The Inextricable Madame President: How Corruption Affects Women Heads of Government

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Abstract

While there has been a surge in interest, little work focuses on the conceptual foundations of the relationship between women in high political office and corruption. Contributing to the growing body of literature on women executives, this article clarifies how generics may impact the public perception and political longevity of women in office. Contrary to other work which suggests the prescriptive stereotype of ethical morality creates more obstacles for women in leadership, this paper argues that generic prescriptions cannot be examined in isolation. Competing generics can mitigate the impact of corruption on the political popularity of a woman. A two-staged approach is used to examine the relationship between women in office and corruption scandals. First, a macro-analysis of all women who have held a chief executive position in politics and been formally charged for corrupt behaviour is conducted to identify trends. A key trend identified is that women retain public support if allegations of corruption are believed to be politically motivated. Moreover, the acts that are construed to be corrupt in order the charge or dismiss women differ significantly from what is widely understood as corruption. Case studies are then used to identify the different roles generics played in two distinct and dissimilar situations, Dilma Rousseff and Yulia Tymoshenko. Particular attention was paid to generics which seem to be universal to the concept of 'woman,' including ethical, maternal, and transformative prescriptions. A key point of discussion in this paper is the serious repercussions that stem from the lack of conceptual clarity surrounding corruption. Furthermore, the importance of regional context when studying both women inn politics and corruption is highlighted. This article adds to the literature on gender and corruption by providing evidence to suggest that women do not suffer from a loss of public support in response to allegations of corruption. I suggest that in some cases allegations of corruption can in fact bolster the support for women.

The Inextricable Madame President: How Corruption Affects Women Heads of Government

There has been significant attention payed to the role of corruption within politics for good reason. The persistent erosion of democratic ideals and progress by corrupt activity has attracted the attention of academics from the very beginning of political thought through to the current day, with a surge of interest following the worldwide "corruption eruption" in the 1990s (William 1999: 513). Over fifteen years ago, an interesting correlation between levels of women in government and lower perceptions of corruption was noted by two seperate studies (Dollar, Fisman, and Gatti, 2001; Swamy et al., 2001). Interest in this area grew, with the relationship between women and political corruption becoming central to a significant body of research. In part, this was due to an increase of women's representation at the executive level of government. Some early scholarship suggest that women were intrinsically more ethical than men, and as such increasing women's representation would result in lower levels of corruption within government (Chodorow 1979; Gilligan 1993). When these claims were further investigated, it was found that the explanation for women being seemingly incorruptible was that they were often excluded from existing corrupt networks, and that subject to more scrutiny given their outsider status (Schulze & Frank, 2003; Armantier & Boly, 2008; Franceschet, Piscopo, and Thomas 2016). Work in this area further developed, with recent research arguing that belief in women's integrity causes female presidents to face higher standards of moral leadership and are punished more harshly for transgressions (Goetz, 2007; Reyes-Housholder, 2019; Prentice and Carranza 2002)

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Many studies suggest that the implications of this relationship are incredibly serious, in that it could have an adverse affect on public support for women in politics, and that it could prompt a backlash against women candidates, and reverse gender equality gains (Reyes-Housholder, 2019). To support the theory that women will be held to a higher ethical standard in political office, Cross-sex and cross-country comparisons have been conducted, as well as case studies that examine how corrup-

tion scandals impact political women's popularity. However, it must be said that across disciplines, the current conclusions of research vary. In development studies and organisational psychology, some scholars still maintain that the presence of women will invariably lead to lower rates of corruption.

There are some variables in the existing research on the link between ethical standards and women in political leadership that are either omitted or opaque. It is unclear how acts of corruption are meaningfully compared, and how incredibly varied states of governance and time period affect such comparisons. For instance, during the democratisation it can be expected that both acts of corruption, and politically motivated allegations of corruption will be more frequent (Doig & Theobald, 2013; Moran, 2001). Other variables, such as familial ties to power, which we know impact the support women in office receive, are not clearly interrogated. I would argue that this has lead to incorrect suggestions that corruption has heuristic force when in comes to understanding women's experience in executive political positions.

That said, it is obvious the ethicality plays an important role for women in government. The suggestion of some essential ethical quality held by women has long been present in philosophical and political discussions about The Woman or "women". While, it is widely acknowledged that individuals are unlikely to possess any kind of essential social quality based on category membership, these beliefs still permeate throughout our language and beliefs. As such, I believe this area of investigation could benefit from a discussion of generic generalisations.

Generics are statements or beliefs that express generalisations about members of a kind or category, that are not quantifiably informed. To give an example; we would understand the statement "mosquitos carry West Nile virus" to be true, even though less than 1% of mosquitoes carry the virus. Conversely, we would not agree with the statement "human beings are right handed" even though

over 90% of human beings are right-handed. Generics are resistant to quantifiable data, and to counter-examples (Leslie, 2008). The elevation of women as 'the fairer sex' is an historical generic that undoubtedly plays a role in the dynamic between women and corruption in politics. While I adopt a cognitive approach to the problem in this paper, I do not wish to imply that other political and cultural perspectives are not of equal importance. There is no competition between perspectives, rather it is my hope that the varied approaches will complement each other to create a thicker explanation of the relationship in question.

This paper seeks to complicate the relationship between corruption and women in high political office. To do this, all women heads of government who have been formally charged or impeached for acts of corruption are investigated. This is done firstly through macro-analysis. It is found that, contrary to claims in existing research, women do not suffer a loss of political face or public support as a result of corruption charges. In fact, in some cases women will experience a bolster in support following an accusation of corruption. Moreover, it was found that often women are found guilty of corruption when they have not in fact acted in such a way. This paper also argues that women do not turn away from politics following corruption allegations. Most maintain political enthusiasm and engagement, with many formally re-entering political life. Moreover, this paper extends the application of generics to social kinds, looking at how categorical generics affect women in politics.

A discussion of generics offers some preliminary possible explanations for the interesting affect corruption has on women heads of government and heads of state. The differing ways generic beliefs impact women facing corruption charges is elucidated using case studies. This research contributes to both the body of literature regarding women in politics, and the cognitive literature on social kinds. It offers a counter to suggestions that acts of corruption damage women's political careers and interests in an irreparable way.

