

# A Critical Review and Analysis of the Literature Concerning Women Who Wield Political Violence and Women in State Militaries



## Development and International Relations



**AALBORG UNIVERSITY**  
DENMARK



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# Abstract

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**Keywords:** *women, state militaries, non-state militant groups, security, international relations, narratives, gender, feminism, war.*

“Women are nurturing mothers, and men are strong protectors!” - These are common gendered stereotypes of men and women and their roles in society. However, if these are the general narrative of men and women, then how do we explain that throughout history and today women directly engage in conflict and war.

International relations (IR) scholars across different academic fields have engaged in this conversation, theorizing and conceptualizing on how to understand women’s direct participation in war. Feminist IR scholars especially have been interested in investigating this and argue for a gendered approach to IR and global politics and that war, conflict and security are highly gendered and part of an overall power hierarchy which consistently places women in a subordinate position. Feminist perspectives towards understanding women’s roles in violence and the affects this has for understanding security has caused tensions between conventional IR scholars and feminists, in particular in terms of the degree to which gender is to be understood as a cause or a symptom of the challenges associated with understanding women’ violence and changes in security perceptions.

This project will provide a critical review and analysis of the literature concerning WWPV and WSM to detect if there are similarities and/or differences in how the scholarship explains women’s engagement in violence. The literature review consists of 20 articles from scholars from different disciplinary fields and is supported by expert interviews with three IR scholars of gender, war, and security. The interviews provide additional and detailed perspectives to understanding the topic and the challenges in theorizing and conceptualizing on the women and violence. The comparison of WWPV and WSM is part of a larger debate on questions of war and security matters, in light of the emergence of new actors, such as non-state military groups, which challenge the traditional state security paradigm.

It can be concluded on the basis of the critical review and analysis that a number of the same narratives were being produced and reproduced in the literature on both WWPV and WSM. One example was the narrative of motherhood, which was significant in both bodies of literature as an explanatory narrative in understanding women’s involvement in violence and the discomfort it

caused for society, men, and the non-state organizations when women participated in violence. Despite similarities there were also differences in the degree to which some of the narratives and concepts were applied. In the WSM literature there was a tendency to analyze and discuss the question of women's legitimate place in the military on the basis of their physical abilities and whether it was beneficial for both women and the institution. In the literature on WWPV the analysis of physical abilities were to a lesser degree discussed, whereas the gendered power hierarchies causing differences in the positions that men and women are allowed to fill were often debated.

Additionally, the review of the literature revealed that the group of scholars conducting research on WSM was more evenly gender balanced than scholars working on WWPV. Furthermore, there was an interest from non-feminist scholars to engage in the conversation on WSM, whereas in the literature on WWPV, the scholars were all women and all took a gender and/or a feminist perspective to understanding women's roles in violence and the connection to security.

Ultimately, the differences in academic paradigms, especially between feminist and non-feminist scholars, made a coherent understanding of security difficult. However, both non-feminist and feminist scholars seemed to conclude that an awareness of gender (not necessarily a feminist perspective) is significant to understanding security.

# List of Abbreviations

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DDR: Disarmament, demobilization and Reintegration

IO: International Organizations

IR: International Relations

NGO: Non-Governmental Organizations

SANDF: South African National Defence Force

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UNSCR 1325: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

WSM: Women in State Militaries

WWPV: Women who wield political violence

# Preface

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This thesis report was written on the 10<sup>th</sup> semester in the spring of 2013 at the department of Development and International Relations at Aalborg University. The literature review on women who wield political violence utilized in the project builds on work conducted in connection with an internship at the *Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights*, at University of Massachusetts, Boston in the fall of 2012.

The project applies two datasets: the first a literature review (secondary sources), and a second dataset of expert interviews (primary sources). The interviews were conducted in April 2013, as part of a field trip to San Francisco and Boston, USA. The audio records of the expert interviews are available on the attached CD.

I would like to thank PhD Laura Sjoberg, PhD Caron Gentry and PhD Nicole Detraz for their willingness to participate in the interviews, adding unique and inspiring perspectives to questions on women's involvement in violence, and how to understand this in an IR security framework. Finally, a special thank you to Sandra McEvoy for her help and guidance during my internship at the Consortium and for her assistance in organizing the expert interviews.

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Kathrine Bjerg Christensen / date

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# 1. Introduction

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Female suicide bombers, women producing explosives in their kitchens as part of conflicts between paramilitary groups and militant organizations, and female soldiers in state militaries carrying machine guns and killing the enemy; these images challenge traditional understandings of who are the fighters of war and perpetrators of conflicts, and who are the individuals that need protection by the state/society. Furthermore, the images challenge our understandings of masculinities and femininities, and require us to conceptualize and understand war and security from a more gendered (even feminist) perspective in order to fully comprehend the different mechanisms involved, and how these are linked to power hierarchies.

The emergence of feminist international relations (IR) theorists in the 1980s provided an alternate way of thinking to the field of IR, and argued for the necessity to address gendered aspects through a gendered set of lenses. These scholars challenged conventional IR scholars and created tensions between the two approaches to the field. Political scientist J. Ann Tickner is one of the early prominent feminist scholars who has argued for the importance of a feminist perspective in IR, and addressed some of the complications that might be the cause for the lack of taking feminist perspectives seriously in IR studies. The title of Tickner's article from 2002 *You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements between Feminists and IR Theorists* exemplifies some of the implications of combining paradigms. Tickner argues that tensions occur because of different paradigms, that are ontologically, epistemologically and methodologically different and, according to some conventional IR scholars, incompatible (J. Tickner 2002). However, feminist research and more critical approaches to IR have gained momentum in recent time, as they have been able to address issues related to power hierarchies in IR from a different approach, and thereby highlight important aspects in the debate on security.

A large number of feminist scholars, including Tickner and political scientist Cynthia Enloe, have been pioneers in advocating for the importance of gendered and feminist perspective to IR issues. Enloe and Tickner's goals have been to bring attention to understanding that *war*, *militarism*, and *security* are topics that are extremely gendered and need to be analyzed and challenged in order for us to understand how these notions work and influence our way of thinking. Political scientist V. Spike Peterson argues that it is important to make a distinction between understanding gender as either an empirical category or as an analytical category, since the aim is different.

Understood empirically, gender can be deployed as a variable to investigate, for example, how women and men are differently affected by, and differently participate in, political and economic practices. This is the more familiar use of gender in contemporary research, especially social sciences. Analytical gender is less familiar; it refers to the signifying system of masculine-feminine differentiations that constitutes a governing code. The claim here is that gender pervades language and culture, systemically shaping not only who we are but also how we think and what we do (Peterson, 2010, p. 18)

This distinction that V. Spike Peterson addresses is central for understanding and analyzing gendered issues and also for addressing the unique reflective paradigm that a gendered analysis is able to provide to IR. It is particularly relevant to this project in terms of understanding the implications surrounding security.

Women's involvement in political violence is not a new phenomenon, nor is it an exception, however, how we understand, address, and study women who wield political violence (WWPV) has changed within recent years, and a new scholarship addressing women not only as victims, but also as perpetrators has emerged. This is also the case for women in state militaries (WSM) whose involvement in war has become more prevalent, and a number of countries, including the US and Israel, have experienced an increase in female soldiers and a shift in the positions that female soldiers are allowed to fill (Sjoberg & Sandra, 2010). As an example, in 2012 the US government initiated a change in the policy on women in the US military and their abilities to participate in active combat. In addition, the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) states the importance of including women in questions of war, security, and conflict, as their experiences, knowledge, and understandings of conflicts and related security issues provide valuable information. This gendered change in the military and militant organizations challenges our understanding of who are the protectors of the state/society and who are the victims that need protection. Notions of masculinities and femininities and new power dynamics and power relations need to be examined in order for us to understand the challenges and impacts this might have on our understanding of victims, perpetrators, protectors, and security. These concepts are at the center of IR, as they encompass the relationship between states and emerging challenges related to new wars and a change in how states interact.

A comparison of the bodies of literature on WWPV and WSM is built on the premise that state militaries and non-state groups represent two different actors in questions of security. The bodies of literature are mainly concerned with providing a framework for discussing one or the other, which

then follows a certain way of comprehending and conceptualizing security. The combined critical review and analysis of the literature will therefore discuss the implications of security by examining differences and similarities in the scholarship to enable a discussion of the differences in paradigms as well. This leads to the following problem formulation:

*How does current (feminist) scholarship address and analyze women who wield political violence in non-state militaries compared to women who are members of state militaries, and how do differences and similarities in the scholarships' analysis of these women effect our understanding of security in an IR context?*

## 2. Conceptual, Theoretical, and Methodological Frameworks

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The following section will introduce the ontological, epistemological, and methodological premise for the project, which will be based on feminist thinking. The section will also introduce a theoretical and conceptual framework which in combination will provide a critical tool of analysis. Since the project takes a feminist research method as the foundation for analysis, a combination of epistemology, theory, and conceptual framework will provide a foundation for critically examining how the scholarship addresses and analyzes WWPV and WSM. Firstly, the section will discuss some of the differences between feminism, feminist theory and feminist methodology to enable a conversation on the complexities associated with feminist thinking. Secondly, the notion of conceptualization and essentialized ideas will be discussed in relation to the complications these have for research and how topics and issues are presented. Lastly, the difference between a gender perspective and a feminist perspective will be discussed in terms of the utilization of the terms.

An emerging (feminist) literature addressing WWPV and WSM has been part of introducing new concepts, ideas, and narratives, challenging conventional and traditional points of departure. The academic approach to WWPV or WSM pushes us to address and understand women's involvement in these violent contexts in different ways. At the same time as the scholarship is informing us and producing new knowledge, it is also determining and shaping the direction of the production of knowledge. These different approaches and scholarly interpretations of women's involvement in violence creates implications for understanding security, and a conventional state security framework might not be adequate for explaining the new actors in security issues and how gender is part in shaping understandings of security. The aim of this project is to analyze and critically review how the scholarship is presenting, analyzing and discussing WWPV and WSM with the intention of critically reflect on the complications this has for a security framework. This means that I will be looking into the questions asked by scholars and the concepts, ideas, narratives and approaches they are utilizing in their analyses and discussions. This will then lead to a discussion on how the scholarship's approach to this particular field is part of producing and reproducing a certain conceptual framework with a particular perspective and narrative in mind and thereby discusses and reflect on what this knowledge production means for our understanding of security in an IR context.

## 2.1. Understanding Feminist Epistemology, Methodology, and Theory

Feminism, feminist theory, and feminist research methods are all terms which to some degree are disputed and face criticism from a number of different audiences, in particular from non-feminist scholars and academics who disagree with the ontology, epistemology, and methodology of feminist research; even feminist researchers disagree on the definition of feminism and what it entails. It is important to distinguish between the three previously mentioned concepts. The term *Feminism* holds a number of different meanings; however, many of these refer to particular times in history where specific feminist thoughts were common. Hence, it is possible to refer to feminism mainly in terms of three different waves, each of which focused on issues and challenges related to that particular point in time.

British feminist philosopher and author, Mary Wollstonecraft's work *A Vindication of Rights of Woman* (1792) is often used to mark the beginning of first wave feminism. Since this was a time of liberal political philosophy, at least in the Western sphere, fighting for women's voting rights and political rights in general were of high priority for the first wave of feminism. (Cudd & Andreasen, 2005) The second wave of feminism was highly influenced by feminist French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir, and Beauvoir's work *The Second Sex* from 1949 mark the initial starting point of the second wave. With de Beauvoir's work, the debate on biology versus social constructs got underway with the argument that gender differences are not rooted in biology but socially constructed, hence de Beauvoir's famous quote, "*one is not born, but rather becomes a woman*" (de Beauvoir as quoted in Cudd and Andreasen 2005, 8). The second feminist movement was also characterized by a commitment to go beyond political and legal equality and focus on all aspects of human life. Second wave feminists focused on the economic, political, and social aspects of life; they argued that embedded understandings of men and women in society were part of sexist oppression of women which maintained their status as *the second sex*. They were critical towards the first wave in terms of it not being focused enough on economic equality for women, instead of simply demanding economic survival. It was also a time when feminists were demanding a break with the public/private dichotomy by challenging our understanding of the institution of marriage, motherhood, heterosexual relationships etc. (Cudd & Andreasen, 2005, p. 7)

The third wave of feminism, which initiated in the late 1980s, aimed at focusing on women's diversity and making this more central in feminist thinking and theory. Given that most of the feminist thinkers of the second wave were white middleclass women, women of color especially

felt that there were inconsistencies in the debate on women's oppression. Women of color argued that not taking social circumstances into account, including race, sexuality, cast, and class, unfairly generalized women (Crenshaw 1991). Feminists of color questioned whether it made sense to talk about women's oppression as a single unified group. Another point was to talk about "woman" in the singular, challenging the very idea of categorizing people into sexes and genders. Rather they argued that, "*we need a feminism that accepts diversity and allows for a multiplicity of feminist goals*" (Cudd & Andreasen, 2005, p. 8).

The development of feminism is important in terms of understanding the epistemological and methodological choices that feminist theories are built around and make use of. Thus, "*Feminist theory is the attempt to make intellectual sense of, and then to critique, the subordination of women and men.*" (Cudd & Andreasen, 2005, p. 1). Since this kind of thinking, which addresses subordination as a notion that needs to be analyzed, is fairly new, feminist theory is by definition also fairly recent. Nevertheless, feminist thinkers have been influenced by earlier thinkers. The Enlightenment period has been very influential to feminism and feminist thinking. Although it might not have been the general idea of enlightenment to discuss equality between the sexes, the ideas on liberalism, equality and political and economic rights did linger on. Especially British philosopher John Stuart Mill made a famous contribution to some of the early feminist theory with his work "*The Subjection of Women*" from 1869 (Mill 1988 [first published 1869]). Although feminist ideas were being produced and presented in different contexts, it was not until the late twentieth century that feminism as an independent self-conscious field really took its form, initiated by Simone de Beauvoir's work.

The importance of the historical overview of feminism is to understand the development and the various philosophical ideas that feminism has been shaped by in terms of where feminist theory, methodology and method are today. It is interesting to note that a number of the early feminist theorists were philosophers, whereas today a large number of the people contributing to the field of feminist studies are anthropologist, sociologist, political scientists, historians, and economists. The philosophical starting point of feminist theory is perhaps not too surprising as philosophers are trained to conceptualize, theorize and deduce and question assumptions. What is noteworthy is that the nature of feminist theory, that is to challenge and be critical towards previous ideas and conceptualizations, also challenge philosophy to a greater degree than other theories. These critiques have caused tensions between influential philosophers and feminist theorists which is



perhaps one of the reasons why epistemology from a feminist perspective is not simply called epistemology, but *feminist* epistemology. (Cudd & Andreasen, 2005, pp. 1-2)

The different feminist waves focused on different aspects of women's subordination, and as in any other academic fields, there are different feminist theories which take on different approaches and perspectives. Some feminist theories adhere to social constructivist, post-colonial, post-structural, or liberal perspectives. Even though feminism has many meanings, and scholars might not agree on the definition of feminism or the same interpretation of gender, they adhere to a feminist ethic (to be curious about gendered hierarchies, silences, power dynamics, and other social components) which make them unique "feminist approaches" and which connects them. (Sjoberg & Sandra, 2010, p. 9)

A critical perspective is essential for a feminist approach to research and as argued by political scientists Brooke Ackerly and Jacqui True, "*the insight from feminist theoretical reflection on epistemology is that it is possible, and indeed essential, to reflect on the epistemologies that inform our own work.*" (Ackerly & True, 2010, p. 25). Given this attention to critically analyze both the production of knowledge, the understanding of power hierarchies, power dynamics and social components such as class, gender, cast, ethnicity, and race, feminist epistemology and methodology will be the basis for this thesis. This approach will allow me to critically analyze and discuss the literature on both WWPV and WSM and examine similarities and differences in the narratives and concepts applied. This then leads to a discussion on how the scholars' contributions enables us to understand the field, but also to be reflective towards the scholars' own cultural and academic backgrounds, and how this may shape their approach to the work they are conducting. Enloe argues that the most important part of a feminist ethic is to be curious about gendered issues in all aspects of life, and maintain a willingness to critically examine and analyze these (Enloe, 2004). Ackerly and True concur as they claim that, "[...] A feminist research ethic asks us to be attentive to situating ourselves and these connections in order to do *ethical* scholarship." (Ackerly & True, 2010, pp. 36-37)

I adhere to the feminist understanding that knowledge is produced and that research is normative. This approach to research will also enable a reflection on my own position in terms of the research. I acknowledge that my academic background schooled in a Western context and my gender may influence my interest in this particular topic. An awareness of feminist history and different waves of feminism with their theoretical and conceptual standpoints enabled me to analytically address both the scholars' points of departure and make use of feminist social constructivist and feminist

post-colonial perspectives, and use the history of feminism to critically address the scholars own starting points and theoretical frameworks.

