CHAPTER **17** # Gender in Global Politics

'Men make wars … because war makes them men.'

BARBARA EHRENREICH *Blood Rites* (1997)

PREVIEW

The study of international politics has traditionally been 'gender-blind'. In a discipline that focused primarily on states and inter-state relations, sexual politics and gender relations appeared to be of little or no relevance. Since the 1980s, however, feminist perspectives on world affairs have gained growing prominence. To a large degree, this reflected a growing acceptance that people's understanding of the world is shaped by the social and historical context in which they live and work. This implied, amongst other things, that global politics could be understood through a 'gender lens'. But what does it mean to put a 'gender lens' on global politics? How has feminism changed our understanding of international and global processes? One implication of adopting a gender perspective on such matters has been to make women visible, in the sense of compensating for a 'mobilization of bias' within a largely male-dominated discipline that had previously been concerned only with male-dominated institutions and processes. Women, in other words, have always been part of world politics; it is just that their role and contribution had been ignored. At a deeper, and analytically more significant, level, putting a 'gender lens' on global politics means recognizing the extent to which the concepts, theories and assumptions through which the world has conventionally been understood are gendered. Gender analysis is thus the analysis of masculine and feminine identities, symbols and structures and how they shape global politics. Not only does this involve exposing what are seen as 'masculinist' biases that run through the conceptual framework of mainstream theory, but this conceptual framework has also, in some ways, been recast to take account of feminist perceptions. Do women and men understand and act on the world in different ways, and what is the significance of this for the theory and practice of global politics?

KEY ISSUES

- What are the main schools of feminist theory, and over what do they disagree?
- What is gender, and how does it affect political understanding?
- How have feminists understood security, war and armed conflict?
- Are states and nationalism constructed on the basis of masculinist norms?
- How does an awareness of gender relations alter our understanding of issues such as globalization and development?

FEMINISM, GENDER AND GLOBAL POLITICS

Varieties of feminism

Feminism can broadly be defined as a movement for the social advancement of women. As such, feminist theory is based on two central beliefs: that women are disadvantaged because of their sex; and that this disadvantage can and should be overthrown. In this way, feminists have highlighted what they see as a *political* relationship between the sexes, the supremacy of men and the subjugation of women in most, if not all, societies. Although the term 'feminism' may have been a twentieth-century invention, such views have been expressed in many different cultures and can be traced back as far as the ancient civilizations of Greece and China. For example, the *Book of the City of Ladies*, written by the Venetian-born poet Christine de Pisan (1365–1434), foreshadowed many of the ideas of modern feminism in recording the deeds of famous women in the past and advocating women's rights to education and political influence. However, feminism has always been a highly diverse political tradition, encompassing what sometimes appears to be a bewildering range of sub-traditions – 'liberal' feminism, 'socialist' or 'Marxist' feminism, 'radical' feminism, 'postmodern' feminism, 'psychoanalytical' feminism, 'postcolonial' feminism, 'lesbian' feminism and so on. Two broad distinctions are nevertheless helpful. The first of these is between the feminism's first wave and its second wave.

So-called **first-wave feminism** emerged in the nineteenth century and was shaped above all by the campaign for female suffrage, the right to vote. Its core belief was that women should enjoy the same legal and political rights as men, with a particular emphasis being placed on female suffrage on the grounds that if women could vote, all other forms of other forms of sexual discrimination or prejudice would quickly disappear. **Second-wave feminism** was born out of a recognition that the achievement of political and legal rights had not solved the 'woman problem'. The goal of second-wave feminism was not merely political emancipation but women's liberation, reflected in the ideas of the growing women's liberation movement, one of the leading so-called 'new' social movements that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. A key theme of this movement was that women's liberation could not be achieved by political reforms or legal changes alone, but demanded a more far-reaching and perhaps revolutionary process of social change. Whereas first-wave feminism had been primarily concerned with reform in the 'public' sphere of education, politics and work, second-wave feminism sought to re-structure the 'private' sphere of family and domestic life, reflecting the belief that 'the personal is the political'. Second-wave feminism thus practised the 'politics of everyday life', raising questions about power structures in the family and personal and sexual relationships between women and men. This shift reflected the growing importance within feminist theory of what was called **radical feminism**, which presents female subordination as pervasive and systematic, stemming from the institution of 'patriarchy' (see p. 417) (Millett 1970; Elshtain 1981).

Since the 1970s, however, feminism has undergone a process of deradicalization, defying (repeated) attempts to define a clear feminist 'third wave', but it has

● **First-wave feminism**: The early form of feminism from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1960s, which was based on the liberal goal of sexual equality in the areas of legal and political rights, particularly suffrage rights.

● **Second-wave feminism:** The form of feminism that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, and was characterized by a more radical concern with 'women's liberation', including, and perhaps especially, in the private sphere.

● **Radical feminism**: A form of feminism that holds gender divisions to be the most politically significant of social cleavages, and believes that these are rooted in the structures of family or domestic life.

also become increasingly diverse. A second broad distinction within feminism has nevertheless become increasingly significant: whether feminism is defined by the quest for 'equality' or by the recognition of 'difference'. Feminism has traditionally been closely associated with, some would say defined by, the quest for gender equality, whether this means the achievement of equal rights (liberal feminism), social equality (socialist feminism) or equal personal power (radical feminism). In what can broadly be called equality feminism, 'difference' implies oppression or subordination; it highlights legal, political, social or other advantages that men enjoy but which are denied to women. Women, in that sense, must be liberated *from* difference. Although socialist feminists and most radical feminists embrace egalitarian ideas, the most influential form of equality feminism is **liberal feminism**. Liberal feminism dominated first-wave feminism and helped to shape reformist tendencies within second-wave feminism, particularly in the USA. The goal of liberal feminism is to ensure that women and men enjoy equal access to the 'public' sphere, underpinned by the right to education, to vote and participate in political life, to pursue a career, and so forth.

Such thinking is based on the belief that human nature is basically **androgynous**. All human beings, regardless of their sex, possess the genetic inheritance of a mother and a father, and therefore embody a blend of both female and male attributes and traits. Women and men should therefore not be judged by their sex, but as individuals, as 'persons'. In this view, a very clear distinction is drawn between sex and gender (see p. 416). 'Sex', in this sense, refers to biological differences between females and males, usually linked to reproduction; these differences are natural and therefore are unalterable. 'Gender', on the other hand, is a social construct, a product of culture, not nature. Gender differences are typically imposed through contrasting stereotypes of 'masculinity' and 'femininity'. As the French philosopher and feminist Simone de Beauvoir (1908–86) put it, 'Women are made, they are not born'.

The idea that gender is a social construct was originally conceived as a means of refuting biological determinism, the notion, favoured by many anti-feminists, that 'biology is destiny', implying that women's domestic or 'private' role is an inevitable consequence of their physical and biological make-up. However, it can also imply that gender differences are more deep-rooted, grounded in the quite different material and psycho-sexual experiences of women and men (Squires 1999). This has led to what has been called 'standpoint feminism', in which the world is understood from the unique perspective – or standpoint – of women's experience (Tinkner 1992). Standpoint feminists hold, in particular, that women's experience at the margins of political life has given them a perspective on social issues that provides insights into world affairs. Although not necessarily superior to those of men, women's views nevertheless constitute valid insights into the complex world of global politics. In other cases, forms of **difference feminism** have attempted to link social and cultural differences between women and men to deeper biological differences. They thus offer an **essentialist** account of gender that rests on the assumption that there is an 'essence' of man/woman which determines their gendered behaviours regardless of socialization. However, regardless of whether they have biological, politico-cultural or psycho-sexual origins, a belief in deeply-rooted and possibly ineradicable differences between women and men has significant implications for feminist theory (Held 2005). In particular, it suggests that the traditional goal of gender equality

● **Liberal feminism**: A form of feminism that is grounded in the belief that sexual differences are irrelevant to personal worth and calls for equal rights for women and men in the public realm.

