Security Dialogue

Gender Identity and the Subject of Security

Gunhild Hoogensen and Svein Vigeland Rottem

The online version of this article can be found at:

Published by:

$SAGE

http://www.sagepublications.com

On behalf of:

PRIO

International Peace Research Institute, Oslo

Additional services and information for *Security Dialogue* can be found at:

Email Alerts: http://sdi.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts

Subscriptions: http://sdi.sagepub.com/subscriptions

Reprints: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav

Permissions: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav

Citations: http://sdi.sagepub.com/content/35/2/155.refs.html

>> Version of Record - Jun 1, 2004

What is This?

Gender Identity and the Subject of Security

GUNHILD HOOGENSEN & SVEIN VIGELAND ROTTEM*

University of Tromsø, Norway

This article is a contribution to the ongoing debate on human security in *Security Dialogue*; the authors argue that they provide an illustration of the complexity and dynamism of security. To illustrate this point, the authors examine security through the notion of societal security as understood by Ole Wæver, and use identity as a 'door' to a broader understanding and use of the concept of security. The focus of the article is gender identity as an integral perspective of security. In conjunction with elite-defined state interests, identity articulates the security interests of 'significant groups', supporting the articulation of security needs by individuals (as they identify themselves with various significant groups) and communities. Gender is identified as a 'significant group' relevant to the security dynamic. Using gender identity to understand security requires breaking down rigid and fundamental structures that have been built around traditional notions of security, allowing for articulations of security as it is understood by individuals in general and by women in particular.

Keywords critical security studies • gender • identity • security • societal security

THE SECURITY DEBATE: attack, parry and riposte. In the name of defending and protecting presumably all societies from threats and/or vulnerabilities, academics engage in battle in the scholarly journals over what they believe such threats to be. As illustrated in the recent debate in *Security Dialogue*, traditional definitions of security are under attack, as are often the contributors to the debate themselves, accused of 'a blatantly subjective and highly personalized set of normative values'(Thomas & Tow, 2002: 379), 'ill-developed and unsubstantiated contentions and contradictory messages'(Smith-Windsor, 2002: 493), 'blinding flashes of the obvious' (Liotta, 2002: 495) or plain 'naiveté' (Grayson, 2003: 338). However, while no one contribution will conclude the security debate, each of the articles referred to above identifies problems and provides a part of the answer. Within this article, we support broadening the definition and use of security by focusing on identity. Although Liotta has stated that 'traditionally, when

we use the term "security" we assume three basic questions are being asked: Security from what? Security by whom? Security achieved through which means?' (Liotta, 2002: 474–475), we focus on what we see as the fourth basic question: security for whom?

The traditional answer to this question has been 'the state', although this has not been without its attendant challenges. The recent debate in *Security Dialogue* has illustrated some of those challenges, as well as others arising from a change in the security referent. A central problem in defining security outside of state-designed parameters is determining what other parameters could be equally or more useful. The popularization of human security as a functional security concept referring to the individual instead of the state has given a measure of legitimacy to the individual-based approach, but has also heightened the controversy. It is not very clear how we can best understand the security needs of the individual, never mind translate those needs into policy. However, as we begin to develop more concrete methods of understanding security needs, the human security approach can be strengthened and provide policy direction. The importance and role of the individual in security is now recognized, but often only from the position of elites as they determine individual security needs. Within this article, we argue that it is not sufficient to assume individual security needs from a distance; rather, it is both necessary and more effective to respond to the security needs articulated by individuals themselves, particularly those who are the least secure. To do so, we focus on identity as a pivotal feature of security and look to gender analysis as a basis for this approach.

Identity is central to our understanding of security (McSweeney, 1999: 5). Although identity in the security debate is most often linked to ethnicity and race, we would like to demonstrate the significance of gender for security: 'discussions on cultural identity and societal security would be enriched by considering different constructions of masculinity (and femininity) as relevant variables of cultural and political identities' (Zalewski, 1998: 38). Women's experiences of violence and their security needs differ significantly from those of men (Boulding, 2000: 107; SAP Canada, 2002: 3; United Nations, 2002: 4–5). Women are also usually the most insecure, disadvantaged and marginalized (SAP Canada, 2003: 3). However, gender and gender research have not been adequately engaged by the security studies literature (Blanchard, 2003; Hansen, 2000). Recognizing gender as a significant dimension of identity and security opens the door to non-state-based views of security and aptly illustrates how identity shapes individual and collective security needs. Gender analyses reveal the structures that neutralize identity through assumptions of the Universal Man. Removing these structural distortions allows us to hear and respond to the identities within.