Literature Review

Generics

Generic statements are used to express claims about categories broadly (lacking any kind of explicit quantification), rather than individuals (Leslie 2008, 21). They are viewed as true, although their truth conditions are quite elusive. Unlike quantifiable statements, they do not always infer truth from statistical measurement, or probability. Common examples used to illustrate this are statements such as, "Mosquitoes carry West Nile Virus," which is seen to be true even though less than 1% of mosquitoes carry the virus. Conversely, "human beings are right handed" would not be accepted as true even though a large majority of human beings are right handed. Their truth is usually resistant to counter examples - "tigers are striped" remains true despite the existence of albino tigers. A number of generic generalisations concern women and manifest within the political realm when women run for office; women are compassionate (Barnes and Beaulieu 2014; Huddy and Terkildsen 1993; Murray 2010); women are caring (D. Alexander and Andersen 1993; Barnes and Beaulieu 2014; Barnes, Beaulieu, and Saxton 2018; Eggers, Vivyan, and Wagner 2017), women are ethical (Chodorow 1979; Gilligan 1993), women are transformative (Franceschet, Piscopo, and Thomas 2016; Gilligan 1993; Goetz 2007).

When generics are used they are not expressing an abbreviation of an enumeration of cases, but rather they are saying something about the group as an open-ended class. Consider the following statements:

(1) All women are ethical

(2) Women are ethical

Statement (1) focuses on the members of a group, whereas statement (2) focuses on the group itself. While it is possible to falsify the first statement using a single counter-example, (2) cannot be undermined, even if a majority of the members of the group lack the property ascribed. The proponent of (2) can always affirm that although many women are not ethical, that does not mean that property

is not a part of their essence and that, in fact they would be ethical if they were in the right circumstances, due to a natural predisposition to such a quality (Leslie 2007, 2008, 2012, forthcoming; Langton *et al*. 2012; Haslanger 2014).

Generics are often used to explain the behaviour of one individual in terms of the property of the group. Take for instance, the claim: Shirley is the best candidate to root out corruption, because women are more ethical than men. Shirley may be the best candidate to end corruption in government for any number of reasons, and women in that region may have a history of more ethical behaviour than men. Even when a group-level explanation is apt, generics still communicate something mistaken: that the *intrinsic* nature of the group, rather than their extrinsic circumstances, is the relevant explanatory factor. That is to say, even if Shirley is the best candidate to root out corruption, it is not because her womanhood has afforded her a more ethical outlook on the world.

Generics further complicate our understanding because they are used to state three sorts of claims: statistical regularities, claims about natures, and claims about norms (Haslanger, 2014). These claims enter into a cycle where occurrences which are statistically consistent are viewed as evidence for the nature of something, and if something is natural, then that is the way it ought to be. Furthermore, what is ought to be is used to evidence how things are by nature, and then used to guide what statistical regularities should be. In this way, essentialist assumptions give whatever is statistically regular metaphysical grounds, then normative claims use those metaphysical groups to insist that all conform to them.

Corruption

The two pioneering papers on the relationship between gender and corruption (Dollar, Fisman, and Gatti, 2001; Swamy et. al., 2001) were weakened by the ways in which they measured corruption, a common problem for many statistical analysis of the phenomena. There are a number of definitions for corruption, with no consensus across political science, "Since the time of Aristotle, scholars ex-

ploring the question of corruption have adopted a variety of different definitions, associated with different sorts of research questions and normative concern" (Manion 1997:58). Heywood (1997, 6) posits that corruption is so complex that "it would be impossible to develop one generalisable and uncontested definition of political corruption."

However clearly explicating how corruption is understood is of critical importance to any paper that makes large claims, including those which claim women are more adversely affected by allegations of corruption. Being clear about how corruption is understood allows for studies to further evidence claims by using a consistent heuristic, and to conduct a deeper investigation about why corruption and gender interact in such a notable way.

Two of the most prominent existing approaches to defining corruption are the public officer-centred approach (Nye 1967), and the public opinion-centred approach (Gardiner 1993). The public officer-centred approach is defined by Nye (1967) as: "behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of the private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary of status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence. This includes such behaviour such as bribery (use of reward to pervert the judgment of a person in a position of trust); nepotism (bestowal of patronage by reason of ascriptive relationship rather than merit); and misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private regarding are)."

There are multiple problems with this definition, including the fact that it does not allow for any consideration of whether or not acts are for the public good. Given that so many women come into power as a result of family connection, this definition adds complexity to this relationship (Jalalzai & Rincker, 2018). There is nothing within the above definition which accounts for moral transgressions. Perhaps most importantly, the above definition does not account for culture differences in what acts should be treated as political corruption, and what acts should be treated as a seperate matter. Of course, it is difficult to craft an understanding of corruption which is both relativistic but

globally comparable. Furthermore, in many cultures two seperate sets of standards exist concurrently; one more cultural, and indigenous to the country in question, and one more formal and more closely related to a traditionally western understanding of corruption.

Conversely, the public-opinion centred approach views corruption as "what the public in any given state perceives it to be" (Heywood 1997:424). Clearly, when operationalising this approach, identifying and understanding of public opinion and what the public understand corruption to be, is of paramount importance (Keefer & Knack, 1997). This is complicated by the intricacy of what a public is, and the lack of a singular, homogenous public opinion (Carino 1986). Research must clearly articulate how public opinion has been measured and whom is viewed as the 'public' (Qizilbash 2001). However, some attention must be paid to public opinion because, as Gardiner (1993, 32) argues: "it is likely that officials and government employees will be guided more by local culture than by the words of a law, and thus will be more likely to violate the law," and also because how the public perceive acts of corruption is likely to dictate how they themselves behave, whether they will attempt to benefit from corruption, or whether they will adhere to the law.

