"Women, Children and Other Vulnerable Groups": Gender, Strategic Frames and the Protection of Civilians as a Transnational Issue

R. CHARLI CARPENTER

University of Pittsburgh

This article offers an explanation for the use of gender essentialisms in transnational efforts to advocate for the protection of war-affected civilians. I question why human rights advocates would rely upon such essentialisms, since they arguably undermine the moral logic of the civilian immunity norm on which their normative claims are based. This can be understood, I argue, as part of a strategic framing process in which pre-existing cultural ideas, filtered through an environment characterized by various political constraints, impact the rhetorical strategies available to advocates. In-depth interviews with civilian protection advocates reveal that many believe that warring parties, the global media, transnational constituencies and partners in the international women's network will all be more receptive to their message if it is couched in terms of protecting "women and children" specifically. Network actors believe that while this may undermine the protection of adult male civilians and while it may reproduce harmful gender stereotypes, these problems are outweighed by the gains in access to needy populations and the benefits of getting "civilians" on the international agenda. I conclude by considering the extent to which this cost/benefit analysis is being contested and reconsidered by some actors within the civilian protection network.

Men have been the major victims of summary executions in a number of recent wars.
—Kofi Annan to the Security Council, 1999

The Council condemns attacks directed against civilians, especially women, children and other vulnerable groups . . .
—Security Council President, 1999

In early 1999, the United Nations Security Council undertook a series of meetings to discuss its responsibility with respect to the protection of civilian populations in times of war. After NATO's "humanitarian" air war in Kosovo, these discussions continued and gathered momentum, resulting in three reports, two resolutions, two Presidential statements, and a series of regional workshops.[1] These activities at

---

[1] Data and pertinent documents on the emergence of the "protection of civilians" at the level of global institutions is available from the OCHA website at http://www.reliefweb.in/ocha_ol/civilians.

the highest levels of international society are indicative of a recent shift in the global security agenda to include humanitarian affairs, and an increasing interest by the United Nations in war-affected populations specifically (Jones and Cater, 2001). Like other major cases of international agenda setting (Keck and Sikkink, 1998), this sea change has resulted from the concerted efforts of a transnational network mobilized around the issue of war-affected populations (Goldberg and Hubert, 2001).

This article examines the use of gender essentialisms—tropes associating men and women with mutually exclusive and oppositional attributes—in these transnational efforts to advocate for the protection of civilians in international society.[2] I begin by demonstrating below that "protection of civilians" as an international issue has been framed in such a way as to reproduce the traditional notion that "women and children" (but not adult men) are "innocent" and "vulnerable." Through this process, the "civilians" frame has been *distorted* by reliance on a proxy—"women and children"—that both encompasses some combatants (female and child soldiers[3]) and excludes some non-combatants (adult civilian men[4]). Moreover, the gendered emphasis on particularly vulnerable groups as "women, children and the elderly" has obscured the gender-based vulnerabilities that draft-age civilian males face in armed conflict, including risks of forced recruitment, arbitrary detention, and summary execution (IASC, 2002:175).

While a number of authors have already critiqued this rhetorical inconsistency (Jones, 2000; Lindsey, 2001:29), none has offered an explanation of *why* human rights advocates would perpetuate such stereotypes. Yet this is a genuine puzzle, since gender essentialisms such as these arguably undermine the moral logic of the civilian immunity norm on which the network's moral claims are based. According to the laws of war, "civilians" whose lives must be spared are to be distinguished from "combatants," who may legitimately be killed, according to whether or not they participate directly in hostilities (Palmer-Fernandez, 1998; McKeogh, 2002). In other words, fighters are to distinguish civilians from combatants based on what they are doing, rather than *who* they are. A discourse that promotes the use of "women and children" as a proxy for "civilians" (and therefore suggests that any draft-age male is a legitimate target) encourages belligerents to bypass that process of distinction when choosing who to target and act contrary to the immunity norm itself.[5]

As several authors have suggested (Hamilton, 1999; Bruderlein, 2001; Jones, 2002; Carpenter, 2003), this may affect the implementation of civilian protection in sub-optimal ways, particularly by enabling and legitimizing the targeting of adult civilian males and older boys. In turn, the failure to recognize and address the specific protection needs of civilian males affects the civilian population more generally. For example, there is a fair amount of evidence that civilian children and women become more vulnerable in wartime when their men go missing (Aafjes and Goldstein, 1998:17; Lindsey, 2001:29; Shoemaker, 2001:19). So why has the net-

---

[2] As Smith (2001) describes, gender essentialisms both exaggerate alleged differences between men and women and obscure variation within these groups.

[3] Particularly since the light arms revolution and in the context of civil warfare engulfing most of the globe, women and children are under arms in increasing numbers. See Goodwin-Gill and Cohn (1994), Bennett et al. (1995), Smith (1997), Hughes (2000), and Lindsey (2001).

[4] It is estimated that only 20% of draft-age men are mobilized in both formal and informal armed forces worldwide (Kidron and Smith, 1991:33). This leaves a majority of military-age men in the civilian sector, along with younger adolescent males, the disabled and the elderly. Of the civilian population adult males are usually at the greatest risk of massacre by enemy forces. See Jones (2000) and Lindsey (2001). Civilian men and older boys are also subject to sexual mutilation, arbitrary detention, and forced conscription.

[5] This frame may be problematic for other reasons that I do not fully address here. For example, it has been argued that an emphasis on saving civilian "women and children" from *slaughter*, a crime to which they are statistically less vulnerable than are draft-age civilian males, has historically drawn attention away from sexual violence, displacement or deprivation to which women are more often exposed. See Stanley (1999).

work, whose aim is to protect all civilians, reproduced rather than challenged these gender essentialisms that undermine the protection of civilian men, older boys, and by extension, the civilian population more generally?

Below, I argue that network actors have attempted to establish a "frame" that "resonates" with the moral language familiar to international donors, belligerents, and the media, and that is acceptable to political allies in the women's network. As Enloe (1999) has noted, the intersubjective script through which actors within and around a war-affected context typically interpret the conflict includes the assumption that "all the women are victims, all the men are in the militias." Such pre-existing gender essentialisms, embedded in the civilian immunity norm itself (Kinsella, forthcoming), constitute an intersubjectively resonant normative resource for those interested in strengthening and promoting that norm. Protection advocates generally believe these agenda-setting benefits outweigh possible programmatic gaps created by the perpetuation of gender stereotypes, although a critique of this position is emerging (though far from dominant) within the civilian protection network.

This analysis contributes to recent theoretical work in international relations on the role of transnational advocacy networks in generating and amplifying inter-subjective understandings. A number of recent studies have imported research from comparative politics on the strategic use of ideas in mobilizing collective action to explain why certain collective meanings and not others emerge at the international level (Smith, Chatfield, and Pagnucco, 1997; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Florini, 2000; Khagram, Riker and Sikkink, 2002; Joachim, 2003; Price, 2003). Such a line of inquiry advances scholarship on international norms, which has been criticized by several authors for failing to capture the ways that actors manipulate norms in their own strategic interests (Barnett, 1999:7; Joachim, 2003:249), for inadequately specifying the conditions under which actors are successful (Checkel, 1998:325), and for focusing primarily on "good" dogs that barked (Legro, 1997).

Even this emergent literature, however, has tended to treat norms as static and as inherently functional. By contrast, I argue that even seemingly good norms may emerge as dysfunctional, and therefore their robustness may be illusory, if they are framed in a way that undermines their normative logic (Finnemore and Barnett, 1999; Payne, 2001). The case of the civilian protection network illustrates this phenomenon. It is clear enough that activists have succeeded in galvanizing attention to "innocent civilians" (Roberts, 2001). For many norms scholars, this would in itself be considered a success. But these agenda-setting efforts have simultaneously replicated gender essentialisms that arguably undermine the civilian protection agenda itself: issue advocacy aimed at transnational audiences may be adversely impacting norm advocacy with belligerents in war-torn regions. Moreover, advocates have missed opportunities to correct this "mis-framing" (Snow, Rochford, Jr., Worden and Benford, 1986) in such a way as to provide a frame more consistent with the immunity norm itself.

I argue this can be explained by understanding how pre-existing cultural discourses (in this case, gender discourses), interacting with ongoing environmental factors, influence the strategic context advocacy networks face. These pre-existing ideas provide advocates with incentives to privilege certain frames—even those they fully understand to be perhaps harmful distortions—over others. Since the effect of these distortions may be to undermine the civilian protection agenda even as it gains visibility, such dynamics beg questions about the relationship between agenda-setting strategies and the implementation of norms in world affairs. This analysis suggests that the IR literature on advocacy networks needs to pay closer attention not just to whether and how issues get on the international agenda, but to whether or not the frames adopted in the norm-building process are actually conducive to the robustness of a given norm in practice.

The remainder of this paper is in four sections. The first situates the civilian protection network in the context of the emerging literature on transnational

advocacy networks, and describes the qualitative methods used to identify gender essentialisms within the civilians frame and to understand the logic behind network actors' use of such essentialisms. The second section illuminates three prominent gender tropes embedded within the frames adopted by the civilian protection network: civilians as "women and children," parents as mothers/peacemakers, and vulnerable groups such as "women, children and elderly." In each case, I describe the manner in which gender essentialisms have been used to frame civilians and women as synonymous and draw attention away from the fact that the civilian population may also contain adult men with specific vulnerabilities. The third section explains the emergence of this gendered rhetoric as part of a strategic framing process in which network actors sought to promote an image of their work that both resonated with traditional humanitarian ethics and drew strength from the emerging activity around the issue area of war-affected women. Finally, I consider whether nascent efforts to transform these gender discourses are likely to succeed given the current institutional and normative climate in humanitarian assistance.

The Civilian Protection Network

The targeting of civilian populations has been a feature of international politics throughout history (Rummell, 1994; Carr, 2002), but in the late 1990s, this phenomenon became an *issue*: powerful countries began explicitly addressing it as both a pragmatic and a moral problem for the first time in history (Roberts, 2001). This international shift toward a global concern with war-affected populations has been generated by the advocacy of numerous committed groups, organizations, and individuals who have succeeded in mobilizing international attention to the needs of civilians through skillful use of persuasive rhetoric (Risse, 2000). Keck and Sikkink (1998) refer to such principled communities as transnational advocacy networks: "sets of actors linked across country boundaries, bound together by shared values, dense exchanges of information and services, and common discourses" (Khagram et al., 2002:7).

What I call the *civilian protection network* is the transnational community of international and non-governmental bureaucrats, citizens, journalists, and statespersons who, believing that norms protecting war-affected civilians should be respected, aim at the more widespread implementation of those norms through persuasion or purposeful action. The norms in question include a responsibility to spare civilians and civilian objects (such as schools and hospitals) from armed attack, to facilitate humanitarian access in order to provide for basic needs, to avoid means of warfare that disproportionately affect civilians (such as landmines) and, increasingly, to take active preventive, ameliorative, and punitive measures to protect civilians where armed groups fail to uphold their obligations under these laws (Sandvik-Nylund, 1998; Bouchet-Saulnier, 2002:43–47). Because it draws on and promotes particular principles within the international regime regulating armed conflict, "protection of civilians" (PoC) as an issue is a small subset of the broader issue areas of human rights and humanitarian affairs.[6] However, it engages many of the same actors concerned more broadly with the implementation of human rights norms, development objectives, and humanitarian action; and in the context of the emerging "human security" agenda, these areas are increasingly being viewed as interconnected (Goldberg and Hubert, 2001).

---

[6] The norms protecting war-affected civilians are codified in international humanitarian law (IHL), which regulates the conduct of hostilities and the treatment of foreign civilians, prisoners of war, sick and wounded during armed conflict. IHL has originated and evolved separate from human rights law, which regulates states' treatment of their own citizens during peacetime. However, the two sets of principles are increasingly seen as interdependent and complementary.

By "transnational community" I am referring to any actor at any level of global civil society who engages in discourse or action intended to promote the protection of civilians: the concept of transnational advocacy networks explicitly goes beyond inter-state or inter-organizational interactions to emphasize the transnational public sphere (Smith et al., 1997; Guidry, Kennedy and Zald, 2000; Khagram et al., 2002). Thus, this community includes individual citizens, state-persons, and journalists speaking out on behalf of war-affected civilians, as well as a variety of state and non-state actors.

States play a role when they broach issues in global bodies, sponsor conferences, sign, ratify, and enforce treaties, and otherwise shape agenda space. They also promote the protection of civilians to the extent they comply with their own obligations under humanitarian law or (arguably) when they promote a culture of humanitarian intervention to prevent gross violations by others.[7] *Non-state* entities in the civilian protection network include the global media, international organizations established by states such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and non-governmental organizations such as Medicins Sans Frontiers (MSF) (Shiras, 1996). Coalitions of many actors around particular issues also constitute discrete focal points in the broader network. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers are two such examples: landmines and child soldiering became salient issues as part of a broader social concern with the effects of armed conflict on the "innocent" (Price, 1998; Hughes, 2000).

The humanitarian affairs community, of which most formal protection network actors are a part, is now coordinated under the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, which brings together those organizations under the UN umbrella, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Programme (WFP), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); the Red Cross Movement, which includes the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; and several groupings of major non-governmental organizations working in humanitarian relief and development. Of the formal agencies in the civilian protection network, none has a specific mandate to protect civilians (Cohen and Deng, 1998:197). Some organizations are mandated to protect war-affected populations more generally, such as UNHCR and the ICRC; others address the needs of civilians in the context of their broader work in development and assistance (Save the Children Alliance), human rights (Human Rights Watch) or in advocating for specific groups such as women (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children). For some entities, such as the non-operational UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the "protection of civilians" figures prominently as a subset of its broader humanitarian agenda, exemplified by a link from its homepage to a specific website on the issue.[8]

As in most transnational advocacy networks, these actors are diverse, informally connected, and embedded in broader issue networks concerning human rights, humanitarian affairs, and development. Their modes of operation vary, spanning the range of network political tactics specified by Keck and Sikkink (1998:16). Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch expose and condemn violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, "quickly and credibly generating politically usable information and moving it to where it will have the most impact"; journalists and external relations departments of major protection agencies frame atrocity by calling upon "symbols, actions or stories that make sense of a

---

[7] There is much disagreement within the international community about whether military intervention can necessarily be considered "humanitarian," particularly when it makes use of counter-humanitarian means, as NATO did when targeting civilian objects during its 1999 campaign against Serbia. For an overview of this debate, see Mertus (2001).

[8] See http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/civilians/. Accessed August 4, 2003.

situation for an audience that is frequently far away;" concerned citizens engage in "leverage politics" vis-à-vis their own governments; other actors, such as the ICRC, avoid shaming belligerents externally in favor of direct persuasion, or what Keck and Sikkink (1998:16) call "accountability politics." In many cases, addressing violations themselves takes a back seat to negotiating access to needy populations in order to deliver aid or alleviate suffering. As Sikkink (2002:309) points out, actors within networks often disagree strenuously on how to negotiate such tradeoffs, and organizations engaged in humanitarian operations are no exception (Cohen and Deng, 1996; DeMars, 1997; Minear, 2002).

Despite vast differences in outlook, strategy, mode of operation, and organizational culture, groups within an advocacy network are members of the same community by virtue of their shared values and common cause (Smith et al., 1997:65). One of the most important roles in which advocacy networks are engaged is the construction or transformation of norms and discourses at the international level. This process involves what I distinguish as two kinds of advocacy: *norm advocacy*, in which advocates "teach" (or in this case, "remind") political actors how they should behave (Finnemore, 1996; Thomas, 2001), and *issue advocacy*, in which advocates use evidence of norm violations to incite others to join their cause (Cohen, 2001). In addition, networks engage in *issue alignment* by taking cues from other issue networks on how to successfully frame a particular cause. These processes interrelate and shape the way in which an issue is framed in global discourse.

