An Empirical Analysis of the Women and Peace Hypothesis

Malek Abduljaber
Lighthouse Academic Services, LLC
İlker Kalın
The Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, Wayne State University

Abstract

For decades, social scientists have questioned whether women are more politically tolerant, peaceful, and less likely to prefer war to solve international conflict compared to men. Empirical analyses have been limited to a few geographic regions: North America (the United States); the Middle East (Israel and the core Arab World); and Africa (Rwanda). Furthermore, the measurement of the dependent variable, perceptions of war and peace, has been either evaluated with a single item or with a few items tapping on various dimensions of war and peace. This paper extends the geographic coverage in the literature to include a cross-national analysis containing North American, Latin American, Western European, Eastern European, African, Asian and Pacific nations, and utilizes thirteen items measuring gender differences in attitudes towards the perception of war, conflict resolution, foreign policy attitudes, international organizations' appeal, political tolerance, and international cooperation. The analysis utilizes the most up-to-date data of national representative surveys, the World Values Survey and the Arab Barometer, featuring mean comparison methods to supply readers with simple results informing the relationship between gender and perceptions of war and peace on a global level. The evidence reveals that there is no difference in perceptions between men and women regarding international conflict perceptions across countries.

Keywords: Women and peace hypothesis, international conflict, peacebuilding, Middle East, gender and politics

1. Introduction

Are women more peaceful compared to men? Do women exhibit less belligerent views towards international conflict compared to men? Are men more politically tolerant compared to women? The women and peace hypothesis has undergone serious investigation in Western Europe, the Middle East and Africa, finding mixed evidence. On the one hand, scholars have supported the notion that women are more peace-oriented than men,[1] with some authors

Malek Abduljaber, PhD, Lighthouse Academic Services, LLC, Ann Arbor, MI, USA. Email: malikfayez@gmail.com. ⬤ 0000-0002-5476-5784.

İlker Kalın, PhD, The Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, Wayne State University, Detroit, MI, USA. Email: ilkerkaln@gmail.com. ⬤ 0000-0001-9142-3743.

[1] J. Ann Tickner, "Hans Morgenthau's Principles of Political Realism: A Feminist Reformulation," in *Gender and International Relations*, ed. R. Grant and K. Newland (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 27–40; Alison M. Jaggar, "Feminist Ethics: Projects, Problems, Prospects," in *Feminist Ethics*, ed. C. Card (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1993), 78–104; Marysia

suggesting that females are more dovish, tolerant and peace-oriented.[2] On the other hand, studies have concluded that men and women do not differ with respect to international conflict, war and peace perceptions and behaviors.[3] The current study extends the earlier research to encompass twenty-one countries across all continents around the globe. Further, the analysis includes an array of items measuring not only political tolerance, coexistence, war-initiation and peacemaking, but also individuals' perceptions of international organizations and foreign relations, constituting a more comprehensive outlook towards perceptions relevant to war and peace in world politics.

This article answers voices encouraging research on gender in international relations, negotiations and diplomacy. In their recent manuscript, Aggestam and Towns concluded that "first there is a need to move out of Europe and North America to provide greater focus on Africa, Asia and Latin America. Second, there is a need to move beyond the descriptive single case studies towards more systematic comparisons, which can trace change in institutional gender dynamics over time."[4] This study investigates perceptions of men and women towards several items related to war and peace across the world including countries that have been long neglected such as Brazil, India, and the Middle East. Furthermore, the study moves away from the single case study approach by providing fresh insights from nationally representative samples in a cross-national survey. The study also echoes previous researchers' belief in enlarging the scope and domain of their studies connecting gender and political science. For instance, does gender matter in brokering better negotiated deals? Or, how can diplomatic missions utilize social psychology models about gender perceptions to improve their odds of making a peace deal? Notice that perceptions are of utmost importance in negotiations and diplomacy, and if leaders and stakeholders develop favorable attitudes towards other parties and gender composition of a diplomatic delegation, the likelihood of peace is increased. The main research question in this study is: Are perceptions toward war and peace around the world different based on gender? As an answer to the research question, it is argued here that men and women will not differ in their perceptions towards war and peace. Findings from the most recent waves of the Arab Barometer[5] and the World

Zalewski, "The Women/'Women' Question in International Relations," *Millennium* 23, no. 2 (1994): 407–23; Ted G. Jelen, Sue Thomas, and Clyde Wilcox, "The Gender Gap in Comparative Perspective," *European Journal of Political Research* 25 (1994): 171–86; V. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan, *Global Gender Issues in the New Millennium* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2009); Pamela Johnston Conover and Virginia Sapiro, "Gender, Feminist Consciousness, and War," *American Journal of Political Science* 37, no. 4 (1993): 1079–99; Lise Togeby, "The Gender Gap in Foreign Policy Attitudes," *Journal of Peace Research* 31, no. 4 (1994): 375–92; Mark Tessler and Ina Warriner, "Gender, Feminism, and Attitudes Toward International Conflict: Exploring relationships with survey data from the Middle East," *World Politics* 49, no. 2 (1997): 250–81; Mark Tessler, Jodi Nachtwey, and Audra Grant, "Further Tests of the Women and Peace Hypothesis: Evidence from Cross–National Survey Research in the Middle East," *International Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (1999): 519–31.

2   Tessler and Warriner, "Gender, Feminism, and Attitudes Toward International Conflict," 250–81; Conover and Sapiro, "Gender, Feminist Consciousness, and War," 1079–099; Cheryl Benard, "Assessing the Truths and Myths of Women in War and Peace," (paper presented at The United States Institute of Peace Conference Perspectives on Grassroots Peace building: The Roles of Women in War and Peace, Washington DC, 14 September 1999); Cheryl de la Rey and Susan McKay, "Peace as a Gendered Process: Perspectives of Women Doing Peacebuilding in South Africa," *International Journal of Peace Studies* 7 (2002): 91–102; Jean Bethke Elshtain, "II. Reflections on War and Political Discourse: Realism, Just War, and Feminism in a Nuclear Age," *Political Theory* 13, no. 1 (1985): 39–57; Patricia Ward Scaltsas, "Do Feminist Ethics Counter Feminist Aims?" In *Explorations in Feminist Ethics*, ed. E. B. Cole and S. Coultrap–McQuin (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 15–26.

3   Tessler, Nachtwey, and Grant, "Further Tests of the Women and Peace Hypothesis," 519–31; Valerie Morgan, "Women and the Peace Process in Northern Ireland" Global Forum Occasional Papers Series (Duke University Center for International Studies, Durham, North Carolina, 1996); Mary E. Bendyna, Tamara Finucane, Lynn Kirby, John P. O'Donnell, and Clyde Wilcox, "Gender Differences in Public Attitudes Toward the Gulf War: A Test of Competing Hypotheses," *The Social Science Journal* 33, no. 1 (1996): 1–22.

