

Feminism

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Reader's Guide

This chapter introduces feminist perspectives on international relations. It provides a typology of feminist International Relations theories, outlining their major tenets with illustrations from specific authors. Feminist theories of IR use gender as a socially constructed category of analysis when they analyse foreign policy, international political economy, and international security. This chapter focuses on feminist perspectives on international security. Feminist security research takes two major forms: theoretical reformulation and empirical evaluation. This chapter chronicles developments in feminist reanalyses and reformulations of security theory. It illustrates feminist security theory by analysing the case of United Nations Security Council sanctions on Iraq following the First Gulf War. It concludes by discussing the contributions that feminist IR can make to the discipline of IR, specifically, and to the practice of international politics, more generally.

Introduction

IR feminisms began in the late 1980s and early 1990s, a subset of a more general discontent with the disciplinary mainstream, characterized as the 'third' or 'fourth' debate (see **Chapter 1**). Feminisms have been 'in' IR since then, but the relationship between feminist scholarship and the 'rest' of IR (mainstream and critical) at times has been uncomfortable, complicated, and fraught. This chapter accounts for many of the feminist contributions to the study of international and global politics without ignoring the ways that feminisms still fit uneasily in IR.

Early feminists in IR recognized the uncomfortable relationship between feminist theorizing of global politics and disciplinary IR and characterized it as a symptom of the broader problem of the gendered nature of the discipline. They challenged the discipline to think about how its theories and approaches might be reformulated and how its understandings of global politics might be more accurate were women's lives and experiences taken seriously. Feminists argued that introducing gender analysis into *all* of IR's subfields or 'isms' or topics

is necessary in order to understand global politics fully and to see the differential impacts that the state system and the global political economy have on the lives of women. Feminist scholars over the last thirty years have implemented that suggestion across many of the conventional subjects of study in disciplinary IR—from sovereignty to coloniality, from states to the environment, from security to the economy, and across all of their overlaps.

Parallel to efforts to re-theorize international and global politics, IR feminists have sought to draw attention to women's invisibility and gender subordination in global politics and in the global economy. They have done significant empirical work to show the ways that gender draws lines of advantage and disadvantage all over the world, from the White House to the average house. It remains the case that, after thirty years of drawing attention to gender subordination in global politics itself and the discipline that studies it, *nowhere in the world do women have the same economic privilege, political access, rights, entitlement, or social status as men*. Women constitute less than ten per cent of the heads of state in United Nations recognized states. Less than forty per cent of those states have ever had a female leader. Women around the world earn on average seventy-five per cent of what similarly situated men earn, and that does not account for all of the gendered factors which situate women differently than men. Women are overrepresented among the poor, among the malnourished, among the underemployed, and among the unemployed. This subordination is organized not only on a dichotomy between presumed-biological maleness and femaleness, but also on perceptions about traits associated with masculinities and femininities, genders, sexual identities, and their relative value. IR feminists have asked why this is the case, and how it might affect theorizing about global politics, the structure of global politics itself, and peoples' lives within global politics.

The feminist mode of inquiry is characterized as putting on gendered lenses (Peterson and Runyan 1999: 21). Putting on gendered lenses means asking questions about where gender is in a political situation or a study of a political situation. We begin this chapter by discussing what gender means for the purpose of putting on gender lenses to study global politics. We then go over some key places where feminist scholars have identified gender in the global political arena as examples of the utility of gender lenses in studying global politics. The next section explains how gender might tell us about the nature, structure, and function of global politics. That is followed by an example: a feminist analysis of security through an engagement with United Nations (UN) economic sanctions against Iraq in the 1990s. We propose that a feminist approach to the study of this sanctions regime, like a feminist approach to the study of global politics more broadly, offers some insights that other approaches cannot. We conclude by suggesting some of the contributions that feminist IR has made and will continue to make to the discipline specifically and to global politics more generally.

Thinking about gender in global politics

Many people think of gender as whether a person has a body that can be identified as male or a body that can be identified as female. Bodies are not that simple. There are many bodies that are intersex, defying the male/female dichotomy, and many more people whose bodies do not tell the whole story of their maleness or femaleness, including but not limited to people who are trans* or genderqueer.

Still, those who focus their attention on the parts that bodies have are conflating 'sex' (the biology of bodies) with 'gender' (social traits usually associated with perceptions about the biology of bodies). It is true that 'sex' and 'gender' are not completely separable—Judith Butler (1990) tells us how we often change our bodies based on perceptions about what they should be based on in the gender norms we confront in everyday life. But there is no essential relationship between sex and gender—the sort of body parts we have and the ways that we behave—either on the individual level or on the international level.

