

VISIBILITY AND VULNERABILITY: DECONSTRUCTING
REPRESENTATIONS OF RAPE IN THE CONTEXT OF
WAR IN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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Title: Visibility and Vulnerability: Deconstructing Representations of Rape in the Context of War in Democratic Republic of the Congo

My work explores protracted conflict in DR Congo representationally, considering ways in which conflict is thematized in Western media around sexual violence. I use content and text mining to think through the role of *framing* in media, and conduct discourse analysis tracing how rape in the context of war has become instrumentalized by Western media to make sense of and justify interventions in the conflict in DR Congo. Specifically I examine forty-two articles published in diverse sources containing the phrase "rape capital of the world" to uncover links between violence, gender, and power. This thesis is generally situated within a postmodern feminist critique of overemphasis on rape and sexual violence as a universal narrative about women's lives. My policy recommendation is stop implementing laws singling out rape in the context of war as a unique assault, because they enforce female vulnerability and injurability by representing women as victims/pre-victims of SGBV.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

“The same function which the image of God performs, the same tendency to permanent existence, may be ascribed to the uttered sounds of language” ~Cassirer

Forward:

As a woman I feel an interest and stake in how my gender is being represented. As a white, western woman trying to discuss the problems of speaking for “others” in awareness raising representations I could not, in good conscience, ignore the obvious contradiction of writing a paper about Congolese women that repeated the object of my critique. Beyond these, perhaps obvious, pitfalls as an academic, I daily encounter and participate in conversations about well-intentioned scholars and researchers who go into the field with the aim of better understanding and improving upon the lives of individuals in the Global South, and end up essentializing, infantilizing and disempowering people as knowers and experts in their own lives. This work is a reflection of my desire to reconcile my interest in the lives of Congolese women without engaging in their silencing. I hope to do this through an investigation that begins with my subject position to elucidate how “othering” narratives are created and inscribe meaning in the West, and the effects this has on policy implemented in DR Congo. In addition, I want to continue a conversation about the social construction of gender and the spaces proscribed for women within this narrative that are limited and anti-agential. It is certainly a partial and imperfect attempt. I hope my work contributes to elaborating these tensions and demonstrates a willingness to engage a more nuanced understanding of the stories, like gender, we tell ourselves. Gender is not neutral, but does work that impacts self-perception, our ability to fully perceive “others”, and becomes economic, political, and social policy that moves through the social imaginary shaping material reality.

Currently the Democratic Republic of the Congo is struggling to overcome a history of violence and wars that have claimed the lives of an estimated 6 million people. The 1994 genocide in Rwanda was the catalyst for what is often referred to as Africa's Great War. One of the tactics employed by soldiers and rebel groups on all sides of the conflict was systematic rape. After the second Congo war ended the conflict did not, and increasingly civilians in addition to remaining armed groups continued committing rape leading the DRC to be given the macabre distinctions "rape capital of the world" and "the worst place on Earth to be a woman" most notably by Margot Wallstrom, the United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Widespread and ongoing use of sexual violence and rape in the DR Congo was instrumental in the United Nations (UN) declaring rape a weapon of war in 2008.

In my work I explore protracted conflict in the Congo "representationally" by considering ways in which conflict is *thematized* in Western media in relationship to sexual violence, specifically the rape of Congolese women. By *thematized* I mean-taking a subject, in this instance rape in the context of war, and presenting it as a salient framework for understanding a topic. In order to do this I would like to trace the deployment of the phrases: "the rape capital of the world" and "the worst place on Earth to be a woman" in order to demonstrate these are not benign phrases, and ask what work is being done when we tell this "single story" about Congolese women (Adichie, 2012).

To be clear, it is in no way my intent to minimize or undermine the very real experiences of rape in the DRC, "To challenge how we discuss violence, it seems, or to question the analytically undisciplined proliferation of a rhetoric of violence has become tantamount to doubting a victim's integrity, experience, or pain" (Haag, 26, 1996). My point of intervention is to think through the role of *framing* in media, and to conduct a discourse analysis tracing how

rape in the context of war has become *instrumentalized* by Western media to make sense of and justify interventions in the conflict in DR Congo. When I say *instrumentalized* I am drawing on the work of Adam Branch. Branch defines *instrumentalization* as rendering a topic, like rape in the context of war, or in his work child soldiering, into an instrument for pursuing an aim or policy. This thesis attempts to reconcile discourse and policy; two deeply interconnected ways of knowing.

The central theme of my work is female agency. This paper is generally situated within a postmodern feminist critique of the overemphasis on rape and sexual violence as a universal narrative about women's lives. It is my intention to unpack how we, in the West, make sense of violence, and to uncover the links between violence, gender, and power. I will explore themes of mobility and bodily integrity as well as the parallel constructions of gender and sexuality as regulatory. Further, I will complicate legal definitions and popular understandings of rape as a sex crime distinct from other forms of assault. I will ask how Western media, informed by these links, constructs narratives about the Congo that rely on the thematization of rape in the context of war to render intelligible "the other". Lastly, I question the implications these powerful narratives have in shaping foreign policy at the level of NGOs and the state.

The other concept central to my project is the gendering of violence, explicitly the simultaneous privileging of violence and masculinity and the equation of femininity with vulnerability. Thinking through the conversion of rape as a weapon of war into an instrumental narrative (Branch, Foucault, Brownmiller, Marcus) with reliance on militarized masculinity (Enloe) allows me to explore how violence becomes gendered. It also allows me to problematize considering sexual assault as a category apart from other forms of assault. Drawing on the work of Sharron Marcus I will suggest the legibility of sexual assault is derived from preauthorized

rape scripts that are culturally informed and legitimated, and unpack why women are effective targets for violence directed at states. Media is the conduit for our knowledge of the Congo war and it is paramount to understand how stories become assimilated into the social imaginary by analyzing content and cultural context, “The imaginary is the net which binds bodily awareness and social meaning” (Mann, 100, 2014). How are stories told? Are there themes across reporting on the DR Congo? Do these themes employ gender as a justification for violence?

At the theoretical level I think through the production of racialized and gendered bodies, and everyday knowledge and construction of the “other”. Furthermore, the ways in which media reify and exploit stereotypes for intelligibility, in this instance that of the rape-able woman, and Africans as brutish, violent, and unknowable; although ironically seemingly known through their hyper-visibility and accessibility in media, the discussion of which I will return to in greater depth. Additionally, there is a problematic equation between masculinity and violence, and femininity and victimization that needs unpacking. As Cynthia Enloe posits the danger is that, “mere maleness will be accepted as sufficient cause for wartime rape” (Enloe, 134). Who or what is being left out when we tell the story this way? Based upon this analysis I problematize the way policy is written that uncritically reproduces these constructions. My claim is policy and media in the United States are mutually generative and reinforcing of discursive frames that do not accurately reflect the lived experience of Congolese men and women, but merely a tokenized snapshot turned information currency that plays on culturally authorized myths of gender and race, i.e. female inviolability.

I am going to borrow from and expand upon Edward Said’s seminal text *Orientalism* as a way of unpacking and exploring the process of gendered “othering” happening in awareness raising representations of rape in the context of war. Said describes orientalism as, “a style of

thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction...” (Said, 2, 1979). In other words it is both a theory of knowledge and a way of knowing about the world. Orientalism is the *domestication* of the other, the rendering intelligible of the other, and the possessing of the other as a form of knowledge produced by and for the West, “a *distribution* of a geopolitical awareness into aesthetic...an *elaboration* not only of a basic geographical distinction...but also of a whole series of interests...it *is*, rather than expresses, a certain *will* or *intention* to understand...it is, above all, a discourse that is by no means in direct, corresponding relationship with political power in the raw, but rather is produced and exists in an uneven exchange with various kinds of power...power political...power intellectual...power cultural...power moral...” (ibid, 12). There is no such thing as the Orient; it exists as an exercise of power-over, and an affirmation of Western culture. Gender functions the same way.

Gender is a social construct to legitimize operations of power linked to biological sexual distinctions the way Orientalism exploits geography. Gender relies on binary thinking taking the form of masculine and feminine just like the opposition of the Orient and the Occident, the Core and the Periphery, or us and them. Colonialism actively under-developed the so-called Orient and utilized its underdevelopment to legitimate further interventions and superiority. Gender colonizes the mind creating ideological and material conditions whereby women have spatial, temporal, monetary, legal, cultural, and political constraints put on their existence that become self-fulfilling prophecies in patriarchal society. It is important to situate and link gender with parallel forms of domination. It is even more important to link gender with orientalism in the context of awareness raising representations of raped Congolese women, because our understanding of rape in the context of war is predicated upon western conceptualizations of gender and race as well as a desire to dislocate our own capacity for barbarity and sexualized

aggression by constructing a predatory and savage other. Because this boogeyman lives in a faraway land, look different, and has been historically registered as unintelligible to our way of life his capacity for violence and her capacity for injurability must not only exceed our own, but require our intervention to disable. Yet it contradicts our interests to “save”, because then the gaze would be available to direct back onto ourselves. All the better to regulate, manage, and maintain the suffering of others and our moral outrage to prevent such introspection.

In her TED talk, “The Danger of a Single Story”, Chimamanda Adichie tells us that stories are dependent upon power. Not just the power to write and tell the story of another, but to make it the definitive narrative of that person or place. Historically, the single story told about Africa is one of beautiful landscapes, says Adichie, beautiful animals, and incomprehensible people who are unable to speak for themselves, and waiting to be saved. In contrast, because of America’s cultural and economic power, there are many, poly-vocal stories told about it, “The western default position becomes one of feeling sorry for Africans even before one has met one” (Adichie, 2012). Adichie believes, and this paper will echo, people are vulnerable and impressionable in the face of stories. Therefore this tradition of speaking about and for Africa as a place of difference and darkness leaves no possibility of feelings more complex than pity. If all one hears about Africa is the people are poor, poverty becomes the single story of them. I am suggesting, if all one hears about Congolese women is that they are raped or living precarious lives as rape-able, victim becomes the single story told about them. To tell as single story is to show people as one thing, as only one thing over and over again until that is all they become (Adichie). I would like to unpack these dynamics in media coverage of rape in the context of war in the Congo.

