Talk for a seminar
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WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AGAINST WAR: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The subject I'm asking you to think about with me today is the subject of my current research - women's purposeful and collective organizing against war.

There's nothing new about the idea that women might do such a thing. Two thousand four hundred years ago Aristophanes wrote a play, *Lysistrata*, in which he imagined women of Sparta and Athens going on strike – refusing to have sex with their husbands – to bring to an end the 27-year war between the two city states that had become a way of life for the men.

In the late 1840s in Britain at least three thousand women around the country were organized in 150 women's peace groups termed "Olive Leaf Circles".

In 1915, one year into the First World War, one thousand five hundred women from the belligerent countries, including the US, Britain, Germany, Austria, travelled to the Hague in neutral Netherlands to discuss how to end it. Subsequently they sent female embassies to appeal to the heads of state to negotiate peace.

Half a century later, on December 12th 1982, around 35,000 women assembled at the Royal Air Force Base at Greenham Common in protest against the siting of US cruise and Pershing missiles in Britain. In an action called 'Embrace the Base' they joined hands round its nine-mile fence.

I was one of them. It was a damp and gloomy day. The mud was ankle deep. By four o'clock it was dark, but we lit candles and sang and I remember thinking: this has to be the first time in the history of the world so many

women have come out of doors for peace. Surely things will never be quite the same again.

Questions about women opposing war

That was 23 years ago, and of course things *have* gone on, the same or worse. But women all over the world continue to protest against war. They do it in mixed movements of men and women. But also, quite often, in women-only groups and organisations.

My fieldwork over the last two years, and the last 80,000 air miles, has been to immerse myself in those movements of women against militarism and war in different countries. I've been asking several questions. First, I wanted to grasp what kinds of groupings, or group-lets, organizations, networks or *ad hoc* alliances, exist and where? Second, I wanted to understand what their activism involves, what distinguishes it, what methodologies appeal to women? Third, I hoped to learn whether women organizing as women are motivated by a gender-specific argument about militarism and war. Why *women's* peace groups? Why wasn't the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament enough for women in the 1980s? Why aren't today's coalitions - Stop the War Coalition here in Britain, or United for Peace and Justice in the States, or the Tavola della Pace in Italy - enough for women now?

Obviously this is rather a big canvas for a 45-minute talk. I'm going to take little snips from it to illustrate some answers to those three questions: who, how and why. First I'm going to describe three current or recent wars and contrasted responses to them by women. This will give me a chance to note a few of the 'how' things – their methodologies - as we go along. Towards the end of the talk I'll deal with the theory that I think underlies the activism.

Two things I plan not to do…'m not going to load this talk heavily with references. I've brought with me a select bibliography in case anyone wants it. But also I'm not going to talk about my own research methodology – although I'll gladly answer questions on it.

I discovered one thing, fairly early on - that it's impossible to do a complete mapping of women's anti-war activism – the groups are too many, too scattered, and what's more they come and go – the map's continually changing. In a way it seems best to think in terms of a typology – a kind of cosmology. What are the kinds of phenomena that spark into life, like suns or galaxies, impinge on each other in curious ways and sometimes just vanish. Here are some of the creatures that inhabit this space.

In Colombia: In Colombia, as you probably know (is there anyone from Colombia here? – or Sierra Leone?) there's a long-drawn out and highly destructive three-way conflict between the state's armed forces, the guerrilla and the paramilitaries. The guerrilla movement began in the 1960s as an understandable protest against an exploitative capitalist and political system. The groups of paramilitaries, for their part, are paid by right-wing business and criminal interests in a country where the growing of coca for the world hard drugs market has been a major source of income. The guerrilla movement also turned more and more to kidnapping and drugs as a source of revenue, and lost popular sympathy as a result.

The state and its army have sacrificed legitimacy too, by their brutality, and by the government's close ties to the USA, who intervene in Colombia in the name of eradicating coca production but also recently to reframe the Colombian problem in terms of Bush's war on quote 'terrorists'. The fumigation of illegal crops under Plan Colombia badly damages health and well-being in the nearby farming villages. There are many thousands of violent deaths – twenty, thirty thousand a year - and many of the dead are civilians. Women are raped and abused by the men of all sides in the conflict. Millions of people have been displaced to live in poverty on the edge of the cities. A lot of these are woman-headed households.

