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SPECIAL ISSUE: OCIS AND BEYOND: INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN AUSTRALIA

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OCIS and Beyond: International Relations in Australia: Introduction
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Review Article
The Howard Years: An Evaluation
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Book Reviews

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SPECIAL ISSUE

OCIS and Beyond: International Relations in Australia

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Feminist International Relations in Australia

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*I am convinced at every turn that the international is personal,
and the personal is international too.¹*

Feminist International Relations (IR) scholarship has a small, but significant, presence in the Australian IR discipline. This presence, now over two decades old, has made important contributions to the re-thinking of the agenda, methodology and ambitions of Australian IR. This article offers a guide to tracing the impact of feminist scholarship in the Australian IR discipline. It begins with an overview of feminist IR generally, and then moves to identify the work of Australian scholars in this field. It demonstrates the pioneering breadth and scope of this work and pays tribute to the scholars who broke down the traditional barriers of the discipline to reveal the identities, issues, and ways of thinking about world politics that had been previously unexplored. It doing so, it analyses feminist impact on the core of the discipline as well as its work on expanding the boundaries of IR. It will argue that, in Australia, feminist IR scholarship is often (though not exclusively) located within the pockets of scholarship committed to exploring critical approaches. However, this article also recognises that the discipline of International Relations in Australia has not always been welcoming of feminist insights and contributions. With this in mind, this article turns to the challenges and debates that face feminist IR both within the discipline and without, with a focus particularly on the dialogue between "critical feminism" and "mainstream International Relations".

Introduction

Feminist insights into International Relations are now a familiar part of Australia's IR landscape. While the number of academics who self-identify primarily as feminist IR scholars remains small, the number of IR academics who consider their research and themselves to be compatible with feminist principles continues to grow. Similarly, the number of Australian scholars who readily recognise the embedded nature of gendered politics in all issues of International Relations has increased. Feminist IR theory is now routinely taught in IR and Politics undergraduate courses around the country, there is a continued demand for research higher degree supervision on feminist issues, and there is a plethora of research emerging from Australian-based scholars working within feminist IR.

In some ways, this is surprising. Until very recently Australian IR has been particularly resistant to feminist scholarship. The Realist ascendancy and its proclivity towards focusing upon the "high politics" of war, strategy, and diplomacy made little room for feminist insights. Moreover, Australian IR has been a particularly male-dominated profession. Slowly, this has changed. While there may remain bastions of resistance to feminist scholarship throughout Australian universities, for the most part,

¹ Jindy Pettman, "A Feminist Politics of Region? Reflecting and Revisioning IR from Asia and the Pacific" in Bina D'Costa and Katrina Lee-Koo, eds, *Gender and Global Politics in the Asia-Pacific* (New York, 2009), p.226.

feminist IR and feminist IR scholars now have a welcome presence in important parts of the Australian IR community. This space has emerged for two key reasons. Firstly, the "critical turn" in Australian International Relations in the 1980s amplified the feminist critique of IR and created welcoming spaces for feminist insights. Secondly, the scholarship of Professor Jan Jindy Pettman, who was for a long time a lone feminist voice in Australian International Relations, pioneered the terrain which other feminist scholars, like myself, would follow.

Yet while feminist scholarship has a clear presence in particularly critical scholarship within the Australian discipline, it also extends far beyond. Feminist comment on global politics in Australia is a strongly inter-disciplinary affair. This may be partly because of early resistance from mainstream IR that saw feminists seek calmer waters in more accepting disciplines. However, the need to explore methodologies that could focus more clearly on gendered social relations have also driven feminists away from mainstream International Relations. As a result, feminist scholarship on global politics isn't necessarily produced by those trained in International Relations.

Far from lamenting the lack of clearly defined space for feminist work within the Australian discipline of International Relations, this article will instead instruct the reader in how to locate Australian feminist scholarship on global politics. It is out there, shattering the ceilings and shaking the foundations of the discipline, making material differences in the lives of those affected by the machinations of the international, and challenging each and every issue that affects this nation, the people inhabiting it and the people whose lives are affected by its actions. One simply needs to know where to look. To borrow from Christine Sylvester, we need to "follow [feminist] stories down holes and into wildernesses and wars and firing lines far more diligently, dangerously, and determinedly than most of us do".²

This guide to feminist International Relations in Australia will begin with an overview of the evolution of the sub-field globally, outline its key commitments and motivations, and then trace the work of Australian scholars working in this field. It will demonstrate the pioneering breadth and scope of this work: it will pay tribute to the scholars whose intrepid research has broken down the boundaries of what has often been a traditional and stuffy discipline to expose issues, lives, perspectives and relationships hitherto unexplored. It will then return from the breadths of the field back to the core of the IR discipline to examine the impact that feminist International Relations scholarship has had. It will argue that in Australia, feminist IR scholarship has found haven and camaraderie within the pockets of scholarship committed to exploring critical approaches. With a number of critical theorists, postmodernists, constructivists, post-colonial scholars, among others, feminists have engaged in mutually fruitful conversations that have taken place at conferences³ and in journals such as this special edition.

However, this article also recognises that feminist International Relations, both locally and globally, has not always received such a ready welcome. With this in mind,

² Christine Sylvester, "Woe or Whoa! International Relations Where It's Not Supposed to Be", *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Vol. X, 2 (Winter/Spring 2004), p. 60.

³ In this regard, OCIS (the Oceanic Conference on International Studies), hosted by the University of Queensland in July 2008, held two relevant panels entitled "A Dialogue Between Feminism and Critical Theory: Empowerment and Emancipation" and "Critical Methodologies for International Relations".

this article will turn to the challenges that continue to face the sub-discipline. It will look at the rocky relationship between "critical feminism" and "mainstream International Relations" both in Australia and globally, as well as the resistance and challenges that feminist scholars face engaging academic structures and the wider community.

Feminist International Relations: The Global View

Feminist IR is the product of a simple, yet disarming question: "where are the women in the study and practice of International Relations?" This question, posed over twenty years ago first by Cynthia Enloe and later by scholars like Ann Tickner and Jindy Pettman, piqued the curiosity of some IR scholars and some feminists working outside the discipline. Women had been largely absent from political leadership and decision-making roles, from the narratives of global politics, and from the academic study of International Relations as both analysts and subjects. Subsequent feminist investigations were designed to uncover not just where the women were, but why they had been absent from the discipline. It soon became clear that the traditional practices of International Relations had neither the capacity nor the curiosity to identify and analyse gender-based politics in the international system. More alarmingly, it generally rendered incidences of gender-based discrimination and oppression that occurred within, and as a product of, global politics as outside its rubric of study. When dealing with traditional approaches to International Relations, feminists found that they faced an "ontology based on unitary states, operating in an asocial, anarchical world" and consequently it provided, as Tickner explains, "few entry points for feminist theories, since these were grounded in an epistemology that took social relations as its central category of analysis".⁴ While this point remains a significant stumbling block in the relationship between the mainstream discipline of IR and feminist scholarship (as will be detailed later), it simultaneously presented a disciplinary challenge that feminists needed to overcome if they were to make inroads in IR. This challenge has generated feminist work in IR and provided the basis from which a broad field emerged.