Definitions and Challenges

The 1994 United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Report* helped solidify the concept of human security, although recognition of people's security independent of state security is nothing new (Axworthy, 2001: 19). Within the UNDP report, human security is defined as 'freedom from fear, freedom from want', seen as consisting of four characteristics: universal, interdependent, easier to ensure through early prevention and people-centred (UNDP 1994: 23–24). The UNDP report additionally identified seven primary categories: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security (Axworthy, 2001: 24–25). Since then, the concept has been adopted by various agencies and governments, such as the Commission on Human Security and the government of Canada, albeit it in significantly different ways. The government of Canada, for example, has narrowed its focus to 'freedom from fear' (DFAIT, 2004). King & Murray (2001/2002: 590) state that 'Canada defines human security as "safety for people from both violent and non-violent threats", a more conservative and narrower focus than the UNDP version'. The members of the Human Security Network have also adopted a narrower framework, focusing on 'antipersonnel landmines, small arms, children in armed conflict and human rights law' (King & Murray, 2001/2002). The Commission on Human Security, however, has adopted a broader approach:

> The Commission on Human Security embraced this movement beyond the traditional state-centric view of security. It defines human security as 'protecting the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment.' This means protecting vital freedoms – fundamental to human existence and development. Human security means protecting people from severe and pervasive threats, both natural and societal, and empowering individuals and communities to develop the capabilities for making informed choices and acting on their own behalf (Ogata & Cels, 2003: 274).

Although the Canadian Human Security programme appears to have a narrower human security agenda, gender and human security issues are engaged under the auspices of other Canadian programmes (see below). In general, however, both the Canadian government and the Commission on Human Security accept the assumption that security needs to be defined at the level of the individual.

In addition to reorienting the security referent from the state to the individual, human security embodies a positive image of security. No longer focused on the negative 'absence of threat' approach, human security speaks to 'enabling, making something possible' and 'making each secure in the other' (McSweeney, 1999: 14–15). This positive connotation is not new. Jeremy Bentham, for example, made frequent use of the positive notion of

security as social or civil liberties two centuries ago (Rosen, 1983: 68). Nevertheless, the positive connotations of security have not really pene-trated the dominant discourses. Rather they have often been dismissed 'as sentimental, feminine, utopian, and therefore incapable of transfer to the international arena for rigorous analysis' (McSweeney, 1999: 15). Part of the difficulty in human security becoming part of the dominant discourse is the implicit genderization of the concept. If broadening the definition of security towards positive, 'enabling' connotations results in the 'feminiza-tion' of the concept, which in turn reduces its appeal to researchers and policymakers, it is clearly time that we begin to break down the structures that underpin how we understand security and international relations.

One of the most common arguments against adopting the human or indi-vidual approach to security is the 'motherhood and applepie' argument (Anonymous, 2002: 658). The argument states that if we define security out-side of state interests and actions, especially if we focus on the individual as the new referent, then we succumb to pressures to define security as anything and everything, rendering the concept meaningless. Recognizing security needs from the individual point of view inevitably widens the parameters of what security means. Setting new parameters, especially based on the security of the individual, is a significant task. The question is then, do we take on this task, or do we accept state-oriented security as the only legitimate articulation because the parameters are conveniently narrow and manageable?

The security debate has shown that one of the primary reasons for examin-ing security through other referents, especially that of the individual, is that state security does not inevitably transfer to the individual or other referents within the state. It is because state security has often been inadequate that discussions of reorienting the referent have arisen in the first place. To state that the individual as the security referent disables the meaning of security, with the result that we reify state security, brings us only to the original problem. 'State security is essential but does not necessarily ensure the safety of individuals and communities. No longer can state security be limited to protecting borders, institutions, values, and people from external aggressive or adversarial designs' (Ogata & Cels, 2003: 275). Security politics is not undemocratic per se. Creating security is a democratic task coming from those who seek security: people. This does not negate a role for the state as an important tool for policy and implementation. The material presented in the debate definitively illustrates the complexity, not the simplicity, of security. As a result, accepting and working with the complexity of human security is a necessary part of the search for greater global security.

Does this mean that we are on a mission to 'securitize' all and sundry? Should securitization be our main ambition? There are actually two answers to this. If we assume that security is unable to escape its history (that it is no

longer a construct of our making but an entity independent of us) our main ambition should be desecuritization. On the other hand, if security could escape its state-centric, militaristic, non-democratic and elitist dimensions, securitization would instead become a positive process and could play a pivotal role as a part of the new global vocabulary.

