

# Feminist Perspectives on International Relations

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## J.AnnTickner

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Compared to the other social sciences, feminist perspectives entered the discipline of international relations (IR) relatively late – at the end of the 1980s. Asking why IR remained immune to gender for so long, Margot Light and Fred Halliday have suggested that IR scholars have tended to view gender as an intranational problem, irrelevant to international relations; international relations have been seen as ‘gender neutral’, which means that they can no more be about women than they are about men (Light and Halliday, 1994: 45). With its focus on the ‘high’ politics of war, the discipline has privileged issues that grow out of men’s experiences; we are socialized into believing that war and power politics are spheres of activity with which men have a special affinity and special expertise and that their voices in describing and prescribing for this world are, therefore, likely to be more authentic (Tickner, 1992: 4–5).

It is not coincidental that feminist perspectives entered the discipline at the same time as the end of the Cold War and the consequent lessening in the predominance of military security issues that had tended to dominate IR since its founding. Previously obscured by the East-West rivalry, a variety of issues such as ethnic conflict, economic globalization, democratization and human rights began to occupy the IR agenda in the late 1980s. While international politics has never been just about relations between states, increasingly it has been defined in terms of relationships between international organizations and non-state actors such as transnational corporations, social movements and international non-governmental organizations.

This broad set of issues and a more comprehensive definition of global politics offered an entry point for feminist approaches. While women have always been players in international politics their voices have rarely been heard in the halls of state power. Therefore, their international political participation, which has more often taken place in nongovernmental settings such as social movements, fits better into these broader frameworks.

## Feminist Beginnings in IR

Much of the early work in feminist IR was generated by a series of conferences in the United States and the United Kingdom. Papers given at a conference held at the London School of

Economics in 1988 were published in a special issue of *Millennium* the same year; many of the articles were reprinted in *Gender and International Relations*, edited by Rebecca Grant and Kathleen Newland; several of the authors came from the development studies field, others from IR. Conferences attended by IR and feminist scholars were held at the University of Southern California in 1989 and Wellesley College in 1990, the latter of which resulted in the volume *Gendered States*, edited by Spike Peterson. In 1989, one of the first courses on women and international relations was introduced into the MA program at the London School of Economics; Fred Halliday, one of the founders of the course, noted that, at that time, there was very little literature in the area to assign to students (Halliday, 1991: 167). In the early 1990s, the British and North American International Studies Associations established gender studies research sections.

Since the early 1990s, publications and panels at professional meetings have proliferated. There is now a substantial body of literature on gender and IR and courses in the field have multiplied. Certain introductory IR texts are including feminist approaches in their overview of the field and edited volumes and anthologies sometimes contain a chapter on feminist perspectives (see for example, Art and Jervis, 1996; Goldstein, 1994; Rourke, 1993; Smith et al., 1996). Special issues on feminist IR have appeared in *Alternatives* and the *Fletcher Forum* edited by Christine Sylvester (1993), and Eric Giordano and Kimberly Silver (1993) respectively. In 1998, *Millennium* published a ten-year anniversary issue, 'Gendering the "international"'. In 1999, the first IR feminist journal, *The International Feminist Journal of Politics* began publication.

#### *Why the Take-Off?*

Besides the newly recognized developments in world politics referred to earlier, I believe that the rapid growth of feminist perspectives was also due to the ferment in the discipline in the early 1990s. It is not coincidental that feminist theory came to IR at the same time as a fundamental questioning of its epistemological foundations that called for rethinking the ways in which we explain or understand world politics. Constructivists suggested that ideational as well as material forces could explain international politics and the 'third debate' proclaimed the beginning of a 'post-positivist era' in international relations (Lapid, 1989); these developments marked the appearance of a substantial body of scholarship, associated with critical theory, historical sociology and postmodernism, that challenged both the epistemological and ontological foundations of a field dominated, in the United States at least, by rationalist methodologies. Like feminist theory, much of this critical scholarship is interdisciplinary, drawing from fields such as sociology, history and political philosophy. Also like feminist theory, many scholars on the critical side of the third debate have been skeptical of 'conventional' scholars' quests for objective, universal explanations, typical of positivist methodologies;<sup>1</sup> asking in whose interests and for what purpose knowledge is constructed,

post-positivist scholars have examined the intersection between knowledge and power (Walker, 1993).

Even though scholars on both sides of the third debate have been slow to introduce gender into their analyses, these epistemological critiques opened up space for feminist perspectives in a way that previous IR debates did not. Coming out of hermeneutic, historically based and humanistic methodologies, many IR feminist theorists, like critical scholars, have drawn on philosophical traditions outside the social sciences. Rather than generalized rationalist explanations about the behavior of asocial states and anarchic structures, typical of conventional methodologies, feminist theories are based on an ontology of social relations. By revealing and analyzing socially constructed gender hierarchies, feminist perspectives attempt to understand women's subordination, which is seen as variable across time and place.<sup>2</sup> Asking different questions from conventional IR and motivated by different normative concerns, feminists often employ bottom-up analyses which start at the micro-level and attempt to understand how individuals, embedded in social relations, impact and are impacted by international politics at the highest level.

Like scholars on the critical side of the third debate, feminists have frequently gone outside the discipline to seek answers to their questions. Drawing on earlier literatures on women and war, and women and development, feminist approaches are rooted in a long tradition of feminist theory. First-generation IR feminist theory was primarily concerned with bringing to light and critiquing the gendered foundations of the discipline. More recently, IR feminists have begun to develop their own research programs – extending the boundaries of the discipline, asking different questions, and listening to unfamiliar voices from the margins. Besides shedding new light on traditional topics, such as conflict and security, these investigations are taking IR feminists far from the discipline in terms of both subject matter and ways of understanding.

## Feminist Theories

Feminist perspectives also entered IR at about the same time as a debate was taking place within feminist theory itself. The key concern for all types of feminist theory has been to explain women's subordination or the unjustified asymmetry between women and men's social and economic position and to seek prescriptions for ending it. Sandra Whitworth (1994: 2) has claimed that contemporary feminist theory has its roots in social movements directed at transforming the unequal power relationships between women and men. Therefore, a key goal for feminist theory is to understand how the existing social order, one many feminists believe is marked by discrimination and oppression, came into being and how this knowledge can be used to work toward its transformation. Claiming that knowledge emerges from political practice, many feminists do not believe in, nor see the need for, the separation between theory and practice. However, feminists disagree on what they believe constitutes women's subordination as well as how to explain and overcome it.

Feminist theories have been variously described as liberal, Marxist, radical, socialist, psychoanalytic, standpoint, post-colonial and postmodern (Tong, 1998). Generally committed to a positivist epistemology, typical of the analytic and empiricist tradition of knowledge, liberal feminists believe that the removal of legal obstacles can overcome women's subordination. Most women's political movements in the United States have been and continue to be motivated by liberal feminism. However, postliberal approaches or 'second-wave' feminisms, see deeply rooted structures of patriarchy that cannot be overcome by legal remedies alone. While psychoanalytic traditions have looked for causes of women's subordination in socialization practices of early childhood, radicals, Marxists and socialists have looked for explanations in structures of patriarchy that 'naturalize' women's subordination, or in the labor market with its gender discriminations and divisions between public (paid) and private (unpaid/domestic) work. Rather than seeking equality with men, radical perspectives, which were strongly influenced by the consciousness-raising movements of the 1960s, have celebrated women's 'feminine' characteristics, and postulated feminist utopias.

