

## Introduction: Invisible Battlegrounds

*Susan Comfort*

In the contemporary era of global capitalism, imperialism and war have emerged as dominant geopolitical forces. Despite a candidacy based on calls for “change,” in the initial years of Obama’s presidency, the scope and impact of contemporary imperialist violence are immense. In addition to its massive military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. currently maintains nearly 1000 military installations in over 150 countries<sup>1</sup>; U.S. troops deployed worldwide exceed 350,000, with private contractors easily surpassing that figure.<sup>2</sup> What’s even more troubling, the *2010 Quadrennial Defense Review* issued by the U.S. Defense Department indicates that the U.S. is preparing a dramatic shift in military strategy toward an expansion in counterinsurgency operations, which are currently ongoing not only in Afghanistan and Pakistan but also in Colombia, Somalia, the Philippines, and Yemen.<sup>3</sup> Under this worldwide regime of imperialist warfare, as invisible battlegrounds and secret wars propagate, there seems to be no end in sight to secret detentions, drone attacks, assassinations, and private-public military collusions.<sup>4</sup>

Amidst conditions of greater militarization, critics assail a growing number of cascading causes and consequences: mushrooming U.S. military budgets; ever-rising exposures to weapon toxics such as depleted uranium or remnants of unexploded ordnance; increased arms dealing; runaway war profiteering; many more resource and land dispossessions; and the general militarization of daily life worldwide.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, the priorities of neoliberal global capitalism continue to drive hyperexploitation and the diversion of resources from human needs to speculation and profit. And, the world economy, especially the dispersal of production by corporations, continues to operate under militarized conditions of labor control, racist profiling, and gender and sexual violence.

This system requires examination and understanding, especially from feminist perspectives, not only because it has had a disproportionate impact on women that is mostly invisible in dominant representations, but also because the ideological justifications for war and imperialism often redeploy reactionary, even colonial, patriarchal formations of gender, race, sexuality, and class. What’s more, it is via these justifications that a grossly unequal global system of capitalism is perpetuated. This “alibi thing,” as Gayatri Spivak has called

**WORKS AND DAYS 57/58: Vol. 29, 2011**

these ideological justifications, not only renders invisible injustices of gender, sex, and race created by war and imperialism; it also throws the spotlight on token gender visibilities. “Women are prominent in this war on terrorism, this monstrous civilizing mission,” Spivak has observed (“Terror” 84). And token visibilities, Spivak continues—such as a report on a female captain of a U.S. aircraft carrier interviewed by an enthusiastic CNN journalist extolling the end of “sexist jokes about women drivers”—can obstruct any awareness of other women in conflict zones. As Spivak says, “Given this gender prominence, a feminist critical theory must repeat that expanding the war endlessly will not necessarily produce multiple-issue gender justice in the subaltern sphere” (84). Furthermore, as suggested by the editors of the recent anthology *Feminism and War*, new circumstances of war and imperialism have required “a new mobilization of historically embedded colonial practices and rhetorics of male superiority and white supremacy; of female vulnerability, inadequacy, and inferiority; and of the subjugation of oppressed masculinities of men of color” (3). These formations have arguably also revived or reinvented ideologies of heteronormativity and gender that racialize national identities, which have been newly interwoven with neo-orientalism and Islamophobia.

Feminist critiques of contemporary war and imperialism have, in fact, developed diverse approaches and strategies to contest this system. Across disciplines and spheres of activism there has been a remarkable array of research, among which notably include feminist theorizing within the areas of postcolonial, transnational, Marxist, Indigenous, and environmental justice feminisms. Even as critiques may differ depending on disciplinary emphasis or the exigencies of specific moments or locations, what is noteworthy is that a significant portion of them includes historical and structural analysis of imperialism, capitalism, and colonialism.<sup>6</sup> It may even be that feminist critiques are beginning to shift away from the splintered analysis that has defined second-wave feminist theory in recent years, as Nancy Fraser posits. According to Fraser’s argument, three aspects of gender injustice—political, economic, and cultural—were initially integrated in “ramified and systematic analysis” by second-wave feminists, but beginning with the Reagan years, “the three dimensions of injustice became separated, both from one another and from the critique of capitalism” (99).<sup>7</sup> This volume was broadly conceived, in response to critiques by Fraser, Spivak, and others, to foster analytical connections among the dimensions of gender injustice and thus make a contribution toward reintegrating feminist analysis with materialist approaches.

To gauge the significance of recent contributions of contemporary feminist critique, both in this volume and beyond, this introduction breaks down feminist efforts into three areas of critique—which roughly correspond to the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of feminist critique in Fraser’s analysis. In these three areas, feminists scrutinize three key hegemonic narratives of shifting ideologies that legitimize war and imperialism as humanitarian interventions promising women freedom in their political, economic, and daily lives. Rather than splintering feminist efforts, however, my in-

tention is to emphasize simultaneously the valuable work within an area as well as the interconnections across them, and also how investigators in all three consistently allude to underlying structures of wealth redistribution and accumulation. Toward that end, analysis of these three areas in this introduction is divided into three separate sections with each focused on one of the three key hegemonic narratives. These sections are followed by a synthesizing section on resistance.

This introduction will also reflect on the difficulties, but also the possibilities, of imagining new coalitions of feminism across locations and disciplines. At a moment when hegemony is being challenged, we should combine our forces to identify not just its contradictions but also areas of shared interest and struggle. With this end in mind, the organization of the volume is meant to encourage making new connections, not just within, but also across, disciplines and locations. It is hoped that this organization generates new perspectives on “multiple-issue gender justice” called for by Spivak and Fraser. This volume of *Works & Days* is indeed also inspired by Cynthia Enloe’s repeated urgent call for “feminist curiosity,” which I understand as a demystification process, of seeing and understanding war and militarization critically, not through the lenses of dominant ideologies, but through the eyes of those engaged with ideological critique and feminist inquiry into “unlikely places,” the hegemonic narratives “grown and watered” not just in political speeches or Pentagon reports but also in beauty parlors or poetry. I now turn to the vital critical work of feminists who have brought clarity to otherwise muddy and deadly hegemonic visions.

### **I. “This Monstrous Civilizing Mission”: Hegemony and the Uses of Women’s Rights**

The first sets of hegemonic narratives contested by feminists in recent years revolve around the humanitarian claims of imperialism seeking legitimacy under the cover of concern for women’s rights. Feminist analytical insights into these narratives have been prompted by the blatant uses of gender and sexuality as justifications for invasion and occupation. As Zillah Eisenstein has remarked, “Imperial democracy mainstreams women’s rights discourse into foreign policy and militarizes women for imperial goals” (“Resexing Militarism” 27). Especially during the early days after 9/11, a concern for women’s rights was assimilated to the goals of imperialism—a brand of imperialism, which, in effect, redeployed colonial frameworks for understanding the “war on terror” in ahistorical and metaphysical terms. An infamous example cited frequently by feminist analysts is Laura Bush’s November 2001 radio address in support of the U.S. war in Afghanistan.<sup>8</sup> In unmistakable colonial language, she stated: “Civilized people throughout the world are speaking out in horror—not only because our hearts break for the women and children in Afghanistan, but also because in Afghanistan we see the world the terrorists would like to impose on the rest of us.” She suggested further that “because of our recent military gains in much of Afghanistan, women are no longer imprisoned in their homes. They

can listen to music and teach their daughters without fear of punishment. . . . The fight against terrorism is also a fight for the rights and dignity of women" (Bush). Quite a number of feminist critics have pointed to the culturalist explanations here, which attribute the causes of women's oppression, not to the 30 years of devastation by Cold War proxy conflict, but to an ahistorical, indeterminate "terrorism," stripped of its complex origins as a proxy of the CIA and the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).<sup>9</sup> Also, as many feminist analysts have remarked, Bush failed to mention that the U.S. was at this point early in the war allied with the Northern Alliance, an organization just as oppressive of women as the Taliban. Indeed, Bush's reference to the civilized rescue of women from a backward culture would become a frequent motif as in the Jessica Lynch saga.<sup>10</sup>

Regarding Iraq as well, Bush administration-funded women's groups, such as the Independent Women's Forum, were more concerned, just as Laura Bush had been, with constructing false notions of Middle Eastern, in this case Iraqi, cultures and traditions as oppressors of women than with the devastating consequences of UN Sanctions and the destruction of the state and civil society by the U.S. invasion.<sup>11</sup> Nadjé Al-Ali, in this volume, reflects on the ideological context that prompted her to historicize her analysis of conditions for Iraqi women after the U.S. invasion in 2003:

I felt uncomfortable writing about the present time without providing a historical context. I feared that a book about the devastating impact of the occupation could all too easily be construed as "just another Muslim country oppressing its women." I felt that what was needed was a modern history of Iraqi women which would challenge some of the widespread views about the "backwardness" of Iraqi society and inherent oppression of Iraqi women . . . [and] the notion that Islam, Muslim, or Middle Eastern culture . . . was to be blamed for society injustice, increased conservatism and a deterioration of women's rights. (102)

Indeed, among the historical contexts stressed by Al-Ali in her contribution to this volume are the devastating conditions created by UN sanctions and the Gulf War for Iraqi women, particularly as those conditions impacted their employment and public roles. She observes that "From being the highest in the region, estimated to be above 23% prior to 1991, women's employment rate fell to only 10% in 1997, as reported by the UNDP [United Nations Development Programme]" (104).

