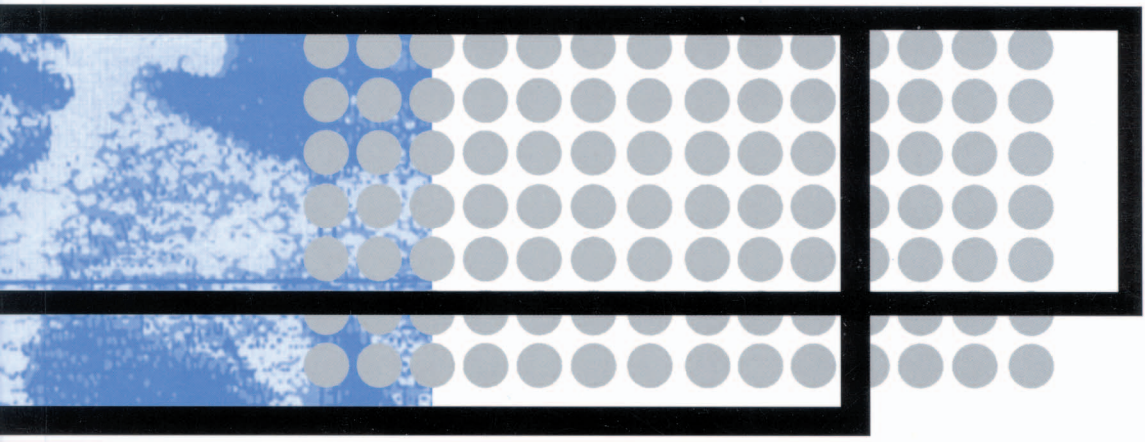
GENDER, PEACE & CONFLICT



Edited by

Inger Skjelsbæk and Dan Smith

GENDER, PEACE AND CONFLICT

International Peace Research Institute, Oslo
Fuglehauggata 11, N-0260 Oslo, Norway
Telephone: (47) 22 54 77 00
Telefax: (47) 22 54 77 01
E-mail: info@prio.no
http://www.prio.no

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PRIO
International Peace Research Institute, Oslo

SAGE Publications
London • Thousand Oaks • New Delhi

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First published 2001

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SAGE Publications Ltd
6 Bonhill Street
London EC2A 4PU

SAGE Publications Inc.
2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320

SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd
32, M-Block Market
Greater Kailash - I
New Delhi 110 048

British Library Cataloguing in Publication data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 0 7619 6852 0
ISBN 0 7619 6853 (pbk)

Library of Congress catalog record available

Typeset by M Rules
Printed in Great Britain by Redwood Books, Trowbridge, Wiltshire

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Foreword

This book on the role of gender difference in conflict resolution and political decisionmaking resulted from the Expert Group Meeting organized jointly by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO) at the United Nations Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), in Santo Domingo, in 1996. The Expert Group Meeting explored further the application of a gender perspective to conflict resolution and decisionmaking.

One of the most important outcomes of the 1995 Beijing Conference was to reach agreement of the concepts of gender and gender mainstreaming. The latter is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, programmes and research in all areas, and at all levels. This agreement was reflected in the Platform for Action which was adopted. Further elaboration by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC agreed conclusions 1997/2 and 1998/2) implied that the gender perspective should become an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all policies and programmes in all spheres, at national and international levels, so women and men can benefit equally. It also implied that the consistent inclusion of women's views and experiences in all policies would inevitably lead to changes in their content and priorities, making them better tailored to the realities of our times, and to the needs of *all* members of society.

By applying a gender perspective to conflict resolution, the Santo Domingo meeting recognized that women and men were differently involved in armed conflicts but that policies and research have reflected a 'gender blind' approach. In practice, this means that men and male norms have been taken to represent the norm for all human beings. To bring a truly gender perspective to conflict resolution therefore means to develop a fuller understanding of women's roles and the changes that might come about with greater participation of women in conflict resolution, including decisionmaking.

There is evidence that women can make a visible difference to political decisions and agenda, political culture and styles of decisionmaking when they constitute a sufficient proportion of a decisionmaking group – a '*critical mass*' of perhaps 30–35%. Although women have been involved in conflict resolution in different arenas and in various roles, they have never achieved a 'critical mass' as decisionmakers. Many women have made important contributions as peacemakers, crossing lines of conflict that men were unable to cross; working with the other side of a conflict on new peaceful solutions; networking with women and other actors in civil society and encouraging women at the grassroots level to get actively involved. These contributions, however, are not recorded and have not had decisive long-term implications.