It is on these aspects of network activism, which Keck and Sikkink call "symbolic politics," that this project focuses. I am less interested in the diversity of approaches or procedural disagreements within the network than on the set of values that they hold in common and the way these are represented in appeals to their targets of influence (belligerents) and various sectors of the international community. This article explores how these principled and causal beliefs about civilian protection have been articulated and politicized in the post-Cold War era with respect to different transnational audiences, and the way in which pre-existing gender discourses regarding war-affected populations influenced this process of strategic social construction.

Methodology

Data for this analysis were gathered from a number of sources. Documents listed on the PoC Internet site of the UN OCHA constitute the core set of data on the "civilians" frame as it emerged on the United Nations agenda in the late 1990s. These include reports to, speeches at, and resolutions by major United Nations organs, and web content on the site itself. To this data set was added the verbatim minutes of the Security Council thematic debates over the issue, available through the United Nations Official Document System. These debates were held in February 1999, September 1999, April 2000, April 2001, December 2002, and December 2003.

The OCHA Online website is a useful data source because of OCHA's status as an umbrella organization coordinating humanitarian initiatives and framing the protection agenda. Moreover, the finite number of "key documents" listed on its "PoC" page has been identified by OCHA itself as representative of "civilian protection" as a transnational issue, thus reducing an overwhelming number of print sources to a manageable data set while controlling for researcher bias in document selection. Web content on the site itself is also a useful indicator of advocacy network discourse, insofar as it is recognized that the discursive and linking practices within global cyberspace play an important role in constituting contemporary advocacy networks (Smith and Kollock, 1998; Aronson, 2001). Although there are a number of ways in which to analyze web content linking online social networks (Garton, Haythorwaite, and Wellman, 1997), I primarily pay attention to the text and images available on these sites, as well as the way in which issues were categorized on different pages within the main PoC site as of January 2004.

Table 1. Frequency of Rhetorical References Incorporating Sex, PoC Documents, 1999–2003

Sex Reference	Women	Men	Girls	Boys
Frequency	151	8	20	4

The documents, verbatim minutes, and online text together were subjected to a qualitative analysis to identify and analyze the use of gender essentialisms in PoC discourse. Passages that referred to women, men, girls, or boys were identified and coded according to whether they invoked gender essentialisms, and which ones. I operationalized essentialisms by comparing the contextual deployment of these references in civilian protection discourse to what is known about the actual vulnerabilities of war-affected populations. For example, I wanted to know how often "women" were associated primarily with children, with civilian status, with peacemaking, or with vulnerability, and whether the existence and particular vulnerabilities of draft-age men were also highlighted in the transnational discourse framing civilian protection as an issue.

The frequency distributions for gender references and to references by context are summarized in Tables 1 and 2. Each passage invoking a gender reference received 1 score for each code to which it applied. The same reference might contain a number of different meanings and receive several different codes. For example, the following passage would have received one code each for "women as victims," "women as civilians," "women identified with children," "women as vulnerable," "women as deliberate targets," and "women as primary targets": "Civilians today constitute the vast majority of victims of armed conflicts … among those civilians, women, children and other members of vulnerable groups are deliberately used as priority targets by the combatants" (UN Doc. S/PV .3980: 23).[9]

To make the case that the gender essentialisms identified in these actors' discourses are consistent with the frames used by other network actors, I have supplemented the data from OCHA with illustrative references from a broad array of other empirical sources: appeals to citizens and donor states for resources or involvement; condemnations and depictions of specific atrocities; web content on civilians as a humanitarian issue; scholarship on humanitarian action, civilians, and/or gender and armed conflict; and reports and press releases from major network actors including the ICRC, UNHCR, UNICEF, Save the Children, and the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. In addition, I attended the ICRC's Seminar on the Protection of Special Categories of Civilian in May 2002 as a participant observer. This experience enabled me to look for gender essentialisms in a training setting and to see whether humanitarian practitioners may be challenging them as part of an ongoing "reframing" process.

Textual analysis is useful for identifying dominant discourses, but it cannot by itself explain *why* certain discourses are invoked and others avoided. To gather data on network actors' rationale for using such essentialisms, I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with officials involved in civilian protection advocacy. In addition to OCHA officials, I interviewed individuals at the ICRC and UNHCR. These organizations were selected due to their particular mandate to deal with war-affected populations, their importance in civilian protection advocacy during the 1990s, and their involvement in the 1999 initiative to place civilians on the Security Council agenda.

---

[9] The full set of coded passages is available from the author upon request.

TABLE 2. Frequency of Rhetorical References Incorporating Sex According to Context, PoC Documents 1999–2003

Context of Sex Reference	Frequency
"Women and children"	163
"Women and children" to signify "civilian"	44
"Especially" or "including women and children"	60
"Women" as "vulnerable"	56
"Women" as "parents" or "peacemakers"	29
Special protection needs of "W/C"	33
"Women and children" as victims	79
"Women and children" as deliberate targets	42
"Women and children" as *primary* victims/targets	27
"Women" as combatants	6
"Men" as victims/targets	6
"Men, women and children"	9
"Men" specifically mentioned as civilians	3
"Men" as "vulnerable"	1
"Men" as parents	1
"Men" as perpetrators/combatants	7

Those interviewed include officials from the Protection and Donor Relations divisions as well as Gender Focal Points in the organizations, whose staff are typically embedded in both the civilian protection network and the transnational women's network. These interviews took place between May and October 2002. Respondents were asked general questions about civilian protection and gender equity in protection initiatives and discourse, as well as specific questions about the protection of civilian males. Quotations of individuals by name have been used only with written permission.

Gender In Civilian Protection Discourse

Unlike human rights law applicable in peacetime, a fundamental tenet of which is the unalienable right to life, the laws regulating armed conflict draw a distinction between individuals who may legitimately be killed and those who may not (Palmer-Fernandez, 1998; McKeogh, 2002). This distinction between combatants and non-combatants, of whom civilians are one category, has been constructed in part through gender binaries since its emergence during the Enlightenment (Kinsella, 2005). While feminist scholars have demonstrated that until recently human rights law and discourse privileged able-bodied adult men rather than women or children (Bunch, 1990; Deutz, 1993; Charlesworth, Chinkin, and Wright, 1996), precisely the opposite has historically been true with respect to the protection afforded by the civilian immunity norm (Jones, 2000; Goldstein, 2001).

The legal definition of a "civilian," codified in 1977, hinges on whether an individual is actively participating in armed conflict.[10] However, the intersubjective meanings attached to the distinction principle—based on assumptions of wartime gender roles—make it far more likely that women and young children will be *interpreted* as civilians by belligerents, and thus that women and children to a greater degree than adult males will benefit from whatever protection "civilian" status affords, if any, in a particular context (Hartigan, 1983; Grossman, 1995; Carr, 2002). As Lindsey (2001:28) notes, this essentialized understanding of the civilian/

---

[10] See 1977 Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, 51:3, and 1977 Additional Protocol II to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, Article 13.3. Article 50:1 of Additional Protocol I also states that "in case of doubt whether a person is a civilian, that person shall be considered to be a civilian."

combatant distinction is also evident within transnational civil society: "In public perception (although not in international humanitarian law) within the civilian population as a whole women have tended to be classified in the single category of 'women and children,' and men have tended to be largely forgotten as civilians, as if they were all combatants."

To the extent that these gender beliefs legitimize the targeting of civilian men and older boys, they undermine the principle of distinction, which requires belligerents to distinguish civilians from combatants on the basis of what they are doing rather than according to proxies such as sex or age. Thus, the perpetuation of such essentialisms represents a liability to efforts to strengthen the immunity norm (Carpenter, 2003). Yet, despite opportunities to reformulate or challenge the gendered language long used by states and legal scholars to define and delimit the moral parameters of the civilian immunity norm, activists in the transnational network instead tend to mirror several of these gender essentialisms to press their cause. "The ones no one talks about," said an official from the ICRC's Protection Division, "are the adult men between 18 and their 60s, because they are the combatants traditionally, they are the bad guys."[11]

Instead, as the sections below demonstrate, civilians have been identified with "women and children" (but not adult men); concern for child protection, and the ability to work for peace at the grassroots, has been associated with the empowerment of mothers (but not fathers); and the "especially vulnerable" have been constructed as "women, children and the elderly," despite evidence that civilian males may be particularly vulnerable to summary execution. As I demonstrate in the sections below, each of these frames draws on older gendered imagery embedded within international humanitarian law. Each gender essentialism situates women alongside children as innocent, dependent, and vulnerable, and each simultaneously draws attention away from the fact that adult men may also be members of the civilian population worthy of respect, concern, and protection (Lindsey, 2001). Each has been used by network actors prior to the recent attention to civilians at the Security Council, and each has been reproduced at the Security Council in the language used to frame "protection of civilians" as an issue (Figure 1).

Civilians as "Women and Children"

As a number of scholars have recently demonstrated, women and children, and adult men only on a more contingent basis, have historically been associated with the civilian population itself. Kinsella (2005) has traced women's presumed noncombatant status to evolving gender hierarchies in the Enlightenment that positioned women as subordinate to men, and discusses the distinction principle as a site for the articulation of modern gender binaries. Carpenter (2003) argues that the immunity norm is more robust when the civilians in question are adult females or young children than when they are adult males. Historically, both belligerents exercising restraint and human rights advocates promoting it or condemning its lack have assumed that "women and children" are inherently "innocent" and therefore deserve immunity as such, whereas the norm is more ambiguous in the case of draft-age males.[12]

Consequently, the term "innocent women and children" (as a synonym for "innocent civilians") abounds in international discourse, essentializing women as bystanders to conflict and simultaneously obfuscating the existence of men in the

---

[11] Personal interview, May 2002, Geneva.

[12] That the immunity norm is weaker with respect to males is evident in quotations from contemporary protection discourse, in which the targeting of civilians "regardless of gender or age" is considered particularly atrocious. See "The Nature of War" Web Page, OCHA Online, http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/civilians/nature_of_war/index.html.
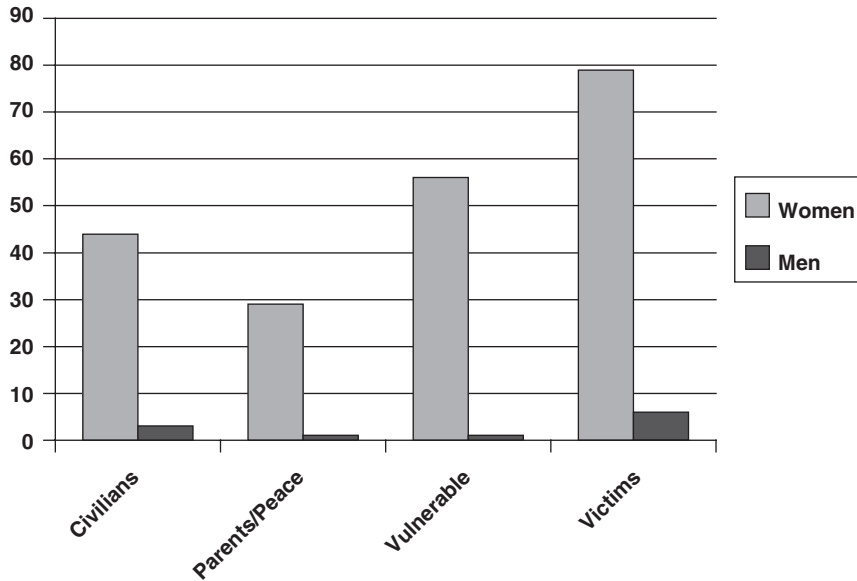
Fig. 1. Comparison of Key Contextual References' Frequency Disaggregated by Sex

civilian population. Civilian protection advocates have throughout the 1990s used the language of "innocent women and children" to call on belligerents to restrain themselves, on powerful states to intervene in humanitarian emergencies, and on potential donors to send aid:

> Rebel groups should demonstrate the quality of their leadership, by halting the slaughter of innocents such as women, children and the disabled.
> —Nelson Mandela, 2000

> The U.S. will have to accept the moral responsibility to intervene where innocent women and children are being slaughtered in the name of ethnic cleansing.
> —Rep. Coleman, D—Texas, 1993

> Do we, the members of the international community, really require that more innocent women and children be slaughtered by the thousands to cause a change in our priorities and level of concern?
> —Report to the Carnegie Commission On Preventing Deadly Conflict, April 1998

Organizations in the protection network have often made this association explicit, both through language and visual imagery. Their appeals for donations or international concern tend to picture women as both the primary civilian victims of slaughter and the living in need of relief; their brochures picture hungry mothers or desolate refugees (Moeller, 1998; Cohen, 2001). For instance, the same year that nearly 8,000 unarmed men and boys were executed at Srebrenica, the ICRC published a slick brief entitled "Civilians in War," featuring sections on "women" and "children" alongside "mines," "water," and "humanitarian law," but which contained no images of un-uniformed adult men and which failed to discuss endemic patterns of attack against civilian males such as those documented by Jones (2000; see also Buchanan, 2002; Carpenter, 2004).

Web content of Internet sites claiming to be clearing houses for information on the protection of civilians also invokes this imagery. Both the ICRC and OCHA websites contain PoC web pages with links to "women," "children," and sometimes

"elderly" and "displaced" but not to "draft-age men."[13] The image chosen for the OCHA's PoC homepage is a photo of refugee women rather than male detainees or victims of summary executions; of the 17 thematic links on the site, each containing an image, civilian males figure in only one image, of an Albanian family (two draft-age males, a mother, and two children) on a tractor. The three other pictures containing images of adult males are photos of local and international male humanitarian workers. Twelve of the 17 images contain pictures of female civilian war victims: amputees, refugees, relatives of the disappeared, and aid recipients.

Despite a growing awareness of both women's and children's capacity to engage in armed violence (Bennett, Bexley ,and Warnock, 1995; Goldstein, 2001; Lindsey, 2001) and despite evidence of atrocities against draft-age male civilians worldwide (Jones, 2000), the PoC discourse at the Security Council since 1998 has reproduced these gender stereotypes as well, specifically identifying women, but not able-bodied men, as "innocent" members of the civilian population:

> Millions of civilians, including innocent women and children, [are] being targeted and killed.
>
> —OCHA Online (2004a).

> Children, women and the elderly are innocent victims who deserve and demand vigorous international protection.
>
> —Costa Rican Delegate to the Security Council, February 1999

OCHA Online describes the organization's mandate for civilian protection, in connection with its various network partners, through gender references as well: "The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs . . . advocate[s] for the accommodation of needs and rights of civilians, particularly children, women, the elderly and other vulnerable groups" (OCHA Online, 2004b). Indeed, OCHA's *Glossary of Terms on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, released in 2003, defines "civilian populations" as "groups of unarmed people, including women, children, the sick and elderly, refugees and internally displaced persons, who are not directly engaged in the armed conflict" (OCHA, 2003:7). Among the Security Council Meeting Minutes and supporting documents available on the OCHA website, there are only three specific references to male civilians and only nine references to civilians that include "men" alongside "women and children." By contrast, "women and children" is used as a signifier for "civilian" 44 times; "women and children" are specifically identified as civilian victims 79 times; "women and children" are articulated as the *primary* civilian targets 27 times.[14] These references draw attention away from the fact that the civilian population also contains draft-age men who have chosen not to take up arms and may therefore be subject to specific forms of attack.

Parents as Mothers/Mothers as Peacemakers

Women have historically been associated with child rearing as well as with the civilian sector; indeed women's general exclusion from the formal armed forces has often been justified in terms of their roles as caregivers (Goldstein, 2001). Thus, the

---

[13] See OCHA Online, "Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict" Web Page, http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/civilians/; International Committee of the Red Cross "Protecting Civilians in Wartime" Web Page at http://www.icrc.org/Web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/civilian_population?OpenDocument, accessed August 4, 2002.