Important to this understanding of corruption, is the concept of systemic corruption (Johnston, 1998). This kind of corruption results from weak structures that lack watch-dog institutions and, as a result, is widespread throughout the entire system. In such systems, accusations of corruption are less likely motivated by a desire to root out corruption, and more likely a means to reach a different political goal. Esarey and Chirillo (2013) suggest that *democratic* institutions activate the link between lower levels of corruption and gender. Within a democracy, corrupt behaviour comes with a significantly higher risk and a lower profit, as the possibility of exposure is heightened and the denouncement and ostracism of wrongdoers is increased (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003; Kolstad and Wiig 2011; Kunicova 2006). Many of the existing studies which explore the connection between women and corruption in office do not appropriately explicate what they understand corruption to be, and how it is examined and measured meaningfully and contextually.

Women, Corruption and Politics

The relationship between women and corruption is complicated by the distinct ways women access power. There are four specific factors which are particularly pertinent when investigating acts of corruption. Namely, political dynasties, democratic transitions, dual power arrangements, and the heightening importance of generic beliefs.

Overwhelmingly, executive women hold Prime Ministerial office rather than Presidential office. A presidential system is characterised by the separation between the executive and the legislature which means that the President is under no obligation to answer to the legislature, but has no ability to dismiss it. This is particularly important in a case like Brazil's Dilma Rousseff, where her legislature were highly corrupt, but she herself was relatively clean. Traditionally, this arrangement protects and insulates Presidents from scandals that may affect the legislature, but this was not the case for Rousseff. Presidents are also elected by popular vote, meaning that they enjoy extra security, but perhaps have a more responsive mandate. That said, in some systems, Presidents are largely ceremonial, the same can be said for Prime Ministers in certain countries. Dual systems are more favourable to women, as the existence of multiple executives results in a lower concentration of power. More often than not, women secure the weaker position in this arrangement, and they are most often appointed. This is highly influential to the connection between women and corruption, as at times, Prime Minister's are beholden to their Presidents or the wider legislature. In this weak position, it is relatively easy to be removed, and women are often scapegoated in these positions.

Another critically important structural factor that complicates the relationship between women and corruption is the high proportion of women in leadership who are a part of political dynasties (Hodson 1997; Ritcher 1991; Jalalzai 2004, 2008). This is particularly the case in regions such as Asia and Latin America, where almost all women executives come from political families, unlike men in executive positions whose backgrounds vary (Jalalzai 2008). Women often inherit political power,

gaining their legitimacy and recognition from male family members. If legitimacy is inherited, failure to live up to the standards or promises of a predecessor may have exaggerated consequences for women in office. Given that definitionally nepotism would be seen as corruption, it is important to consider the different cultural constructions of corruption that exist in countries were political dynasties continue to thrive.

Political dynasties have a strong relationship with political stability and institutionalisation. They often appear in states which are newly independent, where ethnic or religious factions that were suppressed under colonialism resurface or appear as a result of colonialism (Smith, 2012). These political circumstances are distinguished by regular regime changes, assassinations, exiles and imprisonments of leaders (Hodson 1997). Therefore in countries where political dynasties exist, it can be assumed that the punishment of leaders will be more severe. Given that so many women access power through political dynasty, it is understandable that it could appear as if women are being treated more harshly for acts of corruption (Jalalzai & Rincker, 2018). In actual fact, it could simply be that women are more likely to come to power in systems where corruption is rampant and there is a higher rate of leadership turn over.

Interestingly, political dynasties can work to nullify negative qualities that may be ascribed to women in particular regions. For instance, in Asian countries that have been examined, being a member of an influential family, having a high level (or international) education, or coming from a wealthy community mitigates the negative gender perceptions attached to women in politics (Ridgeway, 2001: 637).

There are many connections between democratisation, political dynasties, and gendered generics. Women in governments going through a process of democratisation benefit from conforming to the generic of the agent of change or the outsider (Jalalzai 2008). Moreover, if they are coming in fol-

lowing an authoritarian regime, or a period of great turmoil, it benefits women to promote themselves as highly ethical. In political dynasties, particularly in cases where the politician is the wife or daughter of a political figure, it is easy for women to adhere to the generic of mother, claiming a superior connection to the country and the people.

Data and Methods

The data set for this research includes women in high political office, that is Heads of Government or Heads of State, that have been charged with corruption. Twelve women have been charged with corruption, across 9 countries. While allegations of corrupt behaviour are levelled at many women politicians, this sample is interested exclusively in women who have been officially charged with corruption. This includes impeachment proceedings, imprisonments, exiles, and arrest warrants. Consideration is given to how each act of corruption fits into wider definitions of corrupt activities, and how this relates to the consequential punishment and reception of the women in question.

To examine the different kinds of corruption charges brought against women in high political office, and how they affect women's political popularity and prospects, acts of corruption are firstly detailed and then categorised. The kind of punishment they received is noted. One factor that this study determined was key to understanding the way corruption impacts women in politics, is whether or not a corruption charge is believed by the people to be political or persecutory in nature. Details of any political career following a corruption charge are given. Finally, information is provided as to whether or not women who have faced allegations of corruption still have the support of the public following the charge. This data set will allow meaningful trends to be identified. These cases can be categorised based on how they activate various generics relating to women.

To further investigate this generic interplay, two case studies are used. Through detailing how corruption impacted the individuals at the centre of these two cases, the ways in which generics can

heighten or mitigate accusations can be more closely examined. The case studies will look specifically at the accusations of corruption made against these women, how they responded, and public sentiment following accusations. Given that other studies have suggested that allegations of corruption will have a significantly negative impact on the public support for a woman in office, this is of paramount importance. Attention will also be paid to the political realities which frame the careers of these women, as I expect acceptance of corrupt acts will differ across various cultures.

The women chosen to be looked at as case studies are Dilma Rousseff of Brazil and Yulia Tymoshenko of Ukraine. These cases have been chosen for a number of reasons: they are from different regions, are charged with different kinds of corruption, and generics had varying impacts.

Political Women and Corruption

What is immediately obvious from a macro-analysis of women in political leadership who have been charged with corruption, is that their acts of transgression are incredibly varied. While there are strong and evident cases that some have committed serious crimes, such as murder or abuse of power, in other cases there is relatively little evidence for small crimes or failures such as economic mismanagement, which cannot be cleanly described as corrupt. This is where a more nuanced understanding of corruption is necessary.

