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Introducing the Monkey Cage gender gap symposium

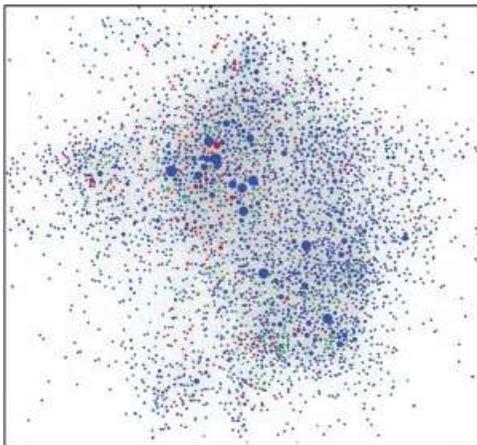
Erik Voeten, 9/30/13

Link: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2013/09/30/introducing-the-monkey-cage-gender-gap-symposium/>

Despite substantial progress, it is irrefutable that a gender gap persists in academia – as it does in many other professions. By 2010, women constituted 40 percent of assistant professors and 30 percent of associate professors but only 19 percent of full professors in the political science profession ([source](#)). These figures have gone up steadily but slowly ([see here](#)) and it would be tempting to believe that the disappearance of the gender gap is merely a matter of time.

Yet, there are still structural obstacles that stand in the way of full equality. Those range from overt sexism to (more commonly) implicit biases and the fact that men on average still do less than 50 percent of childcare and household tasks. The intense discussions surrounding [Anne-Marie's Slaughter's article on work-life balance](#), [Sheryl Sandberg's Lean In](#), and the *New York Times* [article](#) on gender issues at the Harvard Business school illustrate that concerns about gender equality in universities and workplaces are alive and well.

And for good reasons. Women are still more likely [to consider dropping out of graduate school](#). There is ample evidence of persistent implicit biases. For example, [psychologists have found](#) that women are described in more communal terms in letters of recommendation and that such communal characteristics negatively affect hiring decisions in academia. A particularly striking finding concerns the gender gap in citations, as documented in a forthcoming article in *International Organization* by Daniel Maliniak, Ryan Powers and Barbara Walter. The image below is the network of citations they analyze, with blue dots representing male-authored articles and red dots female authored articles. The size of the dot reflects the authority of the citation. To fully understand the analysis, I encourage you to read the [temporarily ungated](#) article or the coverage it received in the [Economist](#), [Chronicle of Higher Education](#) and [Inside Higher Ed](#).



Visualization of citation network (From: Daniel Maliniak, Ryan Powers and Barbara F. Walter. The Gender Citation Gap in International Relations. *International Organization*.)

Here is why the finding is so compelling and disturbing. Academic articles are accepted through a double-blind peer review process. On average, articles published by men and women in the same journal should be of equal importance and quality. There is no affirmative action in the journal publication process. Yet, once published, articles written by women are cited less frequently than those written by men– even if they are published in the same journal. This matters because citation counts are used in our profession as indicators of authoritativeness and as one metric for promotion decisions.

Why is this so? And what can be done about this? This week, we are organizing a symposium that debates these questions. We believe that many of the issues raised by our roster of impressive contributors will be relevant not just to those in political science or other academic professions but also to others interested in understanding why, despite so much progress, barriers to the professional advancement of women continue to exist.

We start with a framing contribution by [Jane Mansbridge](#), the Adams Professor of Political Leadership and Democratic Values at Harvard University. She was the 2012-2013 president of the American Political Science Association and is a leading scholar on issues of inequality, including gender inequality.

Next up are the authors of the citation article. [Barbara Walter](#), a professor of International Relations and Pacific Studies at the University of California in San Diego, will offer a relatively straightforward proposal to reduce the citations gap based on ample social science research showing that women do better the more anonymity is introduced in the evaluations process. Her co-authors, [Daniel Maliniak](#) and [Ryan Powers](#), then discuss a tool that allows users to prepare citation lists in a more effective and, plausibly, more gender neutral way.

We then turn to two other empirical studies. [Sara Mitchell](#), a professor and the chair of the political science department at the University of Iowa, examines how the gender citation gap depends on having a critical mass of women participate in a specific subfield. [Lisa Martin](#), a professor at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, offers insights from a study she conducted on the gender gap in teaching evaluations.

Next we turn to broader perspectives on the gender gap in political science and academia more generally. [Rick Wilson](#) is a professor at Rice University and will write from his perspective as the editor of the *American Journal of Political Science*. [Brett Ashley Leeds](#), also a professor at Rice University, will discuss broader social science evidence that the work of women tends to be devalued more than that of men.

We close with reflections from two of the most distinguished scholars of international relations. [Beth Simmons](#) is the Clarence Dillon Professor of International Affairs at Harvard University and a former president of the International Studies Association. [David Lake](#), is the Jerri-Ann and Gary E. Jacobs Professor of Social Sciences, Distinguished Professor of Political Science at the University of California at San Diego. He is also a former president of the International Studies Association.

I will roll out the posts over the course of this week.

Explaining the gender gap

Jane Mansbridge, 9/30/13

Link: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2013/09/30/explaining-the-gender-gap/>

For our first contribution to the [gender gap symposium](#) we are delighted to welcome [Jane Mansbridge](#), Charles F. Adams Professor of Political Leadership and Democratic Values at Harvard University, [2012-2013 president of the American Political Science Association](#), and author of numerous groundbreaking scholarly works, including the award winning *Why We Lost the ERA*. Professor Mansbridge's contribution provides the broader context necessary to understand why biases against and disadvantages for women persist and what can be done about them.

Since the "second wave" of the women's movement in the late 1960s, feminists have been pointing out that the discrimination against women today is mostly structural and implicit. You don't usually see the "smoking gun." It is therefore highly resistant to legal action.

The structural variables have to do primarily with 1) women's primary responsibility for childcare and 2) the unconscious replication of social networks.

Some universities have parental leave policies that give both parents who take 50 percent or more responsibility for childcare a semester of paid leave and a year off the tenure clock. Some have subsidized on-site childcare. Many have neither of these supports. Even those that have the supports, however, do not begin to make up for the time spent on childcare by any parent with 50 percent or more responsibility in the years from one to 21 as the child grows up, gains skills, has the inevitable minor or major health problems and a busy or troubled social life, and relies on the parent for emotional and physical support. Accordingly, women who have no children do better in academia than women with one child, and women with one do better than women with two or more. Not until all men take 50 percent or more of the responsibility for childcare will the playing field be equal for women on this front.

People also tend to socialize by gender. Men tend to have more men among their friends; women tend to have more women. So when someone is asked to recommend someone for a lecture or a prize, or when people are sitting around discussing others' good articles or books, men are likely to think of people they know, who are more likely to be men, and women are more likely to think of people they know, who are more likely to be women. If the group is not 50-50 male and female, the numerically dominant group (in political science usually men) will tend to produce more mentions of others in that group. Those who hear those mentions will underscore in their minds their memories of those people. Social networks reinforce themselves.

Psychologists interested in group dynamics and in the preconscious have studied the implicit variables that produce discrimination by gender.

Studies of group dynamics reveal in-group positive biases and out-group negative biases, even when the "groups" are formed overtly and explicitly by the throw of a dice, a mechanism chosen to underscore the randomness of the selection. Groups with deeper routes produce deeper biases, and gender has deep roots in every society. Societies engage in much "gratuitous gendering," giving male and female noun forms to neutral items such as table and armchair, or dividing all the world into Yin and Yang. Gender is one of the first pieces of information given and asked about a newborn. Mothers treat their boy and girl babies differently from the first days of birth. Boys and girls separate into somewhat different social groups in the preschool years and remain in different groups thereafter, although are later brought together again by school activities,

courtship, the raising of a family, and, in some societies, by relatively gender-neutral work. In most societies work itself is gendered, although not with the strong taboos of some.

Anthropologists report that among the Suku of Africa, only the women can plant crops and only the men can make baskets. But among the Kaffa of the Circum-Mediterranean, only the men can plant crops and only the women can make baskets. Among the Hansa of the Circum-Mediterranean, only the men can prepare skins and only the women milk. But among the Rwala of the Circum-Mediterranean, only the women can prepare skins and only men milk.

Studies of implicit associations show that gendered attributes are part of almost everyone's preconscious. Go to [this Harvard Web site](#) and you will be able to take a test online that, whether you are a man or a woman, will almost certainly reveal your own implicit association of women with the humanities and men with science. The test relies on our brain's ability to register congruent items more quickly than incongruent ones (so that you can read the word "red" faster when it is written in red than when it is written in green).

Preconscious assumptions regarding gender also affect hiring and promotion patterns, as when male managers respond with a lessened desire to work with an employee who has a woman's name but not when the employee has a man's name if that employee has made a number of irritating negotiating demands.

How to handle these structural and preconscious biases? First, acknowledge their existence.

