Women and Militarism

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Militarism in various forms dominates states all over the world, and its basic value of "power over the other" influences the population which begins to accept the suitability of violence as a method of resolving conflicts. Although war and the military are considered to be "men's work," armed conflict and the militarist ideology have had a great impact on women all over the world. A gender analysis of militarism is essential to both feminists and peace activists who are working towards a world free of all forms of violence, injustice and oppression. Military values contribute to the construction of narrow definitions of masculine and feminine characteristics and this should be addressed by feminists in search of an alternative society without rigid gender roles. Patriarchy is one of the roots of militarism, so a gender analysis is useful to peace activists, in order to challenge the basic ideology of militarism, rather than just addressing its effects. An examination of the effects of militarism on women in both peace and war time show that women do have a specific concern with militarism and war and therefore a large stake in working for peace.

Militarism

Militarism encompasses much more than just the armed forces of a state and their activities. It is an ideology of power affecting governments with different political objectives and its influence can become part of a social process which penetrates all areas of a society. One useful definition of this complex idea comes from the World Council of Churches, which defines militarism as the result of the process of militarization in which "military values, ideology and pattern of behavior achieve a dominating influence on the political, social, economic and external affairs of the state, and as a consequence the structural, ideological and behavioural patterns of both the society and the government are 'militarized.'" Militarism involves a willingness on the part of states to realize their policies through deliberate and organized use of physical force. It is open-ended and there is no theoretical limit on how much force will be used; it is indiscriminate, continuous and impenitent. War is not a continuous state of humanity, nor is it something which creates itself or "just happens." It is a direct result of militarism, and should be seen in that light.
Militarism as a process has both material and ideological manifestations. These vary in different cultures and at different times, but there are some common elements. The material forms of militarism which are evident around the world include wars and direct military interventions, destabilization of other countries through proxy armies, foreign-sponsored coups, foreign and colonial occupation, military rule and abuse of human rights. Its institutional manifestations include the armed forces and government budgets which devote a disproportionate amount of money to the military. Militarization is the "gradual encroachment of the military institution into the civilian arena," including, for example, industrial plants becoming dependent on military contracts or the state relying on the military to solve its unemployment problems.

The ideological manifestations of militarism are more difficult to identify because often they are internalized by the society. They include a dissemination of military values, symbols and language among the civilian population which promotes acceptance of hierarchies, nationalism which defines the "other" as enemy, violence as a legitimate means of resolving conflicts, and strict division of proper masculine and feminine roles.

"Power-over-the-other" is the basic value of militarism and the military is an exaggerated microcosm of this dominance which protects those in power. It is hierarchical and unaccountable to the people. In a militarized society, the population begins to accept the idea that "might is right" and that society should be founded on a dominant-submissive mode of relationship and has ramifications for interpersonal relationships. This hierarchy is seen as a prerequisite for social stability and not as a form of repression.

Militaristic nationalism encourages polarization in which a group identity is defined as being in opposition to the "other." Group membership is most obviously at work within the military itself, where uniforms, communal living and group activities all serve as identifiers of belonging to a particular group. Nationalism affects civilians who begin to identify with "us" and not "them," as the virtues of one culture, race or ethnic group and the defects of the "other" are both exaggerated. When nationalism is linked to militarism, the "other" becomes the "enemy." This is cyclical: military ideology creates an "enemy" out of difference
and then uses the existence of this enemy to justify continued militarism. Thus, "power-over-the-other" is extended beyond the boundaries of the society.

The military system of belief contends that one of the main ways of controlling society and ensuring social stability is through use of organized violence and force. Militarism provides a context for much violence in society. As the government sees force as a legitimate means to an end, or, in fact, an end in itself, society is anesthetized to it and eventually comes to accept it. This is reinforced in civilian life by the media which glorifies war, and portrays violence as necessary, combat as exhilarating and aggression as natural. As violence becomes accepted, it is minimized through language which distorts and sanitizes its impact. Carol Cohn argues that military "doublespeak" masks the lethality of nuclear weapons. Missiles are called "peacekeepers," civilian deaths become "collateral damage," and "penetrating weapons" hit "virgin targets." Militaristic terms have pervaded the english language, and are especially evident in sports, with teams "decimating" and "annihilating" each other. While militaristic language and war movies may seem harmless, they are symptoms of a society which minimizes the ramifications of military activities and institutionalized violence. This acceptance of coercion and physical force as primary methods for solving problems can extend to violence in the home and in relationships.