Globally, feminist International Relations is a rich and dynamic field. In its efforts to entice the discipline of IR to "take gender seriously", feminist scholarship on International Relations has been prolific. Contributing to the "Third Debate", critical approaches to feminist IR scholarship in particular (and here I include feminists using and contributing to postmodernist, critical theory, constructivist and post-colonial theoretical frameworks) have challenged the ontological and epistemological boundaries of International Relations. Beginning with Cynthia Enloe's celebrated *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, and later J. Ann Tickner's *Gender In International Relations* and Jindy Pettman's *Worlding Women*, among others, feminist International Relations has contributed to the fertile critique of the discipline.⁵ It has also exposed the discipline of IR to an abundance of new, feminist-inspired issues and concerns. In 1988 the journal *Millennium* anticipated this contribution with a special edition on "Women and International Relations", which it reviewed a decade later in 1998 and again, in 2008. The initial publication was followed in 1993 with a special edition in

⁴ J. Ann Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements Between Feminists and IR Theorists", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 41, 4 (1997), p. 616.

⁵ Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases* (Berkeley, 1990); J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations* (New York, 1992); and Jindy Pettman, *Worlding Women* (St Leonards, NSW, 1996).

Alternatives, and in 2007 the *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* published a special edition on "Gender and International Relations in Britain" which re-assessed Jill Steans' "State of the Discipline" report on Feminist International Relations three years earlier.⁶ These debates and discussions reflected a growing presence of feminist scholarship in international bodies such as the International Studies Association (ISA). In the early 1990s a new subsection of ISA was founded and today the Feminist Theory and Gender Studies (FTGS) section of ISA has strong showings at the annual conventions. Similarly, the British International Studies Association (BISA) has a strong Gendering International Relations Working Group. In 1999 Jindy Pettman spearheaded the launch of the first Feminist IR journal, the *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, whose initial home base was the Australian National University.

Contributions to these publications and organisations focused upon critiques of the mainstream approach to IR, the competing goals of feminist scholarship, questions regarding feminist ethics and methodologies in International Relations, and contributions to a broadening feminist-focused research agenda in IR. For instance, Tickner's contribution to the initial *Millennium* special edition made the disarmingly simple point that Hans Morgenthau's "Six Principles of Political Realism", and his worldview more generally, was a construct free of women. Yet while women may have been absent, gendered politics was not. Tickner argued that Morgenthau's "Six Principles" did, in fact, privilege masculine values by prioritising objectivity over subjectivity, reason over emotion, public over private, and politics over morality.⁷ These early analyses paved the way for a broader feminist engagement with the discipline. Feminist inquiries into IR theory,⁸ International Political Economy,⁹ Globalisation,¹⁰ Democracy and Governance,¹¹ War and Security,¹² Nation Building and Nationalism,¹³ and International Law and Justice¹⁴ have all made significant contributions to the study of IR and provided important critiques of mainstream approaches. Furthermore, feminist scholarship has re-shaped the boundaries of the discipline by including a gendered perspective on issues such as post-colonial

⁶ Jill Steans, "Engaging from the Margins: Feminist Encounters with the 'mainstream' of International Relations", *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 5, 3 (2003), pp.428-454.

⁷ J. Ann Tickner, "Hans Morgenthau's Principles of Political Realism: A Feminist Reformulation", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (1988), pp.429-440.

⁸ See Christine Sylvester's two contributions *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era* (Cambridge, 1994) and *Feminist International Relations: An Unfinished Journey* (Cambridge, 2002) as well as Marysia Zalewski and Jane Parpart, eds, *Rethinking the "Man Question" in International Relations* (London, 2008).

⁹ See V. Spike Peterson, *A Critical Rewriting of Global Political Economy: Integrating Reproductive, Productive, and Virtual Economies* (London, 2003).

¹⁰ See Mary Hawkesworth, *Globalization and Feminist Activism* (Lanham, 2006).

¹¹ See Shirin Rai and Georgina Waylen, eds, *Global Governance: Feminist Perspectives* (New York, 2008) and Zillah Eisenstein, *The Color of Gender: Reimagining Democracy* (Berkeley, 1994).

¹² See Laura J. Shepherd, *Gender, Violence and Security* (London, 2008) and Laura Sjoberg, *Gender, Justice and the Wars in Iraq* (Lanham, 2006).

¹³ See Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation* (London, 1997).

¹⁴ See Hilary Charlesworth and Christine Chinkin, *The Boundaries of International Law: A Feminist Analysis* (Manchester, 2000).

politics,¹⁵ activism and resistance,¹⁶ human rights,¹⁷ developmental issues,¹⁸ and others. This scholarship brings to the surface issues hitherto neglected by International Relations scholars. Yet it also demonstrates the inter-connectedness of International Relations in and around the relationships of people and issues beyond IR's spotlight. This scholarship developed the analytical capacity to demonstrate the clear links between, for instance, the Asian Financial Crisis and violence against women in Indonesia,¹⁹ or the link between US militarism and alliance politics in East Asia, and the rise in prostitution.²⁰ Consequently, feminist International Relations assisted in opening up a new world to the discipline, one that transcended state boundaries and followed the implications of IR's theory and practice into homes, communities, and relationships.

To this end, Feminist International Relations has two primary goals. Firstly, it seeks to highlight and understand the causes and consequences of gender-based discrimination in the study and practice of International Relations. Secondly, it seeks to use this understanding to advocate on behalf of those who, because of their gender, are rendered insecure or oppressed by the prevailing order. For example, feminist International Relations scholars are not simply interested in the politics of war, they are interested in how the common and accepted assumptions and practices of the politics of war are themselves gendered and how they, in turn, affect the lives of gendered identities. This offers three things: a different ontological perspective of what constitutes war, a different epistemological approach to understanding war, and, by necessity, a unique methodology with which to study war. It also reveals an expanded agenda of the gendered politics of war, from wartime violence against civilian men and women to the treatment of homosexuals in state-based military institutions.²¹ As a result, feminist International Relations is necessarily transformative, normative and relies upon an emancipatory ethic.