Second, set in place mechanisms to diminish them, recognizing that it is hard, if not impossible, to eliminate them. On childcare, the more time a university can give for paid leave and on its tenure clock to parents who are genuinely involved in 50 percent or more of their children's care, the better. We have not even begun to approach the point at which the time given could make up for the time taken away. On networks, make sure that all search committees begin by phoning women faculty for suggestions of outstanding colleagues and students. Make affirmative efforts to tap female networks to give out and collect every form of important information. Recognize that citations are not neutral measures of the importance of a piece of work but derive from gendered social networks. Recognize that fields are not neutrally "important" or "marginal," but gendered, with fewer citations occurring in those fields that are gendered female. On implicit biases, notice the faculty with whom deans and chairs get irritated and those who are the stars, and try to identify the possibility of gender biases. When female colleagues complain of bias, try to see the ways in which they might be right.

This is a tough nut to crack. The problem is larger than any of us and will take generations to solve. But justice, care, and the full use of our society's resources demand that we try.

How to reduce the gender gap in one (relatively) easy step

B.F. Walter, 10/01/13

Link: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2013/10/01/how-to-reduce-the-gender-gap-in-one-relatively-easy-step/>

This is the second post in our [gender gap symposium](#) (see [here](#) for the first by Jane Mansbridge). We are delighted to welcome [B.F. Walter](#), a Professor of International Relations and Pacific Studies at the University of California at San Diego. B.F. Walter is an expert on international security and regularly blogs about security issues at [Political Violence at a Glance](#). Walter is one of the co-authors of the [citation article](#) that motivates this symposium.

I've been in academia for 20 years. During that time I've had the pleasure of meeting many talented male and female scholars. I've also watched a disproportionate number of the female scholars in this group drop out of grad school, be denied tenure and fail to reach the highest levels of professional success. As one of the few women who have made it to full professor at an elite research university, I often ask myself, "Where have all the women gone?"

In August, [the New York Times reported that gender bias and outright sexual harassment](#) appeared to be endemic in the field of philosophy. This article was followed by a second one that reported [a gender gap in grades at Harvard Business School](#), which appeared to be the result of gender biases in the school's culture and practices. This should come as no surprise to many women in higher education who have long suspected that the road to success was harder for them than their male counterparts.

These arguments, however, have often been met with skepticism, in part because no hard data have existed to back them up. One could, for example, argue that women are failing to rise through the ranks of elite universities because they are less productive, publish in less prestigious journals, choose topics that are less central to core debates, or because they are more likely to choose to teach at liberal arts colleges. In other words, it's possible that the differential outcomes for men and women at the highest levels of academia have everything to do with the choices women make and very little to do with any systematic bias against them.

So which is it? Are women doing worse than men in academia because of the choices they are making or because gender bias has made their path to advancement more difficult? To answer this question, Daniel Maliniak, Ryan Powers and I collected hard data. [Lots of it](#). We were particularly interested in data on the gender of authors and the citation counts of the articles they wrote. We looked at citation counts because they are increasingly used as a key measure of a scholar's performance and impact. The more citations a scholar receives, the more influential he or she is perceived to be, and the more likely he or she is to get hired, promoted and financially rewarded.

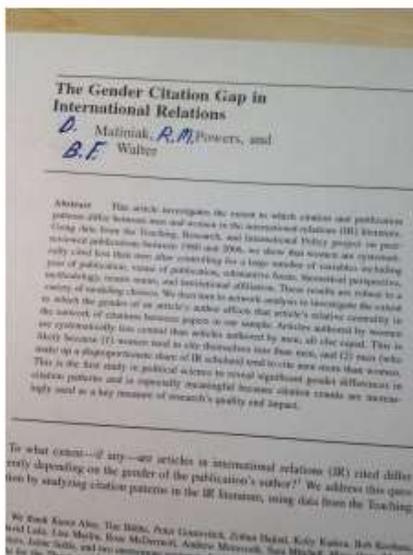
The first thing we did was look at more than 3,000 articles published between 1980 and 2006 in 12 leading peer-reviewed international relations journals. We then controlled for every possible factor that could contribute to one's citation count including the quality of the publication, its venue, methodology, the subject matter, and the researcher's home institution (to name a few). We suspected that an article written by a tenured professor from an elite university, published in a top journal and written on a popular topic would get more citations than an article written by an untenured professor at a liberal arts college on an esoteric topic in a second-tier journal. What we didn't know was whether gender would matter once you held all of these factors constant. Did knowing the gender of the author make other scholars cite an article more or less?

The results were striking. Even when we controlled for an enormous range of factors, gender remained one of the best predictors of how often an article would be cited. If you were female, your article would get about 0.7 cites for every 1 cite that a male author would receive.

This paper has garnered a lot of press [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#), not because it's telling us something we hadn't already suspected but because the data are incontrovertible. Crunch the numbers in different ways and the results are always the same: articles written by women in IR are cited less than men, all else equal.

The question then becomes, what can we do about it? In the paper, we offered four suggestions. Women can cite themselves more (another interesting finding of the paper was that women self-cite less than men). Faculty mentors can help women network so that they are better incorporated into what is still a very male-dominated profession. Faculty can make sure that their syllabi don't rely disproportionately on male authors, a practice that only perpetuates a gender imbalance in citations. And journal editors can pay attention to citations in the articles they accept to ensure that this bias doesn't continue.

But there's another potentially easy solution: anonymity. What if we set up evaluations in academia so that we never knew the gender of the person being evaluated (or at the very least downplayed it as much as possible)? Anne-Marie Slaughter suggested this recently at a conference panel on the subject. This would be akin to what elite symphony orchestras did in the United States in the 1970s. Prior to adopting anonymous auditions in which candidates sat behind screens when they played, less than 5 percent of all musicians in these orchestras were women. Once blind auditions were instituted women were 50 percent more likely to make it out of the preliminary rounds and significantly more likely to ultimately win the job. Today, 25 percent of all musicians [in these elite orchestras are women](#).



Credit: B.F. Walter

What if we did the same in academia? What if the norm for scholars was to identify themselves only with their first initial and last name when submitting an article for review and publication? This would make it more likely that initial impressions about the quality of scholarship were based on the work itself and not the author's gender. This already occurs in some journals in the sciences, where – it turns out – [the citation gap appears to be less prominent](#) [gated]. And what if we extended this to the classroom where student work was identified only by a number? Both of these practices would eliminate any conscious or unconscious bias professors, reviewers and editors might have when assessing the quality of a piece of work. More well-established scholars would not benefit (or suffer) from this procedure since their identity would already be known by their initials. Instead, the benefits of gender-blind initials (or numbers) would accrue most heavily to young, unknown scholars who are most vulnerable to bias and most in need of a level playing field. (Not surprisingly, it is untenured women who were the least likely to be cited.)

So why not institute the norm of using initials in all our work so that the youngest and most at risk scholars will have a fighting chance to make it up the ranks? Perhaps then we'll see fewer highly talented researchers drop out of the profession well before their prime.

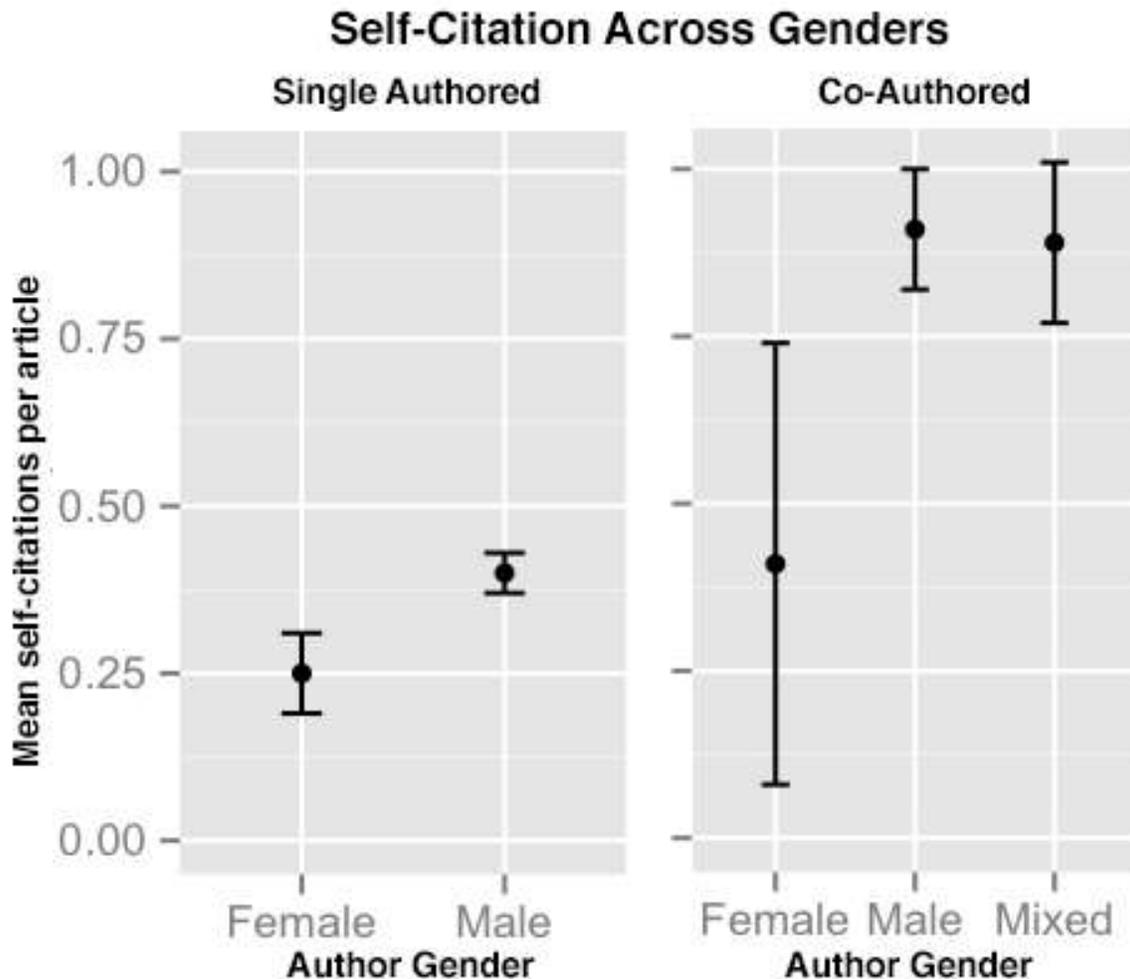
Closing the gender citation gap: Introducing RADS