The militarization of a society cannot proceed without the compliance of the population. In many countries, this submission is achieved by overt military means, through "low intensity conflict" and terror intended to silence dissent and protect the power of elites. In some societies, however, the acceptance of military values is based on consent, rather than on coercion. As Noam Chomsky has documented, propaganda plays an important role, particularly in democracies, where popular, uncritical support is vital to the endorsement and pursuit of the state's activities and interests. The process of militarization can be legitimized and perpetuated through government propaganda, or more subtly, through popular culture and media which glorify military exploits or in school curricula which prepare the next generation to participate in the military structure. Even when there is dissent in a democratic society, it exists within a narrowly defined framework. People can be mobilized to protest a particular war or military activity, but are much less likely to question the fundamental existence of the military institution.
The degree to which a society has been militarized can be seen by the degree to which military institutions and solutions are considered acceptable or "common sense" by the populace. The acceptance of the military as a viable career or the belief that recruitment of women soldiers is a triumph for women's liberation are both examples of "ideological militarization." Government responsibilities to the population become dependent on the institution of the military and the populace accepts this.

Why a Gender Analysis?

The military ideology affects all facets of society. What then is the significance of an analysis which focuses on militarism's specific effects on women? The interrelation between peace activism and feminism has long been recognized by activists and scholars and a gender analysis of militarism can serve both movements. Birgit Brock-Utne's definition of peace combines non-violence, equality and justice. "By peace we mean the absence of violence in any given society, both internal, external, direct and indirect. We further mean the nonviolent results of equality of rights, by which every member of that society, through nonviolent means, participates equally in decisional power which regulates it, and the distribution of the resources which sustain it." Feminism envisions similar ideals. As a social movement and an ideology, its aims include the empowerment of women, the achievement of equality between men and women and the creation of a just society. "Ending discrimination against women and achieving a non-violent world are mutually interdependent, inseparable goals." If women want to build peace, they must also rid themselves of oppression based on gender. Similarly, if women want to gain their emancipation, they must work for a peaceful society in which to live. A gender analysis of militarism and war is essential to both of these movements.

Just as peace activists and feminists have similar goals, they also face similar obstacles. In their struggle for equality and a just society in which both men and women are empowered, feminists are confronted by patriarchy, a social power structure and an ideology which provides a context and justification for institutionalized discrimination and violence against women. Its material aspects are manifest in men's control over resources and over women's labour power and in the marginalization of women from positions of power and decision-making. Peace activists must contend with the institution of the military and its material and ideological manifestations. As institutions based on power and oppression, militarism and patriarchy are inextricably linked. Cynthia
Enloe, who has written extensively on women and militarism sees the oppression of women as a fundamental part of the militarist ideology and not just one of its many consequences. Militarism is so tied to constructions of masculine and feminine that "to omit gender from any explanation of how militarization occurs, is not only to risk a flawed political analysis; it is to risk, too, a perpetually unsuccessful campaign to roll back that militarism." Similarly, questioning militaristic ideas will also challenge prevailing ideas about gender which are used to marginalize and oppress women. Therefore it is essential that feminists examine militarism and challenge it as one of the root causes of women's oppression and equally necessary that peace activists examine and challenge patriarchy as one of the root causes of militarism.

One of the ideological manifestations of patriarchy is the imposition of rigid conceptions of gender roles. These are used to justify discrimination against women, and as these beliefs continue from generation to generation, this situation continues. Gender categories are social relationships, values, behaviours and attributes culturally associated with the male and female biological sexes respectively. In other words, while sex is biological, gender is social. These gender characteristics are often expressed as binary oppositions (active/passive; logical/intuitive; rational/irrational; etc.) and are reinforced by any number of doctrines in a patriarchal society. They are by no means adopted by all men and women (in fact, many people resist these roles as restrictive), but they represent what a society deems to be "appropriate" behaviour in "proper" men and women. It can be argued that the separation of what are essentially "human" values and characteristics into rigid categories of masculine and feminine is in itself a root of discrimination and violence in society.