For the purpose of thinking about gender in *International Relations*, perhaps the most common way to understand the concept is as a set of socially constructed characteristics describing what men and women ought to be based on the perception that they are men and women. Characteristics such as strength, rationality, independence, protector, and public are associated with masculinity, while characteristics such as weakness, emotionality, relational, protected, and private are associated with femininity. It is important to note that individual men and women may not embody all these characteristics—it is possible for women to display masculine ones and vice versa. Rather, they are ideal types; the ideal masculine type in the West—white and heterosexual—is sometimes referred to as 'hegemonic masculinity'. These characteristics may vary over time and place but, importantly, they are relational, meaning they depend on each other for their meaning. They are also unequal. Men, women, and the states they live in generally assign more positive value to masculine characteristics than to feminine ones—at least in the public sphere. The foreign policies of states are often legitimated in terms of hegemonic masculine characteristics; a desirable foreign policy is generally one that strives for power and autonomy and which uses this power to protect its citizens from outside dangers. Appeals to these gender dualisms also organize social activity and divide necessary social activities between groups of humans; for example, since women are associated with the private sphere, it is seen as 'natural' for women to be caregivers while men's association with the public space makes them 'natural breadwinners' (Harding 1986: 17–18). While feminists rightly question the naturalness of these dichotomized distinctions, they have consequences—for women, for men, and for global politics. Much feminist work focuses on the contours of these consequences.

Situating feminism in disciplinary international relations

At times, studying the consequences of gender in global politics has set feminisms at odds with the methods that many other scholars use, both to do analysis and to conduct their research. One of the reasons that feminist scholarship has often been lumped into, or conflated with, the critical side of the 'third' or 'fourth' debate in the field is that a significant majority of feminist research is postpositivist in orientation. Many feminists share a postpositivist commitment to examining the relationship between knowledge and power. They point out that a significant amount of knowledge in global politics—about what happens between states, about what matters in global politics, and about who matters in global politics, has been created by men and is about men. Although IR postpositivists have been as slow as positivists to introduce gender into their research, their epistemological critiques have created space for feminist analyses in a way that other IR scholarship had not. Conventional IR relies on generalized rationalist explanations of 'asocial states' behaviour in an anarchic international

Featured book

Cynthia Enloe (2010), *Nimo's War, Emma's War: Making Feminist Sense of the War in Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press).

Cynthia Enloe's *Nimo's War, Emma's War* provides an account of the war in Iraq through the life stories of eight women, four American and four Iraqi, as a creative and complicated way to see the war through gendered lenses. Enloe provides a window into the ways that war functions to militarize women's lives, as well as the ways that the militarization of women's lives is essential to the making and fighting of wars. Enloe traces the impacts of the war from Iraqi jails to American kitchens, and from American hospitals to Iraqi beauty parlours, showing that, despite narratives of 'progress' on women's rights in Iraq and 'success' in gender integrating the US military, gender oppression remains.

Enloe argues that militaries and their civilian supporters rely on the existence and support of women, not only as people, but specifically as women, as well as on ideas about masculinity and femininity, and that the war in Iraq is no exception. In fact, she notes: *masculinization—the decrease of women's presence and women's influence—in key spheres of the war (including but not limited to the Iraqi economy, the Iraqi police forces, and the US military)*. She outlines a number of the roles that women are expected to fill in order to make war possible, roles that are as diverse as free care provision for wounded soldiers and prostitution as a means of supporting families. Enloe claims that these roles are linked by gender-based behavioural expectations essential for the inspiration for, and operation of, militarism in global politics.

Through rich empirical analyses, Enloe argues that militarization is pervasive, and that it is important to see the war(s) in Iraq as fought through, on, and in the lives of ordinary people, who experience the fighting very differently depending on the biological sex category to which they belong. Whether it is in Nimo's beauty parlour as politics is discussed or at Emma's dining room table as her sons talk about joining the US military, Enloe 'makes feminist sense of' the Iraq War by showing how it is fought constantly in everyday life.

In so demonstrating, Enloe does not just 'make feminist sense' of the Iraq War, she makes sense of it. She demonstrates that the war cannot be accounted for without understanding not only the war's place in history, but the war's place in the history of gender relations, and the gender relations of history and war. Looking through the experiences of the women who lived the war, Enloe compellingly demonstrates war as commonplace, embodied, and felt in ways that are gendered, raced, and classed.

system. IR feminist theoretical approaches focus on social relations, particularly gender relations. Rather than anarchy, IR feminists see an international system constituted by socially constructed gender hierarchies that contribute to gender subordination. In order to reveal these hierarchies and their impacts, feminists often begin their studies of global politics at the microlevel—attempts to understand how the lives of individuals (especially marginalized individuals) affect and are affected by global politics. This approach sometimes fits uneasily into the 'maps' of disciplinary IR.

