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CAN WE SEE GENDER AS CAUSE AND CONSEQUENCE of IN MILITARIZATION AND WAR?

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Thank you for that generous introduction, Amal. I'm very honoured to be asked to give the first *Feminist Review* lecture - and I can't wait to read the new volume on women and war.

Looking at the title I suggested for the talk, I wonder now why I posed it as question? Why so weedy? I must have been feeling cautious! Let's recast it as a statement and say "Gender is a driving force in war" - and that'll give us more to argue about! What I'm going to suggest is that experiencing war, as a woman; or allying with women who are experiencing war; and especially getting actively involved in opposing war, gives rise to a particular understanding. It's one that doesn't make it into the standard war studies textbooks.

It's the perception that militarism, militarization and war are – only in part, but very significantly - driven and perpetuated by *gender relations*. Economic factors, like oil or diamonds, drive war, yes. Ethno-national factors like the desire to kill all the Muslims in India, or all Christians and animists in Sudan, yes, they too drive war. But gender factors do also. I emphasize ALSO. This is not to substitute a gender analysis of war for the mainstream analysis, but to propose it as an intrinsic, interwoven, inescapable part of the story.

This idea isn't just mine of course. It's pretty much what Virginia Woolf was saying in the 1930s, and a lot of others since. More immediately it comes out of research I recently did among women's organizations and networks opposing war. My project was funded by Joseph Rowntree and other kindly NGO funders and it cost them and me (and the ozone layer) 80,000 air miles of travel over two years 12 different countries: Colombia, Spain, Belgium, Turkey, the USA, Italy, Serbia, India, the Philippines, Sierra Leone, Israel and Palestine, as well as the UK. During that time I listened to more than 250 women talking singly or in groups about more than 60 organizations they belonged to. They were for the most part small local groups, adjacent to much larger mixed-sex anti-war movements. But four were transnational networks including Women in Black against War, which I'm involved myself and some

of you too. It's important to me to keep a foot in an activist as well as an academic world, because I strongly believe that useful knowledge is brought into being, in different ways, in both.

What I learned from these women, above all else, is that gender and war are mutually shaping. In the talk I'll touch on the way war shapes gender, but my main focus will be on how gender can be seen as causative in war. The reason I think it's important to make the case is because I think it can be a resource in the wider anti-war movement that all of us here are probably part of. I'll come back to that at the end.

A way of seeing war

To perceive gender relations as a driving force in war calls for both war and gender to be understood in a particular way. In the case of war, first and foremost, you have to bring a sociologist's or anthropologist's eye to the subject, not so much an international relations one. We need to see warfare as social. War may be deadly, but it's *relational.* It involves a degree of shared understanding between the warring factions. Only if we understand it this way, can we tease out, among the other relations, those of gender.

But war-fighting between two armies is only the tip of the iceberg, as it were, of an underlying, less immediate, set of institutions and relationships that needs to be understood as an interconnected whole, as a kind of system. The author most often credited for the term 'the war system' is Betty Reardon in her text *Sexism and the War System* (1996). But I have to say I have a problem with her way of seeing it. She uses the term war system to refer to quote 'our competitive social order, which is based on authoritarian principles, assumes unequal value among and between human beings, and is held in place by coercive force'. But I don't actually find, in the main, feminists addressing war think this way. You can't reduce the social order to nothing other than a gender order. Its going too far to say, as Reardon does, that quote 'authoritarian patriarchy…invented and maintains war to hold in place the social order it spawned'. Unquote. Looking at war from close quarters women activists see all too clearly the other power systems that shape the social order.

By systemic I mean the kind of system that 1970s systems theory described - I mean seeing it as a set of interacting or interdependent entities, functionally related, whose inputs and outputs, and information flows within and across its borders can be observed and analysed. A war 'system' in this sense would comprise, first of all organizations (Ministries of Defence, the arms manufacturing firms, training academies and military suppliers, the Chiefs of Staff and their commands), secondly materiel elements (bombs, battleships, bullets), and also governing ideologies (expressed in values, attitudes and cultures). War seen systemically in this way readily opens up to a gender analysis. Its institutions, let's say the 'military industrial complex', can be seen as loci of several dimensions of power, economic, national - *and* patriarchal. We can see overlaps and information flows between the war system and other social systems – the educational system, the media etc.