## **2.2. Categorization and Essentialized Ideas**

Women's subordination, whether it being in regards to economic, political or social rights, has been the starting point of feminist thinking and research and continues to be essential to the discussion. This also means that women have often been placed in a secondary position, and even maintained in this hierarchy by scholars and policy-makers when the purpose of analyzing and debating women's subordination to men was the exact opposite; that is to emancipate women and not reduce and retain them from the category of "the second sex". This exact dilemma brings attention to the issues relating to using categorizations and essentialized notions and ideas in research. From one perspective, they are part of bringing attention to an issue and introducing the people that this issue concerns. At the same time, we might end up with a self-fulfilling prophecy where the problem and solution becomes a double-edged sword. Scholar Martin Bak Jørgensen addresses some of the issues related to using categorizations in research. Jørgensen writes in his paper from 2012,

Categories of difference have a crucial position in academic research as well as policymaking. They serve to distinguish and differentiate between groups in society. They can appear in the shape of crude dichotomies or in complex and sophisticated forms resting on constructivist and intersectionalist perspectives. Nevertheless, using categories of difference also creates something into existence and there may be implications through the particular application of specific categories. (Jørgensen, 2012, p. 78)

The awareness of categorization and essentialized ideas is particularly relevant from a feminist perspective, since the basis for a feminist research is the awareness of social constructs to various degrees. One of the categories that is often referred to in feminist theory and research is the concept of "the Other" (a concept and idea which is formed by scholars such as Foucault, Hegel, Hobbes and Mill's work on orientalism and "Othering"(Edgar and Sedgwick 2008)). The challenge then becomes how to analyze without using unnecessary categorizations, and if necessary, being aware of the limitations and biases that this might create in terms of the research.

As argued by Jørgensen,

Categories are social constructs which define who and what is included and excluded. They can serve as means for securing privileges and dominance of the powerful over the less powerful. At the same time they reveal inequalities and social problems and

produce empirical knowledge on social divisions and help to deconstruct established hierarchies by de-naturalizing what we take for granted. (Jørgensen, 2012, p. 80)

A feminist awareness of categorizations and the aim of addressing all power hierarchies are linked to the empirical and analytical approach to gender which was discussed briefly in the introduction. Political scientist V. Spike Peterson argues that the concepts of feminization and masculinization are integral for understanding the categorization that is consciously or unconsciously taking place in regards to sex and gender (Peterson 2010). It is important when discussing and analyzing gendered issues to be aware of the concepts of feminization and masculinization and this awareness needs to extend to the understanding of how these categorizations are produced, reproduced, and utilized in research.

Translating the above considerations into the framework of this thesis, means that I as a researcher need to be aware of the terms and concepts I apply. Thus, in regards to the terms used to refer to the women conducting violent actions in this project, “*Women who wield political violence (WWPV)*” and “*Women in State Militaries (WSM)*” will be applied. I agree with David Whittaker that

[...] There are few neutral terms in politics, because political language affects the perceptions of protagonists and audiences, and such effects acquires a greater urgency in the drama of terrorism. Similarly, the meanings of terms change to fit a changing context. Concepts follow politics. (Whittaker, 2003, p. 10)

In regards to the women representing the non-state actors, the term WWPV will be used, as I consider it less political compared to categorizations such as: *terrorist*, *insurgents*, *militants*, *rebels*, and *freedom fighters* which are terms frequently found in this literature and public discourses on this topic. There are, especially from IR and security perspectives, a set of reasons for labeling a particular group a terrorist organization or an individual as a terrorist. Firstly, by labeling a group or a person a terrorist, the individual or the group are immediately delegitimized, as their actions are perceived to be wrong, harmful, and unjustifiable. In terms of legal prosecution there is also a tactical measure in labeling the enemy a terrorist, as the Genève convention does not apply to terrorists, making the prosecution process more one-sided. (Whittaker, 2003). The body of literature concerning WSM is not contested to the same degree in regards to how one refers to women, and I will simply use the term *women in state militaries*. I find that WSM both holds more neutral connotations compared to female soldiers, and that it refers to all the positions that women fill in state militaries; including active combat, peacekeeping operations, nursing etc.

The choice of terms is also relevant for the comparison of WWPV and WSM as both categories then are able to expand to a number of different ways that women can participate in violent actions. This is useful as the scholars refer to different terms but also address the multiple roles that women fill in conflict and war. Since the scholars have different academic backgrounds, use different case studies and approaches, these terms encompass a large variation in the ways that women are seen as participating in political violence and state militaries.

### **2.3. A Gendered or a Feminist Perspective**

Related to the debate on conceptualizations is also the differentiation between a gendered perspective and a feminist perspective, and whether the latter is the premise for conducting the other. In this regard, it is relevant to reexamine the argument that gender should be understood both as an analytical but also as an empirical category. This distinction is important for understanding some of the complexities and misunderstandings that might exist in how a gender analysis is approached. A liberal or a realist may conduct gender analysis in their research, but one could argue that they often are only using gender as a variable; that is as an empirical category. Many feminists would argue that this approach is blind to the premise of a gender analysis, and that this will lead to a lack of understanding the actual power hierarchies which constitute gender discrimination and subordination; thereby missing an important part of the overall perspective. It is not simply enough to count the women, rather, one needs to examine the underlying gendered power structures and power hierarchies which are the basis for discrimination, subordination and differentiation among men and women. (Sjoberg & Sandra, 2010)

Cynthia Enloe touches upon the difference between a gender analysis and a feminist analysis and argues that the two are very much alike, but that there are differences in the two approaches. Enloe further hints to some of the political considerations that feminist scholars might have in terms of referring to their scholarly work as either taking a feminist, or a gender analysis. Enloe argues that,

Sometimes a lot of us describe our analytical exploratory approach as from a “gender perspective” because, we imagine, that sounds to many of our listeners and readers less frightening, less radical, less political than from a “feminist perspective.” After all, we want to be heard, we want to be taken seriously, so we don’t want our potential listeners and readers to run in the other direction (or to avoid our conference panels, or never assign our articles, or deem us unworthy for tenure, or). Substituting “gender” for “feminist” doesn’t seem cowardly; it just seems prudent. (Enloe, 2010, p. xi)

Enloe's quote addresses some of the complications that feminist scholars have faced in regards to getting their research taken seriously and adds another aspect to the debate about a gender or a feminist label, as it might also rest on pragmatic reasons why scholars refer to their work as taking a gender perspective. Nevertheless, the empirical and analytical debate is still relevant as that debate concerns the actual usage of the two in more direct terms.

### 3. Method

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The project is a comparative critical review of how the scholarship addresses and analyzes WWPV and WSM, and consists of two qualitative data sets, one of secondary sources (literature reviews) and a primary data set (expert interviews). Given the theoretical nature of the project, all sources, including the articles used in the literature review and the expert interviews, are of an academic nature. I chose merely to focus on academic texts and only to interview academics, as the project aims at analyzing how the scholarship is addressing WWPV and WSM, and how this affects the discussions and understandings of security in an IR context. I recognize that by not including non-academic texts, I was only able to analyze the type of knowledge that is produced within an academic context and thereby not address questions, notions, and concepts that Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), international organizations (IOs), such as the UN, and governments are engaged with. This approach obviously influences the type of knowledge framework I analyze, as it relies only on the knowledge production that is current within academia. I argue that a critical analysis of academic literature of this topic is important as the views, concepts, narratives and general knowledge that are produced within academia is part of shaping and influencing the work by non-academic organizations, governments and general discourses. For this reason, it is relevant to recognize the important role that scholars play in adding too and leading the discourse on any given topic and, in this particular case, on WWPV and WSM and the link to understanding security.

As explained in section 2. *Conceptual, Theoretical and Methodological Frameworks*, feminist research method and ethics are the basis for selecting, analyzing, and conducting the research for this project. A commitment to conducting feminist research entails an awareness of gender, race, ethnicity, and class and applying curiosity to questions of how these power structures influence the questions asked (Ackerly and True 2010). It is important to be aware of these perspectives, such as the gender of the researchers and their academic backgrounds. My research takes the point of departure that both the scholars' cultural backgrounds, and also their academic points of departure, may influence their research and the conclusions they draw. This might especially be the case between feminist and non-feminist scholars, as these scholars may have different paradigms in terms of knowledge production and research qualification.

### **3.1. Theoretical and Methodological Points of Departure**

The three waves of feminism and the feminist theories that derived from those periods were used in the analysis as to provide a historical understanding and context to the scholars' points of departure and the development in feminist literature and feminist IR studies. Whereas the first and second waves of feminism introduced some of the key concepts that are present in feminist thinking today, the third wave of feminism functioned as another critical tool in terms of addressing women in non-state and state militaries as one unified group. According to a number of post-colonial feminists, it is important that scholars are cautious when referring to women in a singular form, because it disregards other social factors, such as race and ethnicity, which influence women's lives. In terms of this project, the argument may relate to the fact that WWPV and WSM are part of different contexts both among state militaries, but also between different non-state groups. The post-colonial feminist perspective enabled a framework for incorporating and understanding that women might not always be one unified group, but that cultural, economic, social, racial, ethnic and political differences are as much present among women as between men and women.

Section 2. *Conceptual, Theoretical and Methodological Frameworks*, were combined as one section, and functioned both as my ontological, epistemological, and methodological framework, but also as direct concepts and ideas to be applied in the analysis. The entire content of this section was utilized as a critical tool for analysis. Especially the theory on conceptualization was beneficial in terms of analyzing how the scholars' presentation of WWPV and WSM shape the understanding of how we understand war, conflict, perpetrators, and ultimately, security. Section 4. on *Security* with the subsection on 4.2. *Masculinities and Femininities* provided a basis for discussing the narratives and concepts that the scholars' apply in their analysis and discussion on WWPV and WSM; functioning as an analytical tool for a critical review of the literature concerning this topic. Theories on conceptualization helped in terms of analyzing how narratives, concepts, categorizations and essentialized ideas influence knowledge production and our understanding of a certain phenomenon.

### **3.2. Sources used in the Literature Review**

The project makes use of two bodies of literature. One body is on WWPV and the second is on WSM. However, the two bodies of literature were analyzed as one combined critical literature review. This meant that in terms of the structure of the analysis, the literature on both WWPV and WSM was addressed according to a number of overall theoretically driven themes. This enabled a comparison of some general themes current within both bodies of literatures to enable an analysis of

similarities and/or differences in how the scholarship discuss and approach these women and how this affects our understanding of security in an IR context. A combination of the two bodies of literature provided the basis for a critical analytical review, thereby functioning as the object of analysis and enabling an expansion on the theoretical discussion of the topic.

The project includes three expert interviews with scholars working within the field of gender, security and IR. The interviews functioned as extra support of the literature review and added a more detailed and unique perspective to the analysis. The three scholars were asked to reflect on questions that I formulated to be of particular relevance to the project. For instance, I was able to have them reflect on the questions that related to their experiences with adding a feminist perspective to the field of security and IR.

### **3.2.1. WSM Sources**

The literature chosen for the review of the state of the art regarding WSM emphasizes the US military and the Israeli military as case studies, however, many of the articles address the topic from a more general perspective, including perspectives from a number of non-Western militaries as well. The increased focus by scholars on women in the US and Israeli militaries may be explained by the fact that these two countries are unique in regards to two perspectives: the US still has the largest military in the world (with the highest number of women in total numbers) and is a significant player in the global area in terms of military power, including military engagements across the world. The Israeli military is significant in the sense that conscription is mandatory for all citizens of Israel, which means that both men and women are required to enter the military as part of their civic duties. However, there are still restrictions, such as the job functions, time served, religious, and marital considerations, in the Israeli military. The emphasis on Western militaries may also be connected to the idea of Westphalia<sup>1</sup>, and that Western militaries therefore represent military institutions that have been present for a long period of time.

Despite the focus on the US and Israeli militaries within the literature review, the sources were not deliberately chosen based on specific criteria such as region, conflict/war, or the nationality of the authors. On the contrary, the articles used for the literature review reflect a variety of cross-national conflicts and militaries, since the purpose was to analyze the general themes that the scholars are

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<sup>1</sup> Westphalia or the Treaty of Westphalia refers to the peace treaty in 1648 of Münster and Osnabrück and the end of the Thirty Years War. The treaty of Westphalia and the Westphalian system is linked to the origins of the notion of sovereign states as part of the international order. Thus, the treaty of Westphalia has been an integral part of discussing the role of the state in international relations; including the debate on loss of state sovereignty as part of the emerging new actors in the global world order. (Croxtan, 1999) (Cheeseman, 2005) (Lui, 2008).



utilizing in their research. The selected articles were chosen because they provide important and relevant theoretical conceptualizations for understanding and analyzing general themes and expose potential gaps in the literature. This also means that I did not compare the different case studies as such, (Mathers 2013) rather, addressed the different theoretical frameworks that the scholars employ. The canon of literature, especially on state militaries, is extensive in terms of scope and duration and has shaped the literature produced today. Given the scope of the project it was necessary to make limit the quantity of the material used. Therefore, all articles used in the literature review were published after 2000 to ensure that the review covers the latest developments within this academic field, and includes 8 articles from 8 different scholar's work on the topic. The scholars were included based on those most often referenced and an attempt was made to include scholars from different disciplinary fields.

### **3.2.2. WWPV Sources**

The literature chosen for the review of the state of the art regarding WWPV was selected on the same premise as the sources on WSM; meaning that the focus was on finding material that reflects a number of different conflicts cross-nationally, and which have a particular relevance for discussing some of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that are produced and reproduced in the scholarly work. The articles focus on conflicts in Western, Southern and Eastern regions; including conflicts in: Sierra Leone, Eritrea, Northern Ireland, and Sri Lanka. The body of literature on WWPV was based on 12 articles from 10 scholars' work within the field and, like the literature on WSM, the material was published after 2000. The scholars are primarily feminists or scholars who take a gender perspective that challenges power structures and power hierarchies. In addition, it is important to note that all the scholars used in this part of the literature review are women. This created a certain gender bias in the sample, however, the selection of scholars was chosen based on the premise that these are some of the most prominent scholars conducting research within this field. The gendered imbalance may also be explained by the relatively higher number of women doing feminist work than men. This latter point is interesting in terms of looking at feminist literature from a historical perspective and recognizing the feminist movement as being part of the academic field of women's and gender studies. Seen from the perspective of the relatively short history of feminism, and the link to women's movement, the higher number of women conducting research within this field might not be too surprising. Nevertheless, it did create a certain bias that I reflected actively on in the analysis.

As argued previously, the military as an institution has been analyzed and addressed to a high degree because it is an important component in conventional IR questions. This also means that scholars with a

non-feminist background have been interested in analyzing and discussing the question and role of women in state militaries. Scholars who might be traditional realists or liberals have engaged in a conversation on women's presence in the military and conducted analyses which aim at revealing the questions related to women's presence in the military. Their viewpoints are also relevant for a discussion and analysis of this topic, as it adds an important point to the construction of knowledge that is produced by scholars researching on WSM and WWPV. These perspectives become of particular relevance when addressing the question of how to view and understand security and where, and in what settings, conventional militarized institutions differ from militant organizations. The interest from non-feminists scholars to engage in the conversation on WSM may be an explanation for a more even gender balance among the scholars in the articles used for this part. I reflect on this gender balance in more detail in the analysis, as it might be an indication of some of power structures and other gendered elements in the general difference between literature on state vs. non-state actors. The nationalities of the scholars are mainly from the Western Hemisphere. The scholars', at times conflicting approaches to discussing this topic is related to J. Ann Tickner's paper *You Just Don't Understand*, which challenges different paradigms that scholars might have for theorizing and analyzing a particular topic.

### **3.2.3. Expert Interviews**

The expert interviews constituted the second part of the empirical dataset. The expert interviews were conducted during a two week field trip to the United States in the beginning of April 2013. I was able to connect with the participants for the interviews through my person of contact, PhD. Sandra McEvoy, Assistant Director at the Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights at University of Massachusetts, Boston, USA. The scholars I interviewed are all academics who have been working on subject on gender, security, conflict and IR for about a decade, and are familiar with the literature and the different conceptual frameworks that shape this field. At the same time, they are scholars who have been trained in political science, but who take a feminist perspective to issues of gender, war, security and conflict.

The interviews were structured and Sandra McEvoy was provided with the questions beforehand for revision and to make it easier for her to connect with the scholars in her network that she found would be of most value to the topic. Structured interviews were chosen because it is an often used method when conducting expert interviews, as it allows for concrete answers to the questions asked. The purpose of the interviews was to acquire first-hand information and reflections from scholars who are doing research in this area, and have them reflect on the topic based on relevant questions.