The difficulty of mapping where feminist IR is in IR is perhaps why feminist IR has been categorized in a wide variety of different ways over the years in textbooks like this one. An earlier draft of this chapter presented a roadmap of feminist IR based on different feminist approaches' relationships to the other 'isms' across this book. In that typology, liberal feminisms called attention to the subordinate position of women in global politics from within a positivist framework interested in using existing legal and political structures to further women's equality with men (e.g. Caprioli and Boyer 2001; Hudson et al. 2012). Critical feminisms

explored ideational and material manifestations of gendered identity and gendered power in global politics, following the critical agenda set out by Robert Cox (1981) and others (e.g. Whitworth 1994; Chin 1998). Constructivist feminisms focused on the ideational, following IR constructivists to look at the ways that ideas about gender shape and are shaped by global politics (e.g. Prügl 1999). Poststructuralist feminism was characterized as the study of the ways that understandings of reality are mediated through language, especially in such as gender-dichotomized constructions (strong/weak, rational/emotional, and public/private) serve to empower the masculine over the feminine in many ways across both global politics and theories thereof (e.g. Hooper 2001; Shepherd 2008). Postcolonial feminisms engaged the problem of the characterizations of non-Western women (and people and places) by Western scholars generally and feminisms specifically, showing racialized and colonial configurations with wide-ranging discursive and material effects (e.g. Mohanty 1988; Agathangelou and Ling 2008).

Another earlier draft of this chapter recognized a 'generation gap' where first-generation feminist IR theorizing was primarily *theorizing*, concerned with bringing to light and critiquing the gendered nature of IR theories and the global political arena they characterize, and second-generation work was empirical, with scholars expanding beyond critique to new areas of study (e.g. True 2003).

Other scholars have 'mapped' feminist scholarship in International Relations by the sub-field of disciplinary IR that it critiques and looks to deconstruct or reformulate, for example thinking about feminist International Relations theory; feminist security studies; and/or feminist global political economy (e.g. Wibben 2010; Elias 2013). Still others have told a story of the evolution of feminist conceptual theorizing in gender-based quantitative empirical work (e.g. Reiter 2015).

Depending on perspective (e.g. Reiter's perspective as an American positivist, or our perspective witnessing the development of the 'second generation' of feminist IR as we wrote the first draft of this chapter a decade ago), these stories of the parts that make up feminist research on global politics are not *per se* wrong. *But they no longer represent the complexity of the work done on global politics through gender lenses*. If there were a first and second generation, both have come and gone, and a third generation is upon us with no easy grouping mechanisms. While some feminist work still builds off of IR's 'isms', more feminist work crosses 'isms' or pursues its inquiries independent of the preexisting structure of disciplinary IR's theories. Feminist and queer work have been cross-pollinating in ways that are uneasily situated in IR's 'isms' (e.g. Weber 2016), and decolonial feminist work has challenged the oppressive nature of disciplinary categorical boundaries (Medie and Kang 2018). Work continues in subfields like feminist security studies (FSS) and feminist global political economy (GPE), but recent discussions have shown that these boundaries are more productively deconstructed than maintained, given the interdependence of political economy and security (e.g. Chisholm and Stachowitsch 2017).

So if there are no easy classifications for feminist IR in the twenty-first century where in IR is feminist IR? Two answers guide both our current research and the structure of the rest of this chapter.

The first answer, and a crucially important one, is that feminisms in IR are, and should be, everywhere IR is. Even early feminist scholars argued that no subject matter in global politics could be fully understood without an account of gender dynamics. Thirty years of feminist

research has argued *both* that the things that traditional IR studies (from realist accounts of the state to liberal accounts of international law to critical accounts of emancipation) have important gender components *and* that looking for gender in global politics reveals important sites of political interaction previously invisible in IR scholarship (from hair salons to brothels and from kitchens to cans of soup). Anywhere there is a question about global politics to ask, there are gender (and sex and sexuality) questions to ask as well—Where are the men? Where are the women? How are dichotomized notions of sex entrenched or deconstructed? Where are masculinities? Where are femininities? Where are heteronormativities? What hierarchies based on gender exist and what are their material and ideational impacts? How do sex and gender affect the distribution of knowledge, power, and/or resources? Wherever global politics is, feminist work either is or could or should be.

Still, the answer that feminist IR is or should be everywhere in IR only provides an understanding of part of the work that feminist scholars have been doing. The second answer to the question of where feminist IR is in IR is beyond IR. As we mentioned above, an increasing amount of feminist research about global politics has been taking its theoretical inspiration from broad, interdisciplinary sources that are most helpful for addressing particular problems or particular situations rather than from within the boundaries of traditional IR inquiry, positivist or critical. Feminist scholar Christine Sylvester (2013) has argued that feminist inquiry problematizes the abstract nature of IR theorizing, given feminisms' concerns for paying attention to the lives of everyday people in global politics. Other feminist scholars (e.g. Peterson 2004; Wibben 2004) have argued that feminism should not be constrained by the limited imaginary of IR. In important ways, feminist research continues to investigate global politics while moving beyond what has been traditionally understood as the field of IR.