If we adopt Nye's public officer-centred approach, then almost all of the accusations made against these women can be understood as corrupt. However, if we adopt Gardiner's public opinion-centred approach, many of these acts can be excused. This is amplified by the fact that many of these women were operating in weak democracies, where public acceptance (or complacency) of corruption is much higher. Take for instance, Indira Ghandi, who simply refused to accept the punishment

Figure 1

Leader	Country	Allegations	Kind	Political Motivation	Punishment	Public Support	Post Political Career
Gloria Macapagal Arroyo	Philippines	Allegedly tampered with results of 2004 congressional polls to favour her candidates. Misused the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office's P366 million intelligence fund. NBW scandal, ZTE-NBN fund scam, fertilizer fund scam, Hello Garci case.	Electoral Fraud, Economic Mismanagement, Graft	No	Imprisoned (4 years)	No	Current Speaker of the House
Isabel Martinez de Peron	Argentina	Embezzled large amounts from the Cruzada de Solidaridad - a government run charity. Charged with the disappearance of Hector Aldo Fagetti Gallego. Also involved in the alleged murder of students during her time.	Abuse of Power, Embezzlement, Murder	No	Deposed, house arrest	No	Continued as leader of Justicialist Party for nearly a decade after being deposed.
Park Guen-hye	South Korea	Leaking classified information. Using position to call in favours for friends. Creating a cultural blacklist and the culture of the government. Took $36 million in bribes from the National Intelligence Service. Interfered with election polls. Allowed close confidant to promote candidates who were friendly to her, Choi S_n and Samsung.	Abuse of Power, Bribery, Electoral Fraud	No	Impeached	In prison	
Dilma Rousseff	Brazil	Laws and misappropriated funds. Removed private close friends. Impeached. Many members of her party spent and some close friends. Accused of breaking accounting rules in her election and an illegal auaction. Nevertheless, not of corruption. To impeached in February of Lava Jato scandal.	Economic Mismanagement	Yes	Impeached	No	Ran for senate unsuccessfully.
Han Myeong-sook	South Korea	Charged with accepting $83,000 in bribes from the corporation president, Han Sangnyun Goal. Express Railway scandal.	Bribery	Yes	Imprisoned (2 years)	Yes	Career hold no political position.
Joyce Banda	Malawi	Cashgate money paid out in improper fee reimbursement where money never supplied. Contracts were also inflated, and payments were made with no documentation. About one-third was siphoned off the annual GDP. In six months. No direct connection to Banda.	Plunder	Yes	Arrest warrant (Malawi)	Yes	Powerful figure for the People's Party. MCP alliance. Has voiced desire to re-enter politics.
Yingluck Shinawatra	Thailand	Rice-pledging scheme - central rice price. Bought rice at above market prices leading when rice sold at a loss. $8 billion claimed when it paid for rice management schemes. Claims she was not truly allowed to administer it on her own.	Economic Mismanagement	Yes	In exile (5 years, impeached and banned from politics until 2020)	Yes	Powerful figure for Pheu Thai, stays on longer influential in Thai politics. Living in exile and banned from politics until 2020.
Indira Gandhi	India	Found guilty of disruption election practices, misused an election expenditure, using government machinery for party purposes. Claimed bribery claim stood.	Electoral Fraud	Yes	Banned from office (approx 6 yrs)	Yes	Stayed in office and served another term as Prime Minister.
Benazir Bhutto	Pakistan	Received a kickback when in office by awarding two Swiss pre-shipment companies, SGS and Cotecna, overseas. Allegedly sanctioned Nizami to illegal the Karachi. Did not come corruption with a hid cabinet, and mismanaged the economy.	Economic Mismanagement, Murder, Graft	Yes	Deposed twice, went into exile, placed to run again but was assassinated	Yes	Held office twice more (also assassinated). Was placed to run again but was assassinated.
Yulia Tymoshenko	Ukraine	Kyoto Tymoshenko - put in prison and charged for much harm. Her alleged as part of the murder. She signed natural gas import contract with Russia. Case rising to the United Energy Systems of Ukraine.	Economic Mismanagement	Yes	Imprisoned (7 years)	Yes	A front runner in Presidential races, will likely run for Prime Minister.
Khaleda Zia	Bangladesh	Over 34 cases filed against Zia, but most pertinent: Zia Orphanage Trust graft. Zia Charitable Trust corruption. Rice graft case. She has also been charged with a number of instances, and for challenging elections between her family.	Graft	Yes	Imprisoned (? years)	Yes	Lead her party, BNP, from Prison until the High Court rules prisoners could not contest an election.
Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner	Argentina	Accused of embezzlement from national public works contracts with Lazaro Baez during presidency. Also allegations of bribery.	Graft	Yes	Charged (pending conviction)	Yes	Member of Argentine Senate. Running for Vice President.

for her electoral fraud charges and stayed in power without any real public opposition (Green, 2013). Of course, it should be acknowledged that the public of any state is not a homogenous body, and it is likely that some members of the public did voice dissent. For the purposes of this paper, unless members For the purposes of this paper, dissent has only been noted if members of the public organised to voice their dissent.

One aspect of corruption that was found to be important in this study, was whether or not corrupt acts could be viewed as for 'public gain.' This significantly impacted the interpretation of corrupt acts for both Yulia Tymoshenko and Yingluck Shinawatra. The acts of corruption for which they were charged and punished, could equally be perceived as for the benefit of the public as much as the benefit of the politicians themselves. This concept was also influential in the corruption charges brought against Dilma Rousseff, but in a very different way; although it is near impossible to distort Rousseff's actions into something that can be seen as political corruption, her larger failure to take care of the public resulted in her downfall. Her loss of public support, and the general disinterest in whether or not her actions were actually corrupt was a result of economic mismanagement. In some cases, where abuse of power is at the root of corruption charges, the positive benefits the public may have received as a result of corrupt acts may have nullified a negative response in terms of declining support or popularity. This would also play into the generic of maternalism, which is often associated with women in politics.