Security, the State and the Realist Discourse

The concept of security, as it has been largely argued within the human security debate, must disentangle itself from the purely militaristic dimension but prevail as a notion that entails a logic of necessity. This is seen in connection to *means.* The *end* is to securitize individuals, not a system of states. Ole Wæver and the Copenhagen School address the historic dimensions inherent in the security discourse. Barry Buzan's (1991) *People, States and Fear* is a seminal contribution to the security debate, as noted by Bill McSweeney (1999: 52–78) in his critical evaluation of the work. Wæver's 1995 essay in *On Security* has also been influential, as has Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde's (1998) *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, discussed by Lene Hansen (2000: 286) in her critique of the Copenhagen School and its barriers to gender through speech acts, among other things. Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde elaborated on the various sectors in which the concept of security could be expanded, including societal security, which is rooted in identity. However, security and securitization do not escape their traditional roots, as the state primarily remains – albeit not exclusively – both referent and security actor. Securitization is negative, and the potential for change still appears limited.

 The arguments of Buzan et al. are reflected in the recent *Security Dialogue* debate. For example, although Kyle Grayson states, inter alia, that threats and vulnerabilities are constructs, he nevertheless proceeds to treat security and especially securitization as something other than the constructs they are. As a result, we are told that human security and national security cannot be 'converged' given the dangers inherent in securitization (Grayson, 2003: 337). This is in keeping with the arguments of Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde (1998: 29), who state that 'security should be seen as negative, as a failure to deal with issues as normal politics; desecuritization is the optimal long-range option'. Why, according to Grayson, are threats and vulnerabilities constructs, while security and securitization are not? Indeed, they are constructs and can be dismantled. But the importance of the state role continues to be conflated with its prioritization as the security referent and basis for securitization. According to Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde (1998: 91), where the security referent is not primarily the state – as in the case of environmental

security – very little actually enters the security dimension, as environmental issues are largely politicized rather than securitized.

In these same works, however, it is fruitful to note the development of societal security. Wæver's 1995 contribution acknowledged societal security, which was rooted in identity, but still emphasized the state-centric, militaristic and elitist dimensions of security (Wæver, 1995). Consequently, the realist notion of security politics was given significance, emphasizing the structural dimension over the agent, so that Wæver tells us what security *is* (within the confines of structure) and not what it can *become*. Thus, the neo-realist discourse – where security is about the state and the study of the threat, use and control of military force (Walt, 1991: 212) – is indirectly embraced. Nevertheless, Wæver et al.'s treatment of societal security has provided an important entry point into non-state securities focused on groups of people (albeit not individuals). They do not go as far as we do in acknowledging the next step to human security, but we argue that the link is there: security is to a large extent what actors make of it (Wendt, 1992: 404).

Identity: A 'Wæverian' Road to Security

Here, we begin with Wæver's 1995 essay 'Securitization and Desecuritization', in which he identifies 'the core' of the security concept, then we move to his subsequent 1998 work on security with Barry Buzan and Jaap de Wilde, which attempts to broaden the definition – although notions of 'human security' still appear to have a fringe-like and unmanageable quality. If we take Wæver's advice and work from within the established system of security, and if we assume that Wæver adequately articulates the parameters of the security system, it is still possible to design a broad definition of security that is more reflective of the needs of individuals.

In his 1995 article, Wæver stated that the most effective way to explore the meaning of security is to 'enter into and through its core'(Wæver, 1995: 47). In other words, one can only work with security from the 'inside' of the concept (therefore, using the current established parameters). Of course, Wæver's demand that one analyze the concept from the inside assumes that one is allowed inside in the first place. What this effectively does is 'secure' security, closing the door to others who would dare co-opt the concept and make it relevant to themselves and their own parameters. Additionally, there may be no choice but to address the concept from the outside, especially when the inside contains little to nothing recognizable for the outsider to work with. However, Wæver fortunately provides a way for the outside to come in.

Wæver claimed there is a difference between 'security' and 'everyday secu-

rity' (Wæver 1995: 49), inherently prioritizing the state over individuals. He identified security actors and processes as the elites, the power holders. Consequently, we must accept the following: 'All such attempts to define people's "objective interests" have failed. Security is articulated only from a specific place, in an institutional voice, by elites. All of this can be analyzed, if we simply give up the assumption that security is, necessarily, a *positive* phenomenon' (Wæver, 1995: 57). Not unlike 'trickle-down' economics, security oriented around elite interests is assumed to benefit all, giving us, in effect, 'trickle-down' security. Differentiating between 'security' and 'everyday security' is further noted in *Security: A New Framework for Analysis,* where it is argued that 'the meaning of a concept lies in its usage and is not something we can define analytically or philosophically according to what would be "best"' (Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde, 1998: 24). In this case, the authors claim that 'people' use the concept of security as something inherently connected to international security issues, that these issues are inherently more important than other issues and therefore deserve top priority (Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde, 1998). Not only does this eliminate the possibility for security to 'trickle up', but it is difficult not to see this as a rigid, fundamentalist and structuralist approach to security.

