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## Inviting More Women to the Party

### Gender Quotas and Women's Substantive Representation in Germany

*ABSTRACT: Four of the five major political parties in Germany have voluntarily adopted gender quotas of some kind, and these quotas have assisted in increasing the number of women in the Bundestag to nearly one-third of its membership. While their impact on women's descriptive representation (the presence of women in elected decision-making roles) is relatively clear, research is needed to assess whether this descriptive representation in fact links to women's substantive representation (attention to women's interests in debate and in legislation). Through a content analysis of Bundestag plenary debates discussing laws sponsored or cosponsored by the Committee on Families, Seniors, Women, and Children, this study hypothesizes and tests several ways in which women legislators may be more likely than men to draw attention to women constituents and their interests. Using individual-level data, the study concentrates on gender and the implementation of a gender quota in any individual speaker's party as explanatory variables, and it incorporates indicators of both feminist and traditional notions of women's issues as response variables. Results of statistical analyses indicate that women do speak more frequently and more substantively in this set of debates, and it appears that the presence of a gender quota independently enhances attention to these issues.*

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Germany is one of many countries in Europe, and throughout the world, where gender quotas have been introduced to address the low numbers of women taking part directly in political decision making. Implicitly, these quotas, which take a variety of institutional forms (e.g., quotas voluntarily adopted by individual parties versus quotas that are legislatively mandated for all parties in a given system), are expected to accomplish several goals, including: (1) to increase the number of female elected officials (i.e., to increase women's descriptive representation in government), and (2) to advocate, and ultimately pass, legislation in favor of women's interests (i.e., to improve women's substantive representation). Neither has been conclusively obtained. A growing literature is emerging to address why and where quotas succeed in increasing the number of women elected as legislators. The second goal, however, remains largely unexamined outside the United States, and the cross-national work on women's substantive representation rarely addresses quotas.

Gender quotas are typically assumed to provide women's substantive representation by providing descriptive representation (the presence of women). As some studies show, however, women's descriptive representation does not straightforwardly denote substantive representation (Bratton 2005; Lovenduski and Norris 2003; Reingold 2000). Women legislators may have as many different understandings of what it means to represent women as there are women legislators; some will not even consider it their particular responsibility to represent women. Moreover, even if all women legislators did share, however minimally, a "women's interests" agenda,<sup>1</sup> party discipline in most legislative systems renders individual legislators' motives and interests difficult to discern from their party's goals (see Childs and Withey 2004). How, then, can we establish a link between descriptive and substantive representation?

In the present analyses I assess whether and how women's interests have found voice in the German Bundestag through women's descriptive representation (i.e., the presence of women) as achieved through quotas.<sup>2</sup> I use a content analysis of the stenographic minutes of selected plenary sessions from the sixteenth Bundestag to explore three hypotheses that posit various ways in which women legislators may be more likely than men to draw attention actively to women constituents and their interests. I focus on the gender of the speaker and the implementation of a gender quota in that speaker's party as explanatory variables. In all three hypotheses, substantive representation is conceptualized as literally giving voice to the experiences of women constituents in their national legislatures: that is, I seek evidence for substantive representation in legislative debates rather than in voting records or in terms of passage of women's issues legislation.

To determine the effect of gender on the expression of women's interests, I assess whether women representatives speak more frequently than men during debates about women's issues, and whether, in those speeches, women tend to refer more frequently to gendered experiences. The minutes I have selected address laws sponsored or cosponsored by the Committee on Families, Seniors, Women, and Children; as all of the debates included here regard women's interests, the frequency with which a legislator speaks is a measure of her or his advocacy of

Table 1

**Germany Political Parties: Percentage of Females in the Sixteenth Bundestag**

	Quota, year of adoption*	Quota	Females in Bundestag, %
Green Party	1986	50%	57
Social Democratic Party	1988	40%	36
The Left	1990 (unification)	50%	48
Christian Democratic and Social Unions	1996	1/3 "soft target"	20
Free Democratic Party	n/a	No quota	25

\*See the Global Database of Quotas for Women ([www.quotaproject.org](http://www.quotaproject.org)).

women's interests (broadly construed). I also test the possibility that the presence of a gender quota exerts an independent effect on legislators; that is, I explore whether, controlling for gender and a number of relevant variables, the gender quota is a predictor of women's substantive representation. In making these assessments, I countenance both progressive and traditional notions of women's interests, purposely not restricting a notion of women's interests to a feminist agenda.