In the 1990s, the introduction of postmodern and post-colonial perspectives generated a debate within feminist theory that has had important implications for feminist IR. Postmodernism has viewed with suspicion any mode of feminist thought that has tried to provide *the* feminist explanation as to why women are oppressed (Tong, 1998: 193). Challenging arbitrary boundaries between reason and emotion, mind and body, and self and other, feminist postmodernism has criticized the entire conceptual scheme of Western dualistic thinking and its gendered implications. Emphasizing plurality, multiplicity and difference among women, postmodernism has questioned radical feminism's notion of an essentialized women's standpoint.<sup>3</sup> Emphasizing the connection between knowledge and power and skeptical of the social scientific quest for 'objectivity', postmodern feminists seek to uncover in whose interests existing theories have been constructed. They express skepticism with respect to explanations associated with knowledge from which women have frequently been excluded as knowers and subjects. Postmodern feminism is interested in the problematic of 'otherness' and new forms of subjectivity (Zalewski and Parpart, 1998: 29). Writing in 1994, Christine Sylvester suggested that all feminists can, in some way, be thought of as postmodern because most women have been outsiders in the intellectual life of modernity (Sylvester, 1994: 16).

According to Marianne Marchand and Jane Parpart, whose edited volume *Feminism/Postmodernism/Development* has put the debate about postmodernism in the context of its utility for studying development, feminists have responded to postmodernism in a number of ways. The strongest opposition has come from liberal and Marxist feminist traditions, both of which claim that postmodernism denies the liberal promise of modernity and progress as well as the overarching theories of patriarchy, racism and capitalism upon which Marxist and socialist feminisms have been constructed. Given its skepticism about all forms of knowledge, many feminists believe that postmodernism threatens feminism's emancipatory agenda; its anti-essentialism and refusal to speak of women as an undifferentiated category

can lead to political fragmentation and the dissipation of feminist activism (Marchand and Parpart, 1995: 4–7).

However, a growing number of feminists, including many IR feminists, believe postmodernism has much to offer feminist theorizing; one of its most appealing aspects has been its focus on difference, which has been particularly empowering for women of color (Marchand and Parpart, 1995: 4–7). Strongly influenced by Black feminist critiques (Collins, 1990), postmodern feminists have emphasized the need to take into account a variety of structures of oppression associated with race and class as well as gender. Stressing the importance of producing their own knowledge and recovering their own identities, Third World feminists, speaking out of the historical experiences of colonial oppression, offer further evidence of the multiplicity of oppressions (Mohanty, 1991).

## Feminist Theories Meet IR

IR feminists have drawn from all these theoretical traditions. While there is an established liberal literature within feminist IR, much of which focuses on foreign policy, decision-making, voting and public opinion, to which I return later, many IR feminists would identify themselves as postliberals in that they challenge the claim that women can simply be added to existing theoretical frameworks; they also acknowledge the centrality of gender as a category of analysis. Although many would deny the label ‘postmodern’, most have been influenced by postmodern and post-colonial approaches and their emphasis on difference among women. Writing on issues such as rape, trafficking, prostitution, domestic service and homework, issues that are far from conventional IR agendas, many IR feminists have focused on individuals and groups at the margins of world politics (Chin, 1998; Moon, 1997; Pettman, 1996; Prügl, 1999a, 1999b). They have shown how the lives of marginalized people are multiply positioned in terms of race, class and culture as well as gender and how the social relations within which individuals’ lives are embedded impact on and are impacted by global politics.

Writing in 1991, Rebecca Grant and Kathleen Newland claimed that this diversity of feminist thought should not be a handicap nor stand in the way of conducting research on the gendered nature of international relations (Grant and Newland, 1991: 4). Generally committed to what they term a ‘celebration of diversity’, IR feminists have followed a variety of different approaches in their explorations. Working across knowledge frameworks, feminists challenge the ‘disciplining’ effects of disciplinary boundaries. Many of those whose work I discuss are not IR scholars in the disciplinary sense; some would deny affiliation with any traditional disciplinary label. Thus, it is hard to speak of the emergence of a canonized body of knowledge or even the state of the art. Indeed, many feminists would vigorously resist such categorizations of their work. Jill Steans (1998: 15) has suggested that, rather than try to

identify the essence of feminism, or establish a set of core feminist beliefs, it is more useful to demonstrate the richness and variety in feminist theories and practices.

In spite of this diversity of thought, debates between IR feminists have been muted and there has not been a great deal of self-criticism among them. This may be due in part to the relative newness of the approach; it may also be due to the fact that, in spite of its rapid growth, feminist IR is still quite marginalized. Since IR feminists, whatever their theoretical orientation, are still struggling to be heard by the wider discipline they may be reluctant to engage in self-criticism. Nevertheless, in summarizing some of the questions and issues with which IR feminists have been concerned, I will attempt to identify some of the debates between them.

### *Feminist Questions*

A question with which IR feminists have often begun their research is, 'where are the women?' Acknowledging that we need to look in unconventional places not normally considered within the boundaries of IR to answer this question, Cynthia Enloe has asked whether women's roles, as secretaries, clerical workers, domestic servants and diplomats' wives, are relevant to the business of international politics (Enloe, 1989: 8). While Enloe believes they are significant, she notes that it is difficult to imagine just what these questions would sound like in the arena of international politics and whether they would be taken seriously (Enloe, 1989: 5).

Locating women has included placing them within gendered structures. Typically, feminist research questions have to do with investigating how the international system and the global economy contribute to the subordination of women and other marginalized groups. Investigating how global structures and processes constrain women's security and economic opportunities requires asking how the types of power necessary to keep unequal gender structures in place are perpetuated. Does it make any difference to states' behavior that their foreign and security policies are generally conducted by men and often legitimated through appeals to various types of 'hegemonic' masculinity? Feminists believe that answering questions such as these may enable us to see that what is so often taken for granted in how the world is organized is, in fact, legitimating certain social arrangements that contribute to the subordination of women and other disadvantaged groups.

Questioning the way we have come to understand the world, as well as the forms of power necessary to sustain dominant forms of interpretation, demands different methodologies. In order to answer the kinds of questions outlined above, feminist research has looked both up and down; looking up enables the investigation of how structures of political and economic power as well as dominant forms of knowledge are created, upheld and legitimated. Looking down involves investigations based on the lives of those not normally considered as bearers of knowledge – looking in strange places for people and data or 'lower than low politics' (Sylvester, 1996: 264). Critical of IR's Western centrality, IR feminists have attempted to include the voices and experiences of Third World women in their investigations. Questioning

how structural power is legitimated and recovering the experiences of subjugated people demands methods more typical of discourse, anthropology and sociology than political science.