● **Androgyny**: The possession of both male and female characteristics; used to imply that human beings are sexless 'persons' in the sense that sex is irrelevant to their social role or political status.

● **Difference feminism**: A form of feminism that holds that there are ineradicable differences between women and men, whether these are rooted in biology, culture or material experience.

● **Essentialism**: The belief that biological factors are crucial in determining psychological and behavioural traits.

GLOBAL ACTORS . . .

THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Type: Social movement

An organized women's movement first emerged in the mid-nineteenth century, focused on the campaign for female suffrage, the defining goal of feminism's 'first wave'. By the end of the nineteenth century, women's suffrage groups were active in most western countries. Although the goal of female suffrage was largely achieved in developed states in the early decades of the twentieth century (it was introduced first in New Zealand in 1893), gaining votes for women, ironically, weakened the women's movement by depriving it of a unifying goal and sense of purpose. It was not until the 1960s that the women's movement was regenerated with the birth of the 'women's liberation movement'. Often viewed as feminism's 'second wave', this reflected the belief that redressing the status of women required not just political reform, but a process of radical, and particularly cultural, change, brought about by 'consciousness raising' and the transformation of family, domestic and personal life. This radical phase of feminist activism subsided from the early 1970s onwards, but the women's movement nevertheless continued to grow and acquired an increasingly prominent international dimension.

Significance: The impact of social movements is difficult to assess because of the broad nature of their goals, and because, to some extent, they exert influence through less tangible cultural strategies. However, it is clear that in the case

of the women's movement, profound political and social changes have been achieved through shifts in cultural values and moral attitudes brought about over a number of years. Beyond the earlier achievement of female suffrage, feminist activism from the 1960s onwards contributed to profound and far-reaching changes in the structure of western societies. Female access to education, careers and public life generally expanded considerably; free contraception and abortion on demand became more available; women enjoyed considerably greater legal and financial independence; the issues of rape and violence against women received greater prominence, and so forth. Such changes brought about major shifts in family and social structures, as traditional gender roles were re-examined and sometimes recast, not least through a major increase in the number of women in the workplace. Similar developments can be identified on the international level, as the advancement and empowerment of women came to be prioritized across a range of international agendas. This happened, for example, through an explicit emphasis on women's empowerment in development initiatives, via ideas such as human development (see p. 356), human security (see p. 423) and women's human rights, and as a result of the adoption of 'gender mainstreaming' by the UN and bodies such as the World Bank.

However, the significance and impact of the women's movement

has been called into question in a number of ways. In the first place, advances in gender equality, where they have occurred, may have been brought about less by the women's movement and more by the pressures generated by capitalist modernity, and especially its tendency to value individuals in terms of their contribution to the productive process, rather than their traditional status. Second, the sexual revolution brought about by the women's movement is, at best, incomplete. The expansion of educational, career and political opportunities for women has been largely confined to the developed world, and even there major disparities persist, not least though the continued under-representation of women in senior positions in the professions, business and political life, and in the fact that everywhere household and childcare responsibilities are still unequally distributed. Third, the women's movement has become increasingly disparate and divided over time. The core traditions of western feminism (liberal, socialist/ Marxist and radical feminism) have thus increasingly been challenged by black feminism, postcolonial feminism, poststructuralist feminism, psychoanalytic feminism, lesbian feminism and so on. Finally, social conservatives have accused the women's movement of contributing to social breakdown by encouraging women to place career advancement and personal satisfaction before family and social responsibility.

Gender

Gender refers, most basically, to the social construction of sexual difference. As such, 'gender' is clearly distinct from 'sex' (terms that are often used interchangeably in everyday language). For most feminists, 'sex' highlights biological, and therefore ineradicable, differences between females and males, while 'gender' denotes a set of culturally defined distinctions between women and men. Gender either operates through stereotyping (usually based on contrasting models of femininity and masculinity), or it is a manifestation of structural power relations. This constructivist account of gender has nevertheless been challenged by essentialist feminists, who reject the sex/gender distinction altogether, by poststructuralist feminists, who highlight the ambiguity of gender, and by postcolonial feminists, who insist that gender identities are multiple, not singular.

is misguided or simply undesirable. To want to be equal to a man implies that women are 'male-identified', in that they define their goals in terms of what men are or what men have. The demand for equality therefore embodies the desire to be 'like men', adopting, for instance, the competitive and aggressive behaviour that characterizes male society. Difference feminists, by contrast, argue that women should be 'female-identified': women should seek liberation not as supposedly sexless 'persons' but as developed and fulfilled women, celebrating female values and characteristics. In that sense, women gain liberation *through* difference.

An emphasis on difference rather than equality can also be seen, albeit in contrasting ways, in the case of postcolonial feminism and poststructural feminism. Postcolonial feminists take issue with any universalist analysis of the plight of women and how it should be addressed, viewing it as an attempt to impose a political agenda developed out of the experiences of middle class women in liberal capitalist societies onto women generally (Chowdhry and Nair 2002). Postcolonial feminists have therefore resisted attempts to deal with gender injustice through a 'top-down' international policy process which treats the recipients of its intervention merely as 'victims'. Poststructural or postmodern feminists, for their part, question the idea that there is such a thing as a fixed female identity, rejecting the notion also that insights can be drawn from a distinctive set of women's experiences (Sylvester 1994). From this perspective, even the idea of 'woman' may be nothing more that a fiction, as supposedly indisputable biological differences between women and men are, in significant ways, shaped by gendered discourses (not all women are capable of bearing children, for example).

'Gender lenses' on global politics

Feminist theories have only been widely applied to the study of international and global issues since the late 1980s, some twenty years after feminism had influenced other areas of the social sciences. Since then, however, gender perspectives have gained growing prominence, alongside other critical theories that have, in their various ways, challenged mainstream realist and liberal approaches. Feminism has made a particular contribution to the so-called 'fourth debate' in international relations (see p. 4), which has opened up questions about the nature of theory and the politics of knowledge generally. These newer perspectives have generally accepted that all theory is conditioned by the social and historical context in which the activity of theorizing takes place (Steans 1998). But what does it mean to put a 'feminist lens' or 'gender lens' (or, more accurately, 'lenses', in view of the heterodox nature of feminist theory) on global politics? How can issues such as nationalism, security, war and so on be 'gendered'? There are two main ways which take account of how prevailing gender relations alter analytical and theoretical approaches to global politics. These are sometimes called empirical feminism and analytical feminism (True 2009).