4   Karin Aggestam and Ann Towns, "The Gender Turn in Diplomacy: A New Research Agenda," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 21, no. 1 (2019): 9.

5   Walid Al–Khatib, Rabah Hammami, Abdel–Hamid Abdel Latif, Rabih Habr, Mhammed Abderebbi, Khalil Shikaki, Imen

Values Survey[6] corroborate that despite a few statistically significant relationships between gender and attitudes towards international conflict in a few countries, such results do not amass sufficient evidence to generate overarching arguments suggesting that women are more caring, dovish, tolerant and less war-like, belligerent and hostile compared to men concerning international conflict.

This research contributes to the practice of international relations, diplomacy and peacebuilding projects in many respects. First, it calls into question the argument that "women possess unique advantages as negotiators, including greater cooperativeness and stronger ethics"[7] in world politics, finding no difference in recruiting females or males for crisis management teams or diplomatic missions working on negotiating settlements. Second, the findings of this research indicate that recruiting more women for military institutions does not imply a retreat from the warrior culture, shattering the myth of "recruit more women and lose a future war."[8] Third, the findings of this research call for more fine-grained scholarship on the combination of demographic and behavioral characteristics, the interaction between gender, age, educational level and personality type that characterize the profile of those possessing the highest level of peacebuilding, peacekeeping and peacemaking perceptions to be hired, promoted and recruited for international organizations, thereby bolstering efforts of making the world a safer haven for everyone.

The study is organized as follows. The first section provides a summary of the theoretical and empirical literature on the women and peace hypothesis. The second section provides details about the data and methods utilized by the research to test the proposition that women are more peace-oriented and less war-like compared to men with respect to international conflict, war and peace. Finally, a discussion section that outlines areas of future research, applied implications and conclusions of the research is supplied.

2. Literature Review

The women and peace hypothesis has received considerable theoretical and empirical attention across the social sciences and humanities. Writing on the existence of gender differences in attitudes and behaviors towards war and peace, authors have two main conceptual frameworks: the essentialist and the constructivist. Both views have been repeatedly tested for empirical verification and the evidence points to mixed support of the proposition suggesting that women are more peace-oriented and less belligerent compared to men when it comes to international conflict.[9]

Earlier feminist writers concluded that warfare constitutes the ultimate destruction of femininity. They argued that women are created to care, nurture and harness the fruits of peace, pacifism, tolerance and co-existence in the world. Simultaneously, this line of scholarship has

Mezlini, Arab Barometer, Public Opinion Survey, Wave IV (Ann Arbor, MI: Inter–university Consortium for Political and Social Research, 2016–2017), https://www.arabbarometer.org/waves/arab–barometer–wave–iv/.

6   R. Inglehart, C. Haerpfer, A. Moreno, C. Welzel, K. Kizilova, J. Diez–Medrano, M. Lagos, P. Norris, E. Ponarin and B. Puranen et al., eds., *World Values Survey: Round Six – Country–Pooled,* Datafile Version: www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV6.jsp (Madrid: JD Systems Institute, 2014).

7   Laura J. Kray and Jessica A. Kennedy, "Changing the Narrative: Women as Negotiators and Leaders," *California Management Review* 60, no. 1 (2017): 70.

8   Gerard J. DeGroot, "A Few Good Women: Gender Stereotypes, the Military and Peacekeeping," *International Peacekeeping* 8, no. 2 (2001): 23.

9   Christine Sylvester, *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era* (Cambridge University Press, 1994); R. Charli Carpenter, "Gender Theory in World Politics: Contributions of a non–feminist standpoint?" *International Studies Review* 4, no. 3 (2002): 153–65; Judy El-Bushra, "Feminism, Gender, and Women's Peace Activism," *Development and Change* 38 (2007): 131–47.

depicted men as aggressive, bold and belligerent in the public sphere. The essentialist view of the women and peace hypothesis concluded that women are more submissive, dovish and nicer compared to men.[10]

The constructivist prescription of the women and peace hypothesis advocates that the processes of socialization along with contextual political, institutional, and economic factors have led to the perceived differences among both genders towards international conflict. Proponents of this perspective believe that women may appear as more caring due to the way they are raised in society as mothers and individuals bringing peace to the household. Furthermore, the push for women to pursue degrees in the social sciences, humanities, nursing, education and healthcare field makes the association between women and tolerance, nurturing and caring more apparent. Constructivists argue that distinct patterns of gender socialization lead to perceived differences with respect to attitudes and behaviors towards international conflict.[11]

A more recent perspective argues that increased modernization levels are associated with the political liberalization of females. This perspective suggests that increased wages, political clout, social mobility and prestige obtained by females make them left-voters. This line of research relies on the assumption that modernization is associated with challenging patriarchal structures that seek to have women stay at home caring for their children. In turn, this suggests that if females advocate for social change through removing barriers to economic, social and political opportunities, they tend to be more liberal and are more likely to vote for the left. Therefore, they are expected to be more tolerant, advocates of peace and vocal anti-war voices.[12]

2.1. Empirical evidence

The empirical investigation of the women and peace hypothesis in Western democracies has found mixed support for this thesis. On the one hand, Conover and Sapiro found differences among male and female attitudes towards war and peace.[13] They concluded that women are more concerned about the waging of a prospective war compared to men, and in fact this difference increased with respect to attitudes towards actual wars, specifically in their study, the Gulf War—though it is worth noting that the authors cautioned about overemphasizing a conclusion of difference given that the differences found in both genders' attitudes towards war and peace were slight. Similarly, a line of studies from Western democracies found support for the difference hypothesis among men and women towards war and peace.[14] Haastrup, for instance, notes the increase in the European Union's recruitment and retention of females in

---

[10]   Inger Skjelsbæk and Dan Smith, eds., *Gender, Peace and Conflict* (London: Sage Publications, 2001); Annette Weber, "Feminist Peace and Conflict Theory," *Encyclopaedia on Peace and Conflict Theory* (Jul 2006): 2–13.

[11]   Inger Skjelsbæk, "Sexual Violence and War: Mapping out a Complex Relationship," *European Journal of International Relations* 7, no. 2 (2001): 211–37; Karen Brounéus, "The Women and Peace Hypothesis in Peacebuilding Settings: Attitudes of Women in the Wake of the Rwandan Genocide," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 40, no. 1 (2014): 125–51.