When women got organized against the violence in Colombia in the 1990s it was because of what the never-ending war was doing to '*everyday life'*. They mobilize a resistance that they say (quote) "redeems the sacred value of life

and thence of the “every day”, of sensibility, the respect for difference, solidarity and sisterhood”. The largest and internationally best-known women’s organization for peace is La Ruta Pacifica – the long version of its name means Women’s Peaceful Road for the Political Negotiation of Conflicts. It’s an alliance of more than 300 local women’s groups in eight regions of the country, with an office in Medellin. They define themselves explicitly as pacifist, feminist and antimilitarist.

La Ruta do a lot of different things, we could talk about them all day. I’ll just tell you about their most characteristic approach – which is to organise huge mobilizations in which as many as 3000 women will travel in fifty or sixty coaches from every corner of the country to lend solidarity to women in a some afflicted location. They stay some days, listen to each others’ stories, celebrate life with them, and exchange strategies for peace. Women who’ve been on these mobilizations say it’s a life-changing experience.

La Ruta use feminine symbolism very consciously, drawing on local cultures, but if necessary, making things up as they go along: weaving spiders webs for connectedness, bathing in the water of the river for spiritual cleansing, ascribing meanings to colours. Interestingly they revived the *Lysistrata* strategy and proclaim ‘No parimos hijos ni hijas para la guerra’ – we won’t give birth for war.

In Sierra Leone: And now to the other side of the Atlantic – to West Africa. In Sierra Leone, women activists have used an entirely different methodology. The war in that country in the 11 years between 1991 and 2002 involved several fighting forces. There was a rebel army calling itself the Revolutionary United Front, there was a state army in disarray, renegade soldiers, a civil militia of traditional tribal hunting societies, foreign peacekeepers – finally the British. The motive of the RUF that launched the war is difficult to deduce, but most commentators see it as having been rather short on politics and rather long on self-interest and greed: the illegal mining and selling of diamonds certainly fuelled the process. It was a low technology war: mostly machetes and small arms. The atrocities committed were so appalling that it’s

impossible to describe them without appearing pornographic. The most terrible thing about the terrible things that were done, is that many were done by children – very young boys who were drugged and forced to torture and kill, starting with members of their own families.

In case this seems like an indictment of Sierra Leonean people, it's important to remember on the contrary another striking fact about this war - that civil society organisations, ordinary men and women willing to take a risk by coming out on the streets, played a big part in bringing it to an end. Centrally involved in those demonstrations was a Women's Forum. An organisation came out of this towards the end of the war called the Mano River Women's Peace Network, Marwopnet. It was trans-national, involving women in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone - three neighbouring countries, all caught up in the war in different ways. The key women were members, if you like, of an urban elite. And what they did, although they didn't use this term, was what Louise Diamond would call Track-2 diplomacy. They flew between Freetown, Monrovia and Lome, delegations of women from all three countries working together, getting audiences with their presidents and other leaders, and knocking their heads together. They had some important successes, and won a UN peace prize.

Marwopnet aren't just an elite group, though, and they don't always travel by plane. They go on bone-breaking overland trecks to the borders, building networks of women who'll be watching out for any untoward movements of men, drugs or weapons, acting as an early warning system of any impending reccurrence of war.

Wider networks and other methodologies

OK - these two examples are of single nationwide groups, which you might see as individual stars in our cosmology. (Although one might say Marwopnet is a three-star cluster). But the universe of women's anti-war activism also contains things that look more like galaxies: networks with an international scope. One of these is Women in Black against War. Another is the Women's

International League for Peace and Freedom, and I'll come back to them in a moment. And a third is Code Pink: Women for Peace - newer, zanier, brasher and more colourful than Women in Black. It's US-based, but already there are branches in the UK and Ireland, Canada, Brazil, Germany, Iran, Fiji and Australia.

I'll just say a little about Women In Black – the website titles them "Women In Black. For Justice. Against War". This phenomenon began in Israel just after the first intifada - 1988. Groups of Israeli Jewish women began to stand in public places, often a major crossroads, wearing black and carrying signs saying simply "End the Occupation". It wasn't an easy thing to do – they got a lot of aggression from extremist Zionists, and still do today.