Most women appear to have a somewhat different understanding of peace, security and violence than most men. This has led to the assumption that if women were involved in a sufficient number in peace, security and conflict resolutions, these definitions would be transformed and so would all related policies, activities and institutional arrangements. Broadening both these concepts and participation in conflict resolution would open new opportunities for dialogue. It would replace the traditional model of negotiations aimed at ceasefire or crisis management by a real conflict resolution model, where the root causes of conflict are addressed, all aspects of human security are taken into consideration, and the process of negotiation is inclusive, involving representatives of civil society, including women's organizations.

The results of the Santo Domingo meeting clearly indicate that, indeed, the incorporation of gender is essential for the better understanding of ongoing conflicts and their root causes and, subsequently, for the elaboration of more relevant means and policies for their peaceful resolution. The meeting also provided an opportunity for cooperation by the two institutions with the distinct but interrelated mandates: the Division for the Advancement of Women, a focal point on women's issues and gender mainstreaming in the United Nations Secretariat and the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, an institute specializing in conflict resolution. This partnership by itself constitutes a step towards gender mainstreaming in practice and the much-needed collaboration of a policy-oriented, intergovernmental organization with a research institution. More of this type of cooperation is needed.

It is critically important that more research be done to demonstrate how essential the incorporation of gender is in all aspects and at all stages of conflict resolution. This book and the Expert Group Meeting from which it resulted are first steps in that direction.

Angela E. V. King
Assistant Secretary-General
Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women

Acknowledgements

This anthology is a product of co-operation between the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO) and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (UN DAW). The first major activity of the co-operation was a UN Expert Group Meeting, jointly organized by UN DAW and PRIO, with the support of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and hosted by the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, on 6–11 October 1996. The chapters of this book are based on papers presented at that meeting. The United Nations published the report of the meeting and its conclusions on 7 November 1996 (reference: EGM/PRDC/1996/REP.1).

We would like to thank Angela King, UN Assistant Secretary-General, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, for her support of this project throughout. We also want to thank John Mathiason, then Deputy Director of the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, whose support for the project at the outset was crucial to raising funds for it, and whose participation at the Expert Group Meeting was fundamental to its success. Special thanks are due to Dorota Gierycz, author of one of the chapters in this anthology and Chief of the Gender Analysis Section of UN DAW; she was the one who initially brought PRIO and the Division together and proposed this co-operative enterprise.

Our thanks also go to Martha Dueñas Loza, Director of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) in Santo Domingo, together with her administrative staff, who did everything necessary to make the Expert Group Meeting run efficiently and pleasantly. Eva Irene Tuft, one of the authors in this anthology, was at that time Research Consultant at INSTRAW, and was particularly helpful in arranging the co-operation and ensuring it worked smoothly. We were also fortunate to have the intellectual and practical support of UNESCO, whom we also wish to thank, especially Ingeborg Breines, Director of the UNESCO programme on Women and a Culture of Peace.

This anthology is shaped and inspired by the presentations and discussion at that Expert Group Meeting at INSTRAW in 1996. For various reasons not all of the presentations could be included in this anthology, so we would like to thank the ones who are not included among the authors of chapters in this book: Rukia Said Ali, Eugenia Piza Lopez, Carolyn Stephenson and Sandra Whitworth. Observers at the meeting also participated fully in the discussion of the issues and the shaping of the report, and our thanks go to them too: Georgina Ashworth, Berit Kyllingstad Collet, Claire Fulcher, Martha Olga Garcia, Elise Judith Kant, Maja Mischke, Maria Cristina Nogufra, Mary Power, Lucero Quiroga, Maria Cristina Sara-Serrano, Eleni Stamris, Maj Britt Theorin, Cora Weiss and June Willenz.

We also want to take this opportunity to record our gratitude for the financial support that this project has received. The UN Division for the Advancement of Women, UNESCO, and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided funding for the Expert Group Meeting. In addition, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided the further financial support necessary for the preparation of this book.

During the extended process of organizing this anthology, we received essential assistance in compiling the bibliography from PRIO's librarian Synnøve Eifring, with further help from Jon Arild Olsen. The editorial assistance of first Susan Høivik and then of Lesley Hauge was invaluable. And Karen Hostens efficiently carried out the chores involved in answering copy-editing queries and tying the last bits and pieces together to take us over the final hurdle and into production and publication. We are extremely grateful to all five of these colleagues for their help, their cheerfulness and their good nature.

Inger Skjelsbæk
Dan Smith
Oslo

Introduction

Inger Skjelsbæk and Dan Smith

When decisions are to be made about politics and peace, what role does gender play? That is the focus in this volume of essays. For decades, much political and social science research remained blind to the very existence of gender – a blindness so obtuse that it sometimes seemed as if it had to be deliberate.

