

## States of Insecurity and the Gendered Politics of Fear

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"Terrorism" has become a catchall term for the enemy who challenges U.S. imperialism. Viewed by the likes of George Bush, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz, terrorism is the activity of terrorists; and terrorists are not us, nor are they like us—terrorists are those who hate "our" freedom/democracy, modernity/secularism, and hard-won success. "Terrorism" has now fully replaced communism as the globe's scourge. "Our" enemies, the enemies of democracy and freedom, exist everywhere and anywhere. Yet much of the rest of the world thinks that President Bush is more of a threat to the world than Saddam Hussein. (Eisenstein 2004, 8)

Just months before the beginning of World War II, Franklin Delano Roosevelt addressed Congress, invoking a future in which security figured in what now may seem to be archaic ways:

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world. The third is freedom from want—which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world. The fourth freedom is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means worldwide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world. That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation. That kind of world is the very antithesis of the so-called new order of tyranny which the dictators seek to create with the crash of a bomb. (Roosevelt 1941)

Reading this address 65 years later, it is difficult to imagine a world in which security required peace rather than "the crash of a bomb," freedom to worship rather than the imposition of evangelical Christianity worldwide; economic opportunities for every nation; and where the freedom from fear stood in direct opposition to armed conflict and war. Indeed, as we write this introduction, U.S. President George Bush has announced his intent to dismantle Social Security "as we know it." Three decades after conservative revolutionaries ascended to the White House in the United States, the last of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's great society programs—one that brought a measure of security to the country's elderly—may yet be dismantled by conservatives.

This special issue was born out of our shared concern about the meanings that have accrued to "security" during the U.S. war on terror, particularly the articulation of "security" to a political agenda that promotes

militarization, a word we use following Cynthia Enloe (2000). Enloe describes militarization as "a step-by-step process by which a person or a thing gradually comes to be controlled by the military or comes to depend for its well-being on militaristic ideas," a process that involves the kind of "institutional, ideological and economic transformations" the United States has experienced in the years since the invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001 (2000, 3). Conceptions of security in particular have been increasingly militarized, coming to depend on military needs and perspectives for their definitions, in ways that are often directly tied to forms of aggressive masculinity. Our analysis of the nexus among security, fear, and gender within the context of ever more aggressive militarization worldwide is divided into three sections in this introduction. In the first, we address how the term "security" has been hijacked since the commencement of the U.S. global war on terror, mainly as an alibi for a series of economic policies, political decisions, and military actions that have had the effect of making many women throughout the world infinitely less secure. In the second section, we discuss the construction of fear within contemporary political discourse, its political uses, as well as the manner in which fears themselves have been gendered in the language of the architects and engineers of the war on crime. We conclude by analyzing the cynical ways in which symbolic women have been invoked as both grounds and justification for the war on terror, while the material needs of women and their communities have been entirely written out of the picture, both economically and symbolically.

### **Institutionalizing Insecurity**

Today's war on terror needs to be understood as the globalization of a set of narratives forged during the U.S. war on crime—a war waged against people of color in the United States and a war that grew on assertions made by mass media, politicians, and pollsters about people's ostensible fear of crime. The war on crime waged by conservatives (many of them avowed evangelicals) was grounded in a view of masculinity as aggression and force. In this conservative worldview, the "feminized" traits of forgiveness, comprehension (too intellectual for a U.S. regime that prides itself on its arrogant self-assurance), and mercy were embarrassing signs of being "soft" when it came to protecting society from various threats. The androcentric privileging of hardness over softness, toughness over leniency, and masculinity over femininity, is perhaps the defining feature of the field of bipartisan politics in the United States, shared by Democrats and Republicans alike. We should not forget that Bill Clinton left the campaign trail in 1992 to preside over the execution of a mentally retarded black man in Arkansas to demonstrate his hard-on-crime

credentials. In the lexicon of U.S.-style politics, security now is etymologically related to violence.

U.S. concerns about the "security" of other states, and the interventions that have followed from these concerns, have proved to be synonymous with U.S. economic interests in the eyes of much of the world. Even the most cursory research demonstrates the convergence of U.S. economic interests and its declared concerns about security, particularly the security of women and children. As we have seen in both Afghanistan and Iraq, concerns over female victims fade once the soldiers and guns are in place. Those victims who do not serve U.S. interests—who are, in the words of Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky, "unworthy"—are simply ignored (1988, 37).