[14] Of these passages, several listed explicit forms of attack for which "women and children" were the "prime targets": many of these references explicitly discussed forms of assault to which women are in fact disproportionately targeted, include forced displacement and sexual violence; however, there were eight statements also explicitly claiming that women and children are most likely to be targeted for *massacre* in armed conflict. For example: "We are witnesses to the separation of families and death of civilians, especially women, the elderly and children" (UN Doc. S/PV 3980: 13).

special protections that have accrued to women under the international human-itarian law have traditionally addressed primarily their specific needs as mothers rather than the broader difficulties they face as a result of gender hierarchies prevalent in society before and during armed conflict (Charlesworth, Chinkin and Wright, 1996; Gardam and Jervis, 2001).

Juxtaposing women with children in this respect not only suggests that women's needs can be boiled down to those specific to mothers. It also suggests, as van Bueren (1995:18) has noted, that women alone are responsible for or vital to the survival and developmental needs of children, marginalizing the importance of fathering. The Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions, for example, specify that pregnant women or mothers of children under five may not be ex-ecuted even if convicted of a capital offense, whereas the father of the same child has no such immunity.[15] The relative devaluation of fathers is also reflected in the priority given to mothers accompanying children during humanitarian evacuation (Carpenter, 2003).

Maternal imagery has often been used by protection organizations to invoke in-ternational sympathy for war-affected populations. UNICEF has in the past decade begun to define child well-being as synonymous with women's well-being through the slogan "child rights are women's rights" (Goonsekere, 1992; UNICEF, 1999; OCHA, 2000a; see also Beigbeder, 2002). While this frame is rooted in a valid em-pirical understanding of the link between maternal health and child protection (rather than war-affected civilians' issues per se), it equates women with parental roles and does not consider the relevance of fathers' health for the protection of children.

This construction has mapped easily onto the specific issue of war-affected pop-ulations, and has been mirrored in the narrower issue of war-affected civilians. Save the Children, for example, has begun a parallel campaign to call attention to mothering at a global level. The "Every Mother Every Child" campaign cuts across issue areas and is development oriented, but its 2002 "State of the World's Moth-ers" report specifically emphasizes armed conflict. Here, women are positioned as both within families and the civilian sector:

> It has become increasingly clear that the lives of children are jeopardized when the lives of women are not protected . . . the global community can and must do more to make the protection of women, of mothers, of children in armed conflict a priority.
> —Save the Children (2002: 2)

> "When houses, schools and hospitals are bombed, food supplies are cut off, ag-ricultural fields are strewn with land mines and wells are poisoned, mothers strug-gle mightily to preserve their way of life and keep children safe and healthy."
> —Save the Children (2002: 4)

This language is also reflected in the web content of the OCHA page on "Women and War," situating women (but not men) as civilian caregivers: "in spite of all they endure in camps, towns, villages, and fields across war zones, women persevere and work to preserve the integrity of their families and communities" (OCHA Online, 2004c). Here, women's role as mothers is linked to an assumption that they are inherently peaceful, which has led some actors to frame women as peace-building resources using what Helms (2003) calls "affirmative essentialisms" in efforts to get major UN organs to see women's rights as part of their broader agenda with se-curity and peace (Cohn, Gibbings and Kinsella, 2004).[16] Among the results of these

---

[15] See Additional Protocol 1 to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, Article 76.3; and Additional Protocol II, Article 6.4 (ICRC, 1977); see also Lindsey (2001:158).

[16] Indeed, as several scholars have noted (Skjelsbaek and Smith, 2001; Lentin, 1997; Helms, 2003), women's putative peacemaking skills are juxtaposed in this discourse with men's presumed belligerence, replicating the women-as-peacemakers/men-as-warriors discourse that underwrites the gender essentialisms described here.

efforts were Security Council Resolution 1325 on *Women, Peace and Security* and the resulting Secretary General's Report, both of which emphasized the need to draw on women's capacities in peace-building efforts, but which also continued to position women as civilians (Kinsella, 2002). The Secretary General's Study does specifically state in a number of places that "women and girls are also active agents and participants in conflict" and "it is important . . . not to generalize about 'women' as not all women work for peace" (UNSG, 2002:3 and 54). However, the study includes an entire chapter on women's peacemaking activities without a corresponding chapter on women as agents or supporters of violent conflict.

Within the data set analyzed here, there are 29 references to women as civilian peacemakers. By comparison, there are only two references to fathers in the data set, and none to men as peacemakers. This frame obscures not only the caring and supportive roles of civilian men, but also the role that women play in supporting, promoting, and engaging in armed conflicts (UNSG, 2002:13). The "innocent women and children" of network discourse are often women *with* children: mothers whose men have "gone off to fight" (Save the Children, 2002:12) and who now struggle to provide for and protect their children, often without access to resources that were once channeled through male heads of households and community leaders:

> In many cases, women and teenage girls in conflict zones are the sole providers and protectors for their families, as wives, mothers and sisters, since their husbands, brothers, sons and fathers have either been exiled or killed or are away on combat duty.
>
> —IASC (1999:2)

> Women's usual position as primary caretakers of infants and young children makes them vulnerable to forms of psychological torture if their children are also victimized.
>
> —Bunch and Reilly (1994:41)

> It may be harder for women to flee the fighting if they have babies and small children.
>
> —Lindsey (2001:65)

These statements are not in themselves inaccurate, but they are framed to invoke specific gendered understandings regarding who deserves protection and why. The disappearance of men is assumed, rather than analyzed, and is treated as a factor affecting their families' plight rather than a protection issue in its own right. The burden of parenting and caregiving is framed as presenting risks only for women, and women are viewed as inherently peaceful, by extension of these roles.[17] Civilian fathers, before and after separation from their families, are invisible in a frame that assumes their absence and associates childrearing with mothers; therefore, their specific protection as members of families is not framed as a humanitarian goal.[18] Instead, as Save the Children advocates, "the care and protection of women and children must be *the humanitarian priority* in ethnic and political conflicts" (Save the Children, 2002:6).

---

[17] Also hidden from this frame is the fact that many women are facing difficulties (such as reintegration for female ex-combatants) quite distinct from issues of providing for children; and in some cases, such as forced pregnancy, emphasizing biological motherhood may not result in the protection of children or women (Carpenter, 2000).

[18] An interesting exception to this general pattern is a quote from a statement made by Under-Secretary-General Kenzon Oshima to the Security Council in June 2003, in which he invoked familial imagery to put a human face on the "millions of voiceless that require our attention" and included, along with images of helpless mothers, hungry toddlers and teenage female rape victims, "the father who is too powerless to protect his family from brutal attacks." Nonetheless, while the vulnerability of children and women to deprivation and rape is explicitly mentioned, the likelihood that a civilian father himself will be attacked because he is a draft-age male is not.

Vulnerable Groups Including "Women, Children and the Elderly"

While in theory, protection should be available to all who need it, humanitarian principles allow for prioritizing those in most need of assistance (Bouchet-Saulnier, 2002:141). Both aspects of the "impartiality" principle are reflected in the civilian protection network's moral discourse: on the one hand, all civilians are to be assisted impartially and on the other, particular attention is to be paid to the particularly vulnerable groups within a population (Caversazio, 2001:66–67). Within this data set, where civilian protection discourse makes mention of particularly vulnerable groups, it nearly always specifies "women," despite the fact that several documents on women and armed conflict have emphasized that women are not necessarily vulnerable (e.g., Lindsey, 2001:29; UNSG, 2002:99) and despite evidence that draft-age civilian men may be *most* vulnerable to certain forms of attack in certain contexts (Paul, 1999).

This discourse draws on older gendered notions about the basis for protecting specific groups. Since at least the Middle Ages, women's civilian status has been linked to a discourse regarding women as the "weaker" sex, thereby deserving of special protection due to their inherent "vulnerability" (Johnson 1981:131–150). The 1973 Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Armed Conflict states, "women and children . . . are the most vulnerable members of the population." Provisions in the Geneva Conventions that women shall be "treated with all consideration due to their sex" suggest the physiological vulnerability of women (Gardam and Jervis, 2001:95). As an ICRC official explained when asked why women were considered vulnerable as such, "Women are more vulnerable than men for physical reasons and these kinds of factors."[19]

In recent years, a conception of vulnerability based on social rather than assumed physical factors has supplemented this older discourse, emphasizing women's subordinate status rather than biological difference. Since it is true that "women do not enjoy equal status with men in any society" (UN Doc S/2002/1154), this frame is somewhat less empirically problematic: as numerous feminist scholars have emphasized (e.g., Gardam and Jervis, 2001), the vulnerability women face during war is a direct consequence of the discrimination they face throughout their lives. However, the shift to emphasize socially induced vulnerability has not tended to include an emphasis on the gender-based vulnerabilities that some males (homosexuals, conscientious objectors, civilian men, and boys of draft age) also face due to social attitudes in times of war.

With rare exceptions, attention by the civilian protection network to "especially vulnerable groups" tends to include every possible category except able-bodied adult civilian males.[20] In 2001, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs disseminated a pamphlet entitled "Reaching the Vulnerable" which emphasized deprivation rather than lethal attack and whose images included no civilian males (OCHA, 2001). The opening statement of the Report on the Civilian Protection Workshop in South Africa states, "Women, children and the elderly are often at the greatest risk [in armed conflict]" (OCHA, 2002). Describing the concept of "vulnerability," and considering whether adult men could be vulnerable, an OCHA representative told me:

> It's really not in the general definition of being vulnerable, when you're a healthy, strong, 20-year-old male. Commonly when you speak of vulnerability you have the image of women, children and the elderly. The idea of a 20-year-old man who can't defend himself (laughter) he can just run away and join the army or join the rebel force.[21]

---

[19] Personal interview, September 2002, Geneva.

[20] This discursive usage, designed to draw programmatic attention to particular demographic categories, is to be distinguished from the sorts of vulnerabilities and capabilities assessment instruments popularized in the development community (March et al., 1999).

[21] Phone interview, October 2002.

Where acknowledgment of civilian men's particular vulnerabilities has begun to appear in policy documents or speeches, it has seldom been followed by analysis or policy recommendations. A recent report on gender-based violence in conflict settings acknowledges that "GBV programming targeting men and boy survivors is virtually non-existent among conflict-affected populations" (Ward, 2002:4), but the report goes on to focus almost entirely on women and girls and includes no recommendations regarding men other than the need to incorporate them into initiatives to eradicate violence against women. OCHA's Emergency Relief Coordinator pointed out in a 2000 public statement that "While research has been undertaken on types of violence and traumatic stress disorders experienced by women during war, less is known about the psychosocial consequences of violence, including sexual violence, suffered by men during conflict" (McAskie, 2000:3). But none of the policy recommendations at the end of her talk included gathering data on such issues.

Of the three essentialisms described here, the association of women but not men with "vulnerability" is currently the most explicit and predominant within global institutions, particularly the Security Council.[22] The Secretary General's 1999 Reports to the UN Security Council on the Protection of Civilians refer to the "special needs" of women as well as children.[23] By contrast, no reference is made to the vulnerabilities of adult men, other than one statement in the September report that they are most likely to be killed. (This is buried in the section on page 3 regarding special problems faced by women.) The ensuing thematic debates resulted in a Statement by the President of the Security Council that condemned "attacks or acts of violence in situations of armed conflict directed against civilians, especially women, children and other vulnerable groups . . .." During the debates, delegates repeatedly made statements such as the following (see Table 2):

> Crises which have recently broken out in various parts of the world have inflicted great suffering on the civilian populations, particularly the most vulnerable groups such as children, women, the elderly, refugees and displaced persons.
> —Swiss Delegate, Security Council, 1999

> Women and children in particular, as one of the most vulnerable social groups, are most gravely affected in conflict situations.
> —Chinese Delegate, Security Council, 1999

> The weaker and vulnerable groups of society become easy victims of conflict. Abuses of the rights of women and children are most common.
> —Bengali Delegate, Security Council, 1999

In total, women are designated a particularly vulnerable group 15 times in the text of the February 1999 debates, alongside children, elderly, sick, and displaced. There are no references to the protection of civilian men as a particular group or of the specific vulnerabilities they face in war-affected regions.[24] Indeed, the assertion that women and children are *more* likely than men to be the direct targets of attack is articulated 13 times. As Table 2 demonstrates, this pattern is consistent with that in the other verbatim records of later meetings, as well as other U.N. documents available on OCHA's PoC web pages. In December 2003, the recently disseminated "Aide Memoire on PoC," updated to "reflect the latest concerns pertaining to the protection of civilians in armed conflict, including new trends and measures to

---

[22] Notably, the General Assembly's Millennium Declaration, which includes a section on "Protecting the Vulnerable," avoids gender references and emphasizes the vulnerability of "children and all civilian populations that suffer disproportionately." See UN Doc. A/RES/55/2:7, September 18, 2000.

[23] UN Docs S/2001/331 and S/1999/957.

[24] See UN Docs S/PV.3980, S/PV.3978 and S/PV.3977.

address them," identifies the need for "special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based discrimination and violence," but makes no such mention of the special protection needs of civilian men and boys.

Why Gendered Protection Discourse?

The sketches above demonstrate that a gap exists between the reality that war-affected civilian populations face—including complex and variegated gender differences in agency, vulnerability and role status, cutting across other categories such as age, ethnicity, context, occupation, class, sexual preference, and marital status (Gardam and Jervis, 2001; Lindsey, 2001; UNSG, 2002)—and an essentialized "protection" discourse that associates women but not men with civilian status, with the protection of civilian children, and with vulnerability to armed attack. "Framing" civilians as "women and children" allows some non-civilians into the frame (female and child combatants) and pushes some civilians (adult civilian men and adolescent boys) out. In short, the "PoC" frame is *distorted* by the use of gender essentialisms, as is the emphasis on the "particularly vulnerable."

If we assume that the goal of civilian protection advocates is, as stated, to promote the protection of *all* civilians, this is quite puzzling. The moral pivot of the civilian immunity norm is that "distinction" between civilians and combatants is to be established on the basis of whether or not a person is directly engaged in hostilities. By contrast, gender essentialisms suggest that this distinction can be drawn at least in part on the basis of ascriptive characteristics—sex as well as age and disability. The use of gender essentialisms in this advocacy discourse would seem to legitimize gendered short cuts in compliance, contradicting, in some respects, the very agenda which norm advocates are pressing.

There are other reasons why this case of frame distortion seems puzzling. Several of the key conflicts in the early 1990s that put the protection of civilians on the international agenda were as notable for sex-selective atrocities against civilian men and boys as for crimes against women and younger children. For example, it is the July 1995 massacre of men and boys at Srebrenica that epitomizes the failure of civilian protection in Bosnia (Zarkov, 2002); in the Rwandan genocide, now seen as emblematic of the need for decisive action to protect endangered non-combatants (Barnett, 2002), the majority of those killed were also males (El-Bushra, 2000:73; Jones, 2002a). We might have expected advocacy on behalf of war-affected civilians to explicitly include attention to the singling out of men and boys for execution, whereas the data show that references to adult males are near absent from the discourse.

Moreover, in the early 1990s, the time was ripe for an understanding of conflict-affected populations that relied less on gender essentialisms than previously. Development and humanitarian assistance organizations were already beginning to adopt a "gender-mainstreaming" approach in vulnerability analysis that sought to disaggregate target populations according to specific demographics, including but not limited to age and gender, and replace essentialist assumptions with contextual analysis (March, Smith, and Mukhpadhyay, 1999). In 1989 the General Assembly of European NGOs adopted a Code of Conduct on Images and Messages Relating to the Third World that aimed in particular at reducing stereotypical gender imagery (Benthall, 1993:182). By the late 1990s, gender-mainstreaming policies had proliferated throughout the humanitarian assistance community, defined as "ensuring a gender perspective is fully integrated into all humanitarian activities and policies."[25] This approach was to include "equal protection of human rights of women *and men* in carrying out humanitarian and peace-building activities" (IASC, 1999:2).[26]

---

[25] ECOSOC 1998, U.N. Doc. E/Res/1998/26.
[26] Italics added by author.