Even in societies which do not seem overtly militarized, military values play a "special role in the ideological structure of patriarchy because the notion of 'combat' plays such a central role in the construction of concepts of 'manhood' and justifications of the superiority of maleness in the social order." The cliché that the military makes a man out of a boy is a familiar one. But what kind of a "man" does it create? Is it a man capable of both dominance and submission, aggression and compassion, or is it a man who values only the stereotypically masculine traits? The recruit is stripped of his individuality and is taught not show "feminine" traits like tenderness or weakness. Only those characteristics necessary to be a good soldier are permitted. Stereotypical masculine characteristics like aggressiveness, bravery,
endurance and discipline are demanded and any stereotypical feminine characteristics such as compassion, cooperation, or nurturing are belittled and weeded out. Accounts of basic training in the military in different countries show a strategy of "breaking" the recruits and "molding" them into fighters. The indoctrination teaches that "the good things are manly and collective; the despicable are feminine and individual." Although individual soldiers are encouraged to function as a "unit" and feel loyal to their "brothers in arms," this is not based on feelings of community or cooperation; rather it is based on hierarchy and on a model of dominance and submission. The military needs conformity and its rigid code of masculinity cannot allow for any difference. This is exhibited in the reaction to gays in the military and the continual efforts to purge them.

This socialization of men to aspire to the characteristics of a good soldier is in direct contrast to the socialization of women. Just as militaristic nationalism needs an antithesis, so too does aggressive masculinity. In a hierarchical structure of domination and submission, there must be someone on the bottom; in a patriarchal system it is women. By proving his "manhood," a man is also proving that he is not a child or a woman. Thus, patriarchy (and the military) has to define feminine traits in opposition to masculine ones. If soldiers (and by extension, all "real" men) are strong and brave and aggressive, then "real" women must be the opposite: weak, passive and in need of protection. This reinforces the strength and potency of the masculine soldier. The masculinity of war depends on the myth that women must be protected. As is often the case with patriarchal assumptions about women, there are "good" women (wives, mothers and "sweethearts") who need protection, and "bad" women (prostitutes and enemy women) who are expendable. This distinction is very clear in the militaristic mind and explains the fact that a soldier who is fighting for the freedom and honour of "his" women can rape and murder "their" women. Thus, militarism opposes equality between the sexes because it relies on the degradation of women and the denial of their subjectivity. Women exist only in relation to men--as victims in need of protection, or as sexual objects deserving exploitation.

The socialization which perpetuates these gender roles extends into peace time and civilian life as well, and the characteristics which are encouraged and rewarded in schoolboys--competition, aggression and not showing "weak" emotions--differ very little from those drilled into recruits. These ideas are disseminated through school curricula which focus only on "masculine" achievement, physical education which
encourages competition and physical aggression and toys which make war into a game. Thus, boys develop into the kind of men who would look forward to being a soldier, or who are at least capable of accepting or perpetrating violence. Girls are similarly socialized to accept their proper attitudes of compromise, accommodation and submission, and their toys prepare them for roles which reflect nurturing characteristics. These ideas become deeply ingrained and society accepts that it is just "natural" that boys are aggressive and girls are passive, and gender specific roles are considered "common sense," in much that same way that militarism itself is.

This construction of masculinity is not just incidental to militarism, but is actually essential to its preservation: militarism needs a gender ideology as much as it needs soldiers and weapons. It needs men who accept and believe in their role as "warrior" so much that they are willing to obey orders even unto death and women who accept their "proper" role in relation to men and will sacrifice their sons to their country's interests and exhort them to fight and submissively fulfill the sexual needs of men in the military. These constructions of gender roles constitute a cycle. Militarism emerges out of patriarchal ideas, then patriarchal ideas are used to perpetuate it. Women must question these perceptions of gender roles so they can also resist militarism. Both must be challenged together because "patriarchal militarism disarmed is only temporarily disarmed."