Daniel Maliniak and Ryan Powers, 10/01/13

Link: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2013/10/01/closing-the-gender-citation-gap-introducing-rads/>

This is the third post in our [gender gap symposium](#) (see [here](#) and [here](#) for the first two.) We are delighted to welcome [Daniel Maliniak](#), a PhD candidate in Political Science at University of California, San Diego, and [Ryan Powers](#), a graduate student in Political Science at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Daniel and Ryan are co-authors of [the citations paper](#). Both of them graduated from William & Mary, where they were heavily involved in the [TRIPS project](#), which has become the primary documentation of trends and facts about teaching and research in international relations. See [here](#) for some very cool visualizations they have created of citation networks.

In our [recent paper with Barbara Walter](#), we show that gender differences in self-citation and self-promotion are a contributing factor to the of the overall gender citation gap in international relations (IR) (see the graph below). The question we are asking ourselves now is what to do about it.



Difference of means test with 95% CI. See Maliniak, Powers, and Walter (2013) for details.

Graph by Daniel Maliniak and Ryan Powers

In our paper, we encourage women to self-cite more often as one strategy to narrow the citation gap. As (very) junior scholars, we find recommendations that give authors some individual agency compelling, in part, because we are not in a position to make the needed structural/policy changes for which others are advocating. But our emphasis on self-citation overlooks [another](#) – potentially more important – way to help narrow the gender citation gap: encouraging authors to improve the gender balance of their own citation patterns.

How do you do this? We don't know why people tend to cite along gender lines. That's a whole other research project in itself. But we do have some potential antidotes. The first is to simply make people aware of the problem and encourage them to be more self-conscious about the citations used in their own research. One senior IR scholar, well known for his mentoring of women in IR, told us that he was astonished when an editor noted the disparity in gender representation in a paper that he had submitted for publication. Most scholars seem simply unaware that they under-represent women in their bibliographies.

The second is to encourage faculty members to be more self-conscious and careful about how they construct the reading lists on their syllabi. Some of the gender bias in citation patterns may be the result of the map of the field imparted to scholars in graduate seminars. For example, if the research assigned on syllabi is mostly produced by men, then a significant gender gap is likely bequeathed to the next generation of scholars.

The challenge is to make it easy for scholars to identify and then cite high-quality, substantively relevant female scholarship. Search tools such as Google Scholar and Web of Science are helpful, but they are only useful insofar as we are able to pick the correct set of keywords. In addition, scholars have to wade through search results filled with work that they are already aware of. Finally, since citation analysis is an integral part of both these services, search results are affected to some degree by the very biases we are hoping to address!

This suggests room for a new research discovery tool. We call it the “TRIP Research Analysis and Discovery System” (RADS) and it is under active development. RADS is a Web service that takes as input a list of citations from the user. This might be some portion of a works cited list or a syllabus. RADS analyzes this input and then returns a list of articles that cover similar substantive issues or topics, use a similar research design or methodology, adopt similar epistemologies or employ similar paradigmatic assumptions. This list can be filtered or sorted in a variety of ways, including the gender of the author. RADS relies on the [TRIP project's Journal Article Database](#), which now includes approximately 5,700 articles published in 12 top journals between 1980 and 2012. These articles are coded on over two dozen dimensions including methodology, paradigm, substantive focus and epistemology (see a complete list [here](#)). TRIP's database is by no means the universe of IR literature, but it is large and diverse subset of the field on which we can build a proof of concept.

This tool accomplishes two things. First, it gives scholars a valuable research aide by searching for articles that are similar on a number of pre-coded dimensions. Second, it could help decrease the gender gap in citations by allowing scholars to find substantively relevant work written by women to which they otherwise may not have been exposed.

RADS is not ready for public use. However, we do need volunteers to test this tool with real and diverse projects and to offer suggestions on how to make this tool more useful. If you would like more information about this project or want to get involved in testing, please [sign up here](#).

Why it matters that more women present at conferences

Sara McLaughlin Mitchell, 10/02/13

Link: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2013/10/02/why-it-matters-that-more-women-present-at-conferences/>

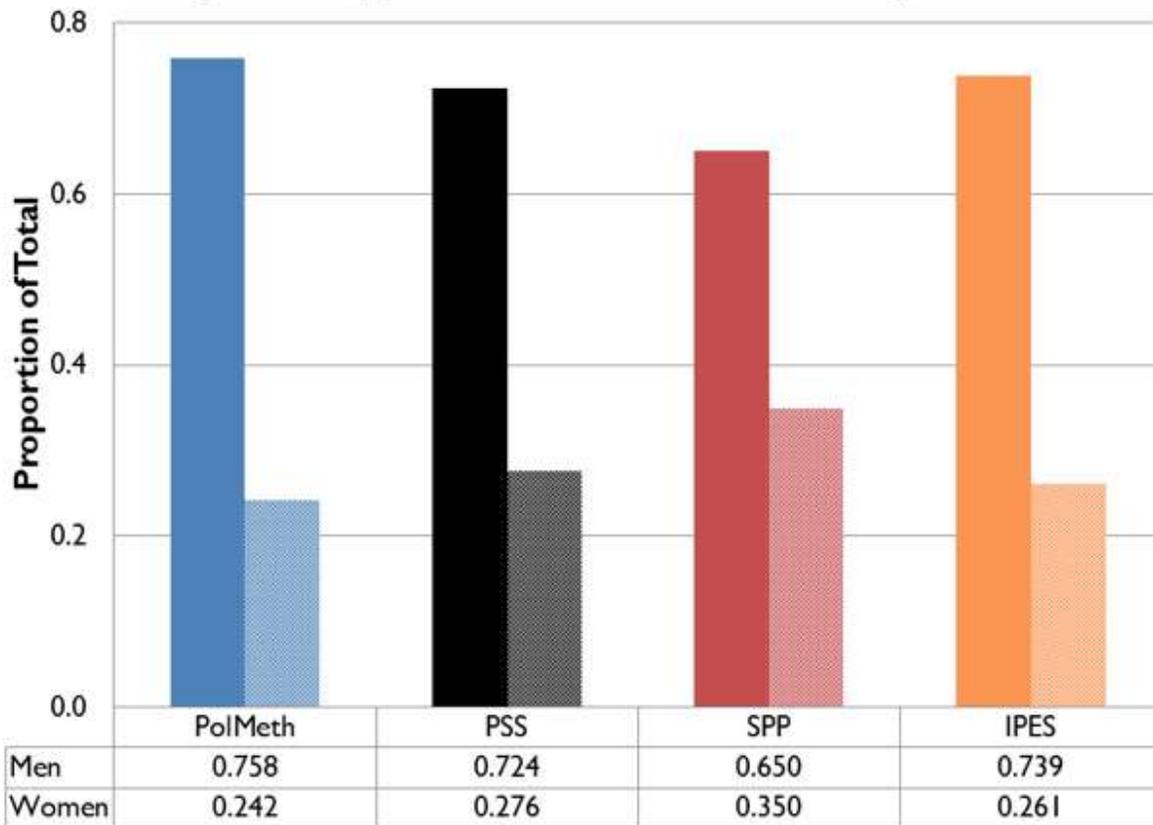
For our fourth installment in the [gender gap symposium](#) (see [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) for the first three) I am delighted to introduce [Sara McLaughlin Mitchell](#). Sara is professor and department chair at the University of Iowa. She [researches](#) international cooperation and conflict. She is a long time organizer of the [Journeys in World Politics](#) workshop, which brings together senior and junior women working in international relations. She has also [published](#) on gender differences in bargaining.