IR feminists have engaged a wide variety of international issues including security, the global economy, development, human rights, global governance and democratization. In order to illustrate some of the paths that feminist IR has taken over the past ten years and some of the emergent debates, I focus on three of these issues – development, the global economy and international security – and discuss some exemplary literature from each.<sup>4</sup> While development is not an issue normally considered in IR, the development debate has been an important locus of the evolution of IR feminist approaches. While international political economy (IPE) and international security have been central to IR, feminist approaches to these topics are quite different; in both the cases, they focus on the security of individuals, particularly those at the margins of global politics.

## **Gender in Development**

During the 1950s and 1960s, development theory and practice was based on the idea that, with Western assistance accompanied by a Western definition about what it meant to be modern, newly independent states in the South could 'take off' into self-sustained economic growth. The early literature on development paid little attention to women in the development process and, for the most part, ignored the contributions that women were making to development.

A separate literature on women and development illustrates the evolution of feminist theories outlined above. Early writings, in the 1970s, were informed by liberal feminism; their goal was to make women visible in the development process. In the 1980s, emphasis shifted to an understanding of gender relations and how they impacted women's lives. Most recently, due to the influence of postcolonial and postmodern feminisms, this literature has emphasized local and particularized knowledge with which to challenge the hegemony of Western orthodoxy. Emanating from women in postcolonial societies, it has contributed significantly to the contemporary feminist epistemological debates discussed earlier; it has also been an important arena for feminist attempts to expand the boundaries and subject matter of IR.

One of the early books which broke the silence about women was Ester Boserup's *women's Role in Economic Development*, published in 1970.

Boserup pointed out that early development models not only overlooked women's contributions but also devised projects that were frequently harmful to women. While Boserup's work has been criticized for ignoring women's reproductive roles as well as hierarchical gender relations that uphold women's subordination more generally (Beneria and Sen, 1986), her book succeeded in making women visible and stimulated calls for women to be integrated into the development process.

Paralleling critiques of liberalism more generally, the Women in Development (WID) approach was criticized for ignoring gender. In her contribution to the Grant and Newland volume, Anne Marie Goetz claimed that international development organizations were engaged in a misleading strategy of integrating women into a process in which they were already fully participating and of which their unremunerated labor was an essential part (Goetz, 1991: 138). Moreover, the WID literature tended to see women as separate from men; it did not deal with the more radical issue as to how gender relations and triple burdens of paid, household and community work decrease women's economic security. An emergent critical literature, much of which is summarized in *Feminism/Postmodernism/ Development*, an edited volume that includes authors from a variety of geographical regions and theoretical perspectives, began to focus on the gendered dimensions of global restructuring and the value of postmodernism for generating new thinking about women, gender and development. It investigated how development processes are embedded in power structures related to ethnicity, race and class as well as gender (Parpart and Marchand, 1995; see also Marchand, 1996a; Pettman, 1996). The gender and development (GAD) literature has focused on both women and men and how relations between them must be changed if women are to be empowered. This has led to a fundamental re-examination of social structures, a rethinking of hierarchical gender relations, and an acknowledgement of the fact that the situation of women is not homogeneous but a function of multiple power relations (Rathgeber, 1995).

The shift from women to gender occurred not only in the literature but also in development policy circles; this move has not been without its critics, however. In certain cases, the 'mainstreaming' of gender, that has taken place as international governmental organizations have begun to adopt the term, has created a disjuncture between feminist intent, which was to focus on hierarchical and unequal social relations, and the way it is being used in certain policy circles to talk only about women's issues. This has the effect of minimizing the political and contested character of relations between women and men. When gender is used descriptively to refer to women rather than analytically to underscore unequal relations between women and men, questions of power can easily be removed; Sally Baden and Annemarie Goetz (1998: 25) have suggested that it is ironic that a term intended to carry a political message has been so depoliticized in many policy arenas. This has the effect of removing from debate any radical restructuring of political, economic and social relations, an emancipatory goal to which many postliberal IR feminists are committed.

Recent feminist perspectives on development, as in feminist IR more generally, have emphasized the importance of knowledge emanating from the South. An important feminist critique of Western development models, that has claimed as one of its goals the empowerment of women, has taken place within DAWN (Development Alternatives for Women for a New Era); DAWN is a network that links women researchers from the South to provide guidelines for action based on research and analysis growing out of Southern women's experiences. DAWN's research methodology differs from eco-nomistic approaches in that it is

bottom-up; starting from analyses of micro-level experiences of poor women and linking these experiences to the macro-economic level, it works from the assumption that knowledge at each level should inform the other. It claims to promote a new science of empathy that uses intuition and reason simultaneously (Braidotti et al., 1994: 146; Sen and Grown, 1987).

Given their skepticism about the universalism of Western theories and their call for local, specific and historically informed analyses, post-colonial and postmodern approaches have made important contributions to the development debate. Braidotti et al. (1994: ch. 3) argue that postmodernism, with its stress on difference and locality, can make an important contribution to generating new types of knowledge. Since it respects difference and thinks beyond dualism and hierarchy, postmodernism can contribute to dismantling power relations implicit in the production of knowledge; it offers important new ways to critique scientific rationality and technological development.

These claims are highly contested, however. Supporting WID's role in giving voice to women and putting gender onto the agenda of international aid agencies, Mridula Udayagiri has asked whether postmodernism can lead the way to political activism through textual analysis that is decipherable for the most part only by erudite academic feminists (Udayagiri, 1995). Arguing that it is not only postmodernism that can effectively study difference, she claims that the political nature of feminist studies derives from the Enlightenment goal of universalizing experiences that bind us together in order to build effective coalitions (Udayagiri, 1995: 166, 169).

Braidotti et al. propose an alliance between Northern and Southern women built on mutual respect and a recognition of multiple positionality. Based on an interchange of local knowledge arising out of specific situations, this type of model is very different from Western models that rely on elite knowledge emanating only from the North (Braidotti et al., 1994: 120–1). This type of knowledge, informed by political and social practice, is often advocated by feminist theorists and practitioners.

Evolution of the literature on women and development illustrates some important trends in feminist IR more generally. The move from women to gender has allowed IR feminists to investigate how hierarchical structures of inequality between women and men are responsible for women's subordination. A focus on local knowledge has led feminists to different methodologies, such as narrative and ethnography, when designing and conducting their research projects. Debates on the advisability of the shift from women to gender continue, however. While acknowledging that women's lives must be seen in the context of a variety of hierarchical social, political and economic structures, certain feminists believe that losing sight of 'woman' threatens the normative goal of working for women's emancipation (Zalewski, 1998).

