DISRUPTED

THE FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY ISSUE

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The Disrupted journal is published by the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy.
We would like to acknowledge the contributions of all involved:

DISRUPTED

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The Feminist Foreign Policy Issue

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A Note from the Editor-in-Chief

It seems wonderfully fitting that we're celebrating the Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy's one year anniversary with the launch of Disrupted, focusing this issue on none other than feminist foreign policy itself. At CFFP, our endgame is the adoption of feminist foreign policy worldwide as we believe it to be one of the best solutions to combat the elitest, inequitable, and harmful foreign policies we see all too often.

The aim of this journal is to highlight both established and emerging voices, and to seek to understand how the everyday actions of people - actions which might seem simply social or even private - are decidedly politically charged, and vice versa. We challenge assumptions about the unquestioned objectivity of policy - assumptions which miscalculate power structures and tend to leave an analysis of international politics lacking. We attempt to understand how the identities of both subjugated and the elite interact to reify systemic bias, and perhaps most importantly, we do not presume the authority to speak on behalf of anyone else. Ultimately, we see a feminist analysis of foreign policy not only as compelling, but as indispensable to achieve a more equal world.

Thank you so much for supporting this publication. CFFP is a grassroots, volunteer run organization and we're proud to lead the way in making foreign policy more feminist, more transparent, and more intersectional. With your support we're amplifying a different and more nuanced conversation that can better inform policy decisions and begin to alleviate inequality at both a global and local level.

Marissa Conway

CFFP Founding Director
& Disrupted Editor-in-Chief

CFFP originally launched in London - and given the UK's colonial legacy, we see no better place to be disrupting foreign policy as usual!

Using a postcolonial analysis to start the conversation at a different place will ideally lead to new conclusions. Considering how poorly the old way is doing right now, we need all the new voices we can get.

-Nanjala Nyabola

CAN AFRICAN WOMEN MAKE FOREIGN POLICY?

Nanjala Nyabola

A few weeks into Kenya's long running election crisis, I wrote an op-ed to give context to Raila Odinga's confounding decision to withdraw from the re-run of the presidential race with barely a week to go. The entire election period had been unpredictable, so rather than try to predict an uncertain future, I focused on what I knew: the law. I dusted off my Harvard Law JD and broke down the legal ramifications of Odinga's decision to withdraw according to the existing law, which pointed to some of the potential ways forward for the country. In summary, I argued, the Independent Elections and Boundaries Commission that was running the election should seek the advice of the court.

Considering that I was commenting from a place of relative authority, I was surprised to see a tweet from a (male) Swedish freelance journalist based in Nairobi saying "there are many clueless people in Kenya right now, and here is one of them", with a link to my article. It was strange that the tweet didn't respond directly to the information in my article; instead, because my perspective didn't align with what he felt he knew about Kenya, he dismissed it.

While I may never know what exactly prompted this journalist to respond to my article the way he did, I can speculate based on my nearly 12 years of doing public commentary and analysis in Kenya and abroad. Al Jazeera is one of the few websites that features a picture of the person who wrote the piece with their bio. It is obvious from mine that I am a black woman. I also made a conscious decision when I started doing this work that I would keep my bio as simple as possible.

It always says the same thing: "Nanjala Nyabola is a writer and political analyst currently based in [whatever city I happen to live in]". I do this deliberately. I want people to be convinced by what I am saying, not by who is saying it. I suspect, like many other people I've encountered in my career, this man didn't think I was qualified to speak on Kenya because, as a black African woman, I am a unicorn in the world of foreign policy.

Foreign policy analysis, either as an academic or as a public intellectual, remains one of the whitest and most male dominated fields - especially, and ironically, when it comes to Africa.

It's rare enough to find a woman in this field. In a 2015 survey of the major foreign policy think tanks in the US, Micah Zenko and Amelia Wolf found that while the number of women in these institutions were increasing, women generally held only around 30% of leadership positions. During this period, the Stimson Centre that bills itself as a non-partisan, non-profit think tank had the highest proportion of female analysts at 40%.

But it's even more rare to find African women. I visited the website of the Stimson Centre in the process of researching this piece and found that both of their black female staff members were in an administrative capacity. Neither were African. The Brookings Institute runs an Africa Growth Initiative that has added only two African members to their expert roster, one male and one female. None of the other institutions that Zenko and Wolf identify as top foreign policy think

tanks in America have Africans on staff. In fact, almost none of the US's main think tanks have black women generally and African women specifically on their staff. Ultraconservative Ayaan Hirsi Ali is probably the most visible exception to the rule, but it seems that most of the black staff members in foreign policy think tanks are administrators or IT experts.

Arguably, these American institutions have a preference or even feel a duty to hire Americans and to stay away from complex visa applications. Even still, the choice to hire Americans still doesn't explain the lack of diversity more generally. This lack of diversity in representation in foreign policy institutions does not improve markedly in Europe or Asia either, which perpetuates the presumption that the "foreign policy expert" is a white American or European man.

Part of the challenge is how foreign policy is defined. The dictionary definition of foreign policy is "a government's strategy for dealing with other nations" (Oxford English Dictionary, 2017). Inherent in this is that the expert is indigenous to the country for which the policy is being developed and not of the country into which it is being projected. Citizens of other countries are necessarily objects of foreign policy rather than active participants in shaping it. For various reasons, including favourable tax conditions for high stakes philanthropy, the West has invested more in developing these institutions to guide their militaries and ministries as they project themselves overseas, in particular towards the Global South. This translates into more Western foreign policy "experts".

As wars become more complicated, we increasingly face the limits of what a non-native analyst can know about a foreign country. In protracted crisis situations, not only do alliances and personalities change regularly, but entire swathes of the population – ethnic and gender minorities, migrants and refugees etc. - can become invisible as analysts chase the personalities that will tell them what they can know over what they should. In places like the Central African Republic, where there are no clear leaders of the various movements and very little knowledge of local actors and their motivations, effective analysis becomes nearly impossible as wars drag on and knowledge gaps persist.

What is considered to be foreign policy has shifted dramatically since the first think tanks were established. Although conflict still dominates the discourse, war and peace theory hold that to achieve true peace, or at least to manage conflict, a broader understanding of the issues driving the conflict is necessary. It's not enough to understand who the main belligerents are and what they say they want.

A successful policy approach must look at the histories of the conflicting parties and the roles of other less visible actors, like women and children.

Feminist, environmental, and postcolonial foreign policy have allowed for a more comprehensive approach to conflict regulation.

It is increasingly difficult to justify the absence of women generally, but particularly African women, at the table in foreign policy practice. In 2016 for example, a prominent global foreign policy concern was the death of migrants and refugees in the Mediterranean. In that year, almost 4,000 people died making the crossing, the majority from Africa attempting to cross from Libya after the Turkish route was increasingly blocked (Aljazeera, 2016). Many making the crossing were young West African women being trafficked for the sex trade (United Nations Refugees and Migrants, 2017).

Yet, and particularly after the resignation of Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma from the African Union, African women were completely absent from high-level decision-making to do with the ongoing crisis. Almost none of the analysis produced in Brussels or Washington

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DC was done by African women. With notable exceptions like the in depth work of Ben Taub at *The New Yorker*, much of the journalism focused on death on the Syrian route and ignored the thousands of women who were being sexually assaulted and killed.

The absence of young women in developing policy is reflected in how these issues are subsequently handled. As European countries increasingly push for "help them at home" policies, which seek to keep migrants in their country of origin, young women are being re-traumatised and returned to the sites of their physical and sexual assault. While in Palermo, Italy, I witnessed the arrival of a rescue ship that intercepted migrants from Libya. While the off-boarding and registration was generally as efficient as can be expected, I was shocked when one of the volunteers approached me as one of the few female journalists present to ask if I had a tampon. In all the planning – providing shoes, food and water, reception centres etc. – none of the seven organisations and state agencies present at the dock had considered that there might be menstruating women on board.

This moment can be extrapolated in many ways. For example, although women in South Sudan fought in the liberation war, there are no South Sudanese women present in any high level delegations concerning the current war. The UN has confirmed the rampant use of rape as a weapon of war, and that women are disproportionately bearing the risks and consequences of the conflict. Thus, any solutions that are proffered for a war waged primarily on the bodies of women are designed through the eyes of men.

Having women at the table does not guarantee improvement to the living conditions of women in war zones.