The idea of Women In Black was picked up by Italian women who had a practice of visiting and giving support to Palestinian women and Israeli activists. Scores of *Donne in Nero* groups formed in Italy – there are 44 today – and they in turn carried the notion of the black-wearing, public vigil to Belgrade in 1991 as Yugoslavia began to fall apart.

The group in Belgrade that took the name too – it's *Zene u Crnom* in Serbo-Croat - like the Israeli women ran a gauntlet of insults and violence, standing in Republic Square once a week throughout the wars of the '90s, in open principled disloyalty to the Milosevic regime. This group have done a lot of analysis and writing, and were influential in spreading the formula of Women In Black worldwide during the nineties.

From Women in Black Belgrade has emerged a dual strategy that informs the whole movement today: (1) taking responsibility for opposing the militarism and nationalism of one's own government, and the injustices it perpetrates; and (2) at the same time building and sustaining bridges of connection and solidarity with women designated 'the enemy' – and between women inside and outside war zones.

Women in Black has spread to possibly thirty countries – maybe 300 local groups. International networks like this of course respond particularly to international wars. And the US-led wars of the last ten years, first in the Gulf, then, after September 11 and Bush's "war on terror", against the bombardment and invasion of Afghanistan and currently the occupation of Iraq – these are what have motivated the spread of networks, more than they've borne on local groups like La Ruta and Marwopnet who've had their local war to deal with. The WiB response has naturally been greatest in countries like the US, Britain and Italy – in Bush's so-called 'coalition of the willing'.

Again, the example of Women In Black throws up a particular methodology of protest. It centres on the silent vigil, usually women-only, mostly wearing black, often repeated at predictable intervals and in constant places. In London for instance we stand every Wednesday from six till seven around the Edith Cavell Statue near Trafalgar Square. Most vigils involve the use of banners and placards, some also give out leaflets. Not all are silent, but for most silence does have a special importance. For example women who stand outside the Public Library in New York say in their leaflet:

> We're silent because mere words can't express the tragedy that wars and hatred bring….Our silence is visible…We wear black as a symbol of sorrow for all victims of war, for the destruction of people, nature and the fabric of life.

When women say why they prefer to organise *as women* they usually cite women's gender-specific experiences of war and their contributions to peace-building - both of which they believe are under-represented and deserve a voice. When asked why they prefer to organise with *women only* the answer's slightly different, and it often hinges on process or method. Women of course do join mass demonstrations, but they often feel critical of their rhetoric and verbal (even physical) violence, and have tended to look for other ways, more imaginative and creative ways, of getting their ideas across. They also prefer to avoid a discourse of "enemies" such as the left-led movement's

images of lynching George W. Bush or Tony Blair. In contrast to this, women have evolved quite a conscious approach of prefigurative struggle (do you remember that from the 70s?), '*coherencia entre medios y fines'*, making your own process a model of the world you aspire to create. Thus, women see non-violence in words, gestures and relationships as necessary means in working towards peace. Of course none of these things are unique to women. The wider movement has a small and enduring pacifist wing with similar principles – though it sometimes gets drowned out by the mass-rallying elements in the coalitions. Incidentally - I've not got time now to go into the interesting question of whether, why and when some men are welcome in women's organizations. But I would stress that when they are and when they're not – the arguments are never essentialist. Nobody in the women's peace movement is seriously arguing that women are 'natural peacemakers' and men are 'naturally aggressive'. In fact if you think about it an antiwar movement is precisely where you can't think biology. Peace activists have to be optimistic about change being possible – some would say they're overly optimistic – and that's incompatible with reductionist notions of men and women.

Tackling the institutions

I want to mention briefly another phenomenon in this universe, which will take us a little further in understanding women's motivation and one particular methodology - working through the international institutions.

As a lot of you know, on October 31 2000 the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. It was a landmark event in which the Security Council recognized women's gender-specific suffering in war, asserted women's human rights, noted the contribution women make to peace-building, called for the full representation of women in all aspects of peace processes at international and national levels, and stated clearly the imperative of incorporating both women and a gender perspective into UN peacekeeping and other operations.

Of course the Resolution wasn't the idea of the Security Council – which is a profoundly masculine body. In fact this was the first time in 55 years and four thousand two hundred and thirteen sessions that they'd discussed women. It's interesting to see whose idea it really was and how it was achieved.