[12]   Ifat Maoz, "The Women and Peace Hypothesis? The Effect of Opponent Negotiators' Gender on the Evaluation of Compromise Solutions in the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict," *International Negotiation* 14, no. 3 (2009): 519–36; Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Women and War: Ten Years On," *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 4 (1998): 447–60; Nicole Pratt and Sophie Richter–Devroe, "Critically Examining UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 13, no. 4 (2011): 489–503; Sarai B. Aharoni, "Who Needs the Women and Peace Hypothesis? Rethinking Modes of Inquiry on Gender and Conflict in Israel/Palestine," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 19, no. 3 (2017): 311–26.

[13]   Conover and Sapiro, "Gender, Feminist Consciousness, and War," 1079–99.

[14]   J. Ann Tickner, "Feminist Security Studies: Celebrating an Emerging Field," *Politics & Gender* 7 (2011): 576–81; J. Ann Tickner and Laura Sjoberg, eds., *Feminism and International Relations: Conversations about the Past, Present and Future* (Routledge, 2013).

mediation missions responding to the United Nations' call in 2000 based on Resolution 1325.[15] By the same token, David et al. found that empathy and empathetic feminist constructions make compromise more likely in areas of conflict.[16] Empathy, a trait often associated with femininity, was found to be a good predictor of compromise, therefore it could help mediate relationships between gender and attitudes and affect behaviors towards conflict.

Empirical support for the women and peace hypothesis is even more ambiguous in non-Western contexts. Brounéus extended the empirical investigation of the women peace hypothesis to a new context—Rwanda during its peacebuilding process. She argued that in war contexts, women are more likely to experience negative attitudes towards peacebuilding due to their higher risk of developing psychological disorders like depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).[17] Using data from a 2006 questionnaire, she found support for her hypothesis concluding that women in Rwanda are more negative towards peace and peacebuilding operations compared to men.

Empirical research on the women and peace hypothesis in the Arab World and Israel also allude to ambiguity. For example, Tessler, Nachtwey and Grant found no difference concerning ordinary citizens' attitudes towards the Arab/Israeli conflict. [18] They concluded that the women and peace hypothesis is not supported in the Middle East. Contrary to the findings of the study, recent analyses from survey data in Israel suggest that women are more warlike than men in the sense that they express more support to increasing the defense budget. Another contradictory finding suggested that women in Israel ranked peace higher than other values compared to men.[19] Women in Israel were also found more supportive than men of peaceful means of conflict resolution and preferring a non-military solution to the Iranian problem. Aharoni, meanwhile, reviewed the literature on the women and peace hypothesis and found that contextual factors lead to attitudinal differences towards peace and war between the genders. [20] For instance, the pattern of political violence in the Arab/Israeli conflict has led Arab women to be less peaceful than expected due to their daily experiences of political subjugation, violence and repression.

The literature on feminist international relations has increased its attention on the role of gender in determining important outcomes such as negotiated peace or diplomacy successes. Hermann's analysis of the Israeli peace movement sheds light on the role of Jewish groups that embraced peace with Palestinians, recognizing the long victimization of Arabs.[21] While no accurate statistics are provided regarding the percentage of male and female members of the varying "peace camp" agents, both males and females in Israel have joined and voiced the peace narrative. Also, the funding provided for the groups was not dissected based on gender indicating that both genders have made significant financial, personal and political contributions for peace. The likely evidence arising from such a detailed study is that both

---

[15] Toni Haastrup, "Creating Cinderella? The Unintended Consequences of the Women Peace and Security Agenda for EU's Mediation Architecture," *International Negotiation* 23 (2018): 223.

[16] David, Yossi, Nimrod Rosler, and Ifat Maoz, "Gender–Empathic Constructions, Empathy, and Support for Compromise in Intractable Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62 (2018): 1727–52.

[17] Brounéus, "The Women and Peace Hypothesis in Peacebuilding Settings," 125–51.

[18] Tessler, Nachtwey, and Grant, "Further Tests of the Women and Peace Hypothesis," 529–30.

[19] Einat Gedalya, Hanna Herzog, and Michal Shamir, "Tzip(p)ing through the Elections: Gender in the 2009 Elections," in *The Elections in Israel – 2009*, ed. Asher Arian and Michal Shamir (New Brunswick: Transaction Publications, 2011), 165–93; Michal Shamir and Einat Gedalya–Lavy, "A Gender Gap in Voting? Women and Men in the 2013 Elections," in *The Elections in Israel – 2013*, ed. Michal Shamir (Piscataway NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2015), 229–53.

[20] Aharoni, "Who needs the Women and Peace Hypothesis?,"311–26.

[21] Tamar S. Hermann, *The Israeli Peace Movement: A Shattered Dream* (Cambridge University Press, 2009).

men and women are capable of developing and possessing similar attitudes towards war and peace. Nevertheless, the overall picture emerging from the Middle East is at best mixed with respect to providing empirical support of the women and peace hypothesis.

All in all, exploration of issues related to gender in war and peace is clearly relevant in today's world, and is important to study. Nevertheless, most authors have concluded that the differences observed among both genders towards war and peace do not warrant practical significance given the slight distinctions found. Various statistical techniques utilized in the extant literature cause the slight differences in results, and therefore deprive us of having a clear answer to the question of women and peace hypothesis.

One of the most obvious limitations in the literature is that many authors utilize multivariate statistical techniques for testing a means' comparison hypothesis. While using advanced procedures is apt in many contexts, the interpretation of logistic regression or multilevel analysis coefficients while using scales often becomes difficult and not straightforward. The use of simpler procedures such as simple mean comparisons, independent samples hypothesis tests or Analysis of Variance seems to be more appropriate to answer the questions posed by the women and peace hypothesis. Moreover, much of the literature fails to utilize a wide range of measures to test whether females are actually more peaceful than males. The use of items measuring individuals' attitudes towards several dimensions of war and peace is logically a better strategy compared to the use of either war or peacebuilding items alone.

Many studies that have concluded by supporting the women and peace hypothesis thesis, have done so based on mere statistical significance. For example, small differences on Likert-items have furnished evidence supporting the women and peace hypothesis across many studies. Observing a 0.25 difference on a 1-7 Likert type item between men and women does not necessarily mean that the genders differ significantly on that item, even if there is statistical significance. Empirical support should be confirmed using many items, including looking at significant practical differences in addition to just statistical significance.