Whether planned or not, ignoring gender difference in research has meant that male norms and male behaviour have been taken to represent the *human* norm. This produces a gross distortion of reality. In most fields and sub-fields in the social sciences, this distortion has now been acknowledged, and serious efforts have been made to rectify the situation. These efforts have faced considerable opposition, though only some of the resistance has been deliberate. International relations (IR) has been considerably slower than, for example, anthropology, sociology or social psychology in coming to terms with the idea that there *is* an issue worth addressing, and then in getting on and addressing it. Since the mid-1980s, nonetheless, there has been exploration of the role played by gender in matters that fall within the scope of IR, and inquiry into the degree to which the range of issues addressed in IR could or should be expanded. This collection of essays is one of several efforts at the turn of the millennium that are attempting to bring IR up to speed.

The ambition in this anthology is by no means to set about re-theorizing the entire field of IR. The chapters that follow have a specific focus: the impact of gender difference in decisionmaking in relation to conflict and conflict resolution – an issue often avoided by IR scholars and other political scientists. Basic gender blindness is probably the main explanation for this, but it may also be that interest has been low because the most influential perspectives on such issues have been overly simplistic. International relations in general, and war in particular, are almost exclusively male fields. True, some women have made their mark in international politics in recent times – for example, Margaret Thatcher, Gro Harlem Brundtland, Madeleine Albright, Golda Meir, Indira Gandhi –

but there are very few such figures. This has allowed some writers to develop a line of argument that holds that, since women are rarely responsible for decisions to go to war, women should be regarded as inherently peaceful. Judging by the small number of researchers who have taken up this question, the mere assertion of women's peacefulness seems to have been enough to deter many from examining it in greater depth. Men in particular seem to have been scared off. We want to contribute to bringing an end to this state of affairs by opening up the question of the impact of gender difference in the study of peace and conflict.

The works of writers such as Boulding (1981), Elshtain (1987), Enloe (1983, 1989, 1993) and Tickner (1992) did a great deal to introduce gender issues in the study of peace, conflict and international politics. They mounted a sharp and forceful critique of the narrow focus of IR and much of peace research – and this in a way that could not be dismissed as mere polemic. And on the back of the critique, they established a challenging new agenda to be assessed and explored. Of course, there have continued to be dismissive reactions to this work, attempts to marginalize and ghettoize it. But there has been an undeniable shift in the centre of gravity of discussion within IR and peace research, with the growing realization that issues of gender raise important and previously ill-considered questions. It is perhaps especially with the end of the Cold War, as IR has come to look more closely at conflict resolution, reconciliation and peace-building, that more and more IR scholars have come to realize the relevance of gender issues.

The process of asking searching questions, mounting the critique and setting out a new agenda does not of itself provide answers or even address the items on the new agenda. Getting to grips with the implications is a task that has been addressed in the second half of the 1990s by research that, for example, looks more closely at geographical areas or focuses on specific issues such as the use of sexual violence in war, or the roles of women in military groups or peacekeeping operations. It is alongside that work that we wish to set this book.

The chapters that follow combine theoretical argument, reviews of policy and of the literature, and a geographically broad range of case studies. We hope with this combination of diverse elements to provide an overview of the field and of the possibilities within it, and to break down the often unfortunate divisions between different kinds of studies. We have put theoretical and empirical research pieces alongside each other to underline how much each needs the other. Theory is rootless without empirical exploration; empirical research is a mere assembling of facts unless there is a theoretical basis to explain how the facts relate to each other. The two together are required for us to see how a steady accumulation of case studies may lead towards an overall reassessment of major issues in conflict resolution and peace-building. The point is not to adjust conflict resolution so that '*and gender*' is inserted at appropriate points, but rather to understand that ignoring the gender dimension of social reality makes it impossible to address crucial elements of conflict resolution.

Some of the violent acts perpetrated by men in armed conflicts are perpetrated precisely because the men have become convinced that that is the way to show their masculinity. This view of masculinity as something to be reinforced through violence is linked to a view of femininity that emphasizes passivity in those issues, like war, that are deemed to be men's business. In such a social context, mobilizing people for reconciliation may be impossible as long as the dynamics of the male–female division of labour are ignored.