The prevalence and persistence of gender essentialisms in civilian protection rhetoric needs to be explained and, perhaps, re-evaluated in light of these factors. In the next section, I argue that the networks' use of gender discourse can be understood as an effect of the aforementioned pre-existing cultural norms, interacting with ongoing environmental factors. Together, these produce the particular strategic context in which advocates must press their agenda. I then turn to a consideration of the ways in which this strategy is being—and perhaps should be—contested within the network itself.

The Gendered Civilian as Strategic Social Construction

Before a problem becomes an issue, advocates must place it on the agenda of those actors with the power to address it, and this usually involves changing the inter-subjective perceptions of target publics. To do this, advocates engage in three distinct kinds of strategic social construction. The first is *norm advocacy* with respect to norm violators and potential norm enforcers. Second, they engage in *issue advocacy*: convincing various constituencies that non-compliance with a norm is an issue that must be collectively addressed by bringing additional pressure to bear on norm violators and potential enforcers. Third, advocates must engage in *issue alignment* with advocates in distinct but complementary issue areas.[27] All of these processes require a carefully crafted interpretive frame that (a) connects the problem to pre-existing principled and causal schemas of those whom advocates wish to influence and (b) proposes a solution (Snow and Benford, 1992). Framing efforts by advocates draw upon pre-existing *symbolic technologies*, or "intersubjective systems of representations and representation-producing practices" (Laffey and Weldes, 1997). These symbols and signifiers—such as the category of "women and children" as a signifier for "civilians"—form the "cultural tool-kit" (Swidler, 1986) with which advocates build the frames that then succeed or fail in mobilizing collective action.

Network actors' efforts to transform pre-existing cultural symbols into calls for action that resonate with their target publics (whether norm violators themselves, those who would pressure them into compliance) are mediated by the strategic environment in which they operate (Joachim, 2001; Payne, 2001). The emerging work on transnational networks typically discusses the strategic environment into terms of two factors: *political opportunity structures* and *mobilizing structures*.[28] Political opportunity structures are "those consistent dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for or constraints on people undertaking collective action" (see also McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1996; Tarrow, 1998; Khagram et al., 2002:17). This typically refers to how much *access* network actors have to key institutions or targets of influence such as states, international organizations, and, in this case, formal and informal armed groups. Most importantly in terms of providing concrete protection in the field is access to civilian populations themselves, which typically requires negotiations with belligerents on both sides of a conflict.

Mobilizing structures are "those collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action" (McAdam et al., 1996:3). In domestic social movements, these structures include churches, families, neighborhoods, friendship networks, and professional associations. In the transnational public sphere advocates mobilize around an issue by building alliances with networks of like-minded actors—*allies, constituencies*, and *partners*—who can generate support for their cause by leveraging different points in the global system.

---

[27] With respect to such "partner" advocacy networks, the goal is neither to promote their adherence to a norm, nor to mobilize them directly as constituents, but to draw strength from their efforts in a similar issue area.

[28] In reality, it is often difficult to analytically disaggregate these interrelated concepts, so I refer to both as aspects of the "strategic environment."

Powerful *allies* can include states, international organizations, and (particularly crucial in this case) the global media (Risse, Ropp and Sikkink, 1999). In addition, networks seek to build a heterogeneous transnational *constituency*, both enhancing their mobilizing base and the legitimacy of their cause (Joachim, 2003:252). For the protection network, this constituency includes donor states and human-rights-minded transnational publics. Finally, advocacy networks attempt to "extend" their frames so as to coincide with and thus draw on the energy of other networks working on issues seen as similar or analogous (Snow et al., 1986). Networks working on overlapping issues—such, as in this case, the international women's network—can become important as *partners*, by increasing the pool of "experts" on which activists can draw both "directly affected individuals who can provide testimonies based on their experiences" (Joachim, 2003:252) and "epistemic communities" consisting of professionals able to share scientific, technical or legal expertise (Haas, 1992). As illustrated in Figure 2, all these aspects of what I call the strategic environment are shaped by pre-existing norms and beliefs, in this case shared beliefs about wartime gender roles (Smith et al., 1997:70).

Framing is about politicizing the "envehicled meanings" evident in these cultural symbols. A key insight of the social movement literature is that successful agenda setting requires establishing a frame that "resonates" with pre-existing norms (Meyer, 1995:175; Klotz, 1996:31; Smith, Chatfield, and Pagnucco, 1997:70; Barnett, 1999:9; Payne, 2001:43) as well as with the symbolic technologies used by other actors with overlapping interests and identities (Snow et al., 1986; van der Veen, 2002). Yet when symbolic technologies are invoked not in their own right, but rather as signifiers of something not conceptually compatible, frames are vulnerable to what Payne (2001) calls "frame distortion." In this case, it is not the protection of women and children per se that is being promoted by the network, but the protection of civilians. Images of women and children, however, represent the innocence and vulnerability according to which the civilian population is to be conceptually constituted and understood: they *denote* "civilians." But the use of ascriptive characteristics to identify "civilians" undermines the moral logic of the norm, which is based instead on identifying who is doing what. Gender imagery proves a potent cultural resource in terms of agenda setting, precisely because it resonates with pre-existing gender discourses, but since this gender essentialism is fundamentally misleading, it distorts the civilian immunity norm it is intended to promote.