3. Research Design

This research utilizes cross-sectional national public opinion surveys across seven Middle Eastern countries: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Morocco and Tunisia and 14 nations representing all major world regions: The United States, Mexico, Brazil, India, China, Russia, Nigeria, South Africa, Sweden, Japan, Germany, Australia, Pakistan, and New Zealand. The choice of including such countries has been informed by (1) earlier empirical investigations of the women and peace hypothesis for verification purposes; (2) expanding the geographic scope to include regions previously neglected, such as Latin America, South and East Asia; (3) adding support for any detected trends found cross-nationally. The surveys come from two large public opinion projects: the Arab Barometer in the Middle East and the World Values Surveys. Both surveys utilize random probability national representative samples for each country included, reducing the possibility of inaccurate data explanation. In addition, all interviews have been conducted face-to-face across all surveys utilized. The latest waves of both surveys are included in this analysis: the Fourth Wave in the case of the Arab Barometer and the Sixth Wave in the case of the World Values Survey. The time-frame of all surveys covers 2014 to 2017, allowing the investigation to detect any trends or differences in the most recent datasets available.

Measuring genders attitudes towards war and peace is not straightforward given the

latent nature of the construct. Nevertheless, a better analysis makes use of multiple items measuring the different aspects of perceptions towards war, peace and international conflict. Fortunately, both surveys contain several direct and indirect measures for operationalizing individuals' attitudes towards war and peace. In the Arab Barometer, several Likert-items and binary measures are used to investigate whether men and women differ with respect to their attitudes towards international conflict. Table 1 presents the selected survey questions and their original coding in the datasets. The questions from the Arab Barometer measuring the extent to which people consider their fellow citizens trustworthy and honest, as well as their tolerance towards people of different religions, were included. Further, items measuring whether men and women prefer a military intervention in the Syrian civil war and their belligerence towards the United States were utilized as proxies for attitudes on war and peace. Preference towards globalization has also been measured through preferences for better relations with the European Union and seeing a more connected planet in all forms, shapes and ways. Most importantly, a preference for the two-state solution in the Arab/Israeli conflict has been used to measure whether men and women differ on war and peace.

Table 1- Selected Survey Questions from the Arab Barometer and World Values Survey

Arab Barometer Wave IV	
Survey Question	**Measurement/Coding**
Where would you rate citizens of your country on this scale?	7 Point Likert Scale (From Dishonest to Honest)
Generally speaking, do you think most people are trustworthy or not?	1. Most people are trustworthy. 2. Most people are not trustworthy. 98. I don't know 99. Declined to answer
People disagree on whether the world becoming more connected is a good thing. Some think it is good because it makes your society more culturally diverse. Others think it is bad because it diminishes traditional values. Do you think the world becoming more connected is good or bad for society?	1. Very good 2. Somewhat good 3. Neither good nor bad 4. Somewhat bad 5. Very bad 98. I don't know 99. Declined to answer
In your opinion, which of the following potential solutions do you favor to end the civil conflict in Syria?	1. Reforms led by the current government 2. Holding free and fair elections under international supervision 3. Military intervention by an Arab coalition 4. Military intervention by an international coalition including Arab and Western countries 5. None of the above 6. Other 98. I don't know 99. Declined to answer
Please tell me to what degree you would describe yourself as feeling angry toward [the United States]?	1. I strongly agree 2. I agree 3. I disagree 4. I strongly disagree 98. I don't know 99. Declined to answer
Do you prefer that future economic relations between your country and (country)? (The United States, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, The European Union, and Russia)	1. Become Stronger 2. Remain Same 3. Weaker 4. Don`t Know 7. Refuse to Answer

Do you support or oppose the solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict based on the establishment of a Palestinian State alongside Israel known as the two-state solution?	1. Support 2. Oppose 98. I don't know 99. Declined to answer
Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion:	1. Democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government. 2. Under some circumstances, a nondemocratic government can be preferable. 3. For people like me, it does not matter what kind of government we have. 98. I don't know 99. Declined to answer
For each of the following types of people, please tell me whether you would like having people from this group as neighbors, dislike it, or not care? [People of a different religion, people of a different race or color, immigrants or foreign workers, people of a different sect of Islam]	1. Strongly dislike 2. Somewhat dislike 3. Would not care 4. Somewhat like 5. Strongly like 98. I don't know 99. Declined to answer
World Value Survey Wave 6	
Survey Question	**Measurement/Coding**
I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country? [Having the army rule]	1. Very good 2. Fairly good 3. Fairly bad 4. Very bad
I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all? [the United Nations]	1. A great deal 2. Quite a lot 3. Not very much 4. None at all
Now I'd like you to look at this card. I'm going to read out some forms of political action that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have done any of these things, whether you might do it or would never under any circumstances do it. [Attending Peaceful Demonstrations]	1. Have done 2. Might do 3. Would never do
I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country? [having a democratic political system]	1. Very good 2. Fairly good 3. Fairly bad 4. Very bad

As seen from Table 1, to aid the comparison using the World Values Survey, several items were used to measure individuals' perceptions towards war and peace. Those included whether or not individuals participate in peaceful demonstrations, whether individuals deem the United Nations as a worthy institution, and the degree to which they support democracy. Finally, an item measuring individuals' preference towards army rule was employed to gauge whether men are more belligerent than women.

Descriptive statistical methods were utilized to investigate the differences between the two genders with respect to attitudes towards international conflict. These included frequency analysis and graphical display of the variables using bar charts, line graphs and other types of nominal and ordinal methods of data representation. Furthermore, mean comparisons utilizing hypothesis testing methods, *t*-tests, Analysis of Variance and Chi-Square tests, were utilized to investigate the statistical significance of means' differences. Notice that while the analysis may yield statistical significance, the difference hypothesis will only be warranted if practical differences on the various measures of war and peace are detected with respect to the two genders.