Germany is an excellent site for studying this link for several reasons. First, the sixteenth Bundestag is 31.8 percent female, meaning that women's overall numbers are sufficient to make statistical inferences. Second, not all German political parties have adopted a gender quota, providing between-party contrast that is useful for evaluating the effect of the gender quota on women's substantive representation (see Table 1). While four of the five major German political parties have adopted quotas, each party appears to have implemented its gender quota for different reasons, including its expected electorate, ideology, and (relatedly) party platform (Caul 1999, 2001; Caul Kittilson 2005, 2006; Davidson-Schmich 2006; Krook 2004).

While previous work in Germany has suggested that quotas in the Bundestag might facilitate women's substantive representation (Meyer 2003), these arguments have relied upon anecdotal evidence, making it difficult to support claims regarding the influence of an individual legislator's gender on her advocacy of women's interests. For example, Meyer (2003) claims that women were instrumental in the passage of a series of landmark women's rights legislations in Germany, but she does not describe how it is that women made this impact. She notes that powerful women members of the Bundestag "used their positions to build bridges between parliamentary caucuses and women's groups," but she does not explain what constitutes this bridge building, nor does she explain how we know whether other factors were not in fact responsible for these legislative outcomes (Meyer 2003: 416). Meyer's evidence may suggest the correlation between apparent women's

efforts and the passage of women's interest legislation, but there is no evidence to support a causal claim. In my study I provide the individual-level data necessary to support such claims.

In examining women's representation in the German context, I extend the concerns of the 2004 "APSA [American Political Science Association] Task Force on American Democracy in an Age of Rising Inequality" beyond the United States. The task force's report argues that the act of voting cannot give disadvantaged groups sufficient influence to change their circumstances, due to the increasing potency of nonvoting means of political influence (e.g., lobbying, direct financial contribution, etc.) to which disadvantaged populations do not have access. Legislative bodies must include people prepared, most likely through direct personal experience, to advocate for populations that have historically been politically "silent." If descriptive representatives cannot be relied upon to "speak" substantively for "their" disadvantaged population, however, then quotas are not a potential solution to the problem that the APSA task force has identified.

### **Theoretical Background and Hypotheses**

Political representation is complicated, regardless of the constituent or legislator whose interests and motivations are under inspection. Parsing these interests and motivations, however, is crucial to understanding how democracy works—and how it might work better. To this end, the contribution of gender quotas to women's substantive representation must not be oversimplified. First, the number of women elected has no automatic bearing on women's political voice. As Hanna Pitkin (1967) articulated forcefully forty years ago, the *legislative activities* of elected women constitute their substantive representative duties. Second, studies of women's political representation have tended to conflate women's interests with feminism, despite the fact that not all women are ideologically similar, nor would (or could) all women share a single monolithic set of preferences.

Attention to numbers cannot be dismissed entirely, of course. Previous research on women's impact has often also asked whether the number of women present in the legislature might help or hinder women legislators' impact on policy (Bratton 2005; Grey 2002; Saint-Germain 1989; Thomas 1991, 1994). Various studies on American state legislatures in the 1970s and 1980s conclude that a critical mass is necessary before women will fulfill their (alleged) potential to represent women's interests (Saint-Germain 1989; Thomas 1991, 1994). By contrast, more recent research (Beckwith 2002; Bratton 2005) asserts findings that do not support a "critical" mass. Grey (2002), writing about New Zealand, emphasizes that the importance of a critical mass on individual legislators is strongly mediated by other factors (e.g., the legislator's party affiliation), and Lovenduski and Norris (2003) make a similar point about women's substantive representation in the United Kingdom.