In an op-ed letter published in the New York Times responding to Helen Cooper's editorial, "Waiting for Their Moment in the Worst Place on Earth to Be a Woman", Jana Frazier McLaughlin expresses the single story understood by Americans about Africa and African women. According to McLaughlin, her knowledge of Africa is based solely on news stories. In spite of her limited interaction with Africa, and despite the subject being her feelings, she felt confident enough titling her piece "The Women of Africa." Cooper's editorial does not represent all African women though she calls Africa, "the worst place there is to be a woman" (Cooper, 2005). Cooper specifically references Monrovia, Liberia, her home, and Bukavu, Congo, as well as a brief nod to Kenya, Ethiopia, and Ghana. For McLaughlin, Cooper's story represents the whole African experience, "the horror and the poverty and the injustice" (McLaughlin, 2005). There is a lack of specificity in McLaughlin's description, referring to "these places", "that continent", and "Africa" as if the story were about some indeterminate, but unified land. In conclusion McLaughlin writes, "If only every American had the chance to walk through the villages of Africa, we might not be able to so easily ignore the suffering of that continent, and our own lives here at home might take on a deeper, richer meaning" (ibid). Africa is not just villages and quaintly suffering natives.

Helen Cooper describes the election of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to the presidency in Liberia amid her recollections of huts, women carrying water on their heads, war ravaged buildings, naked children, and exotic landscapes. According to the African Development Bank, as of 2010 36% of Africans live in cities, and that number is expected to increase to 50% by 2030 (African Development Bank, 2012). McLaughlin writes remorsefully of her, "superficial life here in America, " and suggests awareness of African women's suffering will infuse life with meaning. (How can strangers you have never met on a continent you have never been be

responsible for your humanity?) It is their "otherness" that lends itself to feelings of gratitude for contentment and satisfaction where they are portrayed to have none. Aspects of this story offer a limited glimpse of life in parts of Africa, but walking long distances to gather water no more defines the lived experience of African women than grocery shopping does women in the United States. McLaughlin pens her gratitude for exposure to "the humble dignity" of African women. The word humble means to have a lowered estimation of oneself, and its synonyms include: undistinguished and submissive. Dignity connotes just the opposite, self-respect and worth. I cannot imagine a more underhanded compliment. I do not believe it was her intent to undermine or insult African women, but I do believe her frame of reference does not permit more than pity and amazement.

Awareness raising representations, while aiming to do no harm, commit a different kind of injury. What does it mean to be both hyper-visible and invisible at the same time? In Western media "the raped woman", as a trope, is on constant display. However, the actual women remain anonymous, and actively silenced beyond the fact of their violation. No details are offered as to the substance of their character or daily lives. They go unnamed; deprived of even an alias while someone else authors and authorizes their story. The raped woman becomes a character, a statistic, reduced to one impersonal fact that comes to stand for her being in the world, and is extended to represent all life in the Congo. Yet this fact could not be more personal, and it is its origin in lived experience/living bodies that first imbues the story with power. Rape violates a person on multiple levels; from bodily integrity to mental and emotional wellbeing. In this way the erasure of individual personhood ignorantly works in tandem with the assault. Reporting on rape in the context of war in the Congo becomes predicated on the false consciousness that women as a category are doubly available for use. First, defined as alternately pre-rape or rape

victims. Second, installable as prop characters in a pre-scripted story, which has been fabricated by Western media to elicit a response and reinforce culturally salient beliefs about femininity, masculinity and race.

For Westerners “the rape capital of the world” and “the worst place on Earth to be a woman” become the definitive narrative about the DRC. Unfortunately, this story is abstracted to the point of meaninglessness. Stories of “the raped Congolese woman” are ubiquitous, but Congolese women are absent. Recuperating living bodies in this tenuous discursive space is challenging, and will require cooperation among seemingly divergent feminisms. There is a, “current shorthand that views poststructuralist feminism as a “forgetting” of the body and essentialist feminism as an imprisonment within it” (Haag, 27-28, 1996). A toolbox cannot be complete when it is filled with only one tool, and therefore I will be approaching rape and sex difference from multiple theoretical viewpoints. My insistence on a nuanced understanding of sexual violence would not be possible with obedience to only one feminism or disciplinary lens nor do I feel pledging such allegiance is productive in a time where acknowledging multiple ways of knowing and encouraging poly-vocality is championed.

What are salient Western cultural beliefs about femininity, masculinity, and race? Violence is both gendered and racialized. Men are equated with perpetrator and women with victim of violence. This equation functions in the cultural imaginary as a continuation of historic policing of gender boundaries. Cultural beliefs are constituted in the form of discourse, “the discourse that women have developed about their lived reality...includes concepts such as rape, sexual harassment, and battery...” (Hekman, 1997, 352).

Women, until recently, were relegated to the domestic sphere. Here attributes deemed female, such as mothering, caregiving, and physical weakness, are proscribed a spatial

dimension. Beyond the boundaries of the home, everywhere else, is masculine space where women are vulnerable. Conversely, men are stripped of the capacity to nurture, and those that show signs of caring are branded weak and ineffectual, effeminate. Male power is equated with physical strength, sexual prowess, and mental acumen. Women's labor is to reproduce the home; tasks include the four C's cooking, cleaning, childcare, and compliance. Men's labor is to reproduce the world. Of course I am using broad brushstrokes to paint a portrait of the American cultural imaginary. Women have agency and have always negotiated normative claims to their being in varied and nuanced ways. That does not delegitimize the pervasiveness and weight of the cultural myths surrounding gender.

In order to police these norms and demonstrate their strength, violence is employed by men as a tool of power. In this way both violence and masculinity are simultaneously privileged in society (Enloe). When men utilize violence to enforce their power normative boundaries are also being protected and exploited. Understanding of women as mothers extends to thinking of women as mothers of the nation. Not only do they bear future generations of men, but women are the bearers of culture and tradition. Women make homes for men and preserve their culture making them a source of value and security, and also effective targets for violence directed at the state, and men.

In the work that follows I am going to outline recent research about rape as a weapon of war and establish the reasons women are believed to become targets for SGBV. Then I am going to disrupt the conventional wisdom by suggesting another way in which women are vulnerable. In the process of unfolding a truth about "others" what I disclosed was a truth about myself, and so you will see and hear me throughout. Calling Congo "the rape capital of the world" and "the worst place on Earth to be a woman" conceals the dynamism of the human condition by showing

a place and a people as only one thing, and offers a mirror through which we can see more about ourselves.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

“Each thing or person photographed becomes – a photograph; and becomes, therefore, morally equivalent to any other of his photographs.” ~Sontag

(Each woman raped becomes -- a rape victim; and becomes, therefore, morally equivalent to any other victim.)

i. Gender & Human Rights

Both gender and human rights are terms that have ontological weight (Mann, 2014). They structure the ways in which human beings understand and experience being in the world. In order for me to look at the work being done representationally by the media, I/NGO's, governments, and civil society utilizing rape in the context of war as a lens to frame the Congo wars, I must first understand the work being done by gender and human rights to frame embodied experience. That we recognize gender is a social construct does not negate its role in ordering and thinking about our lives. While my agenda is in part to challenge gendered thinking, it is more specifically to investigate how power is accessed differentially based on gender identification, and the links between violence, sexuality, and gender. I am not contesting the prevalence or experiences of rape in DR Congo. My inquiry is predicated on the belief that discourse is not neutral, “it defines and produces the objects of knowledge” (Dragotesc, 128, 2011). To conduct a patterned analysis of the representation of women I think through and elaborate on the theoretical work of Adam Branch, Cynthia Enloe, and Bonnie Mann. Branch's work on human rights intervention allows me to problematize the construction of gendered and racialized bodies, and demonstrate the continuity between theory and lived experience. Enloe

and Mann will elucidate the connections between masculinity and violence and violence and power.

Branch is deeply concerned with the question of *intervention*, which he argues is an umbrella term for the global *administrative dimension* of power relations, by which he means the process of putting the theory of human rights into action through bureaucracy by states, NGO's, and civil society. Rescue and Peace are the two frames for understanding *instrumentalization* of human rights discourse to justify physical intervention. Types of intervention include: humanitarian, peacebuilding, ethnojustice, and justice via militarization. Branch asserts, "The invocation of human rights allows the mystification" of power structures (Branch, 37, 2011). Furthermore, "human rights interventions can become the building blocks of lasting administrative structures intended to normalize states, economies, cultures, societies, and individuals in line with given models" (ibid, 36). These models become internalized and, "people in the South are no longer ordered what to do—they are now expected to do it *willingly* themselves" (Branch, 38, 2011).