The structured interviews allowed for a more consistent order of the questions, and I was able to ensure that all three participants were given the same questions and that they were responding to all questions. The questions were generally broad, which gave the interviewees an opportunity to reflect on a variety of levels in terms of addressing the question. The interviews provided unique perspectives to the project, as their reflections and answers illustrated their deep commitment to the field, but also their extensive knowledge of the issues related to women, gender, security, and IR.

Given the structured nature of the interviews, I did not ask follow-up questions, however, I did reframe a question if it was unclear to the participants what I meant. When using the interviews in the analysis, I refer to the specific time that this statement was given. This means that there will not be full transcripts of the interviews available; however, the audio files are recorded on a CD and found in Appendix (x). For readability, I have removed empty words from the quotes.

#### **3.2.4. Interview Questions**

1. What would you regard as the main changes in the literature on both women who wield political violence and women in state militaries, respectively?
2. In what direction do you think the scholarship and more popular understandings of women and conflict are headed at this moment in time?
3. One of the main differences between state militaries and militant organizations is the question of legitimacy. However, do you see other similarities or differences in the way women are represented in the scholarly research on women in state militaries compared to women in militant organizations? If so, in which ways and why?
4. In your opinion, what are the largest challenges in enhancing the link between gender and security, so that it becomes an inherent part of asking questions on gender, war, and security? Furthermore, how and which questions do you believe are important to ask?
5. Can you reflect on some of the challenges in bringing a feminist perspective to theorizing and understanding women who wield political violence and women in state militaries? For instance in terms of legitimacy compared to conventional IR theories and perspectives? And how can feminist scholars overcome these barriers?

### 3.2.5. Short Introduction of Interviewees

Name	Laura Sjoberg	Caron Gentry	Nicole Detraz
Nationality	American	American	American
Academic Background	PhD from University of Southern California School of IR (IR and Gender Studies)	Ph.D. from University of St. Andrews in political science	Political Science, primarily IR and environmental politics
Professional Occupation	Associate professor at University of Florida	Lecturer at University of St. Andrews	Assistant Professor at the Political Science Department at University of Memphis, Tennessee
Main Academic Research Areas	feminist theories of war, women's violence, currently transbodies and security	Political violence, feminist theory and gender studies as follows political philology	Connection between, gender, security and the environment
Years Working Within the Field	Since 2001	Since 1999	Since 2007

### 3.2.6. Application of the Expert Interviews in the Project

As illustrated by the interview questions presented above, the nature of the questions are very structured and cover different aspects and levels of analysis. These different levels of questions in terms of the scholars' reflections on the topic were chosen, as I aimed at applying and utilizing the answers of the questions to different aspects of the analysis. The first question was addressed as a basis for understanding the development of the field of especially WWPV to enable a better understanding of progression of the field, but also to lead into a more comprehensive discussion of security. The second question provided an additional framework for reflection in the conclusion, as the interviewees are themselves working within the field and are contributing with knowledge and reflections with respect to their own research. Questions three to five fostered extra perspectives and reflections to the two bodies of literature and enabled an analysis which is both critically reflective and dependent on existing literature within field, but also encountered some of the answers and considerations that these three prominent scholars within gender, security and IR added to the conversation.

## 4. Security

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In the following chapter, the different understandings and approaches to security will be discussed to enable a better insight to the many nuances that this concept holds and the various approaches to comprehending security. The chapter mainly focuses on security from an IR perspective and addresses some of the main differences between state security and human security, and further elaborate on the various actors involved in the question of security. This enabled a framework for analyzing the literature on WWPV and WSM to foster a critical discussion on how the scholarship addresses and analyzes this topic, and how it affects the academic and general understanding of security. Moreover, a section introducing the concepts of masculinities and femininities will be part of this chapter on security as these two concepts play a significant role in the scholars' analysis and debate on WWPV, WSM and security.

### 4.1. Understanding Security

As argued by a number of IR scholars, including Steve Smith in the edited book by Ken Booth *Critical Security Studies and World Politics*, the concept of security is highly contested and has a number of meanings depending of the lens of analysis. The debate of the concept has increased since the end of the Cold War as new forms of security have been addressed and more disciplines, including feminists, have engaged in the conversation. This also means that other terms such as “[...] *the state, community, emancipation, as well as the relationship, such as those between the individual and their society and between economics and politics, [have become] subject to contestation.*” (Smith, 2005, p. 55). Some scholars argue that the term has come to incorporate such a variety of things, that is has become too broad and thereby lost the traditional meaning. On the other hand, others argue that security necessarily needs to adapt to a new world where the structure of the international order is changing and new wars, emerging non-state actors, and communities challenge us and demand us to rethink the question of security (Smith, 2005). For the purpose of this project, I have found it relevant to briefly outline two of the main concepts used within security studies: that of *state security*; representing the traditional system, and the concept of *human security*, which involves a newer and broader definition of the concept. Furthermore, an engagement with a feminist perspective to security will be addressed, including the role of masculinities and femininities in questions of war, conflict, and security.

#### 4.1.1. State Security

States and their military forces are the products of the Westphalian age. Yet in the view of many commentators that age has ended and we are entering a new era in international politics. Just what the post-Westphalian world will end up looking like remains a matter of considerable contention. (Cheeseman, 2005, p. 76)

One might argue that it is impossible to discuss state militaries, at least in a Western context, without recognizing Westphalia. Not simply the treaty from 1648, but more importantly, the conceptual framework that this treaty represents (that is the state centric world order with a focus on state sovereignty), and how it has influenced state militaries and how it has been part of shaping the militaries' identities and the connection to the state. As stated by Robyn Lui,

The fundamental social norm of international relations is still state sovereignty, which conveys a number of other norms such as sovereign equality, territorial integrity of states, non-intervention in international affairs of states. The society of sovereign states is the cornerstone of international order. This society, with its rule of engagement, principles of legitimacy, and diplomatic machinery preserves the liberty of autonomy of states. States recognise this most basic rule of the Westphalian system. (Lui, 2008, p. 152)

Graeme Cheeseman's quote captures some of the core questions in regards to how we understand security today, and what the challenges, conditions, and prerequisites are for how we conceptualize and analyze the current security framework. The debates circle around what the further development of security in the post-Westphalian age will look like. Some argue that we will see a return to a world that is similar to the one before the treaty of Westphalia; often referred to as being chaotic and anarchistic (Cheeseman, 2005). Others argue for a continuum of a state-centric order based on a rational liberal and realist international order, where states still remain the key actors. Thirdly, some argue that the time of a solely state-centric order has passed, and a new time of international order will emerge with either a complete decomposition of states or a complimentary system of a global political economy with civil society; meaning "[...] *a world that has porous or no border, and is increasingly dominated by a range of nonstate entities, transactions, structures, and norms.*" (Cheeseman, 2005, p. 76). Whether the first, second, the third option or a forth structure will occur, we will most likely see a shift in how we understand security, one the grounds that new actors, definitions and challenges to security have emerged. Consequently, the question of who are the protectors and who are the protected will need to be redefined. It requires a rethinking of the role of state militaries and a question of whether their defining role in terms of being security providers will change. Hence, the traditional link between security and state could be changing and

questions on how states interact, how wars are fought, who are allies and who are enemies are all questions that are part of shaping, but perhaps also transforming, power relations between states and emerging new actors.

#### **4.1.2. Human Security**

In the discussion on security and the development of the field, an important concept to take into account is *human security*. The concept took its starting point with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in 1994, where the goal was to rethink the concept of security. Given the post-Cold War area, there was a need to think about security in alternative ways which were not simply determined by traditional state-security measures. The UNDP argued that there should be a shift from nuclear security to human security which would encompass:

[...] a universal concern, relevant to people everywhere because the threats are common to all; its components are interdependent since the threats to human security do not stay within national borders; it is easier to achieve through early rather than later intervention; and it is people-centered, in that it is concerned with how people “live and breathe” in society (Smith, 2005, pp. 52-53).

Despite the UNDPs initial definition of human security, the concept has been discussed by various actors, including scholars, practitioners, governments, states, and NGOs. A consistent theme has been the various ways in which the concept has been utilized and understood. Even the UNDP has added to the meaning of the concept throughout time. This has resulted in a lack of agreement on what the concept means and more importantly, some would argue, how it can be operationalized. (Smith, 2005)

#### **4.1.3. A Feminist Perspective on Security**

As explained previously, more scholars have engaged in the conversation on security including feminist IR scholars. Tickner and Enloe have been active in adding a feminist perspective to the discussion on security in an IR context. Their ideas and conceptualizations on gender and security have shaped and continue to influence the feminist literature within this field. Enloe argues for a need to analyze and discuss whose security is salient and whose security we try to disregard, and in connection to this be critical towards and acknowledge the power hierarchies that are at play in encouraging some people’s security and not others. (Enloe, 2010, p. xii)

One of the frontiers in Tickner and Enloe’s work is the constant recognition that IR is dominated by men. For this reason, Enloe’s famous quote, “*where are the women?*” has continued to be asked by

scholars engaged with work on gender and IR. Feminist scholars share many of the same ideas and understandings of security with the school of critical security studies. Critical security studies argues for a need to change the paradigms for how we understand security and recognize that the traditional rationalist framework built around rational actors in a state-centric world lacks perspectives and answers to comprehending the new world and the security threats it holds. They argue that the identities of the actors are important to understand and analyze from the premise that these identities are produced and reproduced in contexts of war and conflict and therefore are crucial for understanding security. Feminist theorists argue along the same lines, as they reason that underlying socially constructed gendered power relations exists, and that we need to examine and analyze these in order to understand war, conflict, and security (Tickner, 2004). Many feminist scholars share the idea behind human security; namely, that the concept of security needs to be broadened so that it is able to address the many different security threats that people face in their everyday lives; security threats which are not simply traditional state-centric. Especially in regards to women's security, the question of war-rape and gender-based violence has been of high priority. UNSCR 1325 is one of the initiatives that has been pushed forward by feminist scholars and others in an attempt to stress the importance of incorporating women in the discussion on security, and make use of their experiences in the active work on war and conflict resolution. (Tickner, 2004)

Even though the resolution has been criticized, even among feminists, the resolution is one of the first initiatives on a UN level to actively incorporate women's perspectives on security and conflict related issues and acknowledge that their contributions are of high importance. Nevertheless, gendered imbalances in IR continue and women (and girls) are still at high risk of experiencing gender-based violence, and are by far the largest number of civilian casualties in war (United Nations, 2002). The gendered stereotypes, which feminist scholars argue influence the power dynamics of IR, are still prevalent. In regards to the question of WSM and WWPV, there generally has been a reluctance to incorporate and acknowledge women as violent agents due to traditional stereotypes of masculinities and femininities and their link to sexbodies. This has been the case both in state militaries and non-state groups. (Sjoberg & Sandra, 2010) The following section on masculinities and femininities will address some of these stereotypes and discuss the importance of understanding the link between socially constructed ideas of masculinities and femininities and their influence on security, war, and IR.



## 4.2. Masculinities and Femininities

The ideas of masculinities and femininities are closely linked to the questions of security and the debate of protectors and the victims. The gendered nature of IR and the characteristics we associate with masculinities and femininities are significant to men and women's roles in conflict and security issues. J. Ann Tickner argues that,

Masculinity and politics have a long and close association. Characteristics associated with "manliness", such as toughness, courage, power, independence, and even physical strength, have, throughout history, been those most valued in the conduct of politics, particularly international politics. Frequently, manliness has also been associated with violence and the use of force, a type of behavior, that, when conducted in the international arena, has been valorized and applauded in the name of defending one's country. (Tickner, 2011, p. 46)

The link between masculinity and politics that Tickner draws attention to in the above quote is an example of the embedded nature of how we understand masculinities and femininities and the associations we make with both concepts. It points to the powerful position that masculinity has in the world of politics, security and war, and more importantly that the values we associate with masculinity (and some men by extension) are values that are considered important, legitimate and the right ones in connection to war, security and politics. These associations are challenged when discussing women's roles in violent actions and military forces because women, by means of their sex, often are associated with the feminine, which does not hold connotations of being strong, legitimate and powerful (Tickner, 2004).

Another important point is the use of masculinities and femininities in the pluralist form. This is perhaps most often a consideration that feminist scholars have; however, it serves a particular purpose. It refers to the idea that masculinities and femininities, in the capacity of social constructs, not simply mean one thing; but rather there are many forms of masculinity and femininity. Therefore, we cannot simply refer to them in the singular, as the many nuances these terms include will be left out. The pluralist form is important in the argument that femininities and masculinities are associated with certain characteristics, and that both men and women hold masculine and feminine traits. The argument that many feminist scholars make, illustrated in the quote by Tickner, is that masculine characteristics often are perceived as more positive, important and legitimate in connection to politics and security than characteristics linked with the feminine. The problem does, however, not necessarily become that certain characteristics are associated with either femininities or masculinities, but that we often link these to sexbodies, which then creates a power imbalance

between men and women. A consequence of this may be that people are placed in a certain group on the basis of their sex, as socially constructed gender norms dictate that these are the categories that we belong in. (Sjoberg & Sandra, 2010)

#### **4.2.1. Masculinization and Feminization**

In section 2. *Conceptual, Theoretical and Methodological Considerations*, Petersen's argument of understanding gender both as an empirical, but also as an analytical tool was introduced. Petersen further links this argument to the concepts of masculinities and femininities and contends that the analytical gender approach with a focus on the roles of masculinities and femininities is valuable in any type of analysis and theorizing. Petersen argues that feminist work reveals a continuing and historical, "*normalization*" of gender as a systemic code" (Peterson 2010, 18) which favors qualities that are categorized as masculine often described as agency, control, objectivity, reason etc. (Peterson, 2010, p. 18). Petersen argues that this is always done at the expense of what is considered feminine, because the two concepts are inseparable. Thus, by valuing what is masculine, characteristics that are considered feminine, such as, emotion, passivity, subjectivity, etc. are devalued (Peterson, 2010, p. 18); illustrating the interdependence between the concepts of masculinities and femininities. Petersen states that this particular point of view is essential and provides for a significant analytical framework. It furthermore leads to the understanding that gender is not primarily about women, but rather gender is a framework for understanding masculinities and femininities. Petersen argues that this recognition is part of comprehending that gender is systemic in the sense that,

[...] manifestations of gender are less individual "choices" than effects of institutionalized codes, norms and rules. [...] The claim is rather that gender – with its lauded masculinity and denigrated femininity – pervades language and culture and devalorizes *all* feminized statuses. The more an individual or a social category is feminized, the more likely (not invariable) that its devaluation is assumed, or presumed to be "explained". In short, diverse hierarchies are linked and ideologically "naturalized" by feminizing those who are subordinated. (Peterson, 2010, pp. 18-19)

The feminization that Petersen addresses is often referred to in feminist literature as a way of delegitimizing an actor, which, as argued by Petersen, could be an individual but also any social category or a state. The use of masculinization and feminization as tactical measures is interesting in regards to looking at WSM and WWPV as the practice of feminization and masculinization is often referred to in connection with women's engagement in war, IR, conflict and security.

#### 4.2.2. Hegemonic Masculinity and Militarized Masculinity

Peterson's arguments on masculinization and feminization are linked to the debate on militarization. An often asked question is whether militarized masculinity is a foundation for the continuation of the military. In order to address the question of militarized masculinity, the concept of hegemonic masculinity is essential to point to. Within the past two decades, an increased focus on men's studies (masculinity) has emerged among feminist scholars, especially R. W. Connell's work on hegemonic masculinity. The concept of hegemonic masculinity is likewise contested and has faced criticism from a number of forums; including practitioners and scholars. Even Connell and James W. Messerschmidt in their article from 2005 *Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept* argue for a renewed approach to the concept. Nonetheless, the concept is still often used in referring to forms of masculinity. The following quote refers to the general historical understanding of the term,

Hegemonic masculinity was distinguished from other masculinities, especially subordinated masculinities. Hegemonic masculinity was not assumed to be normal in the statistical sense; only a minority of men might enact it. But it was certainly normative. It embodied the currently most honored way of being a man, it required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men. Men who received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as showing a complicit masculinity. It was in relation to this group, and to compliance among heterosexual women, that the concept of hegemony was most powerful. Hegemony did not mean violence, although it could be supported by force; it meant ascendancy achieved through culture, institutions, and persuasion. (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832)

The main argument on hegemonic masculinity is that this type of masculinity is the ultimate form of masculinity, and the one that all men should strive to obtain (but very few are able to). It has been closely linked to militarized masculinity, as this type of masculinity is also thought to be an ultimate male form of masculinity. The concept of militarized masculinity has been addressed by a number of scholars, and is part of a general debate on militarization. Enloe, in particular, has contributed to the idea of militarization, not only of masculinity, but also of society, cultures, institutions, even food products (Enloe, 2000). Enloe argues that militarization is happening on multiple levels and has become an integral part of many different aspects of society; not simply the military. Enloe links this to the constant need to legitimize the military. Enloe illustrates the militarization of everyday life by pointing to how the food company Heniz made use Star Wars satellite shaped noodles in

their can of soups instead of the regular alphabet shaped noodles. (Enloe, 2000, p. 1). Enloe argues that this is a small example how militarization is happening on all levels of society, transcending the line of the military institution itself and into the everyday lives of citizens.