More recently, Wæver has himself criticized the fundamentalism inherent within structural analyses, where 'change appears in the form of incomprehensible jumps between synchronic and structural orders' (Wæver, 2002: 31). His approach is instead to use a 'layered discursive structure' that can 'specify change within continuity' (Wæver, 2002) This is important, as change is central to the development and expansion of the security dynamic, allowing for positive and diverse articulations of security. However, although Wæver notes that 'change is always in principle possible since all these structures are socially constituted', suggesting that such constructs as the state and security could be altered, he limits this possibility by stating that 'deeper structures are more solidly sedimented and more difficult to politicize and change' (Wæver, 2002: 32). Such steadfastness of structure is once again apparent in Buzan & Wæver's most recent work, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security.* Here, territoriality dominates their security agenda 'whether in the form of states, nations, insurgency movements, or regions' (Buzan & Wæver, 2003: 11). As a result, we are compelled to live with the failure of security as an evolving concept owing to the depth of its structural integrity. Lastly, Wæver has also taken issue with the fact that critics address such things as the 'what or who that threatens' or the 'whom to be secured' (Wæver, 1995: 57). Those who examine the question of 'whom to be secured' do not look into 'securityness' and all it implies. We argue, however, that we do not *accept* 'securityness' as a purely elite and negative domain. In the end, neither does Wæver.

Broadening the security agenda is itself a threat to elites (Wæver, 1995:

62). Security signalizes danger and sets priorities (Wæver, 1995: 63), but is also a politically motivated choice (Wæver, 1995: 65). Wæver recognizes these political choices extending to other realms besides the state: 'societal security'. If we accept Wæver's use of the term, societal security is about 'identity, the self-conception of communities, and those individuals who identify themselves as members of a particular community' (Wæver, 1995: 67; Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde, 1998: 119). Where state security has sovereignty as its primary focus, societal security has identity. This is relevant when 'significant groups' within society feel threatened (by immigration, cultural imperialism and so forth). This, of course, complicates security, adding not only another 'legitimate' voice to the security dynamic, but one which is determined on the basis of diverse identities and can therefore reflect diverse security needs. In 1995, Wæver did not yet relegate societal security to the same status as state security, but nevertheless recognized them as two separate referents of security.

That security is not about 'everyday' security, not for 'the people' and not positive (thereby tightening the parameters of security) but nevertheless reflects the interests of identity is contradictory. By recognizing a new referent, security inevitably challenges this claim. Wæver largely equated identity with ethnicity, culture and nation, and he warned against the dangers of legitimizing the 'voices' that articulate these identities as they are often controversial and could exacerbate racist policy. However, he concludes that identities may very well have to be securitized through societal security, to deal with such stresses as 'Europeanization' (and one can imagine 'Americanization') and globalization:

> This could therefore imply that *national communities* might have to engage in a certain degree of securitization of *identity questions* in order to handle the stress from Europeanization. Under such circumstances, there might emerge a complementarity between nations engaging in societal security and the new quasi-state engaging in 'European security.' Neither of these two moves are reflections of some objective 'security' that is threatened; they are, instead, possible *speech acts*, moving issues into a security frame so as to achieve effects different from those that would ensue if handled in a nonsecurity mode. (Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde, 1998: 76)

Threats are not objective, and identity securitization prioritizes societal security, achieving 'different effects' than if identity is desecuritized. In this respect, securitization is not always the monster it is portrayed to be (especially by the elites who wish to be the only actors in the securitization process).

In *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, societal security is recognized as a security sector independent of state security but important to the dynamic of state legitimacy (Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde, 1998: 119). Again, the primary understanding of identity is presented as largely ethnic – tribes, clans,

nations, civilizations, religions and race (Wæver & de Wilde, 1998: 123). Identities are recognized as constructions or reproductions contributing to 'us.' (Wæver & de Wilde, 1998: 120):

> Any we identity can be constructed in many different ways, and often the main issue that decides whether security conflicts will emerge is whether one or another self-definition wins out in a society. . . . To engage in self-redefinition will in many cases be an important security strategy, whereas in other cases the identity is so stable that the best security strategy is for others to take this security concern into account. (Wæver & de Wilde, 1998: 120–121)

It is clear therefore that identity is an important part of the security dynamic and is a valid 'security strategy'.

Identity: Moving Forward Through Gender

Susan Brison wrote that in the wake of 9/11 the journal *Le Monde* declared 'We are all New Yorkers', giving the appearance of a unified identity the world over. Thereafter, she noted, the feelings of an apparent global unity or identity subsided as other identities were expressed on the basis of nationality, race and religion, though 'gender was not mentioned much' (Brison, 2002: 435) . Does gender have anything to do with identity? 'Does gender have anything to do with what I am, as a reader, scholar, and a woman? The answer is a resounding yes' (Wilson, 1999: xi). Gender is inherently linked to identity. Gender, reflecting the interests and security concerns of significant groups, can illustrate the impact and importance of societal security, as well as the meaning it gives to the security dynamic.

