

BOOK & FILM REVIEWS

GENDER AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

by Janice Bogstad

MY DAUGHTER THE TERRORIST. 58 mins. 2007. Film by Beate Arnestad; produced by Morten Daae; distributed by Women Make Movies (www.wmm.com). DVD: Order No. W09934. Sale: universities, colleges, & institutions, \$295.00; home video, \$29.95. Rental to colleges, universities, & institutions: \$90.00.

Tara McKelvey, ed., **ONE OF THE GUYS: WOMEN AS AGGRESSORS AND TORTURERS.** Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2007. 266p. bibl. notes. pap., \$15.95, ISBN 978-1580051965.

Paige Whaley Eager, **FROM FREEDOM FIGHTERS TO TERRORISTS: WOMEN AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE.** Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008. 240p. bibl. index. \$89.95, ISBN 978-0754672258.

Margaret Gonzalez-Perez, **WOMEN AND TERRORISM: FEMALE ACTIVITY IN DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TERROR GROUPS.** New York: Routledge, 2008. Contemporary Terrorism Studies. 162p. bibl. index. pap., \$39.95, ISBN 978-0415570732.

We're all familiar with the stereotype that women are biologically inclined to play private and nurturing roles in society, even in the midst of war or other political violence. Interestingly, as more women actually become directly involved in political violence — whether in governmental or non-governmental military settings — that stereotype is alternately challenged and reinforced, depending on who is interpreting the evidence.

Since women appeared in the Algerian conflict in the 1970s, their significance on the front lines in battles for ethnic, religious, or political autonomy has engaged cultural and political critics. The naïve view that women are innately unsuited to actions requiring direct physical violence seems to have disappeared, but the more recent increase in numbers of women soldiers, women terrorist and freedom fighters, and women suicide bombers has sparked debate about the conditions under which women make these — seemingly unnatural — choices to kill and to die violently.

The documentary film and three books under review here all address, either theoretically or more personally, what one of the authors, Paige Whaley Eager, calls political violence. All conclude that women's agency is an important factor — that is, that women choose to participate in political violence, although personal experience of extremely violent conditions is often a motivating factor in their choices — and that those choices are often made at great personal cost. The maker of the film and the authors of these books also agree that the level of social coercion involved in women's choices differs from one conflict situation to another.

These resources, as a group of texts, also make it apparent that the width of the lens through which events are viewed greatly influences how those events are interpreted, and that this is the case both for participants in violence and for observers (including the readers of these texts). All of these texts contrast national and sometimes international violence with intense interpersonal or case-study approaches

to women who are involved in political violence, whether that involvement is legal, quasi-legal, or illegal. And even those categories are called into question, as is the conventionally understood definition of terrorism.

My Daughter the Terrorist, the documentary film, is the most personal of the texts, opening with interviews of two of the women in the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (also known as Black Tigers) in Sri Lanka. The essay collection *One of the Guys* is also much more personal than national or global, with its focus on the torture tactics used against Arab men at Abu Ghraib and on the women military personnel who were prosecuted based on the few (of many alleged) photographs that were smuggled out to the news media. *One of the Guys* also introduces broader perspectives by examining feminist and anti-feminist dialogues about women in the present-day military.

Although the essays in *One of the Guys* all interrogate feminist theory (especially what some essayists call “naïve” and others “liberal” feminism), they

come to varying conclusions. All of these essays are accessible to a lay audience, including readers unfamiliar with feminism or with the larger political context of the Abu Ghraib atrocities. That same accessibility does not typify the two other texts reviewed here, both of which are embedded in sociological dialogue. Both Margaret Gonzalez-Peréz, in *Women and Terrorism*, and Paige Whaley Eager, in *From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists*, attempt to illuminate the involvement of women in violence around the world, using an overview process and carefully clarified — although very different — methodologies. Both use case studies, but both set those studies within larger social and political contexts. These two books explore very different theses, but reading them together provides both historical and current comparisons of a wide range of existing groups. For example, each discusses women in the Tamil Tigers, but their differing methodologies and lenses expand our understanding of this conflict and others worldwide.