Women and war

From the beginning of 1990 until the end of 1999, the world saw 118 armed conflicts, in the course of which approximately 6 million people were killed.[1] Few of these wars have been open clashes between two sovereign states. Most have been civil wars, many of them internationalized through the involvement of outside powers as paymasters, suppliers, trainers or combatants. Such wars are generally off the radar screens of world politics, receiving scant attention from the international news media. These are long, slow conflicts, often confined to one region of a country. Such a conflict may remain relatively low on the graph of lethal violence for a long time, but is often capable – as in Rwanda in 1994 – of erupting into unimaginable viciousness. About one-third of the wars that were active in 1999 had lasted more than two decades. The weaponry used is relatively low-tech. Almost all the killing is done at close quarters, by men, some of it by male children.

Data on war casualties are uncertain; it is often not clear exactly who is counted and who is left out of the tally. Despite many reservations about the data, it is generally accepted that in warfare at the start of the twentieth century, 85–90% of war deaths were members of the armed forces. By this common 'guess-timate', a small minority of the war dead were civilians who got caught in the cross-fire or were killed in atrocities. It may be that the proportion of non-combatants killed in war was actually higher, because it is not clear whether this estimate includes colonial wars of conquest, in which the whole of the conquered population suffered. In Europe, however, it seems clear that in World War I civilian casualties did not represent a large proportion of the whole. By contrast, in World War II civilian fatalities have been estimated at between one-half and two-thirds of all war deaths, including all theatres of war, and including death camps, massacres and bombing raids. Today, it is conservatively reckoned that some 75% of all war-deaths are civilian non-combatants.[2]

War has been brought to the civilian population. No longer are civilians the chance victims of accidents or of excesses. They are no longer – in the jargon of the US war in Vietnam – part of the 'collateral damage', consigned to the margins as the perhaps regrettable and probably unintended but unfortunately inevitable casualties of military exigencies. Why do

civilians make up such a high proportion of the casualties of war today? Because in many wars, *the civilians are the targets*. Civilians – as well as the economic and industrial infrastructure – were the targets of strategic terror bombing in World War II, culminating in the nuclear strikes on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. Civilians were likewise the targets of ethnic cleansing in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992–95, and of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. In both these recent cases, Western media initially tended to depict the violence as the result of a frenzied orgy of hatred. Evidence has since emerged to show that in both cases the killing was in fact planned in cold blood.[3]

When war is brought to the civilian population, women suffer. Data generally fail to distinguish with respect to gender or age. However, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (1993, p. 87) has reported that about 80% of international refugees are women and children, compared to the 70% of the population of an average Third World country that is constituted by women and children. Clearly then, women and children are disproportionately hard-hit by this aspect of war suffering. Among the reasons is that men are more likely to be involved in the actual fighting; moreover, even as civilians, men are often killed while the women and children are expelled. Detailed accounts of the 1995 massacre of Bosniak men in Srebrenica are an example of this (Danner, 1998).

One form of violence specifically targets women: *rape.* Though men as well as women can be and are raped – especially in all-male contexts such as prisons – accounts of atrocities in war rarely include rape of men, though there are well-documented reports of the sexual mutilation of men. It thus seems that rape in war affects women exclusively. Rape has long been part of war and is often regarded as, if not acceptable, then so inevitable that there is no point in making a fuss about it. In her classic study and polemic, Susan Brownmiller (1975, p. 31) quotes a passage from the memoirs of General Patton in which he recalls telling another officer that, '[I]n spite of my most diligent efforts, there would undoubtedly be some raping'. Patton goes on to report that he requested details as soon as possible 'so that the offenders could be properly hanged'. Though rape is illegal under every military code and is frequently punishable by death, acceptance of the inevitability of rape by soldiers is often so fatalistic as to amount to complaisance.

Rape piles vulnerability on vulnerability, most clearly demonstrated in the case of refugee women who are attacked and raped, as with the Somali women and girls in refugee camps in northeastern Kenya in 1992 and 1993. The rapists were reportedly armed bandits, including groups from the former Somali army.[4] Here, as in most wars throughout history, the raped women and girls were the deliberately chosen victims of male rapists, at the same time as they were the incidental victims of war.

Today, a further dimension has been added with the increasing awareness of the use of rape as a deliberate weapon of war. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 'All the warring parties have been implicated, though to

varying degrees' in 'rape being used as a weapon to further war aims' (UNHCR, 1993, p. 70). The Bosnian Serb army was the main offender, and Bosniak women were the most numerous victims, often of multiple gang rape, and often in camps especially set up for that purpose (Amnesty International, 1993; United Nations, 1994). Rape as well as murder was used in the genocidal attacks on Rwandan Tutsis in 1994. According to one investigation, virtually every Tutsi woman who survived a massacre was raped (Human Rights Watch, 1996). A less publicized case occurred in 1992 in Burma, where the army's campaign to expel 250,000 *Rohingya* Muslims and force them into Bangladesh plumbed extreme depths of brutality and inhumanity, including the systematic use of rape. In one refugee camp of 20,000 people, 'Almost every woman interviewed said she was gang-raped before being allowed to cross the border'.[5]