Rescue must be understood in the context of the end of the Cold War, post-colonial shift to independent African states, and the rise of a new world order that included a proliferation, privileging, and professionalization of human rights activists working internationally without regard for state sovereignty. In Africa this project was taken up to "rescue" Africans from predatory states (ibid). Peace includes rescue, but becomes a totalizing intervention agenda that revalues the African state to fulfill and protect human rights, "the total intervention agenda declares Africa to be caught in a multi-dimensional "trap" of social, political, economic, cultural, psychological, and legal crises that fuels and is fueled by violent conflict" (Branch, 28, 2011). Former UN Secretary General Koffi Annan articulated this platform best in a speech given to the

General Assembly in 1996 claiming, “Sovereignty is responsibility.” In other words, sovereignty does not mean protection from outside interference in a state’s political affairs, rather sovereignty means the duty of the state to protect the human rights, a universal term, of its people, and if it fails to do so it is abdicating its responsible sovereignty, and may be subject to intervention (UN R2P Doctrine). This affirms the capability of the African state by making it the locus of power, while simultaneously undermining its authority by claiming human rights failures are a result of predatory African governance, ignorant of historical conditions that would implicate the West in African conflict as well as cultural factors, making African states constantly open to paternalistic managing via humanitarianism (Branch, 2011).

Human rights exceed the purview of the political sphere, and open up the economic, social, and cultural areas to reform and reconstruction under this broad new intervention logic. Branch’s thesis is the new international human rights regime works to displace human rights through interventions in the name of human rights. What may also be termed neocolonialism is removed from the realm of contestation, because of the moral authority of human rights. It is a perversion of language envisioned to protect individuals from undue harm re-framed within Mutua’s “savage-victim-savior” structure where, “the *savage* is the African violator of human rights...the *victim* is individualized but anonymous, defined in terms of a universally applicable set of basic rights...this depoliticized victim image, in need of outside intervention for its redemption...the *savior* is the self-proclaimed enforcer of global law” (ibid, 182).

How is human rights discourse being deployed as a total intervention agenda by the West in Africa? The problem and the solution are predetermined previous to intervention. The goal is to get individuals and states to self-regulate into these predetermined categories available for intervening. Foucault calls this the creation of docile bodies. People self-regulate into

prescribed roles such as victim, soldier, and savior, which have been defined and “solved”, “Human rights are incorporated into a program of self-management, in which foreign intervention provides the tools with which the community is supposed to pacify itself” (ibid, 131). Conflict is seen as either the preeminent historical condition of Africa, the current plague of Africans, or the inevitable creation of a geography of violence where, “intervention becomes highly self-referential and self-justifying” (Branch, 30, 2011).

This parallels the work done by the invocation of “rape in the context of war” in discourse about the Congo wars in that there are implicit assumptions about who is the victim, who is the perpetrator, what the response should be, and how power is operating. People come to internalize these narratives, and instrumentally categorize Congolese women as either pre-victims or victims of rape. In the media the *individualized but anonymous* victim is Woman, and the frame for understanding her violability is universal human rights. The recognition of rape as a weapon of war is intended to be an emancipatory project for women, but once it becomes institutionalized it falls into a total intervention agenda, which, “renders it not emancipatory but disciplinary and leads it to steer agency into externally provided models that may not match what those subject to intervention genuinely desire or need” (ibid). One of those external frameworks is gender.

Gender is not only one of the first things we learn about one another, but it is one of the first things we learn about ourselves. Gender is medicalized from birth. Before babies leave the womb they are given a gender. Gender is culturally weighty. It confers and strips status, and links to ideas about the types of labor one can perform. Gender can be the basis of a contract in the form of marriage. Gender is economic. According the US Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), women earn 78 cents to every dollar a man makes for equal work. The socially constructed

attributes of gender, known as masculinity and femininity, are overwhelmingly culturally authorized, and therefore shape experience, expression, and identity.

Masculinity comes with a set of virtues that are culturally salient that inextricably link maleness with power, strength, success, and *invulnerability*. War is the vehicle for performing and protecting these American virtues. For men militarization confers status and citizenship. Sovereign masculinity has aesthetic, economic, political, social, cultural, linguistic, and psychological dimensions (Mann, 2014). Mann invokes “gender” as a justificatory project the way Branch articulates human rights as a mobilizing narrative, “...gender is a structure of the social imaginary that binds us together in a community with others. It is at the same time a structure of and operation of language that shapes how we think and what we can think. And it is a brute material operation of power, of bodies on bodies, a structural impetus of funding decisions, institutional formation, government deliberations and military decisions” (ibid, 8). By problematizing gender as a social construct used to justify torture, Mann continues to elucidate the work gender does in society.

Essential to Mann’s thinking is her claim gender has ontological weight, because it anchors our existence in the world. Both biologically and physiologically, gender is an embodied mode of interacting with the world, but that is just one of its many facets; it also occupies both the linguistic and imaginary domain (Mann, 2014). How does gender develop ontological weight? Mann asserts it becomes embodied through the apparatus of war, “linking the imaginary domain to the material conditions of existence” (ibid, 176). The truth claim Mann presents is sovereign masculinity needs violence for its very existence. War is a way to wed violence and control, and gender is the infrastructure facilitating the marriage of the two.

Why does gender function so effectively in this role? Mann argues gender is fundamental to our sense of self and being in the world (Mann, 2014). If we accept this as true then we must also reflexively ask: what does violence do for gender? It locates gender in the body, by creating a spectacle of power relations that are otherwise ephemeral and disembodied (ibid). Violence takes ideology and corporeally animates it, and our fleshy integument becomes its greatest ally and justification, “Gender is justificatory in the sense that my living of it, and others recognition of my living of it, is part of what makes my life appear as socially worthy or worthless.” (ibid, 175). To demonstrate how gender confers or strips away power Mann asks us to think through the use of torture to break down bodies and selves.

In instances of sexual torture one’s own body becomes complicit in the undoing of the self. During the War on Terror, the United States actively invoked gender as a method of torture. Male, Muslim prisoners were interrogated by female soldiers. Female soldiers would invade their physical space by straddling the detainees, shoving their breasts into the men’s faces, and showing them provocative western media images of women in order to elicit arousal. Once aroused the men were made to dress like women. This combined state of powerlessness and self-betrayal is effective, because it creates an embodied awareness of gender. It accomplishes this by drawing on presumed gender differences to enact domination. Furthermore, “by shattering the manhood of the purported “enemy” it *produces* the manhood of the nation,” (Mann, 198, 2014) by rendering the enemy impotent and powerless American masculinity is (re)affirmed as invulnerable and omnipotent.

Rape in the context of war also violently locates gender in living bodies. When men are raped during war it emasculates them and makes their bodies vulnerable and self-defeating. When women are raped during war it is often violence directed at men, but acted out on a

woman's body. Soldiers rape to perpetrate genocide, terrorize civilians, because they view women as a resource, and to psychologically destroy the enemy by engaging constructs of women as the mothers of the nation. Rape further reminds women of their status as vulnerable. It is an action that locates the site of their vulnerability in their body and lack of ability to control it. Likewise male perpetrators are using their body as a locus of power-over their victims that is symbolic of social status.

Sovereign masculinity is only possible if femininity acts as its foil. Masculinity can only claim its ties to state sovereignty if the experience of being a woman is devastating, and comes from a disruption in the "I can body" (ibid, 79). Linguistically, the privileging of masculinity can be seen in the use of words like "bitch", "pussy", or "fag" to equate weakness with female embodiment (Mann, 76, 2014). Psychologically and socially it is demonstrated in the shame to redemption conversion women undergo when they redeem themselves by being able to (re)produce male desire and compete for male patronage. Masculinity becomes co-constituted with the vulnerability of femaleness as the denial of male vulnerability, "Frames evoke whole networks of meanings, so that contempt for women, the injurability of the female body, its penetrability, its shame, and masculine *invulnerability* and *pride* are evoked by the same frame. Sovereign manhood stakes its reputation on the power of such frames, such it is through almost ritualized, repetitious verbal references to the vulnerability and violability of the feminine that a sense of sovereign masculinity is secured" (ibid, 147).

In *Maneuvers* Enloe defines militarization as, "a step-by-step process by which a person or thing gradually comes to be controlled by the military or comes to depend for its well-being on militaristic ideas...involves cultural as well as institutional, ideological, and economic

transformations” (Enloe, 3, 2000). Furthermore, Enloe offers a salient definition of militarized rape that both distinguishes it from other types of rape and problematizes it:

“First, the male militarized rapist in some way imposes his understandings of “enemy,” “soldiering,” “victory,” and “defeat” on both the woman to be raped and on the act of sexual assault. Secondly, consequently, the militarized rape is harder to privatize than non-militarized rape is, since it draws so much of its rationale from an imagining of societal conflict and/or the functions of a formal institution such as the state’s national security or defense apparatus or an insurgency’s military arm. Third, the woman who has endured military rape must devise her responses...not only be weighing her relationships to the rapist and to her personal friends and relatives, to the prevailing norms of feminine respectability, and perhaps to the criminal justice system, but *in addition*, she must weigh her relationships to **collective memory** (my emphasis), collective notions of national destiny, and the very institutions of organized violence” (ibid, 111).

Enloe argues rape in the context of war is not just about power, but about patriarchy, and to suggest otherwise is to, “risk that mere maleness will be accepted as the sufficient cause for wartime rape,” to the exclusion of other structures of power (Enloe, 134, 2000). Sexuality is another structure of power used to regulate bodies and to maintain patriarchy. Along with Mann, Enloe is concerned with the link between the military, the state, and patriarchy. She asks, “...is male privilege so tightly woven into any sovereign public authority –a state—that the phrase “nonpatriarchal state” should be considered an oxymoron? There is a package of attributes that – when they exist simultaneously—distinguishes a state: publicness, authority, exclusiveness, sovereignty, and the capacity for coercion” (ibid, 273). These attributes also describe masculine privilege.

ii. Gender & Sexuality

How does the western world perceive and regulate sexuality? According to Foucault, sexual repression is not the absence of sexuality or its silencing and removal from daily life, but rather its ubiquity. This is not to imply that prohibitions on human sexuality have not proliferated. However, Foucault sees power operating at various levels in the process of prohibition. There are actors within and without institutions that are ceaselessly talking about sex, prescribing its proper exercise, and conducting thorough investigations as to its incarnations. Foucault traces the origins of what he terms the “repressive hypothesis” to the Catholic invention of confession.