Gender analyses expose many of our assumptions about the structures we live with or within, including the state, society and security. Concepts such as the state and security are normalized to the point of being, at the very least, deeply rooted structures (*à la* Wæver) that many have considered impossible or undesirable to change. They have become 'the way it is'. Through gender, we can make linkages from the individual to identity, and from identity to security. The adage that 'the personal is political' also rings true for security studies. An individual's security is political, needs to be heard and allows for security to finally 'trickle up'.

Gender and Patriarchy

Gender pertains to the construction of relationships between male and female, and the attendant power dynamics found within these relationships. Gender speaks to the divisions we have constructed regarding our sexuality:

'gender is the ways that sex and sexuality become power relations in society' (Carver, 1996: 14). Recognition of the power structures we have created within and around these divisions enables us to understand not only the identities we choose for ourselves, but also the identities that are imposed upon us, not unlike the assumed security needs that are imposed from the 'top down'. Gender analyses have shown us how these power structures function and in what ways they need to be broken down to allow for the articulation of identities stemming from the individual. As Carver points out, 'Gender is not a synonym for women!' (Carver, 1996: 4). However women's experiences have played a central role in gender analyses, as women have been marginalized, disadvantaged and made insecure within existing gendered power structures.

Patriarchy is the central structure of focus in gender analysis. Men as well as women are affected by patriarchy, albeit in different ways:

> It is not men-on-top that makes something patriarchal. It's men who are recognized and claim a certain form of masculinity, for the sake of being more valued, more 'serious,' and 'the protectors of/and controllers of those people who are less masculine' that makes any organization, any community, any society patriarchal. (Cohn & Enloe, 2003: 1192)

Patriarchy normalizes constructed gender dichotomies. It normalizes practices and relationships so that gender becomes hidden, unessential and irrelevant. Patriarchy is the expression of the dominant masculinism, which many scholars argue is the basis of Western society and knowledge (Peterson, 1992: 12). Some, such as John Hoffman, argue that early feminist research gave masculinity an essentialist identity that was permanently embedded within concepts such as sovereignty (Runyan, 2002: 364). More recent feminist and gender scholarship has examined masculine identities and the ways in which dominant masculinities are formed, maintained and sustained as patriarchal structures (Hooper, 2001; Kimmel, 2000; Braudy, 2003, Bairner, 1999)

Gender, Identity and Security

How does this play out in the identity-as-security relationship? McSweeney (1999: 73) states that 'identity is not a fact of society; it is a process of negotiation among people and interest groups'. As stated above, however, patriarchy ensures that gender becomes hidden and irrelevant in the identity equation. Patriarchy creates the Universal Man upon whom we develop our assumptions about security. McSweeney, who has recognized the importance of gender in identity (McSweeney, 1999: 97–98) is correct in his claim that identity is negotiated, but he needs to take this a step further. Gender analysis demonstrates that the negotiation for identity is imbalanced and

distorted. Identities are imposed by the structure of patriarchy, while at the same time they are being formed by individuals living within the structure. According to McSweeney, Wæver takes this structure as a given:

> If we reify the notion of societal identity, in the manner of Wæver et al., the answer is that it just happens; identity 'emerges', and with it, the security claim. If sub-societal groups see things differently from the majority, Wæver et al., offer no criteria by which to judge and resolve the dispute. For them, society *has* an identity by definition. People do not choose it; they recognize it, they *belong* to it. (McSweeney, 1999: 77)

From a gender perspective, both McSweeney's and Wæver's approaches to identity are relevant. For example, a woman's identity, or lack thereof, is established outside of her scope of decisionmaking, such that her identity is imposed from above, by society and/or the state. In today's post-9/11 world, such imposed identities have been manifested through 'contending masculinities that vie to reduce women to symbols of either fundamentalist traditionalism or Western hypermodernity' (Runyan, 2002: 362). Hansen (2000: 287) notes that societal security as defined by the Copenhagen School 'subsumes' the identity of woman within other identities of religion, race and nationality. In addition or opposition to these impositions of identity, however, a woman may also negotiate her identity on her own terms. Neither McSweeney nor Wæver explicitly recognizes the possibility of an 'imposed' identity that functions simultaneously and in conjunction with other identity processes.

Security claims cannot be heard from identities that have been enveloped and hidden by the dominant discourse. At the same time, though, women in many different ways have been contradicting the dominant discourse by finding ways to express their identities as women in addition to their other identities. Their experiences exemplify the complexity of life experiences and perspectives that inform their diverse securities. Wæver's acknowledgement (through Erik Ringmar's analysis) that identity cannot be properly understood and known from the perspective of the system but instead needs to be understood through the state and statesman is, in effect, not dissimilar to our argument here. Identity cannot be understood from the top down (Wæver, 2002: 21). Wæver's approach, however, is not open to digging deeper to individual articulations of identity.