Nowhere is this ignorance more evident than in the case of U.S. policy toward Africa. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United States has consistently ignored the conflict that has claimed the lives of at least 3.3 million people since fighting began in 1998. Half of those deaths were women and children. More than 400 thousand people have been made refugees during this conflict ("Refugees by Numbers 2003") and a recent Human Rights Watch report suggests that tens of thousands of girls and women (some as young as three years old) have been raped or subjected to other forms of sexual violence since 1998 ("Seeking Justice: The Prosecution of Sexual Violence in the Congo War" 2005, 9). In response to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, in which it was clear that sexualized violence (including rape, sexualized torture, and the intentional transmission of AIDS to Tutsi women) against women and girls was being perpetrated, the United States refused to intervene. And although condoms have proven to be one of the most effective means of combating the spread of AIDS, the Bush administration has allowed faith-based organizations that receive U.S. funding to promote condom use only when they deem it "appropriate," leaving the assessment of "appropriate" circumstances in the hands of Christian evangelicals and the Catholic church. In Uganda, faith-based AIDS programs are undermining that country's successful fight against AIDS by spreading rumors that HIV can penetrate latex condoms and that premarital sex is "deviant" ("Uganda: 'Abstinence-Only' Programs Hijack AIDS Success Story" 2005).

In those places where the United States has "intervened" in order to make inhabitants "more secure," the security of women and children has plummeted. According to a recent report published in *The Lancet*, 100,000 Iraqi civilians—again, half of those women and children—have died since the U.S. invasion. In addition, infant mortality has gone from 29 to 57 deaths per 1,000 live births, because women are unable or unwilling to travel to hospitals to labor and deliver (Bosely 2004, 10). Despite widespread evidence to the contrary, the U.S. government persists in arguing that military aggression provides the best "road map" for democracy.

Madeline Albright probably put the U.S. position most starkly and straightforwardly: "When asked on U.S. television if she thought that the death of half a million Iraqi children [during the sanctions] was a price worth paying, Albright replied: "This is a very hard choice, but we think the price is worth it"" (Pilger 2000).

Although women and children pay the price both during war and in the devastation left in the wake of armed conflict, a militarized culture like the United States has a stake in encouraging us to believe that war is a masculine undertaking and that both war makers and war casualties are men. In the case of the obliteration of the city of Fallujah in Iraq, journalist Mike Whitney observed that the media participated in a "total news black-out" despite the murder of 6,000 civilians (a Red Cross estimate) and allegations that the United States had used napalm, which was banned by the United Nations (UN) in 1980 (Whitney 2004). Even when the situation is not one of total blackout, representations of women and children appear infrequently in news accounts of U.S. military aggression. Women and their children make up 80 to 90 percent of wartime casualties and are over 80 percent of refugees. Recent estimates suggest that there are over 17.1 million refugees worldwide ("Number of Refugees Worldwide Has Dropped" 2004).

Militarized variations on the theme of security and the relations of visibility and invisibility that underwrite the meanings of security in the United States have other, perhaps less obvious, effects on the actual security of women and children throughout the world. When the most powerful and the richest nation in the world devotes such a large proportion of its resources to war making, it accelerates the production, distribution, and consumption of arms worldwide. Since 1993, the United States has been responsible for more than 50 percent of arms sales throughout the world, selling to allies like Saudi Arabia, whose record on human rights and women's rights in particular is among the worst in the world, as well as governments like that of Indonesia, which enjoy similarly dismal reputations with regard to human rights ("Arms Around the World" 2003). In addition to being the world's major supplier of arms, the United States also encourages a global climate of fear in which other countries feel compelled to arm themselves against the United States. Feminists and other opponents of war, for example, have been organizing to oppose increases in military spending (and decreases in social spending) in China, where the Executive Yuan "proposed in June to buy six batteries of Patriot-III anti-missile systems, eight diesel-electric submarines and a squadron of twelve anti-submarine aircraft from the U.S. with a NT \$610.8 billion budget to be paid for over a 15-year period starting in 2005" ("Arms Budget Should Be Slashed" 2004). Ironically, countries now buy arms from the United States to protect themselves from the United States.