Empirical feminism is primarily concerned to add women to existing analytical frameworks (it is sometimes disparaged as 'add women and stir'). This perspective, influenced in particular by liberal feminism, has an essentially empirical orientation because it addresses the under-representation or misrepresentation of women in a discipline that has conventionally focused only on male-dominated institutions and processes. Its critique of conventional

Patriarchy

Patriarchy literally means rule by the father (*pater* meaning father in Latin). Although some feminists use patriarchy in this specific and limited sense, to describe the structure of the family and the dominance of the husband-father over both his wife and his children, radical feminists in particular use the term to refer to the system of male power in society at large. Patriarchy thus means 'rule by men'. The term implies that the subordination of women both reflects and derives from the dominance of the husband-father within the family. Millet (1970) thus suggested that patriarchy contains two principles: 'male shall dominate female, elder male shall dominate younger male'. A patriarchal society is therefore characterized by both gender and generational oppression.

● **Gender mainstreaming**: The attempt to 'mainstream' gender into decision-making processes by requiring that, before decisions are made, an analysis is carried out of their likely effects on women and men respectively.

● **Masculinism**: Gender bias that derives from the portrayal of male or masculine views as either superior or as objective and rational.

approaches to international politics is thus encapsulated in the question: 'where are the women?' Making feminist sense of international politics therefore means recognizing the previously invisible contributions that women make to shaping world politics, as, for example, domestic workers of various kinds, migrant labourers, diplomats' wives, sex workers on military bases and so forth (Enloe 1989, 1993, 2000). The influence of such thinking can be seen in the adoption, particularly since the UN Decade for Women (1976–85), of **gender main-streaming** by the United Nations (see p. 449) itself and other bodies such as the World Bank (see p. 373). However, although 'adding women' demonstrates that women are, and have always been, relevant to international political activities and global processes, such a gender lens has its limitations. In the first place, it only recognizes gender as an empirical, not an analytical, category, meaning that it widens our awareness of the range of global processes rather than changes our *understandin*g of them. Second, by highlighting the under-representation of women in conventional leadership roles at national, international and global levels, it can be said to be unduly concerned with the interests of elite women, while giving insufficient attention to how rectifying such gender imbalances might affect the behaviour of global actors.

Analytical feminism, by contrast, is concerned to highlight the gender biases that pervade the theoretical framework and key concepts of mainstream inter-national theory, and particularly realism. It is analytical in that it addresses the issue of how the world is seen and understood, drawing on the ideas of differ-ence feminism. Whereas mainstream theories have traditionally been presented as gender-neutral, analytical feminism uncovers hidden assumptions that stem from the fact that such theories derive from a social and political context in which male domination is taken for granted. Key concepts and ideas of main-stream theories therefore reflect a **masculinist** bias. Standpoint feminism has been particularly influential in demonstrating just how male-dominated conventional theories of international politics are. In a pioneering analysis, J. Ann Tickner (1988) thus reformulated Hans Morgenthau's six principles of political realism (see p. 57) to show how seemingly objective laws in fact reflect male values, rather than female ones. Morgenthau's account of power politics portrays states as autonomous actors intent on pursuing self-interest by acquir-ing power over other states, a model that reflects the traditional dominance of the husband-father within the family and of male citizens within society at large. At the same time, this gendered conception of power as 'power over', or domi-nation, takes no account of forms of human relationship that may be more akin to female experience, such as caring, interdependence and collaborative behav-iour. Tickner's reformulated six principles can be summarized as follows:

● Objectivity is culturally defined and it is associated with masculinity – so objectivity is always partial.
● The national interest is multi-dimensional – so it cannot (and should not) be defined by one set of interests.
● Power as domination and control privileges masculinity.
● There are possibilities for using power as collective empowerment in the international arena
● All political action has moral significance – it is not possible to separate politics and morality.

● A narrowly defined, and 'autonomous', political realm defines the political in a way that excludes the concerns and contributions of women.

GENDERING GLOBAL POLITICS

Gendered states and gendered nations

Issues of identity in global politics are generally dominated by an emphasis on identification with the nation-state (see p. 164). Such an identification is particularly strong because the overlapping allegiances of citizenship (membership of a state) and nationality (membership of a nation) are focused on a territorially defined community. Moreover, the supposedly homogeneous character of the nation-state helps to explain why alternative forms of identity, such as those based on social class, gender, religion and ethnicity, have traditionally been politically marginalized. The rise of the modern women's movement has, to some extent, countered nation-state loyalties by trying to foster a rival sense of 'international sisterhood', based on transnational gender allegiances, although, as with attempts by the twentieth-century socialist movement to inculcate a sense of 'proletarian internationalism', this has had little serious impact. Of greater significance, however, have been feminists' attempts to demonstrate the extent to which both the state and the nation are entangled with gender assumptions and biases.

Feminism does not contain a theory of the state as such (MacKinnon 1989). Furthermore, feminists have usually not regarded the nature of state power as a central political issue, preferring instead to concentrate on the 'deeper structure' of male power centred on institutions such as the family. Nevertheless, radical feminists in particular have argued that patriarchy operates in, and through, the state, meaning that the state is in fact a patriarchal state. However, there are contrasting instrumentalist and structuralist versions of this argument. The *instrumentalist* approach views the state as little more than an 'agent' or 'tool' used by men to defend their interests and uphold the structures of patriarchy. This line of argument draws on the core feminist belief that patriarchy is upheld by the division of society into distinct public and private spheres of life. The subordination of women has traditionally been accomplished through their confinement to a private sphere of family and domestic responsibilities, turning them into housewives and mothers, and through their exclusion from a public realm centred on politics and the economy. Quite simply, in this view, the state is run *by* men *for* men. Whereas instrumentalist arguments focus on the personnel of the state, and particularly the state elite, *structuralist* arguments tend to emphasize the degree to which state institutions are embedded in a wider patriarchal system. Modern radical feminists have paid particular attention to the emergence of the welfare state, seeing it as the expression of a new kind of patriarchal power. Welfare may uphold patriarchy by bringing about a transition from private dependence (in which women as homemakers are dependent on male breadwinners) to a system of public dependence in which women are increasingly controlled by the institutions of the extended state. For instance, women have become increasingly dependent on the state as clients or customers of state services (such as childcare institutions, nurseries, schools and social services) and as employees, particularly in the so-called 'caring' professions (such as nursing, social work and education).

GENDER RELATIONS

Realist view

There is no realist theory of gender as such. Realists, indeed, would usually view gender relations as irrelevant to international and global affairs. This is because the principal actors on the world stage are states, whose behaviour is shaped by an overriding concern about the national interest (see p. 130) and the fact that, within an anarchic international system, they are forced to prioritize security (especially military security) over other considerations. States are therefore 'black boxes': their internal political and constitutional structures and their social make-up, in terms of gender, class, ethnic, racial or other divisions, have no bearing on their external behaviour. However, in arguing that state egoism derives from human egoism, classical realists such as Morgenthau have suggested that the tendency to dominate is an element in all human associations including the family. The patriarchal family and the sexual division of labour between 'public' men and 'private' women (Elshtain 1981) therefore tend to be thought of as natural and unchangeable.