4. Results

Figure 1 displays the extent to which Arab men and women trust their fellow citizens, believe that they are honest, and prefer a more connected world. The line graphs for the three measures show no discernable practical differences in attitudes towards trust, honesty or globalization based on gender. This supports previous findings suggesting that men and women in the Middle East do not differ with respect to tolerance, coexistence or cultural openness towards the world, measures of political tolerance and liberal worldviews.
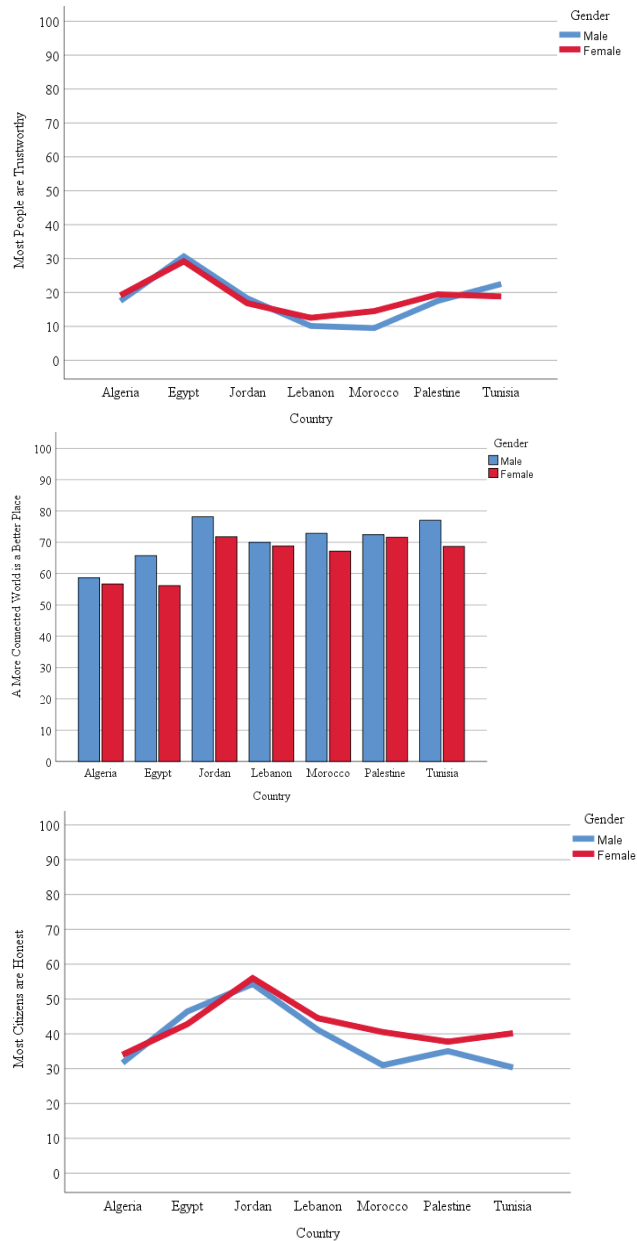
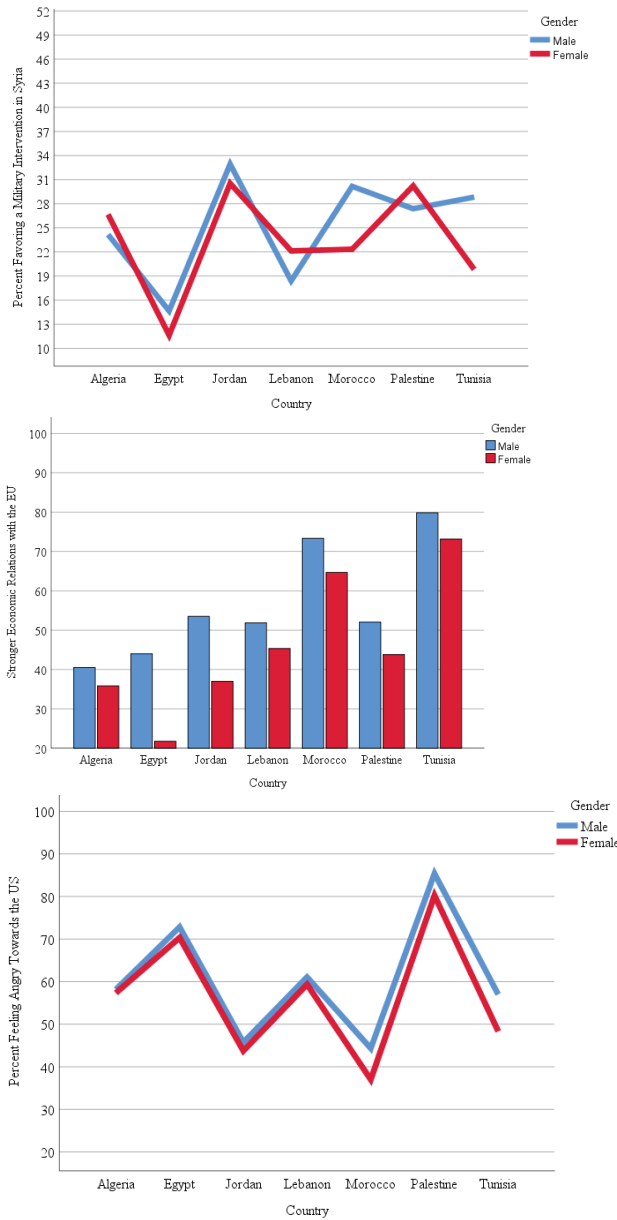Figure 1: Arab Barometer scores on the perception of trust, honesty, and globalization

Figure 2: Arab Barometer scores on gender differences toward tolerance

Figure 2 moves the analysis from a generic inspection of gender differences towards tolerance, by examining gender attitudes towards international conflict. It explores Arab citizens' views towards the use of military intervention to solve the Syrian problem; the extent to which their respective country should be open toward the European Union; and their feelings towards the United States. Generally, men and women do not differ with respect to any of the measures utilized. There are a few noticeable differences, such as in Tunisia with respect to the use of armed forces in Syria, and in Egypt in its outlook toward cooperation

with Europe. While such differences exist, they are not stark. Those differences do not seem to spoil the general trend that men and women do not differ with respect to their attitudes towards international conflict.
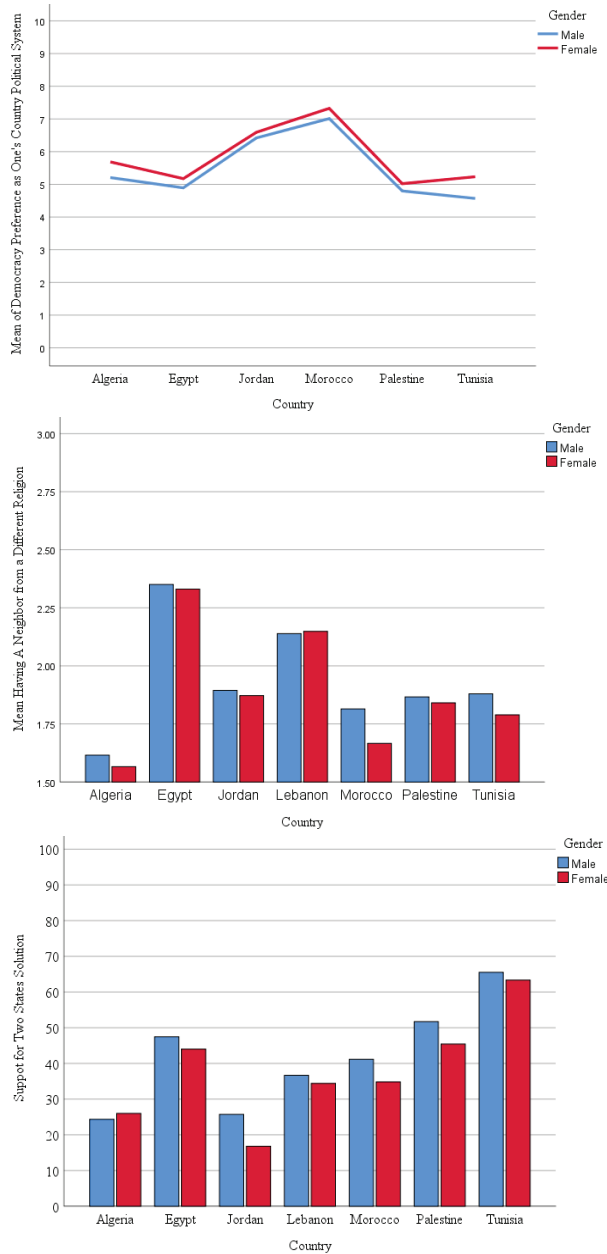