As Enloe, Tickner, and Petersen point to, the role of masculinities and femininities are crucial for understanding conflict, war and security. The embedded notions that these concepts cover are part of understanding the power hierarchies that influence world politics and security. A feminist approach to security studies with a gendered analytical analysis provides a tool for understanding and theorizing about security in a broader more nuanced manner than conventional IR perspectives. On the other hand, more conventional IR scholars might argue that states are still dominant players in the international security area today, and, as Steve Smith argues, we are still not sure in which direction the new world order will turn.

## 5. Critical Review and Analysis

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The following section will include a critical review and analysis of the two bodies of literature on WWPV and WSM. The literature review and combined analysis will be based on the work of prominent scholars conducting research within the field of WWPV and WSM, and will contribute to an understanding of the scholarly work produced on this particular topic. As addressed in section 3. *Method*, the two bodies of literature are approached in one combined critical literature review and analysis to enable a discussion and critical reflections on the differences and similarities that these two bodies of literature hold. This furthers a discussion and analysis of the implications for understanding security. This approach was chosen, as it provided a coherent and cohesive approach to the literature, where I was able to reflect on the literature jointly while I introduced the different perspectives. This means that theoretically selected themes commonly addressed in both literatures provide the structure of the analysis. As explained in section 3. *Method*, the articles were intended to provide a general overview of the literature on WSM and WWPV. However, Western militaries have been studied to a higher degree than non-western militaries, which means that there is an overrepresentation of scholars conducting research on Western militaries. This overrepresentation is also to some degree reflected in the articles used for this literature review. Articles and reflections on non-western militaries, such as North Korea and South Africa will be included as well. The literature on WWPV mainly focus on cases studies from conflicts in Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Sierra Leone, Eritrea, Southern Sudan, and the FARC in Latin America. This combined fosters a comprehensive and inclusive critical analysis of literature from a range of interdisciplinary researchers.

The analysis firstly presents a brief state of the art introduction to both WSM and WWPV before moving on to the two overall themes running through the analysis, which are *Femininities* and *Masculinities*, with appertaining subthemes. These two overall themes were used to analyze the literature on the basis of subthemes presented at the beginning of both the chapter on *Femininities* and *Masculinities*. Following is a chapter on the concept of “Othering”, which is often found in both bodies of literature, but also a concept that transcends both *Femininities* and *Masculinities*. The subchapter of “Othering” functions both as an analytical theme, but also as a link between *Femininities* and *Masculinities*. Lastly, I discuss the literature on WWPV and WSM from the perspective of different paradigms among the scholars and how this is part of shaping the literature.

This leads to an analytical and reflective conclusion on the implications of understanding security. Furthermore, the arguments and reflections from the expert interviews with political scientists Laura Sjoberg, Caron Gentry, and Nicole Detraz were included to add their detailed and informative reflections on the topic to my own analytic conclusions.

One of the goals in choosing to construct the analysis in this manner and analyze, combine and compare these two bodies of literature jointly were to detect how the different scholarly approaches to women wielding violence affect our understanding of security and how a unified way of looking at this might create a new framework to explore and analyze women's presence in violent actions. Ultimately, the purpose is to be critical towards how the literature is part of shaping particular perspective and narratives, which are then being produced and reproduced.

### **5.1. State of the Art – State Militaries**

The literature on state militaries has long history and is a more developed field than literature on non-state militaries. This is connected to the early focus on the role of the state and the military, symbolized by the treaty of Westphalia; recognizing the important role that the state has played in international politics and security issues. As Max Weber stated, the state can be defined by its monopoly to legitimately carry out violence within a given territory and that the military operationalizes this legitimate use of force (Weber in Sasson-Levy 2003). Given the historical background of the state and military's presence as a central part of studying IR, the scholarship has been able to reflect on state militaries and their role and function in society. As the military is the institution that is linked closest to the state in terms of ideologies and policies, conventional IR scholars within the discipline have engaged in the conversation on this topic; including the role of women in the military. A number of the debates on WSM center on the roles that women can fulfill in the military and the legitimacy of their presence in the military in general. Especially the question of women in combat has been subjected to a high degree of analysis and debate both in the general discourse, and within the literature, where scholars from different backgrounds disagree on the principles for why women should or should not be part of combat (some question women's roles in the military entirely).

The field of WSM has naturally progressed since the early work on WSM was introduced and new ideas and questions are being asked and analyzed today. This has happened in part because the military (in particular Western militaries) has changed and developed. This should be seen both in terms of how the military operationalizes (for instance the weapons and machinery being used), the

way wars are being fought, the increased role of peacekeeping operations, and the formal initiatives of including women in more functions in the military (including combat in some countries). These changes and the effects this has on the military as an institution, particularly the role of women in the military, still are debated heavily among scholars. Moreover, essentialized ideas of masculinities and femininities are still part of shaping the literature and intertwined with the questions being asked and the agendas put forward by scholars. The field of WSM is particularly diverse in terms of the scholars who engage in this conversation, as the topic is essential to many aspects of IR. As addressed in section 2 *Conceptual, Theoretical and Methodological Framework*, feminist scholars started to engage in this conversation in the 1980s and challenged the lack of focus on gender, power, and patriarchy in the existing literature. Conventional IR scholars have countered feminist scholars' arguments, stating that their analyses are lacking clear evidence and argumentation and pointing to the many different approaches to feminism and the complications this has for providing a coherent and valid point of analysis. Military traditionalist and Israeli Historian, Martin van Creveld (2000) is one of the established scholars who argue that the "victory" of women in the military is an illusion, and that their presence in the military is neither empowering for women, or the military. Van Creveld criticizes feminist scholars for blindly encouraging women's presence in the military without considering the consequence this has for the institution, or for women. Feminists engaging in this conversation argue that the military as an institution needs to be altered to enable a move away from the gendered power hierarchies that persist within the military; which are part of maintaining women's subordination. These conflicting viewpoints and approaches to women's presence in state militaries are discussed and analyzed more critically in connection to the previously mentioned themes.

## **5.2. State of the Art – Non-State Militant Groups**

Generally, the research within the field of WWPV has been, and still is to some degree, centered on ideas of victims and perpetrators of war, and how scholars have made sense of women's participation in political violence based on gendered stereotypes. Some of the early work relating to this topic is shaped by the notion that women are the victims of war and men are its perpetrators. This stereotype is maintained through the notion that women are inherently more peaceful than men, who are naturally more violent. Social anthropologists Caroline O.N. Moser and Fiona C. Clark (2001) address the question of women as victims, agents, and perpetrators from a variety of disciplinary perspectives, and argue that a universalistic idea of women as agentless victims and men as perpetrators is not only dangerously simplistic but treats both men and women as objects

rather than individual subjects with their own agency. The authors argue that both men and women's experiences are not a result of just one discourse but many, and that these are both verbal and non-verbal; meaning that in order to analyze men and women's experiences, researches need to address conversations taking place, but also the construction of interactions including body language, and ask Cynthia's question "*where are the women?*". Moser and Clark's work provides foundation for understanding many of the gendered aspects and power dynamics at play in conflicts and political violence. In addition, the field of WWPV is dominated by feminist scholars like Moser and Clark. The following section will introduce the narratives and concepts that the scholars use which fall under the category of femininities.

### **5.3. Femininities**

As argued in section 4.2. *Masculinities* and *Femininities*, war, security, and conflict are highly gendered terms, which, according to feminist scholars, need to be questioned, analyzed and critically examined through a gender analysis. One of the arguments which are commonly presented is the notion that some qualities and characteristics are associated with femininities and others are associated with masculinities, but also that the characteristic that we connect with masculinities are often considered more legitimate, important and the correct ones when discussing war, security, and conflict. As discussed in section 4.2 *Masculinities* and *Femininities*, these two concepts are interconnected and interdependent. This is also the case when discussing war, security and international politics. For this reason, both the literature on WWPV and WSM address the influence of masculinities and femininities and articulating concepts and integral ideas about men and women are often referred to and examined. This section on femininities addresses a number of these and analyzes and discusses the utilization of these by the scholars conducting research within both WWPV and WSM. The themes addressed are:

- *The narrative of Motherhood*
- *The narrative of the Monster*
- *The narrative of the Whore*
- *The notion of victims and perpetrators of war (the protected versus the protector)*
- *The notion of Empowerment*

#### **5.3.1. The Narrative of Motherhood**

The narrative of *Motherhood* is often applied in analyses by both scholars within the literature of WWPV and WSM. This general narrative is frequently associated with the "*natural*" role of women in society and addressed in regards to the responsibility that women have towards society as



cultural producers. It is also linked to the notion of the ultimate feminine role and is an example of a dominant stereotype of women. Laura Sjoberg and Caron Gentry (2007) have been significant contributors to understanding and theorizing on WWPV, and in this connection the roles that women hold in questions of war, international politics and security issues. Their work on the concepts and narratives of *Mother*, *Monster*, *Whore* are utilized by a large number of (feminist) scholars within the field of WWPV. Sjoberg and Gentry (2007) argue that,

There has been extensive engagement in feminism and women's studies with the question of the relationship between motherhood, politics and political struggle. In nationalistic discourse, women tend to be described in the private sphere and wrapped up in domestic duties therein. Women in the private sphere are protected by men 'out there' while they are tied to the idea of the 'motherland' and the protection of that ideal. The essentialist ideal-type of the peaceful mother ties into the motherhood narrative (Sjoberg & Gentry, 2007, p. 36).

As the quote illustrates, the motherhood narrative is linked to the notion of peaceful women, of individuals who need protection by men, which is then transferred into the idea of the "motherland" that needs protection by its son. Sjoberg and Gentry's analysis of the motherhood narrative is essential because it addresses the contradiction that lies within the notion of motherhood. One of Sjoberg and Gentry's main points is that the motherhood narrative is linked to the idea of peaceful women; however, it is also the only narrative, they claim, where women are able to carry out violent actions without interfering with gender norms. Violent actions committed by a mother whose sons participate in war will not be regarded as abnormal, but as a sign of devotion to her sons and country. Motherhood is considered the most essential role that women can perform, as it does not challenge traditional stereotypes when women participate in the conflict by "producing" sons and encouraging them to take up arms and fight. It might even be seen as an obligation that women (mother) have to fulfill. In connection to Sjoberg and Gentry's link between motherland and motherhood it is important to recognize that not all countries refer to their country/nation as motherland. For instance Denmark and Germany use the word fatherland (Fædreland & Vaterland). Nonetheless, the feminine connotations are found in the word mother tongue (modersmål & Mutter Sprache). The connection to motherland that Sjoberg and Gentry point to is, however, valid in a number of countries, especially the Anglo-Saxon.

As argued, most of the (feminist) scholars analyzing women's participation in violence apply the motherhood narrative, and often with the same understanding, as the one presented by Sjoberg and Gentry (2007). Political scientist Swati Parashar (2012) applies the theory of the motherhood

narrative to a Kashmir context in the same kind of form as Sjoberg and Gentry. Parashar states that the narrative of motherhood was extremely important for the armed opposition groups, especially Lashkar-e-Toiba, in justifying women's participation in the conflict and in "[...] *appealing to the sacrifices of mothers in the cause of jihad*" (Parashar, 2012, p. 171). As the quote indicates, Parashar is pointing to the strong link that the Lashkar-e-Toiba makes between mothers, the country, and the cause; linking motherhood to forms of political violence. The notions of motherhood that Sjoberg and Gentry put forward in their book in 2007 is also applied by political scientist Linda Åhäll (2012), and political scientist Luisa Maria Dietrich (2012).

Åhäll uses the myth of motherhood from the perspective that this notion enables an understanding of the gendered aspects of women's agency in political violence. The myth of motherhood is related to nationalist discourses on how women contribute to war and the narrative written of women as heroines, and - in some cases - the state as a feminine body in need of male protection. The children that women give birth to become visual symbols of their sacrifice, and also their weapon in the conflict, as they are "producing" the soldiers that are fighting. Due to the myth of motherhood, ideas of what is considered feminine becomes associated with female bodies and functions as a criterion for what is natural and unnatural for a women/mother. Åhäll stresses that the myth of motherhood is not only determining for women who are in fact mothers, but for all women. This means that the idea of motherhood (giving birth) is so essential to being a woman that the female body becomes associated with *giving* life and not *taking* life. Thus, when women engage in violent actions and *take* life, they violate their feminine role and what is associated with being a woman.

Dietrich (2012), like Parashar (2012), stresses the use of the motherhood narrative as a way to defend women's traditional roles in the conflict. Dietrich's research in Latin American, in particular with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), confirms the role and the use of the motherhood narrative. Dietrich (2012) argues that the motherhood myth is used as a strategic measure by the organization to recruit women to be part of the group. This practice can be linked to the notion of motherhood and motherland and how these two are often interconnected. The argument put forward is that being a mother is an inherent aspect of being a woman in Latin America, and the armed organizations are able to recruit women on the premise that women are self-sacrificing and that their contribution will make a better world for future generations.

The motherhood narrative is also found in the literature on WSM. The viewpoint is slightly different and questioned in terms of the obligation to the state. Political scientist Sheila Jeffreys

(2007) takes a critical perspective towards some feminist ideas about the equality aspect of incorporating and including women in the military, and claim that these women are subjected to a double jeopardy. Jeffreys argues that there are multiple complications in allowing women to serve in the military and questions whether there are any benefits of allowing women in the military, both on the women's account, but also for the institution. Jeffreys uses the narrative of motherhood and stresses that this should also be seen in connection to the limitations and complications that women's presence in the military construct, in particular in regards to women in combat roles. Jeffreys argues that it might not be in women's interest to be part of the military on the basis of their obligation as mothers. Jeffreys claims that,

Another reason why this right to combat may not advantage women is the ability to bear children. Though women who are pregnant would not be likely to be sent into the frontline, 'women who have quite recently given birth can be sent into a battle zone, this is only possible at a cost to both mother and baby' [...] (Jeffreys, 2007, p. 17).

Sociologist Doo-Seung Hong (2001), Historian Gerand J. DeGroot (2001), and political scientist, Jennifer G. Mathers (2013) all refer to the motherhood narrative as an integral part of understanding and analyzing the gendered mechanisms involved with women's presence in the military. DeGroot points to the link between motherhood and the state, as he argues that, "*Motherhood was presented as a more important and natural service to the state*" (DeGroot, 2001, p. 27). Mathers (2013) applies the motherhood narrative in her analysis of women in state militaries, as she argues that there are a number of categories for women in the military, including supportive roles such as the mother or the wife. Mathers states that the category of the *wife*, the *mother*, the *sister* and the *girlfriend* are all categories that women need to fill in order for the military to function well.

Another way that the wives, mothers, sisters, and girlfriends of soldiers are drawn into shoring up state militaries can be seen when a male soldier is physically or emotionally injured in the performance of his duties. His closest female relatives are expected to play a key role in this recovery and in his care through long-term disabilities. (Mathers, 2013, p. 130).

As the quotes by Jeffrey's (2007) and Mathers (2013) indicate, the literature on WSM is as much engaged with the narrative of motherhood as non-state military scholars; indicating that an emphasis on this particular stereotypical role of women is present in both bodies of literature. Another notion linked to the idea of motherhood and military service and the actions of political

violence is the obligation towards the children. Sociologist Doo-Seung Hong (2001) argues in connection to women in the South Korea military that,

The issues of marriage and childbirth for military women have been very controversial. In 1950, only single women aged 18-29 were eligible to volunteer as soldiers, but in 1959, eligibility was modified to allow married women with no children under seven years old to apply for the officer's training course (Hong, 2001, p. 126).

Hong (2001) states that the controversies with women in the South Korean military are still present and argues that the role of marriage and childbirth have been subject to discussion in allowing women to serve. Hong's work points to the idea of limiting women to serve due to their "obligation" as mothers or wives, but also indicating the essentialized ideas of mothers as peaceful women and protectors of femininities. Sociologist and anthropologist Orna Sasson-Levy's (2003) work on women in the Israeli military point to some of the same issues and limitations in women's service in the military. Sasson-Levy argues that even though Israel has mandatory conscription for both men and women as part of their civic duties, "[u]nlike men, women are easily exempt on the grounds of marriage, pregnancy, or religious beliefs. Thus, the law grants priority to the women's family roles over their obligations to the military service." (Sasson-Levy, 2003, p. 445).