Several of the resources reviewed highlight women caught between the sexualized violence of their families, the official approval of government soldiers and functionaries, and the leadership of terrorist organizations. This perspective is especially brought to bear in a very personalized way in *My Daughter the Terrorist*. The young Tamil women in Sri Lanka seem to have few choices: they can be raped, harassed, and tortured and generally have their lives destroyed by the Sri Lankan government, or they can become Tamil fighters and expect to live very short lives. The Sri Lankan government has demonstrated its ruthlessness even since the establishment of peace in that country in May of 2009. More than 300,000 ethnic Tamils were being

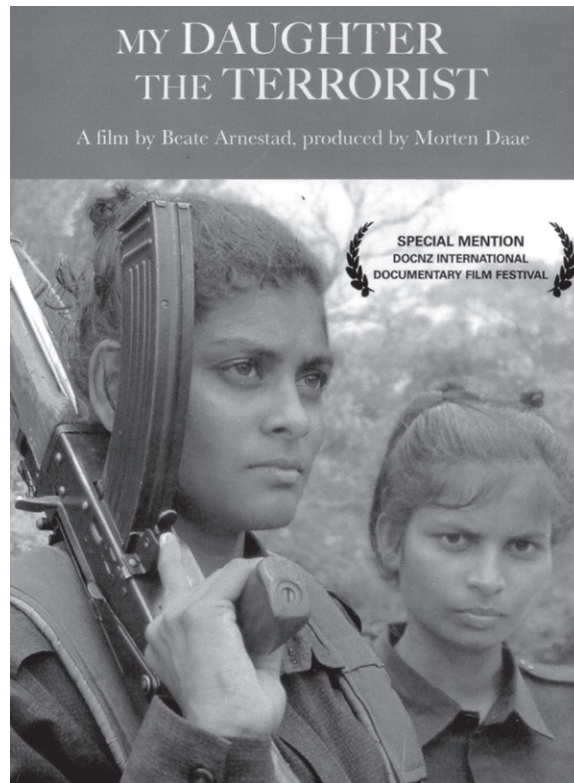
held in wholly inadequate “settlement” camps, and the government refused to allow humanitarian aid. What will inevitably follow if the U.N. is not able to intervene is tantamount to genocide. And it is clear from this documentary that these young Tamil women knew the likely outcome of their defeat.

In *My Daughter the Terrorist*, we actually meet two of these young women, Dharsika and Puhalchudar, twenty-four-year-olds who have been Tamil Tigers since their early teens. The film follows their normal routine over the course of a few days, including military training as well as such every-

that her leader would never authorize actions that jeopardize civilians; she also claims that she would immediately kill her friend as a traitor if ordered to do so. Dharsika’s mother, who is also interviewed, experienced in her own childhood some of the same events that Dharsika has identified as having motivated her decision to become a Tamil Tiger. It is clear there was little choice for these young women between enduring the debased refugee status that her mother and other Tamils in Northern Sri Lanka suffer and joining the Tigers. Her mother describes the conditions of terror under which they have lived since Dharsika was four, “inside

the war,” with their living spaces bombed and invaded, women and girls attacked, tortured, and raped by government soldiers, and the end of any dreams for education and a normal life. In a particularly affecting scene, Dharsika’s mother is shown some of the film clips that will make their way into this production, the first news she’s had of her daughter in several years. Then, near the end of the film, we are treated to views of the graves and hero-walls dedicated to the many young women who performed suicide bombings as Tamil Tigers. Dharsika’s mother tells us that she doesn’t even know where her own daughter is buried, leaving us to assume that both young women are dead. In the lives of all three of these women, the personal is very political. As of this writing, the hope of a Tamil

homeland is gone, and we can only wonder at the fate of the thousands of girls and women of the Tamil ethnicity still in Sri Lanka. The film does a good job not only of contrasting these women’s understanding with that of the rest of the world, but also of portraying their extremely limited opportunities.¹