Confession was designed to illicit people to talk about sex without end as a duty to God. While at the same time all forms of sexuality outside of the reproductive function between husband and wife were banned, and public discourse about sexuality equally maligned. Sexuality was being simultaneously interdicted and made the source of salvation. As a result a “regime of discourses” emerged to control how people could talk about sex creating “not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses” (Foucault, 27, 1978). These silences are not a form of censorship, but rather a way of obfuscating the new overt sexual preoccupation by making sexuality a secret, in spite of the fact that it permeates all facets of life.

Further, Foucault questions a Marxian interpretation of sexual repression as a means of guaranteeing labor capacity by regulating sexuality to marriage relations. Instead he argues sexuality was first and foremost created by and for the bourgeoisie not the proletariat. Regulation of sexuality was extended to the working class only after the bourgeoisie utilized it to establish hegemony, “what was formed was a political ordering of life, not through an

enslavement of others, but through an affirmation of self” (ibid, 123). Ruling classes began to seek an understanding of how the body was a site of control maximization through the extension of their lives; what Foucault describes as an intensification of the body. Marxian analysis of sexuality interprets sexuality in a more limited way as a tool of repression.

As time has passed confessional prohibitions on sex have become part of legal frameworks. This includes the criminalization of sex acts outside marriage and not between a man and woman; these include homosexuality, incest, sexuality of the mentally ill (for whom supposed sexual perversion could be their illness), and miscegenation. Foucault asserts the great lengths to regulate these supposed aberrant sexualities were a way to bring them under close surveillance. Not render them invisible, but hyper-visible, “forcing them into hiding so as to make possible their discovery” (Foucault, 42, 1978).

Essential to Foucault’s argument is his belief power is operating everywhere. There is a “multiplicity of force relations” that make the origins of power diffuse and open to resistance. Forms of resistance, like power, are plural and multifaceted. It is within these many incarnations that it is possible to interrogate the way power operates, and the way sexuality is deployed as a tool of power, which Foucault terms “instrumentalization.” Sexuality has instrumentality in four main domains: hysterization of women’s bodies, pedagogization of children’s sex, socialization of procreative behavior, and psychiatrization. Surrounding these is the superstructure of law, which is how humans make sense of power.

The new hyper-visible state of sex coincided with the medicalization of sexuality. The medicalization of sexuality was reflexively about visibility. Where can you locate sexuality on the body? In this search for the location of sexuality on the body, “pleasure spread to the power that harried it; power anchored the pleasure it uncovered” (ibid, 45). In less poetic words

pleasure became inextricably linked from the search for the location of pleasure, and thus the sciences as the purveyors of this pursuit. In this way the surveillance of sexuality located it as a source of power and a target of the operation of power. Foucault terms this “instrument-effect.”

Since, in the West, science and truth are often equated, and the medical profession is a branch of science, a new vocabulary about human sexuality was created through the diagnoses, “in short, that sex was constituted as a problem of truth” (Foucault, 56, 1978). This recollects for us the importance of confession, because it was employed to elicit “truth” from individuals in the same way that science is. Science and medicine became intensifications of the confessional, where every last detail of sexuality was to be made knowable, not just the acts but the desires and outcomes, to discover its truth. In seeking to regulate sexuality sex was deployed as a cause of all forms of malady, and constantly in discourse; in the nineteenth century truth and sex became inextricably linked.

First, sex was rejected. Then we began to legislate it. Afterward certain forms of sexuality were prohibited, and this was swiftly accompanied by a denial or censorship of the prohibited sexualities. Lastly, an attempt was made to regulate sexuality as a form of universal obedience. Because in the West we accept that the law is the best way to exercise power, we cannot hope to examine power relations regarding sexuality until we first reject the juridical model, “we still have not cut the head off the king” (ibid, 88-89). Our inability to, “cut the head off the king” is one of the ways we internalize power structures and self-regulate. When thinking through the legal recognition and prosecution of rape in the context of war it is productive to keep in mind the historical link between sexuality and the law.

Ann Cahill suggests one way of beginning to unpack this topic in attempting to understand and respond to Foucault’s suggestion that rape should not be thought of as a sex

crime, but a violent crime indistinct from any other by examining feminisms and bodily inscriptions. Cahill begins by refuting Judith Butler's reading of Foucault. Instead she understands the body to be part of power structures from the moment of conception, and therefore there is no "blank slate" stage. Cahill argues women's identity is very much constituted by a regulation of their sexuality; necessarily involving their ability to navigate and avoid rape. Employing Susan Brownmiller, Cahill suggests Foucault's assertion was not more radical than feminist lines of thinking at the time that sought the same objective, albeit for different reasons. While Foucault's objective was to destabilize, "sexuality as a means of social and political power" (Cahill, 44, 2000), Brownmiller felt that by eliminating the sexual connotation from the crime of rape people would no longer participate in victim blaming.

When rape is not wholly taken for granted as a sex crime it can undermine the disproportionate way rape intersects with women as victims and men as perpetrators. Men can be raped as well, but statistically it happens overwhelmingly more often to women. When men are raped they are often stigmatized as feminine, with the accompanying attributes of weakness and submission further reifying the connection between rape and femininity. This illustrates the important connection between sexuality and bodily integrity.

How does the threat of rape operate in constructing female bodies? Being a potential victim forecloses spaces in which women can access power. Cahill notes women are uniquely vulnerable to rape, because it targets their mobility, and while men may also be raped it does not restrict their mobility. This constant monitoring of oneself creates a pre-victim complex according to Iris Marion Young and Sandra Lee Bartky. Women in the West are under constant surveillance to maintain narrowly defined standards of beauty, physique, and countenance. It is a woman's responsibility to control her body, which constructs a narrative which, "does not

locate the dangers presented to her body as originating from outside of her body”, but from within (ibid, 53). It helps me to think of it as analogous to Marxian alienation theory whereby a woman is separated from her body, the physical product of her labor, by standards of beauty imposed by society as a means of regulating sexuality, which are extracted from her in the form of a wage of beauty. Problematically, in this discourse women are always available for rape. Cahill reminds us that women are not passive recipients of these bodily inscriptions.

Indeed, keeping with Foucault’s understanding of power dynamics, women both shape and are shaped by regimes of sexuality; they may resist. Furthermore, the above argument limits the space in which women can operate to the confines of their physical form, because the suggestion of entering public spaces means impending violation. Here Cahill makes an intervention in the literature, and points out this violation is always sexual in nature, and therefore rape is not the same threat as other forms of bodily harm, because it is synonymous with women’s mobility. Women can also be victims of other physical assaults, just as men can also be victims of rape, but rape, according to Cahill, does not dictate a man’s agency and mobility.

Moreover, Cahill believes it is not enough to alter the legal definition of rape to liberate women from pre-victimhood. Additionally, “were rape to be redefined as primarily a crime of assault, the sexual behavior and aggression inherent in this particular crime, which is virtually always the action of a man, would be accorded no legal relevance” (Cahill, 57, 2000). I would like to push back, and point out that men overwhelmingly commit all violent crimes so there is no reason to privilege rape to underscore the link between violence and the construction of masculinity. Instead it only serves to segregate women as victims of a special form of violence that remains exclusively in the domain of male privilege without challenging the larger power

dynamics that afford men control over violence as an exercise of their power to begin with. I believe that redefining rape as assault without the sexual connotation allows the possibility to reveal previously invisible connections between violence, power, and masculinity. If we continue to define rape as a sex crime we draw attention to women's common experience as victims of rape, but we also perpetuate thinking of women as pre-victims and victims, and delimit male rape victim's ability to seek redress.

Cahill argues it is necessary, "to punish not only the violence of rape (although that element should certainly be recognized as punishable as well) but also its role as an enforcement of a set of patriarchal, misogynist values" (ibid, 58). While as a woman I find it compelling to criminalize misogyny I do not believe prosecuting rape uniquely as a sex crime is the best way to win that war. In addition, Cahill asserts, "Foucault's error lies in his interpretation of rape only as something which a man does, and for which a man may be punished" (Cahill, 60, 2000). However, Cahill is originating from that same premise, and I think Foucault is trying to subvert that assignation. Lastly Cahill suggests rethinking domestic violence as sexual assault, because it can prefigure rape. In fact the label domestic already relegates it to the sphere of women who are prescribed the home as the only space in which they have agency. Meanwhile public spaces have been exclusively the reserve of men. How is it empowering women to further legitimize traditional gender roles that have been the source of disempowerment by expanding the definition of all types of assault directed towards women by men as sex crimes? We need to contest the narratives of woman as pre-victim/victim not expand their institutionalization. Cahill's work unintentionally reifies the uncritical equation between woman-ness and victimization that Sharon Marcus' concept of a rape script can further help uncover.

A rape script is a blueprint for making sense of rape, “a scripted interaction which takes place in language and can be understood in terms of conventional masculinity and femininity...inscribed before an individual instance of rape” (Marcus, 390, 2002). According to Sharon Marcus it outlines the available victim type, perpetrator, and way of describing the act. Rape narratives falling outside the purview of the socially accepted script are rejected by society as lacking preordained authenticity. In order for the rape script to do work it must be understood as, “a linguistic fact: to ask how the violence of rape is enabled by narratives, complexes and institutions which derive their strength, not from outright, immutable, unbeatable force but rather from their power to structure our lives as imposing cultural scripts” (ibid, 388-389). The archetypal victim is a woman, preferably white. The antagonist is male, preferably non-white. Our white, female protagonist should not be promiscuous, intoxicated, or wearing anything short of a habit. Any deviation from these characteristics invites questioning the morality of the now alleged survivor; who may have been asking for it or should have known better or is suffering from a case of morning after regret, “Rapists do not prevail simply because as men they are really, biologically, and unavoidably stronger than women. A rapist follows a social script and enacts conventional, gendered structures of feeling and action which seek to draw the rape target into a dialogue which is skewed against her” (Marcus, 390, 2002).