## **Gender in the Global Economy**

While there are obviously enormous differences in the socioeconomic status of women depending on their race, class, nationality and geographic location, women share a certain commonality in that they are disproportionately located at the bottom of the socioeconomic scale in all societies. While figures vary from state to state, on an average, women earn three-quarters of men's earnings even though they work longer hours, many of which are spent in unremunerated reproductive and caring tasks. Of the 1.3 billion people estimated to be in poverty, 70 per cent are women: the number of rural women living in absolute poverty rose by nearly 50 per cent from the mid-1970s to the mid-1990s (United Nations, 1995: 36). <sup>5</sup>

Feminist perspectives on IPE have investigated the extent to which these disturbing figures are attributable to the gendered effects of recent trends in the restructuring of the global economy. Women who work in the wage sector are generally the most poorly paid and women make up a disproportionate number of those working in the informal sector or in subsistence agriculture, areas of the economy that are often ignored by conventional economic analysis. Echoing feminist critiques of the development literature, Marianne Marchand has suggested that women have not been left outside global restructuring; they are participating while remaining invisible (Marchand, 1996a: 585). IR feminists have investigated the reasons for this invisibility that exists not only in the global economy itself but also in the field that studies it. Silence about gender occurs because it is invisible in the concepts used for analysis, the questions that are asked, and the preference for state levels of analysis typical of conventional IPE (Marchand, 1996b: 257).

While *Gendered States*, one of the early volumes in feminist IR, took a state-centric perspective (Peterson, 1992), many of the subsequent feminist analyses of the global economy have relied on a different ontology, one which is closer to that of critical theory. Just as critical theorists have focused on global class structures rather than states (Cox with Sinclair, 1996; Gill, 1995), feminists have examined how hierarchical structures of class, race and gender cross and intersect with state boundaries as well as the interactive effects of these hierarchies on the workings of the global economy (Krause, 1996; Peterson, 1996). Given their interest in understanding how culture, norms and values shape and are shaped by material structures, most IR feminists have rejected rational choice methodologies that focus on calculation of interest. For many IR feminist theorists, adding women to the liberal literature on the global economy is equally problematic because it hides the gendered power structures that feminists believe are the cause of women's disadvantaged position. Working within a variety of postliberal modes of analysis, IR feminists have focused on the global gendered division of labor and how it contributes to women's subordination (Marchand and Runyan, 2000).

#### *A Gendered Division of Labor*

As they seek to explain women's disproportionate representation at the bottom of the socioeconomic scale in all societies, feminists have drawn attention to a gendered division of labor that had its origins in seventeenth-century Europe when definitions of male and female

were becoming polarized in ways that were suited to the growing division between work and home required by early capitalism. Spike Peterson tells us that the notion of 'housewife' began to place women's work in the private domestic sphere as opposed to the public world of the market inhabited by 'rational economic man', the unit of analysis in liberal economics (Peterson, 1992: 43). Even though women have always worked outside the home, the association of women with gendered roles, such as housewife, caregiver and mother, has become institutionalized and even naturalized, thereby decreasing women's economic security and autonomy.<sup>6</sup> While post-colonial feminists have cautioned against imposing these Western categories on women in the South (Mohanty, 1991), Western forms of patriarchy spread to much of the rest of the world through imperialism where 'civilized' behavior was often equated with the behavior of Western men and women, particularly behavior based on appropriate gender roles.

When women enter the workforce they are disproportionately represented in the caring professions or in 'light' manufacturing industries, vocations, or occupations that are chosen not on the basis of market rationality and profit maximization alone as liberal economic theory assumes, but because of values and expectations that are often emphasized in female socialization. Expectations about appropriate roles for women help to explain why women are disproportionately represented in the caring professions such as education, nursing and social work. Cynthia Enloe has claimed that a 'modern' global economy requires traditional ideas about women, ideas that depend on certain social constructions of what is meant by femininity and masculinity (Enloe, 1989: 174). However, in spite of these assumptions about appropriate gender roles that characterize women as supplemental wage earners, estimates suggest that one-third of all households are headed by women, about half of which are in the South, a fact that is frequently obscured by role expectations based on the notion of male breadwinners (Holcomb and Rothenberg, 1993: 55).<sup>7</sup>

Socialist feminists, particularly, have emphasized how gender ideologies and structures, as well as market forces, lead to low wages and double burdens. They claim that women provide an optimal labor force for contemporary capitalism because, since they are defined as housewives rather than workers, they can be paid lower wages on the assumption that their wages are supplemental to their family's income. In the export processing zones (EPZs) of Asia, Africa and Latin America in the 1980s, more than 70 per cent of the workforce was female (Enloe, 1989: 162).<sup>8</sup> Companies favor hiring young unmarried women who can achieve a high level of productivity at a lower wage; these women are frequently fired if they get married or pregnant. Because of expectations associated with traditional gender roles there is a belief that women possess 'nimble fingers', have patience for tedious jobs, and sew 'naturally'; thus, this kind of work is not seen as skilled and is remunerated accordingly.

How disadvantaged women are by a division of labor that has evolved simultaneously with global capitalism is a subject of debate, however. Not all feminist scholars believe that the increase in employment of women in low-paying factory jobs is detrimental. Linda Lim has

argued that negative stereotyping of women in export manufacturing in the South has been based on outworn assumptions and generalizations from data collected in the 1970s during the earliest stages of the establishment of export factories. Lim claims that wages, hours and conditions in factories in EPZs are generally better than in their domestic counterparts and, therefore, are much desired. She also suggests that women workers in these industries tend to be better educated than average workers in their countries and that there is considerable diversity in terms of age and marital status (Lim, 1990: 101–19). Even if it is underremunerated relative to men or to wages in the North, many argue that this type of work may be the best option for women and better than no work at all. It also gives women more financial independence and higher status.

In her study of African women, April Gordon has claimed that paid work is an important source of power for women; like Lim, she sees no necessary connection between capitalism and the exploitation of women. Citing the African case, she suggests that a transition to capitalism that, she predicts, is leading to the increased participation of women in the waged sector, will actually enhance women's position relative to men and break the hold of African patriarchy that predates both capitalism and colonialism. For Gordon, therefore, it is patriarchy, not capitalism that is the real source of women's oppression (Gordon, 1996).

Ruth Pearson has suggested that the only way to assess the validity of these competing arguments is by conducting empirical case studies; such studies are indeed demonstrating that women's experiences of employment vary between marginality, inclusion and exploitation. In some places women's share of the industrial workforce is declining because of upgrading of levels of technology whereas in others they are emerging as multi-skilled workers. Pearson claims that it is necessary to recognize that we are not talking about structurally determined processes but gender identities that are open to reconstruction by women workers themselves (Pearson, 1998: 171–6). Many of these empirical case studies have been conducted by scholars outside IR as traditionally defined. I elaborate on two whose authors explicitly draw on IR constructivist and critical approaches as bases for their research. They are both concerned with labor issues that complicate the public/private divide and with the ways in which gender can be deployed as a strategy for improvement as well as repression.