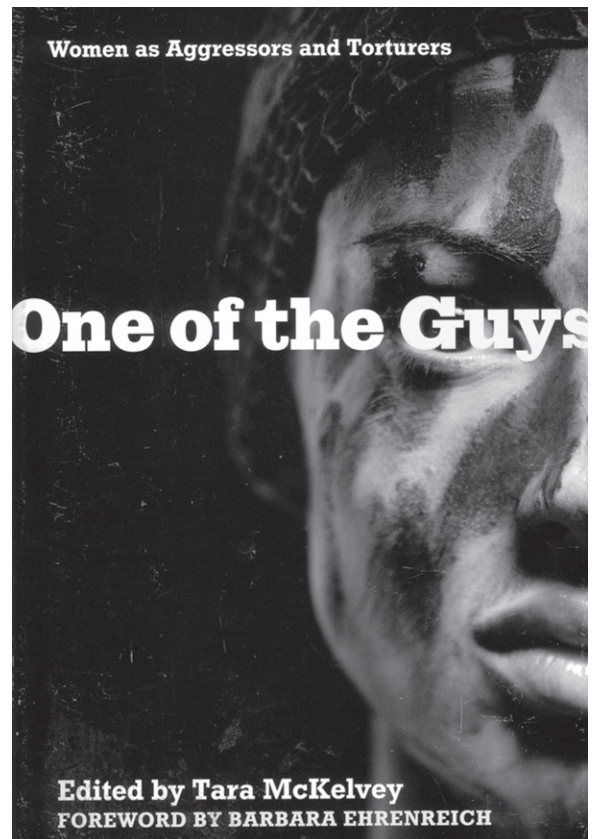
day domestic activities as eating, doing hair, and even praying. The two have lived and fought together for seven years and, despite the statement by one that if she is chosen as a suicide bomber, the other will ask to take her place, we also get a sense of the ominous mindset they have absorbed in their training. Dharsika states emphatically

The essays in the volume edited by Tara McKelvey, *One of the Guys: Women as Aggressors and Torturers*, focus particularly on women and violence, but not the violence perpetrated by groups defined nationally and internationally as terrorist. Here, a very specific, sexually coded violence, mandated or at least encouraged by the U.S. military and the CIA, is addressed. Most of the essays at least make reference to the official government explanation of the smuggled photographs² that came to the attention of the world — that they portrayed the independent actions of “a few bad apples” (including media “poster child” Lynnndie England). According to Jumana Musa, many other photos existed, of similar actions perpetrated by many other soldiers at Guantanamo Bay prison and elsewhere, but those were either suppressed or destroyed. Moving beyond the question of whether the three young women who were prosecuted (out of seven) were guilty, Musa notes that “many questions have been raised about the positions in which female soldiers and interrogators were placed. Interrogation techniques that have come to light reveal a willingness to exploit women’s sexuality to achieve a larger objective” (p. 85). She also describes a common practice of smearing Arab men with fluid made to look like menstrual blood, and asks whether male soldiers would be asked to use sexuality in a similar way. Furthermore, she documents increases in sexual violence against female spouses at the hands of male American soldiers returning from Afghanistan. Her argument is intended to portray not only the military tendency to exploit sexual violence and to expect women soldiers to comply with orders to do so, but also to show that the women soldiers are then blamed for following orders and held up as examples of women who have acted in an unnatural way. Musa points out, as do

several other essayists in this volume, that the only officer to be punished for Abu Ghraib was Brigadier General Janis Karpinski (a reservist in charge of Abu Ghraib at the time), while one of those directly responsible for designing the policies, Major General Geoffrey Miller, was never brought to trial (p. 87).³

Lucinda Marshall, in the essay “The Misogynist Implications of Abu Ghraib,” attacks one important way the “bad apples” explanation has been used: to argue that feminism is the main culprit because it has increased the numbers of women in the military. “Linda Chavez of the deceptively named Center for Equal Opportunity,” Marshall writes, “quickly suggested that the presence of women in the military actually encouraged such ‘misbehavior’” (p. 51). Although there is now ample evidence that sexual humiliation of Arab men is an oft-practiced interrogation technique taught in manuals sanctioned by the U.S. military, several conservative media pundits have claimed that feminists’ attempts to force women into places they don’t belong is really at fault. Marshall also notes the underreporting of male military men abusing female Arab prisoners: “But far more misogynistic is the almost total lack of attention to the ample evidence of sexual assault against Iraqi women at Abu Ghraib. Quite simply, sexual abuse against men is considered torture; sexual abuse against women by men is business as usual” (p. 55).

Ilene Feinman provides statistics to document ways the media have obscured the role of gender and race in both perpetrating and representing that torture in Abu Ghraib. She notes the overrepresentation of white women soldiers as perpetrators of torture: women are only 15% of the soldiers at this facility and 17% of the forces in the Army. She notes, “I would argue that women in the military are used as an enormous symbolic wellspring of unresolved issues around gender equality and masculinism” (p. 64). She



also identifies broad patterns of torture techniques in Iraq and Afghanistan that were uncovered by the International Committee of the Red Cross and Amnesty International.