The narrative of motherhood is dominant and continues to be addressed by scholars within both fields and connects to the general notion of women as life *givers* and not life *takes* and that this is their foremost obligation both to the state (or the non-state group) and also as the providers and maintainers of cultural legacy. Despite Sjoberg and Gentry's significant contribution to the motherhood narrative in 2007, and their influence on the work by a number of other scholars within WWPV, it is clear from the literature on WSM (with literature from past 2000) that the narrative has been present for a long time. Whereas the literature on WWPV has been influenced heavily by Sjoberg and Gentry's work and their approach to motherhood, WSM scholars have been engaged with the concept for a long time as well, and connect it to a state centric framework of mothers and their obligation to country and state. The continued return to the narrative of the "mother" in both bodies of literature indicates that it is influential as an analytical tool of analysis for both literatures. Thus, the concept is not formed by Sjoberg and Gentry, but reinforced by them as one of the three ways that women's presence in violence and international politics is explained.

### 5.3.2. The Monster Narrative

Another narrative used to explain and describe the actions of violent women is the narrative of the monster. Sjoberg and Gentry introduce this narrative in their work from 2007 and argue that the narrative has been used in historical and mythical descriptions for women as far back as the old Greek mythology. This narrative describes and explains women who transcend the gendered stereotypes, and thereby crossover what is expected of women in society. This means that the monster narrative is based on the implicit idea that women are peaceful and non-violent. Gentry and Sjoberg stress that the terms *deviant*, *abnormal*, and not “*real*” women are often used in communities to describe women who act in ways that challenge traditional gender roles. The main argument is that women who commit violence outside of the motherhood paradigm are not responsible as individuals because there is something wrong with their womanhood or they suffer from self-denial of womanhood. This means that women who fall under the monster narrative cannot claim agency for their violent actions because they are insane and evil. As argued by Sjoberg and Gentry,

Violent women defined by the monster narrative are not real women because they are described as both actually evil and psychologically broken, two facets which ideal-types of womanhood in gender norms excludes. Monstrous violent women are thus pathological, and therefore neither they nor their gender are responsible for their actions. (Sjoberg & Gentry, 2007, p. 41).

The monster narrative that Sjoberg and Gentry refer to in their work and which a number of the previously mentioned scholars (Åhäll 2012, & Dietraz 2012) within WWPV make use of, is not found in the WSM literature in the exact same form. Gerard J. DeGroot (2001) uses the category “freaks”; pointing to some of the same ideas about the narrative; that women who fight are not “real” according to traditional stereotypes of women. DeGroot links this to the relatively low number of women fighting in wars compared to men, and argues that even though historically women have participated in war, the circumstances have often been different from those of men.

[...] because these exceptions were rare, they could be dismissed as unrepresentative. They [women] did not threaten gender distinctions which stemmed from combat exclusion. Some of these women were fascinating, others admirable, but all were freaks. (DeGroot, 2001, p. 25).

In the WSM literature there is no reference to the monster narrative as addressed and utilized by Sjoberg and Gentry. DeGroot’s (2001) reference to “freaks” points to a similar notion of women who transcends the gender norms. Nonetheless, DeGroot uses the notion of “freaks” in a different

context, as he argues that there is a danger in highlighting mythical female fighters because it can result in women's abilities in the military being delegitimized. DeGroot stresses that some feminist historians have been eager to accentuate female mythical warriors as evidence that women have fought in wars and therefore, are capable defenders. DeGroot states that,

In other words, there is great danger in eulogizing mythical women, especially those who became men. The key to attacking the combat-based standard of social capital lies in disputing the system of measurement, not in placing disproportionate emphasis upon the odd exceptions which, by strange circumstance, have managed to satisfy it. (DeGroot, 2001, p. 26).

Even though DeGroot uses the idea behind the monster narrative, the form in which Sjoberg and Gentry apply the term seems different. Sjoberg and Gentry's book was published six years after DeGroot's article, which could explain the differences. Even though Sjoberg and Gentry are mainly concerned with women committing political violence in non-state groups in their book on *Mother, Monster, Whore: Women's Violence in Global Politics* (2007) and their research in general, they do link their monster narrative to some of the stories about women in the United States military.

In sum, the narrative of the monster was not traceable in the WSM literature. Only DeGroot discusses a similar narrative, as he refers to some women as "*freaks*". Sjoberg and Gentry make the point that the monster narrative is part of the three narratives that are used to explain women in violence. However, it might be that Sjoberg and Gentry's choice of word for the narrative narrows the number of scholars utilizing it.

### **5.3.3. The Whore Narrative – the Sex Worker, Prostitute, Camp Follower, or Bush Wife**

The last of the three narratives that Sjoberg and Gentry introduce is the *whore* narrative. As mentioned in the previous section on the monster narrative, Sjoberg and Gentry (2007 & 2008) use their narratives on mother, monster, and whore on WWPV mainly. However, in regards to the narrative of the whore they use the example of the US military police officers Megan Ambuhl, Lynndie England, and Sabrina Harman and their implications in the prison sex-abuse scandal in Abu-Ghraib. Sjoberg and Gentry make the argument that,

The three women have been primarily portrayed as depraved and hedonistic. Scholarly journals have portrayed the women's violence as sadism, masochistic dominatrix games, bestiality, and nymphomania. Tales of the women's sexuality formed the core of discourses about their actions. [...] The whore narratives around these women emphasize the titillating aspect of the white women's power over their non-Western,

Arab male prisoners. The stories of these women describe them as white American whores who are constantly screwed by white men and screw Arab men, creating a chain of sexual power that feminizes Arab men's masculinity (Sjoberg & Gentry, 2008, p. 11).

Gentry and Sjoberg argue that most often WWPV are reduced to a narrative of the whore, and that in general, women's political participation is linked to sex. The authors argue that the narrative of the sexual deviant, the she devil, and the whore are symbols and ideas associated with women who engage in political violence. In this sense, the narratives come to represent what is wrong with the female sex. Sjoberg and Gentry argue that despite women's participation in violence in global politics, the recognition of their participation when acknowledged is still based on the ideas behind these narratives about women as monsters or whores, thus depriving women of agency.

Like Sjoberg and Gentry (2007 & 2008), Mathers (2013) points certain categories that women fulfill in the state military. In Mathers' analysis of WSM, she argues that women's supportive roles, such as wives and mothers, are crucial for the existence and function of the military (the mother and wife categories were addressed in the section on motherhood.) Mathers also argues that the function of the *sex-worker* is another important supportive role that women fulfill for the military. Mathers states that there are multiple ways to refer to women who fill the support role of the sex-worker. She argues that "*camp follower*" has been a common use of word for a prostitute in the literature, however, as referenced in Mathers (2013), military historian John Lynn (2008) argues that the role of a camp follower entails much more than having sexual relations with soldiers. The camp followers were women who followed the soldiers in war and made sure that the goods that they and the soldiers retrieved were turned into food, clothing or money. (John Lynn 2008 in Mathers 2013).

Because of this more extensive role of the camp follower, Mathers deliberately applies the term *sex worker*, as her aim is to make the point of the sexual relations between soldiers and sex-workers. Despite the difference in the categorization between the scholars (whore, prostitutes, sex workers, or camp followers), the basic function or role of the category of a female stereotype is identical. Mathers argues that feminist literature has paid close attention to the link between the military and prostitution and the gendered implications this holds and that this is important for understanding women's subordinate role in the military.

Sjoberg and Gentry (2007 & 2008) point to the underlying gendered understandings of masculinities and femininities in the sense that women's sex, when addressed in relation to security

and IR, is not considered a strength, but used to degrade their abilities. Sjoberg and Gentry's narrative of the whore is based on two different types of narratives; the erotomania and erotic dysfunctional. The general argument is that women's participation in political violence is linked to a dysfunctional sex pattern and the idea that "real" women are not sexual beings, but gentle mothers with discrete sexual desires and able to control their sex-drive. The erotic dysfunctional category is categorized by the woman's unwillingness to have sex with a man and inability to please him. This narrative of erotic dysfunctional woman is linked to women's inability to perform the role of a real woman; for instance, if she is unable to have children, unable to find a husband, or if she is gay. All of this, according to the narrative of both the erotomaniac and the erotic dysfunctional narrative, results in frustration that transcends to violence. Common for both narratives is that they fall under the category of "the whore". Sjoberg and Gentry argue that these narratives are part of undermining women and their agency in political violence.

As becomes clear from the analysis and discussion of the narratives of the *mother*, the *monster*, and the *whore*, Sjoberg and Gentry have contributed and shaped the direction of the field on especially WWPV in terms of analyzing women's position in war, security and IR by introducing categories to explain this. Their work is particularly interesting in that it addresses the main changes in the literature on WWPV and WSM. Particularly within the work of WWPV, Sjoberg and Gentry have contributed to a new mindset, which might be lacking in the state military literature. The expert interviews with Caron Gentry and Laura Sjoberg were interesting in asserting this development of the field. When asked about the main changes in the literature, Caron Gentry replied,

Main changes in women who wield political violence. Ton tremendous! Just that what existed on the women in political violence, let's say before 2007 was limited, and was very gendered, very biased, and I think fit a very particular agenda and a particular epistemological bias. I think things changed with, I mean it sounds so egotistical, but things changed with *Mother, Monster, Whores*. But also it was that Laura [Sjoberg] and I were working, but there were so many people working at the same time. Sandy [McEvoy] was working, Swati Parashar was working on it, Megan MacKenzie comes just a few years later, but that the field has been blown wide open. The other changes I would say, even within feminist literature, there had been a lot in the 80s and 90s about literally answering "*where are the women*" and here are "*where the women are*". [...] that volume that I mentioned in discussion really set out and spelled out "*where women were involved in political violence*", but it didn't really deeply engage with some of the bigger and broader narratives and the bigger epistemological biases that needed to be dealt with, and that came in the 2007. (Interview with Caron Gentry, 2013: 00:04:19-4)



Laura Sjoberg expressed some of the same considerations in terms of the development of the field and also argued that she and Caron Gentry's work had been significant in the sense that they were some of the first scholars to address women's presence in violence from a different perspective. Arguing that when they initiated their work the literature was biased in regards to gendered stereotypes used to explain women's roles in violence. Sjoberg stated that,

The work that I do in women in non-state organizations, I had for a while [worked] on women terrorists. Ten years ago we were thinking about that there was no one who wrote about it. And then we started to write about it more from a margin, from a theoretical perspective. That is some empirical evidence, but mostly what would it mean to think about these people, and then what would they mean for how you think about women, and how you think about conflict. And that was the first generation of work, and then following up on that, there is a lot of empirical work, people who went to the field and interviewed women who had been combatants in a lot of different conflicts and then what that brings back to the table [...] (Interview with Laura Sjoberg, 2013: 00:01:28)

Their reflections on their own work and the work that was being produced within WWPV indicate that significant changes were happening within the field around the time they introduced their book as more and more scholars (especially feminists) were starting to question the embedded ideas and notions used to explain women's violent actions. They both point to the fact that they have been mainly concerned with WWPV as part of non-state militant groups and therefore their research and knowledge on WSM is not as extensive. Even though the narratives that Sjoberg and Gentry present are reflected in other scholars work within WWPV, which indicates the applicability of the narratives in a more general and broader context, it is always important to be aware and critical towards narratives being produced. Jørgensen points to the dangers of using categorizations as we might risk enforcing a category of difference that is unbeneficial for the individuals we placed within it (Jørgensen, 2012), even when the purpose is to unravel and bring attention to the problems with this interpretation of women's roles in violence. It is noteworthy that the narrative of the mother is often referred to in WSM literature, but the narrative of the monster or the whore is less often used and described in different terms. This indicates the significant role that the narrative of motherhood has in understanding women's role in society in general. An understanding that is transcended to explaining women's presence in violence or their lack of participation in violence; building on essentialized ideas about peaceful women.

#### 5.3.4. Victim and Perpetrator Narrative

The victim perpetrator dichotomy is often found in the literature on WWPV as a particular binary for analysis between the different parties in a conflict, that being the perpetrators and the victims. Likewise, the victim narrative is present in the debate among state military scholars in discussions on the role of women and the notion of protectors of the state. This narrative is interesting as it centers on essentialized notions of women being beautiful souls that need protection by men and thereby not assumed to be perpetrators of violence. In many ways it is linked to the motherhood narrative, but given the dichotomy between victims and perpetrators it has an extra dimension, as it is also linked to the lack of agency that is often associated with victims. This can be seen in the phrase “*women and children first*”; infantilizing women and depriving them of agency. This narrative of victims and perpetrators also centers on the idea of who are the capable defenders of the state or a given society and embedded understandings of masculinities and femininities.

Social Anthropologist Chris Coulter (2008) is one of the scholars who challenges this binary of victims and perpetrators of war by stressing the importance of rendering some of the stereotypical ideas of women’s roles in war, which are often associated with being victims without agency and more peaceful than men. Coulter poses the following questions regarding victimhood,

That women who are raped and forced to kill are victims is obvious, but are they victims of an event, or has the event itself transformed them into the proverbial 'victim'? For whom are they victims? Do they see themselves as victims? Do their families see them as victims? And those humanitarian institutions that populate and to some extent dominate many war-torn societies, how do they view these women? (Coulter, 2008, p. 56).

Coulter addresses the victim/perpetrator paradigm, as she questions the notion that a fighter is a perpetrator and someone who has been raped is only a victim. Coulter states that it is difficult to make the argument that women are victims at all times, but claims that not *all* women are victims *all* the time, but that there are occasions in war and conflict when women are victims simply because they are women. Coulter argues that the notion of peaceful women and violent men is even present in societies where female fighters are known to have taken part in the conflict. Coulter states that it is not satisfactory to solely categorize women who have been victims of rape as victims because it disregards the role they have played in the war. Coulter argues that the word “victim” often is feminized and infantilized and also linked to lack of agency. Therefore, Coulter argues for caution when using the word “victim” to describe WWPV. Coulter states that in order to understand

women's experiences of war, we need to apprehend that the socially-constructed identity of victims limits this understanding.

Whereas Coulter is concerned with the implications of categorizing women as victims simply based on their sex, and also the lack of recognizing the multiple roles that women play in conflict and war in terms of both being victims and perpetrators, Swati Parashar (2012) argues that the discussion on agency and victimhood is damaging for women in the sense that it leaves women as objects, since discussions are made *on them and not by them*. Parashar argues that mainstream feminist IR still is reluctant to make the link between women's violence and wars, as WWPV contradicts the idea of women as peaceful, as well as a traditional idea that feminists should be concerned with peace and not war. Parashar's arguments should be seen in connection to the different positions towards feminist scholarship, as discussed in section 2. *Conceptual, Theoretical, and Methodological Frameworks*, the notion that feminists should be against violence and, thereby, also refusing to acknowledge the positive outcomes of women's participation in violence is linked to a particular feminist theoretical framework which argues that violence and power hierarchies are interconnected and male dominated and needs to be challenged and refused as a means of empowerment. It is this point that Parashar refers to when she argues that there seems to be a contradictory feeling that women's agency traditionally has been viewed as a way to combat violence, and, therefore, the idea that violence can be a path for women to be empowered is challenging for many feminist IR researchers. Parashar argues that this sentiment is part of maintaining the idea of women as more peaceful than men, and in this sense some of the scholarship is part of maintaining gendered stereotypes, which are not beneficial for women (nor men), and also prevents a better comprehension of the different aspects and outcomes of conflict, war, security.

The idea of the true protectors of society, and who are to perform the role of the victims is also present within WSM literature. Political scientist Tami Amanda Jacoby (2010) argues that even within the Israeli military, which has mandatory conscription for both men and women, cultural gender norms shape the idea of who are right protectors of society and, thereby, also an understanding of who are the natural victims and vulnerable individuals that need protection. Jacoby (2010) argues that,

The traditional rationale behind the prohibition of women in combat in Israel is related to the issue of female casualties. The most serious factor in this regard is the anticipated devastating effect on national morale should a women be captured by the

enemy. [...]The desire to protect women stands as a basic pillar of Jewish national self-determination in Israel. (Jacoby, 2010, p. 85).

Jacoby's quote illustrates the essentialized idea that women need protection even within a military that has mandatory conscription for both men and women. It illustrates that this duty to protect women is carried out by men on behalf of the society as a whole. Thus, the victim narrative that Coulter (2008) and Parashar (2012) address in their work, is also subject of analysis in Jacoby's work on women in the Israeli military forces.

Mathers (2013) is another scholar who addresses the binary between the protector and the victim in state militaries, as she argues that,

The use of images of women in military recruiting campaigns, which was widespread during the First World War, evoked the notion of men going to war to protect women. In Britain, a famous poster pictured a woman and children waving to a group of soldiers marching away under the words "Women of Britain Say Go!" While in the United States women were often depicted as victims in need of rescue from a brutal and inhuman enemy. (Mathers, 2013, pp. 127-128).

