where gender differences in knowledge and risk acceptance are muted or reversed,²⁰ implying that—at least among politicians—knowledge- and risk-driven explanations for the gender gap in trade preferences do not hold. Future work may incorporate this insight and should also assess whether the patterns we observe can be explained by women elites holding more (sincere, or personal) protectionist preferences—for example, as an ecologically rational response to asymmetric costs and benefits of globalization—or their efforts to represent the interests of women in the electorate (or some combination of these two factors).

More generally, our work demonstrates that studying international political economy through a gendered lens is necessary for understanding both the implications of an increasingly integrated global political economy and its interplay with enduring domestic (gender) inequalities in representation. Future studies should continue to assess the gendered effects of trade policy and gender differences in behavior among producers, consumers, and policy makers. Political scientists should pay special attention to how inequalities in representation can yield inequalities in the distribution of the costs and benefits of globalization via government policy. Building on this study, for example, scholars could examine the link between women's representation and the removal of barriers faced by women entrepreneurs in accessing markets. Still other work could ask whether tariffs disproportionately favor men and industries with large shares of male employees. With both the sustainability of globalization and the need for more egalitarian representation in political institutions increasingly becoming pressing societal concerns, understanding these links between representation and globalization will only become more important over time.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

To view supplementary material for this article, please visit <http://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055422001307>.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Research documentation and data that support the findings of this study are openly available at the American Political Science Review Dataverse: <https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/M0LB5V>.

²⁰ Women politicians are as (or more) educated (O'Brien and Rickne 2016) and risk acceptant as are their male counterparts.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

The authors affirm this research did not involve human subjects.

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