



Engaging Gender (In)Security

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Abstract

Despite the proliferation of diverse feminist scholarship in the field of international relations (IR) theory over the past two decades, this body of work has been marginalised in the discipline. Consequently, a key contribution of feminist literature, the introduction of gender in the study of international relations and its focus on the gendered nature of other IR theories is overlooked. This article is a contribution to the ongoing debate on gender in the context of international relations and security studies. It presents the argument that while the feminist literature has presciently critiqued the realist conception of security and advocated for a multi-dimensional and multi-level re-definition of security, solutions proffered to achieve this more encompassing security inadvertently risk reifying gender as innate rather than constructed and, as a result, have yet to achieve their desired ends. Even though a push for increased participation in the relevant decision-making spheres is accompanied by attempts to alter the present discourse by emphasising various “devalued feminine principles,” if these are being pushed solely by women, it will have little effect. Accordingly, an alternative is proposed in this essay that advocates focusing efforts to include more male participants in the discourse and a further emphasising of male insecurities, as well as female insecurities, to help “denaturalise and dismantle” gendered hierarchies to contribute to greater security.

Key words

Feminist scholarship, discourse, international relations, gendered hierarchies, security, constructed

Introduction

Gender perspectives not only allow for articulations of security needs by individuals, but illustrate the ways in which these security needs transcend some of the traditional barriers we have placed between individuals on the basis of north/south or secure/insecure divisions.

(Hoogensen and Rottem 2004) -Gunhild Hoodensen and Svein Vigeland Rottem, University of Tromsø, Norway, 2004

Despite the proliferation of diverse feminist scholarship in the field of international relations (IR) theory over the past two decades¹, this body of work has been marginalised in the discipline (Steans 2003). Consequently, a key contribution of feminist literature, the introduction of gender² in the study of international relations and its focus on the gendered nature of other IR theories is overlooked (Jones 1996). Feminists argue that the neglect of gender by other IR theories, specifically realism and its variants, results in a narrow conception of security and does not account for the changing realities in international affairs. Indeed, emphasis has been shifting in the literature from an exclusive focus on national security to a broadening of the concept to encompass human security (Hoogensen and Rottem 2004). Nevertheless, it has been argued that this new focus often, as well, neglects the dynamic of gender in its analysis (Hudson 2005).

Feminists also argue that failing to understand the role of gender in international relations perpetuates gendered hierarchies that value the masculine over the feminine to the detriment of “women’s (and certain men’s) real security.” (Tickner 2001) It is argued in this essay that while feminist literature has presciently critiqued the realist conception of security and advocated for a multi-dimensional and multi-level re-definition of security, solutions proffered to achieve this more encompassing security inadvertently risk reifying gender as innate rather than constructed and, as a result, have yet to achieve their desired ends (Tickner 1997). An alternative is proposed that advocates focusing efforts to include more male participants in the discourse and further emphasising male insecurities, as well as female insecurities, to help “denaturalise and dismantle” gendered hierarchies to contribute to greater security for all (Tickner 2001).

‘Gender-ing’ the Security Dialogue

The term security, in and of itself, is a highly contested concept, subject to a myriad of definitions (Blanchard 2005). Security, to scholars, “conveys urgency [and] demands public attention.” (Paris 2003) While there is no single precise definition, traditional conceptions envision the state as guarantor of the security of its

citizens from the threats of other states (Blanchard 2003). This thinking is held by the proponents of realism, “the dominant theoretical tradition” in international relations theory (Beckman 1994).