Consequently, a feminist approach to the study of IR involves a number of inter-related commitments: Firstly, feminist IR seeks to reveal the gender biases evident in the study and practice of International Relations. This involves an analysis of IR's epistemological commitments as well as an examination of the agenda that dominates it. Secondly, feminist IR has sought to demonstrate the exclusions and silences that this bias has created and to redress this by "making visible" women, but also other neglected identities, and using them as a central unit of analysis. By applying this "gender lens", feminist scholars identify the often entrenched gender-based inequalities

¹⁵ Geeta Chowdhury and Sheila Nair, eds, *Power in a Postcolonial World: Race, Gender and Class in International Relations* (New York, 2002).

¹⁶ See Amrita Basu, ed, *The Challenge of Local Feminisms: Women's Movements in Global Perspective* (Boulder, 1995).

¹⁷ See Rebecca Cook, ed, *Human Rights of Women: National and International Perspectives* (Philadelphia, 1994) and Kelly D. Askin and Doreen M. Koenig, eds, *Women and International Human Rights Law: Introduction to Women's Human Rights Issues* (Ardsey, 1999).

¹⁸ See Shirin Rai, *Gender and the Political Economy of Development: From Nationalism to Globalization* (Cambridge, 2002).

¹⁹ Jan Jindy Pettman, "Questions of identity: Australia and Asia" in Ken Booth, ed., *Critical Security Studies and World Politics* (Boulder, 2005), p. 173.

²⁰ Katherine Moon, *Sex Among Allies: Military Prostitution in US-Korean Relations* (New York, 1997).

²¹ See, for example, Joshua Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa* (Cambridge, 2001).

across global politics. Finally, feminist scholarship seeks to address this bias in ways that promote gender equality and an understanding of gender politics.

Feminist International Relations in Australia

Feminism entered International Relations in Australia somewhat later than it did in North America and Europe. I would be reluctant to give it a birth date, suffice to say that feminist International Relations in this country owes a great debt to the scholarship of Jan Jindy Pettman, whose pioneering work began in the mid-1980s and carries on to the present. While her early scholarship focused on questions of post-colonialism, nation- and state-building, identity politics (especially race) and development studies, firstly in Africa,²² and then in Australia's own region,²³ Pettman's feminist scholarship on questions on International Relations began, in earnest, in the late 1980s and early 1990s. For Pettman, discovering the politics of gender and finding her feminist voice happened outside of the discipline of IR. Yet upon returning to IR, her contributions to this determinedly traditional field cannot be under-stated. The publication of *Worlding Women* in 1996 put Australian feminist International Relations on the map. In tune with the work of Ann Tickner and Cynthia Enloe, Pettman's work added not only a feminist voice but a series of feminist voices to politics in and around the Asia-Pacific region as her scholarship and her activism inspired graduate students, like-minded feminist IR academics, feminist activists, and practitioners. Her presence at the Australian National University (ANU) also provided a base for a number of visiting feminist scholars. The ANU alone has welcomed Ann Tickner, Carolyn Nordstrom, Spike Peterson, Marysia Zalewski, Cynthia Enloe, Christine Sylvester, as well as scholars from throughout the region who have influenced and inspired the development of feminist IR in Australia.

Jindy Pettman's scholarship pioneered a number of key themes that continue to be significant in the Australian practice of feminist International Relations. Firstly, her work demonstrates the importance for an IR scholar to traverse and even break down boundaries that inhibit our understanding or access to knowledge, be they the borders of nation-states or of disciplines. Consequently, feminist scholarship on global politics in Australia is not always found strictly within the IR discipline and when it is, it rarely reflects the dominant methods and assumptions of the discipline. Departments of Sociology, Anthropology, Philosophy, Law, Development Studies and Gender Studies, among others, produce much of this country's feminist scholarship on global politics. These scholars rely upon methods and insights from their "home discipline" but also from one another, demonstrating the cohesiveness of feminist IR scholarship in Australia, but also reflecting its truly inter-disciplinary character. For example, Hilary Charlesworth, whose recent scholarship focuses on the experiences of women in the Iraq war and in the rebuilding of East Timor, is primarily a scholar of International Law. Similarly, the University of Adelaide's Chilla Bulbeck approaches issues of global politics using insights from Sociology, post-Colonial theory, Feminist theory and Women's Studies as evidenced in her 1998 book *Re-Orienting Western Feminisms: Women's Diversity in a Post-Colonial World*. Thus, feminist scholarship on global politics is not confined to IR journals and publication streams. Feminist research on global questions is being undertaken in spaces that are avowedly inter-disciplinary, open to critical exploration, concurrent with feminist ambition, and

²² Jan Pettman, *Zambia: Security and Conflict* (St. Martins, New York, London, 1974).

²³ Jan Pettman, *et al.*, *Race and Racism in Australia* (Wentworth Falls, NSW, 1988).

nurturing of feminist activism. While this may describe certain aspects of the discipline of International Relations, it does not describe it all. Australian-based journals that describe the global such as *Global Change, Peace and Security* and *Borderlands e-journal* are openly inter-disciplinary and as a consequence are littered with feminist scholarship and perspectives.

The second key contribution of Jindy Pettman's scholarship is her investigations into identity politics. Along with other contributions (like David Campbell's *Writing Security*),²⁴ Pettman wrote *identity* into IR. Both methodologically and ontologically, Pettman demonstrated that *identity matters* to IR and, particularly, to Australian IR. Drawing from her earlier research,²⁵ Pettman asked questions not just about women and men in IR, but also about the intersections of gender identity with race, nation, and class. Furthermore, she demonstrated that identity politics is an ineradicable part of institutions, nation-states, cultures and knowledge as well as in individuals. It shapes relationships of power, determines access to power, and can target individuals for opportunity and for oppression. Particularly when writing about the international politics of Australia's own region, the question of identity is central to understanding politics. Across the region, a number of collections by feminists have recognised this by highlighting the contributions of women and feminist ideas to regional politics. Recently, the publication of the collections *Gender Politics in the Asia-Pacific Region* (2002)²⁶ and *Gender and Global Politics in the Asia-Pacific* (2009)²⁷ demonstrate the significance of identity politics in understanding the political, economic, cultural and social relations that exist between individuals, communities and states in the region.

Thirdly, Pettman's contribution to the importance of identity in understanding IR extended to a consideration of one's own identity. The methodological placement of oneself into one's research can be fraught, and is a key issue in feminist research. As Pettman notes:

How I have done IR as a feminist cannot be separated from my identity as an Australian woman living through the second half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. As a post-colonial feminist, I must account for my privileges and my implications in the very power relations I study.²⁸

The relationships built up between the researcher and her/his subject, agenda, and the resultant knowledge has been an important theme for feminists working in the region. Given the complexities of the intersections of identity that *can* exist in the region, feminist scholars must always critically reflect upon the processes of their research. Gender, class, religion, nationality, ethnicity, race, age, education, economic situation and location can all complicate our analysis and therefore the processes of feminist research.