Figure 3: Arab Barometer scores with respect to war and peace perceptions

Figure 3 further demonstrates that men and women do not differ with respect to war and peace perceptions in the Arab World. Arab men and women possess very similar appeals for democracy across the region. By the same token, they do not significantly differ with respect

to tolerating a neighbor from a different religious sect. Finally, and most importantly, Arab men and women did not systematically differ with respect to their advocacy for the two-state solution in the ongoing long-standing Arab/Israeli conflict. Using different measures of war, peace and international conflict, the results confirm earlier findings concluding that men and women do not differ with respect to war and peace in the Middle East.
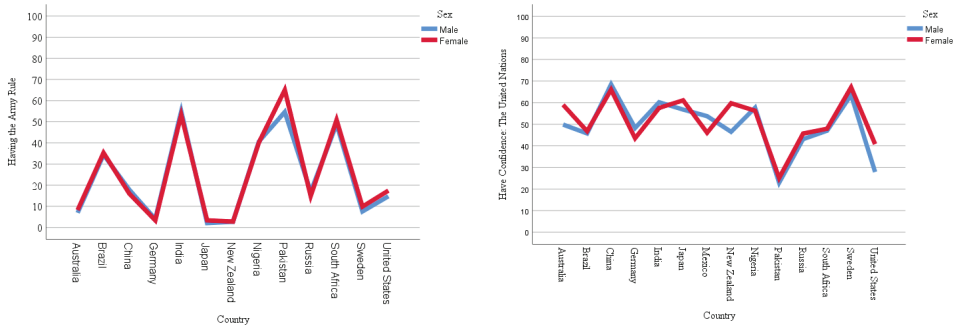

Figure 4: World Values Survey scores on the perception of dictatorships, army rule, and the United Nations

Figure 4 utilizes data from the World Values Survey to verify the conclusions found in the Middle East and investigate whether the region is unique with respect to the women and peace hypothesis. The Figure displays male and female feelings towards dictatorships, army rule, and the United Nations, an international organization associated with peace and global cooperation. Men and women's feelings across countries, all continents included, did not differ with respect to either item. While Pakistan seems to exhibit a difference, this anomaly may be explained by contextual factors such as high crime rates, corruption, political polarization and terrorism within the country.[22] Even when such factors are considered, the difference is not vast, reaching a similar conclusion to other studies conducted in the Middle East, namely, that there is not a strongly marked difference found between men and women with respect to war and peace perception.
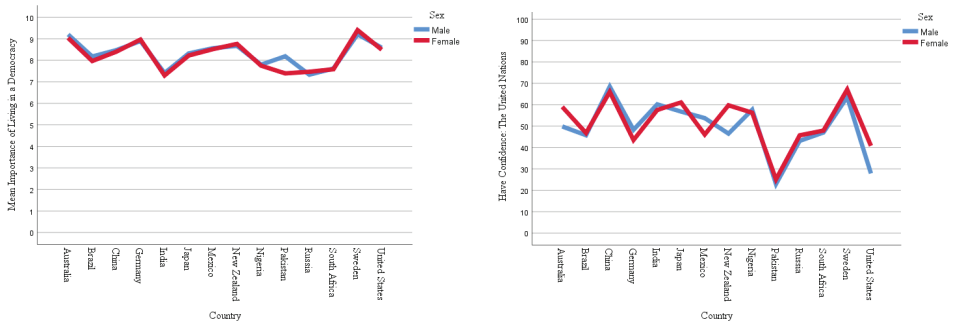

Figure 5: World Values Survey scores on the perception of democracy and peaceful demonstrations

Figure 5 displays individuals' participation rates in peaceful demonstrations and means of democracy thermometers across 14 countries from six continents around the world. The

---

22   Ismail Aisha and Rashid Kashif, "Time Series Analysis of the Nexus Among Corruption, Political Instability and Judicial Inefficiency in Pakistan," *Quality & Quantity* 48 (Sep 2014): 2757–71.

graphs indicate that men and women do not differ dramatically either with respect to their participation rates in peaceful demonstrations nor in their attitudes towards democracy desirability, except a noticeable difference in New Zealand. This evidence confirms lends support to those earlier analyses that showed similarity between men and women with respect to their attitudes and behaviors towards war and peace.

Table 2 displays the Analysis of Variance results by country testing for the effect of gender on means differences with respect to democracy in the Middle East. Support for democracy has been associated with a wide range of attributes such as high political tolerance, higher likelihood for initiating peaceful actions, and advocacy for peacemaking in conflict zones. Thus, the measure provides an adequate proxy for attitudes towards peacebuilding, peacemaking, and peacekeeping, all of which represent attitudes on international conflict, the core dependent variable for this research. Notice that in the last column, means differences are reported between males and females in each country and that all of them are less than 1 on the 1-10 Likert item measuring individuals' attitudes towards democracy in the Middle East. While statistical significance exists in few cases such as Algeria or Tunisia, a practical substantial difference between the two genders is not observed. A move of less than 1 on the 1-10 scale of democracy is practically insignificant for any real applied or policy purposes. Results of the ANOVAs confirm that males and females in the Arab World do not differ with respect to perceptions of war, peace and international conflict.