Liberal view

Liberals have long been concerned about the issue of gender equality, so much so that liberal feminism was the earliest, and in countries such as the USA continues to be the most influential, school of feminist thought. The philosophical basis of liberal feminism lies in the principle of individualism (see p. 150). Individuals are entitled to equal treatment, regardless of their gender, race, colour, creed or religion. If individuals are to be judged, it should be on rational grounds, on the content of their character, their talents, or their personal worth. Any form of sexual discrimination should clearly be prohibited. Liberal feminists therefore aim to break down the remaining legal and social pressures that restrict women from pursuing careers and being politically active, and, in particular, to increase the representation of women in senior positions in public and political life. They believe that this would both serve the interests of justice (in promoting equal opportunities for women and men) and, probably, make a difference to how politics is conducted. This is because liberals have usually assumed that women and men have different natures and inclinations, women's leaning towards family and domestic life being shaped,

at least in part, by a natural impulse towards caring and nurturing. Feminist thinking has had a significant impact on liberal international relations scholars such as Keohane (1989, 1998), who accepted that standpoint feminism in particular had given ideas such as complex interdependence and institutional change a richer and more gender-conscious formulation. As a liberal rationalist, however, he criticized the attachment of some feminist scholars to postmodern or poststructural methodologies, insisting that knowledge can only be advanced by developing testable hypotheses.

Critical views

Critical theories of global politics have engaged with feminist thinking and gender perspectives in a number of different ways. Social constructivism had a significant impact on early radical feminist conceptions of gender, which placed a particular emphasis on the process of socialization that takes place within the family as boys and girls are encouraged to conform to contrasting masculine and feminine stereotypes. Gender is therefore a social construct, quite distinct from the notion of biological sex. Frankfurt critical theory, as with any tradition that derives from Marxism, has tended to ignore or marginalize gender, preferring instead to concentrate on social class. However, a form of feminist critical theory has emerged that tends to fuse elements of standpoint feminism with a broadly Marxist emphasis on the links between capitalism and patriarchy, seen as interlocking hegemonic structures. In this view, women's groups have considerable emancipatory potential, operating as a force of resistance against the advance of global capitalism and TNCs (see p. 99). Postmodern or poststructuralist feminists have taken issue in particular with forms of feminism that proclaim that there are essential differences between women and men. Finally, postcolonial feminists have been critical of Eurocentric, universalist models of female emancipation that fail to recognize that gender identities are enmeshed with considerations of race, ethnicity and culture. For instance, forms of Islamic feminism have developed in which the return to traditional moral and religious principles has been seen to enhance the status of women (see Cultural rights or women's rights, p. 196).

The gendered character of the state is not only significant in consolidating, and possibly extending, the internal structures of male power, but also in shaping the external behaviour of states and thus the structure of the international system. Here, patriarchy dictates that states will be competitive and at least potentially aggressive, reflecting the forms of social interaction that are characteristic of male society generally. A patriarchal state-system is thus one that is prone to conflict and war. Moreover, such tendencies and behaviour are legitimized by the conceptual framework through which the international system has conventionally been interpreted. This can be seen, for instance, in the case of sovereignty (see p. 3). State sovereignty, the central principle of the Westphalian state-system, presents states as separate and independent entities, autonomous actors operating in an anarchic environment. Such an image can be seen to reflect an essentially masculinist view of the world insofar as male upbringing stresses the cultivation of independence, self-reliance and robustness generally. Just as boys and men are accustomed to think of themselves as separate, self-contained creatures, it is natural to think that states have similar characteristics. Very much the same can be said about the stress in mainstream international theory on the national interest (see p. 130) as the primary motivation of states. This may be seen to derive from an emphasis in male upbringing on self-assertion and competitiveness. Indeed, in this light, the classical realist belief that state egoism reflects human egoism, should perhaps be recast as: state egoism reflects male egoism.

Gendered perspectives on nations and nationalism have also been developed (Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989; Yuval-Davis 1997). These have adopted a number of approaches, but one important aspect of gendering nationalism has focused on the extent to which women have been used to symbolize the cultural heritage of an ethnic, religious or national group. As such, gender becomes entangled with issues of national or cultural difference. This can be seen in the common tendency to depict the nation in explicitly gendered terms, usually as a 'motherland' but sometimes as a 'fatherland'. In a sense, such images merely reflect parallels between the nation and the family, both being viewed, in some sense, as 'home' and both being fashioned out of kinship or at least kinship-like ties. The rhetoric of nationalism is also often heavily sexualized and gendered, as, for instance, in the idea of patriotism as a love of one's country. Gender images are nevertheless particularly prominent in the case of regressive forms of ethnic, religious or national identity. As these tend to stress the role of women as 'mothers of the nation', reproducers of the ethnic or national group itself as well as transmitters of its distinctive culture, they place a special emphasis on female 'purity'. This can be seen in the tendency for religious fundamentalism (see p. 193) to be closely linked to attempts to re-establish traditional gender roles, religious revivalism being symbolized by 'idealized womanhood'. However, such tendencies can also have wider implications, not least in linking nationalist conflict to the possibility of violence against women. The notion that women embody the symbolic values of chastity and motherhood can mean that aggressive forms of nationalism target women through rape and other forms of sexual violence. The honour of men (as protectors of women) and the moral integrity of the nation is best destroyed through physical attacks on the honour of women. Incidents of gendered violence have occurred, for example, in Croatia and Bosnia in the 1990s as well as in the anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat, India in 2002.
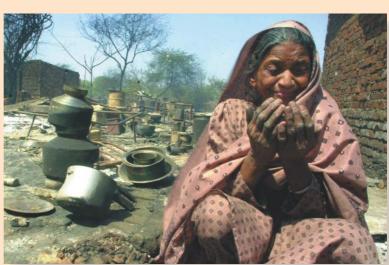
Gendered violence in anti-Muslim riots in Gujarat

Events: On 28 February 2002, communal rioting broke out in the Indian province of Gujarat. The pretext for these riots was the horrific killing, the previous day, of 58 mainly militant Hindu volunteers who had been burnt alive on a train returning from Ayodhya. The communal riots in Gujarat continued until 3 March, after which there was a hiatus followed by a new round of violence from 15 March. Estimates of the numbers killed in the riots range from below 1,000 to over 2,000, with Muslim deaths outnumbering Hindu deaths by a ratio of 15:1. Over 500 mosques and *dargahs* (shrines) were destroyed and enormous numbers of Muslims in Gujarat were displaced: by mid-April, nearly 150,000 people were living in some 104 relief camps. There was, furthermore, evidence of the complicity of the authorities in the Gujarat violence as well as of precision and planning, linked to the family of organizations associated with the RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh), which preaches a creed of 'India for the Hindus'. One of the most notable features of the anti-Muslim riots was the use of the sexual subjugation of women as an instrument of violence. At least 250 young girls and women were brutally gang-raped and burnt alive. Other atrocities included the stripping naked of groups of women who were then made to run for miles, the insertion of objects into women's bodies and the carving of religious symbols onto their bodies. What is more, women who were raped by Hindu zealots saw no action taken against their aggressors, as the police were generally unwilling to take their complaints seriously.

Significance: Hindu–Muslim violence has been a recurring feature of politics in India for three-quarters of a century or more. Although they are often portrayed as a manifestation of spontaneous hostility between the Hindus and Muslims, the deep involvement of the organizations of militant Hindu nationalism have given rise to 'institutionalized riot systems' (Brass 2003). However, why was gendered violence so prominent in the Gujarat riots of 2002, as, indeed, it has been in much of the communal rioting that has spasmodically gripped India?