For realists, sovereign, self-interested states are the primary actors in an anarchical international environment (Tickner 2001). All states engage in power-maximising activities to achieve their desired ends (Schmidt 2005). This pursuit of power becomes problematic in an arena absent of order. War is an ever imminent possibility “because there is nothing to prevent [it].” (Tickner 2001) Given the realities of state behaviour and the anarchical nature of the international arena, states must “rely on *self-help* for ... protection.” (Beckman 1004) Thus, for the realists, the security of the state is tied to its military and its preparedness to fight wars (Tickner 1992). However, increasing military expenditures or enhancing readiness may provoke suspicion on the part of another state. Concern could arise that a state’s expanding army may be for offensive rather than defensive purposes and it in turn may seek to increase its capabilities, setting off further action by the initial state (Beckman 1994). This represents a “security dilemma” for realists, though does not necessarily entail “continual war” as states will engage in a variety of behaviours to manage the threats posed by other power-seeking states. If one state is perceived as becoming too powerful, other states may ally to counterbalance the increased power of the former state in order to ensure their security (Beckman 1994). Thus, war is constrained though always possible. As such, realists believe that security can never be fully assured (Tickner 1992).

Though realism has been a long-standing theory of international relations, its views do not reflect the changing reality of the international system. Even though states still predominate, the vast majority of wars are no longer inter-state but rather intra-state (Human Security Centre 2005). The number of wars that occur between states has declined rapidly for the past two decades, a trend that persists to date.³ This marked decline in inter-state war saw a rapid increase in intra-state conflict during the waning years of the

Cold War.⁴ Even though the number of civil wars has since started to decrease, these still outnumber the amount of inter-state wars that have occurred in recent history.⁵ Thus, the nature of war has been changing such that it is currently characterised not by the struggles of two contending state armies but rather by various factions who, in fighting, “frequently target civilians.”⁶ For this reason, among others, realists’ adherence to national security has come increasingly under attack by a diverse range of theorists (Hoogensen and Rottem 2004). Feminist scholars of international relations have observed these trends and have argued, “new threats to security demand new solutions quite at odds with the power politics prescriptions of traditional international relations theory.” (Tickner 1992) These assertions are supported by the conclusions of others who argue that inter-state war is likely to remain a rare phenomenon.⁷

Realism continues to maintain its narrow conception of security, as its “state-centric, militaristic” definition of security emanates from a masculine bias inherent

in the theory (Hoogensen and Rottem 2004). Feminist scholars have argued cogently that the gendered nature of the theory prevents it from viewing the whole picture with respect to security, seeing only “a partial view of reality.” (Tickner 1992) Feminists have observed that men have long been ascribed certain characteristics such as “[s]trength, power, autonomy, independence and rationality.” For these reasons, men have been seen as rightfully operating in the public domain while women have been relegated to the private, because they are seen as weak, peaceful, cooperative and reliant on others for protection. The feminine, in these socially constructed gendered binaries, becomes the devalued other, needing protection (Hudson 2009). Feminists argue that from these social constructions, the hegemonic masculinity outlined above is “projected [by realists] onto the behaviour of states whose success as international actors is measured in terms of their power capabilities and capacity for self-help and autonomy.” (Tickner 1992) The realist bases their view of the state and behaviour



Congo, which has suffered from widespread instances of sexual assaults during the ongoing conflict, is an example of gender insecurity
Photo: Julien Harnies

in the international system on “the behaviour of men in positions of public power.” (Tickner 1992)

The state is viewed as aggressive, as males are viewed as aggressive. Indeed, for realists, this masculine trait is necessary in an anarchic international system where states are struggling for power. If a state were not aggressive, if it was unable to rely on its own capabilities, it could be seen as weak and dominated by other states. Thus, for realists, while aggressiveness is frowned upon in the private sphere where the state maintains order and which it protects, this trait is encouraged in the public sphere (Tickner 1992). As feminists note, the equation of males/masculinity with aggressiveness precludes any role for females in decision-making processes pertaining to national security (Blanchard 2003). It also proscribes certain activities for women such as war-fighting that are viewed as masculine. Soldiering is the preserve of males who must protect their female compatriots. The state must be prepared for war to guarantee the security of its own. For realists, “survival in a violence-prone international system ‘requires’ war-capable states peopled by heroic masculine... warriors.” (Tickner 1992)