So, war as *relational*, war as *systemic* - and a third qualifier is important: the idea that war is only a phase in a sequence of conditions linked together as a *continuum*. It's from women I've met during my research that I've learned to stress the continuum effect. It's because <u>they</u> are linked in an international movement, yet each of them is variously located in relation to war fighting as it waxes and wanes. For example, some, like the Women's Network against Militarism are about pre-war. Their focus is the US military bases in the Pacific and Caribbean, so they're particularly well informed on militarization, the state of preparedness for war. Some are in the middle of war. Like *La Ruta Pacifica* in Colombia who've been working for peace for years in the three-way internal armed conflict. *Actoras de Cambio* in Guatemala are doing so-called 'post-war', dealing with the terrible residues of massive armed sexual violence. In Sierra Leone, the women of the Mano River Women's Peace Network are organizing women along borders to monitor movements of men, guns and drugs to prevent war breaking out again. So, organizations and networks like this, spanning the globe and linked by electronic communications, tend to see 'war' not just as spasms of war-fighting, but as part of a continuum leading from militarism (as a persisting mindset, expressed in philosophy, newspaper editorials, political think tanks), through militarization (processes in economy and society that signify preparation for war), to episodes of 'hot' war, and thence to cease fire and stand-off, followed perhaps by an unsteady peace with sustained military investment, beset by sporadic violence that prefigures a further round in the spiral.

A lot of mainstream war studies (I mean non-feminist analyses) reflect this perception. I won't cite them, because it's tedious, but a lot's been written for instance on how high military expenditure in the Western world has been maintained despite the end of the Cold War. One ex-military author writes about the end of 'industrial warfare' and the advent of the new paradigm he calls 'war among the people'. With this the continuum effect has increased. War quote 'is no longer a single massive event of military decision that delivers a conclusive political result'. Rather 'our conflicts tend to be timeless, since we are seeking a condition, which then must be maintained until an agreement on a definitive outcome, which may take years or decades'. Some authors have suggested that in contemporary civil wars, in Africa for instance, defeating the enemy in battle isn't any longer the aim. On the contrary, some participants have a vested interest in continued conflict and in the long-term institutionalization of violence.

This kind of lens, then, through which war is seen as relational, as systemic, and as involving a spiralling continuum of phases and cycles, I want to show is helpful in allowing us to see gender as cause and consequence.

Gender relations as implicated in militarism and war

Now I need to say something about this second key word in my title: gender. And here I have a problem about how much it's necessary to say in a feminist audience like this one. I've given this talk in the context of war and

peace studies and there you can't take any short cuts with gender. You have to spell out the feminist underpinnings. But here I'm going to assume it's taken for granted that gender is socially constituted differences between men and women, with a lot of cultural variations. I'm going to take it also that you wouldn't have any argument with the idea that gender-as-we-know-it derives from a male-dominated sex-gender system – that the gender order isn't identical across cultures, but on the other hand none that we know of are either sex-equal or woman-dominated. Although in theory they could be.

Thirty or forty years ago it was possible to feel confident of using the term 'patriarchy', rule by the fathers, to name a gender order characterized by male supremacy. Then we rightly got self-critical, and by the 1980s we were noting that we needed to take account of historic phases of male dominance – that it varies in form with changing modes of production and the rise and fall of empires. An important moment was Carole Pateman's proposition that, since the Enlightenment, rule by the 'fathers' in European society has given way to rule by men in general. Sylvia Walby alerted us to a shift from private to public patriarchy. And so the word 'patriarchy' began to sound a bit archaic. On the other hand nobody came up with a satisfactory alternative. 'Fratriarchy' and 'andrarchy' might be more accurate in contemporary western Europe, but they never caught on. We're left with a very powerful reality that we're uncertain how to name.