Women and Peace

For many years, women of many different philosophies and backgrounds have been working for peace. It is interesting to examine whether or not their work has questioned these perceptions of masculine and feminine, or reinforced them. There has been a long debate on whether women and men have different views and opinions on peace, and whether these views are the result of biology or of socialization into the roles discussed above. The early abolitionist, suffragist and women's peace organizations reflected the Victorian ideology of a woman's separate sphere, which considered women as the gentle, nurturing moral guardians of society. Motherhood has often been a strong theme in various women's peace organizations, including contemporary ones, based on the idea that women's ability to have children, whether they do or not gives them an innate aversion to violence and war. The strength of this argument has been that it is very successful in mobilizing women, especially those who may not otherwise be politically active. Whether one accepts the idea of
biological determinism or not, it cannot be denied that mothers have a strong bond with their children and do not want to lose them to war. Using the motherhood argument can legitimize women's political work in society's eyes. Since women are marginalized or excluded from political activity and protest, the motherhood theme gives them a socially acceptable cover for their political work and an acceptable context in which to express their anger.

In times of nationalist fervor and war women's role as mother can be exploited by governments. For example, in Serbia, with the rise in nationalism in recent years, motherhood has become an obligation, as the militarist government insists that the birthrate must rise so the nation can defend itself. Politicians have stated that women should give birth to one more son to fulfill their "national debt." Also, the suffering of women whose sons' lives are in danger, can be exploited for propaganda purposes. A "good" mother becomes one who is willing to sacrifice her son for her nation.

Relying solely on motherhood to justify women's interest in peace can be a poor organizing tool. The "essentialist" arguments (those which take as a basic premise that masculine and feminine characteristics are inseparable from essential maleness and femaleness) are limited as a basis for opposing militarism. Focusing on motherhood and nurturing as the primary traits of women actually reinforces the military ideology which requires women to be submissive and rewards men for being aggressive. Although this ideology values "feminine" qualities, it is essentially a conservative one, which preserves existing social relationships. The focus on feminine characteristics which make women more pre-disposed to peace also promotes a false universality about women's experience. It ignores the experiences of lesbians and women who choose not to have children and does not account for cultural, class, or racial differences among women. This argument is also not relevant to women who support wars and who join the military or encourage their sons to do so.

Women's perspectives on peace and war may not arise from biology, but they do often seem to be different from men's. Men and women are socialized to have different attitudes towards war and aggression, and this is reinforced by social, economic and political structures. Because of the discrepancies of men's and women's positions in society, their different relations to the military, and their different fates in times of war,
women do have a different perspective of war. Although men die in war (and these men are generally in the ranks which are also excluded from decision-making), it is also men who overwhelmingly wage war. Women on the other hand, with a few notable exceptions, are excluded from power and decision-making positions and are only victims in war. In most cases, women have little to gain from war--they will not benefit from acquisition of territory or defeat of an enemy, and they have much to lose, including their communities, homes, families and lives. Women's political subordination and exclusion from the masculine domain of the military also gives them the freedom to be more critical of it. In questioning the military system, they are not questioning an important aspect of their values and characters.

Women have specific concerns with militarism and war other than the traditional "biological" arguments. In addition to militarism's reinforcement of the gender categories which restrict women's lives and perpetuate their marginalization, there are material ways in which militarism has a gendered affect and has a different impact on women than it does on men, both in "peacetime" and in war.