By bringing in gender, feminists have exposed realist conceptions of security as based on a hegemonic masculinity and are not reflective of the full reality of human experience (Blanchard 2003). Resultantly, they circumscribe a myriad of possibilities that would engender greater security (Blanchard 2003). Through the incorporation of the experience of women, feminists show that there is room for both “competition *and* cooperation,” for aggressiveness *and* passiveness (Beckman 1994). However, this is not because women have certain innate feminine characteristics that differentiate them from men. Gender is indeed malleable (Hudson 2005). Rather, women have been ascribed characteristics that can exist in both sexes, much as men have been ascribed traits that can be held by both males and females. For example, the current construction of the male as protector and the woman as dependent can be either reversed or abolished outright. Indeed, this binary “has been an important motivator for the recruitment of military

forces and support for war.” Understanding the constructed nature of gender and its instrumental use, feminists argue that war is also a social construction and “not inevitable as realists suggest.” (Tickner 1992)

Furthermore, feminists question the anarchy/order distinction held by realism demonstrating how its state-centric emphasis “[misses] the interrelation of insecurity across levels of analysis.” (Tickner 1992) Quite simply, this is because realism is unaware of how its theory is based on gendered binaries of domination and subordination that threaten women’s security. Despite the alleged ordered nature of the state, individuals and women in particular, are threatened within this environment. Women are often the targets of rape and domestic assault. (Tickner 1992) This violence stems from “a gendered society in which male power dominates at all levels.” This includes the state level, where women are also ostensibly protected. Feminist theorists have attempted to elucidate how states have not been adequate security providers by “[focusing] on the consequences of what happens during wars rather than on their causes.” (Tickner 2007)

Women have been the primary targets of wartime sexual violence (Alison 2007). Additionally, women have increasingly been casualties in war though they are overwhelmingly civilians and have often borne the brunt of “economic sanctions associated with military conflict.” (Tickner 2007) Furthermore, feminists argue that the exclusively military focus of security by realists misses various other dimensions where women are rendered insecure due to unequal gender relations. Women are disadvantaged economically, whether because of “the gendered division of labour” or “the discounting of work in the home.” (Blanchard 2003) Environmental degradation is also a source of insecurity for many women around the world.

Thereby, feminists advocate a move past the state-level militaristic conception of national security held by realists to a multilevel, multidimensional security that focuses on “mutual enablement rather than domination.” (Tickner 1992) As Heidi Hudson has argued, such a redefinition of security where “the



A mother in Darfur

Photo: Hoisaeter

survival of one depends on the well-being of the other; would not only enhance women's security but that of men, who are similarly threatened by the conventional gendered approach to security." (Hudson 2005) In so doing, feminists have sought to reveal and dismantle the gendered hierarchies that place the masculine over the feminine and value traits such as conflict and autonomy over cooperation and interdependence. For these scholars, "a truly comprehensive security cannot be achieved until gender relations of domination and subordination are eliminated." (Tickner 1992)

There has been a marked absence of realist rejoinder to these feminist critiques. When forthcoming, responses have been dismissive, asking "[what] ...this talk [has] to do with solving "real-world" problems such as Bosnia, Northern Ireland or nuclear proliferation?" (Tickner 2007) Feminists would argue that being cognizant of the role of gender in international affairs allows one to see how national security is based on gendered assumptions and how those in decision-making positions of the state are predominantly male. The discourse surrounding national

security issues is thus structured to favour the masculine. Resultantly, when dealing with the aforementioned problems, "[t]he impact of gender discourse ... is that some things get left out." (Cohn 1993) Policy alternatives may never be voiced for fear that they will be seen as weak, as feminine. The nature of a gendered discourse that privileges the masculine over the feminine delimits what is acceptable and what is not and thus can perpetuate insecurity rather than allowing for the airing of diverse viewpoints which may represent the best approach for the policymakers concerned.