The answer appears to be that a crisis of identity, linked to the desire to reassert or purify the Hindutva identity in the face of a perceived threat from Islam, has become entangled with a crisis of masculinity. Young males, organized on paramilitary lines, have conflated Hindu nationalism with masculinity and violence. This is evident not only in the emphasis within Hindu nationalist literature on the image of 'the man as warrior', but also in the fact that the political goals of Hindu nationalism are commonly expressed in sexual terms. Stress, for instance, is often placed on the 'threat' posed to Hindu identity by the generally higher fertility rates of Muslim communities. Hostility towards Muslims therefore tends to be expressed in the desire to dehumanize Muslim women, who are then viewed, and treated, primarily as sexual objects. Hindu nationalists thus rape and otherwise attack minority women to destroy not only their bodies but also the integrity and identity of Muslim society, viewed as the 'enemy other' (Chenoy 2002). In that sense, the sexual violence against Muslim women that marked the 2002 Gujarat riots was very much a public act. Attacking Muslim women sexually served two purposes: it brutalized Muslim women and denigrated Muslim men for failing to protect their women. It was therefore an attempt to terrorize Muslims and drive them out of 'Hindu India' by violating their communal honour (Anand 2007).

Gendering security, war and armed conflict

Feminist analysis has placed particular emphasis on developing a gendered conception of security and war (Tickner 1992, 2001). Conventional approaches to security present it as 'the highest end' of international politics (Waltz 1979). In this view, states have prime responsibility for maintaining security, as reflected in the notion of 'national security'. The major threats to security are therefore external, coming in particular from other states. In this way, the threat of violence and other forms of physical coercion are intrinsically linked to the prospect of inter-state war. National security is thus closely linked to the prevention of such wars, usually through a build-up of military capacity to deter potential aggressors. Feminists, for their part, have criticized this view of security on two grounds. First, it is premised on masculinist assumptions about rivalry, competition and inevitable conflict, arising from a tendency to see the world in terms of interactions among a series of power-seeking, autonomous actors. Second, the conventional idea of national security tends to be self-defeating as a result of the **security paradox**. This creates what has been called the 'insecurity of security'.

Feminist theorists, by contrast, have embraced alternative conceptions of security, most commonly the notion of 'human security'. Nevertheless, the parameters of human security are sometimes unclear. While some argue that it should be confined to 'freedom from fear' (in which case the key threats to security would be armed conflict and human-made physical violence), others extend it to include 'freedom from want' (in which case poverty, inequality and **structural violence** become key threats). Further controversies have arisen from attempts to make the concept of human security measurable, in order to make it easier for researchers and policy-makers to apply it in practice. For example, the Human Security Gateway, an online database of human security-related resources, classifies a human security crisis as a situation where at least 1,000 civilian deaths have occurred. For some feminists, such tendencies implicitly privilege physical security and military threats over threats such as rape, loss of property, inadequate food and environmental degradation, which may not result in death, but which nevertheless lead to profound insecurity and, sometimes, vulnerability to further violence (Truong *et al.* 2007).

Feminists have been drawn to a broader and multidimensional notion of security both through long-standing concerns about violence against women in family and domestic life, and though an awareness of growing threats to women arising, for example, from sex slavery and armed conflict. From a gender perspective, therefore, the apparently clear distinction between 'war' and 'peace', which arises from a primary concern with the threat of inter-state war, is quite bogus and merely serves to conceal the wide range of other threats from which women suffer. The absence of war, in the conventional sense, certainly does not guarantee that people, and especially women, live without fear or safe from want. However, feminists have gone further than simply gendering security. They have also sought to apply a gender lens to the understanding of war.

For difference feminists in particular, war is closely associated with masculinity. Such an association may operate on several levels. In the first place, the dominance of men in senior positions in political and military life may mean that decisions about war and peace are made by people whose world-view acknowledges that armed conflict is an inevitable, and perhaps even a desirable, feature

● **Security paradox**: The paradox that a build-up of military capacity designed to strengthen national security may be counter-productive, as it can encourage other states to adopt more threatening and hostile postures.

● **Structural violence**: A form of violence that stems from social structures that perpetuate domination, oppression or exploitation, as opposed to 'direct violence' which stems (supposedly) from individual or group motivations.

Focus on . . .
Human security: individuals at risk?

In its broadest sense, human security refers to the security of individuals rather than of states. As such, it contrasts with 'national security', which is invariably linked to states and military power, the main threats to security deriving from the aggressive behaviour of other states. The notion of human security was an attempt to broaden and deepen the concept of threat, influenced by ideas such as human development (see p. 356) (the idea can be traced back to the 1994 *UN Human Development Report*) and to the doctrine of human rights (see p. 304). Human security is often seen as having a variety of dimensions:

- Economic security – an assured basic income
- Food security – physical and economic access to basic food
- Health security – protection from disease and unhealthy lifestyles

- Environmental security – protection from human-induced environmental degradation
- Personal security – protection from all forms of physical violence
- Community security – protection for traditional identities and values
- Political security – the existence of rights and freedoms to protect people from tyranny or government abuse

Critics of human security tend to argue either that it has so deepened and widened the concept of security that it is virtually meaningless (particularly as it extends beyond 'freedom from fear' and includes 'freedom from want'), or that it creates false expectations about the international community's capacity to banish violence and insecurity.

of world politics. This stems from a tendency amongst men to see the world in terms of conflict, rivalry and competition, whether this arises from the influence of masculine gender stereotypes or from deeper, biologically-based drives. As women, in this analysis, are less warlike than men, having a greater inclination towards cooperation, consensus-building and the use of non-confrontational strategies, the increased representation for women in positions of political or military leadership can be expected to lead to a reduced use of force in world affairs. This, indeed, may lead to a feminist alternative to the 'democratic peace' thesis (see p. 66), favoured by liberals, which would assert that societies become more peaceful not to the extent that they embrace democracy but to the extent that they practise gender equality at all levels. A **matriarchal** society would, from this perspective, certainly be more peaceful than a patriarchal one. The empirical evidence to support such thinking is nevertheless mixed, with some evidence suggesting that, while empowering women at the domestic level often translates into peaceful international politics, the presence of a female leader may at times increase the severity of violence used in a crisis (Caprioli and Boyer 2001). This tends to occur because female leaders operate in a 'man's world' and so are encouraged to adopt 'hyper-masculine' behavioural patterns.

The second link between war and masculinity operates through the role that militarized masculinity plays as a national ideal in times of international tension and conflict. This is evident in the image of the (invariably male) 'heroic warrior' and in the emphasis in military training on the cultivation of supposedly 'manly'

● **Matriarchy**: Literally, rule by the mother (*mater* being Latin for mother); a society, whether historical or hypothesized, that is governed by women.

virtues, such as discipline, obedience, ruthlessness and, above all, the ability to divorce action from emotion. Military training can even be seen as a systematic attempt to suppress feminine or 'womanly' impulses or responses. Goldstein (2001) thus observed that the most warlike cultures are also the most sexist, arguing that the link between war and gender is forged both by the ways in which masculinity is constructed so as to motivate soldiers to fight, and by the impact that war-making has on masculinity. Third, war is often justified in terms of the 'protection myth': the idea that it is the role of the warrior male to protect the weak and the vulnerable, namely women and children (Enloe 1993). In that sense, war both exaggerates the masculine/feminine dichotomy in gender relations and also serves to legitimize it. The masculinity of war was most easily perpetuated when fighting, at least in conventional armies, was an exclusively male activity.