I am so pleased that the Monkey Cage is sponsoring this rich discussion of gendered citation issues in the academic profession. When I served as Chair of the Status of Women Committee for the International Studies Association (ISA), I organized a roundtable on the topic at the 2012 ISA conference. My motivation for this roundtable stemmed from my familiarity with [Marianne Ferber](#)'s work on gender, citations and networking. As a labor economist, her first [study](#) in 1986 examined citations in a leading journal in her field (*Journal of Economic Literature*); she found that scholars were more likely to cite the research of other scholars who shared their biological sex.

Ferber's 1988 [study](#) expanded her data to include articles published in U.S. and Canadian journals in economics, mathematics, psychology and sociology. The expanded dataset confirmed her original findings that male scholars were more likely to cite the research of other male scholars than to cite work by female scholars. She also found important differences across disciplines; the gender citation gap was smallest in disciplines with few female scholars (mathematics) or in disciplines with a critical mass of female scholars (psychology). Gendered gaps in citation patterns emerge in disciplines where women scholars constitute a sizable minority. This is certainly relevant for political science, a field where 28 percent of faculty positions in the U.S. are held by women, despite 45 percent of bachelor's degrees and 40 percent of doctoral degrees held by females (what is called the "[leaky pipeline](#)").

Samantha Lange, Holly Brus and I replicated Ferber's research design by focusing on publications in two political science journals: *International Studies Quarterly* ([ISQ](#)) and *International Studies Perspectives* ([ISP](#)). Ferber's design was innovative because she paired the biological sex of the author(s) of a journal article with the biological sex of the authors of each article or book in the article's bibliography. This design allows us to capture the process of individual authors' decisions about who to cite, or the dynamics of "who is citing whom". Analyzing all articles published in *ISQ* and *ISP* in 2005, my coauthors and I [find](#) that male authors are three times more likely to cite the work of other men than to cite articles authored by women (see also the findings of [Maliniak, Powers, and Walter](#)). Working with women coauthors does not improve this situation because when women coauthor with men, their articles adopt citation practices that are similar to all male authored teams.

Figure 1: Appearances at Conferences by Sex

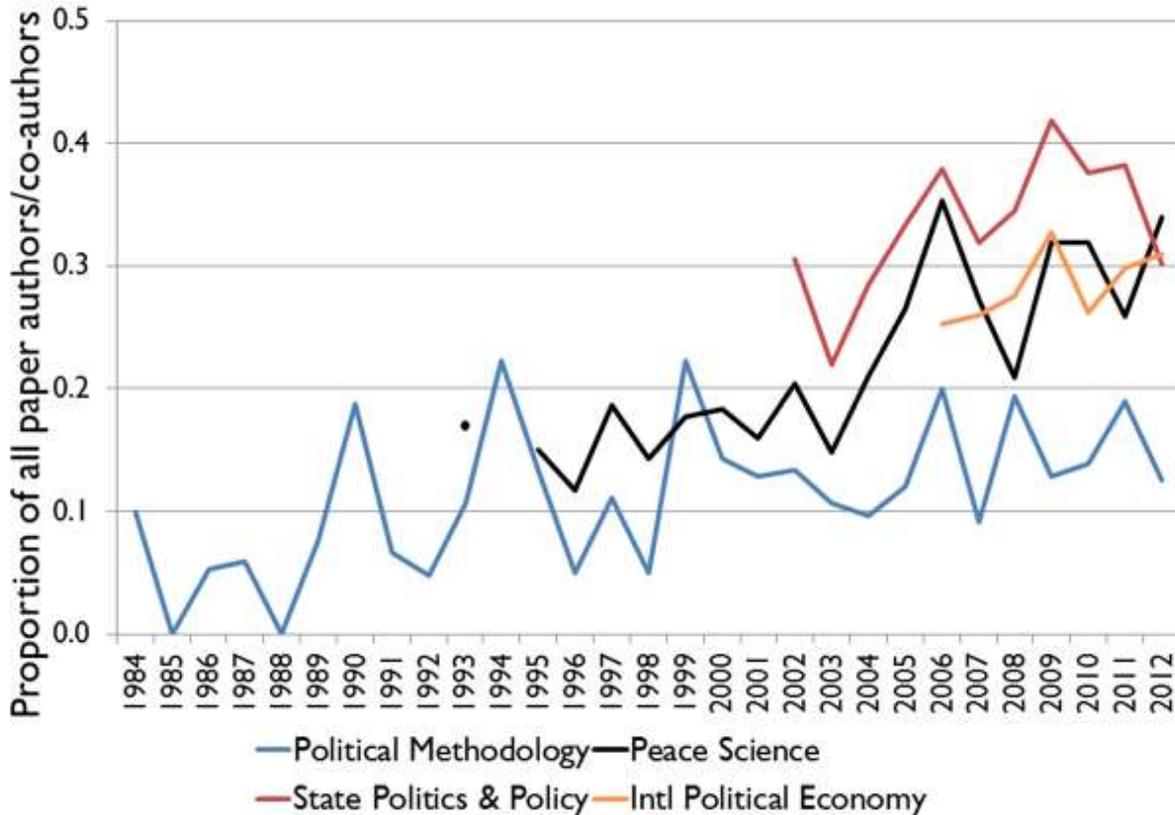


Graph by Sara Mitchell.

While women constitute 28 percent of faculty in political science, there is considerable variation in female participation rates across different areas of the discipline. Within the International Studies Association, an organization with 40 percent female members, the percentage of women who belong to ISA's 33 organized sections ranges from 20 percent to 97 percent. [Michelle Dion](#) and I explored this variance further by comparing four smaller organizations within political science: the Society for Political Methodology ([Polmeth](#)), the Peace Science Society ([PSS](#)), the State Politics and Policy ([SPP](#)) group, and the International Political Economy Society ([IPES](#)). The figure above shows gender differences in paper or poster presentations at the organizations' annual conferences, revealing an 11 percent gender gap across these groups. The State Politics and Policy emphasis on substantive issues in American politics attracts a higher percentage of female presenters than conferences focused on methodological issues in the field ([Polmeth](#)).

There is also temporal variation for women's participation in these four organizations (see figure below). Some organizations like Peace Science have more than doubled the number of female participants over the past two decades, while other organizations' female participation rates are static. Michelle and I found that the number of women participating in the organizations was related to citation patterns in these research areas. Examining journals sponsored by two of these organizations (Polmeth: [Political Analysis](#); PSS: [Conflict Management and Peace Science, Journal of Conflict Resolution](#)), we continued to find evidence for a gender gap in citations, with male authors much more likely to cite the work of male scholars compared with their female peers.

Female Paper Authors over Time by Conference



Graph by Sara Mitchell

However, we also found that the total number of citations to work by women was higher as a proportion of the total citations for journals associated with the Peace Science Society (6 percent) compared with the Political Methodology journal (2.9 percent). Where women's work is visible in smaller academic groups, this translates into a higher frequency of citations to work by female scholars. One thing we must consider in developing strategies for improving the gender gap in citations is to improve the *descriptive representation* of women in various disciplines and sub-disciplinary areas. When women have ample opportunities to present their work at conferences and when women achieve milestones within the organizations (e.g. career awards, the presidency, being featured speakers), this raises the community's awareness about women's research.

There are many potential causes of the gendered citation gap including [implicit biases](#), gendered networking [patterns](#), and the [lack of self-citation](#) by female scholars. Another cause that I have described here is the overall representation of women in an academic field. When women constitute a critical mass of scholars in a field, the gender gap in citations diminishes. The loss of women scholars at multiple stages of the pipeline needs to be understood and addressed. We need to collect panel data on scholars as they move through their academic careers. While aggregate data reveal a problem with the retention of women in political science and other fields, we do not understand the motives behind individual decisions for exit. These decisions have important consequences for the sociological underpinnings of our discipline. While we have made [considerable progress](#), we need to continue to "lean in" and "push back" to address the citation gender gap and other gender issues in academia.

Student evaluations of teaching are probably biased. Does it matter?

Lisa Martin, 10/02/13

Link: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2013/10/02/student-evaluations-of-teaching-are-probably-biased-does-it-matter/>

For our fifth installment in the [gender gap symposium](#) (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) for the first four) I am delighted to introduce [Lisa Martin](#), a professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She has produced [some of the most widely cited](#) articles and books on international cooperation. She is also a former editor of the journal [International Organization](#), the premier academic journal in international relations.

At the end of each semester, most professors gingerly open the e-mail that contains the results of student evaluations of their teaching. Some cringe more than others when doing this. (Okay, and some have completely stopped looking.) Female faculty often express worry about these evaluations, thinking that they may face bias: Are they perceived as not funny enough, or does their voice not project sufficient authority? Do students focus more on women's appearance than on men's?