However: out there, in practice, on the street, wherever I went in the last few years, in the global south and global north, I found women in the women's anti-war movement were using the term patriarchy in everyday speech without the slightest hesitation. They know patriarchy well – they live in it. Ann Oakley agrees with them. She's still insisting, 'Patriarchy isn't an ancestral disease, it's a living institution. It's the default mode: what's always there and will always happen unless it's actively contested… We need to comprehend what goes on,' she insists, 'and what goes on is a constant fracturing of our humanness into divisive and destructive ways of being and living'. Unquote.

In patriarchy men and women are specialized, in the heterosexual couple the genders are rendered complementary and unequal. Good qualities like strength and courage are allocated to men and deformed into tools for domination. Good qualities like tenderness and care are allocated to women and have become the badge of submission and service. Both parts of humanity end up as less than fully human.

Men, in every social class and ethnic group, though in some more than others, gain from the superior agency with which patriarchy endows males. At the same time women, in the main, settle for patriarchy, we collude in it, do its work. 'We're lost without it and lost within it', Ann Oakley says. And in return women are accorded a certain importance in a carefully defined and limited sphere – particularly in reproduction, both reproducing human life in unpaid and paid ways, and reproducing the community's culture. We take other roles - but we're not *endowed* with them.

So are we saying that nature has designated men the war-makers and women the peace-makers? Absolutely not. If anything has done such a thing it's not nature but the patriarchal social system. But it's complicated, isn't it. There *is* in fact a sexual division of war, just as there's a sexual division of labour. This produces a strong gender skew that makes for gender-specific experiences. BUT the statistics are never totally conclusive. Most soldiers are men, but not 100% of them. Most rape victims are women, but not 100% of them. YET – also to the point – the exceptions to the norm, the 5% of odd ones, they too experience their anomalous fate in profoundly gendered ways. (And usually when you get a statement like that, followed by a but, and the but is followed by a yet, that signifies an interesting contradiction that can be approached dialectically). Taking a closer look at life inside these confusing statistics what we learn is that it's not the same thing at all to be a male rape victim as a female one. It's not the same thing to be a woman soldier as a man soldier.

Have you read that amazing autobiography by Kayla Williams, a young female squaddy in the US military in Iraq? It's called *Love my Rifle more than You*. She loved soldiering. But she opens the book by saying, 'I've been back home six months now and I still have to remind myself when I wake up each morning: I am not a slut'. That's what her comrades in arms had made this competent and cheerful young woman feel about herself. It's not the same thing to be a woman soldier as a man soldier. And it's not seen as being the same.

Again, it's always possible to point to women who encourage or participate in the violence of armed conflict. There are loads of examples. To give just one, that emerged in my case study of the International Initiative for Justice in Gujarat… In the profoundly patriarchal culture of India's Hindu extremist organizations, women are cast as the selfless wife and mother. Yet in the massacre of Muslims in Gujerat in 2002 they were militant. Women of the women's wings of the Sangh Parivar and other institutions of the Hindutva movement were out on the streets chiding the men for 'wearing bangles' – in other words not being man enough to kill and rape Muslim women.

So to say 'women are natural (or patriarchally-moulded) peace-makers', and 'men are war-prone' misses the point. The point is that *'patriarchal gender relations are war-prone'.* The case for gender as a power relation implicated in the perpetuation of war doesn't rest on what individual men and women do. It's not written in stone that the cultures we live in will capture and 'normalize' the gender performance of each and every one of us. Some of us escape, some men refuse to serve in the military, some women insist on doing so. There are no certainties, only probabilities. The case rests more firmly on the patriarchal gender relation itself, which is a relation as much between masculinity and femininity as between men and women, a relation of dichotomy and complementarity, heteronormative, of domination and subordination, characterized by coercion and violence. It's the gender order itself that meshes with the war system in interesting and significant ways.

Causes of war and where to look for them

The question is, when we say 'gender-as-we-live-it' is one of the causes of war, do we really mean that literally? I think yes. But of course the verb 'to cause' has more than one inflection. Brian Fogarty writes that any particular war may have multiple causes. 'At the very least, he says, every war probably has immediate causes, antecedent causes, and something like 'root causes' or 'favorable conditions' underlying them'.

The economic motivators of war are often, in this sense, immediate. Usually they're rather clear to see, written into the news headlines. What are the aggressors demanding? What are the defenders defending? In early wars, five thousand years ago, we might see grain surpluses or tribute; today it may be access to markets.