However, gendering war is concerned not only with exploring links between the causes of war and masculinity, but also with recognizing the differing implications of war and armed conflict for women and men. Armed conflict has traditionally been thought of as a 'man's world', the traditional exclusion of women from military life meaning that fighting, killing and dying has been carried out by male combatants. Insofar as women played a significant role in warfare, it was in maintaining the 'home front', as was evident in the large-scale recruitment of women into the workforce in developed countries during WWI and WWII. The distinction between male combatants and female non-combatants nevertheless conceals the extent to which women affect, and are affected by, armed conflict in a wide variety of ways. This certainly applies in the sense that women and girls have increasingly become the victims of war and armed conflict. The advent of 'total' war in the twentieth century meant that women were as likely to be casualties of war as men. For instance, 42 million civilians died in WWII, most of them women, compared with 25 million military deaths. Nevertheless, the development of 'new' wars, as discussed in Chapter 10, has had particularly serious implications for women and girls. As these wars commonly spring from racial, religious and/or ethnic divisions, and involve the use of guerrilla and insurrectionary tactics, they lead to the victimization of civilian populations on a massive scale. It is estimated that as many as 75 per cent of the casualties in such conflicts are civilians, compared with a mere 5 per cent at the beginning of the twentieth century. Women and children are disproportionately targeted and constitute the majority of all victims in contemporary armed conflicts (Moser and Clark 2001).

A particular concern has been the use of rape and other forms of sexual violence as a systematic, organized tactic of war. **War rape** is by no means simply a modern phenomenon. The Old Testament of the Bible, for instance, refers to the rape of the women of conquered tribes as a routine act, in effect a reward to the victors. Indeed, random rape by soldiers has probably been a feature of all wars and armed conflicts, particularly prevalent when there has been a lack of military discipline. However, rape has also been used as a military strategy, designed to demoralize, punish or shame the enemy, with examples including the German advance through Belgium in WWI, the Rape of Nanking by the invading Japanese army in 1937–38, and the Russian Red Army's march to Berlin towards the end of WWII. Nevertheless, modern armed conflict appears to be particularly characterized by the systematic and widespread use of rape. For instance, by 1993, the Zenica Centre for the Registration of War and Genocide Crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina had documented over 40,000 cases of war-related

● **War rape**: Rape committed by soldiers, other combatants or civilians during armed conflict or war.

Debating . . .
Would a matriarchal society be more peaceful?

The feminist analysis of war has emphasized its linkage to men and masculinity. In some cases, this has been based on the distinction between 'peaceful' women and 'aggressive' men. But would a larger proportion of women in leadership positions reduce the likelihood of war?

YES

Biology is destiny. In their different ways, conservative anti-feminists, essentialist feminists and evolutionary psychologists have argued that there are biologically-based differences between women and men, which are reflected in contrasting behavioural tendencies. Fukuyama (1998) thus used the idea that aggression is 'hard-wired' in men to argue that a world dominated completely by female leaders would be more peaceful than one where female leaders are in the minority. He did this by using evidence of the murderous behaviour of chimpanzees, humankind's closest relatives.

Militarized masculinity. In this view, men are more warlike than women because of social conditioning, not biology. Self-assertion, competition and fighting are seen to be 'natural' for boys, helping to prepare them for the 'public' sphere in general and also, if necessary, for military life. Girls, by contrast, are encouraged to be cooperative and submissive, preparing them for a 'private' sphere of domestic responsibilities. Masculinity and war are therefore mutually reinforcing social constructs.

Aggressive young males. An alternative theory of gendered war gives less attention to gender imbalances amongst political and military leaders and more attention to wider demographic trends, particularly the predominance of young men for whom there are insufficient peaceful occupations. Many war-ravaged areas, such as El Salvador, former Yugoslavia and the Muslim world generally have high proportions of unmarried and unemployed young men, who are more inclined to accept risk in order to increase their access to resources.

Women as peacemakers. Women's inclination towards peace rather than war may not only stem from biological or sociological factors but also from the fact that the changing nature of armed conflict makes women peculiarly vulnerable. As women and children now account for the vast majority of the casualties of armed conflict, suffering not just death but also rape, sexual attack, mutilation, humiliation and displacement, women have a particular interest in the avoidance of war and thus tend to play a prominent role in movements for peace and reconciliation.

NO

The myth of 'natural' aggression. Biologically-based explanations for behavioural traits such as aggression are badly flawed. Such theories ignore inconvenient examples (Bonobo monkeys, as closely related to humans as chimpanzees, display no tendency towards collective violence) and disregard anthropological evidence about the diversity of human cultures and societies, making it very difficult, and perhaps impossible, to develop generalizations about behavioural propensities. The idea of 'aggressive' men and 'peaceful' women is, at best, highly simplistic.

Misleading gender stereotypes. The idea that culture and social conditioning disposes men to favour war while women favour peace breaks down as soon as the behaviour of real women and men is examined. For example, women also fight, as demonstrated by female terrorists and guerrilla fighters. Women leaders (Margaret Thatcher, Golda Meir and Indira Gandhi) have also adopted distinctively 'manly' approaches to foreign policy, while male leaders (Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Willy Brandt) have embraced strategies of non-violence and conciliation.

Power trumps gender. The social factors that condition political and military leaders into competitive and aggressive behaviour may have more to do with authority than gender. Leaders, both women and men, are liable to be corrupted by their ruling positions, acquiring an exaggerated sense of their own importance and a desire to expand their own power, possibly by military means. Male leaders may appear to have a greater propensity for militarism and expansionism, but this only reflects the fact that most political leaders have been male.

States make war. Wars are complex, orchestrated and highly organized activities that cannot be explained by individual behavioural traits of any kind. Realists, for instance, dismiss the influence of gender on the grounds that war stems from the inherent fear and uncertainty of an anarchic state-system. Liberals, for their part, link militarism to factors such as empire, authoritarianism and economic nationalism. Foreign policy is thus shaped by wider considerations, and has nothing to do with gender relations.

rape, and between 23,000 and 45,000 Kosovo Albanian women are believed to have been raped during 1998–99, at the height of the conflict with Serbia. These incidents have probably been a consequence of a nexus of factors – the social dislocation that typically accompanies civil strife and internal conflict, the irregular and at best semi-trained nature of fighting forces, and, not least, the potent mixture of resentment, masculinity and violence that tends to characterize extremist identity politics (see p. 186).

A final link between women and armed conflict is the relationship between military bases and prostitution. In one sense, history is so filled with examples of women as 'war booty' or 'camp followers' that the phenomenon of **military prostitution** is seldom analyzed or even recognized. However, since the 1980s there has been a growing recognition of the systematic character of military prostitution and of its implications for national and personal security. In the early 1990s, the Japanese government apologized for the sexual enslavement of so-called 'comfort women' in Korea during WWII. The extent of military prostitution around US bases in Okinawa, the Philippines, South Korea and Thailand has increasingly been understood to have been facilitated by local and national government as well as by the connivance of military authorities. US military deployments in the Gulf War, the Afghan War and the Iraq War have reinvigorated prostitution and the trafficking of women in the Middle East. Nevertheless, the significance of military prostitution perhaps goes beyond the physical, sexual and economic exploitation of women and has implications for international politics as well. For example, the exploitative sexual alliances between Korean prostitutes and US soldiers defined and helped to support the similarly unequal military alliance between the USA and South Korea in the post-war era (Moon 1997). By undertaking to police the sexual health and work conduct of prostitutes, the South Korean government sought to create a more hospitable environment for US troops, sacrificing the human security of the women concerned for the benefit of national security.