The hegemonic story of the civilized rescue of women by colonizers is not new after all—as many feminists point out. In an article in this volume, Mais Qutami explores how veiling is, and has been, among the most contentious of metaphors caught up in the hegemonic struggles of colonial powers. Referring to the Algerian war of independence, Qutami argues that "in the colonialist program, Algerian women and their veiling were targeted in order to weaken the political resolve of Algerian men. . . . In the French colonizer's eyes every veil abandoned by Algerian women was a sign of society's willingness to attend 'the master's school' and submit to the occu-

pier's civilizing mission" (169). Other feminists as well, including Lila Abu-Lughod, Shahnaz Khan and many others, have documented that liberating women from the shackles of tradition has historically been an argument of colonial justification.<sup>12</sup> In Egypt, Lord Cromer claimed to advance women's liberation by opposing veiling, all the while refusing support for women's education or suffrage in England. In another oft-cited example, the British claimed to support women's rights by forbidding sati or child marriage in India at the same time that their policies drastically reduced the political and economic well-being of women by systemically concentrating power and draining the country of its wealth. In French Algeria, the claims of colonial liberation were made into public spectacle; as research by Marnia Lazreq has discovered, Algerian women were publicly unveiled in a ceremony orchestrated by the French colonial government (qtd. in Abu-Lughod 785).

Iraqi feminist Haifa Zangana's account of the U.S. invasion in her memoir *City of Widows* contests the uses of women's rights to advance imperialism. Written explicitly to refute the construction of Iraqi women as in need of rescue, Zangana's work documents the tremendous political efforts of women activists within Iraq who accomplished "within two years after the 1958 Revolution . . . what had failed [to be achieved] during thirty years of British occupation: legal equality" (41). Her account is both a political history and an alternative literary history of Iraqi women's writing. During the Revolutions of 1920 and 1958, as Zangana illustrates, women's cultural production played a decisive role in anti-imperialist agitation. Indeed, her analysis suggests that literacy, during and soon after the 1958 Revolution, was inseparable from the political activities of "trade unions, women's organizations, and student unions" (44). Rather than just highlight individual achievements, Zangana makes clear that the accomplishments of poets such as Um Nizar or Asma al-Zahawi were based on a tradition of women's poetry, which has "been a powerful tool for conveying political messages" (29). And, this participation has been ignored and unrecognized, according to Zangana, because "poetry, songs, folktales, and lullabies were often not recorded . . . [even though] women recited poetry during the 1920 Revolution to encourage fighters against British occupation" (29). Newspapers, social gatherings, women's charities—all formed a significant basis for this political mobilization, in the midst of which "women were actively involved in delivering messages, distributing leaflets, transferring weapons, hiding printing equipment, and caring for the wounded, as well as supporting their male relatives and families especially during their imprisonment" (41). Thanks to their tireless agitation then and later, the Personal Status Code of 1959 secured women significant political rights for the first time (44), with crucial energy behind it provided as well by women's politically transformative literature, such as in the work of Nazik al-Malaika or Badir Shakir al-Sayyab (46). Zangana's memoir thus contests hegemonizing stories by historicizing, analyzing, and advancing the role of Iraqi women in liberating themselves and their country—in effect, undercutting claims of imperialist rescue.

Feminist scholars in this volume also develop concepts and theories for the uses of gender and sexuality in justifications for U.S. im-

perialism today. For example, Jasbir Puar analyzes here what she calls “U.S. gender exceptionalism,” an ideological sleight of hand that represents gender violence perpetrated by the U.S. as exceptional rather than systemic. For example, commentators inscribed Lynndie England’s participation in torture at Abu Ghraib as exceptional when, in fact, her acts should be understood as structured by an imperialist system that is misogynist and racist (123). Even when her complicity was acknowledged, some U.S. feminists expressed not so much outrage at U.S. imperialism but more fear that feminism might be blamed for advocating a role for women in the military. In a similar vein, Puar argues that constructions of Muslim men tortured and photographed at Abu Ghraib as sexually repressed and homophobic served as a disavowal of homophobia in the U.S. military: “The Orient,... [once site of] unfettered sin, now symbolizes the space of repression and perversion, and the site of freedom has been relocated to Western identity” (128). Critics from the LGBT community, according to Puar, participated in these discourses of “homonationalism” or “U.S. sexual exceptionalism” that portrayed Muslim men as sexually conservative, even as they were also constructed as engaged in illicit, perverse acts of homosexuality.

Obscured by these imperialist narratives of gender or sexual exceptionalism is the production of oppressive gender ideologies, which lead to further negative consequences for the security and political rights of women. As Valentine Moghadam argues in these pages, “Wars, and especially occupations by foreign powers, often are accompanied by crises of masculinity that lead to restrictions on women’s mobility and increases in violence against women. Women become the symbols or markers of contending ideologies or competing cultures” (83).<sup>13</sup> According to Moghadam, an understanding of the current U.S.-led war in Afghanistan must be based both on World Systems Theory and feminist insights into the wartime construction of hegemonic masculinities. Explanations of global war and militarization, even those that understand the geopolitical ambitions of the U.S. as driven by a neoliberal capitalist project, neglect the significant dimension of gendered forms of militarization as a factor in the escalation of violence. As a result of the conditions of occupation by U.S. forces in Afghanistan and also in Iraq, the rise of sectarian militias has meant not just temporary insecurity for women, but also a more permanent reduction of security with the loss of political and legal rights.<sup>14</sup> Moghadam observes of Afghanistan that “one consistent criticism—which has emanated largely from the women’s rights community and especially bold women leaders and members of parliament such as Malalai Joya—concerns the sinecures given to former Mujahideen commanders guilty of war crimes, including sexualized violence against women” (87).<sup>15</sup> In Iraq, conditions for women took a similar turn after the U.S.-led invasion. As Huibin Ameer Chew has documented in her numerous articles, the imperialist context of fighting between nationalists and occupation forces has created conditions that favor the rise of patriarchal conservatives, with the consequence that “it becomes harder for feminist organizers to independently push an agenda that risks coming in conflict with nationalist conservatives” (“Occupation, Part I” 6).<sup>16</sup>

More recently, the picture in Iraq may have slightly improved for women, as a quarter of the seats in the Iraqi parliament must go to women. Even so, Haifa Zangana contends that those women who are in positions of leadership are connected with U.S. women's NGOs who lent "imperialist feminist" support for the U.S. invasion (91). According to Zangana, "By lining up women behind nominally progressive goals, the occupation diverts attention away from the main issue of independence, and at the same time hinders the growth of indigenous women's organizations aiming to be part of the process of establishing democracy" (93).

## II. "Between the Frontlines and Sweatshops": Hegemony, Gender, and the Neoliberal Myth of Economic Freedom

Somewhere between the frontlines and sweatshops in which I have seen children exploited, between girls raped in war and prostituted in peace, I have lost the clear distinction dividing war and peace. I think this is a positive step, a useful ambiguity. It is a step that leads us into questions of who profits from war, from silence, and from the lives and labour of girls on a global scale.<sup>17</sup>

—Carolyn Nordstrom

In the last several years, feminist scholars and activists have also developed greater insight into structural analysis of imperialism that considers an underlying capitalist dynamics of accumulation and dispossession. Feminists have specifically critiqued free market ideology, which claims that military intervention brings democracy in the form of free markets. In reality, of course, militarization has not secured free markets but frequently greater exploitation by corporate power and global capitalism. One of the most vocal supporters of this justification during the early days of the Iraq War was *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, who defended the invasion as "the most important liberal, revolutionary U.S. democracy-building project since the Marshall Plan" ("The Chant"). Repeating the mantras of neoliberal globalization for which he is well-known in *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* and *The World is Flat*, Friedman wrote column after column extolling the virtues of globalization as the engine of democracy: "[Democracy] will arise only if these countries develop, among other things, export-oriented private sectors, which can be the foundation for a vibrant Middle East that does not depend upon the state for contracts and has a vital interest in an open economy, a free press and its own political parties" ("New Signs"). Indeed, feminist NGOs seeking to create grassroots women's development projects—though in the short-term beneficial—may in the long-term be compromised by neoliberal agendas. As Nancy Fraser argues, NGO microcredit projects, though intended as anti-poverty self-help programs, have rationalized the withdrawal of state aid and the legitimization of the market (111-112).

Despite the claims of Friedman and others, imperialist militarization has long secured not free markets or "economic development" but rather monopoly control of markets and resources. In regions rich with resources, in particular, war and militarization have been

tools of exploitation with particularly devastating consequences for women. In the northeastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo today, fighting over control of mining operations, in which transnational corporations have been implicated, has resulted in incalculable numbers of civilian deaths, rape, and abduction.<sup>18</sup> In fact, right now the U.S. Army Special Operations, under the humanitarian banner, have begun training Congolese government forces, units from which have been widely documented as the main perpetrators of sexual assaults and rape.<sup>19</sup> As Patricia McFadden, a contributor to this volume, reminds us, “There is nothing ‘abnormal’ about the rampancy of U.S. imperial intention at the present time. . . . The mobilization and application of war as a tool of repression and colonial rule are distinctive features of all capitalist states, and are really universal phenomena that must be carefully understood in a historical and material context” (“Interrogating Americana” 60-61).