Liberia is an interesting case where women like Leymah Gbowee were active in organising women to protest and demand peace during that country's long running conference. Some analysis claims that the "Women in White" were a decisive factor in changing public opinion towards that war (Gbowee, 2011). And after it ended, Liberia became the first African country to elect a woman – Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf – as president. In theory, this should have lead to better participation and representation of women in public life in Liberia. However, one of the strongest criticisms against Johnson-Sirleaf is that during her two terms in office she did not do enough to protect the rights of women. Issues like female genital mutilation remained rampant. The Ebola crisis exposed how much unpaid and dangerous care-work women did as professionals and in their home owing to the failing healthcare system.

But Johnson-Sirleaf's presidency did diversify the voice of power in Africa after a history of resistance. It put a unicorn in the room, for instance, in making an African woman present in Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) meetings, discussing the political transition in the Gambia. Johnson-Sirleaf arguably paved the way for the later appointment of Dlamini-Zuma as AU chair. Dlamini-Zuma in turn pushed for increased employment and appointments for women at all levels at the AU. In 2017, alongside Catherine Samba-Panza, the third African woman elected president, Sirleaf will be part of a high level Panel of the Wise that will help shape the regional body's ideology. One unicorn led to more unicorns in the room.

It's important to note that goal of putting more African women at the table should not just be aesthetic, but should lead to diversifying what is considered a legitimate subject of analysis in foreign policy. The long-term goal of having more African women at the table in the foreign policy sector is to lead to a more postcolonial feminist lens in foreign policy. By incorporating the radical (i.e. getting to the roots) ideology of postcoloniality and the "the personal is political" approach of

feminism, a more human foreign policy may emerge. Currently, foreign policy analysis is focused on abstractions like technological capacity or balance of power, and not with the human consequences of decisions made in that framework. Bringing a new voice to the table may be the way to stimulate a broader way of thinking.

If our journalist friend had looked me up he would have seen this approach in my work; for example, my usage of Grace Musila's work on phallocracies as a way to think about Kenyan politics outside ethnicity. Or digging deep into the participation of women in politics in Kenya and Somalia to hint at the looming institutional failure in both nations. Using a postcolonial analysis to start the conversation at a different place will ideally lead to new conclusions. Considering how poorly the old way is doing right now, we need all the new voices we can get.

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Immigration policies under the Trump administration have become increasingly restrictive with each passing month, and pose no real solutions to the immigration debate in the U.S.

-Daisy Jaimez

THE END OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN MINORS PAROLE PROGRAM

Daisy Jaimez

On August 16, 2017, the Department of Homeland Security under the Trump Administration announced the end of the Central American Minors program (CAM). The CAM program, as enacted by the Obama Administration in December 2014, was designed to provide children fleeing from violence in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras with a safer alternative to a dangerous migration journey to the United States. If minors were not granted refugee status in the United States, they were then able to enter a two-year renewable parole so long as they had a parent legally residing in the country. From its start date in 2014 to its recent end, 1,465 minors were able to benefit from the parole program (Nakamura, 2017). In the summer of 2014, nearly 60,000 Central American children arrived at the southern United States - Mexico border in attempts to avoid to increased gang violence in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, also known as the Northern Triangle. There was a noted increase in the percentage of young girls fleeing these three countries in the most recent wave of minors arriving to the U.S., with increased and threats of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) contributing to this pattern (Doston, Frydman, Center Fray Matias de Córdova, 2017). President Trump's termination of the CAM program will make it even more difficult for girls who are victims of SGBV to seek asylum in the US.

SGBV is most commonly perpetrated against women and girls. The United Nations' Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women states that violence against women is:

A manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men. (United Nations, 1993).

SGBV can be exercised as physical, sexual, or emotional harm, or as the threat of such harm. Specifically, sexual violence constitutes any act or attempted act of sexual abuse without willing consent, including coerced sexual acts in exchange for food, shelter, protection, or resources (UNHCR, 2017). The most frequent perpetrators of SGBV are family members, gangs, and drug traffickers. It is worth noting that police officers, as well as other law enforcement and government authorities, are also guilty of committing SGBV acts (Dotson and Frydman, 2017: 2).

The *Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) & Migration Fact Sheet* released by Kids in Need of Defense (KIND) in 2017 reported that in 2015, a new case of sexual violence was reported every 46 minutes in Guatemala, and that 64% of these new cases involved children. Additionally, Guatemala reported 5,100 cases of girls aged 14 or younger being raped and impregnated in 2014. In Honduras, a crime involving sexual violence occurs every three hours, but this statistic is said to be an underestimation due to many cases going unreported. In El Salvador, nearly

half of all women have reported some form of SGBV (Burgi, Dotson, Frydman, 2017).

One of the biggest factors contributing to these increases in SGBV is the simultaneous rise of gang violence in the Northern Triangle. Gang members will often use SGBV as a means of displaying dominance over the population living in the territories they control. When a gang claims a specific territory, girls of all ages living in that community are approached by gang members and told they will become their "girlfriends." When a girl refuses to enter into these forced relationships, they are threatened with rape, kidnapping, murder, or harm to their families (Lakhani, 2016). Often, gang members will stalk young girls on their way to school, or as they leave their homes. The goal of gang members is to provoke fear in women and girls, but also to "discipline" the community where they are exerting their dominance.

Exceptionally problematic is a marked rise in impunity alongside the rising instances of SGBV (Beltran, 2017). Judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and police officers were responsible for 12% of the SGBV cases reported by women in El Salvador (Burgi, Dotson, Frydman, 2017). And out of the the 978 cases of violence against women in 2014, only four ended in convictions. In Guatemala, a weak judicial system means only 2% of the 5,000+ cases of femicide, the term for the intentional murder of women because they are women, have been convicted (World Health Organization, 2012). To El Salvador's north, 96% of the reported femicide cases in Honduras between 2005 and 2010 were neither prosecuted nor investigated (Burgi, Dotson, Frydman, 2017).

For many, migration is left as the only form of protection available to women and girls vulnerable to SGBV.

Many of those who make the dangerous journey to the United States do so with the hope of applying for asylum upon arrival. But with the end of the CAM program, these minors who once benefited from the temporary stay are left in a limbo. Despite the CAM parole program's granting a stay to about 99% of those who applied, 2,444 minors were no longer permitted entry (Nakamura, 2017: pg).

Central American girls who suffer SGBV - regardless of whether or not they are eligible for CAM status - need a pathway to refugee status in the United States. The United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as:

Someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion (United Nations, 1951).

Due to this strict and outdated definition, the U.S. too often makes the claim that these girls' reasons for leaving their countries are not enough to grant them refugee status. Under the principle of non-refoulement, a country cannot forcibly return someone fleeing from a state in which they face persecution. Despite this, the U.S. has repeatedly failed to ensure their safety.

Immigration policies under the Trump administration have become increasingly restrictive with each passing month, and pose no real solutions to the immigration debate in the U.S. As a signatory of the United Nations Declaration for Human rights, nations like the U.S. have a responsibility to intervene in situations where a state cannot ensure the safety of its citizens. Closing the door to the increasing number of women and girls who have fled sexual and gender-based violence leaves them more vulnerable. Unfortunately, while Washington, argues about who can legitimately claim refugee status, young girls are forced to embark on treacherous journeys or remain where their safety is disregarded.

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A feminist foreign policy must amplify the voices of women's rights activists in the Global South not because they are perceived as victims or as marginalized, but because they demonstrate political agency even when Western eyes are not looking at them.

-Rahel Weldeab Sebhatu

THE DIGITAL MEDIATIZATION OF FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY

Rahel Weldeab Sebhatu

In 2014, Sweden, a country that has branded itself for decades as a nation of gender equality and as a humanitarian superpower (Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond, 2016), launched a feminist foreign policy (Government Offices of Sweden, 2016). Since the end of World War II, Sweden's foreign policy has been quite passive with a focus on human rights and foreign aid (Brommesson and Ekengren, 2017). In fact, Sweden's decision to send Gripen fighter jets to Libya during the overthrow of Gaddafi was the first military intervention since the UN mission in Congo in the 1960s (Brommesson and Ekengren, 2017). Assuming that the ontological underpinning of a militarized "humanitarian intervention" is that of (masculine) state-sponsored violence, and what Keeble (1997 as cited by Zollmann, 2017) terms as "new militarism", then a foreign policy that reorients itself to be more ethically informed and based on cosmopolitan norms of global justice, peace and gender equality (Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond, 2016) — what can be referred to as a feminist foreign policy — might be able to counter this.