Throughout the region, feminist scholars seeking ethical engagements with their research subjects and the formulation of their research agendas have explored these methodological questions. Foremost among this work is the 2006 collection *Feminist*

²⁴ David Campbell, *Writing Security* (Minneapolis, 1992).

²⁵ See for example, Jan Pettman, *Living in the Margins: Racism, Sexism and Feminism in Australia* (Sydney, 1992).

²⁶ Brenda Yeoh, Peggy Teo and Shirlena Huang, eds, *Gender Politics in the Asia-Pacific* (London, 2002).

²⁷ Bina D'Costa and Katrina Lee-Koo, eds, *Gender and Global Politics in the Asia-Pacific* (New York, 2009).

²⁸ Jindy Pettman, "A Feminist Politics of Region?", p. 226.

Methodologies for International Relations, co-edited by the University of Auckland's Jacqui True.²⁹ Such an honest and self-reflective account of how feminists conduct their work in International Relations provides a refreshing change and a key challenge to the mainstream (and positivist) approaches to IR. It also provides a series of persuasive accounts of why we cannot, nor should we, try to write ourselves, as researchers, out of International Relations. Instead, it offers guides for ethical engagements. This theme is elucidated by the ANU's Bina D'Costa in her chapter in this collection (and elsewhere) which looks at feminist research on the gendered politics of war and recovery.³⁰ Similarly, RMIT University's Anne McNevin has confronted these methodological challenges in her own fieldwork in post-9/11 Peshawar. McNevin argues that inevitably a power relationship will exist between herself, as a white, academic, Australian woman researcher, and her research subject, even if it is not the relationship we immediately imagine. She argues that

there is a need to be more explicit about the unavoidable persistence of power within feminist research practice as much as any other, and to recognize this power as dynamic in nature. The emphasis must remain on minimizing power imbalances where we can, and learning to live with them where we cannot. This means being more honest about the limitations and partiality that will necessarily characterize our research.³¹

The consequence of this is research that is self-reflective and accountable, but simultaneously reflects an honesty and curiosity about what drives the politics around us, and what the consequences of those politics are.

Most significantly, feminist IR scholars have made important contributions to the study of the Asia-Pacific region. Recent mainstream IR scholarship on the region has focused on "big-picture" issues like perceived failing states, transnational terrorism, and the consequences of economic crises on state stability. Australian Feminist IR scholarship is also interested in these issues, but provides a new lens, and often a critique, on how we understand these issues, and how they can be addressed. In this sense, feminist IR scholars join with much of the critical project in the region in an attempt to re-examine and re-orientate familiar but unsatisfying patterns of relations between the states and peoples of the region. This involves both ontological and epistemological investigations into the construction of knowledge around key concepts like security, regional political economy, and conflict.³² For instance, Claire Slatter and Yvonne Underhill-Sem provide compelling feminist critique of the neo-liberal reform packages that have been introduced into the Pacific in recent decades. They argue that many of these reforms undermine long-standing social and cultural community-based

²⁹ Brooke A. Ackerly, Maria Stern, and Jacqui True, eds, *Feminist Methodologies for International Relations* (Cambridge, 2006).

³⁰ Bina D'Costa, "Marginalized Identity: New Frontiers of Research for IR?" in Ackerly, Stern and True (eds.), *Feminist Methodologies*, pp. 129-152.

³¹ Anne McNevin, "Confessions of a Failed Feminist IR Scholar: Feminist Methodologies in Practice in Peshawar" in D'Costa and Lee-Koo, eds, *Gender and Global Politics in the Asia-Pacific*, p.127.

³² See, for example, Katrina Lee-Koo, "Security as Enslavement, Security as Emancipation: Gendered Legacies and Feminist Futures in the Asia-Pacific" in Anthony Burke and Matt McDonald, eds., *Critical Security in the Asia-Pacific* (Manchester, 2007), pp. 231-246 and Katrina Lee-Koo, "Terror Australis: Security, Australia and the 'War on Terror' Discourse", *Borderlands e-Journal*, Vol. 4, 1 (2005).

practices throughout the Pacific and in doing so threaten local development programs.³³ Feminists have also contributed perspectives on a broader, critically inspired International Relations agenda. For example, the role of women in peacebuilding, political activism, institutional reform and governance, and poverty and development have all received significant attention by Australian and regional feminist scholars.³⁴ Elisabeth Porter's *Peacebuilding: Women in International Perspective* combines insights from the region and beyond with questions of identity and gender-based politics to examine the prospects of building a sustainable peace based on justice, equality, and reconciliation.³⁵ In conjunction with this agenda, Australian feminists are highly active in engaging questions that affect gendered identities, particularly women, of the region. Issues of trafficking in women and children, sexual exploitation, and women's access to education, safe and equitable labour practices, and developmental assistance are all addressed by feminist scholarship.³⁶

Facing the Challenges to feminist International Relations

Mainstreamed on the Periphery?

In Australia and throughout the region, feminist scholarship on issues relating to global politics is rich and dynamic. While the number of dedicated feminist IR scholars is small, the community of feminist scholars (including graduate scholars) who examine global politics is large and encompasses a range of disciplines. Yet while I cannot claim that Australian feminist IR has been "mainstreamed within the mainstream" of International Relations, I would argue that, more productively, it has been mainstreamed on the periphery. In a recent review of International Relations theory in Australia, Richard Devetak and Richard Higgott highlight the importance of the feminist contribution to the "critical turn" in IR scholarship in Australia.³⁷ It is worth noting that within the ranks of critical scholars analysing IR and IR theory, (critical) feminist IR has found a home in Australia. Recent publications written from a critical perspective or shaped by critical scholars routinely include feminist insights.³⁸ More importantly feminist contributions are not simply "added" for political correctness, but rather reflect a growing awareness throughout the critical IR community that gendered politics, like all identity politics, are central to a complete understanding of global

³³ See Claire Slatter and Yvonne Underhill-Sem, "Reclaiming Pacific Island Regionalism, Does NeoLiberalism Have to Reign?" in D'Costa and Lee-Koo, eds., *Gender and Global Politics in the Asia-Pacific*, pp. 195-210.

³⁴ See, for example, the collection of chapters in D'Costa and Lee-Koo, eds., *Gender and Global Politics in the Asia-Pacific*.

³⁵ Elisabeth Porter, *Peacebuilding: Women in International Perspective* (London, 2006).