In addition to the likelihood of their having been produced by U.S. manufacturers, many of the weapons used by those now constructed as "threats" to security, moreover, were purchased with funding from the U.S. government. On 13 October 2004, forensic experts uncovered a mass grave in Hatra in northern Iraq containing the bodies of thousands of Kurds executed by Saddam Hussein. In one grave, they found the bodies of mothers still holding their small babies, and young children shot in the head while clutching their toys ("Babies Found in Iraqi Mass Grave" 2004). While mainstream news sources were swift to use this evidence to argue that Saddam Hussein should be put to death, none of them mentioned that in 1987 and 1988, when these shootings occurred, Saddam Hussein was still receiving funding and other support from the United States government. Even if the bullets used to kill those women and children were not made in the United States, chances are good that they were purchased with U.S. dollars.

Another effect of militarization involves the socialization of boys and men to exhibit ever more violent and aggressive behaviors that have local and global ramifications. Rape and sexual violence are fundamental parts of militarization and of war making, not exceptions to "normal" wartime behaviors. From Guatemala, El Salvador, Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, and the Congo to Iraq and Pakistan, militaries have targeted women, and occasionally men, for sexualized violence. Girls and women have repeatedly been sexually victimized by U.S. military forces, as well as by their country's militaries and militias, as Enloe documents in *Maneuvers*. The behavior of soldiers in the United States is no better, although the military and the government can more effectively control news about it. In the U.S. Air Force, a survey of 579 female cadets administered in May 2002 found that 68 percent had experienced sexual harassment, ranging from inappropriate language and e-mails to unwanted touching. Eighteen percent reported that they had been sexually assaulted or raped, and 11 percent of the graduating class of 2003 said that they had been the victims of rape or attempted rape. In 149 of the 177 incidents of assault reported, the attackers were fellow male cadets (Goldenberg 2003). In the summer of 2002, the military base at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, saw the murder of four civilian women by their soldier husbands ("4 Wives Slain in 6 Weeks at Fort Bragg" 2002). War making can militarize almost everyone, and nearly all activities, with uniformly tragic consequences.

In economic terms, feminists around the world recognize that the effects of the war on terror will continue to be devastating for women for years to come. Domestically, increases in military spending after September 11, have resulted in less and less funding for social spending in the United States. By the end of 2004, the United States spent some \$399.1 billion on the military, compared to the \$65 billion spent by Russia, our

closest competitor ("Last of the Big Time Spenders" 2003). In 2004, the United States spent \$55 billion on education and a piddling \$8 million on Social Security and Medicare ("Magazine of Future Warfare, The" 2003). Following the example of European Union feminists, we need to consider what a women's budget would look like.<sup>1</sup> What if \$399 billion were spent on education and jobs, rather than on increased militarization and aggression? What if children were taught to address conflict in ways that did not privilege aggression and violence? What kind of security might be achieved through universal health care?<sup>2</sup>

## Fear Is a Feminist Issue

The questions we pose above ask us to imagine, against militarized models of security, what nonviolent, socially secure societies might look like, and the kinds of resource allocation they would require. Many of our contributors draw attention to how dominant models of masculinity (as aggression and force) and femininity (as forgiveness and compassion) are used to justify violence. Even more fundamentally, contributors to this volume underscore the ways that notions of gendered fear determine what count as legitimate issues of security and how security issues get constructed as social problems.

Most dominant articulations of "fear" are spoken from white middle-class, heterosexual male social positions, and represented so that it appears as if there is broad social consensus over *what* to fear, *who* is most fear inspiring, and *how* fear should be defined (see Stabile 2001). But such consensus does not exist. In fact, the overwhelming media visibility of street crime and young, nonwhite male street criminals reproduces definitions of "fear" and "security" that are particularly useful to federal and local law enforcement initiatives and resource requests, but not to local communities. The resultant models of "fear" and "security," based upon racist constructions of street crime and street criminals, are also "gendered maneuvers." Following Enloe, in order to understand how institutions such as federal and local law enforcement, militaries, and media industries work, we must study their gendered maneuvers. That is, we need to critically examine the decisions that go into the gendered management of these institutions. Feminists have long understood that "to make sense of any organization, we always must dig deep into the group's dominant assumptions about femininity and masculinity" (Enloe 2004, 96). The construction of dominant discourses of fear modeled on racist and white masculinist constructions of fear of crime warrant the same critical treatment.