Brommesson and Ekengren (2017) conclude that although there were signs of media logic (how media communications shapes the reflexive nature of media and society) that foreign policy roles adopted to, Sweden's participation in NATO's military intervention in Libya had a stronger adherence to political logic. Inspired by the fact that political decision-making towards "humanitarian intervention" has been influenced by the adoption of foreign policy roles to media logic (Brommesson and Ekengren, 2017), this essay explores the opportunities and challenges that may present themselves if digital feminist discursive activism were to cultivate a media logic that would influence foreign policy decision-making against foreign military intervention.

Sweden's feminist foreign policy overwhelmingly focuses on increasing the political and economic participation of women and girls, including within peace processes and in combating the violence they experience in conflict and post-conflict situations and in close relationships (see Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 2016, 2017). **Despite its appeal, Sweden's feminist foreign policy reads like a humanitarian development project that risks infantilizing women and girls, particularly those situated in the Global South, as victims without agency.**

It mimics the homogenizing and systematizing mode of (Western) feminist analysis that Mohanty (2003) warns us about, particularly for the ways in which such feminist analyses construct the Third World woman and girl as (post-) colonial objects. The policy is also reminiscent of the red thread through today's "gender and development" discourse that Spivak articulates when highlighting the problematic nature of how "white [wo]men are saving brown women from brown men" (1999). If feminist foreign policies are to be truly feminist, meaning that they include everyone (hooks, 2000), they would have to historicize and locate political agency as a "necessary alternative to formulations of the 'universality' of gendered oppression

and struggles (Mohanty, 2003).

For the most part, studies regarding the mediatization of foreign policy analyze traditional news media (Rocamora, 2017). However, contemporary mediatization processes are becoming increasingly digital and online; some would argue that social media is killing newspapers and transforming news to the point where journalism as an occupation could become extinct (see New Statesman, 2017). The media logic that would influence decision-making by foreign policy actors today would most likely be cultivated online and, furthermore, could be influenced by online social media activities. Therefore, it should not be difficult to imagine that feminist discursive activism online could cultivate the type of media logic that would entice foreign policy actors to engage in a truly feminist foreign policy, one that actually listens to the women or societies they have mediatized as "ours" (Berents, 2016) and, therefore, "worth saving". I am enticed to think that the narratives of the women and girls that feminist foreign policies target would be against the type of "humanitarian intervention" witnessed in Iraq in 2003 and in Libya in 2011, solely for the reason that women and girls in (post)conflict societies are all too aware that they would be adversely affected by the devastating consequences of such interventions.

By looking at feminist academic debates that have discussed the hashtag campaign #BringBackOurGirls—which was sparked after 276 girls from Chibok, Nigeria were kidnapped by the Boko Haram terrorist group on 14 April 2014 — I draw on possible opportunities and challenges for online discursive activists who seek to bring awareness and solidarity for issues regarding women and girls in the Global South, while also historicizing and localizing their own agency and advocating against foreign "humanitarian intervention".

Undoubtedly, the #BringBackOurGirls campaign has influenced media agendas, not least because many celebrities—including then First Lady of the United States, Michelle Obama—participated in the campaign (cf. Carter Olson, 2016). As of today, 113 of the 246 Chibok girls abducted by Boko Haram are still unaccounted for (BBC News, 2017). There has yet to be a foreign "humanitarian intervention" inside Nigeria to find these girls despite Western narratives calling for it. Whether the absence of such a "humanitarian intervention" has to do with political logic or media logic is contingent; this does not mean, however, that the online activism in Nigeria and among its diaspora were silent about or unaware of the adverse effects foreign military intervention could have on their country.

Although the #BringBackOurGirls campaign was a home-grown effort, once the campaign became viral in the United States, it was a Los Angeles film director who was credited for creating the hashtag (Maxfield, 2016). Mary Maxfield keeps it blunt: "In the imaginary of the Global North, any brown face could function as the campaign's poster-child, but none could stand as its figurehead" (2016). If such an erasure can appropriate the very origin of the campaign to white Northern feminists, one can imagine how Nigerian calls for such feminists to not speak on their behalf were largely ignored. Still, Nigerian activists persisted.

For the most part, the Western version of the #BringBackOurGirls campaign believed that the correct response was "pity and military intervention"; but when this narrative was challenged, those who are privileged to forget about the girls did so while "for whom the girls were real remained" (Maxfield, 2016).

Nigerian activists routinely referred to their own strengths and commitments towards the missing students, and accordingly called on their own government to take action (ibid).

Although the Western narrative was more inclined to advocate for a "quick fix" in terms of military intervention, the #BringBackOurGirls campaign is still strong in Nigeria. It does not seek just to bring back the girls, but to also "returning them to better lives" (Spectra Speaks 2014 as cited by Maxfield, 2016).

Feminist activism relies on not just making visible the hegemonic (discursive) power struggles that infiltrate daily life, but also on promoting new grammars and social paradigms to combat sexist language (Shaw 2012 and Young 1997 as cited by Clark, 2016). Shaw (ibed) argues that online discourse can be a "mode of activism" that is "capable of triggering sociopolitical change with or without the help of collective action offline". Bennett and Segerberg (2013 as cited by Clark, 2016) calls the "form of activism that unfolds within communication networks rather than organizational membership structures" as connective action. As Nigerians continue to participate in the #BringBackOurGirls campaign through both online and offline action, feminists in the Global North could show transnational solidarity through a connective action that would challenge the misrepresentation of women, girls, and/or feminists in Nigeria and the Global South as a whole. A feminist foreign policy must amplify the voices of women's rights activists in the Global South not because they are perceived as victims or as marginalized, but because they demonstrate political agency even when Western eyes are not looking at them.

Transformative connective action through feminist online discursive activism that seeks to influence foreign policy actors to not resort to military intervention is possible.

Unlike traditional media, social media provides the space for "ordinary folk" to participate in the reimagining of narratives "...for demanding agency, autonomy, and institutional inclusion" (Loken, 2014). Compelling social media campaigns can influence mainstream media agendas. Even parody can be used as a tactic; in what Rentschler (2015, as cited by Clark, 2016) refers to as a "media hijack", feminist discursive activists can use satire to create awareness of the absurdities and stereotypes of women and girls from the Global South.

There are many challenges that feminist discursive activists should keep in mind; for example, there is the potential that hashtag campaigns will continue to, as Berents notes, "(re)produces problematic and limited concepts of girlhood in the Global South that also serve to reinforce ideas about girlhood in the Global North" (2016). Similarly, as stated by Higgs, such campaigns risk "...reinforcing damaging stereotypes of African women, making it critically important to address prevailing Western imperial narratives about African women" (2015). Narratives that replicate and reinforce colonial and racist heritage will continue to erase the complexities of experiences of women and girls (Berents, 2016) and ultimately such erasure "... does more harm than good" (Maxfield, 2016). Many women in the Global South, including those who are leaders and activists within their communities, do not have access to social and digital media, not just in the sense of limited access to the internet, but due to the fact that asymmetric power relations exist even online. To state this differently, members of diaspora are challenged by this digital divide, leaving their voices largely ignored as they compete with narratives riddled with racist/colonial/imperial heritage.

Thus, I propose that transformative connective action through feminist discursive activism online can cultivate the media logic that would entice foreign policy actors to not engage in military intervention. However, for this to work, the insight and voices of feminists in and from the Global South must be given the space it deserves. Feminists in the Global North could demonstrate transnational

solidarity and sisterhood by playing their part in spreading awareness of such voices through connective action.

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How do we effectively capitalize on this momentum and actively help to move this theory into acceptance, practice, and implementation?

-Samantha Turner

A PLAYBOOK FOR FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY

Samantha Turner interviews George Simpson

Introduction

The underlying theory of feminist foreign policy focuses on the inclusion and attention to rights of women and girls within a country, as well as outwardly focusing on those same values in other states. The political approach of the few is evolving and growing through the curiosity of the many. Though such a theory is not new, it is now time for it to catch on.

I am wholly convinced that an inclusive conversation, dissecting everything from policy to humanitarian assistance projects, can save time, money and lives. Consequently, I am fortunate enough to be able to dedicate all of my time to convincing members of the United States Department of Defense and others, that if implemented correctly, feminist foreign policy is a win-win-win for all.

So while feminist foreign policy draws increasing attention, the question becomes: how do we effectively capitalize on this momentum and actively help to move this theory into acceptance, practice, and implementation?