While most engagement with feminist scholars has been selective and limited, Francis Fukuyama (1998), in an article for *Foreign Affairs*, articulated what most closely approximates a realist rebuttal. He asserted that gender differences are not socially constructed but rather biologically rooted. For Fukuyama 1998, the male is naturally violent and aggressive. The female, following the traditional binaries, is less violent, less aggressive. Noting the increased participation of women in the public realm of democratic countries, Fukuyama argued that these countries have resultantly become more "feminised." He problematises this trend noting that it engenders a security threat as "[i]n anything but a totally feminised world, feminised politics could be a liability." For Fukuyama, noting global demographic changes, a greying Western population that will arguably produce more female leaders, will encounter the rest of the world which will not only remain more youthful but be "led mostly by younger men." This will pose significant challenges to the western world as for Fukuyama, states are still driven by power-maximising states in an anarchical environment and anything other than building the necessary capabilities to repel enemies runs the risks of war and domination. Thus, what is needed in this world is not feminised politics but masculine policies. Fukuyama's argument is similar in some respects to Robert Keohane's musing that "[p]erhaps states with less gender hierarchy could resolve conflict more easily; but it is also possible that they would be more easily bullied."

Francis Fukuyama's argument is flawed in two respects. First, it mistakenly designates the gender binaries as biologically rooted rather than socially constructed. If it were in fact the former rather than the latter, one "would expect a clear distinction between men and women, with relatively little variation within one sex." (Beckman 1994) However, there is incredible variation intra-sex. There are pacific women agitating for the abolition of war just as there are female agents of political violence. (Alison 2004) The same is true for men. Militaristic and anti-militaristic males have served as political leaders (Ehrenreich 1999).

Secondly, even if the United States of America theoretically becomes more egalitarian, this does not mean that it will be bullied by a China where gender relations remain unequal. As noted previously, there is a capacity for cooperation and conflict that is inherent in both sexes. It is only when one assumes that traits such as aggressiveness are genetically rooted rather than socially constructed that such a scenario may be plausible.

Engendered (In)Security

The feminist critique of realism exposes a conception of security defined narrowly in national terms, ignoring the security needs of the individual. Other scholars of international relations have also found the realist's definition increasingly problematic in a rapidly changing global environment and have increasingly promoted human security, a concept designed to "encourage policymakers and scholars to think about international security as something more than the military defense of state interests." (Paris 2003) While precisely what is encompassed by the concept of human security is subject to debate, there is general concurrence that this broader definition of security, while not exclusively moving away from the security interests of the state, places individual security interests more front and centre (Hudson 2005).

As a relatively new concept, it is widely used to describe the complexity of interrelated threats associated with civil war, genocide, and the displacement of populations. The primary reason for the construction

of a new approach to security centres on the fact that the analytic frameworks that have traditionally been employed to explain war and violent conflict between nation-states have simply grown out of place when addressing violent conflicts that take place within nation-states. Since both concepts intersect in many ways, human security and national security should be—and often are—mutually reinforcing. However, as the degree of security for a state increases, the security for its people does not necessarily follow suit. The Human Security Report for 2005 asserts that "protecting citizens from foreign attack may be a necessary condition for the security of individuals, but it is certainly not a sufficient one."

For scholars of the respective disciplines, this redefinition is sorely needed given that the traditional definition does not address a myriad of insecurities. J. Ann Tickner has argued that this broadening of the definition of security is "more compatible with most contemporary feminist scholarship" than the traditional definition espoused by realism (Tickner 2007). However, even though the redefining of security has been more in line with the multi-dimensional, multilevel security advocated by feminist scholars, the human security approach often neglects gender and how it factors in to security issues (Hudson 2007). An understanding of gender is crucial to any analysis in international affairs as it is "[g]ender [that] decides who goes to war and who does not; who is a victim and who is not; and who is legitimate within the security discipline and who is not." (Hoogensen and Kirsti Stuvoy 2006)