*Women workers on the margins: two IR feminist case studies* Gender enters into the issue of home-based work. As companies have moved toward a more 'flexible' labor force in all parts of the world, cost-saving has included home-based work which is easily hired and fired. Exempt from any national labor standards that may exist, 'domesticated' workers are outside the working class and its regulations; they are generally paid lower wages than factory workers and are not paid at all when there is no work. Since women, often of necessity, prefer work that more easily accommodates to family responsibilities, home-based workers are predominantly women. Traditional notions of the division of labor which defines women as

housewives, a category with expectations that labor is free, legitimizes wages at below subsistence levels (Prügl, 1999b: 198).

In her study of home-based work and the International Labor Organization (ILO), Elisabeth Prügl investigates how the ILO finally came to adopt the 1996 convention setting international standards for home-based work (Prügl, 1999a). Prügl positions her research in the context of the IR constructivist literature; she argues that since the constructivist approach assumes that life is social and social relations are variably constructed, it is a useful framework for analyzing gender. She draws on Nicholas Onuf's (1989) characterization of rules to suggest that 'gender is an institution that codifies power, a constellation of rules and related practices that distributes privilege in a patterned way and is reproduced in communication' (Prügl, 1999a: 13). The goal of the study is to demonstrate how social activists, lobbying for ILO protection for home workers, deployed various definitions of gender to pressure the ILO to adopt the convention. The discourse of separate worlds of male 'breadwinners' and female 'dependants' had to be challenged and the gender ideology that separates public and private had to be broken down before standards for homework were eventually put in place in 1996.

Acknowledging the current emphasis in feminist research on local knowledge, Prügl defends her research design and its focus on global rules (Prügl, 1999a: 148). Given the divorce of space from territory and place, typical of the modern economy, Prügl claims that the distinction between the global and the local have become problematic as global networks are constructed among distant agents. Since activists, in their efforts to work for protective legislation at the local level, employ global claims to effect particular outcomes, she argues for the emancipatory potential of 'practical knowledge' that focuses at both levels.

While they have paid considerable attention to women's unpaid reproductive labor, feminists have been reluctant to take on the question of paid domestic service, an issue that is becoming increasingly internationalized due to recent economic restructuring. Since it is women who usually employ and often exploit other women, paid domestic service is an arena where issues of colonialism, class and race are particularly acute. In a case study of the employment of Philippine and Indonesian domestic servants in Malaysia, Christine Chin (1998) dates the inflow of overseas domestic workers back to the 1970s when the Malaysian government instituted the New Economic Policy designed to promote growth through modernization of the economy. Chin claims that domestic service, a 'pre-modern' labor form that has traditionally been thought of as a private issue beyond the reach of the state, is actually shaped by state policies. She uses a critical theory perspective to demonstrate how domestic service, rather than being a personal, private issue as is often assumed, is one that involves the state and the political economy of the East Asian region. Reinforcing the feminist claim of the interpenetration of the personal and the political, she investigates the multicausal linkages between region, state and household. While previous analyses have examined class

and racial dimensions of what she calls the repressive developmental state, little work has been done on its gendered dimensions.

Chin describes her work as multimethod ethnographic research; she describes analysis of her interviews as a study of narrativity. Narrative is a method employed by some feminists to further their goal of constructing knowledge that comes out of people's everyday life experiences. Chin claims that such knowledge is important for reaching a level of self-understanding that can enable people to comprehend hierarchical structures of inequality or oppression within which their lives are situated and thereby move toward overcoming them. Like Prügl, her emphasis is on practical, emancipatory knowledge.

Most feminists working on global economic issues believe that women continue to be disadvantaged relative to men by a global division of labor that relegates them disproportionately to unremunerated subsistence and household tasks or to low-paying waged jobs – roles that are based on traditional notions of the public/private divide but that are being reinterpreted to respond to new demands for flexible labor. As these case studies demonstrate, feminists are particularly interested in the local/global dynamic; they have examined the extent to which global economic forces penetrate as far down as the household and how activities in the local arena sustain and support the global economy, often at the expense of those on the margins. Suspicious of universal arguments about economic rationalization, feminists working in this area have drawn on local knowledge and analyses that take social as well as economic relations into account. They claim that the negative effects of the gendered division of labor on women cannot be understood without an analysis of the complex social relations in which the lives of all individuals are embedded; women's subordination is caused not by impersonal market forces alone, but by processes that result from conscious political, economic and social choices, choices that are often based on changing assumptions about gender. Feminists writing about the contemporary global economy claim, therefore, that only when these processes are revealed and understood can progress be made toward substantially reducing these gendered boundaries of inequality.

## **Gendering International Security**

Feminist perspectives on security have raised different issues, engaged in different debates and used different methodologies from traditional international security studies. Feminists have questioned the foundational stories of IR on which explanations about the 'security dilemma' have been built. Using discourse analysis, they have analyzed the 'masculinity' of strategic discourse and its consequences for strategic policy. Examining the effects of war on women, they have challenged the claim that women are a 'protected' category. They have also entered into the long-standing debate as to whether women are more peaceful than men; recently, an emergent empirical literature is linking this debate to the issue of the democratic peace.

In her feminist re-analysis of what she calls the 'creation myths' of international relations, on which realist assumptions about states' behavior are built, Rebecca Grant has claimed that these stories depend on male representations of how individuals function in society. While the parable of man's amoral, self-interested behavior in the state of nature, made necessary by the lack of restraint on the behavior of others, is taken by realists to be a universal model for explaining states' behavior in the international system, Grant asserts that it is male rather than universal. If life were to go on in the state of nature for more than one generation, other activities, such as childbirth and child-rearing, typically associated with women, must have been taking place. Grant suggests that, when women are absent from these foundational myths, a source of gender bias is created that extends into international relations theory (Grant, 1991: 9–17).

For similar reasons, feminists have also questioned the use of rational choice theory based on the instrumentally rational behavior of individuals in the marketplace that neorealists have used to explain states' security-seeking behavior. According to this model, states are unproblematically assumed to be instrumental profit maximizers pursuing power and autonomy in an anarchic international system. When international cooperation exists, it is explained not in terms of community, but rather in terms of enlightened self-interest. Feminists have suggested that rational choice theory is also based on a partial representation of human behavior which, since women in the West have historically been confined to reproductive activities, has been more typical of certain men (Tickner, 1992: 82). The instrumentally competitive behavior of states, that results in power-balancing, is similar to equilibrium theory or the market behavior of 'rational economic man'. Therefore, it tends to privilege certain types of behaviors over others. While states do indeed behave in these ways, these models offer us only a partial understanding of their behavior.

For example, does the fact that states' national security policies are often legitimated by appealing to 'hegemonic' masculine characteristics, such as power and self-help, mean that certain types of foreign policy behaviors – standing tall rather than wimping out – are seen as more legitimate than others? Carol Cohn has asked whether it could be that men who, in the role of defense experts, must employ tough 'masculine' language and suppress any 'feminized' thoughts when constructing strategic options, come to regard more cooperative choices as unthinkable and cooperative behavior as unlikely. Motivated by her claim that the power of language shapes how and what people think, Cohn uses discourse analysis and ethnography to answer some of these questions in her study of defense intellectuals (Cohn, 1993). Her analysis suggests that the masculine gendered discourse of American security experts is the only permissible way of speaking about national security if one is to be taken seriously by the strategic community. This rational, disembodied language precludes discussion of the death and destruction of war, issues that can only be spoken of in emotional terms stereotypically associated with women. In other words, Cohn claims that the limits on what can be said with

the language of strategic discourse constrains our ability to think fully and well about national security.