Feinman is not the only contributor to this volume to attack gendered torture techniques as military policy, explaining the actions of England and

other women in terms of both what was ordered by the military or the CIA and what was encouraged or allowed by them. Timothy Kaufman-Osborn posits that our shock over the pictures is also a gendered response: "I argue that much of what appeared so shocking when these photographs were first released can be read as an extension of, but also threats to, the logic of masculinized militarism" (p. 146). Like some of the other contributors, Kaufman-Osborn interrogates the culture of the military as well as of a significant public sector that is intolerant of women as soldiers at the same time that it expects them to raise the moral tone of the military. As M.S. Embser-Herber has suggested, the fixation on these particular photographs may well indicate that Americans today are better prepared to see women return from Iraq in body bags than as quasi-sexualized aggressors. Women in the military are in a sort of catch-22: they don't fit in because they are supposedly unable to brutalize; but if they prove themselves able, they are blamed as if theirs are monstrous actions. As Feinman argues, male torturers are a given, but female torturers, no matter how much they were instructed and trained to torture, are unnatural.

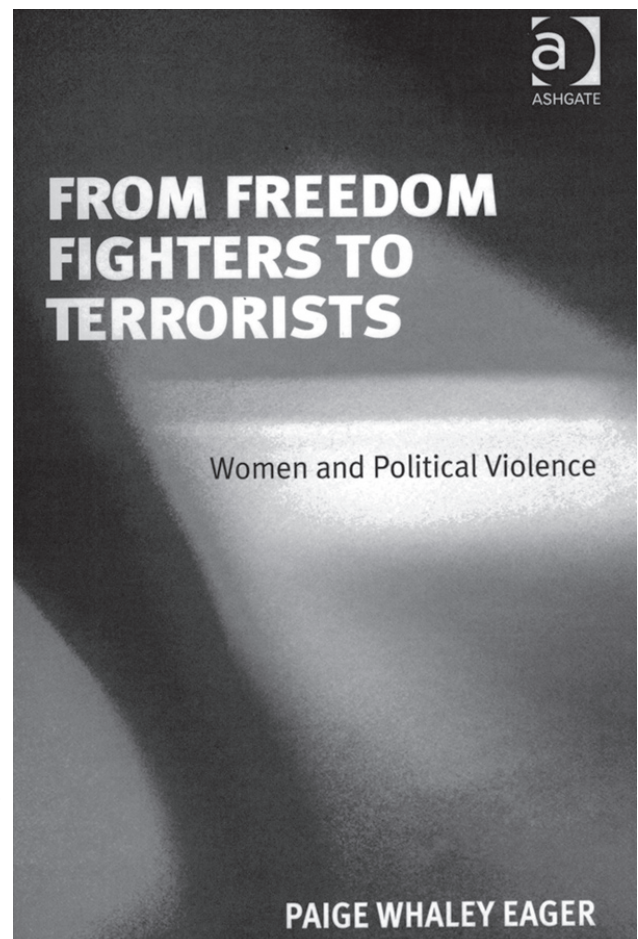
Not all of the contributors to *One of the Guys* excuse the actions of the women soldiers who carried out the policy of sexualized torture. While Lila Rajiva invokes the double standard as an explanation for these women being prosecuted, she also notes that we need to acknowledge their agency: "Ultimately, we are compelled to admit that it was not because they were powerless that women acted as they did, but because they were exulting in their power — exulting both in the voluntary submission of their fellow soldiers to their sexual power (witness the sex videos of Lyndie with numerous partners)

as well as in the coerced submission of male prisoners" (p. 228). Yet somehow these women were both taught and encouraged to take advantage of a situation. Rajiva's argument is merely that if we claim that the women were totally under someone else's control, we are again denying their agency. She still agrees that they were scapegoated and used to direct attention away from a misogynistic military milieu and culpable leaders.⁴

Barbara Finlay analyzes the experience of women in the military as a whole: what they do to cope and what happens to them if they don't put up with regular attacks and humiliation by their male peers. She claims that "[t]o survive, they tend to take one of three general approaches. Some try to fit in, to be 'one of the guys,' as manly and aggressive as the men, enduring sexist behavior in silence and participating in or complying with the misogynist culture and harassment of other women. This is the only way a woman can actually be accepted and promoted" (p. 201). Other strategies include isolating themselves or reporting and resisting the misogyny, neither of which bodes well for a woman's military career. In sum, the essays of this book cast serious doubt on whether women at Abu Ghraib had much choice in becoming torturers, as well as seriously calling into question the cultural interpretation, in news media and more generally, of both their

immediate actions and their essential natures.