**Militarism in "Peacetime"

**Militarism's Economic Impact on Women**

The amount of money spent on the military in many different countries can be seen as contributing to "structural violence," which exists "when economic and social conditions are such that people die or suffer as a consequence of the unequal distribution of resources, not as a result of physical violence." Countries spend huge amounts of money on arms and the military which could better be spent on necessary social programmes. Various WILPF sections have created "Women's Budgets" which outline how military spending adversely affects society and women in particular. The Canadian Women's Budget maintains that "historically, women and children disproportionately bear the cost of militarism since they are overrepresented among the poor and rely on social programmes that defence spending undermines." Gender inequalities in access to and control of resources and labour make women more economically vulnerable. The idea that military spending creates jobs and boosts the economy has been shown to be little more than a myth by several different conversion studies. While military spending does create some job opportunities, fewer jobs are created when the money is spent in the military sector than in almost any other sector of the economy. Both men and women suffer from the loss of...
jobs, although women's jobs tend to be concentrated in the light manufacturing and services sectors--categories which are the hardest hit when military spending is high.

Militarism and Violence Against Women

As discussed above, in a militarized society, violence is considered an acceptable way of solving problems in the international sphere and this affects the interpersonal sphere as well. Women are overwhelmingly affected by this violence. One of the basic values of militarism is domination or "power over the other," and through the glorification of the ideal of masculinity, and the belittlement of femininity, women quite obviously become the "other." It often does not matter if the women are "our" women or "enemy" women, they are still "other" and thus subordinate. Men are socialized to believe that they have an inherent right to control and use women, particularly "their" women (wives and daughters). It is true that in most countries, most forms of violence against women are illegal, but the absence of enforcement of these laws, or the light sentences given to the perpetrators, perpetuates this idea of violence with impunity.

In some cases, the link between militarism and violence against women is explicit. The use of pornography in the military demonstrates the link between misogyny and military preparedness. The showing of pornographic videos to British troops heading to the Falklands and American soldiers before bombing raids during the Gulf War are only two examples. In many countries there is a high rate of domestic violence in military families. A US Inspector General's report on domestic violence concluded that military service is probably more conducive to violence at home than any other occupation because of the military's authoritarianism, its use of physical force in training and the stress created by frequent moves and separations. Military training encourages men to be aggressive and violent, and then asks them to keep these tendencies in check until they are "needed." It is no surprise that this violence spills over into domestic violence and rape.

Violence against women grows out of the stereotypes of masculinity and femininity discussed above and in turn, violence, and the threat of it, enforces these strict gender roles. Often female victims of violence are blamed for an assault, because they had not "behaved appropriately." Being too assertive, too sexually active, or simply in a
place not fit for "nice" women can all be given as reasons why a woman "deserved" to be assaulted. This leads women to curtail their activities in order to attempt to ensure their safety. The use of violence to control rigid perceptions of gender is also evident in "gay-bashing"—assaults on gays and lesbians. Homosexuals are a threat to the tidy categories of gender which serve patriarchal society, and attempts are made to silence them through violence. Rape is a specific form of violence which is closely linked to masculine attitudes about women. It is not an aggressive expression of sexuality, but a sexual expression of aggression, and as such it is another symptom of a social order which accepts and rewards violence. It is a violent means of perpetuating women's subservient position in society, and it is excused by a militaristic culture which expects men to get what they want through intimidation and violence.

The Military and Prostitution

A more direct way in which the military affects women in "peacetime" is the presence of permanent military bases. Women in southeast Asia have held foreign military bases responsible for creating or exacerbating the conditions which promote prostitution. The influx of (in some cases) several thousand men with large amounts of money to exchange for sex, combined with the presence of local men willing to make money exploiting women and the poverty of local communities has contributed to a large sex industry. The case of the Subic Bay US military base is perhaps the most notorious example of the negative impact a base can have on the women of a community. Originally a small fishing village, Olongapo grew to have over 700 bars and clubs catering to the thousands of US marines and soldiers at Subic Bay. Although the Subic Bay base is now closed, when it was open, some estimates put the number of prostitutes serving it as high as 20,000. UN Peacekeepers have also been implicated in prostitution. By the end of their operation in Cambodia in 1992, the number of prostitutes (many of them children) had risen from 6,000 to 20,000 because UN soldiers had created such a demand.