To discuss such a question, I turned to George Simpson to discuss how he approached the fight for marriage equality in New York State, and to draw take aways for campaigning in general. Simpson is an advocate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) equality and justice. He specializes in communications strategy and has worked on a variety of issues impacting the LGBTQ community on the local, state, national, and international level. He lives and works by the idea that it is impossible to fully separate local from global challenges. Simpson's experience is a valuable resource for learning things that may help streamline the work on feminist foreign policy in the US.

Turner: What made your strategy for tackling the challenge of winning LGBTQ rights - similar to deciding how to eat an elephant - successful?

Simpson: The marriage movement was successful in the U.S. because it was a distinct goal that the community and its allies could rally around. It was hard to conceive of the U.S. Supreme Court approving marriage, if it had not first been achieved in several states. When I started working on this in New York State, the country was at a national impasse, in part over the passage of the discriminatory Proposition 8 in the state of California, revoking the newly won right to marry for same-sex couples. To build a solution we took an approach similar to one articulated by legendary community organizer Saul Alinsky, that breaks up organizing into distinct parts and turning up the heat in a step-by-step way, as appropriate. By breaking that smaller challenge - marriage at the state level - into even smaller parts, we were able to ultimately win.

Turner: Could you offer some insight into the process you went through?

Simpson: We started by identifying what was standing in our way. Of the three major state branches of government, who ultimately were the decisionmakers in this effort, we only had the understanding and support of one of them - the executive branch. We hit a roadblock with the second decisionmaker, the courts, so we decided to focus on influencing

the remaining stakeholder: state senate members. To do this we targeted custom messaging for each senator based on district composition, public statements, private conversations, and other factors, in order to help them see how a win for marriage in our state could be a win for them as well. We helped them in any way we could - setting up meetings with constituents was critical. After they voted our way, we stood by them come election time - even across party lines!

Turner: You mentioned custom targeted messaging for the Senators, why was that so important? What else did you focus on to best convey your message?

Simpson: Any movement must begin by understanding who they are trying to reach. In my case, who are these key senators, and what might convince them? Who are their constituents, and how do we move them to get involved? We found people affected by this issue - same-sex couples, their families and friends - and made sure their stories were always in the press. We found queer families in target districts and set up meetings with their senators. We didn't focus solely on senate holdouts; building broad and deep consensus for our community was the goal.

At the same time, we educated voters, in part by understanding what would motivate them. A coalition partner conducted research that revealed that the language we were using to discuss marriage was no longer working.

There was a large group of people we referred to as "the moveable middle." Maybe they weren't really sure how they felt about this, or were softly supportive but were susceptible to the misdirections of our opponents. We found that we could really connect with people better by meeting them where they are and evoking shared values, such as love and commitment to family. This way, we were able to be more culturally understanding and demonstrate that we really all just want the same thing.

We've all had to convince someone to change their minds in our life. What seems to work best is keeping the focus on them. Ask them open-ended questions so they can work out how they feel for themselves. For example, we found that if we asked people if they considered if being gay were a choice, they were primed to support marriage in a followup question. Someone asked to consider if he thinks his daughter should be paid less for equal work might also end up "doing the math" on his own. People will trust conclusions they come to on their own, and remember them, far more reliably than whatever you have to say. But you can help them get there.

Turner: In what ways did you consider and accommodate for the diverse community that you were advocating for?

Simpson: One thing we came across is that our internal language didn't always work for everyone in the LGBTQ community. Some felt that our messages carefully targeted at the moveable middle did not feel true to them. For example, some felt that all this talk of love was missing the point, when real legal rights are on the line. Some felt that by focusing on marriage, we were assimilating too much with mainstream straight culture. Or, among fellow marriage activists, you had folks who thought we're doing it wrong, or weren't pushing far enough, fast enough.

But stop and ask yourself. "Is there anything I can learn from these critiques from your own 'side'?" Sure, some you'll have to dismiss outright, for instance, calls for any kind of violence. But it is important to remember that no one expert or group has a monopoly on the truth. In fact, all movements are predicated on the idea, the hope, that people can and do change their minds. One of my colleagues once wisely said, "You can't tell others how to fight for their lives." This advice is too often forgotten in movements, as passionate and dominant voices can vie for influence, and drown out those

with a more sober or thoughtful approach.

One reason we failed in Proposition 8 was that we tried to accomplish our goal from the top down. We tried to control the message too much, and it sapped the energy from some of our LGBTQ community members who could have been our most ardent footsoldiers. The best you can do is model what you think is the best approach, and make modifications along the way as necessary. Follow the feedback that makes sense, listen politely to the rest, and lead.

Turner: How did you maintain a united front as a community while staying true to and hearing the individual voices within the LGBTQ community?

Simpson: Movements fail when everyone is trying to make it about themselves. The coalition that passed marriage included several key groups that frankly hadn't always played nicely, but each had its own unique strengths. One had national stature and ample funding. One had more clout in Albany and longstanding relationships with key players. One had more credibility with conservatives, another with grassroots activists. Each agreed to work in coalition and take advantage of these unique strengths, presenting a united front, buying TV ads, running canvasses and phone banks together, and sharing best practices and language. It wasn't always easy, but it was well worth it.

Turner: What strategies or best practices did you find most effective for leading?

Simpson: We couldn't always control what others did but we could control what we did, so modeled our idea of leadership. We used the messages we knew would work best. We listened to partners and offered to help. We shared information openly. For example, we convened an annual conference and lobby day in Albany and bussed in activists and groups from all across the state to caucus to meet with their representatives. It was a great opportunity to lead by empowering others to be their best.

Conclusion

Overall, leading a movement that aims to implement major changes has its challenges. However, there are several steps to make it easier. Practice breaking down the mission into smaller goals. Celebrate successes, and evaluate and strategize how to overcome failures as soon as they happen. Understand what motivates the target audience in order to craft messaging; creating policy change requires an analytical approach to communication strategy.

Ultimately, to ensure that we are moving forward in a meaningful way, we need to make certain that when we meet internally and have discussions about where we would like feminist foreign policy to go in the future, we include representation from all spheres: academia, law, policy, NGOs, think tanks, and activist groups. Anyone who would like a seat at the table should be allowed to participate.

Through inclusive practices, we can capitalize on the curiosity of the many and move forward, positively affecting change in local, domestic, and foreign policy for years to come.

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George True Simpson has worked for LGBTQ civil rights advocacy organizations in the United States at the state and national level for nearly eight years, focusing on strategic communications. After experiencing a major loss for marriage equality with the passage of California's discriminatory Proposition 8, he was part of the team that passed the Marriage Equality Act in New York State in 2011. He graduated with a B.A. in Diplomacy and World Affairs from Occidental College in 2007 and a Master in Public Policy from Harvard Kennedy School of Government in 2017.

Catching up with Western 'progressive' norms of gender equality and human rights has been endorsed as aspirational politics, without any interrogation of the terms and their meanings in various local contexts.

-Swati Parashar and Bina D'Costa

FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY: THE SOUTH ASIA CONUNDRUM

Swati Parashar and Bina D'Costa

Sweden announced a 'feminist government' when the Centre-Left coalition of Social Democrats and Greens won the elections in 2014. Since then, much has been made of 'the first feminist government in the world,' and the 'feminist foreign policy' approach Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallstrom takes with their international relations (Government Offices of Sweden, 2017). Sweden has prioritised gender equality and human rights both among the domestic constituents and audiences abroad. It has been argued that foreign policy, especially regarding peace and security matters, would be better guided by gender mainstreaming, which has yet to become an inclusive and gender-sensitive tool to counter women's oppression, silences, and exclusions. Feminist foreign policy in Sweden is similar to Canada's first Feminist International Assistance Policy, which targets 'gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls' (Government of Canada, 2017). These new developments have generated debates globally about the feasibility of feminist foreign policy. In particular, concerns have been raised about whether the terms have any merit in the Global South where patriarchy is deeply entrenched in political spaces and where violence against women in politics is more the norm than exception.

In the context of policy framing and initiatives, there is evidence that the instrumentalisation of 'gender equality' in Western discourse, which is often evoked by feminists in the Global North, is seen as a best practice that states of the Global South should draw from. Catching up with Western 'progressive' norms

of gender equality and human rights has been endorsed as aspirational politics, without any interrogation of the terms and their meanings in various local contexts. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) which established the women, peace, and security agenda, for example, is viewed as an important feminist foreign policy goal (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 2017). This agenda setting has emerged from Western norms around gender equality, and has been used as a tool to 'protect' women in the Global South from the violence within their societies and patriarchies, while not often looking at the way the West is complicit in that violence..

We argue that such a generalized conception of gender equality and state-sponsored feminism have now replaced democracy as a Western export, discursively contributing to development in the Global South.