While women's numbers clearly matter in terms of forming a viable legislative voting bloc, and it may be the case that numbers affect the overall system in which

women legislators work, the mechanism linking descriptive to substantive representation is not yet clear in any context, including systems with gender quotas. I argue that, in order to evaluate the substance of representation, attention must be paid to individual legislators' choices and constraints. To this end, my approach in this study leads away from ecological- and toward individual-level data. Unlike studies using ecological data, which can account only for group characteristics, an analysis of individuals can attempt to account for crucial alternative hypotheses at the individual level. For instance, is a particular woman legislator's women-friendly advocacy due to her gender or due to her membership on the committee that addresses women's issues?

Defining what constitutes women's interests is not a simple task, either, but much previous work has misstepped in conflating, often implicitly, women's interests with feminism.<sup>3</sup> On the one hand, this conflation is understandable. Feminist goals—for example, to expand women's reproductive rights—motivate many women's movements lobbying in the public sphere. However, not all women—including women legislators—share the same attitude toward feminism. Progressive and conservative women alike may self-identify as advocates of women's interests.

Studies that conflate these ideas often claim to link women's descriptive and substantive representation, but, given their data, their inferences must actually be limited to the domain of feminist policies. Scholars who restrict what counts as women's substantive representation to feminist programs also effectively make their claims more difficult to corroborate compellingly. Evidence of the degree to which women representatives pursue feminist agendas distinct from their male colleagues' legislative agendas may well (but we would not know, lacking broader data sampling) underreport the distinctiveness of women legislators' agendas. There are, instead, numerous dimensions along which women legislators might be expected to demonstrate agendas different from men's, as previous work has shown (Celis 2006; Swers 2002).

A number of exemplary studies, both in the American context and elsewhere, do not restrict indicators of women's substantive representation to feminist policies (Bratton 2005; Swers 2002; Tremblay 2006). Tremblay, for example, cautions, "Although it [women's surrogate representation] can certainly adopt this [feminist] orientation, it can also consist of wanting to consolidate the equity of traditional gender roles" (2006: 508). In the same vein, Bratton (2005) and Swers (2002) include both feminist women's issues and traditional women's issues; Swers consults both liberal and conservative women's groups' legislative reports to identify bills that warrant closer inspection (2002: 34–35).

In this spirit of moving "beyond numbers" in the study of quotas, and of incorporating nonfeminist as well as feminist indicators of women's interests, I pose three hypotheses about women legislators' substantive representation of women citizens. All of these hypotheses explore substantive representation as one means of amplifying—or indeed making present, in the first place—the voices of women constituents in their national legislatures.

The first two hypotheses posit that women representatives will give voice to women's experiences with greater frequency than men will. Empirical research on these questions is an important counterpart to the rich political theory literature on political representation, the balance of which suggests that descriptive representation can be a potent vehicle for unmaking social hierarchy and strengthening democracy (Mansbridge 1999; Phillips 1995; Williams 1998). Theorists of these questions discuss a kind of substantive representation that emphasizes the quality of debate more so than it emphasizes policy output, and I follow suit by focusing on speech acts in Bundestag debates. These theorists argue that a legislator's advocacy of interests and preferences stems at least in part from her own personal experiences, meaning that the absence of the descriptive representation of a group of political decision-making venues is tantamount to the absence of its perspective.

Thus, *accounting for* various alternative explanations, the following hypotheses posit that women representatives will give voice to women's experiences with greater frequency than men will.

*Hypothesis 1: All other things being equal, women will speak about legislation on women's interests (broadly construed) with greater frequency, and at greater length, than men legislators will.*

*Hypothesis 2: All other things being equal, women legislators will mention women's experiences while speaking about legislation more than men legislators will, that is, women legislators will give "voice" to women's experience in the political arena more often than men legislators will.*

At the heart of the 2004 APSA task force report, and at the heart of many advocates' arguments in favor of gender quotas, is, again, the notion that descriptive representation may be one means of providing political voice to populations that have historically not taken part in politics as elected officials. While gender quotas may impact women's substantive representation through descriptive representation, by increasing the number of women in political office, who in turn advocate women's issues, the third hypothesis tested here suggests a possible independent impact of gender quotas on women's substantive representation.