While the human security approach has sought to focus on and foster security for individuals, its tendency to overlook gender results in an approach that addresses the security needs of some individuals and not others. Proponents of human security have focused on the plight of child soldiers conscripted by various groups to fight in a myriad of conflicts. However, the long-standing assumption of those concerned with the welfare of child soldiers has been that these children are exclusively male. It is a gendered assumption that is predicated on the belief that males are the aggressive, violent sex. For some, it is difficult

to envision female fighters even though research has demonstrated that females may comprise an estimated 30% of child soldiers across the globe. As such, programming directed towards the needs of these children has been gendered and has not addressed the specific needs of female child soldiers. Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programs to help child soldiers have failed to recognise that not all female child soldiers were combatants. Some were conscripted for “forced labour or sex” and as such, these programs, which “often required the surrender of a weapon” for entrance in the program, excluded many female child soldiers from receiving care. (Fox 2004)

The human security approach, when it does acknowledge gender, often reifies existing constructions through various practices which perpetuate “a highly gendered understanding of who is to be secured.” R. Charli Carpenter (2006) has argued that programs addressing gender-based violence have portrayed women and children as those necessitating protection, whereby the vulnerabilities of men are ignored even though they are often specifically targeted in war on the basis of their gender. Men are often massacred by opposing enemy forces for fear they could be possible combatants and boys are targeted as they represent future generations of soldiers. It is the gendered understanding of soldiers committing these crimes that it is men that will be violent and not women and this is entrenched when programs which are designed to help civilians in wartime present civilian victims as women and children and overlook the insecurities of civilian men. While the human security approach is beneficial through its broadening of security, the feminist perspective, through its analysis of the role of gender on security, allows for a more comprehensive approach to security for all individuals, rather than a select few.

Though feminist scholarship has offered a compelling critique of current conceptions of security, solutions proffered to achieve “a nongendered perspective” are insufficient and risk reifying the social constructions of masculine and feminine as innate to the respective sexes, rather than denaturalising them (Tickner 1992).

Feminist writing has posited two solutions to move past the current paradigm. Firstly, feminists have argued that it is important to change the discourse on security by exposing the inequalities and problematising the construction of gender. Secondly and concomitantly, many feminists have advocated the increased representation of women in decision-making structures. For some scholars, “no fundamental change in the hierarchy of the sexes is likely to take place until women occupy half, or nearly half, the positions at all levels of foreign and military policy-making.” Additionally, it is advocated that women should be involved in the decision-making process at all levels, in all spheres including the economic realm. Women, for reasons described above, have been traditionally excluded from these positions and even in key positions in international organisations. (Tickner 1992) However, feminists point to the need for women to be involved beyond the local.

While both of these are laudable and arguably necessary, the latter carries an inadvertent risk that gender will be essentialised and that the present hierarchy of the sexes will remain entrenched. As Christine Chinkin has observed, women who obtain positions in decision-making institutions nationally and internationally are often relegated to “women’s issues” rather than being included in bodies that deal particularly with issues of security (Chinkin 2007). For example, in Canada, elected women may be slotted for portfolios in Cabinet other than the key positions that pertain to foreign and policy-making. These may be predominantly assigned to their male colleagues. Additionally, even if women obtain key foreign affairs or defence posts, these women will be placed in a double-bind. If they advocate what have been traditionally structured as masculine positions, this will be viewed as acceptable, but these women will be viewed as anomalies. Being seen as an aggressive negotiator is an unfeminine image. Conversely, women who espouse positions that are structured as feminine will reinforce present beliefs that gender is innate rather than constructed. Given this, it is difficult to see how including more women in the key decision-making processes will result in a denaturalising and dismantling of existing gendered hierarchies.

Even though a push for increased participation in the relevant decision-making spheres is accompanied by attempts to alter the present discourse by emphasising various “devalued feminine principles,” if these are being pushed solely by women, it will have little effect (Blanchard 2003). While it is not disputed that these “could play an important role in building alternative modalities of behaviour” it is argued here that the entrenched structures will continue to devalue these principles even if espoused by women in positions of power.⁸ Furthermore, it will continue to reinforce unwanted gender essentialisms. Various scholars, in an effort to problematise essentialist notions of the female as peaceful, have published accounts of women long-engaged in various forms of violence.⁹ However, this approach has been to little avail as the stereotype of women as peaceful continues to pervade despite all evidence to the contrary (Zalewski 1995).

