GENDER, WAR, and MILITARISM

FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES

Laura Sjoberg and Sandra Via, Editors

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Foreword by Cynthia Enloe

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to the teachers who inspired us
and the students who push us

Foreword

"Feminist perspectives." It's so easy to say but so hard to create. Laura Sjoberg and Sandra Via have managed to bring together in this one volume an amazingly diverse collection of investigatory writers who do just that: they consciously fashion a feminist lens through which to dissect, explain, and critique—all three—the political workings of masculinities and femininities in war zones, in military institutions, and in militarized cultures in prewar, wartime, and post-war eras.

Adopting an explicitly feminist perspective is not the same as choosing to look at something from a gender perspective. Certainly there is substantial overlap, but they are not coterminous. Sometimes a lot of us describe our analytical exploratory approach as from a "gender perspective" because, we imagine, that sounds to many of our listeners and readers less frightening, less radical, less political than from a "feminist perspective." After all, we want to be heard, we want to be taken seriously, so we don't want our potential listeners and readers to run in the other direction (or to avoid our conference panels, or never assign our articles, or deem us unworthy for tenure, or...). Substituting "gender" for "feminist" doesn't seem cowardly; it just seems prudent. And then, too, there are those occasions when we really are not aiming to fashion a feminist analysis. Creating a gender analysis can itself seem hard enough.

For gender, of course, is not always on everyone's mind. Nor is it something a lot of people want to consider. As these smart contributors show us, some of the most well-meaning people can forget about the daily workings of masculinity and femininity. Getting journalists, legislators, drill sergeants, human rights activists, and our academic colleagues to

take seriously the constructing, sustaining, and challenging ideas about and standards for what it means to be "manly" and what behavior fits into the tight shoe of "real womanhood" is no mean feat.

"Gender" today is inserted into scores of states' and international agencies' mandates. Gender data should be collected, data should be disaggregated by gender, projects should be designed with gender impacts in mind, and programmatic evaluations should be gender explicit. Nonetheless, all of these formal insertions—each of which has taken surprising amounts of concerted effort by alliances of outsiders and insiders to get into even the small print—has not succeeded as yet to transform the consciousnesses of most people, chiefly, but not only men, who are supposed to be following these mandates. And we won't be able to adequately explain that gap between printed page and actual practice until we ask feminist questions.

Thus, as challenging as it still is to get gender taken seriously, the subtitle that Laura Sjoberg and Sandra Via have chosen for this valuable collection is not "gendered perspectives," but "feminist perspectives."

Thanks to the strenuous sleuthing of researchers such as those whose work we can read here, there has grown up an Andean range's worth of evidence that these gendered politics matter, that they shape policy makers' assumptions and aspirations, that they determine whose security it deemed salient and whose is shrugged off, and that they bolt the doors to the participation of some while laying out the welcoming mat to the participation of others.

That is, what makes these *chapters feminist is* that each author here is conscious of—and wants us to become aware of—the political stakes in, and implications of, ideas about manliness and femininity. And paying close attention to politics means keeping our eyes on power. To craft only a gender analysis *without* an accompanying (informing) feminist analysis is to turn away from the workings of power. Who gains from this hierarchy of masculinities in a given constellation of militarized organizations? Who loses if this stigma is attached to a woman reporting rape in that conflict? Who has a vested interest in treating women as naïve in that peace negotiation? Who gains a new sense of public confidence if "security" is redefined to include freedom from domestic violence? What sorts of rewards, threats, persuasion, or coercion have to be wielded to keep certain men in line and to keep most women silent? What strategies have some women effectively used to tip the balance of gendered power during wartime?

The answers here are not presumed. They are pursued. That means each of these researchers have had to place questions about power on their own agenda. A feminist perspective doesn't come naturally. It is arrived at, often by initially trying out other, more conventionally accepted perspectives and finding them wanting. These researchers have found those nonfeminist perspectives to leave too much in the shadows, to leave too

much unexplained. That explanatory deficit is one of the chief motivators for starting to ask explicitly feminist questions in one's investigations.

Most notably, researchers such as those who have created this valuable volume have come to the shared conclusion that to adopt anything less than a consciously feminist perspective risks underestimating the amount and the varieties of power that it takes to prepare for militarized conflict, to wage and sustain militarized conflict, and to pick up the pieces in aftermath of violent conflict in such a way that leaves the militaristic culture undisturbed. As wide ranging as are the sites chosen by these contributing investigators, all of their examinations are fueled by an unwillingness to take that costly intellectual risk.

Cynthia Enloe

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The genesis of this volume was at a wonderful conference hosted at the University of Pennsylvania with the same title as the book, "Gender, War, and Militarism." The conference, held October 25 and 26, 2007, was sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania's Alice Paul Center for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality and Penn's Women's Studies Program. Without the support of the Alice Paul Center and the Women's Studies Program at University of Pennsylvania, as well as other conference sponsors (the SAS Conference Fund, the Middle East Center, the Annenberg School, Greenfield Intercultural Center, the African Studies Center, the Penn Women's Center, the English Department, the LGBT Center, the Political Science Department, the History and Sociology Department, the Anthropology Department, Gloria Allred, and Andrea C. Roberts), this book would not exist. Shannon Lundeen, the Associate Director of the Alice Paul Center; Demie Kurz, the Co-Director of the Women's Studies Program and the Alice Paul Center; and Rita Barnard, the Faculty Director of the Women's Studies Program and the Alice Paul Center, each were integral in the initial intellectual formulations of this project. Conference participants who did not ultimately write chapters for the book, including Marie Gottschalk, Caren Kaplan, Catherine Lutz, Jennifer Terry, Inderpal Grewal, Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, Nadje Al-Ali, Raka Ray, Ayako Kano, Elizabeth Hillman, Heather Sharkey, Julie Mostov, Ritty Lukose, David Eng, Dyan Mazurana, Katherine Sender, Victoria Bernal, David Kazanjian, Ariane Brunet, Dasa Duhacek, and Charlotte Bunch, are present in this volume in that their questions, comments, and discussion strengthened the chapters ultimately included in the volume.