This conceptual distinction suggests differences, for example, between two legislatures that are both 20 percent female but only one of which has adopted a gender quota. A legislature that is 20 percent female "by manufacture" (i.e., via a gender quota) may pursue, as a whole, a different agenda from its quotaless counterpart. In a hypothetical case more similar to Germany—where quotas are adopted voluntarily by individual parties, as opposed to a constitutional mandate that affects all parties—this distinction suggests differences between two parties that are both 20 percent female but only one of which has adopted a gender quota. By this logic, a woman elected under a gender quota will be different from a woman elected without one.

While no work of which I am aware investigates a possible independent effect

of quotas on substantive representation, research on other political institutions suggests that it is a plausible hypothesis. A vast comparative literature on the manifold influence of electoral laws on political representation, for instance, has established that rules have substantive effects. Proportional representation electoral systems are said to generate and reflect consensual politics, improving the representation of minority interests (Lijphart 2004).

This third hypothesis posits that women legislators' attention to women's interests will be changed by their election under the conditions of a gender quota. Specifically, it posits that a gender quota will heighten their attention to these interests. While the opposite mechanism is plausible—that women legislators' attention to women's interests will be diminished by the quota, perhaps due to a desire to “be like any other legislator”—I conceive of gender quotas as placing a particular burden on women elected. Movements to instantiate gender quotas often emanate from women's movements, and these origins imbue quotas with gendered expectations (Caul 2001; Sgier 2004).

The behavior of men legislators may be shaped by gender quotas, as well, but, because this phenomenon does not illustrate the relationship between women's descriptive and substantive representation, I do not discuss this issue here. In the analyses that follow in the next section, I also include a control for the ballot type under which a legislator was elected, because gender quotas are applicable only to party lists (proportional representation), not to single member districts.

*Hypothesis 3: Women legislators who are members of parties that have adopted a gender quota will exhibit behavior posited in hypotheses 1 and 2 more than women elected from parties that have not.*

## Data and Results

I analyzed a set of Bundestag debates concerning laws (co)sponsored by the Committee on Families, Seniors, Women, and Children in the sixteenth Bundestag. These were full plenary sessions, the stenographic minutes of which are available on the Bundestag's Web site ([www.bundestag.de](http://www.bundestag.de)). As has been noted, speech is a crucial vehicle for political representation, and previous studies of qualities of representation have used similar approaches (Davidson-Schmich 2006; Kathlene 1994, 1995). I coded individual legislators' speech acts into three utterance types (full speeches, questions, and interjections). All three of these speech acts illustrate how legislators address both one another and the issues at hand, but I consider full-length speeches and question asking to be the stronger indicators of substantive representation. While interjections are also an indication of investment in the debate, they are typically very short: the mean length of an interjection in these debates is 1.6 lines, as compared with 136.7 lines for full-length speeches. Moreover, the vast majority of interjections (all but two) in the debates I examined consist of partisan exclamations of support or heckling.

I also coded the content of these utterances for statistical analyses. I identified a series of indicators of women's issues, and I counted the number of references to each of these indicators uttered by each speaker. For example, I tallied up the number of times a given legislator referred to children throughout the debates I analyzed. These indicators included references to: family, children, women as mothers, men as fathers, parents (non-gender specific), women as employees, men as employees, the double burden as experienced by women, the double burden as experienced by men, the double burden as experienced by parents (non-gender specific), concern about single mothers, concern about single fathers, and concern about parents (non-gender specific). This list of indicators captured the breadth of references manifested in the debates that I analyzed.

Two subsets of these data served as broad indicators of feminist and traditional women's interests. For the purposes of the models in Tables 4 and 5, references to women as employees, women's double burden, and concern about single mothers were additively combined as "feminist" interests. References to family and children were additively combined as "traditional" interests. An additive combination is warranted, because these data are straightforward counts of references.

A selection issue inherent to content analyses of debates like these is the absence of *nonevents* from the data. Thus the conclusions that I make from these analyses apply only to the population of legislators who spoke, not to silent legislators. This selection issue may be mitigated here, however, by my focus on minutes of Bundestag debates concerning laws (co)sponsored by the Committee on Families, Seniors, Women, and Children in the sixteenth Bundestag. If gendered personal experiences of legislators differentiate women from men, then debates generated in the Bundestag by this particular committee are the likely site in which to locate evidence of such difference. While an analysis of these debates does not account for potential speakers, a comparison of women and men's speech acts can still provide useful information about gendered patterns in providing women's substantive representation.