According to Payne (2001:46–47), *frame distortion* occurs in cases such as these when "normative debates fail to meet basic standards of communicative rationality," which "imagine actors reciprocally challenging one another's validity claims in order to find shared truth." Payne asserts that only through such "genuine" persuasive practices can "true" norm building take place. If the resonance of a norm is based on misleading or distorted claims, the process of norm strengthening itself can be undermined (Smith, 2001:45). Intentionally distorting a moral claim by appealing to only partially compatible symbolism can undermine the broader moral claim itself when the gap between the norm and its frame becomes evident to constituencies: if women and children are supposed to be civilians, since women and children are under arms, there is no longer any such thing as a civilian. Particularly in the human rights field, "information that turns out to be exaggerated or biased harms the organizations' credibility and ultimately the interests of the people it seeks to help" (Caversazio, 2001:102). Moreover, target populations may respond to the frame rather than the norm. For example, the Bosnian Serb Army frequently allowed women and children to flee while killing adult men and older boys, claiming that this represented compliance with the civilian immunity norm (Burg and Shoup, 1999). By using gender essentialisms to articulate belligerent obligations, civilian protection advocates tacitly reproduce the intersubjective understandings that make possible such practices.

```
┌─────────────────────────┐
│                         │
│     Target Publics'     │
│     Inter-subjective    │
│     Understandings      │
│                         │
└─────────────────────────┘

            ∧

┌─────────────────────────┐
│                         │
│     Norm Advocacy       │
│     Issue Advocacy      │
│     Issue Alignment     │
│                         │
└─────────────────────────┘

            ∧

     ┌─────────────────┐
     │     Frames      │
     │    Problems     │
     │    Solutions    │
     └─────────────────┘

            ∧

┌───────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                                         │
│                  Strategic Environment                  │
│                                                         │
│   Political Opportunity Structure    Mobilizing Resources│
│        Access                            Allies         │
│        Political Alignments              Constituencies │
│        Trigger Events                    Partners       │
│                                                         │
│              ∧                       ∧                  │
├───────────────────────────────────────────────────────┤
│                                                         │
│                 Symbolic Technologies                   │
│                                                         │
└───────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Fig. 2. Agenda-Setting in World Politics

Why do transnational advocates sometimes engage in seemingly counter-pro-ductive frame distortion in order to promote their agenda? Part of the answer lies in the existence of such distortions prior to the process of framing. Pre-existing cultural tropes are the stock of ideational resources from which the frames them-selves are built. If these symbolic technologies already contain distortions, chal-lenging them can reduce the potential for a resonant frame. But the extent to which this is the case will be contingent on strategic factors, through which these cultural tools are filtered and which therefore provide the incentive structure that drives

framing choices. This combination of factors determines the way in which issues will be packaged for target publics and reproduced in the diplomatic lexicon of global elites, such as delegates to the United Nations Security Council.

Understanding this process renders explicable the persistent use by civilian protection actors of gender stereotypes they know to be outdated and which some claim to be destructive to their cause. It also illuminates the potential for or obstacles to reframing this discourse. As elaborated below, the network's relationship with its most important allies, its ability to maintain access to targets of influence, its ability to appeal to its international constituency, and its success in relating to partners in overlapping issue areas are perceived by many advocates to have been enhanced rather than hindered by the use of gendered rhetoric. Moreover, many network actors see the advantages of these gains as outweighing the gaps created by relying on such frame distortions.

Norm Advocacy: Ensuring Access to Targets of Influence

A key aspect of network actors' political opportunity structure is the extent to which they can maintain access to belligerents, and through them to the civilian populations they wish to serve. In order to advocate with belligerents on behalf of war-affected civilians, humanitarian organizations must create an environment in which the belligerents are willing to listen and negotiate (Cutts, 1999). Moreover, to carry out humanitarian operations themselves—the delivery of relief, the removal of civilians from besieged areas, the provision of medical care—protection organizations require access to civilian populations, which also typically involves negotiating in good faith with the belligerents who control the territory in which the civilians find themselves. These negotiations take place in a context in which warring parties may at best be very suspicious of humanitarian organizations, and at worst may wish to exploit them in their own interests (DeMars, 1997; Cohen and Deng, 1998; Darst, 2002).

In order to maintain this access, most humanitarian organizations rely upon a discourse of neutrality: "each organization asserts that it is concerned only with the human needs and rights of the victims of conflict—not with influencing the political and military contest between adversaries" (Demars, 1997:104). While different organizations have conflicting conceptions of neutrality (Demars, 1997; Minear, 2002), and while it has become clear in the post-Cold War era that the very concept of neutrality may be dysfunctional in some contexts (Jones and Cater, 2001), it remains a powerful principle governing humanitarian discourse and practice in war-affected regions.

Because the enabling effect of neutrality is contingent upon avoiding actions that could be interpreted as assisting participants to one side of a conflict, it is typically easier to argue for the right to assist those individuals least perceived as participants. Given the gendered parameters of the immunity norm, and the fact that warring parties generally see adult men but not women as agents during time of war, providing explicit assistance to men can undermine the perception that humanitarian actors are in fact neutral. Take the example of British relief shipments to German-occupied Greece during World War II. Junod (1951:185) describes British concern that humanitarian aid would be channeled to Greek collaborators and thus sustain the German war effort: "Mr. Jordan, the commercial attaché of the British Embassy, was all in favour of relieving the sufferings of women and children, but he insisted that men should not benefit ... 'you really must see that Her Majesty's Government can never agree to feed factory workers in Greece who are working for the enemy.'"

As Frohardt, Paul, and Minear (1999:45) write, gender assumptions often become grafted into humanitarian efforts to maintain neutrality in contemporary contexts as well: "Because provision of social services to the elderly, women or

children often are less threatening to the authorities, relief programs can sometimes be used as points of entry to areas where populations are at risk." By claiming to be protecting only the "objectively" innocent, a UNICEF official explained, agencies attempt to "depoliticize" their role in complex humanitarian emergencies where indeed de facto neutrality is increasingly recognized as untenable:

> We simplify the issue, simplify the scenario, "we are just here to help innocent civilians, innocent women and children, we're not here to interfere with the conflict; by our presence we indicate neither support for nor acknowledgement of the legitimacy of a particular party to the conflict." So bringing it down to a very fundamental level—in that sense, the simplistic nature of the analysis is meant to reduce controversy and make it easier to work.[29]

From a norm-promoting perspective, this creates an important contradiction. An approach to neutrality that validates false assumptions about who falls into the populations under an organization's mandate undermines a second humanitarian principle, *impartiality*, which requires "human rights and humanitarian organizations [to] conduct protection activities not on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, language, or gender" (Caversazio, 2000:19). Impartial humanitarian action demands equal protection of all victims on the basis of need. But the exigencies of maintaining access to civilian populations often require a language that ensures belligerents' ease, and this can necessitate a *partial* approach. When well-intentioned aid organizations adopt gendered language to maintain access, they can inadvertently legitimize policies that neglect civilian men and boys as recipients of protection or aid (Carpenter, 2003). In short, the strategic use of gender essentialisms as a persuasion tactic itself reproduces the set of ideas that make civilian males particularly vulnerable.

Issue Advocacy: Mobilizing Allies and Constituencies

In contrast to norm advocacy, issue advocacy involves not directly lobbying targets of influence, but mobilizing third parties to affect those targets. Whereas norm advocacy involves persuading actors to comply with norms, issue advocacy involves "making an issue" of norm violations: the audience is not the violators themselves, but bystander audiences who might be mobilized into pressuring targets of influence to comply with norms. The goal of issue advocacy is to enlist political allies in framing a moral problem as an "issue" and to mobilize conscience constituencies into collective action. In the case of the civilian protection network, issue advocacy is aimed primarily at the global media and at transnational publics, particularly citizens of donor countries.

Maintaining Media Alliances
The most important political ally for the humanitarian relief community in general, and civilian protection advocates in particular, is the global media. Humanitarian and human rights organizations "need the material and moral support of the public if they are to act freely and effectively . . . the reactions of governments and the UN to major crises are inextricably bound up with public opinion" (Braumann, 1993:149). Particularly in the case of acute crises such as famine, epidemic or massive refugee flows resulting from armed conflict, the influx of resources to provide for afflicted populations depends on media attention (Moeller, 1998).

Advocates for the protection of civilians in times of war—both humanitarian workers and those journalists who might themselves be considered "inside" the

---

[29] Phone interview, October 2002.

network—therefore have an interest in attracting media coverage of the areas in which crises are most severe. Well aware that news coverage will drive donations to agencies as well as, possibly, a resolution to crises, achieving both their moral and organizational goals depends on it. Many humanitarian agencies have established extensive public relations departments whose primary role is to serve as liaisons with the press. "Relief agencies depend on us for pictures and we need them to tell us where the stories are," a BBC correspondent covering Somalia once said (quoted in Moeller, 1998:108). Thus, while relief agencies are often frustrated by journalists, who ignore certain crises and sensationalize others, they are also dependent on the media and exert a powerful influence over it (Rosenblatt, 1996:130).

Media narratives of humanitarian emergencies aim to parse complex events into a simplistic frame that will capture the attention of a Western audience often ignorant of and apathetic to world affairs. Braumann (1993:150) argues that a persuasive emergency story must involve "scene-setting" appropriate to the capacity of Western viewers to respond: "pictures, not words ... an isolated upheaval ... a personality or volunteer from a humanitarian organization to 'authenticate' the victim."

The roles ascribed to women in these media dramas are archetypal: the starving widow, the disheveled rape victim, the refugee columns of elderly women in kerchiefs. According to Moeller (1998:234), television coverage of Rwanda "showed the dead, preferably in large piles, and the hollow-eyed survivors, *preferably women and children*, although men and children or just gaunt men alone were also shown."[30] More often, men are pictured as the perpetrators of violence: the roving bands of warlords ransacking relief convoys or those with the machetes and light arms. Describing the Western response to Rwanda, where some Hutu women had aided in the violence and Tutsi males, including infants, were the disproportionate victims of slaughter,[31] a *Washington Post* reporter wrote: "Women and children were hacked to pieces by machete-wielding gangsters who reveled in the gore ..." (quoted in Moeller 1998:222).

Such gender archetypes are not surprising: as Braumann (1993:150) argues in his list of criteria for engineering "international events," an important requirement for eliciting sympathy is the construction of a victim who is "spontaneously acceptable to Western viewers in his or her own right." Acceptability is dictated foremost by "100% victim status"—the symbolic victim must be seen as entirely lacking agency; s/he must be both unable to help her/himself and an unequivocal non-participant in the political events from which his/her misery results (Braumann, 1993:154). In short, the victim must be unambiguously "innocent." Due to deep-rooted gender assumptions, because adult men and boys may be viewed as "potential participants" in any society, journalists assume evidence of male victimization will elicit less sympathy; women make better symbolic victims, especially in wartime, precisely because they—either as bystanders or as mothers of helpless children—can be seen as innocent.[32]

Given its interdependence with the global media, how have actors in the civilian protection network responded to this tendency to simplify and distort? Generally, they have also elected to craft these simplistic frames (Ignatieff, 1998:194). With respect to donor publics, the aim is not to educate about complex realities, but to generate public sympathy, donations and (perhaps) political will for multilateral intervention (Shiras, 1996:97). According to Hammock and Charny (1996:130)

---

[30] Italics added by author.

[31] On women's participation in the genocide see African Rights (1995). On males as targets, see El-Bushra (2000).

[32] Occasionally men stand in for women in images such as the man holding an infant that became emblematic of Hussein's attacks on the Kurds of Halabja (Moeller, 1999:287); or signify a narrative, such as that of the Holocaust (represented by male prisoners in Bosnia) which invokes reaction in its own right.

"just as the media continue to rely on stereotypical images, so the relief agencies continue to perpetuate the images of helplessness and despondence among the beneficiaries of the work." Foreign aid bureaucracies in major donor states even hand out guidelines to disaster workers on how to relate stories to the media: "Keep it simple. Simplify and summarize your major points . . . remember that the audience is the general public" (OFDA, 1994:I-4).

Not surprisingly, these simplified frames often include gender essentialisms designed to resonate both with journalists' repertoire of narratives and with the mass public. A UNICEF official put it this way: "It's in many people's best interests to maintain [the association of women and children with civilians]. Think of the media, who create many of our visions and images of such situations. They want a story and the story is about the relationship between good and evil, it's about bad men with guns and good, innocent, women and children who suffer and they are starving and raped. It's a hell of a story. You don't want to complicate it."[33]

Appealing to Transnational Constituencies
Besides utilizing the media as an indirect agenda-setting mechanism, the civilian protection network engages directly with donor governments and with transnational civil society, as a site for both fundraising and issue advocacy. Donor governments are encouraged to provide financial resources for humanitarian actors and, having identified themselves as members of the network through their donations, to play an economic and military role in protecting civilians when necessary. Individual citizens are called upon to send money for blankets, food, and other relief programs; but they are also enjoined to pressure their governments to take a stronger stand with respect to an issue. Transnational appeals of this sort work by triggering moral sensibilities (both principled and causal) to invoke action.

As Joachim notes, one way that transnational networks appeal to moral ideas is to establish a frame that resonates with the widest and most diverse set of actors possible. The mobilization of a heterogeneous international constituency can increase the legitimacy of a frame by "making it more difficult for opponents to discredit it as representing the interests of only certain groups [and] enabling NGOs to exert pressure at different levels and with different tactics" (2003:252). The ICRC engaged in such cross-sectoral mobilization when it conducted its People on War Survey in 1999. The survey, which "allows [the] voices [of] people who have experienced war . . . to be amplified and heard in the councils of nations," involved interviewing tens of thousands of people from all backgrounds, both combatants and civilians, in 12 war-torn countries and several "Security Council" countries, and disseminating the results at various levels within international society (ICRC, 1999a). The data were not only useful for the ICRC's norm advocacy efforts in war-torn societies themselves (Harroff-Tavel, 1998), but also for its issue advocacy at the transnational level, enhancing its claim that humanitarian law, in particular the civilian immunity norm, is widely—or as the ICRC puts it, "universally"—recognized as legitimate.

Such efforts often are shaped by the perception within the network that the protection of women and children is less disputable than the protection of civilians in general, both because gender norms governing protection of "women and children" seem universal, and because of widely held assumptions that women and children are "objective" non-combatants.[34] Whereas intervening in civil wars (or promoting women's empowerment) can be seen as the deeply politicized processes they are, "protecting women and children, well nobody can argue with that."[35] The gendered aspects of the immunity norm are "amplified" so as to resonate with

[33] Phone interview, October 2002.
[34] Personal interview, UNHCR Donor Mobilization Unit Official, August 2002, Geneva.
[35] Personal interview, OFDA Official, Washington, DC, July 2002.

individuals' sense of familial obligation, and draw attention away from possibly divisive moral arguments about agency and neutrality, which are in fact an intricate part of the protection network's activities on the ground (Snow et al., 1986).

Frame amplification is used to encourage action as well as to broaden the legitimacy of a frame. Activists frame an issue in such a way as to provoke a response: a check in the mail, a letter to an elected official, an interventionist force. They are faced with distinguishing their cause among the litany of appeals that potential "conscience constituents" will receive, and with overcoming the pervasive denial that afflicts donor populations (Moeller, 1998; Cohen, 2001). Frames are amplified when they are "clarified or invigorated to bear on a particular issue" (paraphrasing Snow et al., 1986). According to these authors, both principled and causal beliefs can be amplified in order to enhance the resonance of a particular frame.

Rhetoric on civilian casualties within the network is calculated to affect constituents' sense of moral urgency (values) as well as their empirical understanding of the current situation (beliefs). For example, "Today, 90 percent of war casualties are innocent bystanders, and the majority of them are women and children. That's a dramatic reversal from a century ago, when civilians made up fewer than 5 percent of war's victims" (Reliefweb, 2003). By claiming that most of the affected are women and children, the ubiquitous appeal is designed to invoke unconditional sympathy and response. By claiming that the severity of the situation is new and unprecedented, a sense of urgency is conveyed along with a sense that things can again be "put right."

The appeal distorts the frame however because it is empirically specious. First, the 90% statistic is used to suggest a drastic rise in proportions of civilian deaths over the course of the 20th century.[36] But an analysis of the data provided in the few primary sources identifiable by tracing citations (Beer, 1981:34; Small and Singer, 1982; Sivard, 1991:20–25; Smith, 1994:2) does not unequivocally support the view that civilian casualties are rising (see also Frohardt et al., 1999:17; Goldstein, 2001:400). The current statistics include deaths from indirect and long-term causes, which have usually been excluded from casualty counts of earlier periods to which they are being compared. Some invocations of this statistic suggest civilian *fatalities* have increased rather than *casualties* in the broad sense of dead, injured or displaced, but many of the still living seem to actually be factored into the current estimate, exaggerating the novelty of the current situation compared to the past.

While distorting, this presumably appeals to constituents' immediate sense of urgency and agency: if wars were once "civilized" perhaps they can be so again. Although no one I spoke to within the network seemed to be sure how that statistic had been calculated or by whom, few seemed to think the validity of the statistic was an important issue.[37] "Where the numbers come from isn't important," a facilitator at a Training Seminar on Humanitarian Law for University Teachers sponsored by the ICRC responded to my query. "What's important is what they show about the situation of war-affected civilians."[38]