The other major cause of war, ethno-nationalist issues, foreign-ness, the expression of the perceived security interests of an ethnic or national self in relation to its others, is often an antecedent cause, in Fogarty's terms, if not an immediate one. Raids against the ones outside the walls of the first city states, or beyond the borders of the early empires. The Chechens have long wanted out of the Russian Federation, the Russians resist ethnic secession. How can this kind of racializing cause in war be detected? By listening to what the ideologues are saying, the religious leaders. What's the propaganda, who's putting it out? What names are claimed, what names are being imposed on others?

But to see patriarchal gender relations as a cause of war you have to look in rather different places. Gender most often falls in the 'root cause' or 'favourable conditions' category of causality. OK, perhaps the abduction of the mythical Helen was an immediate cause of the Trojan wars. And George W. and Laura Bush would like us to see the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 as a war to save Afghan women from repression by the Taliban.But we don't believe them. Wars aren't really fought 'for' gender issues in the way they're sometimes fought 'for' oil resources, or 'for' national autonomy. Instead, they predispose societies to war. They foster militarism and militarization. They make peace difficult to sustain.

Where you have to look to see gender as a causal factor in war (or as a consequence of war) is at *cultures*, cultures as they manifest themselves in societies before, in and after armed conflicts. Any system has to adaptively reproduce itself over time. The way patriarchy reproduces itself is by the processes of masculinization and femininization – but particularly the former. Manhood and masculinity have to be reproduced in a form adequate to power, in the circumstances of each new era. Those processes are cultural processes. It's by looking deep down at the level of culture that we understand the tight link between patriarchy and militarism. Both systems have an interest and a hand in producing a particular kind of man. John Horne, a social scientist who studies war, took a little liberty with Clausewitz and wrote, instead of 'war is politics by other means', 'war is masculinity by

other means'. To understand war, he said, we need to study 'the dense associative life of men'.

In the past, in war studies, it's been a kind of credo that you shouldn't see war as behaviour, but as institutional. One famous saying in one of the war studies classics is quote 'Aggression isn't force, force isn't violence, violence isn't killing, killing isn't war'. Unquote. Of course, they're absolutely right, in a way and up to a point: war's an institution, not fisticuffs. War's calculated. On the other hand, looking at war as a feminist, especially seeing it from inside the war zone, it's not so easy to set aside 'ordinary' aggression, force or violence as 'not war'. Women are saying they experience coercion by men in disturbingly similar forms in war and so-called peace. The frequent sexualization of violence in war is indicative. We need therefore to delve beneath the cool 'international relations' representation of war, to break the academic taboo on looking at 'aggressiveness', and then, down here at the dirty level of practices and cultures, when we see the violence clearly, to ask questions about what kinds of violence, who does them to whom, and what if anything they may have to do with gender identities, gender antagonisms and gender power. War as an 'institution' is made up of, refreshed by and adaptively reproduced by violence as banal practice. Sometimes this is positively cultivated – as I'm going to try and show now from some academic studies of distinct moments in the continuum of war.

Moments in the war cycle
Policy making: the nation's posture

Men and women sociologists in the States have made interesting analyses of US society as it entered the Vietnam war, and as it emerged from it. I'll mention two where you can very clearly see gender relations pointing the way, so to speak, along the continuum of war.

A few years ago, Robert Dean decided to look back to the coldest years of the Cold War and wonder how foreign policy was made. He asked himself quote 'how did highly educated men, who prided themselves on hard-headed pragmatism, men who shunned 'fuzzy-minded' idealism, [how did they] lead the United States into [such] a prolonged, futile, and destructive war…' ?. He looked closely at the policy-making group - John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and their circle - as complex, socially-constructed beings, shaped by quite specific cultures. He noted that they were the product of exclusive male-only institutions: boarding schools, Ivy League fraternities and secret societies, elite military units, and metropolitan men's clubs, places in which imperial traditions of service and sacrifice were fostered, places that were the source as he puts it of 'an ideology of masculinity', imbuing men with a particular kind of manhood, ritually creating what he calls [quote] a 'fictive brotherhood of warrior intellectuals'.