In a range of geopolitical contexts, feminists in this volume advance research that links gendered exploitation, militarization, and imperialism with capitalist accumulation, both in the past and the present. For example, Helen Scott argues here that the invasion of Grenada in 1983 laid the groundwork there for “political conservatism . . . privatization, foreign investment, and structural adjustment through the World Bank and IMF” (323). According to contributor Heejung Cha, in South Korea under military dictatorship in the 1970s and 1980s, Korean workers, particularly women, experienced greater exploitation: “It must be stated that in South Korea, state-driven capitalist industrialization—called the miracle on the Han River—entailed various human rights violations, political harassment, imprisonment, and torture of dissidents, and it was a gendered process” (54). In her research on Mexico, included here, Rosemary Hennessy observes that “Since the mid-twentieth century, neoliberal economic policies have taken a deadly toll on Mexico as the invasion of foreign investment intensified the exploitation of human labor, contaminated and crippled bodies, poisoned the environments, and snatched up common farmlands” (14). In these circumstances of hypercapitalist accumulation, Hennessy suggests, “Profits accumulated through free market exchange capitalize on the political and cultural dispossession of certain subjects, a dispossession that registers in the body, and femininity is one form this dispossession takes” (195).

Cynthia Enloe, who is a contributor to this issue, has done extensive research over her career on how militarization restructures social relations of masculinity and femininity in different global arenas of imperialism and capitalism. Her work on South Korea, for example, has been concerned with the ways the country initiated and orchestrated a model of economic development that “applied both coercion and gendered ideological suasion to compel cheap labor” from “dutiful daughters” (*Globalization & Militarism* 28-30). Enloe provides incisive analysis of a process in which “Capitalism is not just about modernity. The architects of late-twentieth century and early twenty-first century capitalism have deliberately decided to exploit a false notion of tradition. . . . It takes clever footwork by state and company strategists to promote a capitalist brand of modernity



by entrenching traditional daughterhood and traditional wifedom" (32). Besides a reinvented gender ideology, according to Enloe, this economic model has several key elements, among which are anti-communist ideologies and local-global patriarchal collusions, which have been characterized by a "close alliance between male policy makers in Washington and Seoul" (Enloe 28). In Enloe's memorable words on the "militarized global sneakers" that were the end product of this process, "Threaded through virtually every sneaker you own is some relationship to masculinized militaries" (28).

Even as events within South Korea are by no means identical to circumstances in other "developing" countries that found themselves on similar paths, it is still worth identifying shared patterns of militarized economic development. Broadly put, in the years after independence for many Third World countries, aspirations for national liberation became caught up by authoritarian political forces, such as landlords and industrial elites, who built up militaries to secure political power. For some years, the ambitious dreams of social justice and decolonization kept conservative forces in check. Indeed, the role in keeping these dreams alive must, in part, be attributed not only to the political analysis and cultural resistance by anti-colonial thinkers connected with such movements as Négritude and Pan-Africanism but also significantly to nationalist feminist thinkers connected with Bandung and Third World movements (Armstrong and Prashad). Even in the midst of the tremendous institutional pressures of these movements, constant counter-pressures by Cold War militarization—including military pacts, training, interventions, and arms sales—and the 1970s debt crisis, followed by the draconian restructuring imposed by neoliberal global finance on the Third World, put elites firmly in power. Also, it was widely accepted by U.S. policy-makers, among them Samuel Huntington who was then active on the Trilateral Commission, that the military should play a key role in modernization. As Vijay Prashad argues in *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*: "The state needed to concentrate political power as a prelude to economic development, and so there was no better social institution to govern in these parts than the military" (141). At the same time, in Indonesia, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Egypt, and many more countries<sup>20</sup>, elites destroyed communist parties, while detaining and murdering leftist dissidents, including women fighting for feminist principles and rights (Harlow). Iraq followed this pathway, for example, as the dreams of 1958 were crushed by the rise of the Ba'ath Party in the late 1960s and early 1970s. *Dreaming of Baghdad*, Haifa Zangana's memoir of torture, detention, and repression under Saddam Hussein is testament to the tensions and struggles experienced by dissidents, especially women, in these years.

The patriarchal model of militarized economies has not changed all that much under neoliberalism; it has actually been more aggressively applied—even as it is more skillfully "camouflaged" under the ideology of free markets. Enloe argues, for example, that the sneaker companies "had gotten used to the business advantages offered by a militarized regime," so when the sneaker companies moved on to Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, and China, "strong mas-

culinized policy and military forces" have been used to control and mobilize a "cheap" female labor force (32, 34).

In South Korea today, neoliberal policies have followed the now all too familiar pattern of forcibly converting public goods to private wealth by use of a variety of financial, legal and repressive measures, which David Harvey has memorably termed "accumulation by dispossession."<sup>21</sup> In a portion of her interview here, Heejung Cha recounts this process in the form of urban relocations whereby "under the name of redevelopment and neoliberal progress, many Koreans are being forcefully evicted from their homes in areas where new skyscrapers are being built" (52). Furthermore, Cha describes how since the financial crisis in 1977, after which IMF structural adjustment policies were applied, the South Korean government "in order to minimize the aggressive reaction of the workers . . . revived the patriarchal logic of men as breadwinners and women as caring nurturers for home and family and then justified making women workers the first scapegoat for mass layoffs" (55).

A patriarchal model of militarized economics has also been the dominant formation in the Middle East, where it has been "all about oil," of course (Harvey). The Middle East has been an arena of political maneuvering and inter-imperialist rivalry beginning in the late-nineteenth century, but these efforts were stepped up once oil became a key resource. As Rashid Khalidi observes, "Oil transformed and considerably enhanced the already great geostrategic importance of the Middle East" (Khalidi 78-79, 81). After World War I, most of the Middle East was under the domination and military occupation of European powers, and the physical and political control of the region secured huge profits for monopoly oil corporations. In Iraq, the creation of the state followed the dictates of European powers, especially Britain, who invaded and maintained control there until 1958 (Khalidi 93). In the years surrounding the World Wars, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was also formed and sustained in collusion first with the British and then with the United States (Khalidi 103; Mitchell 4). After World War II, the U.S. began to exert more control by means of secret agreements with powerful patriarchies and through overt military operations, such as the 1953 coup of the Mossadegh government in Iran. As a result, "Between 1940 and 1967, U.S. companies increased their control of Middle Eastern oil reserves from 10 percent to close to 60 percent while reserves under British control decreased from 72 percent in 1940 to 30 percent in 1967" (qtd. in Harvey 20). The consequences for democracy and development were devastating, as the oil wealth went to oil companies and to elite players: "supporting a vast system of patronage and corruption that upheld the dominant elites, whether in allegedly 'socialist,' and 'progressive' states like Algeria, Libya and Iraq or in the conservative monarchies of the Gulf" (Khalidi 115).

A crucial component of this militarization in the Middle East was the emergence of "neopatriarchy," Hisham Sharabi's term for the modernization of traditional patriarchies by nation-states seeking legitimacy and control by reasserting, often via legal measures, hierarchical forms of patriarchal social power (Sharabi). As Valentine M. Mogadam explains it, neopatriarchal states appease their political

base by legislating stringent legislation that restricts women's rights and saves public funds by privatizing welfare functions within the family. In countries pursuing state-led development, however, neopatriarchal directives were often contradicted by the need to bring women into the work force (*Modernizing Women* 112). In Iraq, for example, in the 1970s, amidst militarization by the Ba'ath Party, there were significant openings for women in the professions, government, and in the area of legal rights. In the 1980s, during the Iran-Iraq War, however, women began to experience conservative and reactionary pressures. Haifa Zangana discusses an emblematic example: "Drastic measures were introduced, and, for the first time since the establishment of family-planning clinics, selling of contraceptives was prohibited" (70).

The recent U.S. invasion of Iraq and subsequent occupation can be seen as an extension of the political economy of imperialism that structured the region in the twentieth century. David Harvey compares the U.S. invasion of Iraq with Britain's engagement in the Boer War in that both were situations in which economic crisis drove a class alliance to rally for imperialism. In the case of Iraq, since the invasion, the U.S. has used various instruments for asserting control over Iraq's oil, including legal manipulations of Iraqi oil agreements with international contractors and IMF demands that debt cancellation be contingent on the surrender of oil revenues to international creditors. Now, seven years after the invasion, profits from new contracts between Iraq and U.S. and European oil companies are being touted by hedge fund investors, who anticipate a bonanza of profits from the oil companies.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, wholesale privatization and restructuring of the Iraqi economy, as feminist analyst Huibin Ameer Chew has documented, have left Iraqi women economically disempowered. To name but one example, at the Agras clothing factory in Baghdad, 600 seamstresses have lost their jobs since U.S. authorities slashed tariffs in 2003 ("Occupation, Part II"). The company now sends its designs to China and imports the finished clothing.