³⁶ *Global Change, Peace and Security*, Vol. 19, 3 (2007) published two relevant articles: See Bernadette McSherry and Miriam Cullen, "The Criminal Justice Response to Trafficking in Persons: Practical Problems with Enforcement in the Asia-Pacific Region", pp. 205-220 and Helen Johnson, "Migration, Gender and Security Issues in the Pacific: Complicating Conflict Discourse", pp. 243-258.

³⁷ Richard Devetak and Richard Higgott, "International Relations Theory" in Rod Rhodes, ed., *The Australian Study of Politics in the Twentieth Century* (London, 2009).

³⁸ See this author's contribution in the following collections: Burke and McDonald, *Critical Security in the Asia-Pacific*, pp. 231-246; "'War on Terror'/'War on Women': Critical Feminist Perspectives" in Alex J. Bellamy, et. al., eds., *Security and the 'War on Terror'* (Abingdon, 2008), p. 42-54; and "Feminism" in Richard Devetak, et. al., eds., *An Introduction to International Relations: Australian Perspectives* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 75-85.

relations. Moreover, added to this recognition is, increasingly, an overt feminist commitment by those scholars who may not solely or primarily identify themselves as *feminist* IR scholars. Work by Roland Bleiker, Anthony Burke, David Campbell, Richard Devetak, Jim George and others routinely draw upon feminist scholarship and theory in their explanations and analyses of International Relations. The community built around critical IR studies, which includes feminist scholarship, is certainly an encouraging beginning. Yet it is worth noting that this may not be a majority of IR scholars in Australia, and it is not a reflection of the relationship between feminist IR scholars and the mainstream of the discipline.

Engagements between Feminist IR and the Mainstream

Globally, there remains a somewhat uneasy relationship between feminist scholarship and mainstream IR. Unlike any other area of International Relations, feminist IR has had the most difficulty in establishing a strong footing within the discipline's core. This has less to do with feminist scholars and more to do with their mainstream counterparts who resist the relevance of feminist theorising for International Relations. The consequence of this is a sub-discipline that is producing theoretically and empirically ground-breaking work, but largely in isolation from the mainstream discipline. Youngs argues that "Feminist International Relations has tended to flourish as a subfield of the main field of International Relations, without much impact on the field as a whole".³⁹ While this is partly good news, as Youngs continues, "it is also problematic that the impact of [feminist] activity in the field as a whole remains at best limited and at worst non-existent".⁴⁰ It is a sentiment that is echoed elsewhere. In reviewing feminist IR in 2005, Helen Brocklehurst revealed a range of views that identified "ultimately conflicting readings of feminist work in International Relations — as 'ubiquitous and invasive', 'cutting edge' yet also 'failing' and 'dying'".⁴¹ However these readings might not be as conflicting as they first appear. Brocklehurst's earlier descriptors reflect the sub-discipline itself while the latter reflect its engagement with "mainstream" IR. Assuming that an ambition of feminist International Relations is, in fact, to have an impact upon the disciplinary practices of mainstream IR, then this may be cause for concern. In light of the proliferation of feminist work as highlighted above, the question must be asked of the discipline globally: "Why does feminist scholarship effect only a slight impact upon the mainstream of the discipline?"

Terrell Carver responds to this question by asking a more foundational question: "Are critical feminists and mainstream/malestream scholars in International Relations even in the same world?"⁴² In describing the relationship as a "war of the worlds", he identifies that what is at stake is not just intellectual *terra firma* but also professional place. At its extreme, Zalewski points out that "the 'doing' of feminism is

³⁹ Gillian Youngs, "Feminist International Relations: A Contradiction in terms? Or: Why Women and Gender are Essential to Understanding the World 'We' Live In", *International Affairs*, Vol. 80, 1 (2004), p. 75.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Helen Brocklehurst, "The Art of Security: The Relationship of Gender and Sex to Peace and Conflict—Caution! Wet Paint!", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 7, 3 (2005), p.427.

⁴² Terrell Carver, "War of the Worlds/ Invasion of the Body Snatchers", *International Affairs*, Vol. 80, 1 (2004), p. 92.

simultaneously the 'undoing' of the discipline of IR".⁴³ Critical feminist IR, like the critical project more broadly, threatens the very core of mainstream International Relations. It suggests that not only are the ontological and epistemological foundations of the discipline deeply problematic, but in the case of feminist interventions, they are also revealed to be deeply discriminatory in ways that range from being careless, to being wilfully misogynist. Consequently, the gate-keeping that takes place is not a simple "turf war" but one that has much more at stake. Spike Peterson argues that feminist work that

[...] analytically and structurally expos[es] how gender operates to constitute the theory and practice of International Relations is thoroughly disruptive. It disturbs foundational concepts, conventional dichotomies, familiar explanations, and even the discipline's boundaries. It effectively demasculinises the discipline.⁴⁴

Furthermore, Peterson goes on to argue that "I believe that many who sense these systemic implications resist feminism not because they deny its truths but because they prefer their investment in the current arrangements of sex, gender, International Relations, and theory".⁴⁵ If Peterson is right, then all manner of strategic incursions by critical feminist scholarship will fail to move the mainstream of the discipline and instead result in defensive action. This much is demonstrated by the engagements between feminist scholars and the mainstream.

The methodological and ontological impasse between the mainstream and critical projects is unlikely to be overcome. As a result, Tickner noted over a decade ago, feminist IR will continue to be "dismissed as relativist and lacking objectivity".⁴⁶ Demonstrating the impasse, this very critique is in fact the goal of feminist IR: to recognise the multiple subjectivities and power dynamics continually at play in contemporary global social relations. The intractability of this impasse further embeds the incompatibility of a mutually acceptable International Relations agenda. This is demonstrated by the contribution of Robert Keohane to the debate on gender's "place" in International Relations. Keohane's objection to feminist scholarship was not one of subject matter, but rather of method (as if they could be easily separated). Keohane conceived of a place for feminist-inspired issues provided they conformed to the rules of acceptable scholarly practice. For Keohane this meant that:

Specifying their propositions, and providing systematically gathered evidence to test these propositions, will be essential: scientific method, in the broadest sense, is the best path toward convincing current non-believers of the validity of the message that feminists are seeking to deliver. We will only 'understand' each other if International Relations scholars are open to the important questions that feminist theories raise, and if feminists are willing to formulate their hypotheses in ways that are testable — and falsifiable — with evidence.⁴⁷

⁴³ Marysia Zalewski, "Do We Understand Each Other Yet? Troubling Feminist Encounters With(in) International Relations", *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 9 (2007), p. 303.

⁴⁴ V. Spike Peterson, "Feminist Theories Within, Invisible to, and beyond IR", *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Vol. X, 2 (Winter/Spring 2004), p. 42.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand", p. 620.