Feminists have and continue to face immense challenges in attempting to dislodge the gendered hierarchies which produce insecurity. The theory is still marginalised in the field of international relations, more than two decades since it came to the fore. The discourse in international relations and in security studies is still gendered, despite a broadening of the definition of security beyond the state. Indeed, almost a decade after the publication of her groundbreaking *Gender in International Relations*, J. Ann Tickner noted that women still have not achieved a high level of participation in intergovernmental organisations and substantial barriers still exist for women seeking formal political office (Tickner 2001). The solutions posited do not seem to have had any discernible effect.

Negotiators face legal minefield in arriving at power-sharing deal

The law reforms to validate the deal may take months or years to hammer out

By GITAU WARIIGI

The announcement that the two sides involved in the Kofi Annan mediation effort had narrowed down their differences to what kind of coalition government to have may not have been the thundering breakthrough the country expected, but it was highly significant nonetheless.

It is understood that ODM are rooting for substantive power-sharing. They have drawn a list of the ministries they want for a transitional period pending major constitutional reforms. Furthermore, the party wants guarantees that President Kibaki will not fire the appointees to those ministries, a notion that the PNU side dismisses as impractical and contrary to existing constitutional norms.

PNU has been agreeable to a coalition where the President appoints those he wishes from ODM as the constitution provides for. The position of an executive prime minister is something the PNU is opposed to in the absence of enabling constitutional provisions. But word is that the government is not totally averse to a non-executive premier, or a minister-in-chief.

In principle, power-sharing can be agreed upon. But there is a legal minefield. Plus the necessary legal reform will take time, even a few miracles to accomplish. There has to be facilitating bills (brought to Parliament) and amende-

conference fell apart because the draft proposed an executive prime minister. The draft's opponents criticised it for relegating the President to more or less ceremonial duties. The entire anomaly with this arrangement was that the President was expected to be subjected to a direct popular mandate, which the more powerful prime minister was not.

Tanzania navigates this problem by having a non-executive premier who is answerable to the President. Assuming Kenya wants to pursue an arrangement where the President shares executive power with a prime minister, the constitution will have to be altered, which in turn will affect many statutory provisions. It would fundamentally alter the way the government works.

“If we want a prime minister, what scope should he get? Which appointments can he make? Do those include ambassadors? What are the checks and balances that would govern this office? Will the Head of the Public Service report to him? Can the President fire him? Such questions would have a huge ripple effect on the bureaucracy. It may actually be easier to draw up a new constitution from scratch,” said Mr Paul Mwangi, a lawyer and author who has written extensively on the Kenyan Judiciary.

The other form of power-sharing that was tried was a coalition between National Alliance Party of Kenya (NAK) and Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) under the Nare umbrella. It failed, which raises questions as to whether another attempt involving the same divided group of politicians won't be equally futile.

But, strictly speaking, the NAK-LDP memorandum of understanding and the follow-up coalition did not amount to sharing executive power. It could not do



Mr Kofi Annan with President Kibaki and ODM leader Raila Odinga. A grand coalition bringing ODM into government has been proposed. Photo/FILE

als from those parties. His action did not have the goodwill of the corporate leadership of Kamu, which at the time comprised Mr Uhuru Kenyatta and Mr William Ruto. In that sense it was not an inter-party coalition, leave alone being a government of national unity.

By poaching individual Opposition figures, the President technically did not

election is impractical. But if the matter were to come up, it would raise questions of how a presidential election would be separated from parliamentary and civic elections. Kenya's electoral law says that a General Election must simultaneously be carried out at three levels: presidential, parliamentary and civic.