Crime and fear of crime, as Beatrix Campbell argues, are "unthinkable outside the imperatives of gender" (1999, 187). The dominant representations of fear manifested by the war on crime have cast crime in terms of

racialized, aggressive masculinity, to which competing forms of aggressive masculinity embodied in law enforcement and military training are offered as solutions. Anti-violence gender activists Martha McCaughey and Neal King argue that the cultural reproduction of media images of "dangerous men" re-asserts fantasies of sexist violence where masculinity, linked to aggression, is both feared and marshaled as a form of protection (1995). The aggressive masculinities depicted in the figures of the criminal and the lawmaker in so many entertainment and nonfiction media portrayals work in tandem with representations of fear to depict an idealized victim—one who is feminized and feels, above all else, fear. Her fear, in this depiction, can be dispelled through masculinist procedures of crime control and anti-terrorism tactics.

As Elizabeth Stanko argues, "fear of crime has become the dominant popular tool in conceptualizing vulnerability, assessing risk to victimization and measuring anxiety about the possibility of encountering violence" (2000, 13). Instead of addressing the conditions of these fears, the construction of "fear of crime" via crime news, mainstream criminology, and the manipulation of data gives new life to social exclusions based upon race, class, gender, and sexuality on which the industrial production of "fear of crime" is based. While national crime surveys do help prove that the rates of victimization for various crimes are much higher than figures reported by police departments (a point many of those involved in anti-rape and anti-domestic violence activist struggles have found immensely useful in directing attention to the amount of sexualized violence committed against women that is not reported to the police) these surveys also have participated in the much larger process of social exclusion enabled through the war on crime. Black and Latino populations in the United States have been cast as scapegoats for the "crime problem" through stereotypical portrayals of young men of color as animalistic predators, linking up images of criminality with particularly dehumanized depictions of black and Latino masculinity (see Rome 2004; Surette 1994).

Furthermore, the war on crime fosters a "barrier mentality" that requires the continual reproduction of fearful images, where security comes to signify secured and militarized borders, hardened and gated architectures, private security forces and strategic weapons, and tactical (SWAT) units within law enforcement. Calls for "security" have become the battle cry for forces seeking to profit from their ability to design fear into city spaces and militarized state borders (Rentschler 2003, 2004). Our cities, suburbs, and ex-urbs have in effect become hardened security zones—"defensible spaces" in the words of urban planner Oscar Newman—on the backs of young men and women of color who are rendered less secure through this process (1972). The definition of security as hardened barrier zones reproduces fears rather than reducing them. As in the call for "security fences" in the West Bank, fears of terrorism

and crime, criminologist Murray Lee argues, are not so much social facts as much as they are "contingent categor[ies]," mutually constructed alongside the figure of an idealized "fearing subject" (2001, 467).

Feminists and anti-violence educators argue that aggression and fear are not grounded in any particular person or type of person, but are instead coached as part of the process of learning gender (Canada 1996; Gordon and Riger 1989; Stanko 1990). The ways boys and girls learn to be masculine and feminine offer lessons in risk and safety. Boys are often coerced by other boys and men in their families to act aggressively, to "know how to fight" in order to appear masculine and heterosexual, because aggressive masculinity is also code for compulsory heterosexuality (see Bourgois 2003, 213–58). As a result, boys are targeted for violence to enforce norms of compulsory heterosexuality. As some feminist legal scholars have begun to argue, it may be better to think of boys' "bullying" behaviors directed at other boys as forms of same-sex harassment that reproduce what Rachel Toker refers to as "masculine supremacy" (Toker 1999; Williams and Brake 1996–1997). Girls learn to fear sexualized aggression through forms of often daily gender and sexual harassment, obscene remarks, demands for emotional performance, and the definition of their sexuality vis-à-vis boys and older men, while boys learn that they must deny their own vulnerabilities to violence in order to "look tough" and "be a man." Because many of our ideas about fear, vulnerability, aggression, and crime are bound up with the ways we learn compulsory norms of gender and sexuality, the most available means we have for talking about fear, vulnerability, and aggression often do not help us see more clearly the sources of each in the gendered and sexual divisions of our societies. Instead, U.S. culture represents fear by reproducing those images of fear and dangerous criminality most politically useful to crime control establishments and anti-terrorism efforts.