The military needs to marginalize women in order to reassert its masculine identity, and one of the ways to accomplish this is to assert that all women are only useful to serve men's sexual needs. Cynthia Enloe argues that the military's preoccupation has been with satisfying men's perceived sexual needs without losing military efficiency and "readiness." This has often involved a tacit policy of running brothels to ensure a steady supply of women and to attempt to control the spread
of sexually transmitted diseases. The military of different countries have different policies regarding prostitution and these depend on the imagined racial or cultural gap between the local population and the military, the level of local hostility, and the level of economic hardship and social displacement in the local community.

**Women in the Military**

A very contested area of debate about women and militarism is the role of women *in* the military. While feminists seeking equality with men are opposed to any occupational field being closed to them on the basis of their sex, the goal of having more women in the military is not without its problems. Greater participation in the military as an appropriate means achieving women’s liberation must be questioned. To see it as such reinforces its centrality and to integrate women into the military only increases the militarization of society. The military itself uses the argument of promoting women’s equality in its recruitment information; however, an institution built on masculine ideals such as aggression can hardly be expected to play a sincere part in women’s emancipation. If in joining the military women are also turned into unquestioning killing machines, then what progress or liberation exists in that? What kind of society are they defending?

Despite the military’s promises of equality and challenging non-traditional careers, women who join are concentrated in clerical and other service jobs which reflect the job ghettos of civilian women. The United States army proudly proclaims that only 28 of 348 occupational specialties are closed to women, however, these positions comprise 42% of all army jobs and are often prerequisites for advancement. Military women face levels of sexual harassment and rape which are much higher than in civilian life. The 1991 Tailhook scandal in the United States, where scores of women were assaulted by naval aviators at a convention, was the catalyst for the investigation of the widespread sexual harassment throughout the military which is tolerated and covered-up. Although women in the military are challenging gender roles by becoming soldiers, they are still judged by them. Military women are labelled either lesbians or prostitutes and are sexually harassed and slandered by their male colleagues. Although most militaries routinely purge homosexuals and lesbians from their ranks, women are much more likely to be targeted and discharged for this reason. This widespread sexual harassment (which affects women in armed forces all over the world) bolsters male egos which have been threatened by female competition and invasion of their previously male-
only domain. The exclusion of women from combat (which must constantly be redefined in an era of nuclear and high tech combat) is essential to preserving the masculine identity of the military and to justifying the continued male dominant position in the social order.

With some countries abandoning compulsory military service for men, and fewer men joining, the armed forces in many countries are currently recruiting women. However, they are quite clearly doing this on their own terms. The "Rosie the Rivetters" of the Second World War who took industrial work while the men were fighting were quickly sent back to their low-paid pre-war roles when the "boys" returned. Women seeking equality must do it on their own terms according to their own goals. Enlisting in the military may mean equality on paper (although even this is debatable), but it does not mean liberation--from restrictive gender roles, from sexual harassment and abuse, or from a society which condones violence. Some argue that a large influx of women into the military will fundamentally change its character as it will cease to be an all-male preserve and women will have more of a stake in the formulation of national security policy. This is a debatable. It seems that women will be less likely to change the military and more likely to be changed by it, as the presence of women in the military in several industrialized countries has not yet made a significant impact on the institution.

The situation of women who take up arms in situations of armed liberation struggles is often perceived to be different from that of women in the "peace time" military. However, the same ambivalence about women's participation exists in liberation armies. The men need the women, but they do not want to lose their masculine dominance. During the struggle, women's participation in actual combat positions is manipulated by the leadership to exhibit the justness of the cause being fought and the commitment of the population, as well as to exhort men to join a fight for which "even" women are willing to take up arms. After liberation, women's contributions are often minimized. In Algeria, for example, many women who participated fully in the war for independence were not acknowledged as veterans. Although they risked their lives carrying food to guerillas or hiding wanted people, they were considered to be only performing their normal nurturing tasks, and helping their men, not participating in the war. Women fighting in liberation struggles are often fighting as well for their own emancipation. Too often, though, they are expected to return to the background once the struggle is won, and there is no place for them in the new government.
Women and War