When *One of the Guys* is read in the context of the other resources reviewed here, one notes startling similarities in the lives of women in the military and women who become terrorists. Both within the military and within terrorist organizations, women's lives are structured by misogyny. Interestingly, women in both groups also are similar in that poverty and abuse figure heavily in their backgrounds. Apparently, some of the same social forces that lead some women to become freedom fighters and terrorists lead some others into the U.S. military, where, despite all efforts to counter male hostility, they find some of the same sexuality-based hostility and interper-



sonal manipulation suffered by women “freedom fighters,” that is, women who find themselves in organizations that oppose their government. Hence, the title of this book identifies the irresolvable tension for these women: On the one hand, they are expected to be like “the guys”; on the other, they are criticized for not being proper women, and victimized as if their success as soldiers also makes them sexually available. As even Janis Karpinski, the former commander of Abu Ghraib, says, men don’t like to work for women, and they use a range of behavior to demonstrate their frustrations.

Paige Whaley Eager, in *From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists: Women and Political Violence*, is more interested in what she describes as the range of forces in women’s lives that lead them to become terrorists or freedom fighters. In an effort to refute the impression prevalent in the news media that women become terrorists for personal reasons (e.g., they have boyfriends in the movement or have had personal experiences of injury or humiliation), but that men do so for political reasons, she first organizes her case studies into political groupings and how they make use of women: left-wing organizations, right-wing organizations, national liberation organizations, ethnonational political violence, and suicide bombing. Her focus is a search for women’s levels of agency in these various situations — or, more exactly, to demonstrate that one cannot assign women a “personal” impetus and men an ethical or social one. But she first defines political violence as a more neutral term than terrorism, explains why it is useful, and concludes by offering observations on differences and similarities of women operating in these different organizations, internationally. She approaches each type of group by looking at different meanings that can be read into their actions at different levels of

analysis. Each is first discussed on the basis of what she calls the macrolevel factors influencing women’s participation in political violence and terrorism, in both a wider historical and a current context. In another category, which she calls mesolevel factors, she examines current political and social issues relating to the group in question; in a third, microlevel factors, she describes the general involvement of women in the group or groups identified and then provides short case histories of individual women.

Eager addresses each group only once — so, for example, the Tamil Tigers of Eelam are discussed in Chapter 5, where they are viewed in the context of ethnonational political violence, and not where one would expect, in Chapter 6 along with other female suicide bombers. Yet her carefully set-out multilevel analysis provides information that makes these individual women’s choices much more clear. *My Daughter the Terrorist* included references to the Tamil leader, but Eager goes further, identifying him as Prabhakaran (p. 135) and reviewing his historical involvement in the conflict, seriously undercutting the cult-of-personality image narrated by the young women. And, of course, news of Prabhakaran’s recent death during the disastrous defeat of the Tamils was identified by current news media as one major factor in the surrender of the surviving Tamil Tigers.

Yet each of Eager’s narratives is very brief, so the book reads like a catalog of “freedom fighters” or terrorist organizations. This approach is useful for making comparisons. As does Gonzalez-Perez’s *Women and Terrorism*, Eager’s work identifies a disturbing trend: that news media around the world interpret the same evidence differently depending on whether the perpetrators are male or female. Journalists constantly point to personal tragedies

as the reason that women become terrorists and suicide bombers, while the motives of male terrorists, who tell the same stories of privation and suffering, death of relatives, and personal affront, are described as primarily political. Equally disturbing is the propaganda created by the political movements themselves. Women are often portrayed as martyrs for either a political or religious cause, but not as people with individual agency. And in most of the countries where activity has recently taken place or is happening now, these very women who become active in the political sphere also become social outcasts, no longer considered appropriate marriage candidates by family or society at large. Eager also makes a very telling comparison between the terrorists and suicide bombers of other groups and those identified by the PLO.

