Extremism and the Gender Gap: Explaining Women’s Increasing Internationalism

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Traditional Gender Gap in Support for International Economic Integration
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- International trade (Guisinger 2009; Mansfield and Mutz 2009; Mayda and Rodrik 2005; Scheve and Slaughter 2001)
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- European integration (Gabel 1998; Liebert 1999; Nelsen and Guth 2000)
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- European integration (Gabel 1998; Liebert 1999; Nelsen and Guth 2000)
- (Some types of) immigration (O’Rourke and Sinnott 2006; Ponce 2017)
Gender Gap in Western Europe Over Time

Support for European integration

![Graph showing the gender gap in support for European integration over time. The graph illustrates a significant increase in support for European integration among women compared to men, especially after 2012.](https://www.ninaobermeier.com/presentation/#/)}
Gender Gap in Western Europe Over Time

Support for immigration

[Graph showing the gender gap in support for immigration over time from 2004 to 2016.]
Gender Gap in Western Europe Over Time

Support for free trade

https://www.ninaobermeier.com/presentation/#/
Existing Explanations for Gender Gap
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- International trade: concern about economic volatility (Guisinger 2017); trade as competition (Mutz 2021)
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- International trade: concern about economic volatility (Guisinger 2017); trade as competition (Mutz 2021)
- EU: Lack of knowledge (Nelsen and Guth 2000); responsiveness to gender mainstreaming (De Vries 2018)
- Immigration: Threat to gender equality (Ponce 2017)
Argument

Narrowing of gender gap due to increased linking of anti-internationalism to right-wing extremism as populist radical right becomes more prominent
Argument

Linking of anti-internationalism to right-wing extremism in public discourse
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Increased internationalism among people who reject right-wing extremism
Argument

Higher sensitivity to social norms and discomfort with political extremism among women (Harteveld and Ivarsflaten 2016; Harteveld et al. 2017; Mayer 1999; Oshri et al. 2022)
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+ Change in public discourse around anti-internationalism
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+ Change in public discourse around anti-internationalism

Internationalism increases more strongly among women than men
Hypothesis

H1: The effect of closer links between anti-internationalism and right-wing extremism in public discourse on support for international economic integration will be stronger among women than among men.
Research Design

Study 1: Cross-national media and survey analysis

Study 2: Unexpected event during survey design in UK
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Study 2: Unexpected event during survey design in UK
Research Design: Study 2

- Unexpected event during survey design: murder of UK MP Jo Cox in June 2016
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- Unexpected shock that concentrated association between anti-internationalism and right-wing extremism in public discourse
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- Unexpected shock that concentrated association between anti-internationalism and right-wing extremism in public discourse

- Timing of British Election Study (BES) allows me to compare responses collected immediately prior to the murder to those collected immediately afterwards, by gender
Results: Study 2

Effect of murder on support for EU by gender
Results: Study 2

Effect of murder on support for immigration by gender
Conclusion

- When anti-internationalism becomes linked to extremism, the gender gap in support for international economic integration narrows
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- Supported by cross-national analysis in Western Europe
Conclusion

- When anti-internationalism becomes linked to extremism, the gender gap in support for international economic integration narrows
- Supported by cross-national analysis in Western Europe
- Importance of (changing) relationship between gender and the populist radical right
Thank you!

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