Seeing gender in global politics

If feminist inquiry is everywhere in IR, and reaches beyond IR, how is a student to learn about global politics from a feminist perspective, or even multiple feminist perspectives? The answer comes from learning to ask feminist questions about global politics, and looking through gender lenses at whatever part of global politics interests you as an observer. This section will provide a guide to doing that work through a question that has always interested us—what is security in global politics, and how can it be understood?

The first thing that looking through gender lenses at security does, for us, is suggest that the ways that security is traditionally understood in IR are too limited. Whether it is security or political economy, traditional IR often focuses on the state as the thing to be analysed. IR's 'state' is a coherent whole (unitary) that makes strategically advantageous decisions (rational) to improve its status, resources, and power (self-interested). In security work, a secure state is often one that can protect its boundaries and whatever is inside them from an international system, perceived to be and understood as anarchic. Feminist scholars have shown three major limitations to this idea of the state and its security.

First, feminists have argued that the state is not like that. Rather than being unitary, the state is composed of many different populations with different and often conflicting interests. Rather than being rational, states' decisions include affect, emotion, impulse, and the incoherence of multiple decision-makers. Rather than being driven towards some coherent notion

1 Featured book

Weber, Cynthia (2016). *Queer International Relations: Sovereignty, Sexuality, and the Will to Knowledge* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Queer International Relations outlines a methodological and substantive approach to the study of global politics with attention to sexuality. Methodologically, it introduces queer intellectual curiosity—analysing figurations of the homosexual and sexualized orders of IR and reading plural figures that signify as normal and/or perverse—as an orientation towards the study of global politics. Substantively, it looks at development political economy, migration, terrorism, human rights, nationalism, and popular culture to show the pervasiveness of sexuality in the everyday practices and overarching structures of global politics.

These substantive engagements show both the pervasiveness of sexuality in global politics and its complexities. For example, in Chapter 3, Weber makes an argument that sexuality is a key axis on which imperial and colonial states make the distinction between their underdeveloped 'others' and their undevolvable 'others': juxtaposing the figuration of the 'perverse homosexual' with figurations of '(neo) imperial man' and '(civilizationally) developed man'. Weber makes the case that the way states describe themselves, their citizens, and those outside of their borders fundamentally relies on a heteronormative understanding of what people are and how they work. Here, heteronormativity is the assumption that heterosexual relationships and interactions are not only the norm in terms of their frequency but also normatively preferable and therefore privileged. In short, the assumption that the world is full of and should be full of heterosexual and heterosexualized orders impacts not only social hierarchies among people but also the organization of interstate relations.

When first introduced to this work, some students ask if it is feminist research or if it is properly placed in disciplinary IR. We suggest that it is 'in' both feminism and IR, but that it goes beyond both as well. Gender lenses cannot stop asking about how gender is in politics when that gender is interacting with, intersecting with, or engaged with sex and sexuality. IR cannot stop asking about global politics when those inquiries enter the realm of sexuality. At the same time, *Queer International Relations* draws on work outside of feminisms (like Transnational and Global Queer Studies) and goes beyond the methodological and substantive constraints of IR (with queer intellectual curiosity and the study of plural subjects). Weber's *Queer International Relations* is a good example of where feminist research is—both everywhere in IR, concerned with its traditional subject matter in important ways, and beyond IR, imagining the study of global politics without regard to IR's traditional limitations.

of self-interest, states have a lot going on in each and every foreign policy decision. Across all of these dimensions, gender-based expectations and perceptions matter—leaders of states care about gender-based perceptions of their states; states' nationalisms are drummed up on gender-based assumptions about citizenship.

Second, gender lenses show that states are not the only things that can be secure—or insecure—in global politics. Instead, "below" the traditional state level, people, groups, and communities can be secure and insecure. People can be physically, emotionally, economically, culturally, and/or environmentally secure or insecure.

That brings us to the third thing gender lenses reveal about security—that it is multidimensional and multilevel. Critical security theorists have argued that security is more than physical or military security—that it is important also to pay attention to environmental security (people's ability to survive in their natural environment), cultural security (people's ability to hold onto their language and cultural traditions), community security (people's ability to live in their

villages, cities, and towns), and health security (people's ability to live healthy and long lives). Johan Galtung's understanding of structural violence—the violence done to people when their needs are not met—has also been incorporated into a broadened notion of what security is. Feminists, looking through gender lenses, have examined domestic violence, rape, and gender subordination as sources of insecurity for people, communities, and even for states.

Through these lenses, feminist research has shown how those at the margins of states may actually be rendered less secure by their states' military security policies. For example, Christine Chin (1998) shows that foreign domestic service, often thought of as a private issue concerning homeowners, became a political issue in Malaysia, where the government permitted the exploitation of domestic servants in order to win support of the middle class and decrease ethnic tensions in the state. Aaron Belkin (2013) in a study of the homoerotic subtexts to idealized, heterosexual masculinities in the US military from 1898 to 2001, shows the ways in which the intimate and national identities are crucially tied together, both representationally and empirically. The politics of sexualized relations among soldiers are directly related to the strategies and tactics of the US military domestically and internationally. Both of these cases demonstrate how considerations of national security translated into insecurity for those at the margins of their own states and the international political arena.