As several of the authors in this special issue demonstrate, far too often "security" signifies a set of protectionist "muscular solutions" to perceived criminal and terrorist threats, where "victims" are not only hailed, but coerced into participating in powerful social scripts of victimization that ventriloquize their own needs and fears for the purposes of social control (Hope and Sparks 2000). The articles by Connie G. Oxford and Nandita Sharma examine how immigration policy and asylum cases respectively rely upon notions of victim harm and "trafficking" that silence and reinterpret the politicized stories women tell in their asylum cases in the United States, and in their claims to refugee status as migrant laborers (and not "trafficking victims") in Canada. Against women's own narratives of fear, survival, resistance, and choice, official constructions of fear marginalize the social and economic sources of insecurity and the articulation of collective experiences of fear that can directly challenge

law and order, punishment-based criminal justice, and immigration policies (Stanko 2000). Feminist standpoint epistemology reminds us that perspective is grounded in social position and that what one fears depends in large measure on the everyday realities of race, class, gender, ability, nationality, and age that structure and limit individual vision (see Collins 2000; 2004). To be poor, to be a welfare recipient, to be a migrant laborer, to be a person of color, means one is more *policed* than served by criminal justice systems and immigration bureaucracies.

In keeping with this, Esther Madriz's ethnographic study of women's fears of crime found that black women feared that their brothers would be victims of police brutality, a fear not likely to be shared by most middle-class white women (1997). In her interviews, Madriz discovered key racial, gender, and age distinctions in how different women and men experience and express their fears. White women indicated they were more fearful of rape than other women. Black women feared hate crimes and robbery. Teenage girls feared assault from other teenage girls of different racial groups. Adult women feared mostly men. African American and Latina women feared police and reported feeling less safe when police were around, while white-identified women reported feeling safer when police were around. Ethnographers Michelle Fine and Lois Weis's analysis of the gendered and racial coding of people's own articulations of fear similarly reveals that people of color have the most to fear from police institutions and other state agencies, while white men tend to blame non white men and women for crimes they are least prone to directly experience, such as street crimes (1998a). African American men and Latino men express particular concern about their safety in relation to state-initiated violence, including incidents of police harassment, systemic flight of jobs and capital in poor communities, the over-arrest of men of color, and the boom in prison construction. In contrast, white men overwhelmingly express fears of street crime committed by nonwhite men. While many working-class white men have also lost jobs, they report feeling "mugged"—that is, they use the language of street crime—and they tend to direct their fears and angers at men of color, instead of corporations or state institutions. The fears of these white men furthermore enjoy state support in ways that the fears of nonwhite populations simply do not.

Within the situated contexts of the social spaces in which they live, work, and play, diverse women have a difficult time publicly articulating their fears. Powerful institutions fail to hear these diverse fears, which often get uttered in local community contexts, in alternative discursive spaces such as community centers or in popular cultural venues. Such counter-discourses of fear occupy what Fine and Weis call "the unknown city" (1998b)—spaces of interaction where marginalized people gather to express their fears, worries, ideas, and plans for the future, but which

largely remain ignored by many policing and criminal justice institutions, even when, as Connie G. Oxford argues about asylum cases, women articulate them directly to representatives of the state, like their case workers.