Mathers states that the narrative of women as victims and men as protectors is still present within the military and society today and that this is part of the challenge in incorporating women in the military. There seems to be a continuing emphasis on the dichotomy between victims and protectors of society even within the literature produced on state militaries today, despite women's increased role in the military. The scholars continued use of this binary may be explained by the fact that this notion emphasizes some of the traditional understandings of men and women as either victims or protectors and women's increased presence and roles in the military challenge this traditional understanding, which may create tensions that the scholars are interested in examining and explaining.

Coulter's use of the word "perpetrators" in connection to the dichotomy is relevant in regards to the differences in how the literature on WWPV and WSM address the idea of victims and protectors. Coulter is bringing attention to the violent nature that is often associated with a perpetrator; whereas the state military, by utilizing the dichotomy between protectors and victims, is focusing on the obligation to protect the victims. This difference between using the protector narrative or the perpetrator narrative may be linked to the question of legitimacy in the actions committed by non-state actors. The difference of attention could be explained by the notion that traditionally soldiers of a state army are not labeled perpetrators, because they are executing their violence on behalf of

the state, which traditionally has had the monopoly and legitimacy to carry out violence. Even though some might argue that soldiers are as much perpetrators as protectors, within the literature they are more likely to be defined as protectors of society since this is linked to the general understanding of state legitimacy of violence, as defined by Max Weber. Nonetheless, one might argue that the basic meaning of the narratives is the same, some are fighters and some are victims in war. The difference does, however, have an influence on the concept of security, since the basic notion of protectors can be linked to the understanding of who are capable defenders of the state. Thus, the WSM literature might be more engaged with this question, as the inclusion of women in the military is part of a discussion of the understanding of an institution, but also part of the discussion of protectors and capable defenders of the state.

### **5.3.5. Empowerment**

Parashar's argument that violence might be a path to empowerment is important for the discussion, because it raises the possibility of positive aspects that conflict might have for women, and how we address agency. In general, the past ten years of feminist research on women and political violence makes the argument that women are active participants in war and conflicts and that understanding their contributions are important for understanding conflicts. A number of feminist scholars, including political scientist Miranda Alison (2003 & 2004) makes the argument that violence may be a path of empowerment for women and that non-state organizations use the lure of women's empowerment as a means to encourage women to participate in combat. Alison gives the example of the Tamil Tigers of Eelam as an organization that deliberately used the promise of women's empowerment as a tactic to recruit women. Alison links gendered stereotypes within the groups to the question of emancipation and empowerment for WWPV. Alison argues that participation and a potential emancipation of female members of the organizations are more easily accepted by the male members of the organizations if women's emancipation is a symbol of the nation's emancipation. Alison also argues that there seems to be a connection between participation and political influence. Even though Alison stresses this connection, there is still a long way for gender equality and representation of women in the political spheres post-conflict.

Miranda Alison (2003) argument about the connection between empowerment and participation in political violence is linked to a similar idea presented by Luisa Maria Dietrich Ortega (2012), writing on women in Latin American non-state military groups. According to Ortega, there is a link between empowerment and participation in political violence, and an understanding that WWPV

are able to push traditional gendered stereotypes within the organizations. Ortega argues that women within armed groups are less discriminated against than in civil society, and that other social constructs such as class and ethnicity likewise are pushed in the background. These changes seem only to be temporary, as women are still not invited to post-conflict negotiations and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes. In relation to this and the gendered experiences of men in armed struggles, Ortega argues that, *“The idea that women break their identities while men strengthen theirs needs to be critically examined and nuanced in order to identify the patterns and mechanisms behind power arrangements.”* (Ortega, 2012, p. 91).

The connection between women’s empowerment (as a term and concept applied), can be a result of their service in state militaries is not to the same degree present in the WSM literature. There is a general acknowledgement that the number of women serving in state militaries has increased and the positions that they are able to serve in have expanded, for example with the ban of women in combat in the United States as in a number of other militaries. There is a tendency in the WSM literature to examine and analyze the challenges women’s presence in the military might have for the organization, but also on the efficiency of women’s presence in the military. At the same time, there is an emphasis of the question of equality and women’s right to fight as equal members of society, which could be linked to the empowerment framework that is especially dominant within feminist theory.

Sociologist Lindy Heinecken’s (2001) work on women in the South African National Defense Force (SANDF) touches on some of the issues regarding women’s equal right to fight, as she states that,

For women serving in the SANDF, the issue is no longer whether they may serve in combat, but whether they will do so in a ‘gender friendly environment’. Legally and politically the mechanisms are in place to ensure that policies are implemented, but true equality cannot be achieved where the support structures are absent and attitudes that render women inferior and subordinate remains unchanged. (Heinecken, 2001, p. 117).

Heinecken is concerned with the implementation of gender friendly policies and how the lack of implementation and change in the attitude towards WSM limit women’s abilities to become successfully integrated in the military institution. Heinecken argues that, *“Only time will tell whether the more ‘gendered’ approach to security has been too ambitious, or as ‘traditionalists’*

*claim at the expense of both the organizational and operational effectiveness.*” (Heinecken, 2001, p. 119).

Historian Martin van Creveld (2000) represents a traditionalist military perspective towards women’s increasing incorporation in the military and argues that,

In the hands of feminist, the thirty-year long influx of women into the militaries of advanced countries is usually presented as a ‘gain’ or ‘victory’ for the members of the female sex, one part of womankind’s unstoppable march from the dark recesses of subjection to the glories of freedom. In this paper I do not intend to address the question of whether women’s joining in what Lord Byron called ‘the brain splattering, windpipe-slashing, art’ does in fact constitute ‘progress’, rather, I shall argue that the process is part symptom, part cause, of the decline of the ‘advanced’ military. (van Creveld, 2000, p. 429).

Even though van Creveld states that he is uninterested in debating whether women’s increased role in the military should be considered progress, it is evident that the perspectives he represent, as a traditionalist military historian, are critical towards the more gendered approach to the military and security issues, which Heinecken argues for in the quote above. Van Creveld puts a large emphasis on the institution and the basic function of this, versus the individual emancipatory aspects that more ‘gender friendly’ policies and implementation might bring about.

Empowerment and emancipation are often used and refereed to concepts and ideas within feminist scholarship. As described in section 2. *Conceptual, Theoretical, and Methodological Frameworks*, feminist theories may take different points of departure, but a general concept has been the notion of improving women’s subordinate position within society in general, and for feminist IR scholars addressing and theorizing on this within the world of international politics, which includes questions of security. For this reason, emancipation and empowerment have been key theoretical and analytical tools utilized by feminist scholars to address the gendered hierarchies that they argue constitute a significant hindrance for gender equality. As the sample of literature concerning WWPV applied in this project is dominated by scholars who either take a gendered or feminist perspective, a larger emphasis on exposing the empowerment aspect in women’s agency might be explained on the basis of this.

In sum, the use of narratives linked to femininities is consistent throughout a number of the literature on both WSM and WWPV. Differences are also found within WSM and WWPV literature but the utilization of the same narratives, across academic paradigms indicate the gendered

stereotypical ideas and concepts used to analyze and discuss women's roles in questions of war and security. Especially in the literature on WSM, there was an emphasis on the roles and functions that women play in the military and how it might challenge the structure of the institution. Nonetheless, there was also a clear acknowledgement that women committing violence challenged gendered stereotypes and that it had an effect on both men and women. Van Creveld's approach to women in the military argues for the feminization of the military and a decline of the effectiveness of Western militaries. The concept of "Othering" was briefly introduced in regards to the connection between understanding both WWPV and WSM. The following section will address the concept in more details as it will function as a link between discussing the scholars' use of femininities and masculinities as explanatory categories.

#### **5.4. "Othering"**

In the previous section, Ortega (2012) pointed to the notion that women break their identities while men strengthen theirs in questions of violence. This idea is linked to the narrative of the peaceful women with beautiful souls that need protection, as argued in the sections about the narratives of the mother, the monster and the whore. This notion is related to another argument presented in Ortega's work, which relates to the concept of "*Othering*". This concept is part of the power relations that feminist thinkers are concerned with, and is an important component for understanding the often secondary roles that women have in conflict. The concept of "*Othering*" was explained in more detail in section 2.2. *Conceptualizations and Essentialized Ideas* and associated with Foucault, Hobbes, Hegel, and Mills' concept of "*Othering*" and orientalism, which is also often used with the notion of "us and them". As argued in section 2.2., the concept of "*Othering*" has been an integral part of most feminist theories and linked to the subordinate position that women traditionally have been positioned in due to a patriarchal power hierarchy.

Ortega connects the notion of "*Othering*" to the idea of men as warriors and women as passive victims. The idea, Ortega argues, is central to our understanding of the power struggles that are taking place in a conflict setting, but also post-conflict. When women take up arms, they transcend traditional stereotypes and become the "*Other*", the deviant women who are not real women. In order to understand the extensive influence gendered stereotypes have on peoples' lives and power relations, Ortega argues that research on WWPV reveals that armed organizations apply gendered analyses in their operations and strategies. Ortega disputes that the organizations' strategies are highly gendered, and that the armed organizations make use of stereotypes of femininities and



masculinities in the given cultural and social context. Women play a significant role in the organizations, both in terms of operations but also recruitment, because they have access to new recruits in different places than men. Ortega stresses the need for scholars to examine the gendered components within the organizations' strategies as well.

The concept of "*Othering*" is also found in the literature on WSM and utilized as an important component for understanding the gendered stereotypes that influence men and women's perceived roles in the military. Moreover, it is used to address the influences of embedded understandings of masculinities and femininities and their conscious and unconscious connection to sex-bodies. Sasson-Levy (2003) uses the concept of "*Othering*" in her analysis, and links it to the gendered challenges between male and female soldiers in the military, as she argues that female soldiers attempt to mimic masculine characteristics in order to fit into the institution and gain recognition.

The subversive and threatening dimension of their new identities stems from the fact that they do not turn into men, but are always only "like men," similar but different. The men/soldiers cannot erase the distinction between the imitation and the original and thus cannot turn the "other" into "one of us," but neither can they control the variations on the "original" that female soldiers put forward. The gap between ideal, imaginary identities of femininity and masculinity and these female soldier's distinctive identify practices is the source of the chaos that threatens the stability of the military gender regime. (Sasson-Levy, 2003, p. 451).

Sasson-Levy's quote brings attention to women's constant struggle to obtain the same status as men and relates to Ortega's analysis of how men's use of violence and connection to violent behavior is considered a strength, whereas women's violent behavior, even as part of their jobs as soldiers, is rendered negatively because they are diverting from the feminine characteristics that are associated with women.

Jeffreys (2007) introduces the concept of the "other" in her analysis of WSM and connects it to masculinity, arguing that there is a need for women to represent the "other" that men mirror against. When women take-up arms the gender roles are altered and that makes it difficult for male soldiers to distinguish between who are the protectors and who are the protected.

The masculinity of the military, however, goes beyond this masculine protection of their turf. Masculinity is central to the basic enterprise of the military in a way in which it is not for the fire service. Male soldiers are trained to kill on the basis that they are men and that women are the 'other' against whom they can recognize

themselves. Women are also offered as the ‘other’ that male soldiers are to defend and die for. Even the motherland that they fight for is usually gendered female. (Jeffreys, 2007, p. 18).

As becomes evident from examples from Jeffrey’s, Sasson-Levy, and Ortega’s work, the concept of “Othering” is a concept often applied to explain and understand some of the gendered components of WWPV and WSM, and also for revealing gendered hierarchies and power dynamics. Jeffreys and Sasson-Levy refer to ideas of masculinities and “othering” and the influence this has on our understanding of what a soldier is. The following section will address the notion of masculinities in the literature and the various ways that both the literature on WWPV and WSM refer to masculinities as an explanation for some of the complications associated with women’s presence in both political violence and as serving in state militaries.

## **5.6. Masculinities**

In the previous section, the scholars’ use of femininities in construction of narratives on *Motherhood*, the *Monster*, the *Whore*, and *Victims and Perpetrators* were addressed and discussed, and the different and similar scholarly approaches to femininities were analyzed. This section focus on masculinities, and how scholars make use of this concept in their work, and how it might differ depending on whether discussions of masculinities are found within WSM or WWPV literature. Furthermore, I reflect on the some of the often referenced narratives that scholars use when discussing the gendered roles which men and women fulfill, and which are part of shaping our understanding of the military and gender in general. The subthemes within this section of the analysis are:

- *Warrior/-Soldier*
- *Militarized Masculinity & Hegemonic Masculinity*
- *Sexual Harassment and the Role of Military Masculinity*
- *Legitimacy*

### **5.6.1. The Narrative of the Warrior/Soldier**

The first narrative concerns the notion of the warrior/-soldier. This narrative is related to the victim/perpetrator dichotomy that was addressed in the section on femininities. However, this particular narrative focuses on the dominant role of the perpetrator/-warrior/soldier and how this is linked to ideas and notions of masculinities. It addresses the interconnectedness between masculinities and femininities, and the role of sex-bodies in the discussion of warriors and soldiers.

The concept of “Othering” is useful as it addresses this particular binary between masculinities and femininities and between male and female sex-bodies.

As argued by Sasson-Levy (2003), the concept of “Othering” is relevant for maintaining masculinity in the military. Sasson-Levy connects this to women’s ways of adjusting and finding ways to fit into the masculine nature of the military. Sasson-Levy argues that female soldiers mimic men and masculine traits in order to hide all connections to feminine characteristics. Sasson-Levy links the mimicking of masculine traits to the notion of empowerment, by stating that, “*Mimicry practices should be understood, then, as multivocal acts that empower women soldiers while the same time strengthening the androcentric military norm.* (Sasson-Levy, 2003, p. 459). Sasson-Levy argues that despite female soldiers mimicking of masculine traits and behavior, they are unable to fully win the soldier or warrior status. Sasson-Levy argues that these women form a new type of identity; a type of gender identity that is a combination of both masculine and feminine elements.

Women’s presence in the military in terms of gendered differences is also addressed by DeGroot (2001), as he argues that women have to earn their legitimacy and status as soldiers to a much higher degree than men. DeGroot argues that,

Women are changed by their military service, but their service has yet to change the military significantly. All this demonstrates that the ability to kill is a very odd distinction by which status in society has been determined: women do not earn coveted state when they demonstrate they can kill, while men do not have to kill in order to earn that status. (DeGroot, 2001, p. 31).

Sasson-Levy’s focus on analyzing female soldiers’ mimicking of masculine traits can also be seen in relation to WWPV and the question of who are the “right” soldiers and warriors. Like Coulter (2008), political scientist Annette Weber (2011), working with women fighters in Eritrea and South Sudan, is concerned with the victim/perpetrator paradigm that was discussed in section 5.3. *Femininities*. Weber links this notion to the construction of the warrior/citizen nexus and the question of who is allowed to take part in this transformation. Weber argues that the warrior/citizen nexus influences images of warriors and, furthermore, creates a gendered division between who are perceived as real warriors and who are not. Weber argues that women are restricted from the fighter image because being a warrior is associated with masculine characteristics. Weber explains that the image of the fighter is linked to gender roles in society. Weber argues that this transfers to the fighter image and argues that there is an understanding that, “*men are not born, but made fighters, and women can perform, but not own the fighter status.*” (Weber, 2011, p. 363).

Weber's work is useful in illustrating some of the important ways we understand warriors. Weber's work also transcends the barrier between WWPV and WSM, as both the guerrilla groups (the authors' choice of word) in Southern Sudan and Eritrea transformed into the government of the new states. Weber's analysis is interesting, as her main argument, that men, as a construction, are viewed as legitimate fighters and warriors, and women are viewed as less valuable stand-ins, seems to exceed both groups (the WWPV and WSM). It is also interconnected with the idea of sex-bodies and the abilities to be soldiers. Weber argues that the construction of the warrior body is extremely important. One element of this is to overcome all that is feminine. This means that the soldiers have to disregard aspects that have to do with family, lover, mother, and wife. Instead they need to display a violent and aggressive nature that is part of a larger collective masculine identity.

It is clear that the discussion on "real" soldiers and "warriors" is present in both bodies of literature and also their emphasis on the role masculinities plays in this connection. It is again linked to the notion of capable defenders of the state and the gendered stereotypes of women as more peaceful souls, who are not meant to fight and kill in wars. The similarity in the way the narratives and concepts are analyzed and discussed across the bodies of literature is interesting. It brings attention to arguments presented by especially the second movement of feminist scholars, who argue for general gendered stereotypes that transcends borders and contexts on women's subordinate and passive role in questions of war, IR and, security; enhancing the argument that the scholars continue to focus on explaining these gender differences through the same narratives.

### **5.6.2. Militarized Masculinity & Hegemonic Masculinity (Manhood)**

As argued, there are multiple forms of masculinity; however, two categories of masculinity are central in the literature on WSM, and to some degree WWPV literature, which are the notions of *hegemonic masculinity* and *militarized masculinity*. As argued in section 4. *Security*, the concept of hegemonic masculinity has been developed as part of a canon of literature concerning masculinity studies in the 1980s. The concept, despite differences in the interpretation, is still used in the recent literature in particular in connection to militarization. The direct link between hegemonic masculinity and the military should be viewed in the light of the military as the ultimate institution of a particular type of masculinity that is characterized as predominantly tough, strong, and powerful. The literature on WSM is concerned with unraveling the influence of this type of

masculinity in regards to how it interplays with functions in the military and the question on how women should be analyzed and viewed in the context of this masculine forum.