The *Stand der Gesetzgebung*, the registry of all laws considered by the German legislature (Bundestag and Bundesrat), lists five laws (co)sponsored thus far by the Committee on Families, Seniors, Women, and Children in the sixteenth Bundestag: a law addressing the eligibility of immigrants in Germany to state-provided child support, a law revising the taxation system,<sup>4</sup> two identical drafts of laws addressing the introduction of *Elterngeld* (money provided to parents upon the birth of a child),<sup>5</sup> and a law on the effects of violent media on children. Content analyses of only the first three were done for this study, because the fourth law was identical to the third, and the fifth law was discussed only in the Bundesrat.

I frame my discussion of these debates in quantitative terms, offering primarily statistical results of my content analyses: a combination of descriptive statistics and linear regression models, which control for several factors known to influence German legislators' behavior. I organized the data into two different databases: first, the data are organized by utterance. There were 204 utterances spoken in these debates on women's issues. Second, the data are organized by speaker. Fifty-five



Table 2

**Utterances, Disaggregated by Utterance Type and Gender of Speaker\*** (unit of analysis: utterance)

Utterance type	Female**	Male**	Total (utterances)
Interjection	91 (53.8%)	77 (45.6%)	168 interjections
Full speech	14 (53.8%)	12 (46.2%)	26 full speeches
Question	10 (100%)	0	10 questions
Total	115 utterances spoken by women (56.4% of all utterances)	89 utterances spoken by men (43.6% all utterances)	

\*Utterance type  $\times$  gender of speaker: Pearson  $\chi^2 = 8.14$  and  $Pr = 0.043$ .

\*\*Each of these columns refers to the number of utterances (of each type, respectively) expressed by women or men. The percentage indicates the proportion of total utterances.

unique speakers participated in these debates; of these speakers, twenty-one were members of the Committee on Families, Seniors, Women, and Children. The unit of analysis for each table is specified below. Gender was coded as female = 1 and male = 0; committee membership = 1 (nonmembership = 0); the presence of a party quota = 1 (absence = 0); election type was coded as single-member district = 0 and proportional representation = 1; and total length of utterances was a summation of all that speaker's utterances throughout the debates analyzed, measured in lines of speech (the latter variable is only in the database organized by speaker). Party affiliation was left out of the analyses, as it was statistically significant in no models, and it appeared to obscure the effect of a party quota.<sup>6</sup>

Tables 2 and 3 address hypothesis 1, which posits that women legislators will speak on behalf of women's interests more frequently than men will. All of the debates included in these analyses address women's issues, meaning that the frequency with which a legislator speaks is some measure of her or his attention to women's interests (broadly construed). Table 2 (using the utterance as the unit of analysis) summarizes the overall gender distribution of utterances in all of the minutes I included in the analyses. In raw numbers, it is evident that more utterances were spoken by women than men; that is, more of the debate consisted of female than male speakers. Pearson chi-square tests indicate a statistically significant relationship between the gender of a given speaker and form that her or his utterance took (interjection vs. full speech vs. question). This suggests that being a woman, independent of quota presence, influences expression of women's interests.

Of the fifty-five unique speakers in the debates analyzed, twenty-seven were women and twenty-eight were men. Two linear regression models of two different dependent variables, generated from the database in which speakers were the units

Table 3

**Linear Regression of Frequency of Utterances (of all kinds) and Frequency of Questions (unit of analysis: speaker)**

Independent variables	Model 1: DV = Frequency of utterances		Model 2: DV = Frequency of questions	
	B (std. error)	Beta	B (std. error)	Beta
Speaker's gender	0.57 (1.38)	0.06	0.30 (0.15)*	0.26
Committee on Families . . . ?	1.50 (1.43)	0.15	0.20 (0.15)	0.17
Presence of party quota	-3.10 (1.90)††	-0.23	-0.71 (0.20)*	-0.43
Election type	-0.31 (0.41)	-0.11	-0.03 (0.04)	-0.10
Constant	5.76 (2.01)**	—	0.60 (0.21)*	—
<i>N</i>	55		55	
Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.01		0.25	
<i>F</i> (df)	1.19		5.52	
Prob > <i>F</i>	0.33		0.00	

††The presence of a quota is significant only slightly below the statistical gold standard, at  $p = 0.11$ ; \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.001$ .

of analysis, are shown in Table 3: total frequency of utterances, and frequency of questions. Separate models for full speeches and interjections were not included because none of the coefficients was statistically significant with 80 percent or greater confidence.