### *Challenging the Myth of Protection*

Despite the widespread myth that wars are fought, mostly by men, to protect 'vulnerable' people, a category to which women and children are generally assigned, women and children constitute a significant proportion of casualties in recent wars. There has been a sharp increase in the proportion of civilian casualties of war – from about 10 per cent at the beginning of the century to 90 per cent in the mid-1990s (United Nations, 1995: 45). Women and children constitute about 90 per cent of the total refugee population, a population whose numbers increased from 3 million to 27 million between 1970 and 1994, mainly due to military conflict, particularly ethnic conflicts (United Nations, 1995: 14). Feminists also draw our attention to issues of rape in war. As illustrated by the war in the former Yugoslavia, where it is estimated that 20,000 to 35,000 women were raped during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Pettman, 1996: 101), rape is not just an accident of war but often a systematic military strategy. Cynthia Enloe has described social structures in place around most US army bases where women are kidnapped and sold into prostitution; this system of militarized sexual relations has required explicit American policy-making (Enloe, 1993: 19–20).

In her study of prostitution around US military bases in South Korea in the 1970s, Katharine Moon has shown how these people-to-people relations were actually matters of security at the international level. Clean-up of prostitution camps by the South Korean government through policing of sexual health and work conduct of prostitutes was part of its attempt to prevent withdrawal of American troops that had begun under the Nixon Doctrine of 1969.

Thus, military prostitution interacted with US-Korean security politics at the highest political level. Crossing levels of analysis, Moon demonstrates how the weakness of the Korean state, in terms of influencing the US government, resulted in authoritarian sexist control at the domestic level. In other words, national security translated into social insecurity for these women (Moon, 1997: 151–60). Describing her fieldwork in Korea as an attempt to lift the curtains of invisibility that have shrouded Korean prostitutes' existence, Moon's stories, based on ethnographic research, locate women in places not normally considered relevant to IR and link their experiences to wider processes and structures crucial to national security.

Feminists believe that by looking at the effects of war on women, a better understanding of the unequal gender relations that sustain military activities can be gained. Given the belief of many feminists that knowledge has the potential for emancipation, revealing social practices that support war and that are variable across societies suggests that war is a cultural construction rather than an inevitability. Evidence about women in conflict situations severely strains the protection myth; yet, such myths have been important in upholding the legitimacy of war and the impossibility of peace. Looking more deeply into these gendered constructions

can help understand not only some of the causes of war, but how certain ways of thinking about security have been legitimized at the expense of others both in the discipline of IR and in political practice.

### *Gendering War*

The association between masculinity and war has been central to feminist investigations. While the manliness of war is rarely denied, militaries must work hard to turn men into soldiers through misogynist training thought necessary to teach men to fight. Importantly, such training depends on the denigration of anything that could be considered feminine; to act like a soldier is not to be 'womanly'. 'Military manhood', a type of heroic masculinity that goes back to the Greeks, attracts recruits and maintains self-esteem in institutions where subservience and obedience are the norm (Segal, 1987: 187).

Another image of a soldier is a just warrior, self-sacrificially protecting women, children and other vulnerable people (Elshtain, 1987). The notion that young males fight wars to protect vulnerable groups, such as women and children, who cannot be expected to protect themselves, has been an important motivator for the recruitment of military forces. As discussed earlier, the concept of the 'protected' is essential to the legitimization of violence; it has been an important myth that has sustained support for war by both women and men. In wartime, the heroic just warrior is sometimes contrasted with a malignant often racialized masculinity attributed to the enemy; this serves as further justification for protection.

These images of the masculinity of war depend on rendering women invisible. The recent acceptance of women into the armed forces of certain states complicates this issue however. By the end of the 1980s, 430,000 women were serving as uniformed personnel in the world's regular military units, although this has not changed the masculinized culture of states' militaries. The military remains largely a male institution and the presence of women stirs deep currents, particularly with respect to combat. The image of female soldiers fighting and dying in wars, as was evidenced in the Gulf War of 1991, is deeply disturbing to public opinion. While placing women in combat is motivated by the liberal principle of equality, it is in strong tension with the myth of protection and with the culturally embedded view of what it means to be a warrior; in certain cases, it has been strongly resisted by the military itself with claims of its negative effect on combat readiness. It has also generated a debate within feminism; while liberal feminists support women's equal participation in the military, many radical feminists believe that women should reject fighting in men's wars. In fact, certain radical feminists have claimed that women have a special affinity with peace.

### *Gendering Peace*

If women have been largely absent from the world's militaries, they have been well represented in a variety of peace movements. All-women peace groups have frequently drawn

upon maternal imagery to relay their message. Drawing on feminine characteristics, such as caregiving and connectedness, many women in these movements see themselves as different from men. Such movements have ranged from protesting the nuclear confrontation between the great powers during the Cold War to organizing against the repressive activities of states on their own populations. The women's Strike for Peace in the United States in the early 1960s drew attention to what its members believed was an alarming escalation of the Cold War. Although pre-dating radical feminism, these women defended their right as mothers to influence the course of government in its support for nuclear containment, a course which they claimed was not protecting but threatening the American family. Stressing that nuclear war was the greatest threat to families, they challenged the notion that war is waged by men to protect women (Swerdlow, 1990: 8).

The association of women with peace is a major debate in feminist IR. The suffrage movement at the beginning of the century argued that, if women were given the vote and allowed more influence over foreign policy, peace would follow. Many women in peace groups and peace research today have similar beliefs. For example, feminist peace researcher Betty Reardon has argued for the need for 'feminine' values which she sees as morally superior in a nuclear world (Reardon, 1985). Drawing on psychoanalytic object relations theory and influenced by the work of Carol Gilligan (1982), Sara Ruddick has argued for the affinity of a politics of peace with maternal thinking. While Ruddick is careful not to say that women are more peaceful than men, she does claim that there is a contradiction between mothering and war (Ruddick, 1989: chs 4, 5). While Ruddick believes that the association of women with peace is the result of female socialization, other feminists, particularly radical feminists, believe that this association is biologically rooted in the ability of women to bear children.