The more important distortion in this reference is the reification of women but not men with civilian status and with particular vulnerability to attack. "Civilian women are the primary victims of modern-day warfare," reads the Midterm Review of the 2000 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals, publicized by the U.N. Office of

---

[36] This habit was questioned by the Indian delegate to the Security Council pointed out in the 1999 debates, citing centuries of atrocities against colonized populations. UN Doc S/PV.3980. Notably, his references to scholarly data on the issue and his reminder that "women are also under arms," did not substantively impact the discourse at the debates, which continued to reiterate the standard statements.

[37] This statistic is sometimes attributed to the United Nations, but the UN Department of Statistics couldn't tell me how it had been calculated and denied they had ever disseminated such numbers. The UN Genderstats Division responded to my query with a number of secondary citations.

[38] Training Seminar on Humanitarian Law for University Teachers, University of Geneva Graduate Institute of International Studies, September 2002, Geneva.

the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR, 2000:2). "Belligerent parties deliberately inflict violence on civilian populations, and women and children are killed," claims Save the Children's report on Mothers and Children in Armed Conflict (Save the Children, 2002, 8). Simon Chesterman (2001:2) writes, "In conflicts throughout the 1990s, civilians constituted up to 90 percent or more of those killed with a high proportion being women and children." At the Security Council in 2001, the Pakistani delegate stated, "Violence against civilians has reached alarming proportions and is directed in most cases against women, children and other vulnerable groups" (UN Doc. S/PV .4312, Resumption 1:21)

But available data show that civilian men and older boys are most likely to be directly killed in war or civil strife (Jones, 2000; Goldstein, 2001); women and younger children are particularly affected by conflict's long-term, indirect effects, in part because they tend to be disadvantaged socially during reconstruction (Gardam and Jervis, 2001; Meintjes, Pillay, and Turshen, 2001; Cockburn and Zarkov, 2002) and in part because they are more likely to survive the immediate conflict period (Ghobarah, Huth, and Russett, 2003) to suffer in the aftermath. By conflating these factors, "women and children" are framed as the primary "targets" of armed violence, amplifying the frame but obscuring sex-selective targeting of men and boys: "Today, civilians, especially women, children and the elderly, are deliberately targeted by combatants."[39]

These frames are reiterated strategically to the public by figureheads of protection agencies, even as those same agencies' statistical divisions produce empirical data contradicting the public statements. For example, in the same year that the ICRC published a report stating that only 35% of weapons injuries it had treated since 1991 were women, children under 16 and men over 60 (ICRC, 1999b), the President of the ICRC told the Security Council: "The ICRC is faced today with 20 open conflicts the world over, in many of which civilians are the first and principal target. Women, children, the elderly, the sick, refugees and internally displaced persons have been attacked in large numbers and methodically driven from their homes."[40]

Alleged refugee numbers have similarly been disseminated by public relations divisions of humanitarian agencies and by the media, so as to appeal to moral sensibilities (Crisp, 2000). According to official UNHCR statistics, however, the oft-repeated statistic "80% of the world's refugees are women and children" is often simply wrong or, at best, meaningless. Women may be over-represented in some camp populations, but they are under-represented among asylum seekers in Western and Central Europe (UNHCR, 2000a). An official from the Population Data Unit at UNHCR pointed out that all females plus males under 18 would make up a majority of *any* population: "There wouldn't be a population person in the whole world, a demographer or a head of statistics office or a head of census who would issue a statement saying that 75% of the population in the U.S. was women and children—not that it wouldn't be accurate, but that they don't see the point."[41]

To bureaucrats in the Population Data and Evaluation/Policy units of UNHCR, the misuse of data is an irritant; to officials in the Donor Mobilization and External Relations units, it is a moral resource. The Population Data Unit receives frequent calls from journalists and activists wanting to cite the percentage of female/child refugees globally. The official above told me, "I ask what kind of children do you want, what do you mean by women, women of all ages, women above a certain age, for example, and then there's a silence . . . The facts are often not paid attention to because the message is more important."[42] UNHCR's 2000 Report directly refuted

---

[39] Namibian Delegate to the Security Council, February 1999.
[40] U.N. Doc. S/PV/3977.
[41] Personal interview, September 2002, Geneva.
[42] Personal interview, September 2002, Geneva.

the assertion that there exist more female than male refugees (UNHCR, 2000b). A separate report questioned the conflation of "women" with "children" for statistical purposes: "from a statistical and demographic viewpoint, there appears little reason to combine the two groups [women and children] into one statistic" and suggested that "combining the two is unsuitable for programmatic reasons" (USCR, 2000). But the availability of this data has not affected the use of the "women and children" rhetoric in describing refugee populations. The message *is* "the point."

It is not entirely clear whether such frame distortions are actually required to generate donor sympathy. There is little systematic research on whether states and citizens actually *do* respond better to gendered imagery of civilians than to gender-neutral appeals (Harff, 1987; Cohen, 2001:169).[43] But network activists clearly *believe* that successful advocacy hinges on emphasizing that "women and children" are the beneficiaries of civilian protection (Cohen, 2001:183). When asked about whether to highlight civilian men and boys as a "vulnerable group," participants at the ICRC's Seminar on the Protection of Special Categories of Civilian responded, "I don't think it's a good strategy. I wouldn't do that" and "If you suggest a program for 'vulnerable men' no one will fund it."

Issue Alignment: Cultivating Network Partnerships

A final important institutional pressure on advocacy networks' mobilizing strategies is the need to align their discourse with "partners": activists working on overlapping issues, whose frames might either clash with and undermine, or coalesce with and mutually support, those of the said network. Snow et al. identify several ways in which activists seek to align their frames not just with "values presumed basic to prospective constituents" but also with "structurally unconnected but frame-compatible sentiment pools" (1986:468–469). In other words, for any given issue network, as important as resonating with one's targets of influence and constituencies is resonating with *other advocates* working in "frame-compatible" issue areas. For the civilian protection network, one of the most important such strategic "partners" in the transnational human rights network has been women's advocates.[44] Humanitarian organizations are now under both activist and donor pressure to demonstrate what they are doing for women, and this pressure provides an additional (though unintended) incentive to de-emphasize civilian men in their discourse or as programmatic targets.[45]

Like the protection of civilians, women's issues have been on the international agenda for some time (Penn and Nardos, 2003; Steinstra, 1994), but in the early 1990s both issues were redefined in a way that catapulted them to prominence at the level of international institutions (Joachim, 1998:147). Civilian protection advocates joined with other human rights groups to argue that massive violations of human rights constituted a threat to global stability and security (McRae, 2001; Roberts, 2001). Women's advocates, concerned with the marginalization of women's issues by mainstream human rights groups, reframed women's rights *as* human rights (Bunch, 1990) by focusing on the issue of violence against women (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). Violence that is specific to *civilian* women in time of war constituted a focal point around which both networks mobilized conjointly in the early 1990s.

As noted above, the civilian protection network strategically framed civilian women as the primary victims of war as part of a general strategy to draw greater

---

[43] Harff's (1987) study on how students ranked human rights violations in terms of severity and obligation to intervene suggests that the age and gender of victims may be less important than the brutality and cruelty of killings and the graphic manner in which they are portrayed. Cohen (2001) and Moeller (1999) also describe various factors in addition to gender that bear on whether humanitarian appeals issue a response.

[44] Personal interview, ICRC Women and War Project, August 2002.

[45] Personal interview, UNHCR Official, Evaluation and Policy Unit, August 2002.

attention and resources to civilians in general. From the perspective of civilian protection advocates, while not all civilians are women, a large percentage of them—as in any population—are. This is a percentage that rises if they are conflated with the category "children." At an operational level, civilian protection advocates correctly recognized in the 1990s that addressing the needs of civilians meant taking women's needs into account, in particular by taking seriously the concerns raised within the women's network.[46] But at a more strategic level, the increasingly successful movement around women's human rights also represented a mobilizing resource for attention to "civilians," particularly to the extent that the civilian population continued to be conceptualized primarily as a women's sphere. Protection agencies drew on women's organizations to provide professional expertise on women's issues, relieving them of the necessity of fully mainstreaming gender in their own programs. Data-gathering on women's issues is now often delegated to partners, such as the WCRWC, and experts to fill the "gender focal point" positions in major protection organizations are often gleaned from within the women's network, in lieu of a systematic mainstreaming process.[47]

For women's advocates, the emphasis on war-affected civilian women was part of a strategy to promote women's human rights in general, rather than those of civilians in particular (Joachim, 1998; Thompson, 2002; Penn and Nardos, 2003). While not all women who experience gender-based violence are war affected, the problem of violence against women in armed conflict became a potent symbol for the broader problem of violence against women (Barstow, 2000:238–239; Tickner, 2001),[48] which then epitomized the claim that the international community must take seriously the human rights of women more generally.[49]

Therefore, women's advocates strategically drew on and facilitated humanitarian organizations' emphasis on war-affected women to promote greater attention to gender-based violence, and by extending women's rights, more broadly. As Johnson relates, the international women's network actively sought to cultivate relationships with mainstream human rights groups and to influence and transform their discourses. "Human rights NGOs became part of the transnational network around women's human rights, contributing significantly to information development and exchange in the area of state practices" (Thompson, 2002:106). The cluster of NGOs around the issue of "women in armed conflict" has encouraged protection organizations to emphasize the special needs of "women and children" in particular in the context of civilian protection as a whole. In a 2000 briefing to the UN Department of Public Information, the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women praised a "linked awareness" between the women's movement and multilateral advocacy for the "protection of women and children in armed conflict" (USDPI, 2000). Organizations such as WCRWC also actively supported sex-specific protection initiatives such as the "United States Women and Children in Armed Conflict Protection Act of 2003" (WCRWC, 2003). These institutional and discursive linkages involved a process of strategic frame alignment where both networks' efforts were strengthened by adopting compatible frames, inadvertently obscuring the vulnerability of civilian males in armed conflict.

The similarity between women's network frames and those of the civilian protection network is evident throughout the post-Cold War era. In the early 1990s the

---

[46] Personal Interview, OCHA Representative, October 2000; see also Rehn and Sirleaf (2002).

[47] Most of those whom I interviewed in the "gender unit" or "women's units" had a previous background specifically in broader women's issues, rather than broader protection issues. These actors are networked with one another and the transnational women's network through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE). See http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge/.

[48] Violence against women is defined very broadly and is understood to encompass family violence, honor crimes, harmful cultural practices such as bride burning and female genital mutilation, sexual violence and exploitation, and sex-selective abortion, among other practices. See Penn and Nardos (2003: Ch. 1).

[49] Personal interview, ICRC Official; see also Keck and Sikkink (1998).

discourse of women's activism on war-affected women dovetailed with the civilian protection network's focus on "women and children" as innocent victims of violence perpetrated by men. Both the Vienna Tribunal and the 1995 Beijing Conference, occurring in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide, focused almost exclusively on women as *civilian* victims of war, despite women's participation in both the Bosnian conflict and the Rwandan genocide: "Those making the war are not women, however those being raped, yes, we are women," stated the judge appointed to hear the cases at the tribunal (quoted in Barstow, 2000:236). Scholarship on war-affected women during this period also tended to emphasize women as civilian victims, and as particularly vulnerable to political violence (presumably in comparison to men):

> Women and children, in particular, are victims of widespread and apparently random terror campaigns by both governmental and guerilla groups in times of civil unrest or armed conflict.
> —Charlesworth, Chinkin, and Wright (1996:267).

> Civilians—women, children and elderly men—are often the targets in [ethnic] conflicts.
> —Mertus (2001:21)

> It is generally accepted that the majority of the casualties in armed conflicts are women and children.
> —Sharatt (1999:2)

Because the aim of women's advocates is to promote the human rights of women, references to the victimization of civilian men are rare in this discourse, and those that exist typically highlight the way that these atrocities affect women. Therefore:

> Women are often forced to witness the brutal torture or murder of loved ones . . . Minka watched out of the bushes as her father was murdered. They killed him and then cut him in pieces with a yard axe . . .
> —Bunch and Reilly (1994:40)

> As a result of the genocide, many women lost male relatives on whom they previously relied for economic support and are now destitute.
> —Human Rights Watch (1996:2)

> Women have always been the primary victims of war. Women lose their husbands, their fathers, their sons in combat.
> —Hillary Clinton, 1998, quoted in Jones (2000:91–92)

The relative inactivity among women's advocates regarding men as direct victims of gendered violence may be reasonably explained by the programmatic emphasis of women's NGOs on the particular, and often overlooked, needs and experiences of women. Additionally, some women's advocates see a danger of gender mainstreaming being hijacked in the service of men's issues to the exclusion of women if women's network discourse should become more sex inclusive: a fear which is indeed validated by some programmatic experiences with gender mainstreaming (Chant and Gutman, 2001). Thinking along these lines, one respondent situated within both networks specifically advocated against a focus on men as victims per se:

> I recognize our discourse is a bit outdated. But it's very difficult because as soon as you stop talking about women, women are forgotten. Men want to see what will they gain out of this gender business, so you have to be strategic.
> —UNHCR Official, Gender Unit August 2002

Thus for very different reasons, the advocacy frames developed by women's advocates in the 1990s employed a construction of gender similar to that of civilian protection advocates: men were cast as agents, rather than victims, of violence in general and gendered violence in particular, while women's civilian status, peacemaking roles, and vulnerability to gender-based violence were emphasized.[50] The choice of these frames was shaped by the constraints women's advocates face in promoting an agenda to promote women's security and are not necessarily incompatible with that objective. But to the extent that the protection network has incentives to align its frames with the women's network, an unintended side effect of these frames may be to exacerbate the neglect of civilian men within the protection network as well, where such gaps become more problematic.

Interview data suggests this is part of the explanation behind the perpetuation of gender essentialisms in the protection network, as well as the likelihood of certain essentialisms but not others changing over time. Protection agencies, which have often been rightly accused of failing to adopt a gender-aware approach, now look to the women's network to legitimize their attempts to improve their policies. It is still often assumed this process is better served by emphasizing what agencies are doing for "women and children" than by working systematically at a "gender-aware approach," understood by most gender specialists as involving an awareness of gender hierarchies as they affect all individuals and the power relations between them (Anderson, Howarth, and Overholt, 1992; Benjamin and Fancy, 1998:10; Morris 1998:3).[51] Officials in the Protection Units of major protection organizations specifically mentioned the activity of the women's network as crucial in their understanding of how to protect war-affected women; some felt constrained by the need to trumpet their work on behalf of "women and children" to appeal to the concerns of women's advocates:

> In the media women and children are often mentioned, especially if there are casualties, children who have died in the conflict. In UNHCR we often do use it as well. And I think it is linked to the way in which within the organization we are struggling to mainstream gender in our operations, and it's also linked to the fact that a lot of HCR staff members, and a lot of donors are really pushing women and children all the time, and NGOs say we are still not doing enough for women and children.
>
> —UNHCR Official, Evaluation and Policy Unit, 2002

This process of strategic frame alignment between the two networks also explains changes in *certain* gender essentialisms over time but not others. For example, in recent years, the tendency to cast women as vulnerable and helpless has been increasingly reframed among women's advocates (Cockburn and Zarkov, 2002:17; Rehn and Sirleaf, 2002) with cascade effects on protection network discourse. Consistent with calls from women's advocates, OHCHR's "Checklist for Integrating Gender and Human Rights" specifically asks practitioners and researchers to make sure that women are not simply being described as a "vulnerable group" or discussed only in connection with children (OHCHR, 2000). A 2000 bulletin produced for OCHA by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children reads,

---

[50] This tendency has also influenced emerging diplomatic discourse at the UN on the effects of war on women, as indicated by the Secretary-General's 2002 Report to the Security Council on *Women, Peace and Security* (UNSG 2002). While challenging some gender essentialisms commonly used in humanitarian rhetoric, the Report reiterates the claim that "Women and children are disproportionately targeted in contemporary armed conflicts and constitute the majority of all victims" (2002:1); and when male victimization is discussed in the report, it tends to be in the context of the effects on women: "women are also victims of detention or 'disappearance.'" The "'disappearance' of male relatives affects women" (UNSG 2002:2).

[51] Barbara Harrell-Bond told Doreen Indra in a 1998 interview: "No one believes that those outside feminist circles who talk about gender studies are actually including men or considering the dynamics of relationships *between* men and women" (Indra, 1998:56).

TABLE 3. Change in Number of References to Vulnerability, Peace, and Decision-Making, as a Percentage of Total Number of References to Women, 1999–2003

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
W/Vulnerable	24	21	23	4.5	13
W/Peace	1.6	0	23	18	15
W/Decisions	0.8	0	2	4.5	3

"Women are often seen only as victims of war. The reality is far more complex . . . women have an essential role to play in the resolution of conflict" (OCHA, 2000b). The OCHA webpage on "Women and War" specifically refers to the agenda-setting role of the women's network: "Recent trends by leading scholars and activists tend to emphasize women's strengths not their vulnerability. Women play a prominent role in rebuilding war-torn societies . . . women community leaders facilitate mediation and reconciliation" (OCHA Online, 2004c). Between 1999 and 2003, references to women as a vulnerable group in the OCHA data set declined, and references to women as constructive actors in peace-building and post-conflict decision-making increased (see Table 3). This frame change was facilitated by the resonance of the new frame with both networks' previous frames and also with one another.[52]