The U.S. government is also pushing "commercial" reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. On a recent visit to Helmand province, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, according to a recent newspaper account, "emphasized the commercial logic that underpins the Obama administration's anti-poppy strategy" (MacKenzie). In his own words, "Farmers, I think, are the same wherever they are. They're always interested in being able to get the highest price and produce the most and pay the least" (qtd. in MacKenzie). Valentine Moghadam's comment is relevant here: "When a proposal was made to USAID to subsidize Afghan farmers and wean them away from poppy to cotton production, the agency rejected it; the free market model made farm subsidies anathema" (86). Furthermore, according to feminist analyst Ann Jones, development aid is "delivered by the U.S. military through a system of Provincial Reconstruction Teams" (PRTs), which privileges infrastructure projects that benefit the military and local strongmen, while defunding women's projects to support these efforts (26). In addition, reconstruction in urban areas has favored high-end development projects, such as five-star hotels like the new Serena Hotel and shopping malls such as the Kabul City Center that

serve the urban elite (Khan 166). Rather than by basic needs such as medical care or education, as Jennifer Fluri observes, development in Afghanistan is measured by consumerism, museum attendance, and technological militarization. Mais Qutami similarly asserts here that “The war on terrorism has in fact proven valuable to American capitalist and corporate interests. As Afghan people [have] suffered from the lack of clean water, food, and security, the cosmetics industry made inroads in the country” (172). In direct challenge to this model of development, RAWA (Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan) has recently issued a statement criticizing the reconstruction of Buddhist statues destroyed by the Taliban: “It is good to rebuild the [Bamiya] Buddhas but this is not the priority. The Buddhas should come later. Bamiyam is very poor and clinics and schools are more important. . . . In this case it is blatant that the first world cares more about historical objects than people’s lives” (qtd. in Fluri 154).

### III. “Peace is War”: Imperialist Violence and Invisible New World Orders of Gender, Race, and Sexuality

For most people in the world, peace is war—a daily battle against hunger, thirst, and the violation of their dignity. . . . And it is the flaws, the systemic flaws in what is normally considered to be “peace,” that we ought to be writing about. . . . We have to lose our terror of the mundane. We have to use our skills and imagination . . . to recreate the rhythms of the endless crisis of normality, and in doing so, expose the policies and processes that make ordinary things—food, water, shelter, and dignity—such a distant dream for ordinary people.

—Arundhati Roy, *An Ordinary Person’s Guide to Empire*

Indigenous women continually challenge the normalization of warfare along the international border of the U.S. with Mexico, and are active in exercising the authority of families, and in securing necessary food, water, medicine, and manufactured goods, which they transport back and forth between the U.S. and Mexico on a daily basis.

—Margo García Támez, “Our Way of Life is Our Resistance”

Feminists have also directed more energy toward challenging the complex chain of cascading consequences that war and militarization produce, not only the immediate spectacular devastations, but also, to use Roy’s phrasing, the more “mundane,” imperceptible, slowly unfolding violence of daily life—violence that inscribes deadly ideological hierarchies of gender, race, and sexualities. For example, Indigenous feminists in the U.S.-Mexico border region, as Margo García Támez writes here, defend their communities against normalized warfare by maintaining historical networks of identity, subsistence, and trade, across a militarized border. In Kamala Platt’s article in this volume on militarized border walls constructed along the U.S.-Mexico border and the Israeli-Palestinian Territories bound-

ary, Platt calls attention to the “borderlands beyond or between ‘normal’ comfort zones, places where marginalization and violence are perpetuated based on divisions of lived experience, perspective, and subject position” (333). In these circumstances, militarized capitalism has led to everyday catastrophes by which the basic necessities of life are denied, both in zones of war and “peace.” Feminists also critique the persistent notion, often at the core of arguments promoting militarization, that war will bring peace. That is, war is portrayed as exceptional and spectacular, and hence an assumption emerges that draws a national boundary between the continuities of wartime atrocities and rape cultures of daily life—or the massive incarceration regime in the U.S. and techniques of war applied in the “war on terror.” In a related vein, it is assumed that the impacts of war are discrete and can be contained. As Charles Cunningham in this volume observes: “A crucial assumption informing the instigation of the Iraq War is that war itself is containable, both militarily and conceptually: the U.S. military could invade the country, identify the enemies, defeat them, and then support sympathetic friends in a new ‘democratic’ government” (361). In his analysis of several narratives of war, Cunningham examines how a “process of hyper-masculinization” issues from, and facilitates, the “unleashing of extraordinary destruction” (370).

During the run-up to the Iraq War, in the 2003 State of the Union speech, Bush outlined the case that justified pre-emptive war by arguing that it will bring peace and freedom: “We seek peace. We strive for peace. And sometimes peace must be defended. A future lived at the mercy of terrible threats is no peace at all.” Suffused with the language of American exceptionalism and claiming that the war will be fought for “the safety of our people, and for the peace of the world,” Bush’s speech made a case for a “just war”: “If war is forced upon us, we will fight in a just cause and by just means, sparing, in every way we can, the innocent” (Bush). In Obama’s much more recent speech given as he accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009, he does acknowledge some of these contradictions: “The instruments of war do have a role to play in preserving the people. And yet this trust must coexist with another—that no matter how justified, war promises human tragedy.” However, he asserts nonetheless that “force can be justified on humanitarian grounds,” as he paints a grim picture of the “new threats” that “require us to think in new ways about the notions of just war and the imperatives of a just peace” (Obama).

The notions, expounded by both Bush and Obama—that military campaigns will establish peace and justice—have been proven false. As I write this, in Afghanistan and elsewhere, under Obama, plans to increase assistance and involvement in counterinsurgency campaigns are especially troubling, given their deadly consequences, most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan (U.S. Department of Defense *2010 Quadrennial Defense Review*). The initial assault in Iraq by the U.S., for example, caused untold damage and destruction, but it was the post-invasion counterinsurgency campaign that was more deadly. The U.S. conducted a neoliberal experiment that dismantled Iraqi society, including its military, police, infrastructure, industry,

and civil society. As a result, security and social welfare were taken over by mosques, neighborhood associations, and local militias. Frequently, Iraqis found themselves in direct confrontation with the U.S. military as it set up operating bases in schools, conducted patrols, and set up checkpoints. The typical outcome of a raid or patrol, which often ended in civilian deaths, was an increase in resentment and the formation of guerilla armies. As a result of an escalating counterinsurgency campaign, the U.S. adopted more draconian pacification tactics, including torture, death squads, and coordinated assaults on insurgent areas. Practices of collective punishment took hold as the pressure to capture insurgents increased, and violence escalated.<sup>23</sup> Collective punishment, according to Mahmood Mamdani, “abrogates notions of individual responsibility central to a rule of law in favor of collective responsibility for all political acts” (216). Counterinsurgency tactics blur the boundaries between civilian and soldier, especially because they target civilian infrastructure and support for insurgents.<sup>24</sup> Within this context of impunity, these practices also included horrific acts of gendered violence. Haifa Zangana points out that a well-known case—the 2006 gang-rape and murder of 14-year-old Abeer Qassim by U.S. soldiers in Iraq—exemplifies not “aberrant behavior” by U.S. soldiers but rather “a pattern of . . . collective humiliation, intimidation, and terrorizing of Iraqi people, a classic colonial maneuver” (119). In general, the post-invasion climate developed a regime of surveillance, racism, torture, and collective punishment according to which rules of engagement were applied that harmed civilians. In this volume, Liz Philipose examines the rendition and torture of Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen who was detained in the U.S. in 2002 on his way home to Canada from a family vacation in Tunisia. Far from an exceptional case, Philipose argues that the pain experienced by Arar was “imperial pain and racialized pain [that] are structural, as structural as class or gender or race” (6). The case destroys any notion of war or torture as discrete or anomalous, but rather reveals it as an instrument of imperialism, in Philipose’s words, “to incorporate those who are characterized as less than human into an order that keeps them properly governed, managed, and contained” (10).

Collective punishment is also experienced in conditions where resources for the provision of daily life are dramatically reduced or destroyed. In the war zones of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Gaza, women experience the daily violence that is a consequence of the destruction of the environment and the physical infrastructure, particularly as a result of reduced availability of clean water, electricity, cooking fuel, and transportation.<sup>25</sup> During the period of UN Sanctions against Iraq, according to a Canadian medical doctor, “The bombardment of 1991 ‘effectively terminated everything vital to human survival in Iraq—electricity, water, sewage systems, agriculture, industry, and health care’” (qtd. in Mamdani 184).<sup>26</sup> During the Sanctions period, a 1999 UNICEF survey “showed that the ‘rate of mortality more than doubled’ among children under five years . . . from 56 per 1000 births in 1984-89 to 131 per 1000 during 1995-99” (Mamdani 181). In the Israeli reoccupation of Palestinian territories, with the ensuing militarization of daily life—involving an ever-increasing number of checkpoints; frequent curfews; the division and closure of villages

and cultivated lands; and deadly assaults and raids by Israeli forces—civilian casualties often outnumber deaths and injuries of militants (Khalidi 147). The recent economic and humanitarian blockade of Gaza by Israel has also created a humanitarian crisis with severe shortages of food, medicine, and fuel, and the elimination of state and civil society structures has furthermore meant drastic decreases in access to education, housing, and employment outside the home.<sup>27</sup> Insecurity and mounting poverty in Gaza and elsewhere have, in addition, meant greater dependence by women on men for survival, which can put women at risk for increasing levels of domestic violence and abuse.<sup>28</sup>

In the shadow of U.S. military bases worldwide, militarized violence also pervades daily life. In this volume, Anna Lascamana details the racialized gender violence that is the result of U.S. military presence in the Philippines, where after WWII, “The sheer magnitude of prostitution . . . resulted in its ‘normalization’ whereby the sexual assault and exploitation of women became a routine, acceptable part of life in the cities of Angeles and Olongapo. Not surprisingly, the presence of the bases further inculcated a sense of racial and cultural inferiority” (208). Also, in this issue, Heejung Cha suggests that in the aftermath of the Korean War, as “South Korea became politically, economically, and militarily dependent on the United States, . . . Korean society and culture became more heterosexually masculinized and hierarchically militarized” (49, 51).