While maternal thinking has often been quite successful in motivating women's peace movements, it has made many feminists, including many IR feminists, uncomfortable. The association of men with war and women with peace reinforces gender hierarchies and false dichotomies that contribute to the devaluation of both women and peace (Sylvester, 1987). Assumptions about peaceful women and warlike men lead to antagonisms that threaten the credibility of feminist projects. In their study of women foreign policy decision-makers, Nancy McGlen and Meredith Sarkees (1993) set out to test the relationship between women and peace. Characterizing the debate as one between 'minimizers', who minimize differences between women and men, and 'maximizers', who support the special affinity of women with peace, they interviewed women in high level positions in the US Departments of Defense and State. Relying on data from their interviews and anonymous questionnaires, they found that, while there was some indication of different styles of leadership, there was little evidence of different attitudes; thus, they concluded that more women in leadership positions would not result in significant changes in policy. Asking the question to both women and men as to whether more women in the departments of Defense and State would have an impact on US foreign policy, 75 per cent replied in the negative (McGlen and Sarkees, 1993: 303).

The broader evidence for the association of women with peace is inconclusive (Light and Halliday, 1994: 48). Jean Elshtain (1987), Cynthia Enloe (1993) and others have documented both women's roles in various peace movements as well as their support for, and participation in, war. McGlen and Sarkees (1993: 5) and others have claimed that the association of women with peace is a liability because it has been used to keep women out of politics. While peace movements, that have relied on maternal images, may have had some success, they do nothing to change existing gender relations; this allows men to remain in control and to continue to dominate the agenda of world politics while women's voices are often seen as inauthentic and 'idealistic' in matters of defense and foreign policy-making.

An example of the negative consequences of associating women with peace is Francis Fukuyama's discussion of the biological roots of human aggression and its association with war that appeared in the journal *Foreign Affairs* in 1998. Fukuyama claimed that women are more peaceful than men, a fact that, he believes, for the most part is biologically determined. Therefore, a world run by women would be a more peaceful world. However, Fukuyama claimed that only in the West is the realization of what he calls a 'feminized' world likely, since he believes that areas outside the West will continue to be run by young aggressive men; therefore, Western men, who can stand up to threats posed by dangers from outside, must remain in charge, particularly in the arena of international politics (Fukuyama, 1998).

Arguments such as these are, in reality, deeply conservative; given the dangers of an aggressive world, they imply that women must be kept in their place and out of international politics (Tickner, 1999). And, as many IR scholars have claimed, the leap from aggressive men to aggressive states is problematic. Moreover, there is little evidence to suggest that men are 'naturally' aggressive or that women are always peaceful; many feminists believe that traditional socially constructed concepts of masculinity and femininity that, as I have suggested, sustain war require an exercise of power; therefore, they are not inevitable and can be changed (Enloe, 1989: 3).

Certain scholars have also begun to outline a possible relationship between the claim that democracies do not fight each other and gender. Robert Keohane (1998: 197) has suggested that a research program that links gender hierarchies with war and peace could be fruitful. One such study (Caprioli, 2000) has investigated whether gender equality correlates with fewer military solutions to resolve international disputes. Testing whether high levels of gender equality yield low levels of militarization, Mary Caprioli finds that states with a long history of female suffrage, a high percentage of women in parliaments, and relatively high economic and social status for women, are more likely to settle disputes peacefully.

Since there are very few states in which women are in positions of power in significant numbers it is difficult to say whether gender equality accounts for the relative peacefulness of certain states. While there is little evidence to suggest that the influence of women has

predisposed states against entering wars, it is true, however, that, in certain cases, a gender gap does exist when measuring support for war. Nancy Gallagher (1993) has demonstrated that women in the United States have consistently shown less support for forceful means of pursuing foreign policy goals than men and that this gender gap continues to grow. It was widest at the time of the Gulf War of 1991 although it closed somewhat once the fighting had begun.<sup>9</sup> There was evidence to suggest that those who opposed military intervention were amongst those most likely to support feminist goals, a claim also supported by an analysis of attitudes toward the peace process in the Middle East.

A study of Israeli, Egyptian, Palestinian and Kuwaiti attitudes toward the Arab/Israeli conflict broken down by sex found that men and women did not have different attitudes and there was no evidence of women being less militaristic. Using data collected between 1988 and 1994, it did, however, find a strong positive correlation between attitudes toward support for equality of women and support for diplomacy and compromise. Therefore, the authors saw a connection between feminism and positive attitudes about international conflict resolution (Tessler and Warriner, 1997).

These examples are instructive; they suggest that reducing unequal gender hierarchies could make a positive contribution to peace and social justice; such a goal is more 'realistic' than idealized notions of an unattainable 'feminine' peace. Offering a counter position that rejects both the masculinity of war and a feminine peace, Mary Burguieres has argued for building a feminist security framework on common ungendered foundations. She claims that women have no superior moral claim to being bearers of peace (Burguieres, 1990: 8). She has suggested a role for feminism in dismantling the imagery that underlies patriarchy and militarism and a joint effort in which both women and men would be responsible for changing existing structures.

Much of the feminist work on international security, in addition to these empirical studies, has been concerned with analyzing various constructions of masculinity and femininity and examining how they have upheld the legitimacy of war and the devaluation of peace. Increasingly, the study of masculinity is being included on the feminist IR agenda more generally. Feminists are beginning to examine not only the masculinity of war, but also how various types of masculinity play out in the global economy and in the construction of IR theory more generally. A 1998 volume entitled *The 'Man' Question in International Relations*, included contributions from a number of male scholars in the field writing about masculinity (Zalewski and Parpart, 1998). This type of work is important if feminism is to successfully engage with and have a future in the broader discipline.

## **What is the Future for Feminist IR?**

In *Gendered States*, Spike Peterson (1992: 11–15) challenged IR to open up space for feminist conversations. She encouraged the discipline to question the empirical adequacy of knowledge

claims that exclude knowledge about women and to think about the implications of taking gender seriously. Through discussion of some scholarship in development, the global economy, and international security, I have shown why feminists believe that it is important to take women and gender seriously. Yet, for the most part, IR has been slow to include women or gender in its investigations.

Ten years after the introduction of the graduate course on gender and international relations at the London School of Economics, Fred Halliday saw little progress in integrating gender into the wider discipline. In 1998 he claimed that most IR departments, journals and conferences still paid scant attention to feminist IR (Halliday, 1998: 843). Although she thinks this may be changing, Marianne Marchand notes a lack of engagement with critical IR also (Marchand, 1998: 202). <sup>10</sup> While the third debate and the introduction of constructivist approaches more generally have engaged critical and conventional scholars to some degree, there has been little discussion of feminism.