In two instances, the actions which lead to corruption charges were presented at elections, were undertaken publicly, and had a mandate. This demonstrates the importance of understanding whether or not corruption allegations or charges are viewed by the public as politically motivated. Accusing someone of behaving in a corrupt manner while in office is a common way to overthrow or change a government, regardless of the gender of the politician at hand. In all of the countries where women have been charged with corruption, a number of men have faced a similar fate. It is difficult,

and largely unhelpful, to compare across gender in a more detailed way because of the paucity of the sample and the high likelihood for omitted variables given the disparity of circumstances.

That said, an overwhelming number of the women charged with corruption claimed that the charges were politically motivated. Moreover, these claims garnered significant support, which largely attested to the women's innocence. This is an important observation for two key reasons. One, is that it provides counter-evidence to studies which suggest that women's popularity is uniquely and permanently damaged by corruption scandals. While women's popularity may take a downturn following a corruption allegation, it must be stressed that creating a causal relationship between the two does not account for possibly committed variables, which may have an important affect on the theory.

Secondly, it could be suggestive of an understanding by the public that the corruption women are often alleged to have committed, is different in nature to what we generally think of when we discuss corruption in politics. As previously mentioned, corruption is conceptually difficult to define. As such, it is possible that corruption committed by women takes a different conceptual form to that committed by men. Furthermore, punishment for corruption may in fact bolster support for women in politics, and embolden their status as agents of change. This is true for any political actor seen as an agent of change regardless of gender. However, given that so many women find their way into power using this generic, it warrants further investigation. If the public believe that corruption charges levelled against women are politically motivated, it may strengthen their claim as outsiders, different to the political machine. In countries where political systems are inherently corrupt, this may bolster their appeal as opponents or threats to the status quo. Accusations or charges of corruption against political opponents have historical had this affect for actors regardless of gender. However, given the existence of a transformative generic for women, that is, the belief that the ability to

bring about change is somehow essential to a woman, it is worth interrogating how this affects women in political office.

It would seem that the consequences of acts or accusations of corruption are less linked to the acts themselves, but rather the politician and their general performance. This further complicates the situation, as it is difficult to delineate how politicians are assessed by the public, and there is a significant body of work which looks at the gendered aspect of such assessments. This point will be investigated further in the case studies, as it also prompts a closer interrogation of the construction of ethicality. A broken promise or a failure to meet a certain expectation may be viewed as unethical behaviour; if that is the case, behaviour which is not technically corrupt could be interpreted as corrupt in a particular context. Similarly, corrupt behaviour could be viewed as ethical in different circumstances.

A number of similarities can be observed by looking specifically at the women who were not able to retain the support of the public following charges of corruption. Most obviously, these leaders either did not claim, or were not able to persuade the public that the charges laid against them were politically motivated. In other words, the public either believed that these women had partaken in corrupt behaviour, or disliked them to the point that they could not be persuaded of their innocence. That said, depending on the strength of democracy within the state, public support has not always uniformly translated into the inability to continue a political career. Both Gloria Arroyo and Isabel Peron were active in politics following corruption charges despite having relatively little public support. Park Guen-Hye and Dilma Rousseff, the two women who were formally impeached, are also interesting to consider. Neither of these women have retained the support of the public. Park clearly and obviously committed corrupt acts, where Rousseff clearly and obviously did not.

Based purely on this data set, the size or severity of corrupt acts themselves cannot be said to have any bearing on the punishment of women heads of government or state. Contrary to what the findings of other studies suggest, the data suggests that women can be significantly corrupt and still manage to retain public support and a political career. Contrastingly, women who have not been corrupt can struggle to maintain public support or political standing in the face of allegations. This suggests that other variables may be impacting this relationship. As already mentioned, the democratic strength of a political system will likely have an impact on the perception and toleration of corruption.

I would argue, generics that strongly relate to women in politics (namely that: women are virtuous; women are maternal; and that women are agents of change) potentially influence how women fair following acts or allegations of corruption. It must be said that these characteristics in no way are essential to women, however they are believed to be. Men can be agents of change, or virtuous politicians, but these are usually characteristics which they choose. For women in office, these characteristics are chosen for them. Such generic generalisations are believed to be true of almost *all* women without any quantifiable evidence for such claims.

The women that make up the dataset in *Figure 1* can be categorised based on which generics they successfully fulfil. Many of these women come from political dynasties, and as a result may struggle to comply with the agent of change generic. Something beyond the scope of this paper, but worth further investigation, is how the 'Iron Lady' construction interacts with the maternal generic. A number of the women included in the dataset have been branded iron ladies, however this does not seem to be incongruent with maternalism. For instance, Khaleed Zia has been described as both an iron lady and the mother of humanity. Of paramount importance is the ways in which these women comply with the generic of ethicality. For the purposes of the paper, two cases will be examined. Dilma Rousseff will be examined, who has failed to retain any political career or public

support. Then the paper will investigate Yulia Tymoshenko as she still has strong public support and a political career.

Case Study 1 - Dilma Rousseff

Dilma is kind of the mother of PAC. She is the one who coordinates PAC. She is the one who takes care of it, who follows it, who makes sure the plan is working.
- President Lula 2008

What makes the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff interesting, is the fact that while the government had the votes and support to impeach the President, there is widespread agreement throughout politicians and the public alike, that she was not guilty of corruption. In fact, Rousseff has a strong political reputation as an honest politician. The fact that Rousseff was unable to retain the support of the public was particularly unusual, given that many other women who have been charged with corruption were able to do so. Rousseff's case has received more attention than other 'corrupt' women politicians. Academics are particularly interested in Rousseff's case, because Michael Temer, the politician who succeeded her as President of Brazil, was exceedingly and undoubtedly corrupt, thus providing a good gender comparison (Weitz-Shapiro & Winters, 2017).

In regard to a generic analysis of this case, Dilma Rousseff was not seen as a change agent, nor did she attempt to present herself as one. A close political companion of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, she represented the status quo. In 2011, she defeated the centre right coalition to continue the government led by the centre left Workers' Party, the party founded by Lula, who had been in power since 2003. Rousseff had also been a member of the government for this period, and prior to that, worked in big business. She ran a campaign where she promised to maintain the popular policies of the leader who preceded her. Lula was particularly popular, still maintaining 80% public support at the end of his tenure. Many attribute his popularity to her election, as she failed to win the vote of more than 50% of the public in the general election, and did not win the South in the run off election, relying on Lula's strong supporters in the north to get her into office (French & Fortes, 2012).