I learned it was the product of a very widespread, informal and in some ways scarcely visible network of women – a unique phenomenon in our antiwar cosmos - scores or hundreds of women in non-governmental organisations at local and international level, in the United Nations departments and agencies, in national governments and in universities. A lot of them are still involved today, striving to get the Resolution implemented.

A movement about "women and conflict" was already present in the nineteen-seventies and eighties in the UN world conferences of women in Mexico and Nairobi. The Platform for Action resulting from the fourth conference in Beijing in 1995 had a chapter on the subject. This was reviewed in the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York at its biennial meetings in 1998 and 2000 which were attended by a great number of women's organizations from around the world, many of whom wanted action. A coalition of international NGOs formed around the initiative. They were Amnesty, International Alert, the Hague Appeal for Peace, the Women's Caucus for Gender Justice, the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children and finally, the Women's International League For Peace And Freedom. WILPF is the biggest and best organised and oldest of the women's international anti-war movements. It's head office is in Geneva and it has branches in 37 countries.

It was this international NGO Working Group that had the idea of carrying this theme of Women, Peace and Security to the very top, so to speak, aiming for a Security Council debate and a Resolution on it. The more cautious feminists inside the UN, especially in UNIFEM, warned them they were being too ambitious. But eventually they saw the civil society women really knew their stuff and weren't going to be deterred, and they gradually warmed to the project.

The working group lobbied all the government missions to the UN and every ambassador that sits in the Security Council. They sent each delegation a carefully chosen pile of feminist books on women and gender in relation to militarism, war and peace-making. Among them were Betty Reardon, Cynthia Enloe, Sara Ruddick…household names to feminists, but certainly unknown to these ambassadors. Knowing they weren't likely to do their homework, the women also provided helpful summaries and crib-notes.

The missions of Canada, Jamaica and Namibia were specially responsive to the women's initative. A particular champion of the cause was Ambassador Anwral Chowdhury of Bangladesh during his presidency of the Council. At that time there was one woman member of the 15 member council, Ambassador Patricia Durrant of Jamaica. She was important too. To cut a long story short these assorted women and organisations achieved their Resolution. By all accounts it was a great day. It was certainly the first time this august chamber had seen women crowding the public gallery and clapping the speakers. Felicity Hill, the director of WILPF's UN office – she'd coordinated the NGO working group at this crucial period - told me, 'that day we felt the UN's last bastion of totally gender-free thinking had fallen at last'.

But some things had been un-sayable in the Resolution. It's interesting what happens when you take the institutional route like this. The feminists in the NGOs had become self-censoring, partly because the feminists in UNIFEM and other departments (inside the system and knowing the ropes), had continually advised the outsiders not to rock the boat, not to try to include in the draft document any statement, even in the preamble, about *the causes of war,* even though you could have thought this was absolutely central to the Security Council's very purpose. There would be no mention of things like militarization, the arms trade and nation-state belligerence – sensitive issues, since all five permanent members of the Security Council were guilty of them.

A feminist theory of war?

We've seen then, several methodologies - from mass mobilizations to the lobbying of international institutions. And we've seen that women are motivated to organize as women on several grounds. First, as in Colombia, evoking women's gender-specific experience of war and voicing it more clearly than gets done in the mixed movement. Second, recognizing women's particular learned capabilities and skills in surviving war and building peace – and we saw an example of those abilities in Sierra Leone. Third, a wish to have full representation of women in peace processes including peacekeeping operations, which had motivated the 1325 coalition. Finally, women were saying they value women only organizations women because they're free to choose the particular relationships, organizing processes and activist methodologies they feel most comfortable with. We saw the silent vigils preferred by Women in Black for instance.

But the most compelling reason for women to organize as women against war is that *women have a theory* – a theory that's entirely lacking from the mainstream understanding of war, and has a lot to add to it. I was once at a meeting of international relations theorists. They'd been called together, by Gillian Youngs I think it was, to discuss the possibility of having a feminist issue of a certain IR journal. One of them said, '*The problem is, feminists have no theory of war*'. It was said so authoritatively that for a moment I thought, my heavens! I know we have a theory of security, but what's our theory of *war*? Then I realized, of course, that feminist thought, simply the idea that *gender is a power relation*, is of itself a kind of theory of war.