This national elite, that defied rationality in taking the US to war in Vietnam, inherited from their predecessors a 'national security state' dedicated to the containment of communism and the expansion of a corporate capitalist world economic order. Kennedy campaigned for office with a

promise to halt America's decline into a flabbiness and impotence that had left the country vulnerable to the threat of a hard, ruthless Soviet empire. The US (this is Kennedy's words) had [quote] 'gone soft -- physically, mentally, spiritually soft'. The identity narrative of *The Imperial Brotherhood*, that's what Dean called his book, with its cult of courage and honour, demanded rigid defence of boundaries and a despising of anything that looked like appeasement.

Recovery from defeat

If Dean shows us a certain patriarchal formulation of masculinity taking a country into war, Susan Jeffords shows us a defeated patriarchy in a postwar moment. I'm thinking of her book *The Remasculinization of America,* which analyses novels and films of the post-Vietnam period - films like *First Blood*, and *Missing in Action.* The defeat of US military might by a mere peasant army, the return of disabled and traumatized veterans, was shocking both to the state and to ordinary Americans. The war years had seen the emergence of a new left, draft-resisting youth and a startling self-assertion by women in second wave feminism. If the US was going to recover self-respect, if it was going confidently to project its power in the world again, strategies of remasculinization were badly needed.

Jeffords looks carefully at a process she saw taking place in US social relations in the late 1970s and 1980s, a cultural effort to get the nation state back into an erect posture. She calls what she sees [quote] 'a large-scale renegotiation and regeneration of the interests, values, and projects of patriarchy'. She shows how films and novels about Vietnam stood the soldier/veteran back on his feet as hero, how they celebrated masculine bonding. This reworking of the Vietnam story totally eclipsed women and the feminine, she says. What it did was to heal the wounded veteran, acquit him of feminine weakness, so despised, and project that instead onto a wimpish government that had betrayed its men.

So here we see masculinity, normally shored up by victory, undermined by defeat. Its restitution was the postwar project. And the energy of that resurgence, both the bitterness and the overcoming of it – will it fuel future war? Susan Jeffords is explicit that she doesn't personally want to suggest a causal connection between gender and the perpetuation of war. But - she was writing in 1989 – and three years later came the Gulf War. It wasn't only feminists then who felt that one element, just one among the several motive forces behind the USA's Operation 'Desert Storm', was a masculine redemption of the defeat in Vietnam. Later, in 2001, we'd be detecting machismo in George Bush Junior's muscular response to the attack on the twin towers.

Gender as consequence of war

Mentioning 9/11 reminds me of Susan Faludi's new book, *The Terror Dream.* And that prompts me to not forget to mention shifts in gender relations as the consequence of war – the other side of the coin. You know

how some times in life you can remember exactly where you were when you heard something for the first time. It was when I heard Dubravka Zarkov say "violence is productive". We were standing in a small room in the Dutch University for Humanist Studies. It was eight years ago. She meant that the violence of the Yugoslav wars didn't result <u>from</u> ethnic hatred as most people believed, it was intended to <u>produce</u>, to deepen, ethnic specificity and difference. People had been getting along too well in Tito's Yugoslavia for the liking of the nationalists. Her book's called *The Body of War*, you may know it. Anyway, at that time we were working on a book about masculinities after war – and she meant the violence of war is productive of a certain gender formation too.

Another wonderful account of the production of gender in a particular form by a militarized society, of gender as consequence, is Ayse Gul Altinay's *The Myth of the Military-Nation*. She shows how, in Turkey, where patriarchy, nationalism and militarism visibly shore each other up, lean on each other, define themselves in each others' language, the paradigmatic Turkish male isn't merely a man, he's a soldiering man.

And, back to *The Terror Dream* - Susan Faludi explores how both in reality and in media representations, after the attack on the twin towers, the search has been on for male heroes (paradigmatically the New York fire fighters) while women have been refeminized, returned notionally and even to some degree factually, to domesticity. A society dealing with a sense of impotence - it's a gender *consequence* of an act of war,.