### **Male Bonding – The Premise for Becoming a Soldier?**

The male bonding rituals are often analyzed and discussed in both bodies of literature, but with this sample of literature it has especially been a dominant theme in the WSM literature. Mathers (2013) links male bonding to hegemonic and militarized masculinity. Mathers (2013) argues that,

Among the methods used to promote this sort of bonding are ones that place emphasis on the differences between soldiers and other. But in many cases the “other” that the new soldiers are encouraged to see themselves in opposition to is not civilian society in general or some notion of an enemy, but women. (Mathers, 2013, p. 135).

This argument is also addressed by Heinecken (2001), as she argues on the basis of her research with women in the South African military that an often used explanation for excluding women from particularly combat is related to the notion that they disrupt the male bonding of soldiers; a ritual that is considered an integral part of becoming a soldier and soldier’ abilities to perform. Thus, women affect the morale and cohesion of the groups. With this argument, Heinecken is addressing one of the functions of military masculinity, namely the bond that it creates between soldiers and makes them good fighters in a cohesive group.

Mathers (2013) further argues along the same lines as Heinecken that masculinity is utilized specifically in the military and as a measuring stock for men’s value and use for a given society.

The interdependence between masculinity and the military is not only visible at the societal and political level, but also at the level of the individual (male) soldier. [...] Even where military service is performed by a minority of men, it is nevertheless usually perceived as an activity which is natural for men to engage in and also as the ultimate test of masculinity, as the rite of passage from boyhood into manhood. The positive characteristics that are associated with soldiers, such as physical strength, self-sacrifice, courage, and honor, are also characteristics that are typically associated with an ideal type of masculinity that all male members of the society should aspire to achieve and against which all men are measured. (Mathers, 2013, pp. 126-127).

The type of masculinity that the military obtains through the values associated with being a soldier, and which are intertwined through the entire institution, can be categorized as a hegemonic masculinity; that is the type of masculinity that all men should strive to achieve.

The close link to masculinity and military is also found in Hong's (2001) research. He argues in his research on women in the South Korean armed forces that women in the military may affect the military culture (referring to the masculine nature of the military), and argues that the military traditionally has been regarded as men's domain. Hong stresses that in a number of the fields within the military, masculinity is required. Hong argues that the modern military is changing, bringing new assignments to the tasks carried out by the military, which civilians can occupy. By expanding the tasks in the military, a lesser emphasis has been placed on the pure physical requirement of soldiers. This, Hong argues, could leave more room for women and the qualities associated with femininities.

As addressed in the previous section, Weber's work transcends both fields, given the history of the groups she researches. Weber also discusses the link between male bonding and explains that there are different bonding rituals to transform the bodies into warrior bodies. This can for example include violence executed through rape of civilians. Weber argues that the female bodies are able to be part of this transformation; hence, it is not a matter of the actual sex-body, but rather that the action of dehumanization and humiliation carried out by the soldiers is gendered in that they punish people by feminizing them. Weber stresses that this process works both on women and men, however, the gendered aspect of women fighters is closely related to their lack of abilities to remain in the masculine sphere post-conflict. Women lose their fighter status, and at the same time their right to make important contributions to understanding and negotiating in peace processes.

Another scholar concerned with the link between masculinity and bonding and forming of groups is Dyan Mazurana (2013). Mazurana addresses the nature of militarized masculinity as a term that needs to be examined in connection to women's presence in non-state military groups, as it also outside the traditional state military context is influential. In connection with her analysis of The United Self-Defense Forces of Columbia, a deliberate constellation of masculinity was maintained as a foundation for the group. Mazurana states that,

The re-creation of a militarized, masculinized, patriarchal system within the AUC was essential to the group's underlying mission and encouraged a culture of *machismo* within the AUC itself. Women and girls were excluded from more visible public roles (and all combat roles) because the AUC believes their presence might make the group appear less *machista* and intimidating. (Mazurana, 2013, pp. 165-166).

Mazurana argues that the organizations utilize gendered stereotypes as a strategic measure. Mazurana stresses that non-state armed groups are aware of the social context they live in and

therefore conduct gender analysis in their operations to accommodate to these. This awareness is crucial for the survival of the organizations, as they rely on the support from communities to survive. Mazurana argues that this is an area where scholars need to closely examine the link between gender, militarized groups and patriarchy, in order to better understand the gendered dynamics that are taking place within the groups. Mazurana gives as an example the idea that female suicide bombers are a clear tactical measure for many armed groups, as they are able to take advantage of gendered stereotypes of women; the peaceful women narrative. Mazurana points out that ironically, female suicide bombings might be viewed as a way to obtain gender equality, as these women in the same way as men are made heroes and praised in society.

Political scientist Sandra McEvoy (2009) adds another dimension to discussing the role of masculinities and femininities, as she argues that the link between WWPV and embedded notions of femininities and masculinities is important in any discussion of security, otherwise, McEvoy argues, one loses out on important aspects of conflict. McEvoy argues that this gendered understanding of conflict and power relations complicates how to address matters of private or public security issues. Miranda Alison (2003, 2004) argues in line with this, stating that a discussion of how knowledge of security is produced is important for comprehending the complexities of the term. Security is often addressed from a masculine perspective and women's experiences and views are often neglected. Alison argues that the idea of masculinized security can be seen among male combatants who feel threatened by female comrades and view their presence as a direct threat to their masculinity. This links to the phenomenon that although women have participated in combat and, thereby, transcended stereotyped gender roles, women are often expected to resume to traditional gender roles in post-war. Both McEvoy and Alison argue that it is important to view WWPV as the same security threat as their male comrades, because they, too, are capable of violent actions and take part in conflicts. By simply viewing them as peaceful, one might compromise the actual security threat that they hold.

The focus on male bonding and the link to masculinity was evident in a large number of the articles. This link and focus on masculinity as an analytical tool for understanding this phenomenon indicate the scholars' realization that this concept influence men and women in both groups, and that it is an important concept to apply in any analysis of men and women's roles and activity in both the military and militant groups. However, it is also interesting that all scholars are keen on

using masculinity (especially militarized masculinity) as an explanatory category, and do not seem to question the concept of masculinity (masculinities) and the application of it.

### **5.6.3. Sexual Harassment and the Role of Military Masculinity**

The concept of “*Othering*” is used in connection with analyzing and discussing the role of masculinity in relation to men and women’s positions in questions of global politics, war, and security. As argued by Mathers (2013), another utilization of the concept is found in relation to the sexual violence and harassment that is present both within state militaries and non-state militant groups.

Scholars also link male-bonding to sexual harassment and violence. Jeffreys (2007) connects men and militarization to sexual rituals that have male bonding as their goal. Women are, per definition, not included in this, because they belong to the “other”. Female soldiers are unable to participate in these rituals given their sex, but more importantly according to Jeffreys, female soldiers cannot be part of the rituals surrounding this bonding, which is considered part of making the soldiers (men) one unified group, due to their sex being linked to the narrative of the whore.

They affirm male bonding by visiting brothels in groups. Women soldiers are deprived of this bonding activity and, presumably, of the other benefits that the US military considers that prostitution provides to its male soldiers. They are not equal in this respect but represent precisely in their persons the ‘others’ on and in whose bodies the male soldiers are being trained to be men. The distinction between their women comrades whom they are supposed to respect, and the women in the brothels that they are expected to use, may provide male soldiers with cognitive dissonance. (Jeffreys, 2007, p. 18).

DeGroot (2001) adds an interesting perspective to the use of sexual harassment and sexualized violence, as he argues that the sexual scandals that recently have appeared in Western militaries could also be viewed as the acceptance of women in the military, based on the view that women now too, are part of the rituals of “bonding” that soldiers go through as part of their integration into the military. Counter arguing the view that these sex scandals are not merely to be analyzed as examples of the misogynist nature of the military, but perhaps the contrary. DeGroot argues for the complexities in analyzing these incidences and their connection to the gendered relations of the military, and points to one of the central issues related to women’s presence in the military; namely that, “*their mere presence creates ambiguity, an ambiguity with which individuals, institutions, states and nations have to engage*” (DeGroot, 2001, p. 33).



The link between masculinity and sexual abuse and harassment that Jeffreys refer to is commonly addressed in the literature on WSM, and often used as an argument for why women should not be part of the military. Jacoby (2010) also reflects on this in terms of the Israeli military and how the incidents of sexual harassment and rape have contributed to changing the legislation. There is a clear indication in almost all of the literature that sexual abuse of women in the military or sexual practices in the military are (to some degree) being analyzed and discussed as an important element of women's presence in the military. DeGroot's point is unique in the sense that it takes a slightly different perspective from the other WSM scholars, however, his views are found among others scholars. In particular in regards to the US military and the bill on *Don't Ask, Don't Tell*, which concerns the question of homosexual soldiers' right to express their sexuality openly (see (Belkin, 2012) for more detail).

The literature on WWPV is also concerned with the sexual harassment, but more often discusses the issue through the term gender-based violence. As pointed to in Coulter's work (2008), women can be victims of gender-based violence simply because of their sex, and in this sense face a different security threat than men do. There is a high emphasis on the gender-based violence in non-state military literature, but also an emphasis on sexual abuse, war-rape and sexual harassment by state soldiers (or opposing non-state groups) as motivating factors for women to participate in political violence. An example is Alison (2003, 2004), who discusses this in terms of the women in the Tamil Tigers and their engagement with combat.

The increased attention to and analysis of sexual harassment and violence presented by scholars in state military literature can be explained by the status of the military in society as a formal institution that is under the laws of society. The abuse and sexual harassment that is taking part in the military is violating laws in society, thereby creating a legitimacy issue for the military as an institution. It is interesting how the scholars are keen on linking it to the masculine nature of the military and as part of a bonding ritual between soldiers. Both among feminist and non-feminist scholars there is acceptance of masculinities as a valid concept of analysis. Nonetheless, it does create problems for an institution whose main goal is to protect, raising the question of legitimacy and its connection to militarized masculinity.

#### **5.6.4. Legitimacy**

The question of legitimacy is closely linked to the notion of who are “real” and “legitimate” fighters, a notion that was touched upon in previous section on the narrative of the warrior/-soldier. The concept of legitimacy is interesting in the comparison between literature on WWPV and WSM, as the latter represents the actor who is by most parties considered the legitimate executor of violence. One may argue that the scholars conducting research within their respective fields have to relate and reflect differently on the question of legitimacy in terms of the actor that they have as object of analysis.

In connection with the question of legitimacy, the debate on physique is very often used in the literature on WSM and to a much higher degree than in the literature on WWPV. The argument is often found among military traditionalist like van Creveld (2001). However, also scholars with a more feminist perspective engage in this conversation on the effectiveness of women in the military, which is often directed towards their physical abilities. In connection to this, van Creveld argues that war is by far the most dangerous activity that human beings engage in and, furthermore, the most physically demanding job where women are at the largest disadvantage in comparison to men. For that reason van Creveld argues that,

To expose, women, therefore, to combat is criminal even if, since combat very often demands close co-operation between the personnel who are engaged in it, it were not counterproductive. Unlike their sisters in the developed countries who have enjoyed peace for half a century on end and consequently do not have the slightest idea of what war is really like, women in war-torn developing ones understand the score well enough. As best they can, they are staying away. (van Creveld, 2000, p. 441).

This argument by van Creveld is an expression of some strong sentiments towards one of the basic roles of military in society; that is to protect and kill, which also means putting your own life in danger. Van Creveld's argument puts a high emphasis on the different physiological appearance and abilities of men and women and argues on the basis of this that neither the military, nor the women, are benefitting from being allowed to serve in, especially, combat situations.

Hong (2001) is another scholar who is concerned with women's effectiveness and how this influences their abilities to perform in the military, but also how this is part of shaping their relationship with their male colleagues. On the basis of studies by the South Korean Institute of Defense Analysis (KIDA), Hong argues that both men and women recognize women's inferiority in physical strength, but women soldiers believe that there is no difference between male and female

soldiers in regards to self-confidence, leadership, responses to stress and their abilities to succeed in the military. This focus on effectiveness is traced throughout Hong's paper, and lies as one of the pillars for discussing women's roles in the military. Hong makes the observation that women are not allowed to participate in combat directly in order to protect their femininity.

DeGroot (2001) describes a two edged sword; he states that the physical argument has been disregarded by some scholars arguing that it is merely based on arbitrary gender norms by referring to the fact that women on average today are stronger than the men who fought in the First World War. Conversely, there are those who argue that the machinery utilized in the military has become more technologically advanced, demanding less physical strength from the soldiers. DeGroot states that the wars in Bosnia and Somalia undermine this argument and argues that peacekeeping operations might be a place for women to be more fully integrated in the system, as their "womanhood" in peacekeeping operations is regarded a desired quality. Thus, *"if women are, for whatever reason, calmer and more conciliatory than men, then they have an important role to play. The UN, in other words, might want its female warriors to remain womanly."* (DeGroot, 2001, p. 37).

While the literature on WWPV is not as concerned with the issue of physique and legitimacy, there are a number of scholars, including Parashar (2011), Weber (2011), Coulter (2008), and Mazurana (2013), who all discuss how women are engaged in active combat-like situations. For instance, Parashar debates how women in the Tamil Tigers of Eelam during the conflict were recruited to more and more branches of the organizations, even combat situation. Coulter's research in Sierra Leone and Weber's work on Eritrea and Southern Sudan shows the same tendency. The scholars focus more on the underlying gendered components associated with women's permission to participate in violent actions.

The degree of attention from scholars within WSM literature on physical abilities and effectiveness could be explained by the fact that the military as an institution have certain obligations to fulfill, and that the "jobs" within the state military are categorized in a different and more institutionalized way compared to non-state militant groups. Thus, within WSM literature it is possible to discuss combat as a specific job position. Non-state groups, on the contrary, might be looser in their structure and have less defined jobs, making a debate on women's right to combat more difficult.

In sum, the degree to which all the literature uses masculinities as an explanatory factor is interesting from the perspective that masculinities and their roles are concepts that feminist scholars have introduced. This concept is utilized across the bodies of literatures and academic points of departure among feminist as well as non-feminist scholars. Perhaps the differences lie in the values and connection that feminist scholars place on masculinities and gendered power relations concerning the overall ideas of patriarchy, and, therefore, feminist scholars use gender and masculinities in as a more analytical tool to unraveling underlying power dynamics.

## **5.7. Differences in Academic Paradigms between Literature on WSM and WWPV.**

As argued in section 2. *Conceptual, Theoretical, and Methodological Frameworks*, the recognition of the production of knowledge and differences in paradigms is an important part of feminist epistemology and methodology. Thus, in the comparative critical review and analysis of the literature on WSM and WWPV, it is imperative to also critically examine the academic points of departure of the scholars. This is beneficial both in terms of discussing and examining differences and similarities, but also in terms of furthering a conversation on how the scholars are part of shaping a particular theoretical framework for analysis. This section will discuss the similarities and differences in the literature review, the scholars' academic points of departure, and implications of understanding security.

### **5.7.1. Literature on WWPV versus WSM**

Through the assessment of the literature on both WWPV and WSM, a number of similarities and differences were examined. The use of similar narratives, the use of masculinities and femininities as explanatory categories for some of the challenges associated with women's presence in violent actions, along with explanations and references to gendered stereotypes are all common features among the scholars' analyses and discussions. Despite continuation of narratives and concepts in both bodies of literature, there are also differences in how the scholarship addresses WSM and WWPV. Especially with WSM, the scholars focus on the roles of women and what their presence means for the institution. There were a number of discussions on women's roles in combat and analyses of pros and cons, and what this means for the military institution internally and externally. The question of sexual harassment was often analyzed within WSM as an internal part of the military, and less emphasis was on soldiers raping civilians. Moreover, the literature did not discuss the aspect that women rape women, too, and that men rape men.

In many of the scholars' analyses on WWPV, a gendered perspective, even a feminist perspective, was noticeable. The material was not chosen with the criteria in mind that it needed to be feminist literature. On the contrary, the selection including the literature review is based on a search through material on recent (past 2000) literature concerning WWPV. Nonetheless, the most often referred to literature, in terms of addressing women and gendered aspects of violence, was written by scholars who both applied a gendered analysis, and took a more or less feminist perspective (reflected in the work by: McEvoy 2009, Parashar 2012, Alison 2003). As argued throughout the analysis, Caron Gentry and Laura Sjoberg have been influential in creating new theoretical frameworks for understanding women's role in IR and violence. As argued by both Gentry and Sjoberg in their interviews, they were some of the first to look at WWPV through a different set of lenses, which challenged the notion of women as peaceful souls and men as violent perpetrators.