Table 2- ANOVA Results: Gender on Democracy

Country	F	P-value	Sample Size	Mean's Difference
Entire Sample	22.97	0.01	6677	0.33
Algeria	8.17	0.04	1029	0.48
Egypt	3.28	0.70	1055	0.36
Jordan	1.48	0.22	1168	0.18
Morocco	4.79	0.29	1039	0.31
Palestine	2.11	0.14	1158	0.23
Tunisia	11.09	0.01	1128	0.67
Lebanon	2.47	0.11	1180	0.23

To confirm the results of the ANOVAs, another item measuring support for the two states solution, the dependent variable, has been used. Results from a series of Chi-Square tests are displayed in Table 3. The table clearly shows that in the vast majority of cases, there is no difference in attitudes towards peace in Palestine. The statistical significance of the test in Jordan and Palestine is not noticeable when the means of males and females are juxtaposed against each other displaying minimal differences. The statistical difference found in the data does not support a conclusion of attitudinal difference. Although both genders seem to possess statistically different views on some items, the difference in means is very minimal given the measurement level of the variables and the type of questions used. It would be misleading to conclude that both genders differ on war and peace perceptions based on the presented evidence. Therefore, this research found, as did some earlier studies, statistical significance for the women and peace hypothesis in a few countries without being substantiated by descriptive statistics, thus removing the meaningfulness of this conclusion in the face of the holistic evidence supporting the idea that women and men do not differ with respect to war and peace in the Middle East and the rest of the World.

Table 3- Chi Square Gender and Two States Solutions per Country

Country	Two-Tailed P-Value from Chi-Square
Algeria	0.54
Egypt	0.95
Jordan	*0.01*
Morocco	0.68
Palestine	*0.04*
Tunisia	0.90

5. Discussion and Conclusions

This study has extended research on the women and peace hypothesis to more countries than any previous analysis. Countries in Africa, Asia, Middle East, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Latin America, North America and Oceania have been included. This study also included measures of political tolerance, coexistence, military intervention, peace demonstration participation rates, and attitudes towards globalization, a measure of international connectedness. The findings of this research confirm those earlier studies that concluded there is no difference between men and women with respect to war and peace perceptions and behaviors. Note that such results do not *dis*confirm the proposition that trauma, conflict and sexual abuse prevalent in civil wars make women feel more negative about efforts of peacebuilding or peacekeeping. This study simply tests whether gender has any explanatory power with respect to attitudes towards war, peace and international conflict. Under unique circumstances, genocides, civil wars and terrorism, women and men may differ with respect to any international effort attempting to restore peace.

The findings of the current research contrasts with some earlier studies in the United States and Western Europe. Based on the amounted evidence from the World Values Survey, this study shows that men and women in the US, Germany, Australia, Sweden, Canada and New Zealand yield to so insignificant differences with respect to attitudes towards international conflict that they can be attributable to methodological distinctions. This study, however, utilized more than a single item and a variety of indicators to verify the women and peace hypothesis in the US and the West. Statistical significance did not establish real and practical significance between the genders concerning the main outcome, perceptions of war and peace. Moreover, the use of multiple items was employed to avoid the measurement trap offered by the use of a single item or one aspect of the construct, such as the Arab/Israeli conflict, the Gulf War, or the Rwandan Peacebuilding process.

In comparison of Western democracies and non-Western countries, our findings suggest some slight differences in gender-based peace attitudes. Citizens regardless of gender in Western democracies seem to be more willing to participate in peaceful demonstrations, rate democracy better, and less likely to prefer armed forces rule than citizens in non-Western countries. Such differences may be explained by a plethora of factors including institutional stability, regime type, corruption, crime rate, quality of political representation, culture, and economic well-being. Notice that India, Pakistan, Brazil and South Africa score lower than Germany, Sweden, Australia and the US on most peace-oriented items confirming the above hypothesized delineation.

Moreover, the findings show that there is no practical differences overall in gender-based attitudes towards war and peace in non-Western countries, although a few countries deviated

from this general pattern on several different items, such as Tunisia with respect to the use of armed forces in Syria, Egypt in its outlook toward cooperation with Europe, and Pakistan in preference of the army rule. Such differences can be attributable to country-level factors (i.e. economic, cultural, social, and political). Also, note that these countries follow the general pattern on other items with other non-Western countries that men and women do not differ with respect to attitudes towards war and peace.

The findings support Tessler's et al. idea that the available theory giving rise to the women and peace hypothesis needs to be further specified.[23] Under what conditions could women be more peaceful compared to men? Under what conditions do we expect both genders to exhibit similar attitudes towards war and peace? These are some of the questions that need to be investigated to aid in better understanding of the women and peace hypothesis. Furthermore, the use of continuous measurements to operationalize theoretical constructs would enable researchers to better detect statistical and practical relationships, compared with a reliance on ordinal and nominal measures.

The findings of this research also contribute to current debates concerning gender in diplomacy, and a rising advocacy for gender parity in external relations. It is the view of the authors that women hold similar views on war and peace to men, and it is therefore illogical to argue that females are less war-like or more peace-favoring. The evidence from this analysis and elsewhere suggests that females and males do not drastically differ, and therefore both genders should be included equally. This is advantageous to the issue of diversity of delegations, adding many positive attributes to teamwork, and the well-being of the nations involved, since women comprise half or more of the populations in those nations, yet they only represent currently a fraction of negotiation, mediation and diplomatic missions.

Future research on the women and peace hypothesis should not focus on a single case and attempt to generalize results from cross-sectional evidence. A single or few cases from the same region do not provide enough evidence to conclude that women are more peaceful compared to men. Further, the use of a single item, factor, or component does not suffice. To make a conclusion of such magnitude, researchers must establish that women are peaceful, less likely to participate in wars, more likely to participate in peaceful activities and less belligerent towards other nations or groups within their respective nations. Available data fails to capture the multidimensionality of the concept of peace. True, available data allow researchers to model a few facets of the structure of the peace construct such as perceptions of the Arab/Israeli conflict in the Arab World; nevertheless, the Arab/Israeli conflict does not capture the entire structure of the construct. Moreover, if the question begins with a simple inquiry of whether men and women differ with respect to a latent construct, a means' comparison suffices. An advanced multivariate analysis, such as multilevel modelling or logistic regression are more complex options to answer a simple question that an Analysis of Variance, a t-test, Means' Whitney U test or any means' comparison hypothesis test is designed to perform. In essence, this research demonstrates that a social question as simple as that of the women and peace hypothesis can be answered more appropriately with a simple statistical inquiry than through the use of complex statistical methods.

---

[23] Tessler, Nachtwey, and Grant, "Further Tests of the Women and Peace Hypothesis," 530.

Bibliography

Aggestam, Karin, and Ann Towns. "The Gender Turn in Diplomacy: A New Research Agenda," *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 21, no. 1 (2019): 9–28.

Aharoni, Sarai B. "Who needs the Women and Peace Hypothesis? Rethinking Modes of Inquiry on Gender and Conflict in Israel/Palestine." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 19, no. 3 (2017): 311–26.