Gender Analysis on the Margins

When women's articulations of security are recognized and heard, this results in access to the appropriate resources women need to ensure their security, as well as creating new foundations for theoretical reorientations of security. Although such gender theorizing and practice has been taking place for over a decade, offering many fruitful and important avenues of

research in identity and security, it has not been able to break through to the mainstream security debates. Feminist perspectives have remained on the margins of international relations and security studies, in part because of 'a view that feminist theorizing is always, necessarily, and most usefully done by women, for women, about women' (Carver, 1996: 4). Blanchard (2003: 1289) notes that the realm of security is 'part of the elite world of masculine high politics', and that the discipline of international relations has 'only recently made a place for feminist analysis, and then only grudgingly'. Ann Tickner states that international relations creates 'an inhospitable home from the more expansive local/global trajectories of feminist inquiry' (Runyan, 2002: 361). The realization that 'realist hypermasculinity is responsible for the emergence and eventual militarization of the state system with its imagery of protector/protected, inside/outside, and order/anarchy – a situation in which security for the few is bought at the cost of insecurity of the many' (Zalewski and Parpart, 1998: 87) appears to be difficult for mainstream scholarship to accept or engage with. The 'so what' response of militaries to gender awareness in security (SAP Canada, 2002: 20) appears to be shared by mainstream security scholars. The question is, then, as Anne Sisson Runyan (2002: 361) states:

> Should feminists seek to be 'at home' in IR (that is, have their perspectives legitimated within the discipline) or should they 'forget IR' in order to build more hospitable local/global homes for the world's inhabitants, especially those marginalized by the world politics-as usual?

Feminist research and action will continue whether or not it is legitimated by the mainstream and malestream disciplines of international relations and security studies. It is our contention that, given the relevance of this research to security – and especially societal security through identity – it is time for the mainstream to take notice.

What Can Gender Analysis Offer?

The normalization of women's identity and experience speaks directly to the decisionmaking involved in determining who is secure and who is not. Security through gender identity demands a reorientation and restructuring of the concept and of international relations in general, enabling the research to

> foreground local/global politics; problematize statist thinking and organization; disrupt boundaries between First World and Third World, public and private, and local and global; reveal interconnections among political, economic, cultural, social, and ecological spheres (Runyan, 2002: 362).

Broadly speaking, this approach is taken by critical security studies in general, not just feminist research. However, as Blanchard (2003: 1292) notes,

even 'critical security discourse has generally invoked, but not engaged, feminist scholarship, and even approaches that imagined societal sectors of security have yet to take gender seriously'. Feminist security literature addresses the role of women (or lack thereof) in the 'corridors of power' (Blanchard, 2003), as well as the gendered structure within IR theory itself. Through gender, security becomes reconstructed on the basis of women's experiences of violence, interrelating violence on the local, national and international levels, and eradicating structural violence instead of primarily focusing on the direct violence of war (Tickner, 1992; Sylvester, 1994; Peterson & Runyan, 1999). Seen though these gender-aware lenses, security cannot remain the exclusive 'widened' fortress Wæver et al. have tried to create.

This contention is further supported by the development that gender appears to have more meaning and relevance to security in practice than in the halls of academe (Blanchard, 2003: 1306). Bureaucracy and policy appear to be leading the way in recognizing the important linkages between gender and security. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 of October 2000 not only focuses on violence experienced by women, but also recognizes the important role a gender perspective has with regard to peacebuilding and conflict resolution – in other words, with regard to ensuring international peace and security. Further work by the UN on this agenda resulted in the 2002 document *Women, Peace and Security* (United Nations, 2002). This study acknowledges there is work to be done regarding the integration of women's security needs and a gender perspective in all aspects of international peace and security. UN Secretary-General Kofi A. Annan states that 'women still form a minority of those who participate in peace and security negotiations, and receive less attention than men in post-conflict agreements, disarmament and reconstruction' (United Nations, 2002: ix). Addressing this means not only ensuring that women are at the table during negotiations, but also ensuring that a gender perspective informs all approaches to international peace and security.

Gender awareness and linkages between women and security were the focus of the South Asia Partnership Canada Forum Report (SAP Canada, 2002). Women from Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan and other South Asian countries expressed their views about what security means to women in the South Asian region. Among things that were discussed were sexual violence, domestic violence, economic deprivation and political isolation. Linkages were made between violence on the battlefield and economic insecurity and the increase of domestic violence at home (SAP Canada, 2002: 7, 8, 14, 17, 18). Some of these articulations of insecurity mirror the experiences of women in what are considered to be 'secure' regions, such as the rates of domestic violence among US military personnel and their families, and increases in domestic violence just prior to and just after military deployment (Lutz &

Elliston, 2002). Gender perspectives not only allow for articulations of security needs by individuals, but illustrate the ways in which these security needs transcend some of the traditional barriers we have placed between individuals on the basis of north/south or secure/insecure divisions. As such, it is 'a new dimension that women bring in the whole question of developing an alternative discourse of human security, alternate to the realism paradigm of power and security' (SAP Canada, 2002: 7). And, as Heidi Hudson (2000: 79) states in her examination of human security needs in Africa, 'nowhere more than in Africa is the security of all people linked to the security of the women of the continent'.