That is not to suggest that Rousseff could not have marketed herself as a change agent. She had a long history of revolutionary activity while fighting against the dictatorship installed following the 1964 coup d'etat. She led bank robberies, taught classes on Marxism, and belonged to two militant organisations. After being captured in 1972, she was brutally tortured for 22 days and sentenced to six years in prison, three of which she served. After leaving prison she was stripped of all her political rights for 18 years (La Botz, 2015). Throughout her campaign and presidency, she was candid and unapologetic about her guerrilla history, however she never made it a central part of her political personality and tended to speak vaguely when recounting that time in her life. During her impeachment, staunch supporters wore shirts printed with a photo of 22 year-old Rousseff defending herself in court during this revolutionary period. This showcases how the generic of change agent could have generated support for Rousseff.

Rousseff made her government's focus the reduction of poverty and promotion of economic prosperity. Furthermore, she implemented an industrial policy that looked to guide the course of the economy. As an economist, returning Brazil to economic prosperity was something Rousseff was seen as capable of doing. Taking care of the Brazilian people economically also allowed Rousseff to invoke the maternal generic. Interestingly, Rousseff also invoked the maternal generic more explicitly during her campaign. Many scholars agree that her image as a mother was central to her campaign and presidency (Amaral 2011; Bertazzo 2012; Pires 2011; dos Santos & Jalalzai 2014). She was known by Brazilians as Mae de Povo, that is, Mother of the People. One of the subsequent expectations attached to the maternal generic, is the requirement to 'take care', rather than 'taking charge' (Prime, Carter, & Welbourne, 2009). That means, she was required to be responsible for more, and less able to delegate responsibility to others or to blame external factors.

Rousseff had made an election promise to continue the stimulus (despite criticism from oppositions who claimed taxes and spending cuts were necessary). However, once in power she independently changed tact, and begun making quite aggressive fiscal adjustments. A large part of the impeachment case made against her revolved around the 'creative accounting' allowed by Rousseff which involved receiving loans from public banks to artificially enhance a budget surplus (Ansell, 2018). This surplus was superficial and the Brazilian people felt the affects of a failing economy. This act signalled a preferencing of her reelection over the well-being of her people, damaging her credibility as a compassionate person. Moreover, her inability to control the economy caused her problems. Rousseff presided over Brazil's worst economy since the 1930s, with a GDP of only 3.8%. The maternal generic requires women to exhibit a higher level of control (Prime, Carter, & Welbourne, 2009). Despite her expertise, and her election promises, she was not able to carry Brazil into a period of economic prosperity, and many suffered as a result of the economic downturn. I suggest that her impeachment, while categorically a result of corrupt behaviour, was more likely motivated by her economic failings, viewed as a failure to fulfil the maternal generic. Rousseff was charged with a very specific kind of corruption, namely "crime of fiscal responsibility," which meant she was not charged for any kind of self-enrichment (Bruneau, 2016). Instead, this specific charge points to the real issue in the eyes of the public - her responsibility for the economy.

The generic of ethicality may have been damaged by the indirect corruption of her cabinet, or the depiction of the loans from public banks as duplicitous. The moral failings of those who surrounded Rousseff could have been viewed as a personal responsibility, as a result of Rousseff's embodiment of the maternal generic. This is particularly important, given the number of Rousseff's cabinet members and friends, 84 in total who were implicated during the Lava Jato investigations, particularly in regard to the Petrobas scandal (Petherick, 2016). The scheme diverted up to US$4 billion from inflated invoices for works and contracts from the semi state-owned oil giant, Petrobas, to cover the campaign expenditures from the PT, PMDB, and the Progressive Party, all of which were

members of the ruling coalition (Benites, 2015). Almost all of political class were implicated in the Lava Jato investigations (Taylor, 2016). The one person who managed to sidestep all corruption claims was Dilma Rousseff herself. In fact even those who opposed her politically have openly acknowledged Rousseff's reputation as an honest politician with integrity (Hamilton, 2018).

It would seem that a transgression of the ethical generic would not necessarily have been significant enough to warrant an impeachment and the loss of support from the public. Her successor, Michel Temer, was particularly corrupt, with Supreme Court documents revealing he accepted millions of dollars worth of bribes, including a $5 million dollar bribe to fix a tax issue and facilitate a loan for the largest meat supplier in Brazil, JBS (Hamilton, 2016). However, in this case of flagrant corruption the lower house voted against referring the case to the Supreme Court, who would have had the power to impeach him. Similarly, there is strong evidence to support corruption on the part of Rousseff's predecessor and friend, Lula. It is well known that corruption allegations are often used by groups in power (political, economic, or media based) to exert pressure and influence the political agenda, disrupt policy, or reroute public debate (Doval and Actis, 2015). I do not think that this disparity in punishment is indicative of a different standard for men and women. While a comparison of Rousseff and Temer or Lula may understandably lead to such a conclusion, there is no consideration of other variables, which paint a more nuanced picture. I suggest that Rousseff 's impeachment was a political strategy to punish her for failing to conform to the maternal generic. The people were severely impacted by the failing economy, with many holding Rousseff personally responsible, explaining their willingness to support an impeachment protest. Despite promoting a maternalistic agenda, the widespread corruption throughout Rousseff cabinet was viewed as a personal failing, as was the failing of the Brazilian economy.

Rousseff acknowledged the ways that she struggled to meet the generic of the maternal woman during her impeachment trial, saying: "There are certain elements of machismo and misogyny in this

impeachment … I have always been described as a hard woman. Yet I have never heard a man described as a hard man" (Encarnación, 2017)

Case Study 2 - Yulia Tymoshenko

I never complain. I chose the road of fighting with the Ukrainian oligarchy in 1996, and have paid for this with my freedom and that of my husband, my father and my close friends.