More importantly adhering to this script makes women always potential victims of rape, “rape scripts gender...we view rape not as the invasion of female inner space, but as the forced creation of female sexuality as a violated inner space. The horror of rape is not that it steals something from us but that it makes us into things to be taken” (ibid, 399). For rape to be culturally and socially authenticated it must violate all of societies taboos regulating race, class, gender, and sexuality. Rape scripts as a *gendered grammar of violence* can be seen to operate

within three categories of violence: legitimate violence between, illegitimate violence between, and legitimate violence against (Marcus, 392, 2002). Legitimate violence between implies the participants are seen as social equals. Illegitimate violence between challenges social inequalities and legitimate violence against maintains the status quo. Marcus gives the example of a man of color assaulting a white person as illegitimate, lynching as legitimate violence against, and man on man combat as legitimate violence between. Within these frameworks violence is both racialized and gendered.

Men participate in subject to subject violence and women in sexual violence (ibid, 396). This distinction trades on the logic, “the gendered grammar of violence predicates men as the objects of violence and the operators of its tools, and predicates women as the objects of violence and the subjects of fear” (Marcus, 393, 2002). In other words, female subjectivity is constituted through fear as a passive recipient of violence. Marcus suggests women are incapable of defending themselves, because women have internalized this gendered language that prevents them from using violence. While I take issue with this I agree with her adjacent claim that, “Feminine fear also seems to entail a complete identification of a vulnerable, sexualized body with the self” (ibid, 395). Drawing on Brownmiller’s instrumental theory of rape, Marcus explains how the male body is perceived as a tool; in the case of rape in the form of a phallus. Meanwhile women’s bodies are non-instrumentalized as having no viable parts for weaponizing in self-defense. In fact, were a woman to fight back she would effectively be transcending the rape script, because she would no longer perform the role of a, “grammatically correct feminine subject” (ibid, 396). The rape script has legal implications as well as constituting subjectivity, “Legislation backs up the objectifying violence of the rape script by not defining rape as an assault, which would fall under the rubric of subject-subject violence against persons, but as a

sexual offense” (Marcus, 397, 2002). This is a question that reemerges throughout the literature and one I will revisit in my findings.

While some have been critical of Marcus for minimalizing survivor experiences, I find her linguistic framework useful for elucidating the type of representational work being done by media coverage of rape in the context of war in the DR Congo. I concur with Marcus that, “Rape exists because of experience and deployment of our bodies is the effect of interpretations, representations, and fantasies” (ibid, 400). Marcus advocates utilizing the rape script as a conceptual tool for demystifying these narratives that authorize rape so that we may trespass them, and, “represent ourselves in militant new ways” (Marcus, 2002). At a macro-structural level I would like to combine her rape script with mediatization to illuminate patterned forms of representational female vulnerability.

Masculinity and femininity work together to structure our understanding of the world, and, while my discussion is focused on women’s experience and representation, men and masculinity are never outside view. When trying to make sense of rape in the context of war there are two ways of understanding the responsibility of men. First, deciding if male perpetrators take responsibility as a group or individuals. Second, if systems of gender are responsible for saddling men with violence as their access to power then to what degree can we hold men responsible as agents of sexual violence? Paul Kirby helps to make sense of what he terms this ‘paradox of responsibility’ by categorizing four types of responsibility: moral, legal, causal, and political (Kirby, 96, 2014). Being clear about what forms responsibility can take makes Kirby able to better think about and address how responsibility can be assumed and the various implications for men and rape in the context of war. In the end he concludes, “excessive focus on the collective character of patriarchy,” championed by postmodern feminism treats all

men as a coherent class ignorant of context, and may work against seeking justice for individual crimes (ibid, 109). However, “directing moral condemnation primarily at individual actors neglects the inescapably social contexts in which they act,” making us unable to address structural factors that enable rape (Kirby, 2014).

Moral responsibility is the ‘vocabulary’ of crime and punishment and is the conversation had to assign blame (ibid, 96). Legal responsibility involves moral responsibility, but is codified and systematic through rule of law (Kirby, 2014). Causal responsibility maps events as they unfolded, and is best understood as an explanatory mechanism for responsibility (ibid). Political responsibility recognizes individuals working as agents of a state (ibid). Within these categories there are also three types of responsibilities one can take: command, omission, and facilitation; or as I think of them: leaders, bystanders, and beneficiaries (Kirby, 97, 2014). As Kirby unpacks these categories and responsible-types he comes up against the agency/structure problem contained in the opening questions. Either patriarchy is responsible or men are. He cites Susan Brownmiller and Catherine MacKinnon as examples where there is, “an oscillation between the ubiquitous and the singular, the general and the specific, and the normal and the pathological” (ibid, 107). Patriarchy is a system in place that allows men access to privilege through violence, and sustains that power-over with violence directed against women, AND that fact does not annul individual accountability for profiteering from that system.

Eileen Zurbriggen helps us understand how men are socialized through violence and sexuality. Zurbriggen posits Western masculinity relies on sexuality as, “a primary means of proving one’s masculinity” (Zurbriggen, 540, 2010). As a result there is a correlation between rape and war in cultures where men are socialized to be violent across domains (ibid, 538).

Zurbriggen echoes the findings of Mann previously discussed and is productive for solidifying how masculinity and violence are co-constituted and actualized.

Using J.M. O’Neil’s model she links six consequences of masculine socialization with rape and militarization (Zurbriggen, 2010). First is “Feminine Avoidance” where women are devalued and men must distance themselves as much as possible from feminine attributes to devaluation (ibid). Second is “Status and Achievement” where women are objectified and dehumanized making their inferior treatment justified (Zurbriggen, 2010). Third is “Toughness and Aggression” that praises those two essential male attributes, and encourages violence as a way of acting them out (ibid, 541). The fourth consequence is “Restricted Emotionality” whereby anger becomes the only socially acceptable emotional expression for men (Zurbriggen, 2010). Six is “Nonrelational Sexuality” exemplified with the character of Don Juan, a man who has casual sex with careless abandon (ibid, 542). Lastly is “Dominance/Power/Control” where relationships are based on manipulation to access privilege (ibid). (As I was reading this list it reminded me of Stanton’s “Eight Stages of Genocide”.)

Masculine socialization and its consequences reinforce war. Under wartime conditions and military training these same six categories link masculinity with state power and militarization. “Status and achievement” is obtained by obedience to the chain of command (ibid). In order to kill the target must be dehumanized and objectified, which often means feminization (Zurbriggen, 543, 2010). Physicality and aggression are necessary characteristics of soldiers, “traditional masculine socialization teaches men that violence is manly, and that walking away from violence...marks a man as a cowardly “sissy.” Men who have internalized this hypermasculine, macho script believe that violence is not just acceptable, but is actually preferable” (ibid). Emotionality, beyond aggression, is counterproductive to inflicting harm, and

so military training like masculine socialization denaturalizes empathy (ibid). Lastly, war and masculinity are both acts of power (ibid, 544).

What does masculine socialization look like in the context of DR Congo? The authors of the study of men and women in North Kivu conducted by Desiree Lwambo and published by HEAL Africa there exists a “masculinity gap” between idealized norms of masculinity and men’s actual agency (Lwambo, 7, 2011). The study is right and careful to point out that masculinity in Congo is not homogenous, but these were the overwhelming trends. Congolese masculinity is primarily monetized. Male and female participants identified being stable providers, bread winners, and earning good money as the hallmarks of being a “real man” (ibid). When men cannot meet the needs of their family and community monetarily they are feminized, and receive less access to “hegemonic dividends”. Hegemonic dividends are privileges accrued from patriarchal power, which for men may consist of more leisure time and money, and for women may be male patronage (Lwambo, 8, 2011). As a result of the protracted conflict, corruption, impunity, and internal displacement men are unable to meet the cultural requirements of masculinity leading to feelings of shame and further exacerbating violent tendencies toward women.

Men in the study self-identified positive attributes of masculinity related to being able to provide for one’s family and, “behave in non-violent ways towards household and community members,” but when circumstances outside men’s control make them incapable of meeting the needs of the community, family, and hegemonic masculinity violence seems to be an all too available answer (ibid, 12). Violence becomes a vehicle for the display of power and control, particularly sexual violence which indicates virility where it may be questioned when households fall on hard times. This is fueled in part by women’s growing independence and the expectations

they “co-create” about masculine ideals (Lwambo, 2011). Female respondents also said men should be the providers. An example of men’s new precariousness can be seen with the traditional occupation of farming. Farming has lost its prestige, because displacement from ongoing conflict makes farming unsustainable, and youth feel that farming does not offer the large monetary rewards and social status largely seen in Western media (ibid, 15-16). Men are no longer being socialized around men without violence, and in the presence of traditional occupations like farming so they become devalued (Lwambo, 17, 2011). An effect of the now perceived weakness of farming is the feminization of farm work. Femininity is traditionally defined as being dependent, weak, subordinate, mothering, and sexually available according to study participants (ibid, 15).

This is further troubled by women’s increasing independence. More women have access to education, and have been forced to find work to provide for themselves and their children as the conflict separates and displaces families, and renders men incapable of earning a stable income. As a way to cope with their loss of power men have responded with, “A prevailing narrative to discredit women’s empowerment...to connect female entrepreneurship to prostitution” (Lwambo, 16, 2011). Girls attending school are said to have contracted sexually transmitted grades or STGs, and women in the workplace are believed to trade sexual favors for position (ibid, 18). Again we see women being reduced to the physical body and sexuality, and sexuality being deployed to shame and devalue.