These insights—redefining the concepts, nature, and contours of security through gender lenses—prompt feminists to ask different questions from traditional scholars of security. These questions are about men and women, sex and gender, masculinities and femininities, heteronormativities, and homophobia, gendered expectations and hierarchies. In our studies of security in global politics, these questions have led us to explore a number of previously understudied issues, ideas, and events. For example, Laura Sjöberg (2013) has shown the ways that the gendered-feminine idea of civilians in wars not only fails to protect women (called 'the protection racket', Peterson 1977) but may also lead to more danger for them. Elisabeth Prügl (1999) has shown how gender-based assumptions about home and work are complicit in women's unequal economic insecurity. Swati Parashar (2009) and Akanksha Mehta (2015) show the ways that women's agency, victimhood, gender, and race play into complicated dynamics for female militants. This is just a small sample of the different ways that feminist scholars have shown the influence of the various dimensions of gender on security in global politics. In the feature that follows, we explore some of the implications of gender lenses for thinking about one particular scenario in global politics—United Nations economic sanctions on Iraq.

Case study: United Nations sanctions on Iraq

In 1991, Iraq invaded and conquered Kuwait, claiming a right to Kuwaiti territory. The United Nations (UN) declared Iraq's invasion illegal and ultimately used military force to eject Iraq from Kuwait.

This conflict is known as the First Gulf War. At the end of the First Gulf War, UN Security Council Resolution 687 left Iraq under a strict import and export embargo. According to the Resolution, the embargo would remain in place until Iraq met a list of demands imposed by the Security Council.

These demands related to Kuwaiti independence, Iraqi weapons, terrorism, and liability for the Gulf War.¹ This sanctions regime, originally intended to last about a year, stretched over thirteen. It was marked by confusion, fits and starts, partial compliance, and ulterior motives. Iraq's cooperation was

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inconsistent at best and Saddam Hussein, the president of Iraq, often openly defied the sanctions. Throughout the 1990s, Iraq remained under one of history's longest and most strict economic sanctions regimes.

In the mid-1990s, international popular opinion turned against the sanctions because of the tragic humanitarian consequences. Many states that favoured the overthrow of the Saddam Hussein regime became critical of the sanctions. A number of UN Security Council member states, including France and Russia, turned against the sanctions. Still, a Security Council vote to lift the sanctions was never taken because such a vote would have faced certain veto from the USA. The USA, but not the UN, insisted on regime change in Iraq as a condition for lifting sanctions. Meanwhile, pictures of malnourished children were publicized by activist organizations fighting the sanctions. The USA and the UN Security Council blamed Saddam Hussein for Iraq's noncompliance, while the Iraqi government blamed the UN.

The sanctions regime was a humanitarian disaster. The impacts of a thirteen-year near-total embargo on the Iraqi economy were extensive. Before the First Gulf War, Iraq had an export-based economy, exporting oil. Iraq imported almost all of its food and other basic necessities. The Iraqi gross national product fell by fifty per cent during the first year of sanctions, and declined to less than \$500 in the following years. By 2000, Iraq was the third poorest country in the world. Economic decline caused a sharp drop in real wages and widespread unemployment.

These adverse economic impacts caused most Iraqis serious material problems. Often, women had less secure jobs than men because their job tenure had been shorter and they were not seen as the primary income-earners for their families. Iraq had neither the money to buy, nor the means to produce, essential supplies; before the sanctions it had imported most of its food. With no income, a crippled infrastructure, and an international law against both imports and exports, Iraq had a difficult time acquiring food. The result was catastrophic malnutrition. Households rarely had enough food and women were often the last to eat. Iraqis also lacked clean water, baby milk, vitamins, healthcare supplies, and adequate electricity. The oil-for-food programme, which was implemented by the UN Security Council, allowed some needed supplies to enter Iraq by permitting limited oil exports. While the programme did result in some food entering Iraq, its provisions failed to provide for the restoration of Iraq's oil infrastructure, which had been badly damaged in the First Gulf War and had been dormant for most of the 1990s. As a result, the oil-for-food programme did not meet the basic needs of Iraqi citizens. It was not until certain members of the international community began to trade with Iraq in the late 1990s despite the sanctions that the worst humanitarian impacts dissipated.

These deprivations had severe medical impacts. Finding adequate prenatal care was next to impossible for Iraqi women; even if their children were born healthy, the lack of vitamins and baby milk meant that child mortality skyrocketed. The cancer rate rose by 400 per cent. It is estimated that the sanctions led to the deaths of about 1 million Iraqis, half of them children and another thirty per cent women (Mueller and Mueller 1999). In a country that had previously possessed a world-class medical system, curable diseases and starvation were the leading causes of death. The educational systems also plummeted. Crime rates and prostitution rose, while culture, the arts, and religious activity decreased. Joy Gordon (1999) claimed that sanctions sent Iraq back to the Stone Age.