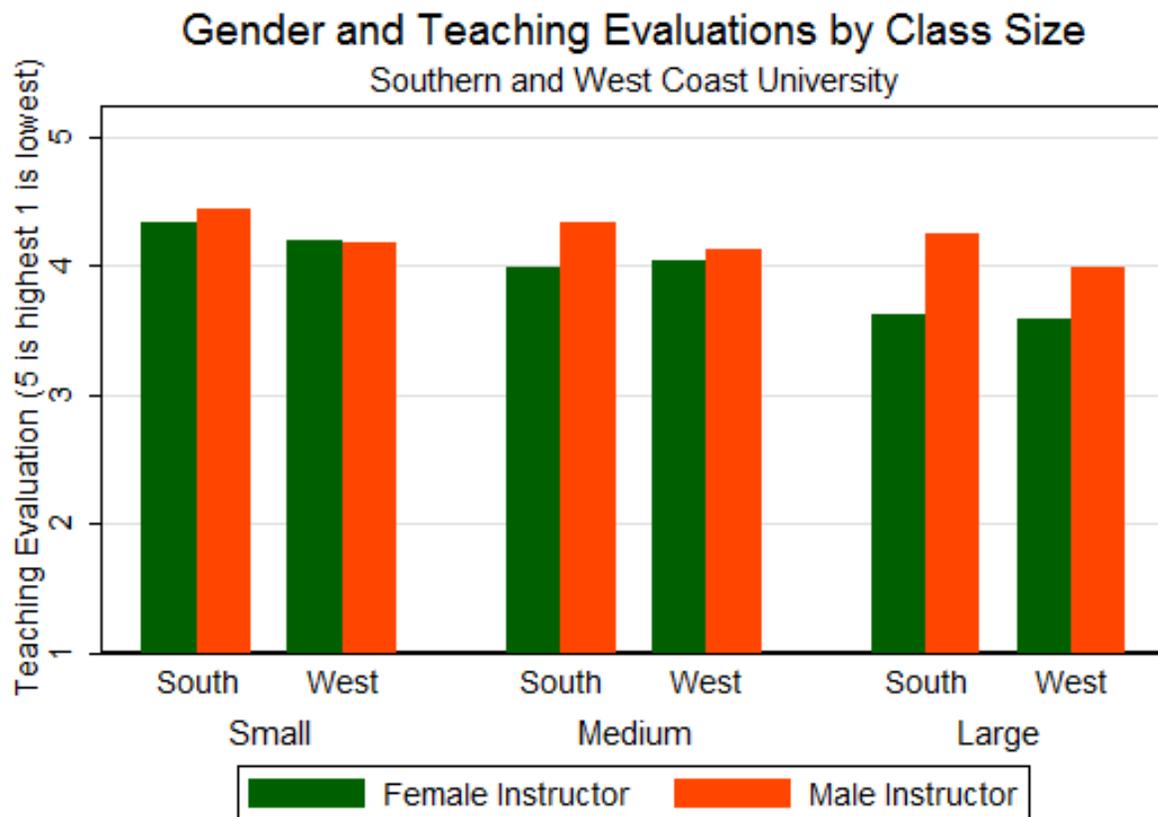
The evidence on these questions is mixed. Some studies have shown that women do, on average, receive lower scores on student evaluations of teaching (SETs); others have argued that the effects are small and inconsistent. Based on accumulating evidence in the psychology literature on implicit associations and role congruity, I propose that bias does exist, but that it is conditional: Students see women as effective teachers in more intimate settings such as seminars, but women teaching larger classes face barriers to receiving high ratings.

The idea behind role congruity theory is that individuals enter social interactions with implicit assumptions about the roles that individuals play. Gender roles feature prominently in this literature, with men implicitly associated with the "agentic" type: assertive, ambitious and authoritative. People tend to implicitly associate women with the non-agentic type, assuming they are passive, nurturing and sensitive. Role incongruity occurs when a man or woman acts in a way that is contrary to type. A situation that demands that a woman be agentic, for example teaching a large lecture class, will cause role incongruity and lead to negative reactions from students.

Substantial experimental work supports the insights of role congruity theory and its applicability to the classroom. [For example](#), students who view stick figures delivering identical lectures rate a figure labeled as a young male as more expressive than figures labeled as older or female. Experiments in classrooms [demonstrate](#) that women instructors who receive the highest ratings are perceived as both sensitive and agentic; men only need to be perceived as agentic to receive high scores. These role expectations set up a dilemma in the stereotypical "sage-on-a-stage" model of teaching. How to be both strong and sensitive in such a setting?

The logic of role congruity has a testable empirical implication. Female instructors may face no bias in small classes where individual interaction with students is the norm, but they are likely to be at a disadvantage in larger classes. Thus, if we look at SET data, we should expect to find an interaction effect between gender and course size, showing that male faculty receive higher scores in large courses than do female faculty. Testing this hypothesis is a bit tricky, since most universities now keep SET data behind a firewall. However, I have found publicly available SET data from two large public universities, one in the South and the other on the

West Coast. I examined data from the political science departments at these universities. (I presented [a paper](#) on this topic at the 2013 American Political Science Association annual meeting.)



As the results in the figure show, the expected interaction effect between instructor gender and course size does obtain. The substantive size of the effect is larger in the Southern university (although those data cover only three semesters and the results are not statistically significant). The Western university exhibits a slightly smaller substantive effect, but it is statistically significant and still noteworthy. SETs are identical in seminar-size courses for men and women. In a moderately-sized lecture course of 100 students, a gap of about a 10th of a point (on a 5-point scale) emerges. For the biggest classes of about 400 students, a gap of 0.4 points appears. For the Southern university, with smaller class sizes, a gap of 0.6 points appears in a 200-student class.

Do these gaps matter? I think so. The negative feedback that women often receive when they offer large lecture courses creates a self-fulfilling cycle, in which women self-select into teaching smaller classes; those responsible for course coordination tend to favor men to teach larger classes; and students lean toward taking large courses that are taught by men. In the two political science departments I have studied, women do on average teach smaller courses than men. These patterns, in turn, mean that women are more often passed over for the rewards that accrue to celebrity teachers – teaching awards (which sometimes have substantial cash attached to them), opportunities to teach MOOCs and even sometimes promotion to leadership roles within departments and universities.

To get a preliminary sense of the degree to which SETs matter for professional advancement, over the summer of 2013 I conducted an informal online survey of political science professors and obtained about 125 responses. The survey (nonrandom as it may be) revealed the tremendous variety of institutional practice out there. Sometimes teaching evaluations matter only at the margins. At other times they carry substantial

weight in decisions about promotion, tenure and compensation, even accounting for as much as 40 percent of the formula for determining annual raises, according to some responses.

So, the evidence so far suggests that using SETs to evaluate teaching effectiveness works against women faculty in large courses, and that this bias has implications for professional advancement of female faculty. Far from being a phenomenon that is fading away, I would argue that it is more likely that the race to distance learning and MOOCs, with their celebrity teachers and lack of personal interaction, is exacerbating the dilemma facing female instructors.

The gender gap from the gatekeeper's perspective

Rick Wilson, 10/03/13

Link: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2013/10/03/the-gender-gap-from-the-gatekeepers-perspective/>

Today is Editor's day in the Monkey Cage [gender gap symposium](#) (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) for earlier contributions). We are exceptionally fortunate to have contributions by the editors of the two most prestigious political science journals.

Later today, we will hear from [Marijke Breuning](#), co-editor of the [American Political Science Review](#). First up is [Rick Wilson](#), editor of the [American Journal of Political Science](#). Rick is a professor of political science at Rice University. He [has published extensively](#) on political history and the design of political institutions and, more recently, the evolutionary, biological, and neurological foundations of human behavior. He has also written about broader issues affecting the discipline, such as the ["war on social science"](#) (see also [here](#) for his contribution in *Science*).

The issues raised in this symposium are real and have enormous implications not only for the pipeline of women into the social sciences, but also for retaining women in the academy. While the models and techniques used by men and women for understanding social phenomena are the same, the inspirations, insights and questions are often quite different. Excluding any group from the scientific community only decreases the quality and reach of our science.

Much of the symposium starts from the perspective that there are differences in the citation rates between males and females. As a gate keeper (the editor of a journal) I worry that I may be a partial source of this difference. After all, I control the content of the research that appears in the [American Journal of Political Science](#), so am I contributing to the problem? No doubt. As [several](#) in this symposium note, I am loaded with implicit biases that may have an impact on my judgment. I see a huge amount of high quality research. I never have enough space to publish everything, so I have to make choices at the margin. What can I do to avoid acting on my biases?

Let me begin with a closely guarded secret. Editors are fallible. (Okay, maybe this is not a secret – rejected authors constantly point to my fallibility.) Editors may not think very hard about diversity when putting together their editorial board. They may think a little harder about who is appointed as an associate editor. But associate editors and editorial boards send a very strong signal about who is welcome to publish in the journal. They also send a signal about the editor's commitment to how manuscripts will be reviewed. When I thought about my associate editors I was interested in people who I could call on to help me with difficult decisions and I was concerned with ensuring diversity.

I ended up with a wonderful set of seven associate editors (three female and one Hispanic male). I asked them to recommend editorial board members and I instructed them to pay attention to ensuring broad representation. At the same time, concerned by the fact that senior scholars are disproportionately male (and white), I asked them to recommend junior faculty to serve on the editorial board. This they did (and it is easy to see how the journals stack up thanks to a great article by [Stegmaier et al. \(2011\)](#)).