This enforced renegotiation of traditional masculinity has policy implications for NGOs, the United States alone spends 1.5 billion annually on aid to the Congo (ibid, 6), “Masculinity is thus a constant enactment of power, it is not something a man simply *has* or *is*, but rather a way of being that he needs to perform and assert” (ibid, 12). NGOs primarily focusing on working to

ameliorate SGBV miss the performative aspect of masculinity and therefore miss effectively reaching men in their performance. Men who participated in the study said they felt gender training was synonymous with women, and failed to address men's needs and vulnerabilities, "while it is true that a great majority of individuals suffering from SGBV are female, a single focus on this group renders the equality aspect of programs obsolete" (Lwambo, 21, 2011). Men are critical of formal education of any kind, because they link it with women's empowerment which they see as a source of their disempowerment, and an example of an ineffective "foreign import."

Further, state violence and impunity is cited by men as a direct cause of violence, and NGOs are seen as non-governmental bad actors that fail to set good examples of the masculinity they preach (ibid, 22). Many NGO workers partake in petty corruption and graft as well as sexual exploitation of women (Lwambo, 23, 2011). Men interviewed also said they would like to see peer education with community members instead of outsiders. Perhaps most revealing was the widespread sentiment that humanitarian work to empower women was a direct contributor to men's feeling a loss of masculinity and responsible for the increased SGBV, and men would be more open to working towards gender equality if their needs as providers were being met by NGO work (ibid, 21). This may come off as victim blaming, but should not be dismissed out of hand. Remember that women, even women entrepreneurs, felt ideally men should be the main providers. In addition, if the aim is to combat militarized notions of masculinity ignoring the needs of already agitated, traumatized, and emasculated men is not the best strategy; particularly when they are saying they feel ignored. Finally, men also felt victimized by the violence, and sought psychosocial and medical help, and reported feeling the majority of the resources and concern were directed toward women to the exclusion of men.

Interestingly militarism was not well thought of among respondents. Joining the military or a rebel group was described as a desperate act that was not favorable to family members (Lwambo, 19, 2011). However, because the conflict has existed for so long there is no easy line to draw between civilian and militarized masculinity in Congo. According to Lwambo, SGBV is the keenest example of the integration of violence into everyday existence, because it coexists with other forms of violence against women that do not rely on militarism for their realization, most notably domestic violence (ibid). Instead, traditional constructions of masculinity that link it with sexual prowess become hyper-actuated when coupled with violence.

I selected this study, because it was conducted by a Congolese, and directly communicated with both men and women about their perceptions of masculinity in DR Congo. The responses looked strikingly similar to dominant constructions of femininity and masculinity in the U.S. and Western World more generally. Women are mothers, defined by their sexuality, and subservient to men. Men are dominant, bread winners, and have a monopoly on the use of violence. While these are very general characteristics they form a pattern about gender construction and performance that is echoed in reporting. Two important takeaways are the emphasis put on the telling of a single-story about women's suffering, and dedication to the maintenance of normative masculinity in the face of political, economic, and social conditions that make it nearly impossible to maintain (Lwambo, 8, 2011).

As we move forward into thinking about rape in the context of war and international law it is important to keep in mind Foucault's intervention that sexuality is a disciplinary power that produces docile bodies. Further, that the instrumentalization of sexuality coincided with the scientific turn in the West, which in its pursuit of truth sought to make visible sexuality on the body. Sexuality, as reinvented by science, and gender as socially constructed work together to

engineer reality. Part of the instrumentalization of sexuality is the imagining of female bodies as vulnerable, particularly vulnerable to sexual assault. Rape scripts, as described by Marcus, are culturally authorized narratives that employ the language of female vulnerability to legitimate certain experiences and foreclose others. Rape then becomes a mechanism for enforcing patriarchy both when men rape and laws interpret the crime where men are the assumed perpetrators and women the victims.

iii. Rape in the Context of War & International Law

I will use as the International Criminal Court's definition as a foundation for problematizing rape as a weapon of war is that of the ICC, Article 8 (2) (b) (xxii) from *Elements of Crimes* (ICC 2002):

1. The perpetrator invaded the body of a person by conduct resulting in penetration, however slight, of any part of the body of the victim or of the perpetrator with a sexual organ, or of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body.
2. The invasion was committed by force, or by threat of force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power, against such a person or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment, or the invasion was committed against a person capable of giving genuine consent.
3. The conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an international armed conflict.
4. The perpetrator was aware of factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict.

According to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820, “Noting that civilians account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict; that women and girls are particularly targeted by the use of sexual violence, **including as a tactic of war (my emphasis)** to humiliate, dominate, instill fear in, disperse and/or forcibly relocate civilian members of a community or ethnic group; and that sexual violence perpetrated in this manner may in some instances persist after the cessation of hostilities... 4. Notes that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide...” (United Nations S/RES/1820, 2008). This document is the first time rape was legally recognized as a weapon of war, and was largely a response to the ongoing sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in the DR Congo. SRC1820 additionally makes clear the important role women play in political, social, and economic life before, during, and after war, and in the period of reconstruction. It goes on to affirm the necessity of peace-building operations that take into account gender issues, specifically women and girls, and recommends incorporating more women in security forces, pre-deployment gender training to ensure proper response in the field, and operations that promote capacity building. Leading up to these findings the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women outlined the use of sexual violence in the DRC, and published its findings in a country report.

According to the second CEDAW DRC country report (2003, pub. 2004), armed conflict exacerbates violence against women. In chapter 11, section d, sexual violence linked to the perpetual state of war is highlighted. The report reaffirms rape is being used as a weapon of war. It further states the aims of rape in the context of war as follows: population control and suppression of resistance, spreading terror, and punishment. CEDAW’s country report lists the age range of rape survivors from 4-80 years old, citing data from MSF (Doctors without Borders)

and Aide Médicale Internationale to support their findings. Additionally, it locates the regions most affected as South & North Kivu, Equateur, Orientale, Maniema, and Northern Katanga Provinces. There are numerous consequences of sexual violence that reverberate after the initial violation and last beyond the conflict.

Women who experience SGBV suffer medical, social, economic, and legal consequences. Medical consequences include exposure to sexually transmitted infections, particularly high risk for contracting HIV/AIDS, psychological damage, unwanted pregnancy, and physical injury, particularly traumatic fistula. Social consequences include being ostracized and stigmatized by husbands, families, and communities. Economic consequences result from loss of income due to inability to work from bodily injury and homelessness and poverty from being kicked out their homes. Legal consequences abound from a lack of juridical infrastructure, political accountability, and an overarching state of impunity. Because of social stigmas victims often do not feel they can report the crimes, and when they do there is no judicial body to conduct proceedings or police force to investigate the crime. Survivors are often living in the company of their attackers with no redress.

CEDAW has a list of recommendations to address SGBV for the government, I/NGOs, and civil society. Women should take responsibility for themselves, educate their children about sexual violence, and “change attitudes.” I/NGOs should improve cooperation and coordination among agencies, increase awareness-raising and advocacy work, and specifically work to combat stigmatization of rape survivors. I would add local capacity building is indispensable for making Congolese feel personally invested in and responsible for affecting positive changes in their communities. Without empowering community members, men and women, to be agents in these

initiatives they will continue to feel disempowered in the face of monumental social reconstruction.

The Congolese government must remove legal barriers to implementation of CEDAW's recommendations, such as funding the Ministry on the Status of Women to be accountable for improving the status of women in the Congo, and representing women's issues in government. Further, to act to disseminate, in local languages and with appropriate media, the conventions suggestions for change. Next, build institutional capacity in government and civil society. Also, to work on building a lasting and sustainable peace in Congo and make ending SGBV a priority of the new government of peacetime. Lastly, write gender specific language into "development policies and programs" (CEDAW DRC Country Report, 51, 2004). That is a summary of the CEDAW country report findings and recommendations for the cessation of SGBV in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

International law may be an imperfect tool to address rape in the context of war. According to Nicola Henry, international law unintentionally reinforces victimization by creating victim hierarchies, and prosecuting rape as the worst type of offense marginalizes victims of other crimes. In spite of these critiques Henry believes law is a necessary form of advocacy for women whose unique burdens have been historically excluded from survivor recognition. Henry situates her argument within postmodern feminist unease with the overemphasis on rape and sexual violence as a universal narrative about women's lives. Postmodern feminists draw attention to the problematic nature of making female sexuality the source of oppression that makes women's bodies passive recipients and always available for sexual violence. Also, it denies women's agency by narrowly casting them in the role of victim. Lastly it is worth

considering the implications of privileging the law as the only and appropriate means of redress, and provider of rights.

Law may not be the best tool because, “law has the power to define and legitimate some narratives, while at the same time, silence and suppress other meanings and stories...law pronounces the ‘truth’...it creates meaning and is authoritative” (Henry, 97, 2014). In other words by defining and prosecuting rape it leaves out a whole range of other gender harms, and makes rape a crime that is uniquely viewed as a crime against women. Henry echoes concerns voiced by Sharon Marcus on the “rape script”. In fact women’s and men’s lived experiences of war and sexual violence are much more nuanced and complex than the law allows.