Some IR analyses of sanctions

Following the success of limited sanctions on South Africa in the 1980s, which contributed to the ending of Apartheid, economic sanctions were seen as a powerful but humane tool. International Relations (IR) analyses of the effectiveness of sanctions are informed by a variety of theoretical perspectives. Realists view sanctions as a way of raising the cost of noncompliance for the country on which sanctions are imposed until it becomes unacceptable (Baldwin 1985). Liberals explain sanctions as a way of depriving the target country of the means to commit a violation of international norms

(Martin 1992). In other words, sanctions take away the resources an errant state would use to defy international will. Constructivists argue that sanctions are a socializing phenomenon, communicating a message of disapproval through the combination of negative consequences and international shame (Crawford and Klotz 1999). Scholars who focus on language see sanctions as discourse—as tools of argumentation which allow actors to demonstrate the importance of their point to other actors reluctant to agree (Morgan and Schwabach 1997). Within each of these schools of thought, there are disagreements about which (if any) sanctions have worked, and how frequently they should be used. A feminist theory of sanctions draws from all these perspectives but goes beyond them, using gender as a category of analysis.

Feminist interpretations of sanctions on Iraq

Economic sanctions do not appear to be a security issue in the narrow sense: they are not fought with guns on a battlefield, or with bombs on airplanes. The UN Security Council did not declare war on Iraq and the sanctions on Iraq did not look like a conventional war. However, as we mentioned earlier, IR feminists who study war pay attention to all forms of violence, physical and structural, and to what is happening on the ground—to individuals and communities. From this perspective, economic sanctions on Iraq not only looked like a war, they looked like a war on Iraq's most vulnerable citizens.

As we have shown, the UN Security Council's sanctions regime deprived most Iraqi citizens of their basic everyday needs. The aim of the sanctions was to stir up popular discontent against the Iraqi government and its policies. In other words, sanctions tried to hurt civilians so they would change their government. The civilians who were harmed the most were not the rich and powerful or the decision-makers, since they had the ability to buy food and supplies on the black market. Instead, it was Iraq's most vulnerable population that suffered most—low-income people, women, children, and the elderly. Economic sanctions against Iraq constituted both physical and structural violence. Physical violence was incurred through frequent bombings intended to communicate UN member states' unhappiness with Iraq's noncompliance. Structural violence was incurred through the destruction of the economic infrastructure and the lack of nutrition and medical care that had supported Iraq's poorest citizens. By these measures feminists might conclude that economic sanctions constitute war. This being the case, we will now suggest some research questions that feminists might ask and what we might learn from their analyses.

Positivist feminists might ask how many women participated in the sanctions decision-making process; they might also measure the varying effects of sanctions on individuals, focusing on gender differences. From this they might conclude that, while few women were involved in constructing and implementing the sanctions policy, women suffered more than their male counterparts, both through direct deprivation and through the effects of sanctions on their homes, families, and jobs.

Feminists from all postpositivist theoretical perspectives might introduce gender as a category of analysis and investigate the role that gender played in the politics of the sanctions regime. They might investigate how both the Iraqi government and the advocates of the sanctions regime used gender as a public relations argument against their opponents. The United States characterized Iraq as a state that failed to fulfil its protector role on account of its willingness to starve its women and children in order to develop weapons. Iraq characterized its sanctioners as cruel for killing women and children to punish the government.

Feminists might investigate the political appropriation of gender categories by both sides of the conflict. IR feminists have emphasized the gendered social hierarchy in global politics that fosters an atmosphere of coercive competition by valuing traits associated with masculinity (bravery, strength, and dominance) over traits associated with femininity (compromise, compassion, and weakness). Feminists might explore the gendered discourses of competitive masculinity that each side of the

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sanctions war used to legitimize their actions and delegitimize the enemy's; such discourses are often manifested in times of interstate conflict. Specifically, they might point to instances where US Central Intelligence Agency Director George Tenet talked about penetrating Saddam Hussein's 'inner sanctum', where US President George W. Bush talked about keeping sanctions and making war to protect Iraqi women from Iraqi men, and where Saddam Hussein countered with the threat of showing the US what a 'real man' he was. It is often the case, particularly in times of conflict, that we personify enemy states in gendered ways, referring to them by their leaders' names. This hides the negative impacts of war on the lives of individuals—individuals who may not be responsible for the conflict in the first place. Feminists might also explore the punitive relationship between the UN Security Council and Iraq as an example of a hegemonic masculinity feminizing a weaker enemy.