We acknowledge that actors of the Global South are complicit in this agenda as well.

The racial politics among feminist activists on the ground and the transnational mobilization of feminist advocacy at senior levels demonstrate differences in expectations (Simons, 1979; Sister Outrider, 2016). They also highlight how women who have embraced the feminist agenda have very different ideas about what such an agenda means for them. The perplexity of meaning has been raised through our own research, where we have met many activists and senior female leaders who identify themselves as women's activists and not feminist activists. Identification as a feminist

or a women's activist is a primary marker of how women in foreign policy view themselves functioning in the global space, and has a real implication for international policy-making and gender sensitive global norms.

We engage with the possibility of a feminist foreign policy with its conceptual strengths and ambiguities from our South Asian perspective and situatedness. The history of feminism in South Asia is rich, textured, and even contentious; indigenous feminist movements have co-existed along with Western influences. Civil society participation has been strong at regional and national levels, drawing within its fold numerous women's and reform movements that may not have espoused specific or explicitly feminist goals. However, they struggle with questions about intersectionality and inclusiveness. Aman ki Asha (hope for peace) between India and Pakistan, WISCOMP (Women in Security, Conflict Management and Peace) and Sangat (network of South Asian NGOs working on peace and conflict) are a few examples of civil society initiatives that contribute towards feminist foreign policy goals.

Our first point, therefore, is that the language of 'feminist foreign policy' may be a new vocabulary in the context of the West, but both feminist practices and objectives in foreign policy have existed for a long time in the South Asian context.

South Asia has produced the highest number of female leaders across different time frames, cultures, and democratic systems. In Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka women have occupied both the highest constitutional positions and served as executive heads of state as Presidents and Prime Ministers (Women Political Leaders Global Forum, 2017). They have been involved in important cabinet posts and in federal governance of various provinces. Even the most conservative regimes that uphold traditional gender norms and politics have not refrained from appointing women in important positions within the government. Benazir Bhutto headed the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) regime and, as the elected Prime Minister of Pakistan, extended full support to the Taliban in Afghanistan. Khaleda Zia headed the conservative Bangladesh Nationalist Party government in Bangladesh on two occasions. Currently, Foreign Minister, Sushma Swaraj, and Defense Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, are both serving under a conservative Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in India. The latter's appointment - and the first for a woman other than Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who held the defense portfolio - has been projected both as novelty, as well as a remarkable leap in gender equality in Indian politics. Regardless of this legacy of women leaders, at best they have been labelled as compliant women from elite political families and, at worst, they are portrayed as cogs in the wheel of patriarchy, enacting and supporting conservative policies like their male counterparts. Arguably, powerful women in South Asian politics have mostly represented the gendering of benevolent authoritarianism.

Our second point is that although this wider political representation of women in South Asia does not necessarily draw from a feminist vocabulary or activist language, it has fulfilled feminist objectives and goals both in foreign policy and governance. Consider, for example, the compassionate view toward the Rohingyas and the bilateral and multilateral diplomatic initiatives around their plight by the current Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina (France-Presse, 2017). On similar lines, Indian Foreign Minister, Sushma Swaraj, has been proactively facilitating the visas of Pakistani citizens on medical visits to India, even in times of heightened hostilities (The Hindu, 2017).

Although the late Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, was often called a masculine leader and referred to as the 'only man in her

cabinet' - an image that was bolstered with her decision to go to war with Pakistan, supporting the east Pakistani/Bangladeshi aspirations for independence in 1971 - she presented her ethical and political commitment for the military intervention in the Bangladesh liberation war in the language of gender justice and human rights (Jerath, 2009). During her world tour to gather international diplomatic support for the war, she denounced the violence against Bengali women by the Pakistani army and the mass rapes that were being reported in East Pakistan (Habib, 2016). She also called out the hypocrisy of the West, which demanded a cessation of the military campaign and a withdrawal of India's overt participation in the war against Pakistan. She reminded them of how the allied forces took on Hitler when they learnt about the Holocaust.

In conclusion, we suggest that there exists multiple debates that have emerged in the process of crafting various transnational feminist platforms to promote a global feminist civil society.

The prevalence of neo-liberal policies in states and global institutions makes it particularly challenging for feminists to instigate a normative shift in global thinking that would include 'gender equality' and equity. Plenty has been written about the neoliberal framing of foreign policy objectives such as the 'global war on terror', in the name of 'saving' and 'protecting' women from the patriarchies of their own societies. These serve as reminders that feminist struggles in the Global South include challenging both: local patriarchies and the epistemic violence of the Global North. Thus, the 'feminist foreign policy' agenda, at the bare minimum, requires a rethinking of its conceptual framework and empathetic conversations around the struggles of women in the Global South.

An analysis of women in foreign policy, on the other hand, provides insights into the diversities and parallels with the feminist agenda at both national and international level. Feminists have articulated that selective emphasis of mainstream approaches on a range of issues, such as global finance, trade, economic restructuring, and peace and conflict, generate a material world in which global inequalities thrive. Within these complex (and occasionally contradictory) processes, gender remains, if not invisible, still at the margins. Feminist analyses further reveal not only the undervalued contribution of women's responsibilities but also the impact of global processes and neo-liberalism at the intersections of gender, race, religion, ethnicity, and nationality. Why do we then stop short of asking critical questions about the silences reinforced by any global feminist agenda?

In light of our critique, the language and outcomes of policies, feminist or otherwise, need to be critically examined within the context of each state.

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The history of development aid and assistance is saturated in colonial, neoliberal, and imperial ideologies.

-Mari-Claire Price, Ghiwa Sayegh, Marisa Viana, and Oriana López Uribe

CUT THE STRINGS: BODILY AUTONOMY NEEDS SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

Mari-Claire Price, Ghiwa Sayegh, Marisa Viana, and Oriana López Uribe

Development aid, in the form of Official Development Assistance (ODA), technical assistance, foreign assistance, development cooperation, international aid, and overseas aid, is often lauded as the most important policy approach to tackle extreme poverty, strengthen infrastructure and education, and promote peace, security, and prosperity in low-income countries. In the past fifty years, although fiercely protected by its proponents, criticisms of ODA--which accounts for the majority of development aid--and its impact, administration, restrictions, and focus have been significant. A number of economists, academics, activists, governments, and NGOs have highlighted ODA's perceived failures to ensure value for money, accountability, governance, or measures to tackle corruption. The "neoliberal critique" (Carbonnier, 2010) is often used by conservative and right wing voices to argue for a reduction or end to ODA, gaining worrying traction in some donor countries. However, this is vastly different from the critique shared by some left thinkers, both in recipient and donor countries, that considers how ODA serves predominantly the interests of donor countries and private corporations, and how it seeks to, or results in, keeping recipient countries in a state of dependence, thus masking the flow of resources from low-income countries to donor countries (Carbonnier, 2010).

The history of development aid and assistance is saturated in colonial, neoliberal, and imperial ideologies. From the British 1929 Colonial Development Act, aimed at strengthening British manufacturing through loans and grants to British colonies (Durano, 2012), to the failure of 'tied' aid in the 1990s, the myriads of conditionalities prioritise countries that showed 'good performance' and value for money. While those conditionalities are no longer explicitly seen in aid partnerships and agreements, they remain an implicit part of most (Brett, 2016). Many countries in the Global South have been gradually forced to transform their economies to adapt to policies through structural adjustment programs, loans, and increasing debts to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Harvey, 2005).

With a focus on gender mainstreaming in development assistance, initiatives such as Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy, and the She Decides campaign led by the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, and Sweden, constitute efforts to mobilize funds to counter regressive measures, such as the Trump administration's attack on women's rights and bodily integrity. The Mexico City Policy, also known as the Global Gag Rule, was first enacted by Ronald Reagan's administration, and is a political game of back and forth, with Republicans reinstating the policy and Democrats rescinding it, depending on who holds presidential power.

Women and feminized bodies, as well as the bodies of people socialized as women, are treated as disposable bargaining chips with the Trump administration reinstating the policy, or in the case of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy, monetized through a focus on women as 'economic actors' for development.

On the surface, the commitment to significant funds that would fill the enormous funding vacuum that will be left by the current U.S. administration's Global Gag Rule is a welcome step, especially in the era of shifting development priorities. However, denial or provision of funding from a single government can significantly affect the agency of thousands of women around the world over their bodies. The deep-seated problem of stark inequalities, the struggle to address North and South dynamics emerging from a long history of imperialism, and the far-reaching impact that development aid policy can have on women's agency and bodily autonomy remain ignored.