The violence inherent in linked systems of power

There are many dimensions along which power is distributed in society: age for instance; skin colour; physical strength and ability; or there's, let's say, sometimes an urban – rural dimension to advantage. But, as far as militarization and war are concerned I think it's safe to say that (1) economic power; (2) ethnic or national power embodied in community, religious and state structures; and (3) gender power, are the most significant and influential dimensions of power.

Feminist studies have developed a way of addressing this multiplicity of sources of power from the perspective of the individual, using the concepts of 'positionality' and 'intersectionality'. They're ugly and tedious words, sometimes deployed to the point of fetishization, but they are genuinely useful because they help us take account of the way a person's sense-of-self and ascribed identity are partly defined by her or his positioning in relation to not one but several dimensions of power. We tell ourselves this over and over, don't we. That a woman is never 'just' a woman. She may be, let's say, white and wealthy. This means that while she's subordinate in terms of gender, she has an edge in terms of class and race. Vectors of power relations intersect in her, as they do in all of us, to constitute us as individuals but simultaneously as members of unequally positioned collectivities.

It's become a bit of a mantra. <u>But the thing is this:</u> when addressing war we need to recognize that intersectionality also and always works at the macro level too. It's obvious, but it's sometimes obscured. The power structures of economic class based on ownership of the means of production, the racializing power of ethno-nationalism expressed in community authorities and states, and the sex/gender hierarchy *together* shape human social structures, institutions and relational processes. Together they establish positions of relative power, thereby laying down the possibilities and probabilities for individuals and groups that variously inhabit them. No single one of them produces its effects in the absence of the other two.

Intersectionality means that it doesn't make sense to look for the institutions, the structures, of gender power specifically. The family may appear to be the 'real' one, the only one. It isn't. Few if any institutions do a specialized gender job – or for that matter a specialized economic or other 'power mobilizing' job. A corporation or a bank may appear to be 'just' an economic institution, a church or a mosque may look as if it is 'simply' an ethnic institution, a family may seem to be 'merely' a sex/gender institution. But look inside them and you find each and all sets of relations functioning at one and the same time: they are all economic, ethnic and gender institutions, though differently weighted. In corporations, almost all senior people are men. Churches often mobilize considerable wealth – and all the monotheistic clerical institutions are bastions of male power. The patriarchal family is an economic institution - it transmits wealth down the generations, and so on. It isn't possible logically to disconnect them, neither the edifices of power themselves nor the processes that express and sustain them. They are intersectional.

My suggestion here, then, is that militarization and war are necessarily, unavoidably, caused, shaped, achieved and reproduced over time through all three dimensions of power. (Probably more, but at least these.) If one is at work, the others will be too. The gender drama is never absent: the male as subject, the female as alien, the alien as effeminate (I mean both the alien a man sees out there, and the alien he fears inside himself). This is why a theory of war and its causation is flawed if it lacks a gender dimension. Most theories of war, however, in sociology and in international relations, do indeed lack this necessary element. To those who evolve and deploy them, they seem perfectly complete and satisfying without it. When women, feminists, come along and introduce our insights into discussions of war, when we talk about women and gender, we're often told we're being trivial, we're forgetting 'the big picture'. Cynthia Enloe is one person who's been brave enough to say about a concern with gender 'but suppose this IS the big picture?'

What, then, has the view of power as intersected sets of institutions and relations got to do with war? Their emergence in human society, closely related in time, were all necessarily violent processes. They were all processes of constituting a self in relation to an inferiorized, exploited other – the rich man's landless labourer; the citizen's hated foreigner; the woman as men's property, commodified in bride price, sale or exchange price, in prostitution and the value of her children. All three processs were necessarily

violent. A labour force won't dig a canal system unless driven by hunger. Foreigners will not bow to another's hegemony if it's not backed by coercion. Women won't be subdued without force. So it's not surprising that institutionalized warfare was born along with increasing accumulation of wealth, the early state and the establishment of patriarchies – innovations that signified the condition known as 'civilization'. Gerda Lerner's intensively researched book *The Creation of Patriarchy* shows this happening towards the end of the Neolithic in the emerging societies of the eastern Mediterranean. It's also been noted, some millennia later, in the American hemisphere. William Eckhardt, in a big study that reviews a lot of other historians on war, evolves a 'dialectical evolutionary theory', as he calls it, suggesting that the more 'civilized' people became the more warlike they became. Civilization and war: it's a correlation he finds persisting in all regions and phases of history.