This deliberate and systematic use of rape is an extension of the use of rape as a means of torture, of which there have been numerous accounts over the years in many states. Rape is used not simply to attack the woman but, through her, to attack another target – somebody whom she is believed to be protecting, for example, a male comrade in arms. The attack exploits not only the physical vulnerability of the woman, but also her subsequent sense of shame and defilement, and all too often the likely rejection by her partner, family and community. In 1972, over a period of nine months, Pakistani soldiers raped 200,000 women in the breakaway Eastern Pakistan, which became Bangladesh. After the war, the government of Bangladesh had the greatest difficulty in trying to persuade the husbands of raped women to accept their wives (Brownmiller, 1975, pp. 78ff.). Thus mass rape is a way to terrorize individuals, communities and, if done on a large enough scale, an entire ethnic group. Those who are ruthless enough to launch a war in which civilians themselves are the target are therefore likely to find that rape can be a convenient and effective weapon.

In war, women have become central as victims, but marginal as agents. Nor has this changed with the shift in emphasis towards attacking civilians as an end in itself. As Enloe (1993, p. 51) notes, 'One of the most striking characteristics of militaries themselves is that they are almost exclusively male'. This is a question of both numbers and culture. As to numbers, Table 1 shows the available data. Over 580,000 women serve in the forces of 25 states. Three states (China, Russia and the USA) between them account for slightly under 85% of the world's military women, who comprise a little more than 2.5% of the world's more than 22 million regular military personnel. In most countries where women serve in the military, they are a small minority. Only in seven countries – Australia, Canada, China, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa and the USA – do the data show that women make up more than 10% of the regular military personnel, though it is likely that Israel, which provides no figures, should be added to that list.

TABLE 1 *Women in the armed forces, 1998*

	Number of women in armed forces	Women as a percentage of total armed forces
Australia	7,400	13.4
Bahamas	70	8.1
Belarus	2,100	2.5
Belgium	2,570	6.2
Brunei	600	12.0
Canada	6,100	10
China	136,000	5.5
Cyprus	445	4.5
Denmark	1,020	4.2
Finland	500	1.6
France	22,790	7.2
Germany	1,440	0.4
Greece	5,520	3.3
India	200	0.02
Ireland	200	1.7
Japan	9,100	3.9
Netherlands	1,920	3.4
New Zealand	1,370	14.4
Norway	185	1.2
Portugal	2,300	4.6
Russia	145,000	14.4
South Africa	16,998	24.3
Spain	3,800	2.0
Sri Lanka	1,000	0.9
UK	15,860	7.5
USA	199,900	14.5

Source: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 1998/99* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Note: If a country's forces are not shown in this table, that does not necessarily mean its forces exclude women – only that *The Military Balance* has no information on this. The percentage calculation is based on the proportion of women serving in the regular armed forces of all services, excluding paramilitary units and reserves.

Where and when women have been recruited into the armed forces, there has always been controversy about their proper role. It is widely felt that women should not be in the military – and further, that if they are there, their roles should be strictly limited. That women are unsuitable for combat roles has long been taken for granted. Marlowe (1983) offers a representative view. Writing as a senior US army psychiatrist, he argues that men and women have different capacities for 'certain kinds of things':

> One of these things is fighting, certainly in the forms required in land combat. The male's greater vital capacity, speed, muscle mass, aiming and throwing skills, his greater propensity for aggression and his more rapid rises in adrenaline make him more fitted for physically intense combat. (Marlowe, 1983, p. 190)

An argument along these lines might barely be sustained for the infantry, but it can hardly be relevant with regard to the rest of today's mechanized and increasingly computerized military forces. The physical intensity of combat even in modern mode is undeniable, but the strength that is required is not dependent on muscle mass, adrenaline or other features of explosive strength. What is required above all is stamina, and here women often outdo men.