Armed and Low-Intensity Conflict

Traditional perceptions of war have not changed substantially since WWII and the lingering conception is that the front line soldier is the primary victim. On the contrary, in modern war, especially low intensity conflict, the civilian is at the epicentre of the conflict. With armed conflict in cities and rural communities, there is no longer a "battlefront" and "home from;" rather, the civilian is the front. In the First World War, 5% of the casualties were civilians, and in the Second World War, the figure was 55%. In the many wars since then civilians have accounted for 90% of the casualties. This is not an accident, or an unfortunate by-product of war; it is the goal of war. The refusal to comprehend this fact renders invisible the plight of all civilians caught in conflict and of women in particular. As long as war is considered "men's work," the suffering of women in war will be ignored, and their contribution to the search for peace and resolution of conflicts will be undermined. Like their exclusion from the masculine domain of the military, the denial of their experience in war also excludes them from existing power structures. The suffering of women and of all civilians in modern war cannot be underestimated. This not only perpetuates the marginalization of women, but it also perpetuates the perception that wars are useful and winnable.

Just as the experience of women in war is minimized and made invisible, until recently, so has the suffering of women who have endured human rights abuses. Although women are just as likely as men to be persecuted by repressive governments for expressing their views or for working in defense of human rights, the popular image of the political prisoner has been an overwhelmingly male one. A WILPF mission to Chile in 1973 investigated the situation of female prisoners, and found that their situation had not excited much attention or concern among those documenting human rights abuses. Little information was gathered on human rights abuses against women until recently, because it was largely assumed that they were not politically active. Women's experience of state-sponsored violence is distinctly gendered. In a low intensity conflict they generally are exposed to different kinds of human rights abuses than men, including rape and sexual torture. Pregnancy can also be a factor in the gendered treatment of female
prisoners, either with forced pregnancy resulting from rape, or forced miscarriage resulting from torture. Women and young girls are often targeted as the quintessential innocents and as socializing agents and conveyors of culture, in order to create a culture of terror which will subdue and demoralize the population.

**Rape in War**

Along with the violence of bombs and bullets, it is not surprising that personal violence against women increases substantially during war. The focus of war is the destruction of the "other," the ideologically, ethnically or sexually different. In armed conflict, it is not only "enemy" women who are targets of violence, often in the form of rape. Despite the insistence of the international media that the widespread and systematic rapes in the former Yugoslavia are unprecedented, this is far from the case. In all wars, women have been assaulted by invading armies and rape's role in wars has been essentially the same throughout history. One reason for rape in war is simply the opportunity and the situation of impunity which exists during armed conflict. Rape is not only a side effect of war, however, and Ruth Seifert argues it is a deliberate policy and has strategic functions. Sexual trespass on the enemy's women has long been considered a right of the victors and Seifert argues that rape in war is actually intended as communication between men. It is viewed as a male defeat (because "his" woman was unprotected) and the pain and emotional suffering of the woman is considered to be incidental. Rapes in war are generally public, so the community, and primarily the enemy men, will know what has been done to "their" women. It is also part of the attack on a culture which takes place during war, and is based on the fact that women are the symbolic representation of the motherland, or the nation, and an assault on them is an assault on the entire people. In addition, women hold together communities and families in times of war and attacking them contributes to the defeat and disintegration of communities. The selective reporting of rape in the former Yugoslavia shows how rape of women is manipulated to achieve strategic ends. Only those rapes committed by the "other" side are reported, and this in turn justifies the rape of women "belonging" to that side. For the victim of rape, the pain is far from insignificant. Rape is a form of torture in which power is exerted through invasion and pain. Coupled with this pain is a loss of dignity and an attack on a woman's identity. Through the humiliation and destruction of women (the enemy's "property), the warrior's virility and the superiority of his people are enforced. Although ethnicity or "enemy" status plays a role, the fact remains that women are raped by men.
The situation in the former Yugoslavia has been particularly shocking because the rapes have been so widespread and systematic, with camps, in some cases, set up solely to detain women for the purpose of rape. It is no longer possible to dismiss rape in war as an unfortunate act committed by a few "bad" soldiers. Rape in ex-Yugoslavia has also been linked to the policy of "ethnic cleansing," making ethnic hatred another reason for violence against women. Stasa Zajovic, an anti-war activist in Belgrade, sees rape as one aspect of an overall policy of ethnic cleansing, which begins with propaganda and progresses to the expulsion of people in ethnically mixed areas, the "cleansing" of mixed marriages and finally rape. In this context, Zajovic calls the female body a "territory whose borders spread through 'birth of enemy sons.'" Women are raped and forced to bear the children of their rapist and he becomes the owner of the territory/womb and of the child.