I have discovered that diversity does more than signal a journal's willingness to publish a broad set of authors. I am fortunate in that I have very strong female Associate Editors and Editorial Board members and they are not shy about reminding me to keep my eye out for inadvertent biases. This puts pressure on me to think carefully about my decisions.

What else can be asked of Editors? First, it is non-controversial to report the percentage of female and male authored publications. This could easily be presented in our annual reports. I have not done so and to atone for that I provide some frequencies here. A study by [Breuning and Sanders \(2007\)](#) during the period 1999-2004 reported that 17.7 percent of the articles published in AJPS had a woman as the lead author. I thought I had done better, but under my tenure, which covers 2010-2013 only 19.8 percent of the published manuscripts have a woman as a first author.

However, 24.6 percent of the published articles have a woman as a co-author and women or a team of women solely authors another 10.2 percent. This means that 34.8 percent of the articles have female authors or co-authors.

The real question for me is whether these percentages are bad news or terrible news. I am now looking at all manuscripts that have been sent to me. I want to know whether I am rejecting female authors at higher rates than male authors. This is hard to do because these data are not collected by the electronic system that I am forced to use. I am currently collecting these data and I can press the next editor to make certain the system can collect these data.

What else can editors do? [B. F. Walter](#) argues for anonymity in the citation process by eschewing the use of first names and using only initials. This is a tempting idea and it may be something that can easily be implemented. But I would push Editors further. They should use anonymity in the first stage of the editorial process. I often (but not always) read new manuscripts without paying attention to the author or affiliation. The first reading is often anonymous to me. I want to read the work and then decide whether I will desk reject the manuscript (send it back to the author without review) or whether it will go out to review. This is a crucial decision, since I desk reject about 30 percent of all manuscripts. At this stage I think it is important to deliberately blind myself to the author(s).

Finally, I have some advice that is aimed at women. To female reviewers (who are overworked) please say no if you really do not have the time to review a manuscript. Believe me, your male counterparts are doing so. But, if you say no, send me the names of two or three well-qualified reviewers. I will not advise that you only send me the names of female reviewers, but I certainly would not object if you did. I want to know the most qualified people in the field, especially junior people who might be under my radar.

To female authors who have been asked to revise and resubmit your manuscript: keep two things in mind. First, if you find that the editor is unclear about what is expected of you, then ask the editor. I grant very few revisions and I have a vested interest in getting you to revise the manuscript so that it will be successful. E-mail me or call me. Your male counterparts are not shy about asking.

Second, if the revision is going to take more time than you anticipated, ask for an extension. I would much rather have a well crafted piece of science than something that was hurried because of a deadline. It may be that you need additional time because you need to collect additional data, because of health issues or child care duties. The reason is not important. I want you to show me your best effort. Again, your male counterparts are not shy about seeking extensions.

I conclude by noting that editors are as busy, overworked and harried as any academic. But being busy, overworked and harried often means falling back on rules of thumb. If those rules of thumb admit implicit biases, then we should be held accountable. Keep up the pressure on editors.

Editors and the gender gap

By Marijke Breuning, 10/3/13

This is the second post from the perspective of a journal editor in our in the Monkey Cage [gender gap symposium](#) (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) for earlier posts). You can find the contribution by Rick Wilson of the American Journal of Political Science [here](#).

Marijke Breuning is [editor](#) of the [American Political Science Review](#), the flagship journal of the American Political Science Association. She is a professor of political science at the University of North Texas. She has [published extensively](#) on foreign policy analysis, foreign aid, but also issues of gender equality- including gender equality in the political science profession. Wiley and Cambridge University Press have kindly agreed to ungate the articles linked to in this post that appeared in [International Studies Perspectives](#) and [Perspectives on Politics](#).

What can journal editors do to foster greater gender equity in academic publishing and the citation of published work? These are important questions.

Editors sit at a crucial juncture in the publishing process and are still [most often male](#). This matters because, as Jane Mansbridge so eloquently explained in her contribution to this gender gap symposium, structural and preconscious biases influence the evaluation of female and male colleagues, and of the scholarship they produce. Although it is clearly possible that editors' decisions are influenced by preconscious biases, the data to substantiate this are rather scarce. [A paper](#) forthcoming in International Studies Perspectives provides a unique glimpse into the issue: On the basis of data that track papers from submission to decision at the Journal of Peace Research, the authors conclude that there is not a statistically significant difference in the likelihood that papers authored by women or men are accepted.

Few analyses of journal content have had access to such data. As a result, it is difficult to know whether the findings for the Journal of Peace Research are representative. Most analyses are based on an examination of the authorship of published articles. [Such studies](#) have generally found that the proportion of articles published by women lags behind the proportion of women in political science. And the gap between women's presence in the discipline and in its journals is not evenly distributed among the various publications: [the gap](#) has been bigger in three most prestigious journals, the American Political Science Review, the American Journal of Political Science and the Journal of Politics. It is not clear why this is so, but it is evident that all journals — but especially the most prestigious ones — must be careful to ensure that the process of evaluation is conducted as fairly and equitably as possible.

The current editorial team of the American Political Science Review, of which I am a member, takes that responsibility quite seriously. This means we endeavor to make sure that all papers are evaluated by panels of reviewers with expertise in the area of inquiry and the methods employed, and that we ask women to participate in the review process in a systematic and deliberate manner. Although it is unclear whether the presence of women as reviewers influences the outcome of the review process in any specific way, we believe that it is important that women have a voice in the review process. It is also our hope that, as more women are asked to review, that they will consider submitting their own work (if they have not previously done so).

The editorial team's own diversity places us in a unique position to entice women and others who may have considered the Review to be "not for them," to submit their work. After all, a greater diversity of submission is a prerequisite to a greater diversity of the journal's content. One year into our term as editors, we were encouraged to find that the first author of 24 percent of original submissions was a woman. Although this still falls short of the proportion of APSA members who are women (32 percent), it is far better than the 17.7

percent of female first authors reported in [Breuning and Sanders](#). And we hope that we can continue to entice more female political scientists to submit their work.

Gender is not the only element of diversity that matters, however. The Review, like most of the prestigious journals in political science, publishes primarily work by authors affiliated with research universities. Given the enormous pressure to publish at such institutions, that bias is not likely to be eliminated. That said, we want to stress that we welcome pathbreaking work from all scholars, irrespective of affiliation. [This matters for women](#), who are somewhat less likely to be employed at research universities.

To underscore our search for greater diversity of scholars and scholarship represented in the Review, we'd like to close by paraphrasing a great line from the movie *Ratatouille*: "Not every scholar can write a great article, but a great article can be produced by a scholar from anywhere." What we call the "Ratatouille Principle" nicely captures our philosophy: We look to publish scholarly work that is of exceptional merit and focuses on important issues, irrespective of who the author is, from where she or he hails, or makes her or his institutional home.

Why is work by women systematically devalued?

By Brett Ashley Leeds, 10/4/2013

On the final day of the Monkey Cage [gender gap symposium](#) (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) for earlier posts) we offer broader reflections from three distinguished scholars. Later today, you will see posts by [David Lake](#) and [Beth Simmons](#). First up is [Brett Ashley Leeds](#), a professor at Rice University [who has published widely](#) on issues of international security, especially alliances. She was the recipient of [the Karl Deutsch award](#), which is awarded to the scholar under the age of 40 who is adjudged to have made the most significant contribution to the study of international relations.

The [finding](#) that international relations articles written by women receive fewer citations than those written by men is surprising and disturbing to many in political science. Unfortunately, however, this evidence is consistent with a broader body of studies that reveal a tendency for both women and men to value work by men more than work by women. Both men and women hold subconscious biases that affect their impressions and may influence their subsequent behavior. While it is almost impossible to rid ourselves of ingrained subconscious biases, we can become more self-aware and take steps to limit the influence of these biases on our behavior.

Two recent studies provide experimental evidence commensurate with this phenomenon. In one [study](#), scientists were asked to rate resumes and suggest starting salaries for students applying for a lab job. The researchers found that job candidates with traditionally female names were rated less qualified and offered a lower average salary, despite the fact that all other information was identical. In another [study](#), communications graduate students were asked to rate conference abstracts for scientific quality. The same abstracts with traditionally female author names were rated less well, especially in subject areas considered traditionally male, including politics. In both studies, male and female evaluators were equally likely to devalue the work of women.

Why would this be? Perhaps some people believe that women inherently produce less valuable scholarship than men, but I don't think most of us subscribe to that belief. Most of us assert that similarly qualified men and women should be paid the same and that research should be equally valued regardless of the authors' gender. And yet, experiments reveal that our behavior does not conform to those beliefs.