Al-Khatib, Walid, Rabah Hammami, Abdel-Hamid Abdel Latif, Rabih Habr, Mhammed Abderebbi, Khalil Shikaki, Imen Mezlini. Arab Barometer, Public Opinion Survey, Wave IV. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, 2016–2017. https://www.arabbarometer.org/waves/arab-barometer-wave-iv/.

Benard, Cheryl. "Assessing the Truths and Myths of Women in War and Peace." Paper presented at the United States Institute of Peace Conference Perspectives on Grassroots Peace Building: The Roles of Women in War and Peace, Washington DC, 14 September, 1999.

Bendyna, Mary E., Tamara Finucane, Lynn Kirby, John P. O'Donnell, and Clyde Wilcox. "Gender Differences in Public Attitudes toward the Gulf War: A Test of Competing Hypotheses." *The Social Science Journal* 33, no. 1 (1996): 1–22.

Brounéus, Karen. "The Women and Peace Hypothesis in Peacebuilding Settings: Attitudes of Women in the wake of the Rwandan Genocide." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 40, no. 1 (2014): 125–51.

Carpenter, R. Charli. "Gender Theory in World Politics: Contributions of a Non–Feminist Standpoint?" *International Studies Review* 4, no. 3 (2002): 153–65.

Conover, Pamela Johnston, and Virginia Sapiro. "Gender, Feminist Consciousness, and War." *American Journal of Political Science* 37, no. 4 (1993): 1079–099.

De la Rey, Cheryl, and Susan McKay. "Peace as a Gendered Process: Perspectives of Women Doing Peacebuilding in South Africa." *International Journal of Peace Studies* 7 (2002): 91–102.

DeGroot, Gerard J. "A Few Good Women: Gender Stereotypes, the Military and Peacekeeping." *International Peacekeeping* 8, no. 2 (2001): 23–38.

El-Bushra, Jud. "Feminism, Gender, and Women's Peace Activism." *Development and Change* 38 (2007): 131–47.

Elshtain, Jean Bethke. "II. Reflections on War and Political Discourse: Realism, Just War, and Feminism in a Nuclear Age." *Political Theory* 13, no. 1 (1985): 39–57.

———. "Women and War: Ten Years On." *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 4 (1998): 447–60.

Gedalya, Einat, Hanna Herzog, and Michal Shamir. "Tzip(p)ing through the Elections: Gender in the 2009 Elections." In *The Elections in Israel – 2009*, edited by Asher Arian and Michal Shamir, 165–93. New Brunswick: Transaction Publications, 2009.

Haastrup, Toni. "Creating Cinderella? The Unintended Consequences of the Women Peace and Security Agenda for EU's Mediation Architecture." *International Negotiation* 23 (2018): 218–37.

Hermann, Tamar S. *The Israeli Peace Movement: A Shattered Dream*. Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Inglehart, R., C. Haerpfer, A. Moreno, C. Welzel, K. Kizilova, J. Diez–Medrano, M. Lagos, P. Norris, E. Ponarin and B. Puranen et al., eds. *World Values Survey: Round Six – Country–Pooled*. Datafile Version: www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV6.jsp. Madrid: JD Systems Institute, 2014.

Jaggar, Alison M. "Feminist Ethics: Projects, Problems, Prospects." In *Feminist Ethics*, edited by C. Card, 78–104. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1993.

Jelen, Ted G., Sue Thomas, and Clyde Wilcox. "The Gender Gap in Comparative Perspective." *European Journal of Political Research* 25 (1994): 171–86.

Kray, Laura J., and Jessica A. Kennedy. "Changing the Narrative: Women as Negotiators and Leaders." *California Management Review* 60, no. 1 (2017): 70–87.

Maoz, Ifat. "The Women and Peace Hypothesis? The Effect of Opponent Negotiators' Gender on the Evaluation of Compromise Solutions in the Israeli–Palestinian Conflict." *International Negotiation* 14, no. 3 (2009): 519–36.

Morgan, Valerie. "Women and the Peace Process in Northern Ireland." Global Forum Occasional Papers Series,

Duke University Center for International Studies, Durham, North Carolina, 1996.

Peterson, V. Spike, and Anne Sisson Runyan. *Global Gender Issues in the New Millennium*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2009.

Pratt, Nicole, and Sophie Richter–Devroe. "Critically Examining UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 13, no. 4 (2011): 489–503.

Scaltsas, Patricia Ward. "Do Feminist Ethics Counter Feminist Aims?" In *Explorations in Feminist Ethics*, edited by E. B. Cole and S. Coultrap–McQuin, 15–26. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992.

Shamir, Michal, and Einat Gedalya–Lavy. "A Gender Gap in Voting? Women and Men in the 2013 Elections." In *The Elections in Israel – 2013*, edited by Michal Shamir, 229–53. Piscataway NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2015.

Skjelsbæk, Inger. "Sexual Violence and War: Mapping out a Complex Relationship." *European Journal of International Relations* 7, no. 2 (2001): 211–37.

Skjelsbæk, Inger, and Dan Smith, eds., *Gender, Peace and Conflict*. London: Sage Publications, 2001.

Sylvester, Christine. *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era*. Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Tessler, Mark, and Ina Warriner. "Gender, Feminism, and Attitudes toward International Conflict: Exploring Relationships with Survey Data from the Middle East." *World Politics* 49, no. 2 (1997): 250–81.

Tessler, Mark, Jodi Nachtwey, and Audra Grant. "Further Tests of the Women and Peace Hypothesis: Evidence from cross–national survey research in the Middle East." *International Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 3 (1999): 519–31.

Tickner, J. Ann. "Feminist Security Studies: Celebrating an Emerging Field." *Politics & Gender 7* (2011): 576–81.

———. "Hans Morgenthau's Principles of Political Realism: A Feminist Reformulation." In *Gender and International Relations*, edited by R. Grant and K. Newland, 27–40. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.

Tickner, J. Ann, and Laura Sjoberg, eds. *Feminism and International Relations: Conversations about the Past, Present and Future*. Oxon: Routledge, 2013.

Togeby, Lise. "The Gender Gap in Foreign Policy Attitudes." *Journal of Peace Research* 31, no. 4 (1994): 375–92.

Weber, Annette. "Feminist Peace and Conflict Theory." *Routledge Encyclopaedia on Peace and Conflict Theory* (2006): 2–13.

Yossi, David, Nimrod Rosler, and Ifat Maoz. "Gender–Empathic Constructions, Empathy, and Support for Compromise in Intractable Conflict." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62, (2018): 1727–52.

Zalewski, Marysia. "The Women/'Women' Question in International Relations." *Millennium* 23, no. 2 (1994): 407–23.