This is also telling of the entrenched economic inequalities that are rooted in colonial histories and maintained through imperialism and neoliberalism, and continue to play out in approaches to development assistance more generally.

Approaches such as the 'corporatization of aid' favour the interests of multinational industries and private development consultants above local interests and needs, facilitate the extraction of care, or force countries to neo-liberalize their economies in exchange for IMF state loans.

Even today, neocolonialism and extractivism depletes and exploits the human, land, and economic resources of Global South countries, only to disburse them in the form of comparatively meager aid (Moghalu, 2015).

In the case of She Decides, details of how funding will be spent have not surfaced yet. However, the long history of aid conditionality imposed by the countries involved in the She Decides campaign, paints a dramatically different picture of donor governments as the advocates of 'progressive' and feminist development aid. In 2014, when the Ugandan government signed legislation toughening penalties for homosexuality, these governments, as well as others European countries, the US, and the World Bank, suspended aid to Uganda. Cuts from the World Bank alone totalled 20% of Uganda's health budget 2013-2014, funds that were due to equip 13 regional hospitals and 27 health centres (IRIN News, 2014). Whilst Denmark and Norway redirected some funding to NGOs in the country, substantial funding intended for Uganda's judicial system, as well as an in-depth, country-wide HIV and AIDS research project into at-risk populations, and other projects, was suspended (IRIN News, 2014).

Such a move had the dangerous potential to negatively impact the lives and wellbeing of women and girls, with the probable redirection of funding to fill budget deficits. LGBT activists in the country spoke out against the decision's complicity in further marginalizing people with non-normative sexualities (IRIN News, 2014).

The announcement of the She Decides funding comes at the end of years-long shrinking of some European government aid spending, such as Dutch aid spending, where 3.25 billion euros were removed from its development cooperation budget between 2013 and 2017 (Fic et al., 2014). The government stated that it was part of a reimagining of development cooperation, and that new priority areas were "relevant to global poverty reduction efforts and to the Netherlands' economic and other interests" (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013). The commitment to spend 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) on ODA, dropped from 0.75% in 2015 to a predicted 0.56% in 2017 (Donor Tracker, 2017), and the list of countries that were to receive bilateral Dutch aid by 2015 was reduced from 33 to 15 (RNW Media, 2011).

Whether in the case of the Global Gag Rule or the aid cuts to countries such as Uganda, women's livelihoods, bodily integrity, autonomy, and well-being are

among the first to be compromised in the tides of private interests and political play. Moralistic decisions, such as the Global Gag Rule, reduce funding for women's sexual and reproductive health, the implication being that women's health is not a part of a comprehensive approach to health. Similarly, decisions informed by value for money or private interests end up sanctioning funding beneficiaries for the very same governmental actions that the decision makers are themselves fighting against. Ultimately, development assistance and aid funding act as a neocolonial, neoliberal endeavor that secures North government's interests and agendas at the expense of women's bodies.

While the need for resources is necessary within the confines of the current capitalist system, financial sources are as political as the work being done, especially when these sources are one of the roots of the problems women face around the world. Foreign funds come with strings attached: the multiple and complex implications of the hierarchy among countries can have a deleterious impact on our national policies, including blocking the possibility of progressive legal changes that could come from within.

Accountability, and a deeper critique of funding sources and their implications for women's human rights and justice, are crucial for the long-fought goal of inclusive sustainable development; we need to find mechanisms to address the deep inequalities that exist within and across countries to aim for the realization of sexual and reproductive justice globally. To improve the lives and wellbeing of women and girls in all their diversity, there needs to be consistent and sufficient funding, and long-term political will. A sustainable funding stream that supports justice for women with no strings attached might allow us to see the day when our bodies are no longer used as bargaining chips.

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Feminist involvement in foreign policy and the international climate justice movement must make space for communities to speak for themselves.

-Jessica Olson

CLIMATE CHANGE: THE IMPORTANCE OF FEMINIST STORYTELLING

Jessica Olson

Storytelling is an important tool that has been used by generations of activists to build movements and collective power. Even as activists engage in existing power structures through policies at local, national, and international scales, storytelling maintains ties to grassroots power through the sharing of lived experiences. When it comes to climate change advocacy, feminist story sharing is the lifeblood of resistance, and interrupts the idea that abstract foreign policies know better what people need than local communities themselves. Storytelling empowers the creation of deep connections born from shared experiences that can not only inform policy as it exists, but challenge it. This is much needed as foreign policy silos conversations of gender dynamics and inequality as superfluous rather than as pivotal.

In order to implement a truly feminist foreign policy, space must be made for the voices of those who are most impacted by climate change and those who work at a local level to make changes (Robinson and Verveer, 2015). At the annual United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), events are now held to discuss the importance of gender and climate change (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2017). However, the lack of truly diverse panels is a glaring oversight. Furthermore, such events tend to rely on numbers and data, all without recognizing the human impact of climate change on the most vulnerable communities. Feminist involvement in foreign policy and the international climate justice movement must make space for communities to speak for themselves.

Sharing stories of feminist advocacy can shift narratives, interrupt institutional power-dynamics, and encourage climate change policies that are centered in justice.

Without including local storytelling in climate change narratives, there are several ways in which context is lost. Too intense of a focus on data can paint climate change as abstract, and can fail to ground it in the actual consequences that are and will be experienced by people. Often, when climate change analysis does indeed focus on the human impact, it points to women only as as casualties and as victims (Arora-Jonsson, 2011). Furthermore, those who have access to a seat at the policy table are often of a higher socioeconomic status, and more marginalized populations are excluded from the conversation entirely (Saba and Constable, 2016; Fadahunsi, 2017). This is why storytelling is so important. It challenges ideas about who is an 'expert' and provides much needed agency so that people can speak to their own truth and lived experience.

In order to advocate for sensible and timely climate policy, feminist storytelling is crucial to building a strong web of activists, leaders, and scholars. Beginning in 2015, the Young Feminists for Climate Action network launched as a transnational space for young feminists to build community and support one another (Women Climate Justice, 2016). Here, the radical sharing of experiences, rather than the absorption of reports, occurs. Its goal is not only to provide a reprieve from feeling invisible in policy

processes, but also to act as a space for envisioning justice beyond its current structural limitations. In 2017, the network established a storytelling project to gather narratives and lived experiences from around the globe. The stories are both compiled on a website and in a hard copy zine to be distributed at the twenty third meeting of the parties under the UNFCCC. This project of bringing truth into a space occupied by power has allowed young feminists to redefine how voices are able to be brought into a highly inaccessible policy space.

Ultimately, policy must serve people.

Storytelling not only highlights how past policies have impacted communities, but keeps the power of experience in the hands of activists across the globe. While policy may not reflect the interests of people who bear the burden of climate change, storytelling can speak truth to power from those living at the forefront of solutions

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Developing a security paradigm that is representative of the population requires challenging the status quo.

-Tabitha Sanders

EXPLORING MENTORSHIP IN THE U.S. DEFENCE INDUSTRY

Tabitha Sanders

When Cynthia Enloe famously asked "where are the women?" the answer was thought to be relatively simple: they remain at the margins (Enloe, 2000). Since then, the political arena has widened slightly, allowing opportunities for women and minorities to advance professionally. The norm-setting United Nations (UN) has embraced a feminist agenda and taken political feminism to the mainstream with actress/activist Emma Watson serving as a UN Goodwill Ambassador and as the face of the He For She campaign (Watson, 2014). Women are increasingly represented in politics; just last year, the United States had its first female Presidential nominee from a major political party (Women Speakers of National Parliaments, 2017). While we have seen some progress, there remains much to be done. At the tail end of 2017, we have some semblance of an answer to Enloe's question: the women are here, they are just not heard.

Who gets a seat at the table?

Fostered by a white male working culture that Carol Cohn observed in the 1980s (Cohn, 1987), a masculine paradigm dominates the security industry and leaves its workers disproportionately populated by men (Baxter and Keene, 2014). Political realism, which defined Cold War relations between the East and the West and pervades today, was based on broad assumptions about the international system; the system was created predominantly by men and unconsciously constructed on the pattern of traditionally masculine behaviour (Holloway, 2015). The very idea that military force is the most effective deterrent and projection of power is a reflection of the longstanding image of men in society as violent protectors (French, 2001). Though female representation in the U.S. workforce has grown over time, participation has begun to plateau (Fry and Stepler, 2017). In the political arena, female politicians make up just 19.4% of the U.S. Congress. Though their numbers have grown significantly over the past several decades, a one-fifth female Congress is hardly representative when 51.4% of the American population are women (Brown, 2017).