Apparently, the women in the Tamil Tigers and several other groups were allowed to advance through their organizations, gaining positions of authority and participating in decision-making, while this trajectory was manifestly not apparent for the women in the PLO. At the same time, the PLO recruited the largest number of terrorist bombers and women terrorists. Eager’s short descriptions of each group, of course, do not offer an in-depth analysis of either the group itself or the women involved. She is clearly seeking comparisons in her search for the forces that move women from the roles of private life — regardless of the political, religious or social construct — into organizations that promote terrorism. Like Gonzalez-Perez (discussed next in this review), Eager asserts that suicide bombers in different movements are there for very different reasons, and that some choose this role while others are forced into it, just as is the case for the men around them. And she concludes that it is not just femi-

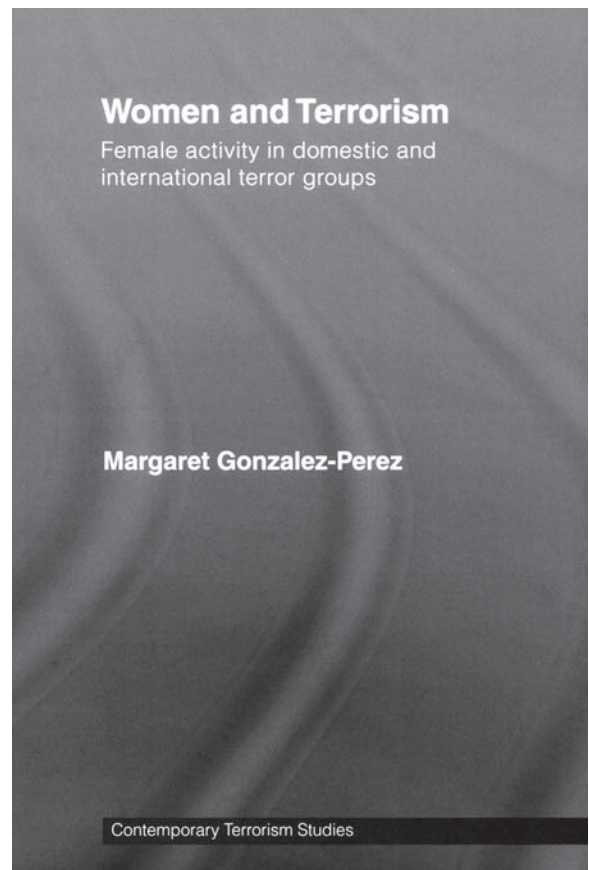
nism (while liberal feminism has some influence), Marxism, or personal relationships that motivate women or men to work within these groups, but larger social networks such as university connections, extended families (as with the IRA), and ethnic identities (as with the Tamil Tigers, the Basques, or the FLN). “What is clear, however, is that there is no single profile of female suicide bombers, just as there is not with their male counterparts. Although they may be younger as opposed to older, they come from all types of socioeconomic backgrounds, secular versus religious milieus, and various educational attainment levels” (p. 215).

In *Women and Terrorism: Female Activity in Domestic and International Terror Groups*, author Gonzalez-Perez explores her view that there is a significant correlation between the numbers of women who join a terrorist organization and the number of women in positions of leadership or authority. She claims in her introduction that “high levels of female terrorist activity appear predominantly in domestic terrorist organizations because the characteristics of these groups are more conducive to the rejection of traditional gender roles and the acceptance of active female participation, thereby encouraging the mobilization and participation of women” (p. 2). In other words, women participate more often in groups with national agendas because they perceive that they have a chance to improve their status within their society, an opportunity they don’t find in groups with international foci.

Gonzalez-Perez sets out to methodically explore the reasons that women are far more likely to join organizations that have a national agenda and are opposed to a totalitarian government. In this type of organization, women are far more likely to hold positions of authority, to advance through the ranks, and to be willing

participants in personally dangerous acts. This argument must be made very carefully, because it might seem almost circular; alternatively, the groups chosen from the many possibilities may seem to have been selected only because they support the thesis.

Gonzalez-Perez first reviews definitions of terrorism; in the course of that review, she highlights the many difficulties attendant on a workable definition, including the ideology that might inform it. For example, depending on your definition, you could exclude acts of terrorism promulgated by a government, such as the Sri Lankan government against the Tamil minority in the North, or, even less ambiguously, the German government against the Jews in the 1930s and 1940s. Laqueur’s definition, she notes, focuses on the illegitimate use of force and the targeting of innocent people for the purpose of creating fear; another analyst, Paul R. Pillar, “further organizes the concept of terrorism into five essential elements: premeditation, political motivation, noncombatants as targets, clandestine agents and creating the presence of threat” (p. 9). Most definers agree, however, that the political use of violence against innocent civilians is a more generally understood condition of terrorism. It is clear that several of the terms used in each definition are ideologically coded, even if the definitions as a whole seem quite reasonable. The range of definitions cited points to areas of ambiguity in the attempt at definition. For example, the claim that terrorists are always counter to their own governments raises the is-