⁴⁷ Robert Keohane, "Beyond Dichotomy: Conversations Between International Relations and Feminist Theory", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 42, 1 (1998), p. 197.

For some, this deafness to feminist critiques of positivist IR approaches espoused by Keohane here and elsewhere⁴⁸ sought to discipline feminist inquiry to fit within the parameters of mainstream IR practice.⁴⁹ Suffice to say, this was unsuccessful.

Francis Fukuyama made a far less engaging intervention into feminist theorising in a 1998 edition of *Foreign Affairs*.⁵⁰ Fukuyama declared that women were indeed more peaceful than men were. For Fukuyama, the "reality" is that the feminisation of foreign policy (through the increased presence of women), would bring about a more peaceful world. Yet this would ultimately be a security threat for western democracies. "Even if we can assume peaceful relations between democracies", Fukuyama argues,

the broader world scene will still be populated by states led by the occasional Mobutu, Milosevic, or Saddam. Machiavelli's critique of Aristotle was that the latter did not take foreign policy into account in building his model of a just city: in a system of competitive states, the best regimes adopt the practices of the worst in order to survive.⁵¹

Some feminists have maintained the claim of innate sex-based gendered characteristics.⁵² For critical feminists however, ideas of both the inherent gendered nature of individuals and the necessity for a dominant hegemonic masculinity in global politics have long been dispelled as myths. Identified as a gendered social construction, these have also been revealed to be dangerous politics that can reinforce violence against gendered identities, particularly in conflict and post-conflict zones.⁵³ Yet Fukuyama's argument resists this analysis in favour of a "realistic" view of international politics [that] demands that 'real' men remain in charge.⁵⁴ Fukuyama's work is not therefore openly hostile to feminist IR (though it is dismissive of postmodern and radical variants of feminism). Rather, like his other work, he identifies a bifurcated world in which zones of feminised peace (populated largely by women) may be desirable but ultimately untenable, and therefore zones of masculinised war (populated largely by men) would finally triumph.

Like hitting one's head against a brick wall, these debates do little to advance the sub-discipline of feminist International Relations. Furthermore, they do little to negotiate differences or engender understanding between feminist and mainstream International Relations. As noted already, these debates do more than highlight the deep ontological and methodological differences between mainstream IR and critical feminist approaches. Mainstream scholars recognise that feminist work challenges IR, and particularly *their* ideal view of International Relations. Yet it is unclear if they see the actual challenge feminists pose. Incorrectly, the challenge they often identify is

⁴⁸ See also Robert Keohane, "International Relations Theory: Contributions of a Feminist Standpoint", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol 18, 2 (1989), pp. 245-253 and *idem*, "International Relations Theory: Contributions of a Feminist Standpoint" in Rebecca Grant and Kathleen Newland, eds., *Gender and International Relations* (Bloomington, 1991), pp.41-50.

⁴⁹ See Cynthia Weber, "Good Girls, Bad Girls and Little Girls: Male Paranoia in Robert Keohane's Critique of Feminist International Relations", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 23, 2 (1994), pp. 337-349.

⁵⁰ Francis Fukuyama, "Women and the Evolution of World Politics", *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 7, 5 (1998), pp. 24-40.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

⁵² For an overview of this issue Lee-Koo, "Feminism", pp. 82-83.

⁵³ See, for example, Charlotte Hooper, *Manly States: Masculinities, International Relations, and Gender Politics* (New York, 2001) and Goldstein, *War and Gender*.

⁵⁴ J. Ann Tickner, "Why Women Can't Run the World: International Politics According to Francis Fukuyama", *International Studies Review*, Vol. 1, 3 (1999), p. 6.

summed up in the *Foreign Affairs* cover title that ran Fukuyama's piece: "What if Women Ran the World?" Ann Tickner notes that "I know of no international relations feminists who hypothesize about or advocate women running the world [...]"⁵⁵ This identification of competition between "women" and "men" and ideas that "women are more peaceful" and therefore "better" than men entirely misunderstands the critical feminist IR project. While we may still hear the occasional populist cries of a "battle of the sexes", feminist IR scholarship has little time for stark and uncomplicated dichotomies of identity formation and pre-destined behaviour. Consequently, these engagements do not advance the work of feminist IR scholarship and have led to the constant need for feminist scholars to justify their work against frequent misrepresentation.

Debate between feminist IR scholarship and the mainstream in Australia isn't nearly as agitated as that in North America. There are a number of reasons for this. The first is the lack of presence of (critical) feminist analysis in mainstream Australian International Relations journals and the lack of general engagement between feminist and mainstream IR scholars. The lonely publication of Jindy Pettman's "Gendering International Relations" in a 1993 edition of the *Australian Journal of International Affairs* is one of the few published interventions of critical feminist scholarship in a mainstream Australian IR journal.⁵⁶ The *Australian Journal of Political Science* generated a short-lived debate between one of Australia's senior Realist scholars and this author as a graduate student.⁵⁷ Echoing elements of the debates involving Robert Keohane and Adam Jones,⁵⁸ Martin Griffiths accused the author and critical feminist scholarship more broadly of "the substitution of reason with rhetoric",⁵⁹ "without pausing to worry about such trifles as evidence"⁶⁰ and echoed Jones' ill-informed claim that feminist analysis excludes men and masculinities in preference to a privileging of women.⁶¹ Jones' and Griffiths' defensive response to feminist inquiries into the experiences of civilian women in war was that war also involves "the 'silent suffering' of young men".⁶² This point is not denied, or ignored, by critical feminist scholars.⁶³ Nonetheless this debate relived familiar misunderstandings of feminist work and the ultimately intractable differences regarding what constitutes a valid method for the study of IR and the suitable place that the "gender variable" (as opposed to the "gender lens") should have in International Relations.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵⁶ Jindy Pettman, "Gendering International Relations", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 47, 1 (1993), pp. 47-62.

⁵⁷ See Martin Griffiths, "War Rape and Disciplinary Blindness: A Response to Lee Koo" and Katrina Lee-Koo, "A Rejoinder to Griffiths", *Australian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 38, 2 (2003), pp. 325-332.

⁵⁸ See Adam Jones, "Does 'Gender' Make the World Go Round? Feminist Critiques of International Relations", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 22 (1996), pp. 405-429.

⁵⁹ Griffiths, "War Rape and Disciplinary Blindness", p. 327.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

⁶¹ See, Terrell Carver, M Cochran and J Squires, "Gendering Jones", *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 24, 2 (1998), pp. 283-298.

⁶² Griffiths, "War Rape and Disciplinary Blindness", p. 328.