All the same, women in the military are confined to 'support' roles – medical, secretarial and clerical, transport and communications – in which they neither carry weapons nor are expected to use them. It is at the margins that the definitions and distinctions have been most blurred. US and Israeli armed forces deploy women in direct combat roles. There were women in combat roles in some units of the Bosnian government army in the 1992–95 period, including the 17th Brigade, which was often reported as one of the most effective Bosnian units.[6] Many insurgent forces have employed women in support roles, whereas a smaller number have employed women in combat. Among these are the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the secessionist forces in Sri Lanka, who were said to have more than 3,000 women fighting in the early 1990s. The Sandinista forces in Nicaragua employed women in relatively large numbers, both during the insurgency against Somoza in 1978 and 1979 and in the 1980s' war against the 'Contras'. The Farabundo Marti Liberation Front in El Salvador recruited large numbers of women guerrillas, as did the Eritrean People's Liberation Front during its 30-year war of independence against Ethiopia that ended in 1991. The armed wing of the African National Congress in its war against the South African apartheid regime included smaller numbers of women. Women have served in several of the armed organizations that have fought for the Palestinian cause over four decades. In many other revolutionary and insurgent forces, women carry out functions that are not quite those of the frontline fighters, but which cannot be regarded as non-combatant, such as courier and intelligence work.

Fears that recruiting women would change the internal culture of the armed forces are often expressed by politicians and by military servicemen. Nobody knows what a mostly female modern military force would be like – and no modern armed force has offered to conduct the experiment to find out. In fact, however, the point of recruiting women is not to change the forces' culture but simply to utilize their skills and motivation and thus to obtain a wider recruitment-base.

Gender differences: theory

The nature of gender differences has been variously conceptualized within the scholarly literature. According to how we perceive men and women to be different, we behave, think and design policies that reflect our point of view. A large section of this volume is therefore devoted to

describing different ways in which gender differences are conceptualized, and what the implications of these differences might be.

Dorota Gierycz places the themes and arguments in this book in a global context, using the UN as a viewing aid. She describes the steps taken in the build-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and shows how the theme of 'women and peace' has received increasing attention over the years. This increased interest coincided with the ending of the Cold War and democratic transformations in many countries around the world – according to Gierycz, not an accidental development. With greater attention to the theme of women and peace has also come a conceptual shift. The focus is no longer on women in isolation, but on the interaction between the genders. Whereas some conceptualize gender differences as the same as sex differences, the United Nations has defined gender differences as *the socially constructed roles played by women and men that are ascribed to them on the basis of their sex.* It was with this definition in mind that the Beijing Conference was convened. The heated debates about gender and peace were related to opposing understanding of the nature of gender differences. The last sections of Gierycz's chapter address the possible contributions that women in political decisionmaking and conflict resolution can make. Research indicates that it takes a minimum of around 30%, often referred to as a critical mass, in order to expect changes. Gierycz suggests that further research in this field should focus on: (1) how best to prove the gender difference hypothesis beyond doubt, (2) how to take advantage of this difference in policy formulations, and (3) how best to ensure a gender balance in decisionmaking and conflict resolution at all levels.

Dan Smith argues that political strategies against gender inequality go astray if they rely on essentialist conceptions of femininity. Smith defines essentialism not as a theory or a philosophy, but as a mind-set that sees individual and social identity in terms of an unchanging inner core or essence, and which then explains people's views and behaviour by reference to their identity. His starting point is that discussing the impact of gender difference means thinking about a fundamental component of our individual and social identities. This makes a critical approach to essentialism necessary, because most people tend to discuss identity problems in essentialist terms, as if we each had a simple and unchanging identity. The more complex truth is that our identities are complex and changeable. Smith argues that, by appealing to simple notions of identity, essentialist strategies can be effective instruments of political mobilization, but their emphasis on perceptions of in-groups and out-groups makes them unreliable instruments for progressive movements. Moreover, he argues, since identity is volatile, the success of an appeal to one aspect of a complex identity is inherently ephemeral. Smith traces the assumptions and errors of essentialism. His conclusion is that we must acknowledge that reality is more complex, more interesting and more rewarding than the monochrome world presented by essentialist modes of thinking.

Inger Skjelsbæk discusses femininity, peace and war. On the basis of a series of oral testimonies she looks at women's reactions to and participation in three different conflict areas – El Salvador, Vietnam and former Yugoslavia. This study highlights three different social psychological constructions of femininity: victimized, liberated and traditional. These constructions were based on the ways in which the women responded to how the conflict was organized along gender lines; what men and women represented on a symbolic level in the conflict; and, finally, on the women's intra-personal experiences of themselves in the conflict. She concludes that one simply cannot claim that femininity is inherently peaceful. The responses the women convey in the research material are sometimes peaceful, sometimes not. However, this does not make an argument against including women in political decisionmaking on war/peace issues – it is simply a warning against one-dimensional expectations.