In the borderlands of the U.S., and in the U.S. itself, there has been a dramatic rise in the incidence of sexual assault and unlawful detention as well as the application of surveillance technologies, the militarization of the borders, intensified criminalization, privatized incarceration, environmentally destructive wall-building, and the militarization of disaster relief (with Katrina as a prime example)—not to mention the diversion of resources to private military contractors. As Margo García Tómez writes in this volume: “As U.S. corporations and military industrial complexes increase the use of violence as acts of ‘sovereignty’—to seize control over lands, water, oil, ores, and biological resources in the specific region—the norming of violence saturates state as well as individual practices of social coercion and control along the U.S.-Mexico border (282). In addition to the violence of the frontlines, then, women must contend with invisible battlegrounds in the borderlands where they must face an unseen cascade of more slowly devastating consequences and developments.

#### **IV. Solidarity Against the Grain: On the Challenges of Building Feminist Resistance**

We need a sustained, radical critique of the links between systems of privilege, exclusionary practices, and the perpetuation of women’s cultural and political repression in all our societies. Without that, we will not be able to make the necessary shift to a feminist-inspired and feminist-driven vision of citizenship, one which is antiracist, anti-imperialist, and postcolonial in new and revolutionary ways.

—Patricia McFadden, “Re-crafting Citizenship in the Post-

colonial Moment”

Within dramatically different geopolitical contexts, feminists have produced voluminous critical work, as we have seen, on gender injustices as structured by imperialism, war, and capitalism. Significantly, we have seen that feminists often confront a range of challenges in difficult terrains of ideological complexity and across global systems of violently enforced inequalities. Recent feminist reflections on war and imperialism make the point, as Patricia McFadden suggests here, that feminist critique cannot ignore these systems if solidarity and forms of feminist political subjectivity are to avoid replicating imperialist forms of agency invested in the deadly narratives of humanitarianism. Formations of solidarity must, to use a phrase, go against the grain of the hegemonic directives of humanitarian intervention. If we are to engage in what Spivak called many years ago now the “difficult task of counterhegemonic ideological production” and reject “brandishing concrete experience” (“Can the Subaltern Speak?” 275), then when we speak of solidarity, we must grapple with international divisions of labor and wealth, as well as with the many social contradictions that assail our efforts to organize feminist opposition to war and imperialism.

With this difficult task in mind, this volume has been organized not by discipline or location but rather by four different dimensions of feminist inquiry into gender injustices and resistance: 1) historical and contemporary conjunctures; 2) hegemonic formations; 3) social movements; and 4) cultural interventions. The articles in each of the four groupings focus, to an extent, on the section topic, but the divisions are not meant to be hard and fast, as there is considerable overlap across sections in terms of the issues, methods, and assumptions that guide feminist analysis.

The first section of the volume, “‘Curious Feminist’ Inquiries into Invisible Imperialism,” features interviews and articles that advance analysis of some of the underlying “invisible” conjunctures in the historical and contemporary contexts of war, militarization, and imperialism—at the same time that they call for the urgent adoption of alternative feminist frameworks for analysis, security, and gender justice. It includes interviews with Cynthia Enloe and Heejung Cha as well as the articles by Liz Philipose and Valentine M. Moghadam. In her interview here, Cynthia Enloe explores the ways some of her very useful approaches—such as “feminist curiosity”—can be applied to analyze recent social and political developments underlying post-9/11 militarization, including the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the spirit of her earlier path-breaking work, such as *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases*—in which she shows us that we cannot assume the inevitability of even the most seemingly natural or mundane event—Enloe reminds us here that “ideas about collective shame and respect, about vulnerability, about masculinized decisiveness, about militarized solutions . . . are planted and watered—or challenged and uprooted—in kitchens, classrooms, boardrooms, and locker rooms, around coffee machines, in beauty parlors, and on talk radio” (42).

The interview with Heejung Cha reflects on the gendered consequences of militarization on the Korean Peninsula since the Cold



War. Cha provides detailed historical evidence of the collusion of local and global patriarchies in the suppression of women's labor, while also examining the gendered hierarchies that are reinforced as a result of pervasive forms of militarization and military service in South Korea. She also conducts extensive analysis of women's movements that have sprung up to resist these developments, both in the past and now in the neoliberal era, while she also explains how these concerns have shaped her research interests in cultural and literary analysis.

Valentine M. Moghadam, in "Afghanistan: Are Human Security and Gender Justice Possible?," outlines a conceptual framework—drawing from World Systems theory and feminist analyses of gender formations—to understand the "structural roots" of the U.S. war in Afghanistan. Given findings that militarization is rooted in economic and political formations of gender, Moghadam argues that global security must be redefined as gendered human security, with an emphasis on disarmament, "people-oriented economic development, regional cooperation, social protection, and gender justice" (81).

In her contribution here, "Healing the Wounds of Imperialism," Liz Philipose also emphasizes an approach that examines the invisible historical components of contemporary imperialism. In her article, she examines the torture and rendition of Maher Arar as "a portal" through which to understand the biopolitics of imperialism, its regime of torture, international law and militarization, but also, specifically, how the system redeploys a "coloniality of power" in racial hierarchies and exclusions drawn from the colonial past. In her own words, the rendition and torture of Maher Arar is "an incidence of racial wounding in imperialist politics and an expression of the coloniality of power" (66). This view of the "palimpsest of imperialism" enables a fuller understanding of the pain and emotion experienced by Arar and his family, as not just physical or psychological pain, but as a structural form of violence, "as structural as class or gender or race" (70). Decolonization, at this juncture, or "healing the wounds" as she puts it, necessarily entails resistance to imperialism not just politically and economically but also by integrating the subjective domains of emotion and spirituality into the politics of solidarity.

The second section, "Hegemonic Formations of Race, Gender, Sexuality, and Nation," is comprised of articles by Nadjie Al-Ali, Jasbir Puar, Shireen Roshanravan, and Mais Qutami, all of which address the challenges of organizing resistance amidst the shifting formations of hegemony in the aftermath of 9/11 and during the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Articles here address feminist resistance as a challenging and difficult negotiation of multiple constraints. Nadjie Al-Ali's article, "A Feminist Perspective on the Iraq War," historicizes the activism of Iraqi women and the challenges of solidarity given her own complex positioning as a German-Iraqi woman living in London (99). She writes of the challenges of staking out a resistant position apart from the destructive dynamic in imperialist contexts: "Women and 'women's issues' have, of course, been instrumentalized, both in Afghanistan and Iraq. We know that both Bush and Blair tried to co-opt the language of democracy and

human rights, especially women's rights. But their instrumentalizing women did not—and still does not mean—that we should condone or accept the way Islamist militants are, for their part, using women symbolically and attacking them physically to express their resistance" (108). In "Abu Ghraib and U.S. Sexual Exceptionalism," Jasbir Puar analyzes the complexity of the ideological terrains of gender, race, and sexuality created by "state of exception" discourses, including those organized around gender and sexual exceptionalism that have recalibrated Orientalist constructions of Muslim male sexuality as "pathologically excessive yet repressive, perverse yet homophobic, virile yet emasculated, monstrous yet flaccid" (*Terrorist Assemblages* xxv). In her analysis of Abu Ghraib photographs, Puar further argues that the focus on gay sex by critics in the LGBT press took the place of "a serious dialogue about rape, both the rape of Iraqi male prisoners but also, more significantly, the rape of female Iraqi prisoners" (131). Not nearly enough attention, according to Puar, has been paid to torture as a process of reordering the boundaries of gender—those between masculinity and femininity—that served to "corroborate implicit racial hierarchies" (132). In "Post-9/11 Shifts in Racial Formation: Tracing Complicity and Mapping Possibility for U.S. South Asian Community," Shireen Roshanravan writes of the challenges of forming feminist bonds of solidarity across racialized class boundaries generated by heteronormative scripts. Even as there has been a shift in U.S. racial formations after 9/11, one that sweeps up people of color into an undifferentiated category of "terrorist-suspect," an ideology of civilizing heterosexuality also operates to mark racialized class boundaries and bolster white, patriarchal nationalism. Pressures to conform to it are intense for people of color constructed as terrorist "others" by attributing to them "failed heterosexuality" (143). In "The Veil (De)contextualized and Nations 'Democratized': Unsettling War, Visibilities, and U.S. Hegemony," Mais Qutami contests hegemonic meanings of the veil amidst a climate of Islamophobia, while also calling attention to efforts to carve out spaces from which to articulate alternative perspectives on Arab-American and Arab-Islamic feminists: "In resistance to invisibility and silence, many Arab-Americans and Arab-Islamic feminists have forged their own space from which they have become their own definers and transmitted their own experiences" (161).