Towards a feminist theory of sanctions on Iraq

We suggest three major insights that feminists have contributed to the study of this sanctions regime. First, feminists look through gender lenses for where the women are in sanctions regimes. They see that women are disproportionately affected by comprehensive sanctions. Women and children are the most likely to be malnourished. When women are malnourished, every stage of the child-bearing process becomes more difficult. Prenatal and infant healthcare is often the first facet of the healthcare system to suffer when a sanctioned economy begins to decline. Women lose their jobs and are charged with running households deprived of basic goods. An international policy of economic deprivation is felt most heavily at the level of individual households. While women suffer disproportionately from sanctions regimes, very few women are present in the decision-making process. When the sanctions on Iraq were enacted, there were no female heads of UN Security Council member states. Feminists see the sanctions regime on Iraq as an example of the systematic exclusion of women's voices from decisions about international policies that disproportionately affect them. State and interstate security policy can cause women's (and other individuals') insecurity.

The second insight feminists have is a criticism of the gendered logic of the policy choice. Sanctions are put in place by the stronger actors in an attempt to force the weaker actor to submit to their will. They are coercive in nature—comply or you starve. Feminists criticize the adversarial nature of international politics because it valorizes masculine values, such as pride, victory, and force, over feminine ones, such as compromise, compassion, and coexistence—values that are often seen as signs of weakness by most states and many of their citizens, women and men alike. This results in confrontational policies; policies that often hurt those at the margins of international political life the most. Decolonial feminist scholarship might add a criticism of the assumption that the UN Security Council members somehow knew *better than Iraq* what was good for Iraqis. It is often the case that powerful people, many of whom are men, claim to know what is best for subordinate people (and often for women). IR feminists critique the gendered logic and gendered impacts of sanctions.

The third insight that IR feminists have to offer a theory of sanctions is a critical re-examination of the question of responsibility. Feminists not only look for the problems with hierarchical gender relationships in global politics, they also look for solutions. Feminists explore sanctions as both an empirical phenomenon and a gendered phenomenon. Having seen the tragic humanitarian consequences of the sanctions regime, they might ask why no one was fixing them. The Iraqi government used people's suffering to advance its political position at the expense of its most vulnerable citizens. Saddam Hussein showed no flexibility that could have saved lives. Whether or not the international community truly believed that the goal of sanctions was worth the catastrophic loss of life in Iraq or whether anyone weighed the consequences directly, many governments in the international arena were willing to let people die. Feminists draw our attention to the construction of state borders as a way to separate 'self' from 'other' and distance ourselves from the suffering of others. Feminists encourage states and their citizens to reflect on the false perception of separateness

and the global hierarchies that are thereby created. Deconstructing these hierarchies might lead people to care for, rather than compete with, those others outside state boundaries.

Feminists might conclude that economic sanctions are not isolated areas of conflict within an otherwise peaceful system. Acts of coercion, physical or economic, put in place by both sides to win international competitions are not only violent, but also part of a system that is condoning violence, both physical and structural. The sanctions regime on Iraq contributed to the perpetuation of a violent international system in which the most vulnerable people are rarely secure. The feminist insights from the study of economic sanctions as war in international relations are not only valuable for their contribution to IR's theories of sanctions, but also for their generalizability to IR's crucial questions, such as what constitutes foreign policy, what counts as war, and how war affects people.

Case study questions

1. Sanctions against Iraq were a case of extreme humanitarian suffering and political intransigence, but other sanctions, such as those that helped to end Apartheid in South Africa, have been more successful. Do gendered lenses have anything to say about economic sanctions and economic coercion more generally? If so, what?
2. Can the analysis in this chapter on sanctions in Iraq be extended to analyse the conflict there that has continued into the twenty-first century?
3. How might these methods and modes of analysis be used to analyse other events, policies, or situations in global politics?

Conclusion

We believe that feminist IR has contributed substantially to our understanding of global politics over the last thirty years. Feminists have restored women's visibility, investigated gendered constructions of international concepts and policies, and questioned the naturalness of the gendered categories that shape and are shaped by global politics. Gender relationships are everywhere in global politics; whenever they are not recognized, the silence is loud. IR feminists suggest that all scholars and practitioners of international politics should ask gender questions and be more aware of the gendered implications of global politics. Scholars should ask to what extent their theories are constructed mainly by men and from the lives of men. Practitioners should ask how their policies affect women and whether a lack of women's voices influences their policy choices. Recognizing gender and other hierarchies of power and their implications for the lives of both women and men allows us to begin to de-gender global politics—from inside the UN to inside the home. IR feminists study global politics at the individual and the community level; they notice the differential impacts of policies on women and marginalized people more generally; they interrogate the gendered nature of concepts such as security and the state. The insights they produce reveal some new causes of insecurity at the global level, including gender subordination.

Gender subordination is visible at every level in the Iraq sanctions case. Individual women were disproportionately affected by the sanctions; gendered states exploited that disparate impact by engaging in gendered discourses of masculine competition. From the policy logic

to the effects, sanctions on Iraq were an example of a gendered international security policy. We have laid out a few paths feminists have used in reformulating IR's understandings of sanctions in order to make women and gender relationships visible, thereby suggesting some new ways to enhance security. We hope that these suggestions offer IR scholars of all perspectives some new insights into the feminist claim that gender is not just about women but also about the way that international policies are framed, studied, and implemented.