Societal messages inundate us with information that create subconscious biases favoring the intellectual contributions of men. This was brought home to me recently by my four year old son. On the way to school, my son asked me the meaning of the street names in our neighborhood—Swift, Dryden, then Shakespeare. My explanation prompted my son to ask, "Are any famous authors girls?" I had never noticed that the streets in my neighborhood honor the work of many men and no women. These street names provide information to my son (and my daughter) that works worthy of commemoration are produced by men. Even if my husband and I and many others in their lives tell and show them repeatedly that women produce works just as valuable as those produced by men, from the photos that adorn the hallways of their institutions to the honorary names of streets and [awards](#), they will receive messages that are likely to produce a subconscious bias.

Current political scientists came of age in eras that were more likely to inculcate biases valuing work by men than my children will. Even the most aware and vigilant among us will find it very difficult to rid ourselves of such biases, and changing the culture will take a very long time and significant active effort. So what do we do in the meantime?

The key is to recognize our biases and to take responsibility for checking our behavior. We must review our syllabi, our manuscripts, our conference panel proposals, our job candidate short lists, and our other gatekeeping activities with attention to the inclusion of women. We must ask ourselves why an article by a man is more important for our graduate students to read than an article on the same topic by a woman, and why an article by a man is a more germane citation for a particular point than an article on the same topic by a woman. Sometimes we will conclude that the male-authored article best matches our goals. Sometimes, however, we may not be able to provide a logical explanation favoring the male-authored article. Other times, we might find that a female-authored article we hadn't paid attention to before is actually more appropriate. In the latter two cases, some of us will consider making a change.

This process requires active effort to learn about works we may have previously ignored, perhaps with little conscious thought. We need to slow down to minimize the impact of our subconscious biases on our actions. Here are some concrete tips: Think explicitly about the criteria you are trying to satisfy with a citation or syllabus entry and "defend" your choice based on those criteria in your mind. Search costs are lower than they have ever been. Use Google Scholar or other search engines to jog your memory or to introduce yourself to possible, potentially better alternatives to the first citation that comes to mind. Once you have identified the criteria you wish to fulfill, searching becomes easier. Take the time, as some of our colleagues have (link to Lake post), to examine your own past behavior. Look at work you have published and syllabi for courses you have taught. Are you comfortable with the gender balance of your past practices? What might you have done differently? Reflecting on bias in one's own past behavior is helpful in overcoming it in the future.

I want to be very clear that my recommendations apply to both men and women. Women, too, have been raised in a culture that systematically devalues contributions by women and thus suffer from the same subconscious biases. I recently took an [implicit association test](#) and learned that I have a stronger association of males with career and with science than I do females. Good intentions alone are not a sufficient solution for dealing with the subconscious. We can't change our history, and we shouldn't blame ourselves for cultural structures we can't fully control. What we can do is be very aware of our biases and their effects, collect data individually on our own behavior and collectively in the discipline on the aggregate effects of that behavior, and change our actions where appropriate.

Gender bias in professional networks and citations

By David Lake, 10/04/13

On the final day of the Monkey Cage [gender gap symposium](#) (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#) for earlier posts) we offer broader reflections from three distinguished scholars. Earlier Friday, Ashley Leeds [wrote](#) about the ways work by women is systematically devalued. Later today, you will hear from [Beth Simmons](#).

It is my pleasure to introduce [David Lake](#), the Jerri-Ann and Gary E. Jacobs Professor of Social Sciences, Distinguished Professor of Political Science, Associate Dean of Social Sciences, and Director of the Yankelovich Center for Social Science Research at the University of California, San Diego. David has published nearly 100 scholarly [articles and chapters](#), three [books](#), and 10 edited volumes on international relations theory and international political economy. He was a co-editor of the journal *International Organization*, the president of the International Studies Association, and was elected into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

The [gender gap in citations](#) in international relations identified by Daniel Maliniak, Ryan M. Powers, and Barbara F. Walter is real and, frankly, puzzling on at least two levels. Let me try to illustrate the problem, and speculate on the cause, mostly via anecdote and with a few references to the available literature on academic networking. This is hardly a scientific response but will, I hope, engage the issues raised by this important article and, perhaps, stimulate further debate.

I know the citations gap is real from personal experience. I was recently called out by a reviewer for a submission of mine to a major international journal. Quite correctly and appropriately, the reviewer pointed out that of the first authors in my extensive reference list, only about 10 percent were women. In revisions, I consciously tried to increase this percentage – and here is the first level of the puzzle – it was hard. Frankly, it took effort and required me to reach beyond the works I would normally cite. I am still not sure why this exercise was quite so difficult, but it was not simply a matter of replacing article A by a man with article B by a woman. Citations are not easily substitutable. I had to broaden the literatures cited in the article to have a significant effect. Expanding the range of citations made the paper significantly better, engaged more communities, and strengthened the argument, but in the end I still did not cite women in proportion to their numbers in the discipline. [Dan Nexon](#) apparently had the same problem in his self-experiment in citations, but that is small comfort. Reflecting on this one instance, I now realize that I have likely been guilty of citation bias for many years in many publications. I am not proud of this fact. Prior to reading Maliniak et al., however, it had never dawned on me to check the gender-distribution of my citations. One benefit of the paper will be to make us all more sensitive to gender balance – but I doubt the problem will be entirely self-correcting.

Maliniak et al.'s article is puzzling at a deeper level, however, for they do not explain the citation gap, only document its existence and dismiss some obvious hypotheses. My first reaction to reading their paper was that the bias might be driven by a few “canonical” cites that we use routinely to denote entire literatures — like Waltz 1979 or Keohane 1984, references that need no additional commentary to the professionally initiated. But Maliniak et al. demonstrate that the result still holds when “outliers” (or works that are very highly cited) are removed.

Another possible explanation is the content of graduate syllabi. What we read in graduate school is what we cite later in our own published research. There is likely something to this explanation, as even a cursory review of syllabi at different institutions will suggest. But it does not appear to account for why men are more likely to cite other men. Although there may be some self-selection into different graduate programs, presumably men and women are reading much of the same material in their core courses. The most depressing possible explanation is that scholars systematically devalue the work of female scholars, as

discussed by Ashley Leeds in [her post](#). Although we do not have evidence on this tendency from international relations, [experiments in cognate disciplines](#) suggest this alternative cannot be dismissed.

Another possibility that I think may be important is that gendered personal networks in the political science profession lead to or at least reinforce gendered citation patterns. It is difficult to read everything these days; the number of articles and books being published is far beyond the ability of anyone to digest — or at least beyond my limited ability to do so. Speaking only for myself here, but in ways to which others may relate, I tend to read things from people I know or at least from scholars to whom I have been personally introduced. Unless it is exactly on the topic on which I am currently working, papers from scholars I have never met — however eminent they may be — often don't get read. For a book or article to get onto one of my reference lists, I've usually had to absorb the work in some deep way — and this takes time. Personal connections lead to deeper readings, which lead to more citations and, likely, more personal connections.

In turn, [academic networks are highly gendered](#), also for reasons that are somewhat difficult to explain. At the 2013 American Political Science Association meetings, for instance, I was on three panels: one, organized by a white male, was composed exclusively of white males; a second, put together by the white male section organizer, was also composed entirely of white males; and the third was organized by a woman and was approximately equal in its gender composition — a point I noted in my remarks at the panel. The net result of these three panels was that the papers I read and discussed at the conference — and would normally tend to cite in future papers of my own — were disproportionately by white males.

Having recently [blogged elsewhere](#) about conference networking and gender differences in this practice, I reached out to several younger female scholars prior to the conference and was, in turn, contacted by several other younger female researchers, so my conference interactions were not nearly as gender-segregated as my panel participations might otherwise suggest. But the panels on which I participated do highlight a larger problem. Gendered professional networks produce gender-segregated panels, which in turn reinforce gendered networks.

Cross-gender interactions at professional meetings, which then produce networks of scholars communicating outside these meetings, are admittedly sometimes tense. All professional networking is difficult, of course. On average, academics have terrible social skills. But let's be honest, sex and status can make professional relationships more difficult. Women and men, young and mature, interact in a wide variety of social settings, many of which are unequal in their perceived power and status relations.

As [research](#) shows, norms sustained in this wider variety of relations can sometimes “leak” into professional relationships. Unfortunately, senior male scholars contacting younger female scholars, or younger female scholars approaching older male scholars, carry cultural baggage that same sex professional relationships do not. Males mentoring women can be perceived as “fathering” or, worse, patronizing their younger colleagues. Women reaching out to men can be equally misperceived by the individuals involved. [Evidence](#) suggests that women want to establish mentoring relationships more than men, but are constrained by fears that their advances may be interpreted as sexual. I do not mean to imply that all cross-gender interactions necessarily risk misperception, or that sexual tension pervades professional contacts, but our cultural baggage can, at the margin, inhibit men and women from establishing meaningful professional relationships.