The model for total frequency of utterances (Model 1) fares the worse of the two; this is likely because most utterances were interjections, and, as noted, interjections were not modeled successfully either. The model of frequency of questions (Model 2) fares much better, however, correctly predicting 25 percent of variance. Gender is a statistically significant predictor of the frequency of questions uttered in these debates, controlling for committee membership, the presence of a party quota, and the ballot type under which the speaker was elected (single-member district versus proportional representation). Moreover, the presence of a party quota appears to mediate the number of questions a legislator asks, even controlling for gender. But in both of these models, the presence of a party quota exerts a *negative* influence on the frequency of utterances (of each type, respectively). (See further discussion of quotas, below.)

Tables 4 and 5 address hypothesis 2, which posits that women legislators will refer to women's experiences with greater frequency than men will. Table 4 presents mean frequencies of references to concerns of particular interest to women,

Table 4

**Average Frequency of References to Women's Issues** (unit of analysis: speaker)\*

Women's issues	Average no. of references by female speakers (std. dev.)	Average no. of references by male speakers (std. dev.)
Feminist	2.56 (4.51)	0.71 (2.21)
Traditional	14.48 (23.37)	4.71 (12.35)

\*Comparing women's and men's references to feminist issues: Bartlett's test for equal variances:  $\chi^2(1) = 12.352$ , Prob >  $\chi^2 = 0.000$ .

Comparing women's and men's references to traditional issues: Bartlett's test for equal variances:  $\chi^2(1) = 10.005$ , Prob >  $\chi^2 = 0.002$ .

bifurcated into feminist and traditional categories. Statistical variance tests indicate significant differences between women's and men's references to both of these categories of issues. Confirming hypothesis 2, these data show that in speech acts (of all types) women are more likely than men to refer to concerns of particular interest to women. Had I restricted indicators of women's interests to feminist programs, the gendered differences that are clear in these fuller data would have been understated. Women refer to nontraditional *and* traditional women's situations more frequently than men do.

Table 5 shows two linear regression models generated from the database in which the speaker was the unit of analysis, using two different dependent variables: feminist references and traditional references. These models predict 32.0 percent and 53.7 percent of frequencies of references per speaker, respectively. Model 3 indicates that all of the explanatory variables except election type and the speaker's membership on the Committee on Families, Seniors, Women, and Children were statistically significant predictors of frequency of feminist references. In Model 4, all of the explanatory variables except gender were statistically significant with 90 percent or greater confidence. In this model, gender was significant only slightly below the statistical gold standard, at  $p = 0.16$ .

While the presence of a gender quota appeared to decrease the frequency of utterances spoken by a given legislator (see Table 3), these models that more directly address content indicate that gender quotas exert a positive influence on frequency of references to women's issues. As hypothesis 3 predicts, quotas appear to highlight attention to issues of particular concern to women. This substantive finding is further corroborated by Table 6, which illustrates gendered differences in quotas' effects on utterance types. Pearson chi-square tests indicate that quotas correlate with utterances among women. I would argue that gender quotas exert an independent influence on women legislators who belong to parties that have implemented them, perhaps by highlighting these legislators' responsibility to

Table 5

**Linear Regression of References to Women's Interests** (unit of analysis = speaker)

Independent variables	Model 3: D = frequency of feminist references		Model 4: DV = frequency of traditional references	
	B (std. error)	Beta	B (std. error)	Beta
Speaker's gender	1.51 (0.87)†	0.21	5.70 (3.96)††	0.15
Committee on Families ...?	1.11 (0.91)	0.15	11.32 (4.16)*	0.29
Presence of party quota	2.03 (1.20)†	0.20	11.26 (5.47)*	0.21
Election type	-0.06 (0.27)	-0.03	2.35 (1.22)†	0.20
Total length of utterances	0.02 (0.01)**	0.53	0.13 (0.02)**	0.54
Constant	-2.92(1.33)*	—	-18.4 (6.06)*	—
<i>N</i>	55		55	
Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.320		0.537	
<i>F</i> (df)	6.07		11.37	
Prob > <i>F</i>	0.000		0.000	

††Gender was significant only slightly below the statistical gold standard, at  $p = 0.16$ ; † $p < 0.10$ ; \* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.001$ .

women constituents. As noted above, the adoption of gender quotas is often the result of efforts by women's movements that emphasize, and advertise, the need for improving women's political representation (Caul 2001; Sgier 2004).