Gender change as part of the struggle for peace

In conclusion then, let me summarize the argument I've made here. It's that if you look closely at war as a sociologist or anthropologist, you have in your hands a lens, an optic, that reveals cultures, the detail of what's done. You see job advertisements for the military, you see policymaking and training camps, you see discipline and indiscipline and hazing, comradeship, killing, rape and torture. If, as well, you look at war as a feminist, you see the gender in all of this. And you turn again to evaluate so-called peacetime. You see that the disposition in societies such as those we live in, characterized by a patriarchal gender regime, is towards an association of masculinity with authority, coercion and violence. It's a masculinity (and a complementary femininity) that not only serves militarism very well indeed, but (and this is my argument) *it seeks and needs militarization and war for its fulfilment.*

Talk to the women of *Actoras de Cambio* about gun ownership in post-war Guatemala. About the escalating crime there. About femicide – two women a week on average, raped, ritually mutilated and dead in a ditch. About the way they just now narrowly avoided electing a president to power on a ticket of "smash violence with more violence". Failure to implement land reform, failure to end the marginalization of the Maya, AND failure to demobilize masculinity and end misogyny, these three things dispose the postwar community to violence. They disturb the peace. And not just in Guatemala,

Sometimes we see small steps in the direction of gender change. But for each step forward there's a step back. A few weeks ago in *The Guardian* newspaper (2007) there was a news clip. In the UK there had been quite some progress in nurseries and play groups where carers and parents, determined that they would not any longer encourage violent play in their children, have decided to rid the toy box of those plastic guns and pistols. This article now stated that our government ministry, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (and the Children's Minister is a woman, Beverley Hughes) had now issued advice that boys should be encouraged to play with toy guns at nursery school. Why? It had been observed that boys between

three and five years old were falling behind their female classmates in all areas of learning. This was partly (the Ministry believed) because nursery staff had been trying to curb boys' desire for boisterous games involving weapons. Boys were more likely to become interested in education and would perform better, they felt, if encouraged to pursue their chosen play. Transformative gender change isn't on everyone's agenda.

There are practical implications in all this for our movements for demilitarization, disarmament and peace. After all, we're ready to recognize that a sustainably peaceful society is going to differ from today's war-torn societies in more than one dimension. At the very least, its economic relations must be more just and equal, and its national and ethnic relations more respectful and inclusive. Women committed to organizing as women against war add a dimension to this transformative change. They ask us to recognize that, to be sustainably peaceful, a society will also have to be one in which we live gender very differently from the way it's lived today.

R.W.Connell, now Raewyn Connell, has never been afraid to build theory from the cultural level, never shied away from what cultural studies tell us about masculinity. In 2002, from the standpoint of a man, he wrote '…men predominate across the spectrum of violence. A strategy for demilitarization and peace must concern itself with this fact, with the reasons for it, and with its implications for work to reduce violence…A *strategy for demilitarization and peace must include a strategy of change in masculinities*' (p.38).

This means that our mainstream anti-war, anti-militarist and peace movements should logically challenge patriarchy as well as capitalism and nationalism - and this is not, for the most part, on their agenda. The mainstream anti-war coalitions, mainly led by left tendencies, find it hard to 'get' the gender story. It's not easy for them to see that if anti-militarist and anti-war organizing is to be strong and effective and to the point, women must oppose war not only as people but *as women.* And men too must oppose it in their own gender identity – *as men.* You shall not exploit my masculinity for war. A few very brave men do say this. They are mainly gay men refusing military conscription in countries like Serbia and Turkey. And they pay heavily for their subversive masculinity. In fact I'd like to end this talk by paying tribute to Mehmet Bal, the Turkish war resister. He was arrested two weeks ago and at this moment is in Adana Prison and is known to have been maltreated to the point of torture. Let's think of him.

Thank you for listening to me.

SOME OF THE WORKS REFERRED TO OR DRAWN ON:

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