Michael Salla's chapter is a variation on Skjelsbæk's theme. He sets out to deconstruct the stereotypical dichotomy that men are war-oriented and women are peace-oriented. Salla suggests that a better avenue to examine the male/female versus war/peace distinctions is to look at how social power structures interact with these stereotypes. Using Foucault's conceptualization, Salla argues that power should not be explored merely in terms of the distinction between power *over* and power *to*; rather, we should focus on the mechanisms that underlie the various forms of power. According to Foucault, power does not become manifest only through agents and institutions: rather, it is embedded in social structures that define knowledge, identity and regimes of truth. These, in turn, manifest themselves in institutions and agents. From this view, Salla argues that altering the gender composition in political decisionmaking bodies will not necessarily lead to peaceful solutions to conflicts, because exercising power is not solely the province of agents. Examples of male pacifists like Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi and Leo Tolstoy show that it is relational thinking which gives hopes for peaceful solutions to conflicts. Salla emphasizes that relational thinking comes in two forms: one guided by conscience and moral principles, and the other by attachment to human relations. It is especially with the latter that the outcome may be violent, because human relations are valued above all else.

Errol Miller's chapter provides a different conceptualization of gender and its relations to patriarchy. Using a constructionist perspective, Miller argues that gender cannot be understood in isolation from race and class. Like Salla, Miller argues against the assumption of female unity and male unity across cultures and races. White women may have more in common with white men than with black women. Miller problematizes the notion of patriarchy, and argues that this should be understood in terms of genealogy, gender and generation combined. He focuses on kinship relations in particular, holding that these cut across gender. Patriarchy must therefore be understood as the marginalization not only of the women in the kinship

collective, but also as the marginalization of men in other collectives. The nation-state is a manifestation of patriarchy perceived in this way. Kinship groups struggle for power, and the ruling kinship is made up of both men and women. It would therefore be wrong to say that the patriarchal structure of the nation-state is based exclusively on gender. Against this background Miller rhetorically asks: why is it then that women are underrepresented in parliaments in liberal democracies, when they constitute at least half the voters? He outlines some possible approaches: (1) recognizing women's integrity and rationality, (2) recognizing that the marginalization and oppression of women in society is linked to other forms of marginalization and oppression; and (3) taking account of the complexities of gender relations.

Gender differences: practice

If more women are involved in political decisionmaking, will it make a difference? Will the political empowerment of women contribute to a more peaceful world? These are the questions addressed by *Drude Dahlerup*. She argues that women's participation in politics on equal terms with men must be regarded not only as a matter of justice, but also as a potential for change. Differences in values and interests among men and women may have significant implications for changes, although the path to change is by no means straightforward. Dahlerup warns against exaggerated expectations of women who enter into politics. It takes a critical mass for a minority to have influence on the ruling majority, she holds, basing this on organizational studies. Dahlerup's own studies of Scandinavian politics support this proposition. With more and more women involved in politics, there has, according to the Scandinavian politicians she has interviewed, been a whole range of changes – from the political climate, through what times are regarded as most appropriate for meetings, to specific items on the political agenda. Despite these effects, Dahlerup believes that a critical mass must be accompanied by critical acts that can change the position of the minority considerably and lead to further changes in policies. Such critical acts – for example, quotas for women, or developing a platform for change – can be carried out by both men and women.

The chapter by *Anuradha Chenoy* and *Achin Vanaik* presents a case study of the status of women in politics in South Asia. The authors set out to investigate whether altering the gender balance in those decisionmaking bodies concerned with peace, security and conflict resolution will create hopes for more peaceful solutions to conflicts. They argue that it is the doctrine of realism which dominated both interstate relations between India and Pakistan as well as internal conflicts in the region. The doctrine of realism presumes patriarchal structures, which again contribute to rigid conceptions of womanhood. It is true that there have been female

prime ministers in four of the South Asian countries. These women have, however, been recruited to their positions as daughters, wives, or mistresses of famous political leaders. These women have not changed the political decisionmaking climate in their countries. Like Salla and Miller, Chenoy and Vanaik argue that the way to change the political climate is not simply to 'add women and stir'. What is needed is a new paradigm for international security, one based on the realization that gender is a constituent of political experience and is basic to the identity of the state and structure of the international system. Rethinking national security would then not only imply greater equity between the genders, but would also redefine the relationship between state and non-state actors, between state and society and therefore also between the structures of decisionmaking in these two areas.

Eva Irene Tuft argues for a complex gender approach in the conflict resolution process in Colombia. For the past 40 years, Colombia has suffered internal warfare. As the conflicts have become increasingly multifaceted so the responses must also be. Tuft emphasizes that including a gender dimension in the conflict resolution process can open the way to such a multidimensional approach. The consequences of the conflict are both direct and indirect; the latter category includes socio-economic, socio-political and socio-psychological consequences, which are different for the two genders. For instance, more men than women are victims of direct violence, whereas more women are victims of socio-economic violence. A gender analysis must not be based on a static understanding of gender differences. A gendered approach to conflict resolution would mean addressing gender-based and other forms of inequality and discrimination simultaneously. The participation of other actors than those directly involved in the armed conflict would be essential. Women's organizations, research institutes, and the international community need to put the theme of gender on their agendas.