In the few cases where critiques of IR feminism have occurred, they have usually been at a fairly abstract level of generality; they have focused on feminists' lack of 'rigor' or of an adequate explanatory framework (Genest, 1996: 511). Feminists have also been criticized for claiming that women are more peaceful and cooperative than men, a claim many would deny as discussed earlier. <sup>11</sup>

What are some of the reasons for this lack of engagement? Robert Keohane has claimed that it may be because the politicization of the debate on issues related to feminist scholarship has meant that IR scholars fear that if they engage seriously, they will become targets for attacks on their motives (Keohane, 1998: 612). I would argue, however, that, particularly with respect to conventional IR, it may be due to the very different ontological and epistemological commitments of each approach (Tickner, 2001). IR scholars see a world of states which they portray as rational unitary actors; feminists de-emphasize state boundaries and focus on hierarchical social relations notably, but not exclusively, gender relations. Joya Misra sees a similar disjuncture between feminism and world systems theory. She claims that feminism focuses on individuals' lives as its unit of analysis while world systems theory focuses on the world system (Misra, 2000: 120). As they move on from revealing and critiquing the gendered foundations of the discipline toward establishing their own research programs, IR feminists are drawing on tools, such as discourse analysis and ethnography, more typical of history, sociology and anthropology than of political science. These are methodologies not typical of IR as conventionally defined. Frequently, this type of research is dismissed as 'not IR' or 'not science'; these epistemological differences are probably the most serious barriers to engagement.

The lack of conversation works in both directions. Fred Halliday (1998: 843) has faulted feminist scholarship more generally for its lack of recognition of the international. He has also criticized feminists for their 'celebration of diversity' which, he claims, runs the risk of slipping

into fruitless discourses that do little to address policy issues or help students understand these issues (Halliday, 1998: 844). Halliday's remarks were published in the 1998 *Millennium* anniversary special issue which was intended to 'revisit gender in IR ten years on'. The volume began with an article by a post-colonial feminist, Gayatri Spivak. Contributors included scholars from a variety of disciplines such as area studies, cultural studies, literary criticism and philosophy, and theorists and practitioners from non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The editors' introduction stated that the goal of the conference, which formed the basis of the articles, was to expand the ways and means of analysis in international studies beyond those considered legitimate by state-centric IR – to show that it is possible to think about 'the international' without being trapped in the traditional framework of IR. The editors rejected the strategy of those IR feminists who are still trying to engage the IR mainstream on the importance of gender (Odysseos and Seckinelgin, 1998: iii–iv).

Several of the articles in the *Millennium* special issue represented views of feminists in international studies broadly defined who reject or ignore the discipline of IR and who are venturing out to create new definitions of international studies and new ways of analyzing them. The attempts to engage with a discipline that they see as lacking an understanding of and interest in gender and feminist theory is regarded as fruitless. It is indeed instructive to note that a number of the early founders of feminist IR have moved on to other professional lives.<sup>12</sup> Then there are scholars, such as Cynthia Enloe and Jean Elshtain, who have written extensively about women, gender and international politics, but who frame their arguments without addressing the discipline directly.<sup>13</sup>

There are also those feminists who continue to call for conversations (Locher and Prügl, 2001; Marchand, 1998; Tickner, 1997) and, as I have described, continue to write within the analytical frameworks of the discipline. In spite of the difficulties of conversation, I believe that it is important that IR feminists stay connected to the discipline. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize that power differences have played an important role in the marginalizing of gender issues and feminist scholarship. Inequalities between mainstream and feminist IR allow for greater ignorance of feminist approaches on the part of the mainstream than is possible for feminists with regard to the broader discipline if they are to be accorded any legitimacy within the profession. For those feminists not working with methodologies considered acceptable by much of the discipline, efforts to delegitimate their work on epistemological grounds will continue. This will not change until these methodologies are awarded equal legitimacy in political science departments where most IR graduate training takes place.

While feminist IR cannot tell us all we need to know about global politics, it does allow us to see new issues in new ways as well as to reconsider how we view traditional ones. Listening to the voices of those on the margins has allowed feminists to uncover different worlds and begin to build the kind of practical knowledge necessary to construct a more democratic global politics. Moving toward a global politics, built on foundations where gender is no longer a

system of oppression, is a goal to which such knowledge can contribute. Critical questioning of the founding assumptions of IR and the raising of the kinds of issues discussed in this chapter are crucial if IR is to contribute to building a more peaceful and just world, goals which have motivated the discipline since its founding.

## Notes

This chapter draws from Tickner (1997) and Tickner (2001). I would like to thank Craig Murphy and the volume editors for their helpful comments.

1 I define 'conventional' in the methodological sense – as scholars in realist, neorealist, neoliberal, behavioral and empiricist traditions who are committed to data-based methods of testing. I define positivism broadly – as a belief that the same methodologies can be applied in the natural and social worlds; that the social world, like the natural world, has regularities; that there can be a distinction between facts and values; and that truth statements can be determined by appeal to neutral facts (Smith, 1997: 168).

2 Throughout this chapter, I define gender, as do most feminists, as a set of culturally defined, socially constructed characteristics. (Gender is distinct from sex, which is the biological aspect of what it means to be a man or a woman.) Power, autonomy, public and reason are characteristics stereotypically associated with masculinity, while their opposites, weakness, dependence, private and emotion, are associated with femininity. The masculine characteristics are generally regarded more favorably by men and women alike; they correspond to an idealized form of masculinity, or 'hegemonic masculinity', to which, obviously, not all men conform. (This carries particular implications for minorities.) Importantly, gender is relational; masculinity and femininity depend on each other for their definitions which vary across history and culture. Gender is a hierarchical relationship of power and inequality between men and women. For a comprehensive analysis of gender as a lens for viewing world politics see Peterson and Runyan, 1999: ch. 2.

3 The term 'standpoint' comes from the Marxist notion of a privileged political and epistemological standpoint. Standpoint feminism has been defined as a vision produced by the political conditions and distinctive work of women (Hartsock, 1983). Given feminist concerns with difference, the question of a single feminist standpoint has been much debated.

4 For some examples of literatures that summarize feminist perspectives on human rights, global governance and democratization see Charlesworth, 1994; Meyer and Prügl, 1999; and Waylen, 1994, respectively.

5 While not the most recent issue, I draw on the 1995 edition of the *Human Development Report* because its focus was specifically on women and gender issues.

6 For further elaboration of the origins of the gendered division of labor see Mies, 1986: ch. 2.

7 Note, however, that statistics on the number of female-headed households in the world are notoriously unreliable. For an analysis that disputes the assumption that women-headed households are necessarily poor see Jackson, 1998: 44.

8 Evidence suggests that this percentage may be declining as automation increases and women are replaced by more technically skilled males. See Runyan, 1996: 240.

9 In December 1990, men were evenly divided, 48 per cent for and 48 per cent against attacking Iraqi forces: 73 per cent of women were opposed and 22 per cent were supportive (Gallagher, 1993: 29).

10 Marchand cites exceptions to this lack of engagement; they include George, 1994; Scholte, 1993; and Zalewski and Parpart, 1998.

11 One IR scholar who has engaged more specifically with feminist IR is Adam Jones. Jones disagrees that IR feminists are constructing new theories; he has also faulted feminism for not paying sufficient attention to male victims of international and inter-ethnic violence (Jones, 1996).

12 Both Rebecca Grant and Kathleen Newland have left academic IR for more policy-oriented work.

13 One of Elshtain's early pieces (1985) did offer a feminist critique of realism but she has since moved away from engaging directly with IR as a discipline.

#### Further Readings

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## Psychological Explanations of International Conflict

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### **Janice Gross Stein**

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