Actually long before the movement arose that would develop the theory, women had perceived an intimate connection between male power structures and war. In the late eighteenth century Mary Wollstonecraft wrote "Every military corps is a chain of male despots, crawling for rank and power." She believed militarism threatens women in particular by reinforcing masculine habits of authority.

In 1938 Virginia Woolf wrote a polemic against patriarchy and its prediliction for nationalism and war. "Scarcely a human being in the course of history,"

she wrote, “has fallen to a woman’s rifle; the vast majority of birds and beasts have been killed by you, not by us…Obviously there is for you some glory, some necessity, some satisfaction in fighting which we have never felt or enjoyed.”

And here I hesitate a bit – because in a few minutes I know I can’t do justice to what’s by now a huge literature on gender and war. Maybe it’s best to start with Gerda Lerner and others who’ve written about the origins of patriarchy. Reading both from the archaeological record and the earliest written texts (mainly from the Middle East but also from independent developments in the American hemisphere), Lerner shows how the earliest civilizations are characterized by a social differentiation and ranking of human beings on three dimensions: differences and inequalities of property and wealth – today we might call it class; of tribe or race – we might call it ethnicity; and between women and men – we call it gender.

All three of these hierarchies or rankings implied violence. With the neolithic agricultural revolution, surpluses began to be produced. Property and wealth were accumulated at the cost of others’ labour power and those others had to be diminished and coerced. Additional labour was acquired through raiding, warfare, enslaving neighbouring peoples who became inferior social elements. Women were commodified for their sexual and reproductive capacities – in the exchange of women between tribes – exogamous ‘marriage’. But women of other tribes were also enslaved. Lerner says, ‘in every known society it was *women* of conquered tribes who were first enslaved – the men were killed.’ As class systems developed, with large disparities of wealth, these hierarchies were (as Lerner puts it) ‘expressed in genderic terms’. By the third millennium BCE in the Middle Eastern civilizations war was already an established part of human existence - from seige warfare in the time of the early city states, to the huge sweep of long-distance infantry in the empires like that of Persia in the first millennium BCE. The interlocking systems of class, race and gender power were founded on violence. Militarism and war were intrinsic to the early patriarchies.

And, feminist theory goes on to suggest, the relationship between patriarchy and war has continued throughout history. In more recent times – class relations have changed. The wealthy classes are now less aristocratic than capitalist. Inter-ethnic relations are structured as a hierarchy of nations and nation states, and as relatively powerful majorities and subordinated minorities within states. Patriarchy has persisted - it's surprisingly resilient - but in adaptive forms. And 'intersectionality' – that may be a new term but the reality it describes is ancient. Male dominance and the 'othering' of women has intersected all along with the other 'otherings' – of class power, of ethnic power. The least-challenged power has always resided in the hands of males of the ruling class and dominant ethnic group or nation, and it's always underwitten by violence – from the threat of rape, to the bailiffs and strike-breakers, to the offshore gunship.

To come to the present moment, it's interesting to observe the collaboration of militarism, nationalism and patriarchy, as ideologies and as social systems. It's beautifully illustrated, for instance, in Ayse Gul Altinay's recent book about Turkish manhood, *The Myth of the Military Nation*. Patriarchy, the system of gender power relations in which men are dominant, sustains and adaptively reproduces itself over time by social and cultural means. It tends to produce authoritative and combative men much appreciated by militarism. Militarism and national patriotism nurture 'proper' men that are useful to patriarchy. Nira Yuval-Davis's work on *Gender and Nation* has been valuable in showing these relations at work – she shows how it's women as mothers that do a lot of the cultural work for patriarchy, nationalism and militarism. The effect of the linkage between the three is to generate masculine cultures – of the school playground, the soldiers' barracks, pornography, the racist gang, computer gaming, the football fan club - that legitimate violence in boys and men, devalue the feminine and women.

With the rise of an oppositional culture of human rights, and women's rights, this has become an embarrassment in some quarters. And of course the reproduction of patriarchal relations, as with class and ethnic relations, doesn't always work smoothly. Some individuals evade the process,

movements arise to contest it. But it persists as the overwhelmingly majoritarian schema.

