

*Pre-Analysis Plan Updates*  
Could a Woman Have Gone to China?  
Evidence of a Gendered Peace Premium\*

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# 1 Updates

As outlined in our initial pre-analysis plan, we conducted a 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 between-subjects experiment based on Mattes and Weeks' (2019) seminal study in order to analyze whether female leaders have a disadvantage in pursuing peace. The four factors we varied were the U.S. president's policy choice (status quo or conciliatory); the U.S. president's gender (male or female); the U.S. president's partisan affiliation (Republican or Democrat); and the U.S. president's foreign policy type (hawk or dove). As a follow-up study, we now plan to replicate the same experiment with one key difference: we will not experimentally manipulate or control for the president's foreign policy type. We examine the external validity of our original results to this change for two principal reasons.

First, there are reasons to question whether the very strong hawk and dove treatments utilized by Mattes and Weeks (2019) would apply in the real world. The core issue is that foreign policy orientation is an inherently subjective and nuanced characteristic, but is presented as objective and straightforward by the treatments. For example, while the treatments present a leader as falling clearly in the hawk or dove category, in the real world leaders often adopt both hawkish and dovish positions. This blurs the distinction between the hawk and dove categories, which might lessen the impact of foreign policy orientation by generating disagreement and ambiguity about a leader's level of hawkishness. The nuanced nature of hawk-dove orientation is illustrated well by debates over Hillary Clinton's foreign policy orientation. Although some journalists and former policymakers argued she was a clear hawk, others argued she was actually quite dovish and preferred diplomatic over military solutions.<sup>1</sup> The subjectivity of hawk-dove perceptions is not restricted to just elites. Even after a long and well-publicized record in foreign affairs, a YouGov poll conducted in 2014 found about a third of Americans believed Clinton was a hawk, a third believed she was a dove, and a third were not sure.<sup>2</sup> A Pew poll in 2008 similarly found that 37% of Americans believed Hillary was not tough

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<sup>1</sup>See the following articles in [CNN](#), [NPR](#), the [Wall Street Journal](#), and [Vox](#).

<sup>2</sup>See [here](#).

enough in foreign policy and just 9% believed she was too tough.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, even more “objective” measures of foreign policy orientation often suggest that differences between politicians are relatively small. Bendix and Jeong (2019) calculate foreign policy scores for each member of Congress from 1993 to 2016, with higher scores indicating greater hawkishness. Hillary Clinton’s average score during her time in the Senate was -1.502, Barack Obama’s was -1.535, and John Kerry’s was -1.419. Therefore, despite arguments from some that Clinton was more hawkish than Obama and Kerry, this measure shows little daylight between them. In summary, while including the hawk/dove factor in our experiment is undoubtedly a useful test of how foreign policy ideal types affect the evaluation of peace proposals, its subjective nature means it may not have as significant an impact in the real world. By contrast, since everyone knows and agrees on a leader’s gender and party identification—and they rarely change over time—they are more objective and consistent characteristics than foreign policy orientation. This means gender and party identification may be more likely to serve as heuristics for the public in real-world scenarios than foreign policy orientation.

Second, from a methodological perspective, we would like to examine the impact of removing foreign policy orientation from the experiment. Will this change cause party identification to have a significant impact on how the public evaluates peace proposals, unlike in Mattes and Weeks’ (2019) study? How will it impact the effect of leader gender? Since members of the public likely consider Democratic and female leaders to be more dovish than Republican and male leaders, we expect that this design change will lead to *stronger effects* for party identification and gender because these factors will subsume some of the impact foreign policy orientation had. On the one hand, if this expectation holds, then that suggests failing to control for foreign policy orientation could lead to a lack of information equivalence across experimental conditions (Dafoe, Zhang, and Caughey 2018). This occurs when manipulating one factor (e.g., gender) leads respondents to update their beliefs about other relevant, but not experimentally manipulated or controlled, dimensions (e.g., foreign policy orientation). On the other hand, to the

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<sup>3</sup>See [here](#).

extent that the criticisms in the previous paragraph are convincing, this would suggest that including a strong foreign policy orientation treatment might obscure the critical role played by leader gender and/or party identification in real-world foreign policy scenarios.

Overall, the follow-up study outlined here will test the impact of leader gender (and party identification) in a situation where hawk/dove orientation is unclear or mixed in the minds of survey respondents.

## 2 References

1. Bendix, William, and Gyung-Ho Jeong. 2019. "Gender and Foreign Policy: Are Female Members of Congress More Dovish than Their Male Colleagues?" *Political Research Quarterly* 73(1), 126-140.
2. Dafoe, Allan, Baobao Zhang, and Devin Caughey. 2018. "Information Equivalence in Survey Experiments." *Political Analysis* 26(4), 399-416.
3. Mattes, Michaela, and Jessica L.P. Weeks. 2019. "Hawks, Doves, and Peace: An Experimental Approach." *American Journal of Political Science* 63(1), 53-66.