By contrast, efforts in international society to highlight women's roles as agents of *violence* or men as civilian victims have been much more muted. The former problem has been identified by some women's advocates, since female ex-combatants remain one of the most underserved populations in humanitarian assistance (Rehn and Sirleaf, 2002; Mazurana and McKay, 2003). However, mention of this issue in some documents falls far short of constituting an *emphasis* on women's roles as participants in armed conflict within either network. Many women's advocates continue to have a stake in framing women as peacemakers in an effort to create a space for promoting women's political involvement on terms acceptable to male elites (Helms, 2003; Cohn et al., 2004). Even less do we see representations of noncivilian women in the protection network, whose "civilians" agenda benefits from the perpetuation of gender essentialisms. The ICRC's "Women and War" study, careful to mention that women may also be combatants (Lindsey, 2001:23–25), nonetheless focuses almost exclusively on women's experiences of war as civilians (Lindsey, 2001:33). While it is notable that OCHA's PoC webpage entitled "Armed Groups" (as actors involved in civilian protection) contains an image of female rather than male soldiers (OCHA Online, 2004d), there are only six explicit references to women as combatants or ex-combatants in the entire data set analyzed here.

Regarding men as victims of armed violence, with few exceptions, discourse on "women and armed conflict" and discourse on "civilian protection" alike continue to downplay male civilians' particular vulnerabilities. The Secretary General's Report on *Women, Peace and Security* emphasized the need for a more gender-sensitive approach to humanitarian assistance, but recognizing and ameliorating the targeting of civilian men is not identified as a component of this agenda. The Report specifically addresses the tendency to cast women as a "vulnerable group," calling attention to two problems: the need to disaggregate essentialized vulnerable groups into different sectors, and the risk of overlooking women's capacities. A third problem, the obfuscation of civilian men's vulnerabilities, is not mentioned in this

---

[52] The women's movement, while securing attention to violations of women's rights, sought to empower rather than simply to "help" women. The notion of strong, maternal women as peacemakers also resonated with conventional protection network gender discourses.

section of the study.[53] Similarly, the PoC data set used here contains only six references to men as specific civilian targets.

The argument here is not that women's advocates should be responsible for explicitly addressing wartime violence against men. The explanatory point is that while civilian men as victims tend to be *justifiably* absent from women's network frames, issue alignment processes inadvertently result (much more problematically) in men's general absence from the protection network's frames about vulnerable groups as well.

Reframing Civilian Protection?

Like most frames, the gendered construction of "civilian protection" is not un-contested within the network itself. Despite the prevalence of several dominant gender constructions in protection network frames, there are currents within the protection community that challenge the use of these essentialisms, as described above. Interview data with those committed to a particular frame provide insight into the logic behind its usage; conversations with those committed to challenging a frame can be useful in understanding the practical obstacles to change.

Many protection network officials I spoke with were quick to identify the use of gender stereotypes, and particularly the neglect of civilian men as a problem, both for protection and for the broader process of building genuinely gender-aware approaches in humanitarian assistance:

> You see the pictures of the women and children and they're crying and they're pathetic and sad and everything else, but they're also alive, it was the men who were killed.
>
> —UNICEF Official, October 2002

> Conscription's often an issue. Officially refugees were not allowed to cross the Afghani border into Pakistan last year, only "vulnerable" groups, only women and children. But in fact the men were perhaps the most vulnerable and the women themselves were most concerned about the men who had the risk of being conscripted to the Taliban at this time.
>
> —UNHCR Official, Evaluation and Policy Unit, August 2002

> I think it's a lot to do with communication. If you look at a lot of media reports, press releases talk about "including women and children" . . . I think we shouldn't do that. Because it gives the message that maybe people are less worthy of attention because they don't happen to be a woman or a child.
>
> —ICRC Representative, Women and War Division, August 2002

But these interviewees seemed either ambivalent about the possibilities of change, given institutional obstacles, or frustrated by the fact that their efforts at frame transformation had seemed fruitless.

> I think there's an obsession within the whole so-called humanitarian world about women and children . . . . I have argued before in UNHCR and I often continue to argue that we rewrite our policy papers to change this . . . but it has been very much in vogue to talk about women, children and the elderly when you talk about vulnerable groups.
>
> —UNHCR Official, August 2002

---

[53] The study does, however, take note that men, as well as women, may be subject to sexual violence (UNSG, 2002:16); and while it is not explicit about the effects of armed violence on men, it does mention men and boys as members of the civilian population (p. 14).

> I think it's so easy to continue with that discourse on vulnerable and inno-
> cent—not for me but for many actors, UNICEF for example, it's important to get
> money, it's a discourse a lot of donors use—hammering UNHCR all the time
> about women and children, and I'm not always sure if they actually know what
> they're talking about, but it's easy to keep focusing on it.
> —UNHCR Official, Evaluation and Policy Unit, August 2002

Nonetheless, there are some tentative signs of change. While "men" as a category is neither listed among the civilian population in the PoC's glossary of terms nor designated a vulnerable group, several recent documents have identified these factors as a problem. The joint IASC/UNICEF publication *Growing the Sheltering Tree* states (2002:175):

> When humanitarians speak of vulnerable groups, they are often referring to
> women and children ... it is important, however, to consider other groups who
> may not immediately come to mind. Some groups may not be vulnerable in most
> situations but are extremely vulnerable in others ... male civilians of draft age
> have been much more likely to be detained, tortured, summarily executed, or
> "disappeared" than persons in other groups ....

Similarly, the proceedings of the November 2002 Wilton Park conference on PoC include a section on "gender" as a specific protection issue, making explicit mention of civilian men's risks of conscription, armed attack, and sexual torture and insisting that "any agenda of protection needs to recognize these particular vulner-abilities." Such passages are currently the exceptions that prove the rule, but they also demonstrate that despite institutional obstacles, some agenda space exists in which to raise these issues, and thus alter the dominant discourse.[54]

It remains to be seen, however, whether and how the growing recognition of civilian men's vulnerability as a protection issue will be mainstreamed into the diplomatic discourse now used to discuss the protection of civilians in international institutions. As an official of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee wondered, "If you want to challenge the idea that all women and children are vulnerable and all men are combatants: how would you package that idea and get it to journalists, public opinion, donor opinion?" One answer could be a more nuanced approach taken in some recent documents, such as the Secretary-General's Study on Women, Peace and Security, which, while focusing on women, is careful to make mention of men as members of the civilian population (p. 14); of women's experience of war as *distinct* but not necessarily *worse* (p. 4) and, which in places, notes that men as well as women can be victims of gender-based abuse, such as sexual torture (p. 16). How-ever, it seems likely that to address civilian men in their own right would ultimately require a sex-inclusive emphasis on "gender" rather than "women," or pos-sibly even gender-analytic studies on "men and armed conflict" specifically. The data here suggest that in the current institutional climate, such initiatives appear unlikely.

Efforts such as these would require a willingness to relinquish the advantages of using gender essentialisms to maintain access to belligerents, to enlist the global media in publicizing complex emergencies, and to appeal for aid and support from donors and conscience constituents. The humanitarian community is driven by the demands of donor agencies within Western governments who are often beholden to ill-informed constituencies themselves reliant on essentialist discourses to make sense of their world (Ignatieff, 1998; Aguire, 2001). Despite calls from within the

---

[54] "Trigger events" such as the Abu Ghraib scandal, in which sexual abuse of male prisoners was highlighted in the media and by the humanitarian community, might also create agenda space to deal with gender-based violence against men. These events post-dated the research on which this article is based, and this hypothesis should be investigated in future analyses.

network for higher standards of accuracy (Caversazio, 2001), in a context where the media and donor governments favor attention to certain groups or programs, and in which protection organizations are resource hungry, there is little incentive to alter public discourse if it means foregoing money for programs.[55]

Moreover, decisive frame transformation would require some consensus within and between the protection community and the women's network on the development of a common language that addresses civilian men's protection needs without undermining the emergent awareness of the way that women are affected by armed conflict. So far there is little evidence of such consensus, even within specific organizations. For example, while the ICRC's Women and War Project is working hard to change the idea that women are always vulnerable and men are not, the ICRC's Protection Division was developing in 2002 a distinction between the notion of "vulnerability" and "risk" designed primarily to create a means of discussing civilian men's and boys' needs in conflict situations *without* disrupting the gendered assumption that men are inherently "invulnerable."[56] Both types of efforts suggest a careful negotiation between the perceived need for frame transformation and a keen understanding of the strategic environment. Future research should track ways in which such frame transformation efforts affect official discourse on civilian protection, and whether this translates into positive programmatic effects regarding both protection of civilians and ongoing efforts to mainstream gender awareness in humanitarian assistance.

Conclusion

The imagery through which the protection of civilians has manifested on the U.N. agenda remains profoundly gendered, despite the fact that many civilian protection advocates recognize the misleading and potentially counter-productive aspects of this imagery, and despite a few recent attempts to highlight the gender-based vulnerabilities of draft-age male civilians. Given pre-existing cultural assumptions about the innocence and vulnerability of women and/with children, and the continued value of invoking such ideas in order to successfully frame an issue in international society, the use of this language and imagery arguably makes strategic sense. As Keck and Sikkink have written, "Campaigns against practices involving bodily harm to populations perceived as vulnerable or innocent are most likely to be effective transnationally" (1999:27). When vulnerable people (like unarmed draft-age males) are not *perceived* as such, there is a strategic disincentive to expend resources advocating on their behalf, however invalid those perceptions.

But at what point does this strategic logic mitigate against the very norms of impartiality and non-discrimination that are at the core of the human rights regime? The theoretical question for scholars interested in norm promotion, as well as for transnational advocates themselves, is whether short-term agenda-setting successes are laudable if they come at the price of weakening or distorting the norm whose violation is made "an issue." According to Michael Ignatieff, "Nothing is intrinsically wrong about this resort to fictions and simplifications. Dramatization only becomes problematic when the actors in our moral dramas stop playing the roles on which our identification with them depends" (p. 292). When certain women block relief convoys (Minear, Clark, Cohen, Gallagher, Guest, and Weiss, 1994), butcher one anothers' children (African Rights, 1995) or engage in suicide bombings (Lindsey, 2001), the use of gender essentialisms to denote "innocence" risks rendering the entire schema of non-combatancy problematic (Mukta, 2000). Similarly, when certain adult men refuse to take up arms, relying on the international community to protect them as civilians, the use of gender essentialisms to

---

[55] Personal interview, UNHCR Donor Relations Officer, August 2002, Geneva.
[56] Personal interview, ICRC Protection Officer, May 2002.

inform the cognitive scripts actors use to understand reality can produce sub-optimal outcomes in protection.

The social constructivist literature has shown that powerful new ideas emerge and become salient primarily when they can be *and are* decisively linked to pre-existing ideational frames (Klotz, 1996:31; Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; Barnett, 1999). Their chances of success can be affected by counter-frames with which they compete in a highly contested normative context (Meyer, 1995; McCarthy, 1996). As scholars of norm change have emphasized, pre-existing frames exert an influence on norm entrepreneurs seeking to map new discourses upon old (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998). Once ideas are configured institutionally in particular ways, they "can have an impact even when no one genuinely believes in them as principled or causal statements" (Goldstein and Keohane, 1993:20).

This analysis demonstrates that those interested in promoting a particular agenda may be tempted to engage in frame distortion to that end, even if the distortion itself undermines the moral logic of the cause. Moreover, those attempting to correct these "misframings" are also influenced by their presence and salience. Such dynamics raise important questions about the relationship between agenda-setting strategies and the implementation of norms in world affairs. The IR literature on advocacy networks needs to pay closer attention to whether the frames adopted in the norm-building process are actually conducive to the effectiveness of a given norm once established, and to how tradeoffs between these two dimensions of norm-promotion are negotiated by players within advocacy communities.

This article has not systematically addressed the effects of gender essentialisms on civilian protection operations themselves. It remains important to explore that potential relationship, since as van der Veen (2002:7) emphasizes, frames "provide a context in which more specific policy questions can be interpreted." Many network actors apparently believe a clear distinction can be drawn between the strategic use of essentialisms to advocate for civilians and the assumptions that guide protection initiatives in practice. They subscribe to the prescription Braumann outlined in 1993 in his essay "When Suffering Makes a Good Story." Braumann (1993:158) emphasized a principled balance between the need to "exploit in the best interests of the victim the potential offered by the popular media" and "demonstrate that what [aid organizations] are doing is founded on principles more solidly based, and hence more demanding, than the appeals to emotions which are so tempting to exploit." Network actors have deliberately distorted their frames for strategic reasons, but they believe the benefits in international attention and resource mobilization outweigh the distortion and do not adversely affect operations. They believe they have struck that balance: "We describe in all our objectives particular attention given to women and children," said an ICRC official. "But that doesn't mean we do not give attention to civilian men on the ground, it is whether we emphasize them or not."

However, while more systematic research to resolve this question is warranted, available data does not support this optimistic view. A key point made at the ICRC's recent workshops on "Strengthening Protection in War" is that the organizations' choices regarding the categories of people assisted will be influenced by the media and donors' proclivities, with a number of side effects, including the possibility that some victims will "fall through the cracks" (Caversazio, 2001:66). Despite mention of civilian men's vulnerabilities in some recent documents, specific programs to address these problems are still lacking.[57] The ICRC and the UN Security Council have collected information on "Women and War" and on "Women, Peace and Security" but not, for example, on "Men, Masculinities and Armed Conflict." Despite it being well known that belligerents perceive adult men as combatants, ICRC

---

[57] IASC (2002:175).

delegates disseminating humanitarian law "do not put gender first in our dialogues with the authorities."[58] An official at the U.S. Office for Disaster Assistance was unaware of a single assistance program targeting adult civilian men and boys as such.[59]

Ideas are not *simply* symbolic tools: once repeatedly invoked they become part of the way organizations think, and can influence actor practices despite their own best intentions (Finnemore and Barnett, 1999). Hamilton (1999) has evaluated the way in which assumptions about the innocence of "women and children" (many of whom were perpetrators) affected UNHCR's response to the militarization of refugee camps after the Rwandan genocide, possibly leading to the Kibeho massacre. Carpenter (2003) has demonstrated that gendered assumptions of vulnerability affected the way in which UNHCR bargained in the former Yugoslavia, effectively overlooking the extreme vulnerability of civilian men and boys to massacre and leaving them behind in besieged enclaves such as Srebrenica. Claude Bruderlein (2001) has considered the ways in which gendered assumptions of innocence generate enabling effects on belligerents, skillful at tailoring their atrocities to the particular proclivities of powerful actors in global civil society. Given these examples, it may behoove civilian protection advocates to more systematically evaluate the tradeoffs inherent in their framing strategies. Similarly, scholars studying the evolution and effects of norms must pay closer attention to the warping effects of implicit norm schemas—such as gender—on the international phenomena in which they are interested.

References

Aafjes, A., and A. T. Goldstein (1998) *Gender Violence: The Hidden War Crime*. Washington, DC: Women, Law and Development International.

African Rights (1995) *Rwanda—Not So Innocent: When Women Become Killers*. London: African Rights.

Aguire, M. (2001) "The Media and the Humanitarian Spectacle." In *Reflections of Humanitarian Action: Principles, Ethics and Contradictions*, edited by the Humanitarian Studies Unit, pp. 157–176. London: Pluto Press.

Anderson, M., A. Howarth, and C. Overholt (1992) *A Framework for People-Oriented Planning in Refugee Situations Taking Account of Women, Men and Children*. Geneva: UNHCR.

Aronson, J. (2001) "The Communications and Internet Revolution." In *The Globalization of World Politics*, 2nd ed., edited by J. Baylis and S. Smith, pp. 540–558. NY: Oxford University Press.

Barnett, M. (1999) Culture, Strategy and Foreign Policy Change: Israel's Road to Oslo. *European Journal of International Relations* **5**(1):5–36.

Barnett, M. (2002) *Eyewitness to a Genocide: The United Nations and Rwanda*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Barstow, A. (2000) "Introduction." In *War's Dirty Secret: Rape, Prostitution and Other Crimes Against Women*, edited by A. Barstow, pp. 1–10. Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press.

Beer, F. (1981) *Peace Against War: The Ecology of International Violence*. San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Company.

Beigbeder, Y. (2002) *New Challenges for UNICEF: Children, Women and Human Rights*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Benjamin, J., and K. Fancy (1998) *The Gender Dimensions of Internal Displacement: Concept Paper and Annotated Bibliography*. NY: Women's Commission on Refugee Women and Children.

Bennett, O., J. Bexley, and K. Warnock, eds. (1995) *Arms to Fight, Arms to Protect: Women Speak Out About Conflict*. London: Panos.

Benthall, J. (1993) *Disasters, Relief and the Media*. London: I.B. Tauris and Co.

Bouchet-Saulnier, F. (2002) *The Practical Guide to Humanitarian Law*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.

Braumann, R. (1993) "When Suffering Makes a Good Story." In *Life, Death and Aid: The Medicines Sans Frontieres Report on World Crisis Intervention*, edited by J. Francois, pp. 149–148. London: Routledge.

Bruderlein, C. (2001) "The End of Innocence: Humanitarian Protection in the 21st Century." In *Civilians In War*, edited by Simon Chesterman, pp. 221–236. Boulder: Lynne Reinner.

---

[58] Personal interview, ICRC Protection Officer, May 2002.
[59] Personal interview, Washington, DC, July 2002.

BUCHANAN, D. (2002) Gendercide and Human Rights. *Journal of Genocide Research* **4**(1):95–108.

BUNCH, C. (1990) Women's Rights as Human Rights: Towards a Re-Vision of Human Rights. *Human Rights Quarterly* **12**(4):486–500.

BUNCH, C., AND N. REILLY (1994) *Demanding Accountability: The Global Campaign and Vienna Tribunal for Women's Human Rights*. Rutgers, NJ: Center for Women's Global Leadership.

BURG, S., AND P. S. SHOUP (1999) *The War in Bosnia-Herzegovina*. NY: M.E. Sharpe.

CARPENTER, C. (2000) Surfacing Children: Limitations of Genocidal Rape Discourse. *Human Rights Quarterly* **22**(2):428–477.

CARPENTER, C. (2003) "Women and Children First": Gender, Norms and Humanitarian Evacuation in the Balkans 1991–1995. *International Organization* **57**(4):661–694.