The third part of the volume, "Battlegrounds and Movements," consists of articles that focus on contemporary social movements, especially feminist movements, which have emerged in battles against militarization, capitalism, and contemporary colonialism. Articles by Rosemary Hennessy, Anne E. Lascamana, Assata Zerai, Reena Dube, and Patricia McFadden comprise this third section. Rosemary Hennessy, in her article "Gender Adjustments in Forgotten Places: The North-South Encuentros in Mexico," examines the transformative cross-fertilizations or encounters ("*encuentros*") between social movements in Northern and Southern Mexico, notably between the Coalition for Justice in Maquiladoras (CJM) and the Zapatistas. Workers in *maquilas* and indigenous communities are confronted with conditions of "bare life" generated by the constraints and exclusions imposed by neoliberalism on the capacity to sustain

the means of survival. Extending and revising Agamben's analysis of biopower, Hennessy argues that the bare lives or abandonment zones, which are legally excluded from political recognition, are also denied "outlawed needs," or the resources of time, energy, and community that are necessary to replenish the body and the environment. But, Hennessy argues, the *encuentros* are fighting back and forming "new political subjects" as they share strategies and tactics across divisions of ethnicity and location. Women, in particular, have taken leadership roles in "activating a biopower that nourishes life," while also engaging in small but not insignificant "gender adjustments" that have begun to question gender norms in daily life (196). "Through lived practice rather than analysis, a feminism without the name plots the future" (197).

Other contributors in this section also write of women engaged in the challenging work of building movements based on counter-hegemonic political engagements, new political subjectivities, and new forms of knowledge production. In "Subaltern Feminist Counterpublics and the Global Social Justice Movement," Reena Dube analyzes how women in the Oaxaca uprising of 2006 forged a "feminist counterpublic sphere" by producing media that politicized the analysis of daily life. Dube reflects on the problem of theorizing counterpublic protests, and, specifically, argues that the bourgeois public sphere, as theorized by Habermas, does not account for the colonial context of Western European modernity, and thus poses difficulties for theorizing subaltern counterpublics in the contemporary era of globalization. Anne E. Lacsamana, in "Empire on Trial: The Subic Rape Case and the Struggle for Philippine Women's Liberation," explores the significance of women's movements in the Philippines, specifically in their agitation against assault and rape by soldiers in the U.S. military, as they articulate feminism with anti-imperialist nationalism. Basing her analysis on a 2005 rape by a U.S. service member, the first case involving U.S. military personnel tried and convicted in a Philippine court, she argues that racialized gender oppression is at the core of U.S. imperialism in the Philippines. In "A Black Feminist Critique of American Christian Antiwar (Dis)engagements," Assata Zerai compares the responses to the "war on terror" of three protestant churches in the American Midwest. In a sociological study in which she gathered data on the profiles, priorities, and practices of three churches, Zerai discovers how, in her words, "Black feminist organizational structures, including those within religious organizations" may provide a foundation for progressive change and critique (243). As she states, "To the extent that religious organizations have elements of a black feminist organizing structure, I theorize that those organizations will be apt to tackle militarism and protest the 'war on terror'" (243). In "Re-Crafting Citizenship in the Postcolonial Moment: A Focus on Southern Africa," Patricia McFadden also calls for new political engagement with the state via "increasing work on the potential of a radical notion of citizenship, particularly for women in the societies of the South" (268). Citizenship must be reframed, McFadden argues, as a "new imaginary" of social relationships that emphasizes feminist struggle, now and in the past, for a radically transformed future (269).

The fourth and final part of the volume, "Cultural Interventions," which consists of articles by Helen Scott, Kamala Platt, Margo García Támez, Charles Cunningham, and Margaret Stetz, addresses the significance of culture, literature, and testimony in specific articulations of resistance and opposition to global war and militarization. Contributors in this section analyze the critical perspectives and affective possibilities provided by histories and sustaining memories of collective action and social justice, especially of histories of feminism interwoven with national liberation and anti-imperialism that emerged from nonviolent, leftist, and grassroots movements. In "'Our Way of Life is Our Resistance': Indigenous Women and Anti-Imperialist Challenges to Militarization along the U.S.-Mexico Border," Margo García Támez examines the historical and legal contexts of resistance by Indigenous women in the regions of the U.S.-Mexico boundary. As she explains, this activism spans hegemonic boundaries of identity, territory, and political affiliation. She situates the activism of three Indigenous women activists—Leal, Riddle, and Támez—within ongoing challenges by Indigenous peoples to their legal sovereignty, cultural organizations, and practices. Even as the contemporary battles fought by these three activists—especially challenges by the Lipan Apache Women Defense (LAW-Defense) to wall-building and new enclosures—are prompted by new forms of enclosure and militarization after 9/11, they are actually fighting in a much longer war in which militarization has become normalized to such an extent that it has become invisible. The three activists emerge from this rich historical matrix of collective resistance against this invisible war: "Histories, contexts, and texts of Indigenous peoples' anti-imperialist and anti-colonial struggles in Mexico's northern states and the U.S. Southwest are rooted in kinship, trade, and epistemological exchange based in 10,000 years of transcontinental Indigenous social, economic and political mobilities and relationships" (283).

Helen Scott, in "Beyond Mourning: The Legacy of the Grenadian Revolution in Literature," explores the mostly neglected moment of literary output during a brief period of promise and liberation in the midst of the 1979-83 revolution in Grenada. This has been overshadowed by media reports of the invasion, which was justified by racist depictions of "corruption and chaos" of the then-socialist government of Grenada. We must move "beyond mourning" to recapture those hopeful moments in resistant acts of nostalgia that insist on memories of possibility in social liberation. Scott reflects: "It is surely the right time to return to the spirit of anti-imperialism and independence that animated Grenada in 1979. There is much to be learned from the mistakes of the New Jewel Movement. . . . But there is much to be learned also from the concrete achievements and larger aims of the movement itself" (325).

In "Women on Wars & Walls: Cultural Poetics from Palestine to South Texas," Kamala Platt explores a comparative analysis of the activist poetics associated with anti-wall movements in the U.S.-Mexico border region and Palestinian Occupied Territories—two militarized borderland areas also implicated in the project of U.S. imperialism. She also connects the events and implications sur-

rounding the murder of George Tiller to the hegemonic representations and distortions that generate intensified militarization, racism, and misogyny, and wall-building. Indeed, Platt calls into question the protocols of “academic distance” of feminist scholarship: “My own grassroots work on arenas of war and walls has intervened in the writing process; through largely laptop activism, this has nonetheless contributed to my discussion of women’s response to, and experiences of, walls, wars and borderlands” (331).

In “‘A War, Once Started’: Feminism, Marxism, and the Dialectics of Destruction” Charles Cunningham argues that war generates unforeseen social, political, and ideological consequences, among which are notably the brutal reassertion of oppressive gender and race ideologies. In terms of gender, the resulting ideological climate produces an imbalance between masculinity and femininity, one that has the effect of polarizing categories of masculinity and femininity as well as creating rigid hierarchies of masculinity over femininity. Brutality and violence, especially rape and sexual harassment against women, are thus justified, “unleashed,” and perpetually reinforced. His larger point is that “rational” planners do not, and cannot, anticipate these consequences because instrumental forms of reason do not admit uncertainty or dialectical complexity.

In “‘Comfort Women’ on the International Public Stage: Feminist Resistance and the Politics of Visibility,” Margaret Stetz provides a compelling overview of the painful dilemma of comfort women who repeatedly give testimony without official acknowledgement of the injustices they suffered. As Stetz describes: “Women in their seventies and eighties have been repeating again and again, often in large public forums, the details of their individual stories” (386). The details, quotes from testimony, and her documentation of inaction by authorities provide an extremely important context for approaching larger questions about visibility and the politics of feminist intervention. The underlying assumption that Stetz questions is the notion that visibility of injustice necessarily leads to action. In the cases that she describes, visibility, by itself, does not lead to change, and the painful ordeal of speaking out leads not to justice but to greater suffering.

Testimony and “media exposure” do not necessarily lead either to critical consciousness or social change, as Stetz demonstrates. If we wish to meaningfully resist invisibilities and constructed hyper-visibility, what is necessary is constant vigilance but also long-term reflection on our political concepts of analysis and solidarity. In a recent article, Angela Davis has said of responses to Abu Ghraib images: “We tend to relegate so much power to the image that we assume not only that the meaning of the image is self-evident but we also fetishize the image, thinking that it will spur us to action. . . . The problem to which I am referring emanates from the assumption that rational communication and publicity are sufficient” (23). Davis follows up these observations with the idea that change must be created by the political and conceptual imagination that mobilizes our resistance. Within these pages, feminists engage in all sorts of efforts to provide oppositional political research and an imaginative blueprint for change attentive to the principles of gender, economic, and

social justice. It is their imaginative risk-taking that refuses the present as the only possibility.