Models 3 and 4 offer further insight into the effect of gender quotas, because they control for election type. Election type is not a statistically significant predictor of frequency of feminist references, suggesting that legislators inclined to refer to feminist notions of women's interests will do so whether or not the quota was directly instrumental in electing them to office. Election type is a statistically significant predictor of frequency of traditional references, however. A deeper explanation behind this result is not clear, however, given the data available to these analyses.

## Conclusions

I have presented preliminary empirical answers to a series of crucial questions about women's substantive representation and the goals of gender quotas. While

Table 6

**The Effect of Quotas on Utterance Types Among Women** (unit of analysis: utterance)\*

Utterance type	Women speakers, quota	Women speakers, no quota
Interjection	67	24
Full speech	11	3
Question	4	6
Total	82 women	33 women

\*Utterance type  $\times$  quotas among women speakers: Pearson  $\chi^2 = 7.35$  and  $Pr = 0.06$ .

*Note:* Each column refers to the number of utterances (of each type, respectively) spoken by women.

more nuanced analyses must be done to fully discount alternative hypotheses for the apparently gendered differences, these findings from the German context suggest that women's descriptive representation in national legislatures can indeed contribute to their substantive representation. Women legislators speak more frequently than men legislators during these debates on issues of particular interest to women, and gender is a statistically significant predictor of frequency of a given legislator's propensity to ask questions. In terms of content, women refer to feminist as well as traditional women's issues with greater frequency than men. Furthermore, regression analyses indicate that gender and the presence of a gender quota are positive predictors of these references' frequencies—even controlling for committee membership and quantity of speech (in lines of speech). The presence of a gender quota appears to enhance women legislators' attention to issues of particular interest to women, even controlling for election type. The persistence of the quota's influence suggests that a quota influences the entire party, not only the women elected under it.

Future investigation of the questions that I have posed here should expand in several important directions. First, closer attention should be paid to party affiliation. The gender quotas adopted by German political parties are not all identical (see Table 1), and this variation may be related to underlying explanations for legislators' apparent interest in women's issues. Second, longitudinal analyses of debates from multiple Bundestag terms would provide greater insight into quotas' independent effects, as German political parties have adopted quotas in a staggered fashion across time, permitting pre- and post-quota comparisons. Third, plenary debates on laws in other issue areas should be analyzed, as well, in order to know whether it is so-called women's issues or all issue areas about which women speak differently. Finally, future analyses should take account of potential speakers who do not choose to speak, as these are opportunities (lost) for substantive representation.

## Notes

1. The quotation marks serve to indicate that the term “women’s interests” is problematic.
2. A separate but related question asks whether only women legislators can deliver women’s substantive representation. The answer to this question is likely no, but it is clear from the rhetoric of gender quotas that this expectation underpins the adoption of quotas (see Sgier 2004). The present study asks whether women representatives provide more women’s substantive representation (see also Reingold 1992, 2000).
3. I do not mean to claim that feminism is monolithic either. I would claim, however, that there is a ready distinction between traditional attitudes toward women’s roles and interests and a category of, broadly, feminist attitudes.
4. This law was very broad in nature, but the Committee on Families, Seniors, Women, and Children submitted a document offering their opinion on the tax revisions’ impact on issues relevant to the committee.
5. These two laws were simply submitted by different bodies for consideration. They are identical in text but show up twice under the Committee on Families, Seniors, Women, and Children, presumably because they were submitted at different times.
6. More nuanced statistical models would also take party affiliation into account. The present analyses concentrate on the presence or absence of a gender quota, which in Germany (because quotas are adopted voluntarily by parties) is correlated with party affiliation.

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