Gender, globalization and development

There has been a long tradition of feminist theorizing about economic issues, particularly undertaken by socialist feminists. The central idea of socialist feminism is that patriarchy and capitalism are overlapping and interlocking systems of oppression. The sexual division of labour, through which men dominate the public sphere while women are customarily confined to the private sphere, has served the economic interests of capitalism in a number of ways. For some socialist feminists, women constitute a 'reserve army of labour', which can be recruited into the workforce when there is a need for increased production, but easily shed and returned to domestic life during a depression, without imposing a burden on employers or the state. At the same time, women's domestic labour is vital to the health and efficiency of the economy. In bearing and rearing children, women are producing the next generation of capitalist workers. Similarly, in their role as housewives, women relieve men of the burden of housework and child-rearing, allowing them to concentrate their time and energy on paid and productive employment. The traditional family also provides male workers with the necessary cushion against the alienation and frustrations of life as a 'wage slave'. However, such gendered processes are largely ignored by conventional

● **Military prostitution**: Prostitution that caters to, and is sometimes organized by, the military.

theories of political economy which concentrate only on commercial exchange and paid labour, thus rendering much of women's contribution to productive activity invisible. This is further accentuated by gender biases that operate within the conceptual framework of conventional political economy, and especially economic liberalism. This can be seen, in particular, in the feminist critique of the notion of 'economic man' (Tickner 1992a). The idea that human beings are rationally self-seeking creatures who pursue pleasure primarily in the form of material consumption, a foundational idea of market capitalism, has been constructed in line with masculinist assumptions about egoism and competition. Feminists, in other words, suggest that 'economic woman' would behave otherwise.

The restructuring of the economy as a result of globalization has had a number of further implications for gender relations. In the first place, it has brought about the global 'feminization of work'. In the developing world, this has been evident in the expansion of employment opportunities for women, both as agricultural workers in, for instance, Latin America's export-orientated fruit industry and through a process of global industrial restructuring that has seen the export of manufacturing jobs from the developed to the developing world. Examples of this include the growth of the Asian electronics industry and of clothing assembly plants in Mexico. The developed world has also witnessed the growth of new 'feminized', or 'pink-collar', jobs through the expansion of the service sectors of the economy, such as retailing, cleaning and data processing. Although the number of women in paid work has grown, such trends have also been associated with vulnerability and exploitation. Not only are women workers usually cheap (in part because of an abundant supply of labour) but they also tend to be employed in economic sectors where there are few workers' rights and weak labour organizations. Women workers therefore suffer from the double burden of low-paid work and continued pressure to undertake domestic labour, often, thanks to the advance of neo-liberal globalization, in the context of a reduction of state support for health, education and basic food subsidies.

Economic globalization has also unleashed dynamics that have led to the 'feminization of migration'. Pressures in both developed and the developing countries have contributed to this trend. For instance, female immigrants have been pulled by a 'care deficit' that has emerged in wealthier countries, as more women have entered paid employment but with revised aspirations in terms of education and careers. Not only has this created an increased demand for nannies and maids to replace the domestic roles traditionally carried out by mothers, but it has also made it more difficult to fill jobs traditionally taken by women, such as cleaners, care workers and nurses. Major female migratory flows have therefore developed, notably from Southeast Asia to the oil-rich Middle East or the 'tiger' economies of East Asia, from the former Soviet bloc to western Europe, from Mexico and Central America to the USA, and from Africa to various parts of Europe. At the same time, poverty in the developing world pushes women to seek employment overseas. Migrant women, indeed, have come to play a particularly significant role in supporting their families through the remittances they send home, women workers, because of their family ties and obligations, usually being a more reliable source of remittances than male workers. The pressures of globalization have therefore combined to redefine the sexual division of labour in both global and ethnic terms, creating a dependency

KEY THEORISTS IN FEMINIST INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Jean Bethke Elshtain (born 1941)

A US political philosopher, Elshtain's *Public Man, Private Woman* (1981) made a major contribution to feminist scholarship in examining the role of gender in informing the division between the public and private spheres in political theory. In *Women and War* (1987), she discussed the perceptual lenses that determine the roles of men and women in war, interweaving personal narrative and historical analysis to highlight the myths that men are 'just warriors' and women are 'beautiful souls' to be saved. In *Just War against Terror* (2003), Elshtain mounted an impassioned defence of the 'war on terror' based on just war theory.

JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN

Cynthia Enloe (born 1938)

A US feminist academic, Enloe's writings aim to expose the multiplicity of roles women play in sustaining global economic forces and inter-state relations. Often associated with feminist empiricism, she has been concerned to counter the tendency within conventional paradigms to limit, usually in a gendered fashion, our perceptual and conceptual fields, effectively excluding women from analysis. In works such as *Bananas, Beaches and Bases* (1989), *The Morning After* (1993) and *Manoeuvres* (2000) Enloe has examined international politics as if the experiences of women are a matter of central concern.

CYNTHIA ENLOE

See also **J. Ann Tickner (p. 76)**

of a particularly intimate kind, as affluent and middle-class families in the developed world come to rely on migrant women to provide childcare and home-making services (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003).

The global transfer of the services associated with a wife's traditional role are nevertheless most intimate when it comes to sex. The era of globalization has substantially boosted the sex industry on both a national and global level, with alarming numbers of women and girls being trafficked by smugglers and sold into bondage. Thailand, for example, has an estimated half a million to one million women working as prostitutes, and one out of every twenty of these is enslaved. Prostitution expanded rapidly in Thailand during the economic boom of 1970s, a consequence of both rising demand due to increased living standards amongst male workers and of growing supply through a flood of children being sold into slavery in the traditionally impoverished mountainous north of the country (Bales 2003). On a global level, sexual exchange has a variety of faces. These include the growth of sex tourism, particularly affecting countries such as the Dominican Republic and Thailand, and the phenomenon of overseas, or

'mail order', brides, through which men in affluent regions such as North America and western Europe acquire wives mainly from Southeast Asia and the former Soviet bloc. In its most brutal and exploitative form, sexual exchange manifests itself in human smuggling and **people-trafficking**. Estimates of the number of people involved in some kind of trafficking range from 4 million to 200 million persons worldwide, with women and young girls constituting about 80 per cent of all victims. According to the UN, 87 per cent of women and young girls are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation (UNODC 2006). It is a problem that has particularly affected parts of Asia. An estimated 5,000 to 7,000 Nepali girls and women, for example, are trafficked each year primarily to India (Crawford 2009).

As far as development is concerned, a number of competing gender perspectives have emerged. Modernization theorists have associated economic development with the emancipation of women from their traditional roles. In this view, patriarchal control and the subjugation of women is one of the key hierarchies that flourishes in traditional societies. The growth of market-based, capitalist relations brings with it, by contrast, a powerful drive towards individualism, valuing people less in terms of status and tradition and more in terms of their contribution to the productive process. This is reflected in the emergence of more egalitarian family structures in which all family members participate more widely in the family's functions. Opportunities for women to gain an education and enter careers also expand, as modernization creates the need for a more skilled and literate workforce. It is therefore little surprise that in the UN's ranking of countries on the basis of the **Gender-related Development Index** (GDI) and the **Gender Empowerment Measure** (GEM), developed countries consistently outperform developing ones (see Table 17.1). In short, gender equality marches hand in hand with modernity.