⁶³ There is extensive literature on the gendered politics of war which examines the experiences of myriad gender identities. See Goldstein, *War and Gender* or Cynthia Enloe, *The Morning After: Sexual Politics at the End of the Cold War* (Berkeley, 1993).

Jones' critique heralded an array of criticisms, from women and men alike, who accused feminist scholarship of hijacking gender politics exclusively for women *at the expense of men*. In Britain (where Jones' article was originally published), this has led to a distinction between "Gender and International Relations" which may not necessarily be feminist, and Feminist International Relations.⁶⁴ Within "Gender and International Relations", Zalewski documents the emergence of so-called "neo-feminist" scholarship⁶⁵ which "adopts a positivist approach to gendered research in order to document men's experiences in international politics".⁶⁶ This threatens to relieve gender research in International Relations of its emancipatory, but certainly its feminist, ambitions. Across the Atlantic, this debate is also evident with "neo-feminist" scholars arguing that the "conventional feminists" such as Tickner, Peterson and Sylvester are marginalising themselves by rejecting quantitative methodologies.⁶⁷ Caprioli argues: "It may be an appropriate time within the evolution of international relations to create a neofeminism that extends the scope of feminist IR scholarship and enhances its explanatory capabilities in much the same way that neorealism extended realism without ignoring its basic tenets."⁶⁸ Yet it is unlikely this could be done in a way that kept critical feminist International Relations' basic tenets intact.

Such debates within feminist International Relations are less evident in Australia. It is perhaps worth noting however that the sentiment, in its most extreme, has broader, public, appeal. Following the lead of the neo-conservative women of the Bush Administration,⁶⁹ the so-called "culture wars" waged under the Howard Government sought to re-institute traditional social values (and indeed gender roles) within the community. This resurgence, under the Howard Government, of "family values"⁷⁰ has influenced the impact of feminist scholarship in the broader community. At home the broadsheet and tabloid newspapers found fodder to condemn feminism over issues associated with RU-486 and celebration over the first female Deputy Prime Minister. *The Australian's* Angela Shanahan riled against the latter issue arguing:

Women who attain high public office are the natural heroines of those creaky old gorgons [feminists], not because of virtue but because the sisterhood has always elevated power over virtue and condemned marriage and children as domestic slavery. They would rather see children reared by paid carers than their own mothers [...].⁷¹

In terms of foreign policy, the Australian news media swarmed as Afghan women were "rescued and liberated" from their burqas and the Taliban regime by a strong, determined, masculine Australian military. Christina Ho, with sarcasm, noted that on

⁶⁴ Judith Squires and Jutta Weldes, "Beyond Being Marginal: Gender and International Relations in Britain", *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 9 (2007), pp. 185-203.

⁶⁵ See Zalewski, "Do We Understand Each Other Yet?", pp. 302-312.

⁶⁶ Squires and Weldes, "Beyond Being Marginal", p. 190. See also, Laura Sjoberg, "Gendered Realities of the Immunity Principle: Why Gender Analysis Needs Feminism", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 50, 4 (2006), pp. 889-910.

⁶⁷ See Mary Caprioli, "Feminist IR Theory and Quantitative Methodology: A Critical Analysis", *International Studies Review*, Vol. 6 (2004), pp. 253-269.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 266.

⁶⁹ See for instance Christina Hoff Sommers, *The War against Boys: How Misguided Feminism is Harming Our Young Men* (New York, 2001).

⁷⁰ See Heidi Hutchison, "Family Values" in Jim George and Kim Huynh, eds, *The Culture Wars* (South Yarra, 2008), pp. 110-126.

⁷¹ Angela Shanahan, "Why Julia is a heroine to Creaky Feminist Gorgons", *Australian*, 15 December 2007.

the eve of the attacks against Afghanistan in 2001 "all kinds of conservative male public figures seem to have become feminists"⁷² and these "new feminists" pointed the blame at the "old feminists" whom "they accuse of abandoning Muslim women in the name of multicultural tolerance".⁷³ For critical feminists, many of whom had been long engaged in activism with, and on behalf of, Afghan women, it was important that the issue of human rights abuses against Afghan women was known. However, there was a great deal of concern regarding the political ends to which the issue was taken, particularly when it was used to justify practices of war and condemn the perceived failures of feminism.⁷⁴

Such public debates over feminism, while in many ways quite distant from the work of critical feminist International Relations, can only hinder broader engagements with the community and prejudice understandings of academic feminist goals and agendas. It also provides a major pedagogic challenge for those who teach feminist theories and gender-based approaches to undergraduates. Throughout Australian universities, there are a number of feminist and gender-focused courses on offer in International Relations' majors. Yet against a public backdrop of anti-feminism and a general misrepresentation of what feminism is, and who it is for, student recruitment from a broad demographic can be quite difficult. It should only require five minutes of an undergraduate's attention to dispel the familiar and negative clichés about the goals of feminist scholarship, but it needs to be done in a way that recognises, and takes seriously, socially ingrained prejudices. This is an important point because if feminist IR in Australia is to continue to be successful, it needs to have a steady stream of graduate students. While Australia has produced excellent feminist PhDs to date, it must be remembered that every feminist academic, UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women), government, or activist career begins with an undergraduate education.

The difficulties in the undergraduate teaching of feminism has been emphasised by recent agitation by a group of Liberal undergraduate students (under the banner "Make Education Fair") that resulted in a senate inquiry into academic bias in teaching at universities.⁷⁵ While the inquiry's report found that university lecturers had no case to answer,⁷⁶ it must be noted that the submission by the "Make Education Fair" group singled out a number of respected Australian feminist scholars including University of New South Wales's Sarah Maddison and Adelaide University's Carol Johnson and proclaimed bias presumably because of their expertise in feminist and gender-related scholarship.⁷⁷ This attempt to publicly demonise academic feminism should be read in conjunction with the recent public attacks against the teaching of critical theories, in

⁷² Christina Ho, "Cronulla, Conflict, and Culture: How Can Muslim Women Be Heard in Australia?" *UTSpeaks Public Lecture*, 5 September 2006, downloaded from http://www.hss.uts.edu.au/social_inquiry/research/utspeaks_cronulla_conflict_culture.pdf.

⁷³ Shakira Hussein, "Women's Engagement with Islam in South and Southeast Asia" in D'Costa and Lee-Koo, eds, *Gender and Global Politics in the Asia-Pacific*, pp. 144-145.

⁷⁴ See Jindy Pettman, "Feminist International Relations After 9/11", *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Vol. X, 2 (Winter/ Spring 2004), pp. 85-96.

⁷⁵ Miki Perkins, "And the answer to this most vital inquiry is... nothing", *Age*, 5 December 2008.