Perhaps even more insidiously, men and women may fear opening contact from concern that others will inappropriately impose cultural and social stereotypes on their relationships — even if they are entirely professional. The job placement blogs were, until this line of discussion was shut down by the moderators, full of innuendo that female job candidates were getting more interviews for reasons completely unrelated to the quality of their work. Cloaked in anonymity, such misogynist remarks reflect attitudes still held by at least some of members of the profession. In discussing cross-gender networking with several female colleagues, nearly everyone has reported being the subject of malicious gossip about their professional relations at one time or another. Concerned that relationships may be misinterpreted by the small-minded among us, men and especially women are once again inhibited from establishing otherwise beneficial professional relationships.

For both reasons internal to the participants and fears generated by the reactions of others, professional interactions at conferences are again, at least at the margin, biased toward same-sex engagements that then mature into professional networks that are same-sex dominated. Even if the probability of forming professional relationships is biased only slightly toward male-male or female-female pairings, the cumulative effect will produce segregated professional networks. Much like [Thomas Schelling's original housing segregation models](#), this homophily does not require or imply any active prejudice or hostility, just a slightly higher probability of two men or two women establishing a professional relationship than a man and a woman — replicated many times over.

If gender-biased networks then influence what we read and what we cite, as suggested above, they will create or at least reinforce gendered citation patterns. There may, of course, be many determinants of the citation bias demonstrated by Maliniak et al., but professional networking is likely to be a significant contributing factor and – and I emphasize the conditional here – could be a sufficient explanation.

Women still confront many professional hurdles created by broader social norms. As someone who has trained many female graduate students, many of whom have gone on to successful careers and with whom I maintain long-standing professional relationships, I know how hard it can be to navigate treacherous waters or, to mix metaphors, to strike the right note of compassion and authority. Unfortunately, these hurdles isolate women within gender-segregated networks and likely produce fewer readers and fewer citations of their research — for reasons entirely independent of quality.

Some readers may have already concluded that I am perhaps blind to the extent of sexism in academia. I recognize that some colleagues are, to put it bluntly, pigs — and others may even seek out mentoring relationships with nefarious intent. I also acknowledge, regrettably, that even colleagues who themselves would never act inappropriately nonetheless feel free to cast aspersions about the motivations or actions of others. All poison the well of cross-gender professional relationships. There is little to be done about such individuals other than publicly and repeatedly scorn their attitudes and behavior. My eyes are open. But I prefer to focus here on structural reasons that work against beneficial cross-gender professional networks even among colleagues of good spirit and intent.

So, “what is to be done?” Social norms have power only to the extent they are respected and reproduced through practice. To change social norms, they need to be transgressed, de-normalized, and actively challenged. Women need to “lean in” as Sheryl Sandberg has urged, but not necessarily by taking on more professional obligations or responsibilities – for which they are already disproportionately burdened. Rather, they need to reach out to male colleagues, expect to be treated as equals, and ignore the gossip of those who may imply that professional networking across genders is somehow inappropriate.

In turn, when women feel they are not being treated professionally, they need to speak up – and we, as a profession, need to create safe spaces in which these conversations can occur. In discussing gendered interactions with female colleagues, nearly every exchange has led to a trickle and sometimes a small flood of examples of unequal treatment and often gross sexism. Write it off to my naiveté, again, but I have been surprised at the extent of the problem in academia. Women do put themselves at risk professionally in calling attention to the mistreatment to which they are subjected—and unfortunately this is likely to remain a real issue. But bottling mistreatment up and, perhaps, sharing it with only close friends hides the extent of the problem we collectively face. Some men may dislike having their behavior and attitudes examined, and some women may wish that gender issues might be less prominent than they are at the moment, but there is safety in numbers here. Seizing the opportunity provided by the Maliniak et al. paper and flushing sexism into the open for everyone reveals the problem more fully and protects individual women who may come forward with their experiences.

Men, in turn, need to lean in as well, and take the initiative in reaching out to female colleagues on the same terms and in the same way they would male colleagues. Indeed, given current imbalances in professional networks, men should make special efforts to reach out to their female colleagues. Prominent senior scholars who are often perceived as gatekeepers in the discipline have a particular obligation to reach out to women

and, conversely, to make clear that lingering misogynist attitudes will not be tolerated. Maybe someday we can develop non-gendered professional networks that lead to citations that depend, as always, on who you know, but that do not reproduce gender bias in citations.

The gender citations gap: A glass half-full perspective

By Beth Simmons, 10/04/13

Last, but certainly not least, in the Monkey Cage [gender gap symposium](#) (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) for earlier posts) is [Beth Simmons](#), the Clarence Dillon professor of International Affairs at Harvard University and director of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs. She is a former president of the International Studies Association. Simmons has published award-winning books on international political economy and, more recently, [human rights](#). She is also the author of numerous (very well cited) [articles](#) in top journals.

Over the weekend, I will put up a concluding post with links to the entire series and a pdf file with all contributions.

Bias in citations is a serious issue. Citations are the “currency” of academic stature, and even though we would all like to think it is one of the many criteria by which scholars are judged, there does seem to be evidence that citations are becoming more and more important: in comparing candidates for promotion, for special prizes and commendations, and for that coveted state: tenure.

The International Organization [article](#) by Daniel Maliniak, Ryan Powers and Barbara Walter (henceforth: MPW) is therefore really important work. And research not likely to greatly improve their job prospects in the future! After all, these are serious scholars of international relations who have taken time away from their intellectual interests to expose the possibility of biases within their own intellectual community. In fact, I would guess while this article’s citations zoom, it ironically will be one of the few citations that will not help any of these scholars’ careers in a big way. So I think those of us concerned with integrity in our profession owe them a big thanks for their work.

The MPW article instantly instilled fear and depression in the young women who heard of its findings at the APSA meeting this past September. Not very encouraging news overall, I must say. But if I might cull just a couple of positive bits from this article, I would point to two things. First: For some strange reason, there never seems to have been a “median” citations gap. The table below is drawn from MPW, and it clearly shows that the median number of citations for a female authored article has equaled or *exceeded* that of male authors for the past three decades. By the 2000s, the median citation count for a female authored article was 15 and for a male authored article it was only 13.

	1980s	1990s	2000s
Median All Male:	5	14	13
Median All Female:	6	14	15
Mean Gap	7.17	5.4	2.33

A second positive finding is that the mean citations gap, while it still seems to exist, has declined over time. The mean gap was 7.17 citations in the 1980s, 5.4 citations in the 1990s, and is down to 2.33 in the 2000s, according to the MPW data.

Of course, this doesn't mean that there is no need to pay attention to disparities between men and women when it comes to citations or to the potential for subtle barriers to true equality in the academic profession more generally. If these numbers have improved, it is because over the past decade, women, often with the help of tenacious and encouraging advisors of all genders, have worked very hard to break into the top ranks of researchers in our field. And yet if we focus on mean citations, the gap remains, is annoying and is potentially serious for careers. It seems especially serious for young careers, because apparently the gap is more serious for untenured women than for senior women. (Strangely, tenured women have, if I read the data correctly, a citations coefficient about 10 times bigger than that for tenured men. In fact, it appears that while tenured women have strong positive "authority" coefficients, these are strongly negative for tenured men. Maybe there is a strong selection effect; women who manage to jump the hurdle and get tenured do very well. Or maybe we should be asking, what is it that guys *do* after tenure?) The whole gap issue is doubly troublesome, because many of the "obvious" explanations for lower citations – subject matter, methodology used and theoretical orientation – don't seem to make the mean gap go away.

The blogs have raised the issue – what about controlling for "citability"? Are women unduly under-cited when controlling for the quality of the work? It is an awkward question, to say the least, but an important one. I suppose we will never convince the skeptics that there may be something objectionable to the citations gap, unless and until someone comes up with a study analogous to one of those cool experiments that shows the exact same resume gets much more attention from employers if it has a male name attached rather than a female name. Until someone figures out how to do that with academic citations, MPW's research findings are the state of the art and serious food for thought.

Let's think a little further on this quality issue. Is it plausible that a simple "sex" indicator is picking up quality differences in research? I am going to go out on a limb and say, maybe. But before I'm met with gasps of indignation, let's consider what this means. If we want to say it does have something to do with quality, then the good news is that the quality of women's research has increased noticeably over the past three decades. This wouldn't surprise me. Women are increasingly getting the top training they deserve. But what about that stubborn (mean) gap? In my department, graduate students just concluded a survey of student concerns and we found out that our female and male grad students have about the same assessment to make of the program, except that the women feel they are not getting as good advising as the male students feel they are getting. Are faculty really doing all we can do to help make our female students' research as strong as it can be? Maybe not. I would challenge other departments to take a close look at student perceptions in this regard, and try to do something about a possible "advising" gap. Closing any possibility of a gap as early as we can seems like a good first step.

I have been known to make far more radical suggestions for addressing the citations gap than "let's do more to give female grad students as good a start as we give our males." Inspired by a finding of some research that I have done with Judith Kelley about the importance of "performance indicators" for inducing behavioral change (which you can find [here](#)), I suggested in the APSA panel that it might be a good idea to develop an Index of Gender Bias in Citations, and rate all of the political science/international relations journals for their performance. And yes, assign them a grade. Maybe editors could do just a bit to remind their authors to be sure they have done a reasonably balanced job citing the relevant literature.