The sanctions case is just one of many possible examples of explorations of things that happen in global politics looked at through gender lenses. Like the state, or disciplinary international relations more generally, feminist IR is not one line of inquiry or one thing. Feminists interested in different places around the world, working from different perspectives, and interested in different substantive parts of global politics, ask different questions about gender, and study different ways that gender matters in global politics. Though some feminist perspectives share very little methodologically, politically, or analytically—they are all looking through gender lenses at global politics. There is not just one answer to what looking at global politics through gender lenses reveals—there are as many answers as there are feminist scholars investigating these issues. What they do share is that they—individually and collectively—demonstrate that gender matters across global politics.

Questions

1. What about the men? How does gender affect men's experiences in everyday life? In global politics? Does it matter that most of the world's leaders and most leading IR scholars are men?
2. More than half the world's labour comes in the form of the unpaid, home-based labour of women. If this type of labour were remunerated, labour costs in the global economy would triple. How does women's free labour affect the global economy?
3. One of the major claims that feminists in IR make is that individual lives are global politics. How might your trip to the grocery store, choice of television programming, or choice of Internet sites be global politics?
4. Since feminist insights stretch across different perspectives on IR, this chapter raises the issue as to whether feminism belongs only in one chapter of a book about IR theories. How might gendered lenses see the cases in other chapters?
5. In his 2002 State of the Union Address to the US Congress, President George W. Bush claimed that 'brutality against women is always and everywhere wrong', implying that brutality against women might justify war. Would a feminist perspective on IR agree?
6. In the feminist discussions in this chapter, what does security mean? How is it related to political economy?
7. Do the ways that gender matters in global politics change as global politics changes? What are the gender dimensions of the recent conservative wave in global politics?



For additional material and resources, including web links, flashcard glossary, revision guide, and pointers on answering case study questions, please visit the Online Resources www.o.up.com/he/Dunne-Kurki-Smith5e

Further reading

Introductions to feminist IR

Peterson, V. S. and Runyan, A. S. (2013), *Global Gender Issues*. 4th edn (Boulder, CO: Westview). Peterson and Runyan introduce and apply 'gendered lenses' to global politics.

Tickner, J. A. (2001), *Gendering World Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press).

The author lays out a foundation for feminist IR in the twenty-first century.

Feminist security theory

Sjoberg, L. (2013), *Gendering Global Conflict: Toward a Feminist Theory of War* (New York: Columbia University Press)

Sjoberg suggests that gender and war are co-constitutive in global politics, and makes the argument engaging both the major work in feminist theorizing of international relations and the state-of-the-art work in security studies.

Feminist political economy

Rai, S. and Waylen, G. (2013), *New Frontiers in Feminist Political Economy* (London: Routledge).

This book addresses genderings in the global economy, going beyond the narrow limits of conventional approaches to globalization to reveal the complexities of global economic and social disparities.

Feminist IR empirical studies

Chin, C. (2013), *Cosmopolitan Sex Workers: Women and Migration in a Global City* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Chin explores trafficked women who knowingly and willingly migrate for sex work, combining interdisciplinary literatures on gender in global politics and in-depth empirical research.

Kronsell, A. (2012), *Gender, Sex, and Postnational Defense: Militarism and Peacekeeping* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Kronsell constructs a conversation about human security, postnational defence, and militaries during peacekeeping activities through gender lenses, with extensive case studies suggesting that there is a difference between increasing gender parity and increasing women's participation.

McCracken, A. (2014), *The Beauty Trade: Youth, Gender, and Fashion Globalization* (New York: Oxford University Press).

Using a feminist political economy framework, McCracken argues that beauty globalization contributes to the diversification of beauty cultures, focusing on the case study of the Quinceañera in Mexico.

True, J. (2003), *Gender, Globalization, and Post-socialism: The Czech Republic after Communism* (New York: Columbia University Press).

True applies the insights of feminist theories of international political economy and international security to post-socialist Eastern Europe.

Important websites

Council of Women World Leaders. <http://www.councilwomenworldleaders.org/>
WomanStats Project. <http://www.womanstats.org>

UN Division for the Advancement of Women. www.un.org/womenwatch/daw

Women in International Security. <http://wiisglobal.org>

MADRE, an international women's human rights organization. <http://www.madre.org>

Global Fund for Women. <http://www.globalfundforwomen.org>

Note

1. See UN Security Council Resolution 687; S/RES/687, 1991. Resolution 687 included demands that Iraq recognize and respect Kuwait's independence; allow a demilitarized zone between Iraq and Kuwait; surrender all nuclear, biological, chemical, and long-range weapons, weapons research, and weapons-related material; accept liability for the First Gulf War in its entirety; return all Kuwaiti possessions stolen during occupation; repatriate all Kuwaiti prisoners of war; and renounce terrorist activities as legitimate politics.