Conclusion

Understanding security through gender identity forces us to re-evaluate traditional security politics, where security and securitization are traditionally understood as the top of the state hierarchy, where securitization is the exclusive domain of extraordinary measures as defined by perceived threats toward the state and where securitization is a negative process that demands emergency action 'outside the bounds of normal political procedure' (Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde, 1998: 24). Securitization understood thus means failure: failure to address the issue within 'normal bounds' (Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde, 1998: 29). Securitization is a threat–defence sequence that we are told we must avoid. But what this also means is that we must accept the deprioritization of security issues that do not meet these narrow standards. Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde (1998: 25–26) state that they 'do not want to start by arbitrarily assigning degrees of importance to referent objects and sectors, for instance, defining state as more important than environment or military as more securitylike than identity'. Instead, they claim that priority, and therefore the securitizing act, can be established on the basis of the impact the issue has on a wider pattern of relations (Buzan, Wæver & de Wilde, 1998: 26). However, to do this, one must decide upon the criteria to be used to determine such impact. We have shown that gender as identity can not only provide the criteria to determine impact, but also allows for a broader understanding of security overall.

A reorientation of the security dynamic that removes the hierarchy and prioritization of some securities over others – acknowledging securities laterally, democratically, and in mutually influential and dynamic ways – moves the concept of security away from the patriarchal and hierarchical structure in which the prevailing security discourse is encased. Thus, it is possible, and beneficial, to recognize security emanating from democratic roots – not in a hierarchical sense but as a multiplicity of securities flowing

concurrently. We can then start to recognize ways in which these securities are linked to one another, rather than isolating them from one another and prioritizing them individually. Such linkages can then inform policy, balancing the complementarity of the securities while recognizing ways in which they possibly conflict.

This means that we recognize the interconnections between local violence such as domestic violence and global violence such as war, and we recognize that ignoring the former prevents us from fully understanding the causes of the latter. Recognizing the nature and causes of these different levels of violence allows us to work with, and cooperate on, these securities before they develop into the sort of atrocities that are often the primary focus of the human security agenda. A broadened understanding of security can work towards prevention. The security dynamic is always in flux, and security is not a 'condition' to be repaired and done with ('band aid' solutions). It takes a great deal of awareness and vigilance to be secure, as well as recognition of the impacts of economic, health, environmental, community and personal security. A broader definition of security, trickling up and out to policy-makers and community action, allows for deeper and more effective exploration of the insecurities articulated by diverse identities – including through gender – regarding famine, disease, the sex trade, environmental degradation, oppression and, among many other things, war.

What we learn from Wæver et al. is that identity is important. The greatest evidence that the definition of security must be widened is the debate about security itself. The debate illustrates the extent to which security is understood in so many different but important and relevant ways, including traditional as well as non-traditional approaches. The failure of the debate so far lies in assuming that each avenue presented is *the* avenue to security. When we take a moment to step back from our attacks and parries, we can see that we are plainly demonstrating the complexity of security. In fact, there is a great deal of agreement and positive movement among the scholars who argue in favour of some sort of expansion of security. That they come to the debate from different perspectives is only a benefit – it illustrates just how necessary it is to understand security in a broader sense. What these debates clearly show is that state security cannot be equated with the security of the people. Through identity, individuals, communities, 'the people' have a legitimate avenue to achieve security on their own terms, 'trickling up' to the policymakers.

*Gunhild Hoogensen is a Postdoctoral Fellow in International Relations and Head of Research for the Human Security Project at the University of Tromsø. Svein Vigeland Rottem is a Doctoral Student in International Relations at the University of Tromsø and a Researcher for the Human Security Project. The Human Security Project is also affiliated with the Arctic Institute of North America (AINA).

References

Anonymous, 2002 . 'Human Security: "A Conversation"', *Social Research* 69(3): 657–676.

Axworthy, Lloyd, 2001. 'Human Security and Global Governance: Putting People First', *Global Governance* 7(1): 19.

Bairner, Alan, 1999. 'Masculinity, Violence and the Irish Peace Process', *Capital and Class* 69(Autumn): 125–144.

Blanchard, Eric M., 2003. 'Gender, International Relations, and the Development of Feminist Security Theory', *Signs* 28(4): 1289–1312.

Boulding, Elaine, 2000. *Cultures of Peace.* New York: Syracuse University Press.