Svetlana Slapsak provides a rich, historical and cultural background to contextualize women's responses to the Yugoslav war. Her argument is that during the conflict all those involved, including women's groups, turned to ancient myths and images of womanhood and manhood. Slapsak begins by explaining the portrayal of women in epic poetry and women's responses to this, followed by an outline of women's roles in the death cult. When the early feminist protests against the war began in Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia in 1990–91, the imagery of women's roles in the death cults was played upon. Peasant and urban women united in this effort. Slapsak also describes the status of feminism during the Communist regime and after. Feminism and dissidence were perceived and portrayed as parts of the same movement. She argues, however, that feminism was a more united movement than other social movements. Denunciation of rapes served to unite women's groups across republics. The fact that many women have defended mixed marriages, mixed origin and the like shows that the common explanation of the Yugoslav conflicts

in terms of religion, history and collective memory simply is not correct for the female half of the population.

Kumudini Samuel points at the many paradoxes and complexities that characterize women's involvement in conflict resolution in Sri Lanka. On the one hand, the roles and positions of women in Sri Lanka have changed due to the prolonged conflict. The killing of men has created a growing group of female-headed households and families where the woman is the primary breadwinner. On the other hand, the traditional roles as wives and mothers are still strongly valued both by men and women. Samuel provides a brief background to the ethnic conflict and emphasizes its multidimensional characteristics. She then goes on to describe the many women's initiatives in connection with attempts at conflict resolution. Women's groups have worked closely with the human rights community and have linked women's human rights to human rights issues in general. She describes eight women's groups that have worked both independently and in cooperation with each other. The group 'Women for Peace' managed to organize a petition demanding negotiations; this in turn led to the first round of political negotiations between the government and the Tamil militant leadership in late 1984. In 1995, the 'Mothers and Daughters of Lanka' group and the 'Women for Peace' were in a predominantly Sinhalese delegation that visited the Northern province controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. This was the first such visit in four years. Both the nationalist groups and the women's movements have played on women's roles in their respective struggles. The Tamil nationalists addressed the woman question in the early 1980s as part of their nationalist agenda as a means of eliminating barriers to women's participation in the struggle. They also promised women equal status with men in the liberated society for which they were fighting. Some activist women's groups embraced this and suggested a new liberated femininity, whereas others, such as the 'Southern Mothers Front', played on their roles as mothers. Samuel emphasizes the important role women's groups have played and continue to play in conflict resolution efforts, as well as stressing the importance of having more women involved in political decisionmaking at all levels of society. She argues that even though a woman is president, there has been no general increase in the number of women in politics in Sri Lanka.

Conclusion

The various contributions in this volume clearly demonstrate the inherent complexities of integrating gender perspectives to our understandings of peace and conflict. Some critics might argue that the gender dimensions are so inherent that the gender impact can never be clearly assessed, simply because we cannot isolate its cause and effect. What the authors in this volume show, however, is that an awareness of gender differences can

be an avenue for identifying new ways of thinking and dealing with questions of politics and peace, while they also warn against expecting unidimensional changes. Gender difference does not have a monolithic cause or outcome: it is one of several organizing principles of our social worlds. What we do claim is that analyses of peace and conflict which do not include gender reflections are simply incomplete. The contributions in this volume should be taken as examples of how to make studies of peace and conflict more comprehensive.

Notes

1 These estimates update those in Smith (1997b).
2 The much-cited estimate that over 90 per cent of war-deaths today are civilian is based on a confusion. When first given an authoritative airing (Ahlström, 1991), that estimate of casualties included wounded and refugees.
3 On Rwanda, see Sellström & Wohlgemuth (1996, pp. 50–52), Adelman & Suhrke (1996, p. 66); on Bosnia and Herzegovina, see Danner (1998).
4 'North Eastern Kenya: Rape of Somali Women Refugees', *Women's International Network News*, vol. 20, no. 2, Spring 1994 (based on a report by the Women's Rights Project of Africa Watch, Washington, DC).
5 'Burmese Muslims Fight Army Assault', *The Guardian*, 13 February 1992; see also UNHCR (1993, p. 70).
6 'Weary Muslims Weigh Costs of War and Peace', *The Guardian*, 31 August 1994.