sue of what to make of groups in the Arab-Israeli conflicts. Is the targeting of noncombatants always a terrorist act? (If so, what do we make of the many governments that target “villages” and ethnic groups suspected of hiding terrorists? Aren’t government troops then also terrorists when they use violent methods?) Clearly, some of the definitions are included to emphasize the difficulty in distinguishing between institutionalized terrorism as practiced in totalitarian regimes and counter-institutional terrorism practiced by both domestic and international terrorist groups with ethnic or political agendas. But Gonzalez-Perez concludes her introduction with the acknowledgement that a working definition is necessary:

Terrorism, then, is the use or threat of violence against noncombatants by individuals, groups, or state governments

for political objectives. These activities may include guerrilla warfare, revolutions, state-sponsored terrorism, separatist movements, and organized militia movements. (p. 11)

Gonzalez-Perez then sets out the categories of her major theoretical position by briefly exploring the concept that women perceive themselves as a repressed majority with issues similar to those of ethnic, tribal, or other minorities. However, since her exploration also requires her to distinguish between national and international groups, she also interrogates the often elided definitions of nation and state and then finally describes a range of roles for women in terrorist groups, as Sympathizers, Spies, Warriors, and Dominant Forces; and she uses these categories throughout her discussion of many practitioners of political violence. Criminal justice scholars Pamala Griset and Sue Mahan, she says,

characterize Sympathizers primarily as camp followers who provide money, time, sewing, cooking, and even sex to the males in the terrorist organization. Spies are a more active group, serving as decoys, messengers, intelligence-gatherers and contributing strategic support to the men as well. Sympathizers and Spies are linked by the lack of any return on their investment. (p. 15)

Warriors, on the other hand,

are more active participants who are recruited and trained to use weapons and incendiary devices in guerrilla warfare. They may fight alongside their male counterparts, but they are not allowed to become leaders

and have little, if any, input on policy formation. Furthermore, there is rarely any anticipation of change in their status once the group's goals have been achieved. (p. 16)

The Warrior category is both central to the thesis of the entire book and ambiguous, especially with regard to suicide bombers. Gonzalez-Perez finally concludes, as did Eager, that there must be more than one category of suicide bombers — those used exclusively as suicide bombers by international terrorist groups, and those who train and operate as warriors before being asked, as their male counterparts sometime are, to commit suicide bombings. So female suicide bombers can either be Warriors or belong to the fourth category — Dominant Forces — the most privileged one for women: “Finally, the Dominant forces participate at the highest levels, providing leadership, ideology, strategy and motivation. These women often fill commando positions at the core of the group” (p. 16).

This last category is not as ambiguous as Warriors, as it requires that the organizations invest time in training and permit women to have power and authority within the organization. While organizing her study of these groups geographically rather than by type, Gonzalez-Perez comes to conclusions about women's level of agency that are similar to those of Eager: that women's level of agency in Dominant Forces, especially, is very high and is motivated by a range of personal, social, and accidental reasons.

Gonzalez-Perez's technique for arguing that women play a more active role in national terrorist groups is to present short overviews of national and international organizations within specific countries. She surveys the groups based on the region in the world in which they operate — the Americas,

Asia, Africa and the Middle East, or Europe — and contrasts domestic terrorism and international terrorism in each chapter. However, in each case, she relies on admittedly limited information in determining which of the four possible roles women play in the specific terrorist organization, further emphasizing the definitional complexities attendant on such a study. And of course the national and international organizations she reviews in each region are not in the same countries, rendering comparisons problematic yet again. For example, the first group discussed in Asia is the Tamil Tigers (also referenced in the DVD and in Eager's book), which is identified as *intranational*, that is, a group opposing the government of its country, and also as attracting women and affording them the opportunity to become Warriors and Dominant Forces. Several other groups with women members are mentioned; one comparison is with the Vietnam National Liberation Front, which “typically portrayed women as active members of the Vietnamese insurgency...but these instances were extremely rare” (p. 73). As in this comparison, at each stage in her argument Gonzalez-Perez relies more on her own judgment and that of her peers than on stated facts and figures, although it can be argued that she does so because there is not a lot of evidence. Thus, the conclusion that women select intranational organizations because they perceive the chance to improve their status slides all too easily into the argument that these organizations attract women because self-agency is more possible within the groups.