In order for there to be an increased representation of women in the male-dominated security sector, there must be conditions which support women entering into and staying in the industry.

Developing a security paradigm that is representative of the population requires challenging the status-quo, a task perhaps best suited for those who have for so long operated outside of the mainstream. However, challenging the status quo can leave the challenger at risk of professional marginalisation, so often, those who perceive themselves as having less security in their work are also less likely to speak against the norm. And as women are less readily accepted into the working environment in the defense industry, it can prove difficult to speak out against the traditionally masculine system. Furthermore, when a given demographic or group is underrepresented, those who are visible may find themselves subject to disproportionate scrutiny and held to incredibly high standards (Kurzleben,

2016). In fact, professionals reported that gaining credibility among their colleagues often required "creating a niche for oneself that reinforces the nationalist discourse." (Malik, 2014).What's more, representation in leadership positions is not sufficient to enact real change at all levels. While the open-ended recruitment of women and people of colour in politics is undoubtedly a positive force, significant institutional change is unlikely so long as traditional barriers to entry exist.

Where are the women?

A real paradigm shift cannot be achieved until the root causes behind such gender gaps are addressed. Generally speaking, women in lower and entry-level positions find career advancement difficult. Many cite pressures to prove themselves as better than their male counterparts as a major barrier to their advancement (Pew Research Center, 2015). While the fostering of professional relationships between men is very much the norm, women who seek to mentor other women are sometimes seen as "feminist troublemakers" or disruptions (Raging and Scandura, 1994); this is likely because industrial culture upholds the view that women working together and in increased numbers presents a threat to the standard practices of a professional institution. This leaves high-ranking females facing greater risks than males when they take on a protegee. Further, the success or failure of mentees tend to reflect more strongly on female mentors than it does on men, thus considerably reducing incentive to establish such relationships (Ragins and Scandura, 1994).

In the nuclear defense industry, women particularly struggle to be heard and often have to adopt more hawkish policies or use masculine-coded discourse in order to be taken seriously (Malik, 2014). A Department of Defense study found that participants in the military field considered mentorship an essential relationship for career advancement (U.S. Department of Defense, 2016).

Positive mentorship may not only increase diversity but is also likely to foster a greater diversity of thought in which those who are traditionally marginalised feel empowered to challenge the intellectual paradigm (Malik, 2014).

Another challenge that women face, as Anne-Marie Slaughter noted, is that though women in political leadership can serve as symbolic trailblazers, their career trajectories can enforce the intimidating "having it all" narrative. The belief that an individual would not necessarily 'belong' in a certain industry may be compounded by the visibility of those with similar backgrounds and identities. While Slaughter urges the closing of the gendered "leadership gap", real change will not happen until women and minorities are visible at every professional level (Slaughter, 2012).

Why mentoring?

Mentoring is part of a larger "deliberate" process wherein certain values, worldviews, backgrounds, and policies are reinforced over others by those in leadership positions to those whom they mentor (Tillman, 2001). In professional development, mentors can "bypass the hierarchy" by using their power to the benefit of their mentee, and potentially creating space for their career advancement (Speizer, 1981). This process allows for mentees and their ideas to be taken seriously by those within the institution as they have the endorsement of someone in a leadership position. This is a situation often afforded to those who already feel an inherent sense of belonging, or those who fit the demographic norm of their workplace - in other words, oftentimes this means men.

In addition to education and insider bias, the limited opportunities for positive mentorship to people of demographic minorities serve as a significant barrier

to entry in the workforce. A mentor can provide a mentee not only with career advice and opportunities for advancement, but can also offer significant psychosocial benefits as well. The security of having a mentor offers new entrants a greater "sense of competence, identity, and world-role effectiveness" which can foster professional self-development and career advancement (Tillman, 2001). Too often, the lack of such opportunities offered to minorities leaves them at the margins, maintaining internal institutional biases, whether it be a paradigm of thought or a demographic issue (Adams, 2017).

What can be done?

The United States and Europe are experiencing high levels of immigration set to shape the workforce in the coming decades. This holds true especially for the millennial generation, which in the United States is expected to grow when compounded with immigration projections (Cilluffo and Cohn, 2017). When the future of the United States and Europe looks increasingly diverse, the West faces a critical juncture: embrace or reject the globalisation of its own making. Navigating this fork in the road in an ethical, people-oriented way involves actively recruiting women and people of colour across the workforce. The presence of this wide-spanning demographic in domestic and international political arenas will be critical for states intending to hold to the basic tenets of representative democracy.

In supporting the existing expertise in the millennial generation through mentorship, the security sector can diversify its intake in order to counter the dominant narrative.

A broader representation of identities opens the strategic dialogue to a wider range of experiences and worldviews. A truly feminist foreign policy is one which grows from a dialogue between different demographic and socio-economic

groups. This is essential to challenging the traditional status of the masculine experience as a universal one and enabling a real paradigm shift within the security field.

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Feminist scholars have argued that war needs to be understood not as a given fact of social life, but as a cultural system based on specific images, language, and concepts.

-Maryam Nahhal

DO GENDER APPROACHES BRING SOMETHING NEW TO THE STUDY OF WAR?

Maryam Nahhal

The study of war within the discipline of International Relations (IR) has largely been based upon the Clausewitzan conception of "war as a continuation of politics by other means" (Clausewitz, 1976). This notion, and its underlying presumptions about the subject matter of politics, laid the foundations for the dominant paradigm in IR: realism. Taking the state as the unit of analysis, realist conceptions of security draw a stark line between the outside and the inside, the former being source of anarchy and insecurity, the latter the ultimate object and provider of security. Feminist scholars, however, have challenged this narrow definition of security as a national issue, urging the need to shift our focus towards the experiences of individuals and, particularly, women.

Through the lens of gender, feminists are able to both shed light on the consequences of war that realist state-centrism renders invisible, as well as exposing war as a socially constructed phenomena, resting on deeply embedded notions of masculinity and femininity that legitimise and justify violence and inequality.

Drawing on insights from feminist security theory, this essay will seek to demonstrate how war, far from being inevitable as realists would suggest, is a social construction with gender categories at its foundation myth.

According to realist scholars, states are unitary actors which, compelled by the anarchical structure of the international system, are primarily concerned with maximising their power as a means to attain security under conditions of anarchy (Pettman, 1996). By analysing the "creation myths" (Tickner, 2001) of IR, upon which realists ground their assumptions on state behaviour, feminists have sought to investigate how the notion of national security is based on a gendered discourse. According to Rebecca Grant, in fact, "the parable of man's amoral, self-interested behaviour in the state of nature, made necessary by the lack of restraint on the behaviour of others, is taken by realists to be a universal model for explaining states' behaviour in the international system" (Grant, 1991). The gender bias of this model is evident, as the Hobbesian state of nature assumes man as the principal political actor, while women remain outside the political arena. This public/private distinction, when transmitted to the discipline of IR, results in an international/domestic dichotomy which posits the state as the principal player, prioritising its security over that of the individual (Blanchard, 2003).

Beyond theory, however, the use of force has historically served as the basis for claims of sovereignty and for legitimising national identities, and has largely relied upon gendered constructions. These operate on two levels: first, domestically, the legitimation of state sovereignty relies on the creation of national identities which have historically drawn upon gendered images of motherland, fatherland, and homeland to encourage a sense of community and shared purpose (Tickner, 2001). Second, internationally, states have sought to justify war and conquest by reference to an uncivilised 'other' that lives in a state of anarchy, or rather, an untamed state of nature that is often described as feminine.

These two processes at the domestic and international level are deeply interlinked. According to Jill Steans, "the creation of the state and the institutionalisation of military power has gone hand in hand with the institutionalisation of gender relations of inequality" (2006).

In other words, state violence and the military complex rest on deeply entrenched beliefs about male superiority and male biased conceptions of rationality that make war a prerogative of men.