From a feminist perspective, however, this conception of 'modernity' is constructed on the basis of essentially masculine norms. As already examined, this applies to economic liberalism, and it is therefore also evident in the idea of 'development as growth'. A further feminist concern has been that orthodox approaches to development have failed to recognize the extent to which poverty is 'feminized'. As Abbott *et al.* (2005) put it: 'Women make up half the world's population, perform two-thirds of the world's working hours, receive one-tenth of the world's income and own only one-hundredth of the world's property'. Some 70 per cent of the world's poor are women. Sen (1990) sought to highlight the degree to which female poverty is disregarded by pointing out that 'more than 100 million women are missing'. The 'missing women' he referred to are evident in population statistics that show that men outnumber women in parts of the world like South Asia and Africa, despite the fact that the normal tendency would be for women to slightly outnumber men (although, at birth, boys outnumber girls everywhere in the world, women tend to outnumber men in adult society because of their greater life expectancy). By some estimates, 50 million women are 'missing' in India alone. Such trends therefore reveal higher death rates among women and girls compared with men and boys in certain parts of the world. Part of the explanation for this is the preference of some parents, motivated by economic and/or cultural considerations, to have boy children over girls, leading to the practice of sex-selective abortion or infanticide. This occurs in parts of East Asia and South Asia, and it is especially evident in

● **People-trafficking**: The movement of persons, based on deception and coercion, with the purpose of exploiting them, usually through their sale into sexual or other forms of slavery.

● **Gender-related Development Index**: A measure used by the UN to rank states on the basis of sexual equality in terms of life expectancy, adult literacy rates, enrolment in education and estimated earned income.

● **Gender Empowerment Measure**: A measure used by the UN to assess the extent of gender inequality in states based on the ratio of estimated female-to-male earned income and the proportion of female legislators, senior officials, managers and professional and technical workers.

Table 17.1 Top ten and bottom ten countries in the GDI and GEM league tables

Gender-related Development Index		Gender Empowerment Measure	
1. Australia	146. Burundi	1. Sweden	100. Azerbaijan
2. Norway	147. Burkina Faso	2. Norway	101. Turkey
3. Iceland	148. Guinea-Bissau	3. Finland	102. Tonga
4. Canada	149. Chad	4. Denmark	103. Iran
5. Sweden	150. Congo (DRC)	5. Netherlands	104. Morocco
6. France	151. Central African Republic	6. Belgium	105. Algeria
7. Netherlands	152. Sierra Leone	7. Australia	106. Saudi Arabia
8. Finland	153. Mali	8. Iceland	107. Egypt
9. Spain	154. Afghanistan	9. Germany	108. Bangladesh
10. Ireland	155. Niger	10. New Zealand	109. Yemen

Source: UNDP 2009.

China, linked to its 'one child' policy, and in some Indian states. In other cases, higher rates of disease and mortality amongst women and girls result from a failure to give them the same level of medical care, food and social services as boys and men, a misallocation that is generally worse in rural areas and particularly severe for late-born girls, and even worse for girls with elder sisters. Families with scarce resources may choose to care for boys over girls because of the expectation they will grow up to be wage earners or family workers, whereas girls are less likely to earn an income and the dowry system may impose a significant burden on individual households.

On the other hand, postcolonial feminists in particular have criticized the image of women in the developing world as victims – poor, under-educated, oppressed and disempowered. Women, they argue, often play a leading role in development and poverty reduction initiatives, especially when these initiatives are based on local ownership and reject top-down, technocratic models of development. Amongst the development initiatives that have placed particular emphasis on the role of women has been the expansion of **microcredit**. Often seen to have originated with the Bangladesh-based Grameen Bank, which, together with its founder Muhammad Yunus, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006, microcredit has the advantage that it is an effective way of helping very poor families to form self-help groups to establish small businesses or advance agricultural or rural projects. The World Bank estimates that about 90 per cent of microcredit borrowers are women. This has major benefits for poor communities as women are more likely to invest their credit rather than spend it on themselves, and they have a better record of repayment than men. India and Bangladesh have been the main beneficiaries of such development initiatives, but they can also be found in countries ranging from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Russia to Ethiopia, Morocco and Brazil. However, the 'microcredit revolution' may also have drawbacks. Critics, for instance, have argued that microcredit schemes have sometimes led governments to scale back social provision, that repayment rates may be high, that they may create long-term dependency on external capital, and that, although they are often designed to empower women, an infusion of cash into the local economy may only increase dowry payments.

● **Microcredit**: Very small loans for business investment, often given to people who cannot access traditional credit.

SUMMARY

- Feminism can broadly be defined as a movement for the social advancement of women. However, it has taken a wide range of forms, with distinctions particularly being made between feminist traditions orientated around the goal of gender equality and those that place a greater emphasis on women being 'woman-identified'.

- The 'gender lens' of empirical feminism is primarily concerned to 'add women' to existing analytical frameworks, especially in the attempt to tackle gender gaps between women and men. Making feminist sense of international politics therefore means recognizing the previously invisible contributions that women make to shaping world affairs.

- The 'gender lens' of analytical feminism is concerned, by contrast, to highlight the gender biases that pervade the theoretical framework and key concepts of mainstream international theory, and particularly realism. These are deconstructed to reveal masculinist biases that, in turn, help to legitimize gendered hierarchies and perpetuate the marginalization of women.

- Feminists have drawn attention to the gendered character of states and nations. Patriarchal biases within the state dictate that states will be competitive and at least potentially aggressive, while nations and nationalism are commonly entangled with gendered images that may place a special emphasis on female 'purity'.

- Feminists have been critical of the conventional notion of national security, seeing the broader idea of human security as a better means of highlighting women's concerns. War is often also viewed as a gendered phenomenon, reflecting tendencies such as the prevalence of men in senior positions in political and military life, and the impact of myths about masculinity and militarism and about the need for male 'warriors' to protect women and children.

- Feminist theorizing on economic issues has tended to stress the ways in which the sexual division of labour serves the economic interests of capitalism as well as the extent to which the conceptual framework of conventional political economy has been constructed on a masculinist basis. Such ideas have influenced feminist thinking about both globalization and development.

Questions for discussion

- How did feminism's 'second wave' differ from its 'first wave'?
- Why have some feminists rejected the goal of gender equality?
- Why is the distinction between 'sex' and 'gender' so important in feminist theory?
- Is 'gender mainstreaming' an effective strategy for tackling gender injustice?
- Are the key concepts of mainstream international theory based on masculinist assumptions?
- What implications do feminists draw from the gendered character of nations and states?
- Why and how have feminists criticized the conventional idea of national security?
- Why have feminists argued that war and gender are intrinsically linked?
- Has economic globalization benefited, or harmed, the lives of women?

Further reading

Ehrenreich, B. and A. R. Hochschild (eds) *Global Women: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy* (2003). A thought-provoking collection of essays that examine the effects of global capitalism on women's lives all over the world.

Enloe, C. *The Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire* (2004). A stimulating series of essays that uncover the various and significant ways in which women participate in international politics.

Shepherd, L. J. *Gender Matters in Global Politics* (2010). A very useful collection of essays that examine the gendered character of a wide range of aspects of global politics.

Tickner, J. A. *Gendering World Politics: Issues and Approaches in the Post-Cold War Era* (2001). An influential survey of feminist approaches to international relations that highlights issues such as human rights and globalization.

www.palgrave.com Companion Website   Links to relevant web resources can be found on the *Global Politics* website