Undoubtedly, Sjoberg and Gentry's work has been pioneering in addressing this topic from a particular angle. At the same time, there were a number of scholars conducting research around the same time and in the years after. When a group of scholars conduct research within the same period of time, who have the same paradigm, their perspectives on the matter will often be linked. This means that the narratives being used and the conceptualizations will be similar as well. This is not necessarily a negative aspect, since the research illustrates that the narratives of for instance motherhood and the victim/perpetrator narratives are traceable across different settings, organizations and contexts. However, it is important to remain attentive and critical towards the usage of the narratives, to avoid a particular categorization and focus on essentialized ideas, as was expressed by the work of Jørgensen on categorizations of difference.

The WSM literature seems to be divided between feminist and non-feminist scholars to a higher degree. It is evident from the literature used in this project that feminist theory and feminist scholars have influenced this field too. Most of the scholars who do not apply a feminist perspective (van Crevald 2000, Degroot 2001, Hong, 2001) examine feminist arguments and provide counter arguments to feminist ideas. The combination of both feminist and non-feminist scholars was interesting and gives food for thought in terms of the influence feminist work has had on understanding and theorizing on women's presence in the military. It illustrates that the early work that Enloe and Tickner initiated in the 1980s has influenced the field. The more balanced representation of both feminist and non-feminist scholars engaging in the question of women's role in state militaries could be a product of the state militaries' long and integral place in IR studies (a

product of Westphalia); meaning that there has been an interest in engaging in this conversation, since feminist scholars for a longer time have been addressing the gendered aspects of the military. The argument is not, however, that there are more feminist scholars conducting research on non-state actors (there are numerous IR scholars concerned with the emergence of new non-state actors and the security threats this hold), but rather that it has proven more challenging to find scholars who address women (and or gender) within WWPV from a non-feminist perspective than scholars conducting research on WSM.

### **5.7.2. A Feminist Perspective versus a Conventional IR Perspective**

It was noteworthy that conventional IR scholars doing research on state militaries were also interested in analyzing the gendered aspect, but from a non-feminist perspective. This is obviously only a small selection of 20 articles, but it seemed that there was a division between literature on WSM and WWPV.

This difference becomes interesting in the comparison between the two bodies of literature because the feminist epistemology and theoretical standpoints center on a number of the same notions and ideas and influences the way that gender is utilized. Referring back to the notion of gender as an analytical or empirical tool, it becomes clear that there are differences in the literature on this account as well. This also influences the argument for why a gendered analysis is important in terms of understanding security; an argument often found in feminist literature. In the interview with Laura Sjoberg, she reflects on the differences between a gender analysis and a feminist analysis, and argues that the two are inseparable. Sjoberg expresses this perspective of being able to separate a gender analysis from a feminist perspective by arguing that,

I think when you do that you get it wrong then. You treat gender as a variable [...] I think gender fundamentally is something, which is constituted by power and not sex[...] But when you take gender as power, then you get the extra dimension, [that] of the women are on front of the brochure because they sell as civilians, and they sell as civilians because they are understood as less powerful, and because of the protection ranked, and because of all of these ways in which states position women as constitute of the “other” in war [...] (Interview with Laura Sjoberg, 2013: 00:15:42-7)

I think this separation of, you can do gender analysis without feminism, empirically doesn't work, because I think feminisms' contribution is understanding gender as power over variables, or if it is a variable, as a variable which is about social power, and not about specific sex categories. That is the sort of thing I think would really

change people's mindset with this approach, if you can demonstrate to them that seeing gender as power explains the thing better. (Interview with Laura Sjoberg, 2013: 00:16:22-0)

This argument goes against some of the non-feminist work on WSM, as they are utilizing gender, masculinity, femininity and women, more as a variable, and not as much as an analytical tool that addresses the power dynamics that are the grounds for gendered discrimination and subordination (examples of this is van Crevald 2001, and Hong 2001). The argument is that it is not simply enough to count the women and the roles they are allowed to serve in, but to analyze *why* they are or are not allowed to fulfill a specific job and analyze the power dynamics that construct this particular setting.

### **5.7.3. Bridging Paradigms**

The debate on gender as either an empirical or an analytical perspective is part of the discussion of academic paradigms, and also a factor in some of the differences in how women's roles in violence are analyzed. Despite a common interest in discussing WSM and WWPV and what this means for security, the different approaches do create complications for reaching a common frame of reference for understanding security. This is, as discussed by philosopher and historian, Thomas S. Kuhn, part of the paradigm struggle within academia and how shifts in paradigms occur (Kuhn 1996 [first edition:1962]). Despite differences in how the literature is discussing WSM and WWPV, the question of security is present and central in all of the literature. The literature is concerned with the notion of how to approach this; meaning how to best to theorize and conceptualize on: who are the right and capable defenders of the state and why is it necessary to keep it in a certain way or to change it? This raises the issue of bridging paradigms, and whether this leads to a better and more comprehensive understanding of security.

Laura Sjoberg reflected on this by stating that,

I mean it depends on what you want to get out of it. Because there is a literature in feminist IR that says you give up something by engaging in the mainstream. [...] Assuming that you find those tradeoffs, and you decide that radar is worth it. [...] The first is that you demonstrate that people would be better at understanding the thing they want to understand if they take account of gender [...] I think that when you can do that, then you can kind of ease people into gender analysis, and what I think is a way that is actually feasible [...] But like I don't think you change the epistemology of the field without changing the minds of the people who are in the mainstream of the field. (Laura Sjoberg, 2013: 00:14:08-5)

Caron Gentry argued in the same lines, as she stated that,

The biggest problems are the resistances within the field towards gender, but also seeing humans as important, and this refusal to get away from abstraction. And I think, the commitment, particularly in American IR, to stay with the state level of or the international level of analysis [...]. See balance of power as a relevant way of answering things, a commitment to quantitative methodology and rational choice, just inhibits things. (Interview with Caron Gentry, 2013: (00:09:19-5))

Nicole Detraz reflected on this in terms of her own experiences coming from environmental security and argued that the gendered perspective that she is advocating for is also in stressing the need for other scholars to incorporate this perspective in their analyses, if a more comprehensive understanding is to be reached. Detraz argued that,

This is something that in particular I struggle with in terms of the gender, security, environment stuff, because basically, I mean I don't say this, but I am basically saying "hi you, you are missing something, you are not doing this as comprehensively as you could be". [...]there obviously is this need to reach out to other communities and say no this is why these things are important[...]. (Interview with Nicole Detraz, 2013: 00:25:43-5)

Their comments demonstrate that they are all concerned with how to bridge the gap between different academic fields, but also what this would mean for the different paradigms. Would feminist epistemology and theory lose central epistemological standpoints if they engage in a conversation with more conventional IR scholars? Conversely, feminist scholars might be isolated and risk not being invited to engage in conversations with other academic group where they could share their notions and ideas. Both Sjoberg and Detraz argue that the key to engaging in a conversation across paradigms is to make the opponent realize that they would understand their own field better if they incorporate a gendered perspective, not undermining the other field, rather emphasizing that this component enables a better and more comprehensive understanding that can be combined.

#### **5.7.4. Balancing Gender among Scholars**

Another interesting aspect of the sample of scholars for this project is the division of female and male scholars. The scholars on WWPV literature were both feminist, but also women. In regards to



the literature on WSM, the gender balance was more equal. Nonetheless, the scholars in WSM literature that took a feminist perspective were women. This is again, perhaps not an unforeseen finding, as there within feminist scholarship in general are more women than men, which would be explained by the development of feminist theory from a women's rights movement to a more defined academic field today, as well as the fact that feminism traditionally has been concerned with enhancing women's rights. From a post-colonial feminist perspective it does, nonetheless, create a methodological bias in terms of representation. When there is such an overrepresentation of women doing research on women, it is extremely important to be aware of essentialized ideas and conceptualizations, you as a woman are investigating women as a subordinated group. This is also true for me as a woman, trained in a Western academic environment conducting research on WSM and WWPV. It is not necessarily different from the over-representation of male scholars in conventional IR studies. However, feminist scholars have in particular been critical towards this, and therefore it is in some way ironic that they themselves have an uneven gender balance within their field.

In conclusion, in terms of bridging paradigms, feminist scholars might have to be more explicit about the fact that they are not only examining women, but gender and a number of other power dynamics such as ethnicity, class, race and caste, and that this approach of taking these social constructs seriously enhances the understanding of security and provides a more comprehensive frame of analysis and knowledge about security.

## 6. In Conclusion – Implications for Understanding Security

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The following conclusive section will entail an analytical and reflective conclusion to the literature review on WWPV and WSM and the differences in academic paradigms; reflecting on how this creates implications for reaching an understanding of security that is coherent. Throughout the literature in both fields, and across different academic paradigms, a desire to create a better knowledge framework for understanding security is present.

What becomes clear is the realization of the complications associated with understanding security. Two different definitions of security (state security and human security) are part of the scholarly literature concerning this topic. The state security concept is a product of Westphalia with the acknowledgement that states are the primary and legitimate actors in security questions, however, new non-state actors have increasingly gained momentum challenging the state security framework. At the same time, the concept of human security, defining security threats more broadly and outside of the state perimeter, has required new conceptualizations and theoretical frameworks. Feminist scholars have brought attention to the gendered aspect of security and argued for the importance of this in any discussion of security, if a more comprehensive understanding is to be reached.

### 6.1. Categorization in the Literature

The scholarship is part of shaping both academic and general discourses on questions of security, for this reason it is interesting to examine whether they are using the same categories, concepts, and explanations for women's involvement in both state and non-state militant activities. The question of security and what this literature means for academic and general understandings of security in an IR context also becomes a question of the definition of security, and how we should be asking questions about security. If the claim is that state militaries are different from non-state militant groups, but the narratives and gendered stereotypes are the same or similar, then what does it tell us about how we understand women and men in general, and is it an indication of a general gendered understanding of men and women? Sandra McEvoy (2009) argues for the importance of understanding that women, too, are capable defenders, but that this also means that they are capable of committing the same kind of violence and, therefore, should be viewed as the same security threat as their male colleagues. Consequently, if essentialized ideas of women are maintained, we might risk underestimating the security risk that violent women pose.

Both the literature on WSM and WWPV are concerned with the overall goal of understanding security, and that the roles of women in both groups are part of reaching this understanding. The scholarship examines and analyzes women in order to better understand security. As the critical literature review and analysis illustrates, the same conceptualizations are present in large parts of the literature. The assessment of the literature also shows that feminist ideas and notions are often used or debated in the conversation on women's presence in military and militant groups. The question then becomes if it is possible to understand women's role and security in general, without taking a gendered and/or feminist perspective, and if not, then how do we bridge the gap between paradigms, so that gender becomes an integral part of asking questions about security?

One might argue that both women and non-state groups struggle for legitimacy in violence and that they are feminized in an effort to keep them in a subordinate position towards men and the state, respectively. In her interview, Caron Gentry argues for this link, as she states that the lack legitimacy of non-state groups is connected to the delegitimization of women in war and security. Gentry argues that,

If we use Westphalia to say that the state is the only legitimate actor, in violence. Or they are the ones in political violence that have the legitimacy. Then we delegitimize political violent groups, and then I think we also through masculinity and femininity continue to delegitimize women even further. I think it is a hegemonic masculinity and it got this lathering effect that moves it downward, it moves women downward. [...] I have a volume coming out in January on *Just Wars*, and I got a piece in there about legitimate authority and epistemic bias, and how we treat non-state actors in it, but that it is all wrapped up in Westphalia, and the problems of Westphalia. (Interview with Caron Gentry, 2013: 00:09:13-9)

Caron Gentry's argument is supporting the issue of feminization of women and non-state groups, as she argues that the need to delegitimize politically violent groups is part of the legacy of Westphalia, and at the same time it has the effect - due to masculinity - of also pushing women downward. If we are to understand the security binary between non-state groups and state militaries, we need to understand that traditional state legitimacy is part of maintaining a particular security framework which might not reflect present day security dilemmas.

## 6.2. One or Two Fields?

One of the aims of the project was to examine and analyze whether these two bodies of literature, representing two different actors in security, were utilizing some of the same explanations for women's presence and that this might indicate a unified approach to understanding women and security.

To me, these two bodies of literature have always been heavily linked in my head to kind of ideas about gendered nationalism. Because gendered nationalism doesn't require a state to have a nation and to me the motivation to political violence seems very similar in state and non-state groups. [...] At the same time, there is still this what I think is fairly obnoxious privileging of the state in international relations scholarship, where the non-state groups are the terrorists and the states are the counter terrorists, and the non-state groups need to go looking for legitimacy in the states, which by definition have legitimacy. On the other hand, there also seems to be a gender relations among states, with this responsibility to protect sort of thing becoming common discourse among states, where then you have some states that are the protector and some states which are the protected. (Interview with Laura Sjoberg, 2013: 00:07:59-1)

Laura Sjoberg's approach to the bodie(s) of literature is interesting, as she argues that for her as a scholar, the two bodies of literature have always been linked by gendered nationalism. Sjoberg's linking of the two bodies of literature may explain some of the overlapping narratives and concepts with her idea of a gendered nationalism, since this is applicable to both actors and therefore may influence scholarly approaches to both bodies of literature.

One might argue that if the same narratives, conceptualizations, concepts, and notions are applied in both WWPV and WSM literature does it then make sense to talk about two bodies of literature? The assessment of the literature indicates that the same themes are present in both bodies of literature, and a number of the same concepts and narratives are applied. The narratives might be applied slightly differently, - an example is the "motherhood" narrative, - but the scholars are still referring to them. The complications of using the same narratives become evident when scholars utilize the same concepts, but not necessarily understanding the concepts in the same way. When this is the case, it becomes difficult to ensure that the narratives applied are analytically applicable to understanding both WSM and WWPV. Jørgensen argues that there is a risk of making the categories of differences self-fulfilling. One might question whether the motherhood narrative is being applied so often because it is a useful category to explain women's roles in war and security, or perhaps its continued explanatory purpose is based on the same exact essentialized ideas of

gender that the scholars aim to expose and question. The same might be the case for using femininities and masculinities as categories for analysis. These concepts are used frequently and by a variety of scholars with different academic backgrounds that one might argue that the terms, much like security, have been utilized without considering the underlying meanings of the categories.

The differences in paradigms complicate the discussion. Part of this conversation is connected to gender as either an analytical or an empirical tool, because the analytical approach requires a feminist perspective, which does not fit with conventional IR studies. A universal view of men and women is present in both bodies of literature, since the same narratives are utilized by WWPV and WSM literature, and to some degree utilized by both feminist and non-feminist scholars.

The comparison of the two bodies is important, because these two types of actors and security providers or perpetrators are inseparable. There is a need for the scholarship to engage in the conversation across fields and academic backgrounds in order to question how narratives and concepts are part of helping inform and create knowledge, but also how it might limit an understanding of security. It is important to have the discussion between paradigms and academic standpoints, because it may lead to a more comprehensive approach to understanding, not only women's role in violence and the overall gendered dynamics of war, but also create a more comprehensive framework for asking further questions. Lastly, one might argue that the differences and implications of understanding security make it challenging to bring consistent and cohesive knowledge to the practitioner level.

### 6.3. Conclusive Remarks

In sum, reflecting back on the problem formulation,

*How does current (feminist) scholarship address and analyze women who wield political violence in non-state militaries compared to women who are members of state militaries, and how do differences and similarities in the scholarships' analysis of these women effect our understanding of security in an IR context?*

The combined critical literature review reveals that a number of the same narrative, concepts and approaches to understanding women in violence are traceable across both WWPV and WSM literature and between feminist and non-feminist work. The sample of literature used in the project also reveals that there are differences in how the scholarship applies the terms and how much emphasis they place on the different concepts and narratives. There seems to be tendency for feminist scholars across both fields to approach women and violence in many of the same ways, despite the different contexts of state militaries and non-state groups. The gender balance was an interesting observation, as there seemed to be an indication that it was female scholars who conducted research on WWPV and applied a gender and feminist approach. In terms of the literature on WSM the scholars who adhered to a feminist research ethic were all female. The male scholars did reflect on feminism and their contribution to understanding the field but from a more critical perspective. It is important to state that this is only a sample 20 scholars and that the literature is dated after 2000. It is possible that the contrast would not be as stark in a larger sample of literature.

In sum, the feminist body of literature that emerged in the 1980s, with the attempt to add a gendered perspective to IR questions, has contributed to a particular awareness of gender in questions of war, conflict and security. There may be differences in the approaches, but the fact that non-feminist scholars who conduct research on WSM engage in conversations on masculinities, femininities, and gender, indicates that the terms, concepts and approaches that feminist literature has introduced are being utilized and critically engaged.



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