### Acknowledgements

This project has truly been a collective effort. I am especially grateful to David Downing, the editor of *Works & Days* since 1984, for first suggesting that I edit an issue of the journal and, throughout the process, for providing unwavering support, enthusiasm, and advice—and just plain smarts on how to get this done. He is a stellar colleague and friend who has shared his consummate skills and experience to produce this issue—and also to maintain this journal through the years as an exciting and vital source for leftist cultural studies. I am also thankful for the outstanding work by the editorial staff, Tracy Lassiter and Adam Wassel, whose copy-editing abilities are truly dazzling, especially given that they both juggle demanding schedules as doctoral students in the IUP graduate literature program. For the dedicated, invaluable labors of editorial assistant Begoña Vilouta-Vázquez, whom we can thank for the magnificent cover design among her many contributions to this project, I am indebted beyond measure. I also deeply appreciate the generous editorial advice and technical support from Edward J. Carvalho, especially for helping us to scan crisp, clear images. For her helpful critique of the project's conceptualization, my thanks go to Wan-li Chen, who read and commented on the initial call-for-papers. My heartfelt thanks also extend to Kamala Platt, Reena Dube, and David Downing for their invaluable comments on earlier drafts of my introduction. Many other people offered encouragement and insight, including Gail Berlin, Jean-Yves Boulard, David Comfort, Jennifer Jopp, Sara King, Mary Mathis, Kate Miller, sj Miller, Mike Sell, Rubina Sheikh, Ada Holly Shissler, Roxann Wheeler, Tami Whited, and Lingyan Yang. I must recognize, as well, that the energy behind this project is owed, in part, to the leaders of antiwar organizing here at IUP and in the community—Jeff Dories, Jim Dougherty, Jill Fiore, Harvey Holtz, and Terri Smith—who worked tirelessly in a then-hostile climate during the early years of the U.S. war in Iraq. Finally, this project would not have made it to fruition without the amazing contributions of my partner Jessica Jopp. At every stage, she has made profound gifts of her time and energy, from her meticulous proof-reading to her constant advice and suggestions on every aspect of the special issue. This project is dedicated with love and deep gratitude to her.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The Balad Airbase in Iraq is perhaps the most well-known, but there are at least four additional “enduring” bases, among fourteen bases that will remain open after U.S. “withdrawal.” See Lutz, “Obama’s Empire: An Unprecedented Network of Military Bases That is Still Expanding”; Santora, “Big U.S. Bases are Part of Iraq, but a World Apart.” In fact, estimates of the number of U.S. military bases vary because many bases, such as in Israel, Kuwait, the Philippines, Pakistan, Iraq, and Afghanistan, are not officially

acknowledged. See Lutz, *The Bases of Empire*; Corn, "Whatever Happened to the CIA's Black Sites?"

The building boom in military bases is attributable to the new defense strategy that aims to maintain global readiness; in Chomsky's words, "Bases are the empire. . . . They are the point of projection of power and expansion of power" (qtd. in Jamail). See Jamail, "Operation Enduring Occupation." New bases are being built or expanded not only in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also in the Pacific Islands, particularly Guam, where devastating social and environmental impacts are anticipated. See Paik, "Living at the 'Tip of the Spear'." U.S. military bases, with Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib and Bagram as clear examples, serve as "spaces of exception" where some of the worst illegalities, such as torture-led interrogation and secret detention, have been introduced and perpetrated. See Puar in this volume. Since World War II, when the U.S. began massive base buildups, Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs) have laid the groundwork for imperialist occupation that suspends legal and sovereign rights of occupied countries. See Lascamana in this volume.

<sup>2</sup> In Afghanistan, as Obama's plan for a troop surge has been implemented, U.S. troops now total over 90,000 and will soon approach 100,000. They will carry out offensives in southern and eastern Afghanistan, including a planned offensive on Kandahar in summer 2010. In Iraq, even as U.S. commanders continue to hedge on the scheduled summer 2010 troop reductions, approximately 50,000 U.S. troops will remain there. See U.S. Department of Defense, *Active Duty Personnel*.

Private contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan number over 250,000, and, with the increasing privatization of war under the new Pentagon plan, that number is expected to rise. See Scahill, "Obama has 250,000 'Contractors' in Iraq and Afghan Wars." Numbers estimated for just one contractor (KBR) indicate that there is one KBR worker for every three U.S. soldiers, and KBR subcontracts many of its more dangerous and menial tasks at a fraction of soldier pay to Asian laborers. See Chatterjee, "The Military's Expanding Waistline."

KBR, Dyncorp, Fluor, and Blackwater (now Xe services) dominate the field of private contractors. The Pentagon logistics management program, Logistics Civilian Augmentation Program (LOGCAP), divides most of its contracts for large base construction, maintenance, and security among these four contractors, all of which have gained billions in gross revenue since 2001. KBR, which has grossed over \$25 billion since 2001, was contracted for base construction in Vietnam, and later for Pacific bases such as on Diego Garcia. It built most of the bases in Iraq and Afghanistan as well. See Chatterjee, *Iraq, Inc.*

<sup>3</sup> The new defense strategy emphasis on counterinsurgency warfare relies on the expansion of tactics of so-called "low intensity conflict," such as assassinations, torture, detention, Special Forces Operations, checkpoints, and drone attacks, all of which generate greater numbers of civilian casualties, especially of women and children. The use of proxies, including local militias, police forces, and private guards, creates and entrenches autocratic, patriarchal structures of governance. See U.S. Department of Defense, *2010 QDR*. See Klare; Englehardt and Turse; Grossman; Scahill; Schwartz. In this volume, see Moghadam; Philipose.

<sup>4</sup> Coalition military deaths exceed 4700 in Iraq, and 1687 in Afghanistan, with nearly a third (519) in Afghanistan occurring since the escalation of violence in 2009. The number of U.S. military deaths in Afghanistan is now over 1000. See U.S. Department of Defense, *U.S. Military Casualties*.

Calculations of the number of civilian casualties in these conflicts differ dramatically according to how the scope of war's impact is defined. The 2006 updated *Lancet* study of civilian deaths in Iraq, as of 2006, puts the fig-

ure at 654,965, and, since then, estimates of Iraqi civilian deaths that extrapolate from the *Lancet* put it at over 1 million. Also, see *Just Foreign Policy*, "Iraq Deaths"; *Opinion Research Business*, "More than 1,000,000 Iraqis murdered"; *Iraq Body Count*. In Afghanistan, with totals also unclear, there have been between an estimated 13,000 to 34,000 civilians deaths since 2001, and there are reports that "2009 witnessed the highest number of civilian deaths and injuries since UNAMA started systematically recording civilian casualties in 2007" (UNAMA). See UNAMA (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan), 2009 Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict. In Pakistan tribal regions, the numbers of civilians killed in drone attacks and now well into the hundreds. See Human Rights Watch, "Pakistan: Events of 2009."

In recent wars and military occupations, women have numbered significantly among the casualties. According to UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women), "some 70% of the casualties in recent conflicts have been non-combatants," many of them women and children. Especially in conflicts with the prevalent use of aerial bombardment by the U.S., such as in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq, as many women and children as men are maimed and killed by cluster bombs, depleted uranium, and missiles. See Chew, "Occupation, Part I." In the 2004 *Lancet* study, which at that point estimated that of the war-related deaths of over 100,000 civilians, "women and children . . . made up the majority of those violently killed by coalition forces" (Chew 3). Assassinations and threats of physical violence against women in public life also rose dramatically after U.S.-led invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. See Zangana, 114-116.

During periods of intense warfare, little or no security has also meant skyrocketing rates of sexual assault, kidnapping, trafficking, and killing of women. UNIFEM reports that "almost half of all persons indicted by the International Criminal Court and other international tribunals are charged with rape or sexual assault."

<sup>5</sup> The costs of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars through September 2010 are estimated to top \$1 trillion, while the cost to the U.S. economy is said to approach \$3 trillion. For these cost analyses, see Stiglitz and Blimes, *The Three Trillion Dollar War: The True Cost of the Iraq Conflict*. For analysis of the U.S. military budget, especially in terms of social spending trade-offs, see National Priorities Project. Also, see Comerford, "Tax Day and America's Wars."

For a discussion of contemporary warfare as a "regime of biopolitics," see Härtling, "Global Civil War and Postcolonial Studies." Härtling provides a useful overview of postcolonial and postmodern theories of "global civil war," as she terms contemporary forms of warfare, rooted in colonial histories, that impact and structure civil society in unprecedented ways. In her words, "War is a permanent social relation, a regime of biopolitics, a form of rule aimed at controlling the population but producing and reproducing all aspects of social life" (7). Also, see Hardt and Negri.

<sup>6</sup> See, especially, Robin L. Riley and Naeem Inayatullah, Eds. *Interrogating Imperialism: Conversations on Gender, Race, and War*; Robin L. Riley, Chandra Talpade Mohanty, and Minnie Bruce Pratt, Eds. *Feminism and War: Confronting U.S. Imperialism*; Krista Hunt and Kim Rygiel, Eds. (En) *Gendering the War on Terror: War Stories and Camouflaged Politics*; Mary Hawkesworth and Karen Alexander, *War and Terror I & II: Raced-Gendered Logics and Effects beyond Conflict Zones* special double issue of *Signs* 32.4 & 33.1 (Spring & Autumn 2007); Wenona Giles and Jennifer Hyndman, Eds., *Sites of Violence: Gender and Conflict Zones*.

<sup>7</sup> Fraser argues that some strands that separated from the initial integrative feminist critique, especially those focused entirely on culture and identity, have aided and abetted the goals of neoliberal capitalism. "Split off from one another and from the societal critique that had integrated them, sec-



ond-wave hopes were conscripted in the service of a project that was deeply at odds with our larger, holistic vision of a just society. In a fine instance of the cunning of history, utopian desires found a second life as feeling currents that legitimated the transition to a new form of capitalism: post-Fordist, transnational, neoliberal" (99).

<sup>8</sup> Kevin J. Ayotte and Mary E. Husain, "Securing Afghan Women: Neo-colonialism, Epistemic Violence, and the Rhetoric of the Veil"; Debra Cohler, "Keeping the Home Front Burning: Renegotiating gender and sexuality in U.S. mass media after September 11"; Zillah Eisenstein, "Feminism in the Aftermath of September 11"; Krista Hunt, "'Embedded Feminism' and the War on Terror"; Shahnaz Khan, "Afghan women: the limits of colonial rescue"; Iris Marion Young, "The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State."