There is a blurring of rape and prostitution in war time. While women in "peacetime" may be forced into prostitution by their economic situation, in war, women are often physically forced. What has been termed prostitution is often sexual slavery systematically set up by the military with the women physically prevented from escaping. From 1928 until the end of the second World War, approximately 200 000 Asian women, most of whom were Korean, were abducted by the Japanese army or people working for it and placed in "Comfort Houses," brothels serving the Japanese troops, all over southeast Asia. The women were raped ten to twenty times a day by Japanese soldiers and those who resisted were beaten, tortured or killed. The establishment of this system was based on several assumptions--that it was the right of victors to take whatever women they wanted, that soldiers cannot fight without an available sexual outlet, and that the suffering of ethnically different women is insignificant.

Conclusions and New Directions

War and militarism may be "men's business," but women are undeniably affected by it, whether as prostitutes outside a military base, victims of a bombing attack, or mothers whose welfare cheques are getting smaller because of budget cuts. Traditional discussions of militarism and war deny women's specific experiences and reinforce existing power dynamics. A gender analysis of militarism shows that
women are greatly affected by militarism and have every right to make opposition to it their "business." Furthermore, as a gender analysis examines the very strong links between militarism and patriarchy it enables women to name their specific oppression and to make the connections between interrelated institutional forms of oppression.

Addressing the links between militarism and patriarchy is important for women peace activists and feminists to achieve their aims. Historically, women have been asked again and again to put off their own demands while "more pressing" problems in society are addressed. By making the condition of women a key part of the explanation of and opposition to militarism, women's oppression remains a central peace issue. For feminists, it is unwise to ignore an institution as large and influential as the military, when working against patriarchy. Women peace activists and feminists have common goals, and should educate people to see the links between institutional and personal violence and oppression. As long as the institutions of patriarchy and militarism are dominant in our societies, there will be no peace or justice.

A gender analysis also gives us an opportunity to bring about "social conversion." By examining militarism's role in socializing people to accept violence as natural and patriarchy as normal, we see, too, that "gender systems of domination and subordination are not fixed, but, rather, are constructed through socialization and perpetuated through unjust political and economic structures." Changing this process of socialization is a daunting task, but it is not without hope. We must look at gender stereotypes and see how these values and behaviours get passed along from generation to generation. Once we can identify these processes we are able to work for change.

Clearly education is the key, and women can take a lead in this. In most situations, women are still the primary care givers for their children, and as such, can become educators for peace. As mothers, teachers and members of communities, we can teach boys and girls to be cooperative rather than competitive, assertive, rather than aggressive. We can teach boys to see girls as equals, not as weaker versions of themselves who need protection and merit scorn. Many of these values are deeply ingrained in all of us and seeing our own part in the perpetuation of patriarchy is an important first step in creating change. We must break down these dichotomies of "proper" masculine and feminine behaviour and attitudes. Positive characteristics of conciliation
and cooperation should be encouraged in everyone. By emphasizing that all emotions and traits are *human* and not gendered, we can free women to be strong without being accused of being "unnatural" and men to show "softer" emotions without being accused of being "less than a man."

The struggle to combat militarism and patriarchy is not a simple or an easy one: WILPF has been working at it for eighty years. However, by identifying the problems, by educating children and by re-educating adults, we can begin to create change on all levels. The links between institutional violence and oppression in the forms of militarism and patriarchy are inextricably linked to personal violence and oppression. Women must work with determination at both levels. Without fundamental systemic change, any gains which women win on a personal or local level will be incomplete. All of society must move from a militarist culture to a culture of peace. Women must continue to work together, refusing to be silenced, secure in the belief that all global issues of peace and justice are integral to women's lives and women's freedom.