Focusing on rape as the worst crime possible against women during war narrows the conversation about violence. When you prosecute rape as a weapon of war you are not looking intersectionally at the causes of war that also create the circumstances by which women are unduly burdened, like poverty and capitalism. Furthermore, “the international legal order may render invisible everyday violence and injustice” (ibid, 105). However, Henry concludes testifying before a tribunal, for example the ICTY, may offer agency to survivors by creating a space where they can talk about their experiences with violence. Tribunals may also give voice and legitimate untold stories of victims who died, and record the conditions for survivors who are not willing to come forward and speak out of fear (Henry, 2014). It is also possible, in spite of the legal categorization of rape in the context of war, in practice rape in the context of war survivor is not among the available categories for women to access. (I would suggest this is an example of self-regulation by internalizing the juridical model of power as the only legitimate source of agency.)

International Relations (IR) provides methodology that is incomplete for framing and discussing rape in the context of war. K.R. Carter asserts, that while IR has been bereft of study on the topic, its positivist/realist approach is well suited to tackling the subject. While I locate my work in what Carter terms the “peripheral” areas of scholarship, “critical theory, postmodernism, feminist theory, postcolonial theory, normative theory, peace studies, anthropological approaches, and historical sociology,” or soft-IR as it were, I find the framework she establishes useful for an initial understanding of why conceptualizing rape in the context of war is of paramount importance (Carter, 347, 2010). According to Carter, IR’s theoretical underpinning has three basic tenants: state-security as the base unit of analysis, a specific understanding of power as material, concerned with domination, and, “operating in a zero-sum game of relative gains,” and a belief in rational actors (ibid, 348). Since rape in the context of war threatens state sovereignty and fits within the bounds of positivist approaches it is within the purview of IR to theorize.

Carter suggests rape in the context of war threatens state sovereignty in two important ways. First, it deprives states of a monopoly on the use of force. The field of International Relations accomplishes this task by being available to everyone without capital investment or labor and is an infinitely renewable resource. Second, it impacts inter-state relationships, because it can cross borders; for example the rapes in the Rwandan genocide spreading into Eastern Congo. Rape in the context of war is amenable to positivism, because it can be separated into value-neutral facts and values, patterns can be uncovered distinct from the methods employed to discover them, and empirical knowledge is the standard (Smith, as quoted in Carter, 349, 2010). I question whether it is possible to ever truly know if patterns uncovered are beyond the methods used to excavate them, or in other words value-free. Further, I do not

find productive the distinction that rape in the context of war can be empirically value-free, but normatively value-laden. It is impossible for me to separate the act of rape from the cultural connotations of gender and sexuality, and I not sure a necessary step beyond strictly policing disciplinary boundaries.

Understanding the gendered and sexed dimensions of power in authorizing rape in the context of war is not only the focus of my work, but a facet Carter is unable to dispense with in her own inquiry:

On the one hand, raping some women sends a message to all women that they need protection. This places women in a situation of “double powerlessness.” Not only do they sit in a position of relatively less power in the victim-perpetrator model but – even if never suffering the direct effects of rape – they also require the protection of those (men) with relatively more power to protect. On the other hand, the broader power implications of this war weapon are to reinforce rapists’ relative power position over not just the victim herself but over those men who failed to protect her.

Clearly culturally determined femininities and masculinities require unpacking, which demonstrates the ineffectiveness of a purely positivist approach. Not only, as Carter rightly establishes, does rape work effectively because it has low barriers to entry, but based on culturally salient models of gender and sexuality that authorize or de-authorize access to power and model culture. Is this why rape in the context of war has been excluded from consideration in IR?

Carter believes rape in the context of war has been marginalized in International Relations for two reasons. First, debate over whether or not it proves to be an international security concern. Second, because it is widely thought of as a “women’s issue.” On both fronts

Carter quickly dismisses the assumptions. As previously stated rape in the context of war seamlessly crosses borders; examples include Rwandan and DRC, Croatia and Bosnia, and Sudan and Chad, just to list a few. Further, rape does not only effect women. This can immediately be taken as false if one just looks at the act, which involves a male perpetrator. Beyond that obvious observation women also participate in community life, which will be effected by their assault or the constant threat of it. More fundamental, “if rape were to be a “women’s issue”...then even still it would present a weapon of war that directly impacts at least 50% of the population in question,” making it best an embarrassing omission, and at worst condoning women’s inferiority and victimization (Carter, 355, 2010). Assuming rape to be a problem unique to women also omits male rape from the record as well as ignoring its use on children. So, what can IR tell us about rape in the context of war?

According to Carter, the numbers are staggering and on the rise internationally. Rape is misreported because of the shame and stigma attached to the survivor. Many women die from traumatic injuries related to their assault or commit suicide out of fear and internalizing societal shame before they can report. Also, “injustice systems” predominate where no systems are in place for reporting and holding those responsible to account. Male rape also occurs, and has similar results. Men die from health complications because they are too ashamed to report their injuries. Men are stripped of their masculinity and thereby forfeit the power and status it afforded. Male rape survivors are shamed and stigmatized, but interestingly, beyond the violation of the act, by equating them with women. This seems to suggest that it is not altogether implausible to conceive of rape as a “women’s issue”, because male harm from rape, beyond the obvious physical consequences, is emotionally and psychologically damaging because femininity is used as a tool of violence. Lastly, rape is a method of ethnic cleansing, either as an intentional

strategy or a tragic side effect. In conflicts where rape is a tactic of war, including DRC, Bosnia, and Darfur, rape camps are engineered for sexual slavery that produce “rape babies” of mixed ethnicity (ibid, 361). Also, many rapists shout racial slurs while they are assaulting their victims announcing their intent to destroy future generations through traumatic, forced sterilization with foreign objects or by forced insemination. Public rape is also common so that the act(s) fray communal ties. The children who are the products of such rapes also face being stigmatized and ostracized as reminders of the conflict and ethnic hatreds. Lastly, systematic rape has grave public health consequences regarding the spread of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. In the DRC only one organization is providing antiretroviral treatment, and projections indicate that half the population could be positive (Carter, 363, 2010). While these are all valid and useful conclusions reached from employing IR’s realist/positivist approaches none of them account for ideological motivations and cultural models that may illuminate why rape is authorized as an effective strategy and tool for war waging.

Katrina Koo attributes the silencing of rape in the context of war survivors to dependence on realism in International Relations discourse. Realist discourse creates a universal category of woman and does not allow room for nuance and ambiguity. Further, the state is privileged as the best mechanism for dealing with conflict and redress to the detriment of examining power relationships that constitute and limit women’s agency. In wartime, its immediate aftermath, and reconstruction women are only depicted in supporting roles, “such as family members, nurses, factory workers and occasionally spies, prostitutes...state-sanctioned representations of women” (Koo, 525, 2002). Koo believes in spite of the recognition of rape as a weapon of war, and thorough documentation of its use there is an absence in literature on war of a critical

examination of rape in the context of war. Additionally, she interprets this silence as deliberate and problematizes it through the understanding that states are the best mechanism for redress.

The role of the state is problematic, because the state is usually instrumental in ordering rape, or it requires the support of the new government, which also likely employed rape as a tactic, “not surprisingly, therefore, a long history of unprosecuted violence against women in war has allowed it to become naturalized and part of acceptable practice” (ibid, 530). This silence is also a product of the equation of knowledge with scientifically observable fact in the West. A soldier’s death can be quantified, but the trauma of rape is much more elusive and qualitative.

Koo suggests the process of collective forgetting is engineered by the state as a vital part of post-conflict reconstruction. This state-sanctioned memory construction makes women’s experiences invisible, because, “women face an international community that has historically preferred to consider rape outside the realm of the political” (Koo, 531, 2002). While historically this has been true in post-war reconstruction, “as a strategy of war, rape is one of the means by which the sanctioned and systematic pursuit of a political objective is undertaken” (ibid, 528). There seems to be a discontinuity between the wartime objective that relies on rape for its realization, and the reconstruction and reconciliation project that rejects rape as an acceptable chapter in the healing story of the nation. What is evident is how intrinsic sexuality is to state construction and political identity, and as Koo notes, “It is also evidence of the politicized and persuasive relationship between power and knowledge” (Koo, 533, 2002).

A central question in my work and feminist studies more broadly is, how can you discuss and write about women’s lives without either essentializing or being relativistic? Women are being sexually assaulted in the DR Congo. Not all Congolese women experience sexual assault

the same way, but there are patterns to the types of assault. How can I tackle an investigation into the representations of Congolese women without reifying some of the epistemological norms I am trying to question? Feminist standpoint theory is a useful analytical tool for privileging women-situated knowledge that has been historically marginalized in favor of white, male, Western knowledge. It locates voices on the periphery or “others” and elevates them to credible knowers and experts in their own lives. However, if we admit experience is poly-vocal then how can we maintain the category of “woman” as a unit of analysis? What are women’s issues in a movement that privileges difference as the starting place for theorizing? Susan Heckman does a wonderful job analyzing scholarship on feminist standpoint theory, which addresses these very problems of knowledge and desire to accurately represent women’s lives and experiences.

Feminist standpoint theory arose in the 1980’s as a response to Western, white, male, positivist epistemology, and was rooted in Marxian theory. At the fundamental level it endeavors to ask and answer the question, “How do we justify the truth of the feminist claim that women have been and are oppressed” (Hekman, 342, 1997)? However, in the course of destabilizing doctrinaire disciplinary boundaries to make room for new knowledge paradigms based on difference, tensions quickly erupted around the ways this new feminist project may be assimilating the old, masculine thinking under the guise of feminism. First, the central contradiction facing feminist scholarship is the rejection of the essentialization of women while reducing all men to one ‘unitary group’ (ibid, 350). This not only occurs when men are stereotyped in feminist theory as white, Western and affluent (characteristics I find ready at hand for my own work), but when feminist thinkers like Nancy Hartsock refuse to move beyond the core/periphery model (Hekman, 350, 1997). If the project is to destabilize the core by including

“other” voices then the new politics created can no longer operate on a binary model. Hartsock is unwilling to shed the core/periphery model, because, “the postmoderns, she claims, who want to eliminate the center, thereby deny us our right to self-definition...they deny us the right to speak the truth about our subjugation, obviating the very possibility of knowledge and truth” (ibid, 351). Hekman is sympathetic to this concern, because it is a veritable fact women and “others” must demonstrate their oppression and exclusion, their standpoint, in order to arrive at a new truth. Hartsock’s logical fallacy is not her identification of this problem, but her solution, which rearticulates the core/periphery dichotomy that silenced and marginalized women in the first place. As Hekman rightly points out, conceiving of any standpoint as privileged above another does not accommodate diversity and recognize situatedness (Hekman, 351, 1997).

