

THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND WOMEN'S
POLITICAL REPRESENTATION, 1893-2003

Pamela Paxton
Melanie M. Hughes
Ohio State University

Jennifer Green
Luther College

Women's political representation, once considered unacceptable by politicians and their publics, is now actively encouraged by powerful international actors. In this paper, we ask how the growth and discourse of the international women's movement affected women's acquisition of political power over time. To answer this question, we use event history techniques to address women's political representation in over 150 countries over 110 years (1893-2003). We consider multiple political outcomes: female suffrage, first female parliamentarian, and achievement of 10, 20, and 30 percent women in a country's national legislature. We find that increasing global pressure for the inclusion of women in international politics, as well as the changing discourse of the international women's movement, helps explain women's acquisition of these multiple political outcomes. Further, by adding these concepts to traditional domestic models of women in politics, we demonstrate that country-level political, social structural, and cultural characteristics cause countries to act in conjunction with, or in opposition to, these global pressures. This is the first time that research on women in politics has considered such a comprehensive list of countries, time-points, and outcomes.