Over the past 40 years, "fear of crime" has become "the contemporary discourse of inequalities and disadvantages . . . [the] metaphor for contemporary life that has not rid itself of the persistent remnants of hierarchies founded in the historical legacies of colonialism, patriarchy, heterosexism and class" (Stanko 2000, 28). As feminists, we need to shift discourses of fear and insecurity away from the preconstructed categories of "crime," "fear of crime," and "security" toward the kind of analyses that many of the authors of this special issue are developing: analyses that are sensitive to difference, grounded in the "workaday virtues of empirical inquiry" (Hope and Sparks 2000, 3) and engaged with the problems, concerns, and needs of various feminist movements. We must start listening to other articulations of fear and insecurity besides those that repeatedly get spoken in the narrow grooves of institutional meaning among law enforcement, militaries, policymakers, and media industries. If we do not listen to other ways of expressing fear and insecurity, we risk reproducing the same fear-inspiring, protectionist myths of crime and security on which gendered discourses of fear are based. Fear, we must understand, has no universal standard.

## **Feminists Speak Back to the Protection Scenario**

I have been in Palestine for two weeks and one hour now, and I still have very few words to describe what I see. It is most difficult for me to think about what's going on here when I sit down to write back to the United States. Something about the virtual portal into luxury. I don't know if many of the children here have ever existed without tank-shell holes in their walls and the towers of an occupying army surveying them constantly from the near horizons. I think, although I'm not entirely sure, that even the smallest of these children understand that life is not like this everywhere. (Corrie 2003)

During the course of receiving submissions for this volume, we were reminded that, as sociologist Pierre Bourdieu once put it, scholars often work on issues that have been preconstructed for them, sometimes with a state guarantee (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 251–2). As feminist media scholars, our research consistently reasserts this point, by which we mean that academics, like everyone else, are subject to the powerful cultural forces that direct and structure our vision. For many of us, making sense of the security state, the various forms of threat construction that are part of it, and the forms of fear that follow from these, means taking account of the protection scenarios that have historically been used to justify aggression on the part of the U.S. nation-state. According to scholars like

Judith Hicks Stiehm (1982), Susan Jeffords (1991), Richard Slotkin (1973), and Iris Marion Young (2003), protection scenarios are organized around the following cast of characters: a helpless, typically nonwhite villain; a white, male hero whose duty it is to vanquish the villain; and a speechless female or feminized victim, whose needs (particularly for security) must be ventriloquized and acted upon by the omnipotent hero. Although we have both found the notion of the protection scenario to be a useful one in understanding the dynamics of power and powerlessness that go into the making of the security state, we also want to emphasize that the protection scenario, by definition, depends upon the preconstruction of victims worthy of the attentions of the heroic male protector.

Thus, when we focus on those protection scenarios made visible by politicians and the corporate media, we need to be scrupulous in understanding the limitations of these preconstructed issues. Connie G. Oxford, Nandita Sharma, and Gretchen Soderlund ask us to do this in their respective analyses of trafficking, an issue that perhaps more than any other comes with a state guarantee. Women seeking asylum, as Oxford and Sharma demonstrate, are encouraged to tell particular kinds of narratives about their victimization—narratives that come with a state guarantee of worthiness as gendered victims. However, our own attention to “trafficking” can serve to reproduce myths and misperceptions of women’s strategies for migration and their very real needs for material assistance. That is, our own attention to trafficking can function to make invisible the immiseration of those women silenced and made invisible by such a narrative framework, while at the same time invoking a predictable debate over sex work that has become stale and unproductive. As scholars, we must be vigilant in how we construct our objects of study, asking ourselves whether we have taken for granted the ways some objects of study, like sex trafficking, have been constructed *for* us, rather than *by* us. The articles in this special issue challenge in many ways the preconstructed nature of certain categories, but the process is still ongoing and requires vigilance, self-reflexivity, and collaboration.

Jennifer K. Wood’s compelling analysis of how U.S. crime victim policies have the effect of rendering particular victims invisible provides a model for this kind of work. According to Wood, the attention given to a Laci Peterson, or, for that matter a Jessica Lynch, as Carol Mason argues, comes at the expense of other victims, the majority of them nonwhite and poor. What this means in the broader context of political struggle and debate is that only certain women’s alleged fears get represented and distributed, only certain women inspire the actions of the heroic male protector, and only those victims who fit into a larger narrative about U.S. triumphalism and hegemony get their stories told at all. Such stories often require familiar stereotypes that are scripted into narrative battles between good and evil.