A return of the presidential election

Negotiating conflict still a man's world

Summary and concluding remarks

There is no simple solution that will result in the dismantling of gendered hierarchies and the engendering of greater security. Nevertheless, it is suggested here that the aforementioned solutions be coupled with a greater emphasis than has been provided on emphasising male insecurities and encouraging males to be greater participants in eliminating gender inequalities. It is not enough for women to be the core of the solution. As Carol Cohn has noted, in order “to develop, explore, rethink, and revalue those ways of thinking that get silenced and devalued ... men, too, [will] have to be central participants.” (Cohn 1993) Men will need to voice ideas and values designated feminine in the decision-making rooms where the discourse has been structured masculine. Men will need to voice women’s security concerns. Women will need to be in this room as well. It is both sexes, in offering ideas and making statements viewed as traditionally feminine, and also those seen as masculine, that will denaturalise these social constructions and allow for the elimination of gender inequalities that at present, predominantly threaten the security of women. It is difficult to propose concrete measures to secure increased male participation. However, it is argued here, that this represents a better way forward than traditional suggestions, which rested on increased female participation in the realms of foreign and military policy-making.

Feminists need to shed light on male insecurities as much as female insecurities. Indeed, feminist scholarship has already engaged in this practice. Miranda Alison in a recently published article on wartime sexual violence illustrated the gendered nature of this violence and how not only women, but men were rendered insecure. Accounting for male victims challenges the dominant discourse that it is only women who need protection and that all men are protectors (Alison 1997). As noted above, R. Charli Carpenter has also demonstrated how men’s security is threatened by gendered assumptions that all males are aggressive. By focusing on these victims, this can further denaturalise beliefs that it is only females that need protection and allow for the development of a

broader security. Further scholarly work in the same vein is needed. Though some have noted that an emphasis on the insecurities of men may hide the fact that existing hierarchies predominantly threaten women’s security, it has been argued that the alternative, seeing “the oppressive position of masculinity as inevitable and immutable, makes continued research in this direction seem worth the risk.” (Blanchard 2003)

Feminist research in international relations has helped expose the gendered nature of realist theory and its detrimental affect on the security of individuals, particularly women. This perspective has also shown how human security approaches often overlook gender and thus, fail to offer programs which engender security for the entire population. While feminist theorists have correctly pointed the way forward, the solutions proffered in the literature have yet to achieve desired ends. The difficulty encountered in denaturalising the current construction of gender illustrates the deeply entrenched nature of this concept. However, as feminists have noted, not problematising gender will only perpetuate an environment in which women’s security is threatened.

Notes

- 1 Adam Jones, “Does ‘Gender’ Make the World Go Round? Feminist Critiques of International Relations,” *Review of International Studies*, No. 22 (1996), 405-406. It is acknowledged here that “there is no one feminism.” Heidi Hudson, “‘Doing’ Security As Though Humans Matter: A Feminist Perspective on Gender and the Politics of Human Security,” *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (June 2005), 48. While it may be inferred that this paper’s use of the general term feminism implies a unified body of thought, a qualified “many” or “much of” is intended each time the term is used. J. Ann Tickner, *Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 48.
- 2 It is argued here and elsewhere that while sex is biological, gender is a social construction whereby certain traits are ascribed to the male sex and the female sex resulting in notions of what constitutes the “masculine” and the “feminine” respectively. Francine D’Amico and Peter R. Beckman, “Introduction,” in *Women, Gender, and World Politics*, eds. Peter R. Beckman and Francine D’Amico (Westport: Bergin & Garvey, 1994), 3-4.
- 3 Human Security Centre, 148. John Mueller further observes that “there have been remarkably few international wars of any sort since World War II.” John Mueller, “Accounting for the Waning of Major Power War,” in *The Waning of Major War: Theories and Debates*, ed. Raimo Vayrynen (New York: Routledge, 2006), 64.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 150.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 *Ibid.*, 34.
- 7 Human Security Centre, “Human Security Report 2005: War and Peace in the 21st Century,” The University of British Columbia, <http://www.humansecurityreport.info/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=28&Itemid=63> (accessed July 18, 2009), 155.
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 See, Miranda Alison, “Women as Agents of Political Violence: Gendering Security,” *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (December 2004), 447-463.

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