⁷⁶ Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, *Allegations of academic bias in universities and schools* (Canberra, 2008), downloaded from: http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/eet_ctte/academic_freedom/report/report.pdf.

⁷⁷ This submission can be viewed at: https://senate.aph.gov.au/submissions/committees/view_document.aspx?id=78b5988e-de15-4cd5-b2c6-270640c3a162

particular postmodernism, in universities. The same inquiry received similar submissions attacking the scholarship of a number of key Australian International Relations theorists including UNSW@ADFA's Anthony Burke. This follows a number of prominent articles in the *Australian* newspaper⁷⁸ in which scholars using critical methods have been lambasted as unaware of the "realities" of contemporary International Relations and thought to promote dangerous analyses on issues such as global terrorism.⁷⁹ Constituting part of a broader culture war that identifies both feminism and critical approaches as "un-Australian", critical feminist International Relations could be seen to be working against the tide.

A final challenge facing the feminist IR project comes from within academic structures. Like its northern American and European counterparts, Australia is not exempt from dictates of government funding structures and the predilection of university management to restructuring, funding cuts, and strategic planning. As much as researchers might try to sideline it in scholarship, it is important to acknowledge the effect that this has upon research and research design. This is, of course, particularly relevant when it is so intimately linked to research funding, academic promotion, and professional profile. Like all political issues, this has a particular impact upon feminist International Relations scholarship. The "growing emphasis on ranking and measuring the performance of universities, departments and individual academics, especially with regards to research performance"⁸⁰ in a manner which is relatively rigid and quantitative is alien to feminist scholarship. This is the case for two main reasons. Firstly, the prestige of the International Relations discipline is constructed around publication in a few top-tier journals. In his recent survey of the field, Jason Sharman laments that "[n]ot a single Australian-based scholar has published in *International Organization* or *World Politics* in the decade surveyed [1998-mid 2007]".⁸¹ While this might be construed as an indictment for some, for Australian feminist IR scholars it is in no way surprising. On the one hand, there is a lingering expectation that the conservative tradition of mainstream IR journals will be hostile to feminist scholarship while, on the other hand, such journals do not offer the necessary impact for the audiences that feminists seek to engage: it is simply not the "space" that feminists seek. While it is not clear whether Australian feminists (and feminists more broadly) choose not to submit to these journals, or are not published by these journals, the result is nonetheless the same. Feminists are absent from those "spaces" deemed by the mainstream of the discipline to be its pinnacle.

This leads to the second case for why quantitative and tiered research measures are ill-fitting with regard to feminist work. Australian Feminist IR scholarship is largely driven by an activist and an emancipatory ambition. Its goal to "make gender visible" is not best served by re-hashing decades-long debates in top tier journals about the relevance of gender to IR.⁸² While a number of journals still espouse the worth of this debate, much of feminist International Relations has moved on. Australian feminist

⁷⁸ See, for example, Jamie Walker, "Uni row the new front in culture war", *Weekend Australian* 20-21 September 2008, p. 2.

⁷⁹ See, for example, David Martin Jones and Carl Ungerer, "Delusion reigns in terror studies", *Australian*, 15 September 2006.

⁸⁰ Jason C Sharman, "Benchmarking Australian IR: low impact, a bookish lot or a very British affair?", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 62, 4 (2008), p. 530.

⁸¹ Sharman, "Benchmarking Australian IR", p. 534.

⁸² See Fukuyama's contribution - "Women and the Evolution of World Politics", pp. 24-40.

International Relations is activist in nature. For Christine Sylvester this means that "[p]erhaps the time has come for more feminist analysts to ignore the bunch of college professors that get all academic about international relations — and are thus seen as irrelevant in some circles — and push to make the search for international relations [...] crackle with energy and in-the-fray relevance".⁸³ While this may perhaps upset both feminist and non-feminist IR scholars alike, Sylvester's argument points to the recognition that much of feminist International Relations scholarship sees itself as activist. A number of senior feminists in Australia are committed to activist work designed to enact their feminist goals. Be it public lectures, work with local or transnational women's organisations, or consultancy with NGOs, Australian feminists tend to embed activism into their academic profile. The University of Melbourne's Professor Sheila Jeffries has been heavily involved in the Australian branch of the worldwide Coalition Against Trafficking in Women network.⁸⁴ The ANU's Bina D'Costa has provided reports and analysis for UNRISD (United Nations Research in Social Development) and DfID (Department for International Development, UK). Consequently, for feminists, "research performance" and "research impact" is judged by a set of criteria that extends beyond traditional measures of scholarship. At its heart, feminist scholarship seeks to engage actively those made insecure by the prevailing order.

Conclusion

Ultimately, redress of the gender bias within the mainstream discipline of International Relations has proven to be a difficult and certainly an ongoing task.⁸⁵ Yet in the Australian context at least, this failure has neither inhibited nor discouraged the work of feminist IR scholars. Australian feminist International Relations is a developing and vibrant field which witnesses collaborations across academic disciplines, across state boundaries, across the academic, activist, practitioner divide and across topical issues for the benefit of emancipatory politics. Its success is evident in the volumes of research and publication it has produced, in its engagement with non-academic groups who share feminist goals, in the ongoing success of graduate students, and in its contribution to understanding and re-imagining the political relationships, decisions, and exercises of power that constitute International Relations. In Australia, feminist scholarship on global politics has claimed a comfortable and respected space within the broader critical project on IR. Within this community, there is a recognition that *gender matters* to the study of International Relations and that, in Australia's International Relations as much as anywhere, there is a need to recognise and redress the gender-based bias.

For Australia, the costs of global concerns like climate change, irregular migration, food, water and energy security, disease epidemics and transnational terrorism, all identified by the Rudd Government as challenges to Australia's national security,⁸⁶ will be deeply invested in gendered politics and feminist insights will be vital. Provided that "our feminist politics [...] [continues to] be self-reflexive, in terms of our research

⁸³ Sylvester, "Woe or Whoa! International Relations Where It's Not Supposed to Be", p. 67.

⁸⁴ On the other side of this complicated politics, see Barbara Sullivan, "Trafficking in Women", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Vol. 5, 1 (2003), pp. 67-91.

⁸⁵ Zalewski, "Do We Understand Each Other Yet?", p. 305.

⁸⁶ Brendan Nicholson, "PM abandons 'cumbersome' homeland security department", *Age*, 4 December 2008.

agenda, our teaching practice, our activism, our relations with others — and in terms of our own biographies”,⁸⁷ feminist International Relations in Australia will continue to burgeon and to enrich the discipline as a whole.

⁸⁷ Pettman, “A Feminist Politics of Region?”, p. 226.