Furthermore, when we accept a protection scenario's definition of security, based on the standpoint of white male elites, women throughout the world remain unsafe, insecure, and silent. Since only state actors and private security forces can function as protectors, many nonstate actors simply do not count as media sources, especially women (see Del Zotto 2002). And since the protection scenario demands that women not speak back to their protector, they must remain the passive ground for political debate, lest they contradict the protector's version of security. Women cannot function as protectors within this scenario, thus we seldom, if ever, hear the voices of women in debates about foreign policy and militarism. Take the case of anti-fundamentalist women activists in Afghanistan, who, as Anne Brodsky documented, had years of expertise working in their country and thus excellent ideas and suggestions about how to improve the economic and political situation of women (2003). Not only were groups like the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan ignored by the media, they were also shut out of the U.S.-backed interim government. When women do function as protectors along with men, as Kevin J. Ayotte and Mary E. Husain analyze in relation to arguments against covering practices among Islamic women, other pressing political issues get pushed off the public agenda. Furthermore, debates about covering practices among nonIslamic men and women tend to elide national, religious, social, and other differences that exist among Muslim women. Conditions of political solidarity require that women are able to speak for themselves, and that the fiction of "Muslim woman" be directly challenged (see Abu-Lughod 2002).

Or take other cases of female activists who speak back to would-be protectors and, as a result, remain misrepresented or absent from media accounts of conflict. When women activists are portrayed in media accounts, as Lisa Brooten's analysis of Aung San Suu Kyi in this special issue demonstrates, it is on terms set not by her, but by a well-worn media formula for portraying broad-based resistance through the personal struggles of particular individual women. To take another example, African American women have long been in the forefront of struggles against police violence in their communities, yet to the best of our knowledge, debates about security have never addressed their concerns or their ideas about solutions. Women receiving welfare made moving and astute observations about problems with programs before Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) was approved, but wealthy male policymakers and politicians, apparently knowing better, did not consult them. Women in cities throughout the United States know firsthand the effects of violence in their communities and everyday lives and have creative and important ideas about possible solutions, but those who make criminal justice policy simply do not listen. And finally, as those who care for children, the sick, the disabled, and the elderly throughout the world,

women have intimate knowledge of the consequences of lack of access to health care and to drugs that combat malaria, AIDS, and tuberculosis. Yet those who purport to provide protection for women have yet to deliver on demands for fresh, clean water, much less universal health care.

Or take a story that begins closer to home for U.S. feminists. In January 2003, as the U.S. war with Iraq loomed closer, 23-year-old Evergreen State College senior Rachel Corrie left the security of her home in Olympia, Washington to volunteer with the International Solidarity Movement in the Occupied Territories. Passionate about social justice issues, dedicated to social change, believing that her actions could help change a world she saw as tragically unjust, Rachel could have been any one of our feminist students, daughters, nieces, or colleagues. Shortly after her arrival, on March 16, 2003, Rachel Corrie (wearing an orange, fluorescent vest) was protecting the home of a Palestinian family from Israeli forces, when she was run over by a U.S.-made caterpillar bulldozer and killed. According to one eyewitness, "She was raising her hands and yelling at the bulldozer driver to stop. The bulldozer driver paid no attention. . . . He buried Rachel with dirt, which ended up, obviously, knocking her down. Then he ran over her, and then reversed and ran over her again" ("Israeli Bulldozer Kills American Protester" 2003). Months later, according to Rachel's mother, "The Israeli government exonerated the soldiers, closed the case, and refuses to release to the U.S. government the complete report on the military police investigation into Rachel's killing" (Corrie 2004).

Some of you will have heard the story of Rachel Corrie, but it would not be surprising if many of you have not. Where a quick Lexis-Nexis search of northeastern news sources shows that between 15 March 2003 and 15 March 2004, there were a total of 492 stories about the "rescue" of Jessica Lynch (see Carol Mason's article in this volume for more on Lynch's story), during the same time period, there were only 39 stories about the murder of Rachel Corrie. Lynch's story began in Palestine, West Virginia, and ended in Nassiriya, Iraq, where the petite blonde woman was "rescued" by Army Rangers and Navy Seals in a scenario later shown to be staged by U.S. forces ("Truth About Jessica, The" 2003). In contrast, Corrie's story began in Olympia, Washington, and ended in Palestine, where Israeli forces killed her. Without the obvious production of Lynch's "rescue," the story would hardly have been newsworthy, while one would assume that the death of a U.S. citizen engaged in peaceful and nonviolent protest would have been front-page material for days. But despite the fact that she was young, white, female, and pretty, Corrie was a political agent who was, at the time of her death, committed to opposing the actions of the United States's staunchest Middle Eastern ally. Corrie's short life contradicted the rules of the protection scenario through which an androcentric culture seeks to control women's voices and to constrict their ability to represent themselves.