- Yulia Tymoshenko

Throughout her premierships, first in 2005 and again in Fromm 2007-2010, Yulia Tymoshenko was criticised continuously on ethical grounds. The ethical charges were partly motivated by her governments consistently running on an anti-corruption platform (Sereda, 2018). What allowed Tymoshenko to overcome these criticisms was her strong adherence to the 'transformative' generic. Her embodiment of the 'outsider' allowed her to consistently demonstrate that accusations of political corruption were being levelled at her by actors who were themselves corrupt. Moreover, other accusations, such as the suggestion of economic or political mismanagement, was easily explained as either distorted or ordered by actors who wanted her to fail in her revolutionary mission.

Yulia Tymoshenko is an interesting case to examine in juxtaposition to Dilma Rousseff. As a co-leader of the Orange Revolution, which occurred in response to fraudulent elections after a long period of little economic and political change, she did not continue a long and popular government. She proclaimed the desire to stop "the destructive process that has, as a result of the incumbent authorities, become a characteristic for Ukraine" (Aslund & McFaul, 2006). Being an agent of change was central to her political persona, before taking office and while in power.

To understand Tymoshenko's experience as Prime Minister it is essential to account for her relationships with Yanukovych, the President she fought a revolution to oust, and Yushchenko, another po-

litical leader with whom she formed a fractious coalition (Zhurzhenko, 2014). Following the successful Orange Revolution, Tymoshenko served as Prime Minister while Yushchenko served as President. Her first term as Prime Minister was complicated by a power struggle between the two, and conflicts with other members of the "Orange" team (Rubchak, 2005). Despite only taking office in January 2005 she was dismissed by the President September the same year. President Yushchenko tried to suggest Tymoshenko was responsible for Ukraine's economic slowdown; ongoing internal political conflicts; that she served the interests of businesses over the people; and was guilty of corruption as she amassed and cleared debt as she saw fit (Haran, 2011). The President had attempted to attack her using every generic; she could not control the coalition (maternal), she was serving the interests of business (ethical) and she had betrayed the values of the revolution (agent of change). Tymoshenko responded by suggesting Yushchenko and his inner circle had been deliberately undermining her, and that in doing so he was ruining the country's unity and future. In doing so, Tymoshenko confirmed her 'natural' adherence to all three generics; she would be maternal, ethical, and transformative under any other set of circumstances than the ones created by Yushchenko. Rather than discrediting Tymoshenko, these allegations caused President Yushchenko's approval ratings to go down, and Tymoshenko's to go up.

Tymoshenko was reinstated as Prime Minister in 2007, following parliamentary election where her party won a significant number of seats, more than Yushchenko's party (Mierzejewski-Voznyak, 2014). She maintained great support from the public throughout this premiership. Tensions continued between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko, heightening particularly around the issue of the 2008 South Ossetia War. Tymoshenko was accused of having a pro-Russia stance to the conflict, with some politicians claiming she was guilty of high treason. These accusations did not exist in isolation; Viktor Baloha, Yushchenko's Chief of Staff, relentlessly criticised her, accusing her of not being religious enough, damaging the economy, and ordering assassinations (Hale, 2010). Tymoshenko also increased pressure on the already strained relations when she tried to work with oth-

er parties to pass legislation which would make it easier to impeach future Presidents. Yushchenko responded by withdrawing his party from the coalition with BYuT and declared he would veto the legislation (Kuzio, 2011). It is also important to note that Tymoshenko's second term was significantly impacted by the Global Financial Crisis (Kudelia & Kuzio, 2015). This caused Tymoshenko to put a heavier focus on anti-corruption. From the perspective of generics, it is interesting to observe that Tymoshenko's response to attacks on ethical grounds was to lean in and further commit to the ethical generic.

Tymoshenko ran for President in 2010 alongside Yushchenko, the President she served with, and Yanukovych, the President she worked to overthrow. Yanukovych won the election, with Tymoshenko coming in second. There were significant concerns about electoral fraud, with claims that millions of votes had gone missing, and that many votes were falsified (Lukinova et. Al., 2011). Tymoshenko addressed the Ukrainian public, saying: "The falsifications decided the elections, not you. Like millions of Ukrainians, I assert that Yanukovych is not our president" (Tymoshenko, 2010). Discursively, Tymoshenko consistently invoked the ethical, maternal, and transformative generics. She referred to Yanukovych and his team as an oligarchy and in response Yanukovych was quick to publicise his intention to dismiss Tymoshenko's government. Tymoshenko resigned as Prime Minister on 4 March 2010. This strengthened her as an outsider, further conforming to the transformative generic.

Once in opposition, charges of corruption began to be filed against Tymoshenko. First, a 2004 case which had been closed by the Supreme Court regarding the bribing of judges was illegally opened. Tymoshenko publicly proclaimed that the prosecutors office had been personally instructed by Yanukovych to prosecute her. This was only the beginning of her prosecution with up to 41 charges being levelled against her (Popova, 2013). Nearly the entire international community recognised the criminal cases against Tymoshenko as political persecutions (DHCHR, 2011).

One of the central cases made against Tymoshenko was regarding Ukraine's 2009 gas contracts with Russia. An ad hoc commission was set up within the Ukrainian Parliament to investigate the exact circumstances surrounding the agreement between Ukrainian Naftogaz and Russian Gazprom. The commission concluded that Tymoshenko forged directives from the Cabinet of Ministers. This lead the Prosecutor General to criminally charge Tymoshenko for abuse of authority. Specifically she was changed under article 365 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine for acting in "[e]xcess of authority or official powers" causing "grave consequences," namely "substantial damage to the legally protected . . . state . . . interest." The Criminal Code mandates an imprisonment for seven to ten years if found guilty of this charge. The indictment suggested that Tymoshenko agreed to terms that were "economically profitless and unacceptable" for Ukraine and did for personal gain and with full awareness of the repercussions for Ukraine (Popova, 2013). Former President, Yushchenko was a central witness for prosecution. He states that Tymoshenko was "driven by political gain when she signed [the] gas deal with Russia in 2009 and betrayed Ukraine's national interests," suggesting that she wanted to be viewed as a saviour who ended a price dispute (Mierzejewski-Voznyak, 2014).