Braudy, Leo, 2003. *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity.* New York: Knopf.

Brisson, Susan J., 2002. *Aftermath: Violence and the Remaking of a Self.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Buzan, Barry, 1991. *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era.* New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Buzan, Barry; Ole Wæver & Jaap de Wilde, 1998. *Security: A New Framework for Analysis.* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Buzan, Barry & Ole Wæver, 2003. *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Carver, Terrell, 1996. *Gender Is Not a Synonym for Women.* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Cohn, Carol & Cynthia Enloe, 2003. 'A Conversation with Cynthia Enloe: Feminists Look at Masculinity and the Men Who Wage War', *Signs* 28(4): 1187–1207.

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), 2004. 'Welcome to Canada's Human Security Website'; available at http://www.humansecurity.gc.ca/menu-en.asp (3 March 2004).

Grayson, Kyle, 2003. 'Securitization and the Boomerang Debate: A Rejoinder to Liotta and Smith-Windsor', *Security Dialogue* 34(3): 337–343.

Hansen, Lene, 2000. 'The Little Mermaid's Silent Security Dilemma and the Absence of Gender in the Copenhagen School', *Millennium* 29(2): 285–306.

Hooper, Charlotte, 2001. *Manly States: Masculinities, International Relations, and Gender Politics.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Hudson, Heidi, 2000. 'Gender as a Tool for the Analysis of the Human Security Discourse in Africa', in Kari H. Karamé & Torunn L. Tryggestad, eds, *Gender Perspectives on Peace and Conflict Studies.* Oslo: PRIO (79–113).

Kimmel, Michael, 1996. *Manhood in America: A Cultural History.* New York: Free Press.

Kimmel, Michael, 2000. *The Gendered Society.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

King, Gary & Christopher J. L. Murray, Winter 2001/2002. 'Rethinking Human Security', *Political Science Quarterly* 116(4): 585–601.

Liotta, P. H., 2002. 'Boomerang Effect: The Convergence of National and Human Security', *Security Dialogue* 33(4): 473–488.

Liotta, P. H., 2002. 'Converging Interests and Agendas: The Boomerang Returns', *Security Dialogue* 33(4): 495–498.

Lutz, Catherine & Jon Elliston, 2002. 'Domestic Terror', *The Nation,* 14 October: 18–20.

McSweeney, Bill, 1999. *Security, Identity and Interests: A Sociology of International Relations.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ogata, Sadako & Johan Cels, 2003. 'Human Security: Protecting and Empowering the People', *Global Governance* 9(3): 273–322.

Peterson, V. Spike, ed., 1992. *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations Theory.* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Peterson, V. Spike & Anne Sisson Runyan, 1999. *Global Gender Issues*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Runyan, Anne Sisson, 2002. 'Still Not "At Home" in IR: Feminist World Politics Ten Years Later', *International Politics* 39(September): 361–368.

South Asia Partnership Canada (SAP Canada), 2002. 'Women and Leadership: Voices for Security and Development', Forum Report. Ottawa: SAP Canada; available at http://action.web.ca/home/sap/attach/Gender%20ReportFinal.pdf.

Smith-Windsor, Brooke A., 2002. 'Terrorism, Individual Security, and the Role of the Military: A Reply to Liotta', *Security Dialogue* 33(4): 498–494.

Sylvester, Christine, 1994. *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Thomas, Nicholas & William T. Tow, 2002. 'Gaining Security by Trashing the State? A Reply to Bellamy & McDonald', *Security Dialogue* 33(3): 379–382.

Tickner, Ann, 1992. *Gender in International Relations*. New York: Columbia University Press.

United Nations, 2002. *Women, Peace and Security.* New York: United Nations.

United Nations Development Programme, 1994. *Human Development Report 1994.* New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press; available at http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/1994/en/. (3 March 2004).

Wæver, Ole, 1995. 'Securitization and Desecuritization', in Ronnie D Lipschutz, ed., *On Security.* New York: Columbia University Press (46–86).

Wæver, Ole, 2002. 'Identity, Communities and Foreign Policy: Discourse Analysis as Foreign Policy Theory', in Lene Hansen & Ole Wæver, eds, *European Integration and National Identity.* London: Routledge (20–49).

Walt, Stephen M., 1991. 'The Renaissance of Security Studies', *International Studies Quarterly* 35(2): 211–239.

Wendt, Alexander, 1992. 'Anarchy Is What States Makes of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics', *International Organization* 46(2): 391–425.

Wilson, Michiko N., 1999. *Gender Is Fair Game: (Re)thinking the (Fe)male in the Works of Oba Minako.* Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.

Zalewski, Marysia & Jane Parpart, eds, 1998. *The 'Man Question' in International Relations.* Boulder, CO: Westview.