CARPENTER, C. (2004) "Recognizing Gender-Based Violence Against Men and Boys in Conflict Situations." Paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Conference, Montreal, Quebec.

CARR, C. (2002) *The Lessons of Terror: A History of Warfare Against Civilians*. NY: Random House.

CAVERSAZIO, S. G. (2001) *Strengthening Protection in War: A Search for Professional Standards*. Geneva: ICRC.

CHANT, S., AND M. GUTMANN (2001) *Mainstreaming Men into Gender and Development: Debates, Reflections and Experiences*. London: OXFAM.

CHARLESWORTH, H., C. CHINKIN, AND S. WRIGHT (1996) "Feminist Approaches to International Law." In *International Rules: Approaches from International Law and Relations*, edited by R. Beck, A. Arend, and R. D. Vander Lugt, pp. 253–285. NY: Oxford University Press.

CHECKEL, J. (1998) The Constructivist Turn in IR Theory. *World Politics* **50**(2):324–348.

CHESTERMAN, S. (2001) "Introduction." In *Civilians in War*, edited by S. Chesterman, pp. 1–8. Boulder: Lynne Reinner.

COCKBURN, C., AND D. ZARKOV, eds. (2002) *The Post-War Moment: Militaries, Masculinities and International Peacekeeping*. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

COHEN, S. (2001) *States of Denial: Knowing About Atrocities and Suffering*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

COHEN, R., AND D. FRANCIS (1998) *Masses in Flight: The Global Crisis of Internal Displacement*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

COHN, C., S. GIBBINGS, AND H. KINSELLA (2004) Women, Peace and Security: Resolution 1325. *International Journal of Feminist Politics* **6**(1):130–140.

CRISP, J. (2000) "Who Has Counted the Refugees?" In *Humanitarian Action: Social Science Connections*, edited by S. Lubkemann, L. Minear and T. Weiss. Providence, RI: Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University.

CUTTS, M. (1999) The Humanitarian Operation in Bosnia, 1992–1995: Dilemmas of Negotiating Humanitarian Access. *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*. Available from ⟨http://www.jha.ac/articles/u008.pdf⟩. Accessed October 2002.

DARST, R. (2002) "The Samaritan's Dilemma in International Environmental Politics." Paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, Portland, Oregon.

DEMARS, W. (1997) "Contending Neutralities: Humanitarian Organizations and War in the Horn of Africa." In *Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics*, edited by J. Smith, C. Chatfield and R. Pagnucco, pp. 101–122. New York: Syracuse University Press.

DEUTZ, ANDREW (1993) Gender and International Human Rights. *Fletcher Forum* **17**(2):33–52.

EL-BUSHRA, J. (2000) "Transforming Conflict: Some Thoughts on a Gendered Understanding of Conflict Processes." In *States of Conflict: Gender, Violence and Resistance*, edited by S. Jacobs, R. Jacobson, and J. Marchbank, pp. 66–86. London: Zed Books.

ENLOE, C. (1999) "All the Men Are in the Militias, All the Women Are Victims: The Politics of Masculinity and Femininity in Nationalist Wars." In *The Women and War Reader*, edited by L. A. Lorentzen and J. Turpin, pp. 50–62. New York: New York University Press.

FINNEMORE, M. (1996) *National Interests in International Society*. New York: Cornell University Press.

FINNEMORE, M., AND M. BARNETT (1999) The Politics, Power and Pathologies of International Organizations. *International Organization* **53**(4):699–732.

FINNEMORE, M., AND K. SIKKINK (1998) International Norm Dynamics and Political Change. *International Organization* **52**(4):887–918.

FLORINI, A., eds. (2000) *The Third Force: The Rise of Transnational Civil Society*. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

FROHARDT, M., D. PAUL, AND L. MINEAR (1999) *Protecting Human Rights: The Challenge to Humanitarian Organizations*. Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, Occasional Paper #35. Providence, RI: Brown University.

GARDAM, J., AND M. JERVIS (2001) *Women, Armed Conflict and International Law*. The Hague: Kluwer Law International.

Garton, L., C. Haythornwaite, and B. Wellman (1997) Studying Online Social Networks. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication* **3**(1). Available online at ⟨http://www.ascusc.org/jcmc/vol3/issue1/garton.html⟩.

Ghobarah, H., P. Huth, and B. Russett (2003) Civil Wars Kill and Maim People—Long After the Shooting Stops. *American Political Science Review* **97**(2):189–202.

Goldberg, E., and D. Hubert (2001) "Case Study: The Security Council and the Protection of Civilians." In *Human Security and the New Diplomacy*, edited by R. McRae and D. Hubert, pp. 223–230. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Goldstein, J. (2001) *War and Gender.* Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Goldstein, J., and R. Keohane (1993) "Ideas and Foreign Policy: An Analytical Framework." In *Ideas in Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions and Political Change*, edited by J. Goldstein and R. Keohane, pp. 3–30. New York: Cornell University Press.

Goodwin-Gill, G., and I. Cohn (1994) *Child Soldiers: A Study on Behalf of the Henry Dunant Institute.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Goonsekere, S. (1992) *Women's Rights and Children's Rights: The U.N. Conventions as Compatible and Complementary International Treaties.* Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Centre.

Grossman, D. (1995) *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society.* Boston: Back Bay Books.

Guidry, J., M. Kennedy, and M. Zald, eds. (2000) *Globalizations and Social Movements: Culture, Power and the Transnational Sphere.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Haas, P. (1992) Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination. *International Organization* **46**(1):1–36.

Hamilton, H. (1999) Refugee Women, UNHCR and the Great Lakes Crisis. Available online at ⟨http://www.pressroom.com/∼hbhamilton/srp.html⟩. Accessed December 10, 2002.

Hammock, J., and J. Charny (1996) "Emergency Response as Morality Play: The Media, the Relief Agencies, and the Need for Capacity Building." In *From Massacres to Genocide: The Media, Public Policy and Humanitarian Crises.* Washington: Brookings Institution Press.

Harff, B. (1987) Empathy for Victims of Massive Human Rights Violations and Support for Government Intervention: A Comparative Study of American and Australian Attitudes. *Political Psychology* **8**(1):1–19.

Harroff-Tavel, M. (1998) Promoting Norms to Limit Violence in Crisis Situations: Challenges, Strategies and Alliances. *International Review of the Red Cross* **332**:5–20.

Hartigan, R. (1983) *The Forgotten Victim: A History of the Civilian.* NY: Transaction Publishers.

Helms, E. (2003) Women as Agents of Ethnic Reconciliation? Women's NGOs and International Intervention in Postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Women's Studies International Forum* **26**(1):15–33.

Hughes, L. (2000) Can International Law Protect Child Soldiers? *Peace Review* **12**(3):399–406.

Human Rights Watch (1996) *Shattered Lives: Sexual Violence During the Rwandan Genocide and its Aftermath.* New York: Human Rights Watch.

Ignatieff, M. (1998) "The Stories We Tell: Television and Humanitarian Aid." In *Hard Choices: Moral Dilemmas in Humanitarian Intervention*, edited by Jonathan Moore, pp. 287–302. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

Indra, D. (1998) "Not a 'Room of One's Own': Engendering Forced Migration Knowledge and Practice." In *Engendering Forced Migration*, edited by D. Indra, pp. 1–23. New York: Berghahn Books.

Inter-Agency Standing Committtee (IASC). (1999) "Policy Statement for the Integration of a Gender Perspective in Humanitarian Assistance." Included in the IASC SWG *Gender and Humanitarian Assistance Resource Kit*, available on CD-ROM from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

IASC (2002) *Growing the Sheltering Tree: Protecting Rights Through Humanitarian Action.* New York: UNICEF/IASC.

International Committee of the Red Cross (1977) *Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949.* Geneva: ICRC.

International Committee of the Red Cross (1999a) *The People on War Report.* Geneva: ICRC.

International Committee of the Red Cross (1999b) *Arms Availability and the Situation of Civilians in Armed Conflict.* Geneva: ICRC.

Joachim, J. (1998) "Shaping the Human Rights Agenda: The Case of Violence Against Women." In *Gender Politics in Global Governance*, edited by M. Meyer and E. Prugl, pp. 142–160. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Joachim, J. (2003) Framing Issues and Seizing Opportunities: The U.N, NGOs and Women's Rights. *International Studies Quarterly* **47**(2):247–274.

Johnson, J. T. (1981) *Just War Tradition and the Restraint of War.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

JONES, A. (2000) Gendercide and Genocide. *Journal of Genocide Studies* **2**(2):185–212.

JONES, A. (2002) Genocide and Humanitarian Intervention: Incorporating the Gender Variable. *Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, available online at ⟨http://www.jha.ac/articles/a080.htm⟩. Accessed 24 June 2003.

JONES, B., AND C. CATER (2001) "From Chaos to Coherence? Toward a Regime for Protecting Civilians in War." In *Civilians in War*, edited by S. Chesterman, pp. 237–262. Boulder: Lynne Reinner.

JUNOD, M. (1951) *Warrior Without Weapons*. London: Cape.

KECK, M., AND K. SIKKINK (1998) *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

KHAGRAM, S., J. RIKER, AND K. SIKKINK, eds. (2002) *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks and Norms*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

KIDRON, MICHAEL, AND DAN SMITH (1991) *The New State of War and Peace Atlas*. New York: Grafton Books.

KINSELLA, H. (2002) "Women, Peace and Security: Securing Gender at the United Nations." Paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Boston, MA.

KINSELLA, H. (2005) "Securing the Civilian: Sex and Gender in the Laws of War." In *Power and Global Governance*, edited by M. Barnett and R. Duvall. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

KLOTZ, A. (1996) *Norms in International Relations: The Struggle Against Apartheid*. New York: Cornell University Press.

LAFFEY, M., AND J. WELDES (1997) Beyond Belief: Ideas and Symbolic Technologies in the Study of International Relations. *European Journal of International Relations* **3**(2):193–237.

LEGRO, J. (1997) Which Norms Matter? Revisiting the "Failure" of Institutionalism. *International Organization* **51**(1):31–63.

LENTIN, R., ed. (1997) "Introduction: Engendering Genocides." In *Gender and Catastrophe*, pp. 2–17. London: Zed Books.

LINDSEY, C. (2001) *Women Facing War*. Geneva: ICRC.

MARCH, C., I. SMYTH, AND M. MUKHPADHYAY (1999) *A Guide to Gender-Analysis Frameworks*. London: OXFAM.

MAZURANA, D., AND S. MCKAY (2003) "Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique: Policy and Program Recommendations." Unpublished Manuscript, University of Wyoming and University of Montana.

MCADAM, D., J. MCCARTHY, AND M. ZALD (1996) *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framings*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

MCASKIE, C. (2000) "Gender, Humanitarian Assistance and Conflict Resolution." ⟨Available online at http:// www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/Mcaskie.htm⟩. Accessed May 22, 2003.

MCCARTHY, J. (1996) "Constraints and Opportunities in Adopting, Adopting and Inventing." In *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, edited by D. McAdam, J. McCarthy, and M. Zald, pp. 141–151. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

MCKEOGH, C. (2002) *Innocent Civilians: The Morality of Killing in War*. New York: Palgrave.

MCRAE, R. (2001) "Human Security in a Globalized World." In *Human Security and the New Diplomacy*, edited by R. McRae and D. Hubert, pp. 14–27. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

MEINTJES, S., A. PILLAY, AND M. TURSHEN (2001) *The Aftermath: Women in Post-Conflict Transformation*. London: Zed Books.

MERTUS, J. (2000) *War's Offensive on Women: Humanitarian Action in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan*. San Francisco: Kumarian Press.

MERTUS, JULIE (2001) Legitimizing the Use of Force in Kosovo. *In Ethics and International Affairs* **15**(1):133–150.

MEYER, D. (1995) Framing National Security: Elite Public Discourse on Nuclear Weapons During the Cold War. *Political Communication* **12**:173–192.

MINEAR, L. (2001) *The Humanitarian Enterprise: Dilemmas and Discoveries*. San Francisco: Kumarian Press.

MINEAR, L., J. CLARK, R. COHEN, D. GALLAGHER, I. GUEST, AND T. WEISS (1994) *Humanitarian Action in the Former Yugoslavia: The U.N.'s Role 1991–1993*. Providence: Thomas Watson Institute for International Studies.

MOELLER, S. (1998) *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sell Famine, Disease, War and Death*. NY: Routledge.

MORRIS, P. (1998) *Weaving Gender in Disaster and Refugee Assistance*. Report of the February 12, 1998 Seminar on Gender Integration in Disaster and Refugee Assistance. Washington, DC: InterAction.

Mukta, P. (2000) "Gender, Community, Nation: The Myth of Innocence." In *States of Conflict: Gender, Violence and Resistance*, edited by S. Jacobs, R. Jacobson, and J. Marchbank, pp. 163–178. London: Zed Books.

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). (2000a) "Child Rights are Women's Rights, Says UNICEF Afghanistan." Cited on Assistance Afghanistan Site ⟨http://www.pcpafg.org/news/Afghan_News/Year2000/2000_12_11/⟩. Accessed October 24, 2003.

OCHA (2000b) *Women and War*. New York: Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. Copy on file with the author.

OCHA (2001) *Reaching the Vulnerable*. Geneva: OCHA. Copy on file with the author.

OCHA (2002) "Report on OCHA/ISS Humanitarian Policy Workshop: The Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict–Humanitarian Challenges in Southern Africa." Available online at ⟨http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/civilians/Workshops/index.htm⟩. Accessed October 29, 2003.

OCHA (2003) *Glossary of Terms in Relation to the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*. Available online at ⟨http://ochaonline.un.org/DocView.asp?DocID=572⟩. Accessed June 15, 2004.

OCHA Online (2004a) *The Nature of War*. Available online at ⟨http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?ParentID=4381&MenuID=4386&Page=522⟩. Accessed June 15, 2004.

OCHA Online (2004b) *Homepage*. Available at ⟨http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?Site=civilians&Lang=en⟩. Accessed June 15, 2004.

OCHA Online (2004c) *Women and War*. Availble at ⟨http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?ParentID=4382&MenuID=4392&Page=529. Accessed June 15, 2004.

OCHA Online (2004d) *Armed Groups*. At ⟨http://ochaonline.un.org/webpage.asp?ParentID=4383&MenuID=4396&Page=535⟩. Accessed June 5, 2004.

Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (1994) *USAID Field Operations Guide for Disaster Assessment and Response*. Washington, DC: OFDA.

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2000) *Mid-Term Review of the 2000 UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals*. Available from author.

Palmer-Fernandez, G. (1998) "The Targeting of Civilian Populations in War." In *Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics*, Vol. 1. pp. 509–525. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Paul, D. (1999) *Protection in Practice: Field-Level Strategies for Protecting Civilians from Deliberate Harm*. London: Overseas Development Institute.

Payne, R. (2001) Persuasion, Frames and Norm Construction. *European Journal of International Relations* **7**(1):37–61.

Penn, M., and R. Nardos (2003) *Overcoming Violence Against Women and Girls: The International Campaign to Eradicate a Worldwide Problem*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

Price, R. (1998) Reversing the Gun Sights: Transnational Civil Society Targets Land Mines. *International Organization* **52**(3):613–644.

Price, R. (2003) Transnational Civil Society and Advocacy in World Politics. *World Politics* **55**:579–606.

Rehn, E., and E. J. Sirleaf (2002) *Women, War and Peace: The Independent Experts' Assessment of the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peace-Building*. New York: UNIFEM.

ReliefWeb (2003) "US Congress Should put Women and Children First in Setting Priorities for Humanitarian Assistance in War Zones." Available online at ⟨http://www.reliefweb.int/w/Rwb.nsf/0/0914c1383bb5e11d85256dc00077fadc?OpenDocument⟩. Accessed October 25, 2003.

Risse, T. (2000) Let's Argue! Communicative Action in World Politics. *International Organization* **54**:1–39.

Risse, T., S. Ropp, and K. Sikkinik, eds. (1999) *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

Roberts, A. (2001) "Humanitarian Issues and Agencies as Triggers for International Military Action." In *Civilians in War*, edited by Simon Chesterman, pp. 177–196. Boulder: Lynne Reinner.

Rosenblatt, L. (1996) "The Media and the Refugee." In *From Massacres to Genocide*, edited by Robert Rotberg and Thomas Weiss, pp. 136–148. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Rummell, R. J. (1994) *Death by Government*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Sandvik-Nylund, M. (1998) *Caught in Conflicts: Civilian Victims, Humanitarian Assistance and International Law*. Abo: Institute for Human Rights.

Save the Children (2002) *State of the World's Mothers: Mothers and Children in War and Conflict*. Westport, CT: Save the Children.

Sharatt, S. (1999) "Introduction." In *Assault on the Soul*, edited by S. Sharatt and E. Kaschak, pp. 1–6. New York: Haworth Press.

Shiras, P. (1996) "Big Problems, Small Print: A Guide to the Complexity of Humanitarian Emergencies and the Media." In *From Massacres to Genocide*, edited by R. Rotberg and T. Weiss, pp. 93–114. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

SHOEMAKER, JOLYNN. (2001) Women and Wars Within States: Internal Conflict, Women's Rights and International Security. *Civil Wars* **4**(3):1–34.

SIKKINK, K. (2002) "Restructuring World Politics: The Limits and Asymmetries of Soft Power." In *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks, and Norms*, edited by S. Khagram, J. Riker, and K. Sikkink, pp. 301–318. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minneapolis Press.

SIVARD, R. (1991) *World Military and Social Expenditures 1991*, 14th ed. Washington: World Priorities.

SKJELSBAEK, I., AND D. SMITH (2001) "Introduction." In *Gender, Peace and Conflict*, edited by I. Skjelsbaek and D. Smith, pp. 1–13. London: Sage.

SMALL, M., AND D. SINGER (1982) *Resort to Arms: International and Civil War, 1816–1980*. Beverly Hills: Sage.

SMITH, D. (1994) *War, Peace and Third World Development*. Oslo: International Peace Research Institute.

SMITH, D. (1997) *The State of War and Peace Atlas*. Oslo: International Peace Research Institute.

SMITH, D. (2001) "The Problem of Essentialism." In *Gender, Peace and Conflict*, edited by I. Skjelsbaek and D. Smith, pp. 32–46. London: Sage.

SMITH, J., C. CHATFIELD, AND R. PAGNUCCO, eds. (1997) *Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics: Solidarity Beyond the State*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

SMITH, M., AND P. KOLLOCK (1998) *Communities in Cyberspace*. New York: Routledge.

SNOW, D., AND R. BENFORD (1992) "Master Frames and Cycles of Protest." In *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, edited by A. Morris and C. Mueller, pp. 133–155. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

SNOW, D., B. ROCHFORD JR., S. WORDEN, AND R. BENFORD (1986) Frame Alignment Processes, Micro-mobilization and Movement Participation. *American Sociological Review* **51**(4):464–481.

STANLEY, P. (1999) Reporting of Mass Rape in the Balkans: Plus Ca Change, Plus C'est Meme Chose? *Civil Wars* **2**(2):74–110.

STEINSTRA, D. (1994) *Women's Movements and International Organizations*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

SWIDLER, A. (1986) Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies. *American Sociological Review* **51**(2): 273–286.

TARROW, S. (1998) "States and Opportunities: The Political Structuring of Social Movements." In *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, edited by D. McAdam, J. McCarthy, and M. Zald, pp. 41–61. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

THOMAS, W. (2001) *The Ethics of Destruction: Norms and Force in International Relations*. New York: Cornell University Press.

THOMPSON, K. B. (2002) "Women's Rights are Human Rights." In *Restructuring World Politics*, edited by S. Khagram, J. Riker, and K. Sikkink, pp. 96–123. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

TICKNER, J. A. (2001) *Gendering World Politics*. NY: Columbia University Press.

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S EMERGENCY FUND (UNICEF). (1999) *Human Rights for Children and Women: How UNICEF Helps Make Them a Reality*. New York: UNICEF.

UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION (USDPI) (2000) Statement by Angea King, Special Advisor on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women at the DPI/NGO Briefing on Women: Violence, Peace and Security. November 9. Available online at ⟨http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/king.html⟩. Accessed January 31, 2004.

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR). (2000a) *Statistics and Registration: A Progress Report*. Geneva: UNHCR.

(UNHCR). (2000b) *State of the World's Refugees*. Geneva: UNHCR.

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL (UNSG). (2002) *Report of the Secretary General to the Security Council on Women, Peace and Security*. New York: United Nations.

UNITED STATES COMMITTEE FOR REFUGEES (USCR). (2000) "More Male Refugees Than Previously Thought." ⟨Available online at http://www.refugees.org/world/articles/males_rr00_2.htm⟩. Accessed September 26, 2003.

VAN BUEREN, G. (1995) *The International Law on the Rights of the Child*. Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers.

VAN DER VEEN, M. (2002) "National Identity and the Origins of Development Assistance." Paper presented to the Annual Conference of the American Political Science Association, Boston, MA.

WARD, J. (2002) *If Not Now, When? Addressing Gender-based Violence in Refugee, Internally Displaced and Post-Conflict Settings*. New York: Reproductive Health for Refugees Consortium.

WOMEN'S COMMISSION FOR REFUGEE WOMEN AND CHILDREN (WCRWC) (2003) "Bill to Provide Vital Protection to Women and Children in Armed Conflict." Available online at ⟨http://www.womenscommission.org/newsroom/press_releases/0506.html⟩. Accessed January 7, 2004.

ZARKOV, D. (2002) "Srebrenica Trauma: Masculinity, Military and National Self-Image in Dutch Daily Newspapers." In *The Postwar Moment*, edited by C. Cockburn and D. Zarkov, pp. 183–203. London: Zed Books.