Men, masculinity and weapons

So feminist theory delineates an intimate relationship between gender power relations, masculine cultures and militarism. One interesting field in which women have spelled this out is the relationship between men and weapons. To go back for a moment to Security Council Resolution 1325. Just as militarism had been missing from that text, so had men and masculinity been missing. There was a lot there about women's under-representation, but no mention of who was present in place of women. There was mention of women's sexual vulnerability in war – but no mention of who were the rapists and traffickers. Although the Resolution had said a good deal about getting women better represented in UN peacekeeping operations, getting gender units and gender-sensitive practices into PKOs, there had been no mention of the embarrassing reality of male peacekeepers themselves abusing and exploiting women.

This lack was particularly noted and regretted by WILPF, the only feminist organization among the six international NGOs of the working group. Felicity Hill eventually left WILPF's New York office and studied for a masters in Sweden. She wrote her thesis on the 1325 process and the compromises it had involved. And in 2005 she had an interesting opportunity to pursue this question of men and masculinity in another context.

She and Carol Cohn, of Wellesley College and the Boston Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights, were invited to address the Blix Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction - about gender. They used Resolution 1325 as a stepping stone and jumped in right where it had left off. They pointed to the fact that in official measures of 'DDR', disarmament, demobilization and reintegration after wars, and in the movement against small arms and light weapons, the connection between men and their guns is widely understood. Men are very unwilling to be parted from their guns.

There's something symbolic about guns for men, something to do with identity. It didn't take a feminist to understand this. Even United Nations peacekeepers know you have to use local women to help get guns decommissioned.

The two women now said to the Blix Commission - it's a small but necessary step from small arms to big ones. 'It would be naïve' they wrote in their paper, 'to assume that this association [between masculinity and arms] suddenly becomes meaningless when we're talking about larger, more massively destructive weapons. And more naïve still to think that it doesn't matter.'

Carol Cohn had published research that demonstrated that that association was a close, expressive and emotional one. She'd worked among nuclear intellectuals as a participant observer and listened carefully to the discourse of this almost-all-male community. It was a language you had to learn and deploy, she found, if you weren't to be socially excluded. It routinely associated, for instance, megatons of explosives with sexual potency, and conciliation and treaties with wimpishness. Nor was it a question only of military and scientific personnel. Cohn and Hill stressed to the Blix Commission, quote 'there are many instances in which *political masculinity* too is linked with preparedness to use military action and to wield weapons of mass destruction'. And you have only to think of the macho posturing in Bush's pre-emptive strike pronouncements and so on to get a sense of this…

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To wind up……R.W.Connell in his book *Masculinities*, writes quote 'A gender order where men dominate women cannot avoid constituting men as an interest group concerned with defence, and women as an interest group concerned with change. This is a structural fact, independent of whether men as individuals love or hate women, or believe in equality or abjection, and independent of whether women are currently pursuing change.' And of course, in the movement we're just now looking at, women are indeed pursuing change.

One of the reasons why they've chosen to pursue that change in women-only groups is because the mainstream antiwar movement has no gender dimension in its project. If we think of the 15 million on the streets worldwide against the Iraq war on 15 February 2003 – there may have been many many men in those marches and rallies who actually agree with the notion that war and masculinities have something to do with each other. But certainly in the demonstration in London we saw no visible or vocal indication of that idea. Men are not coming out and calling for change in the gender regime, in the same way a lot of them readily come out against class exploitation and racism and war. In fact, all too often the big demonstrations, led by the storm-troopers of the SWP, are a celebration of a militant (if not military) masculinity.

Bob Connell, who I just quoted, is a man who does see this. In a chapter he contributed to our book *The Post-War Moment: Militaries, Masculinities and International Peacekeeping*, he wrote:

> There are many causes of violence, including dispossession, poverty, greed, nationalism, racism and other forms of inequality, bigotry and desire. Gender dynamics are by no means the whole story. Yet given the concentration of weapons and the practices of violence among men, gender patterns appear to be strategic. Masculinities are the forms in which many dynamics of violence take shape. Evidently then, a strategy for demilitarization and peace must include a strategy of change in masculinities.

So yes - the distinctive message conveyed by the very existence of the women's peace movement is – *sustainable peace won't be possible without change in the gender order*. It's not a sufficient condition but it is a necessary one. That's the message women are trying to insert into the antiwar movement. In their many different actions in many different places they're saying: we need a transition from societies in which the supremacy of the masculine principle, male violence against women and the waging of war are taken as normal and unchangeable, to societies which, in retrospect, will see them as a very long and unspeakably costly historical aberration.

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