<sup>9</sup> See Mamdani, who traces connections between the CIA and ISI to earlier patterns of proxy warfare during the Cold War. See also Neil Smith's documentation in *The Endgame of Globalization* of over 100 military interventions by the U.S. in the 20th Century.

<sup>10</sup> Melissa Brittain, "Benevolent Invaders, Heroic Victims and Depraved Villains: White Femininity in Media Coverage of the Invasion of Iraq"; David Kirkpatrick, "Jessica Lynch Criticizes U.S. Accounts of Her Ordeal."

<sup>11</sup> See Chew, "Occupation Is Not (Women's) Liberation, Part I" for an analysis of women's groups, such as the Independent Women's Forum, which were funded by the State Department during the Bush Administration. See, also, Zangana, *City of Widows*, where she states: "Most Iraqi women do not regard traditional society, exemplified by the neighborhood and extended family, however restrictive at times, as the enemy. . . . The enemy is the collapse of the state and civil society. And the culprit is the foreign military invasion and occupation" (104).

<sup>12</sup> Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others"; Marnia Lazreg, *The Eloquence of Silence: Algerian Women in Question*; Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" and "Terror: A Speech After 9-11"; Meyda Yegenoglu, *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism*.

<sup>13</sup> After some improvements for women from 2001 to 2005, Human Rights Watch (2009) reports that conditions are worsening dramatically with the rise in "power of conservative leaders who want to deny women their basic rights" (Motevalli). UNIFEM reports that "87% of Afghan women are regularly subject to beatings and assault." Furthermore, UNAMA describes rape as "an everyday occurrence in all parts of the country," while "rapists are often directly linked to power brokers who are, effectively, above the law and enjoy immunity from arrest as well as immunity from social condemnation" (qtd. in Jones 25). Also, see Anne E. Brodsky, *With All Our Strength*.

<sup>14</sup> In the first meeting of the post-Taliban era in December 2001, at the Bonn Conference, only 2 of the 23 Afghan representatives were women. In the Karzai government that formed shortly afterward, only 2 of the government ministers were women. Prominent women politicians, journalists, and civil servants have been assassinated, kidnapped, and beaten—some by President Karzai's associates. Those who continue to pursue public life "refrain from criticizing warlords and other power brokers, or covering topics that are deemed contentious such as women's rights" (UNAMA report, qtd. in Jones 25). In more recent developments in Afghanistan, Karzai has instituted the Shiite Personal Status Law, which some have called the "marital rape law" because it allows men to deny women food if they are not available for sexual relations once every four days; the law actually consists of over 250 articles that deny women basic economic and political rights.

<sup>15</sup> In 2003, Malali Joya was physically assaulted while speaking out during a parliamentary session and called a prostitute. See Khan, 167.

<sup>16</sup>In the first meeting of the post-Baathist reconstruction government, only 4 of the 80 delegates were women. In the original Iraqi Governing Council, women held only 3 of the 25 seats. See Chew, "Occupation, Part I." The political base for U.S. power in occupied Iraq has been built on coalitions with militias and reactionary forces, "which set the sectarian, ethnic, and gender blueprint for the interim government that followed the 'elected' government, the membership of the parliament, and the drafting of the constitution" (Zangana 93). There were no female provincial governors and very few female representatives on city, district, and neighborhood councils. Furthermore, the Interim Governing Council passed a resolution for Sharia Law to replace the hard-won family civil code. Only after thousands of Iraqi women protested, did then-Coalition Provisional Authority administrator Paul Bremer overturn the resolution. Also, even as the October 2005 Iraqi Constitution stipulates that 25% of seats in the National Assembly must be held by women, violence against women, especially against women in public positions, makes it unlikely that that figure can be maintained.

<sup>17</sup>Quoted in Dickinson and Schaeffer, 234.

<sup>18</sup>See Human Rights Watch, "The Curse of Gold." Jim Lobe, "Global Businesses Profit from Congo War, Groups Charge."

<sup>19</sup>See U.S. Army, "U.S. and DRC in partnership to train model Congolese battalion." Also, Karen De Young and Greg Jaffe, "U.S. 'Secret War' Expands Globally as Special Operations Forces Take Larger Role."

<sup>20</sup>See Westad. Also, see Mamdani: "While supporting a range of pro-terroristic groups, under the policy directives of the Reagan Doctrine, the U.S. engaged in a full blown ideological assault on secular, left-wing groups" (Mamdani 98).

<sup>21</sup>"Accumulation by dispossession" is David Harvey's term for one other main mechanism of redistribution under neoliberalism, which includes "the forceful expulsion of peasants, conversion of commons to private property, suppression of rights to the commons, commodification of labor and suppression of alternative forms of production and consumption, colonial, neo-colonial, and imperial processes of appropriation of assets usury, looting of pensions," and many more (159-160). See Harvey, *The New Imperialism*. See, also, Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*.

<sup>22</sup>See Banks, "The recent deals between Iraq and oil majors Shell and BP could be good news for investors." One stockholder of BP is quoted as saying: "The Iraq deal is an excellent one for BP and provides an almost risk free way to gain a foothold in a country that is likely to become an increasingly important player in the global oil market" (Banks). Also, Williams, "U.S. Companies Join Race on Iraqi Oil Bonanza."

<sup>23</sup>See Schwartz for an analysis of U.S. rules of engagement that include collective punishment. "The view—that these attacks on civilians were necessary to teach civilian families in insurgent strongholds a lesson—was first articulated as part of the 'get tough' policy announced by Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, the top U.S. commander in Iraq, . . . in 2003. *New York Times* reporter Dexter Filkins, citing unnamed 'American officers,' reported that the new policy was designed to use military power to 'punish not only the guerrillas, but also make clear to ordinary Iraqis the cost of not cooperating' with U.S. counterinsurgency operations" (85). See, also, Beaumont, "Farah Tried to Plead with the U.S. Troops but She was Killed Anyway." Recent revelations regarding cover-ups of such practices suggest that they are ongoing in the current U.S. surge in Afghanistan. See Oppel, "U.S. Admits Role in Killing of Afghan Women."

<sup>24</sup>See Mamdani, for a history of state terrorism in the twentieth century. His analysis includes the development of state terrorism by the CIA. As Mamdani explains, *The CIA Manual of Psychological Operations in Guerilla Warfare* (1985) recommended, in the words of the manual, "the selective use of violence" against civilians and "neutralization" of civilian leaders (116).

*The CIA Manual* states: "It is possible to neutralize carefully selected and planned targets, such as court judges, magistrates, police and state security officials. . . . For psychological purposes, it is necessary to gather together the population affected, so that they will be present, take part in the act, and formulate accusations against the oppressor" (qtd. in Mamdani 116). See, also, Kristian Williams, *American Methods: Torture and the Logic of Domination*.

<sup>25</sup> Women must contend not just with the immediate destruction of infrastructure, but also longer term environmental after-effects of toxic weaponry, such as depleted uranium and unexploded ordnance. In Baghdad, according to Haifa Zangana, "there are an estimated eight hundred hazardous sites, the majority related to cluster bombs" (20). See Ghazi, "Cancer: The Deadly Legacy of the Invasion of Iraq." Also, Hsiao-Rei Hicks et al, "The Weapons That Kill Civilians." Furthermore, in Iraq today, according to CBS News, less than a 1/3 of Iraqis have access to potable water compared to 50% before the war—despite the fact that the U.S. military spent \$1.5 billion on water projects from 2003-2007. For the deadly consequences of infrastructure destruction in Gaza, see Associated Press, "UN: Gaza's post-war environmental problems worsening."

<sup>26</sup> According to Mamdani, this is the worst increase in mortality in any war in the last two hundred years. In his words, "Even the minimum estimate was three times the number of Japanese killed during the U.S. atomic-bomb attacks" (189).

<sup>27</sup> See Chew; Zangana; Enloe. Also, Al-Ali in this volume. During periods of the U.S. war on Iraq, unemployment was estimated to be around 70% in Iraq, and women who lost their jobs were forced into prostitution and menial labor to earn money. What's more, 72% of salaried Iraqi women were public employees, and "they lost their jobs after government ministries were dismantled by the U.S.-led coalition" (Chew, "Occupation, Part I"). Indeed, in the 1970s, the Baathists made available many employment benefits to Iraqi women, providing them with more opportunities for professional advancement in the Middle East.

In 2009, Afghanistan ranked 181 out of 182 countries in the UN Human Development Index (UNDP). With the closure of schools, and the emphasis on basic survival, literacy rates can decline rapidly for women and girls. Also, according to MADRE, today, in Afghanistan, "87% of Afghan women are illiterate; only 30% of girls have access to education in Afghanistan." And, with declining access to medical care, infant mortality, maternity mortality, and backstreet abortions can rise dramatically. "44 years is the average life expectancy rate for women in Afghanistan" (MADRE). The decline of medical care has also meant that women must bear more of the burden of care-giving themselves, a burden increasing with rampant outbreaks of disease. See RAWA, "On the Situation of Afghan Women."

<sup>28</sup> See Mahmood, "An Empty Sort of Freedom." Also, Boone, "Plight of Afghan Women May Worsen as War Effort is Stepped Up."

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