Rachel Corrie's death also raises issues about which victims do and do not count in the U.S. media. Although her death received comparatively little coverage in the U.S. media, at the very least, it was covered, a point that Corrie's mother acknowledged shortly after her death,

Rachel would not want her death to overshadow that of others. In barely glancing at headlines since word came of Rachel's death, I note that many have died this week in the Occupied Territories—one a four-year-old child. I would like to be able to hold the mother of that child and to have her hold me. ("Press Release from the Parents of Rachel Corrie" 2003)

In our own struggles over the meaning of the word security, we would like to emulate Cindy Corrie's remarkable self-reflexivity in the wake of such a tragic loss. The war on terror's constructions of threats and fear serve to individualize fear and atomize people based on the promise of a security that never materializes. In defiance of these tendencies, we need to invoke understandings of security that remind all of us about its necessarily social and relational meanings.

Feminists need to work together to undo the silences in the discourses of security that have followed from the war on terror—the media's, as well as our own. Like the women of Greenham Common, who for nineteen years occupied that space in protest of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's decision to site cruise missiles there, we need to make noise about issues of security that matter to more than a handful of the world's elites.<sup>3</sup> We need to speak back to all our would-be protectors and to pay attention to the silences in narratives about security. We need to demand discussion of competing discourses about security and to listen across the boundaries of class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, age, and national origin to understand the limits of individual and individualized constructions of fear, threats, and security. Those of us who enjoy more privilege and comparative security urgently need to mobilize against the militarized futures currently on sale. Feminists need to continue to fight over the meanings of security being foisted upon us and to work to appropriate the word security for feminist purposes and a feminist political agenda.

Working within a discipline itself born out of political resistance to androcentrism, women's studies teachers, students, and supporters have a unique and urgent responsibility to respond to the states of insecurity being created by an arrogant and androcentric militarized culture. No single volume can even begin to address the complicated web of issues that converge around gender, security, and fear, and research cannot substitute for political action. Our hope for this volume is that in some modest way it can provide a starting point for the conversations, conferences, research projects, and direct action projects that we need to begin having in collective, collaborative, and ever-louder ways. In the midst

of this growing political and economic gloom, we can find hope and sustenance for the struggles ahead in the courage, energy, creativity, and dedication of all those women fighting against the states of insecurity being thrust upon us. As Rachel Corrie said shortly before her death, "I look forward to increasing numbers of middle-class privileged people like you and me becoming aware of the structures that support our privilege and beginning to support the work of those who aren't privileged to dismantle those structures" (2003). Together, we need to find ways to make a whole symphony of women's voices heard above the din of militarism, aggression, and androcentric self-interest.

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## Notes

1. See the website of the Women's Budget Group ([http://www.wbg.org.uk/GBA\\_Present.htm](http://www.wbg.org.uk/GBA_Present.htm)), as well as Walby (2004).
2. The United States is the only industrialized nation that does not provide health care to its citizens as a right of citizenship. As a result of widespread lack of access to health care, the United States's infant mortality rates are 23rd out of 28 industrialized countries, down from 12th in 1960 and 21st in 1990; the U.S. life expectancy for women is 20 out of 28, down from first in 1945. Moreover, although elites in this country argue that we cannot afford universal health care, the simple fact of the matter is that right now the United States spends over 40 percent more per capita on health care than any other industrialized nation that already pays for universal health care (Battista and McCabe 1999).
3. See Margaret L. LaWare (2004) "Circling the Missiles and Staining Them Red: Feminist Rhetorical Invention and Strategies of Resistance at the Women's Peace Camp at Greenham Common" for more about the women of Greenham Common.

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