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Those of you who have read more than one of my books (thank you, by the way) know that my acknowledgments usually end with a negative experience that reminded me of my inspiration to do work in this field. This one happened at a job interview last year. I had given my talk about the gendered representations of women who commit wartime sex crimes and was fielding questions about my previous work on portrayals of women's violence and my next book project. Several members of the audience asked questions I get fairly frequently: "Do you think women's violence is a different problem from men's violence?" (no), "What do I think about individual agency in global politics?" (relational autonomy), "Have you done the empirical research for the new book yet?" (no then, and still no). And then comes the question I am still reeling over: "Is gender really a social construction, or is your belief that gender is a social construction just your way, as a woman, of compensating for the fact that women are biologically weaker than men?" While I resisted the urge to let the questioner know that I was pretty sure I was not the one who was compensating, the very existence (if not social acceptability) of the question provides a reminder that the work of feminist scholars is far from done.

Contents

Introduction

Laura Sjoberg and Sandra Via

During World War II, the United States' success in driving the Japanese out of Baguio, the mountainous summertime capital of the Philippines, was credited to the indigenous Igorot women led by "a wizened old lady," Aning Andao (Gray 1945). With Aning, "pretty young girls and a few pregnant matrons" went "where the bulldozers have not gone and the trucks cannot go," hauling supplies through gunfire, where "men dropped their loads and scattered; the women, undisturbed, plodded on in a long single file to the front" (Gray 1945).

Ayat Akras was a Palestinian political journalist who had lost two family friends in the conflict between Palestine and Israel (Victor 2003). One "was killed by Israeli soldiers while he was planting a bomb" (Rubin 2002, 16), and "the second was a child playing with Legos in his home" (Sjoberg and Gentry 2007, 80; Victor 2003, 206). Ayat promised that she was going to "fight instead of the sleeping Arab armies who are watching Palestinian girls fighting alone" right before martyring herself in a Jerusalem supermarket, killing 2 and injuring 29, in March of 2002 (Patkin 2004).

In April 1918, the *New York Times* announced Mrs. Lindley Z. Murray's establishment of the National Tennis Women's War Relief Association, established for women to play charity tennis matches around the United States to fund "maintaining feminine physicians as workers in France" ("Women Plan" 1918).

Etsumi Tarihori, "a gray-haired, frail-looking woman" in Okinawa "spends bone-chilling January nights in a sleeping bag on a sidewalk outside the entrance to the U.S. consulate" (Allen 2003). She engages in "a round-the-clock protest" of the U.S. war in Iraq and has led the Okinawan

women's peace movement for years. As David Allen relates, "she's been there every Friday for 76 weeks as a protest against the U.S. military presence on Okinawa," inspired by an incident when a U.S. soldier raped a Japanese woman (Allen 2003).

Sgt. Steve William Lisette Peterson, a member of Britain's elite 16 Air Assault Brigade, "ran away from the Army in a desperate attempt to come to terms with his homosexuality" because "he feared being dismissed, and the reaction of his fellow soldiers if he told them about his sexuality" ("Gay Soldier" 2007). His commanding officers assured journalists that, since he told his fellow soldiers about his homosexuality, "there has been no reaction against him whatsoever," but Sgt. Peterson, aware of the many anti-gay policies and hate crimes in militaries around the world, had reason to be afraid ("Gay Soldier" 2007).

Tabitha, now 18, "runs a group for former girl soldiers, knitting and performing plays about their military lives" (McFerran 2007). She was 11 years old when she was abducted by the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) with her older sister. Tabitha was beaten "uncountable" times, and her sister was forced to be a "wife" of an SPLA officer and was impregnated (McFerran 2007). Tabitha and her sister Anna learned to do as they were told, "or the consequences would be terrible" (McFerran 2007). Since they have been free of the SPLA, Tabitha reports that "for the former girl soldiers, any hope of a 'normal' life is problematic. After their time in the army, they are often considered unfeminine and aggressive, making them poor prospects as wives" (McFerran 2007). Tabitha runs a group for former girl soldiers because their needs as women are often more complicated than the needs addressed in the supposedly gender-neutral disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) process.

Houston, Texas, resident Sybil Roberts had a nephew serving in the U.S. military in the Persian Gulf as it ejected Iraq from Kuwait in 1991. Sybil was "so angered by antiwar protesters at her door carrying petitions that she wrapped the columns on the porch of her…rowhouse with yellow satin, and planted a sign in her lawn that read 'we support our troops' on one side and 'down with protesting' on the other" (Stanley 1991). She argued that it was unpatriotic for women to protest against wars other women's sons were risking their lives to fight.

In 1998, amid intensifying Lebanese assaults on the Israel Defense Force's (IDF) Paamonit observation post coinciding with personnel cuts by the IDF, Gal, an Israeli woman soldier, was left to keep watch over southern Lebanon and northern Israel (Levinson 1998). Gal expressed worry about her own morale and that of her fellow soldiers in the face of increasing death tolls, explaining that "nobody wants to die and nobody wants to fight" (Levinson 1998).

Aning, Ayat, Lindley, Etsumi, Steve, Tabitha, Anna, Sybil, and Gal lived in different times, in different parts of the world, and through different conflicts. They also played different roles in those conflicts. Some