Gonzalez-Perez has an intriguing thesis that is as difficult to prove as it is compelling. As a result, it is more of a suggestion of where to look for women's roles as terrorists than a proof that women are more common as intranational than as international terrorists. Nevertheless, her knowledge

of the definitional issues as well as of the stereotypical cast given to women's terrorist activity is both fascinating and subtle. With more hard evidence, her thesis might even be more solid. At the same time, some statements in her conclusion are evidentially valid when groups like the Tamil Tigers are studied in more detail. For example, she states that "[a]s a policy tool, studies in this area could encourage government institutions to provide gender equity and opportunities for women in economic, political and social arenas, thereby reducing terrorist movements' appeal to women, and thus, diffusing the infrastructure of such movements. Poverty, human rights abuse, and discrimination are all factors that generate discontent among women and provide potential mobilization for political violence against the state" (p. 131). Such a conclusion correlates with other sources of information on the value of education, economic support, and social investment in women worldwide. That it should appear in a study of the motivations for terrorism should be no surprise.

I can highly recommend both Eager (*From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists*) and Gonzalez-Perez (*Women as Terrorists*), as much for alerting the reader to the reasons for women's widespread involvement in terrorism and to the broad and deep development of terrorist movements since the late 1960s as for their stated theses. One can compare their relatively brief discussions of some of the same organizations for alternative perspectives. In fact, reading (or viewing, in the case of the video) all four of these works in concert has been very arresting for me. *My Daughter the Terrorist* and *One of the Guys*, while more personal in tone, reinforce the broader conclusions of the more theoretical works, and all serve to emphasize the gross dehumanizing effects of institutionalized violence, whether that violence is sponsored by legiti-

mate (to some degree) governments or by nationalist or international terrorist groups. Perhaps women's direct experience with this sort of physical violence will eventually result in men also exercising the freedom to refuse such violence as an answer to conflict. And perhaps we can more openly acknowledge that women as well as men have always paid a high personal price — physically, socially, economically, and psychologically — for their involvement.

Notes

1. For a fuller understanding of how this conflict came about, Eager's and Gonzalez's sociological studies (reviewed in this essay), although more scholarly, are helpful. Neither focuses primarily on the Tamil situation, but includes it in the context of wider studies of terrorism and women. Another film, *To See If I'm Smiling* (Women Make Movies, 2007, directed by Tamar Yarom), reinforces the similarities in the military socialization process described in both *My Daughter the Terrorist* and *One of the Guys*; young women who have served in the Gaza Strip for the Israeli army describe the negative ways in which the experience has changed them and the social indifference to their suffering.

2. The photographs showed primarily female soldiers seemingly gloating over Arab males who are fully or partially naked and in sexually suggestive or humiliating positions — for example, stacked in a naked pyramid, or leashed like dogs, with a woman holding the leash.

3. In fact, as Feinman points out, despite the names and involvement of Colonel Thomas Pappas and Major General Barbara Fast coming to light in subsequent investigations, Fast was not held culpable, although it is now

clear that she had had a major role in directing the soldiers' actions, while former General Janis Karpinski had been allowed only restricted access (to the infamous cellblocks) under the guise that interrogation was under the singular control of the CIA.

4. For a more detailed assessment of the problems created for women in military culture, one might also look to Helen Benedict's *The Lonely Soldier: the Private War of Women Serving in Iraq* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2009). We will see women's agency addressed again in Paige Whaley Eager's *From Freedom Fighters to Terrorists: Women and Political Violence*, which is also reviewed in this essay.

5. There are now a number of other interesting studies both of women in terrorist organizations and women in the military. See, for example, in addition to those cited in Notes 1 and 4, Kirsten Holmstedt's *Band of Sisters: American Women at War in Iraq* (2008) and *The Girls Come Marching Home: Stories of Women Warriors Returning from the War in Iraq* (2009); Eileen MacDonald's *Shoot the Women First* (1992); Laura Sjoberg & Caron E. Gentry's *Mothers, Monsters, Whores: Women's Violence in Global Politics* (2007); and the film *The Sari Soldiers*, directed by Julie Bridgham (Women Make Movies, 2008).

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