In fact, the gas deals between Putin and Tymoshenko were made in the context of a severe crisis, where Putin cut gas supplies to Ukraine and Western Europe (through Ukraine) completely in January of 2009. Under significant pressure from Western Europe, Tymoshenko reached an agreement with Russia within two weeks. The Cabinet of Ministers confirmed the contracts upon her return from Russia, and the the flow of gas was fully restored.

The Deputy Director of the Koretzky Institute of State and Law, testified that in her expert opinion did not exceed her authority and that the directives were necessary for Tymoshenko to fulfil her duties. Strangely, many of the prosecution's witnesses also testified in favour of Tymoshenko, including the former head of Naftogaz. It was clarified that the directives were necessary, that prices cal-

culated were standard and fair, that the cabinet was consulted, and that the agreement included a provision which allowed for Ukraine to terminate the agreement without penalty at their will (Kudelia, 2013). Nonetheless, Tymoshenko was sentenced to seven years in prison. More cases were then opened against her.

Additional charges were brought against Tymoshenko under article 365 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code for "acting intentionally and in personal interest" in regard to her purported decision to "use [the] funds received from the sale of quotas for greenhouse gases . . . to cover the expenses of the state budget of Ukraine, first of all [the] obligation to pay pensions." Tymoshenko denied these claims, stating the monies could still be found within the Environment ministry, and declared the investigation to be a witch hunt (Sereda, 2018).

Similarly, prosecutors charged Tymoshenko under 210, 364, and 365 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine ("violation of budget legislation," "abuse of power that led to serious consequences," and "abuse of power," respectively) for the purchasing of ambulances for rural medicine (Popova, 2013). It was suggested that the ambulances were not agreed to as a part of the budget, and that the agreement was signed without proper oversight. Interestingly, in both of these cases, the claims to personal interest are difficult to understand. Moreover, the decisions that were purported to have been made in the two cases, would not have been made by the Prime Minister alone, rather by the collective body of the Cabinet Ministers of Ukraine.

Both cases were dismissed in June 2011, after an international auditing company, and the law firm "Covington & Burling" investigated and concluded that the cases as stated were "not worth the paper on which they are written" (Zadorozhnii, 2016). However, Tymoshenko still spent four years in prison. Tymoshenko was released from prison during the 2014 Ukrainian Revolution, when the parliament voted to decriminalise the Article on which she was charged (Obydenkova & Libman,

2014). Since her release, Tymoshenko has remained active in politics, running in two presidential elections, and heading a political faction, the Batkivshchyna. She announced her ambitions to serve in the office of Prime Minister again in June of 2019 (Mokhonchuk, 2019).

Conclusion

While there has been a surge in interest, little work has been done to conceptually understand the relationship between women in high political office and corruption. Contributing to the growing body of literature on women executives, this article clarifies how generics may impact the public perception and political longevity of women in office. Contrary to other work which suggests, the prescriptive stereotype of ethical morality creates more obstacles for women in leadership, this paper argues that prescriptions or generics must be viewed together.

The first observation of this paper is that comparative work is significantly impacted by a lack of clarity surrounding what acts are viewed as corrupt. While creating a universal definition corruption may not be possible, research needs to be more explicit about what is meant by corruption. This will allow for simple replication in different contexts, resulting in more comparable and compounding results.

As demonstrated in this paper, this issue is further complicated by the fact that women are often charged with corruption for acts that are not corrupt. Such flexible criteria for corruption also raises questions for any attempts to conduct cross-sex comparisons. When conducting such research, particular attention needs to be paid to regional realities, and the conceptual construction of both women and corruption in the region. The lack of demonstrable acts of corruption, is evidence of politically volatile settings, where accusations of corruption are a relatively simple way to remove actors from power. It could be argued, that the generic of ethical morality actually cushions women in office from the public taking such accusations seriously.

My argument challenges some existing research, finding that women's success is not irrevocably damaged by allegations of corruption. In fact, in some cases, corruption allegations can bolster the appeal of and support for women in office. Almost all of the women who have held an executive political position and been formally charged with corruption have gone on to continue their political careers, and have managed to maintain a particular level of public support.

I presented a two-staged approach to the seemingly problematic relationship between women in office and corruption scandals. First, I conducted a macro-analysis of all women who have held a chief executive position in politics and been formally charged for corrupt behaviour. This highlighted the discrepancies between the formal charges and the deeds, but also the correlation between public support and the belief that charges were politically motivated. Using a discursive analysis of case studies, I identified the different roles generics played in two distinct and dissimilar situations, Dilma Rousseff and Yulia Tymoshenko. I found that generics have a mitigating impact on each other, and that the ethical generic can be overlooked if a political woman strongly embodies either the maternal generic, or the transformative generic. Furthermore, political accusations of corruption are not necessarily enough to damage the ethical image of a woman in office, and if the institutions she works within are known to be corrupt, such accusations may in fact strengthen her fulfilment of this generic.

Interestingly, given that a President cannot be impeached for not being maternal or transformative enough, allegations of corruption may prove to have force in circumstances were a woman has failed to live up to these generics, as was the case for Dilma Rousseff. This paper has suggested the potential for a cognitive approach to understanding this relationship. Using generics which seem to be universal to the concept of 'woman,' this research paid particular attention to ethical, maternal, and transformative proscriptions. Following these insights, future research could also examine how

generics modify public support and political success for women who have been charged with corruption, where their is significant evidence of their guilt. Further research could focus on the heuristic force of each of these generics, and how they interact with each other.

The importance of regional context when considering the relationship between women and corruption cannot be understated. While the number of women punished for corrupt acts is striking when looking at women executives as a whole, when the leaders are viewed in the context of their own country, the connection is less remarkable. Women often come to power as a result of family ties, or during the democratisation process. Governments that engage in dynasty politics or whose democracies are fledging are predisposed to higher levels of corruption. If a majority of women had entered executive office in countries with strong democracies, it is likely that the levels of corruption would not be so high. Put simply, there is a strong casual correlation between country and corruption, than there is between gender and corruption.

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