The relationship between war and masculinity is one feminists are most concerned to uncover. More precisely, feminist scholars have argued that war needs to be understood not as a given fact of social life, but as a cultural system based on specific images, language, and concepts (Pettman, 1996). The war-masculinity nexus is constructed, according to Kimberly Hutchings, through processes of "contrasts (between different masculinities) and […] contradictions (between masculinity and femininity)", which can easily be manipulated to serve political purposes (Hutchings, 2008). The contradiction between masculinity and femininity refers to the assumption of men's inherent violence and women's inherent peacefulness, which both legitimises violence and strengthens patriarchal structures; in a society which praises militarism, the attribution of violence to men automatically reinforces their superiority over women (Steans, 2006). At the same time, such contradiction and the attribution of specific characteristics to each of them, allows for the contrast between different types of masculinities. In other words, feminine is not only attributed to women, but also to inferior men who do not possess the 'masculine' traits of physical strength, action, toughness, and capacity for violence" (Hooper, 1997), all of which Raewyn Connell has conceptualised under the term "hegemonic masculinity" (Connell, 1990). It is revealed that men are in fact not naturally violent, nor, therefore, more suited to combat. As Cynthia Enloe puts it, "much ideological work and power would not need to be brought to bear on soldiering if all men were 'naturally' aggressive" (Pettman, 1996).

To demonstrate the social constructedness of femininity and masculinity, feminists point out another construction which allows for gender roles to be manipulated at will, namely, the distinction between the protectors and the protected, or what Elshtain calls 'Just Warriors' and 'Beautiful Souls' (1987). Here, the notion of masculinity assumes yet another meaning, shifting away from images of manliness and virility, towards the image of a soldier as a just warrior, "self-sacrificially protecting women, children, and other vulnerable people" (Tickner, 2001). These symbols are essential for providing a legitimate rationale for the use of violence. However, as Steans argues, this distinction conceals the reality of warfare by positing the existence of a clear cut boundary between the 'war front' and the 'home front' - the former being the realm where masculinity is tested and affirmed through combat, the latter, the domain of femininity, characterised by domesticity and peace (Steans, 2006). This dichotomy has several consequences. First, by depicting warfare as a contest between men, the devastating effects on women are concealed. Second, portraying women as requiring protection actually renders women more vulnerable, both to their own men and to the enemy (Pettman, 1996).

Hence the need for a bottom-up approach, an analysis of war which starts from a women-centred perspective focused not on the causes, but on the consequences of conflicts on women. More specifically, a state-centric perspective obscures the unboundedness of war - or, in other words, how the boundaries between peace and war are not so clearcut; how women are

in fact regularly targeted during conflicts; how the consequences of war extend beyond the formal signing of treaties; and how women are left to deal with their material and psychological consequences (Steans, 2006). Capturing all these dimensions is the issue of war rape, which has been of concern to feminist and non-feminist scholars alike. A feminist perspective captures not simply the gendered character of such violence, but sheds lights on the political rationale underpinning sexual violence in war settings. In fact, feminist scholars have strongly criticised the idea of war rape as a byproduct of war, i.e. a consequence of men's biological instincts which, while kept under control in civilian settings, come to the fore in the unruly context of war (Baaz and Stern, 2009). Rape is a political form of aggression, or as Eisenstein puts it: "a form of war in yet another inhumane form; an integral form of war rather than an effect" (2007). Rape as a weapon of war is not simply an act of violence towards women. By demonstrating the inability to protect their own females, it symbolises the humiliation of the enemy, or its emasculation. Women, in this sense, hold a "high symbolic value" (Pettman,1996:), which is based precisely on the masculinity/femininity and protectors/protected dichotomies. During the conflict in Yugoslavia, for instance, Bosnian Serbs used the tactic of forced pregnancies "to make Bosnia a Serbian state by implanting Serbian babies in Muslim mothers" (Robson, 1993).

The consequences of such symbolic status are drastic. First among many, women who experience rape are stigmatised and, together with their 'enemy babies', rejected from their communities (Tickner, 2001). Second, the protectors/protected dichotomy obscures the extent to which women are not simply targeted by the enemy, but become vulnerable to their own "protectors", both in the private domain, but most notably at the national level. For example, the stress on religious or ethnic identities with the pretext of threats to

national security frequently presents itself in the form of repression against women. Their representation as the "bearers of culture" (Tickner, 2001) means their behaviour is strictly regulated by notions of good women, whose breach can justify oppression and strict control, just as the Taliban did in Afghanistan.

Demonstrating the fragile line between peace and war further sheds light on the struggles that women are forced to endure due to, what Tickner terms, structural violence (1992).

The consequences of war, in fact, are strictly interlinked with material insecurities caused by the working of global capital, which determine poverty, unequal access to resources, and a gendered division of labour (Tickner, 1992).

As Enloe brilliantly documents in her case study on Iraqi women, the absence of war or suspension of fighting does not mean security or justice (2010).

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Effective policy in Israel and Palestine has to be relevant, nuanced, and willing to adjust.

-Natasha Spreadborough

DECONSTRUCTING THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

Natasha Spreadborough

Western discussion of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict typically focuses on a dichotomous view of Israelis and Palestinians as homogenous entities; two distinct populations unified by race, religion, and political outlook (Cohen, 2014). Generally, this paves the way for the outsider to 'take a side' by aligning with the population and narrative that best fits their worldview (The Economist, 2014). This approach tends to produce a one-size-fits-all policy for 'resolving' the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that focuses on finding a single solution for a single problem.

However, the reality on the ground is infinitely more complex and multifaceted. **Only in understanding the nuances, complications, and contradictions of Israel and Palestine can we form a more realistic and helpful policy, and not one automatically focused on a hypothetical, singular resolution, but focused on addressing critical needs.**

For instance, female Palestinian citizens of Israel represent one aspect of this complex reality. Whilst they hold an Israeli passport and ID card, and are recognised legally as Israeli, their identity is significantly different from Jewish Israelis (The Working Group On the Status of Palestinian Women Citizens of Israel, 2016). It's important to understand that within Palestinian-Israeli society, there is an enormous diversity in relationships with the state of Israel, Jewish Israelis, and Zionism. Palestinians in Israel identify along the spectrum of proud Arab citizens of Israel, to proud Palestinians of Palestine, and everything in between. They are all subject to a tension between what is written on their ID card and the identity shaped by their family, history, culture, and language.

On a social and institutional level, Palestinian-Israeli women suffer from being both part of an ethnic minority – albeit a sizeable and significant one, at roughly 20% of Israel's population – and being women in an often conservative society (The Working Group On the Status of Palestinian Women Citizens of Israel, 2016). Muslim women who choose to wear a hijab face further discrimination. Social, economic, and political realities combine in such a way that Palestinian-Israeli women face significant challenges that are not only largely unacknowledged within Israeli society, but frequently unaddressed in external 'peacekeeping' efforts.

However, if we turn the focus onto Palestinian-Israeli women themselves, it becomes apparent that they are addressing these issues through academia, political activity, art, music, fashion, and their day-to-day lives, reclaiming their narrative and identity for themselves, in all its multifaceted forms (Worley, 2017). Palestinian-Israeli women are leading commemorations for their own history and trauma, creating designs that reflect their historical traditions, battling for better education in Palestinian schools, and shaping the discussion of current affairs. Furthermore, on a day-to-day level, they are working and interacting in environments frequently hostile to them because of their identity, exacting intellectual and emotional labour without fanfare or acknowledgement. In fact, Palestinians

in Israel have frequently faced reprimand for discussing issues of discrimination in their universities or workplaces.

None of these fit nicely into the narrative of 'the future for peace in Israel-Palestine', and demonstrate how the problems in Israel and Palestine cannot be simplified into a single struggle. What's more, the lives, voices, and work of Palestinian women in Israel repeatedly indicate that practical actions hold greater value than simply talking. Whilst less romantic and headline-grabbing than a peace summit, investing in the education and the career advancement of Palestinians can yield significant rewards.

By placing Palestinian-Israeli women in the centre, we are able to disrupt typical ideas of what it means to be Israeli or Palestinian.

We are forced to acknowledge that their identities are enormously varied and in some cases overlapping. And beyond identity, we can see such complications in the social, political, and economic realm, particularly in the political economy of conflict. Furthermore, when we acknowledge such nuances and complications, it becomes harder for us to push our own identity and ambitions onto a complex narrative. This is absolutely crucial for the formation of policy. When we approach Israel and Palestine with an appreciation for the fine differences, contradictions, and overlapping issues, we can then address them in all their complexity and identify the most useful solutions.

Overall, deconstructing such framework makes room to address everything from international, institutional, and structural inequalities and biases, to the immediate humanitarian needs of conflict and all that lies in between. It is an approach to Israel and Palestine that is willing to look at the current reality, not one that was decided in a 'peace agreement', and which remains convenient to perpetuate. Effective policy in Israel and Palestine has to be relevant, nuanced, and willing to adjust. Most importantly, it has to be focuse on the lived realities of those on ground.

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