Second, feminist standpoint theorists are reluctant if not outright hostile to admit the feminist standpoint is a constituted discourse, because they feel to do so would cause it to lose its ‘necessary grounding’ (ibid, 352). For some reason it is considered a failure by feminists such as Hartsock and Collins to accept the feminist standpoint is one of many standpoints that are valid. While I understand the importance of creating a counter-hegemony, refusing to admit multiple perspectives is just an appropriation of ‘the master’s tools’ (Lorde, 2007), which is less revolutionary and more despotic. Sandra Harding believes standpoint theory can overcome this obstacle by developing something she calls “strong objectivity”, which, “recognizes the social situatedness of all knowledge but also requires “a critical evaluation to determine which social situations tend to generate the most objective knowledge claims” (142)” (Hekman, 354, 1997). This is a departure for feminist standpoint theory, because it does not outright reject masculinist definitions of objectivity. Heckman points to two pitfalls of Harding’s “strong objectivity.” One, Heckman fails to acknowledge the “reality of women’s lives” from which she would like to

originate her telling of “less false stories’ is contested reality and constituted discourse, “the fact that it is closely tied to the social actors’ own concepts and provides a counter to the hegemonic discourse of masculinist science makes it no less a discourse” (ibid, 355). Further, Hekman suggests the admission of it as a discourse would not discredit it. Second, there is an implicit assumption that by using objective masculinist science to tell “less false stories” about women’s lives they will be recognized as such unchallenged. However, feminist scholarship has been forever discredited by the establishment, and why would this be any different (Hekman, 1997).

Hekman concludes that feminist standpoint theory is not beyond saving, but that its true contribution to epistemological power shift is not by privileging either universal truth or social construction, “but by deconstructing the dichotomy itself” (ibid, 356). She describes this new form of politics as not reading from a “script” (Hekman, 357, 1997). I find this thinking useful in light of my reading of Marcus and her interpretation of discursive rape scripts. There is still the problem of poly-vocality, “if we take the multiplicity of feminist standpoints to its logical conclusion, coherent analysis becomes impossible because we have too many axes of analysis” (ibid, 359). In an unforeseen turn of events, Hekman posits deploying Weber’s “ideal type” as a solution, “At the root of Weber’s concept of the ideal type is his claim that no aspect of social reality can be apprehended without presuppositions” (Hekman, 360, 1997). Social reality is intelligible via cultural values that order meaning and map reality (ibid). The “ideal type” is the choice of what to analyze predicated on subject position, “the purpose of ideal types is to provide a means of comparison with concrete reality in order to reveal the significance of that reality... We cannot justify ideal types by claiming that they accurately reproduce social reality. No concept can do that – all positions are partial and perspectival” (Hekman, 1997). All knowledge is situated and partial and analytical value is located in the subject’s choosing, and

feminist standpoint theory opens the perspective to include another ‘social world’ without conceding the need for a metanarrative to justify objectivity (ibid, 361). I would counter that regardless of whether or not we engage a metanarrative it is never the less there like an elephant in the room. Being a woman is the metanarrative that Hekman, alongside other feminist scholars and thinkers, have failed to reconcile.

While it is clear there is no universal category “woman” that encapsulates all women’s experiences it remains a fact that there are women’s experiences. How do feminist theorists reconcile this paradox? One potential avenue is theorizing a “politics of difference” (Sawicki, 1986). Jana Sawicki draws parallels between feminist theorist Audre Lorde and Michel Foucault to ground a politics of difference. Both critical theorists are able to harness difference, “as a creative source of resistance and change” (ibid, 24). Although it may seem feminism has only recently take up the project of difference, Sawicki contends feminism has its roots in elucidating the differences between women and men to theorize what is unique about women’s experience (Sawicki, 23, 1986). Tensions arose in the creation of a “collective feminist subject” when multiple systems of oppression were uncovered that seemed to destabilize the feminist project (ibid). Marxian and other radical feminists want to engage in traditional revolutionary theory, while Foucault and Lorde believe, “power utilizes difference to fragment opposition” (Sawicki, 24, 1986). By revealing contrasting understandings of power between Foucauldian and Revolutionary Theory, Sawicki moves us towards conceptualizing a new feminist politics of difference.

Foucault saw traditional power structures and revolutionary theories operating within a “juridico-discursive model” whereby power is possessed, top-down, and repressive (ibid, 26). Within this model micro-powers are omitted and power is limited to operate in the political

sphere. Foucault contends instead that power is exercised, bottom-up, and productive (ibid). His model of power is about relationships of power that constitute subjects instead of beginning with historical subjects, i.e. bourgeoisie/proletariat, “Foucault gives accounts of the ways in which certain institutional and cultural practices have produced individuals. These are the practices of a disciplinary power which he associates with the rise of the human sciences” (Sawicki, 27, 1986). Disciplinary power produces subjects either through labeling or physical division (ibid). Subjects are then normalized within discourse, i.e. sexuality and sanity, which create docile bodies primed for intervention. Working toward “new forms of subjectivity” moves beyond trying to group people into Huxley-esque castes by abandoning categorization altogether, “He does not deny the phenomenon of class (or State) power,” but argues looking to centralized sources of power ignores power, “at the everyday level of social relation” (Sawicki, 28, 1986).

This is in line with feminism’s desire to elevate non-hegemonic ways of knowing and privilege marginalized knowers outside the traditional white, hetero-normative subject position. By articulating power as top-down you cannot but deny agency of so called non-elites. For Foucault everyday operations of power enable macro-power structures, “disciplinary power was not invented by the dominant class and then extended down into the micro-level of society. It originated outside this class and was appropriated once it revealed its utility” (ibid, 28-29). To be clear disciplinary power is a product of mundane force relations that are constantly shifting and resisting.

Foucault refers to his politics of difference as the “genealogical method.” Not intended as a theory, “genealogy as resistance involves using history to give voice to the marginal and submerged voices which lie “a little beneath history,” i.e. the mad, the delinquent, the abnormal, the disempowered. It locates many discontinuous and regional struggles against power both in

the past and the present. These voices are the sources of resistance, the creative subjects of history” (Sawicki, 32, 1986). Coming to voice is the essence of feminism, which began because women were silenced and oppressed. Like other power relations that employ difference as a tool of division, i.e. race and class, gender became a dogmatic caste within the feminist movement that distorted the project. Sawicki utilizes the “sexuality debate” to illustrate this distortion.

American feminists have competing views on sexuality that are predicated on the same juridico-discursive understanding of power. Radical feminists believe sexuality has become male dominated and reject its institutions from heterosexuality to pornography to prostitution as mechanisms of domination (ibid, 33). Libertarian feminists originate from the same belief in male domination of sexuality, but claim women must engage in any and all forms of sex as a liberatory struggle (Sawicki, 1986). In spite of their divergence, both radical and libertarian feminists locate sexual power in male, hetero-normative institutions; top-down and centralized. Both interpret sexual power as fundamentally repressive. And both reify problematic notions of sexuality that rely on reductive male and female gendered units of analysis. A Foucauldian analysis, “would attempt to disarticulate gender and sexuality and thereby reveal the diversity of sexual experiences” (ibid, 34). Some feminist theories continue to replicate sexuality as a subjugated knowledge, and reduce all women’s oppression to a single working of power: sexuality (Sawicki, 35, 1986). Sexuality is but one location where power does work.

Sawicki’s reading of Foucault as a tool for articulating a feminist politics of difference demonstrates why Foucauldian analysis is intellectually productive for thinking through awareness raising representations of rape in the context of war. First, it enables me to subvert leading perspectives and assumptions that inform thinking and policy on rape in the context of war. It is my belief we cannot legislate rape in the context of war as a universal category

representing the convergence of sexuality and violence. Further, reactions to awareness-raising representations are informed by “popular knowledge,” which, “is not shared by all people, “but it is, on the contrary, a particular, local, regional knowledge, a differential knowledge incapable of unanimity” (ibid, 30). Popular knowledge is an operation of micro-power that, “makes possible certain global effects of domination (e.g. class, power, patriarchy)” (Sawicki, 28, 1986). There are specific conditions in the West that permit us to tell a particular story of women and sexuality and violence that can be disclosed by a Foucauldian understanding of power.

It is not enough to describe the reality of rape or legislate against rape where it is found. Awareness and direct action are paramount steps toward eliminating SGBV, but they are only a piece of the intellectual labor required to wholly understand and reject the conditions necessary for rape to be a tool of power. We must open the dialogue to include an interrogation of the power structures that create environments in which rape is possible. Furthermore, SGBV does not exclusively happen to women nor do men always rape. However, this is the framework we are given for making sense of this form of violence. The construction of femininities and masculinities must be examined to uncover the ways in which women are constructed as pre-victims and victims of rape and men as rapists and pre-rapists, and the silences at the margins of such discourse. The male gaze is a theory that explains how women live their daily lives as vulnerable.

iv. The Male Gaze

What is the male gaze and how is it operationalized? According to Laura Mulvey, “In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female

figure...women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*" (Mulvey, 346, 1992). In life, art, and other media the spectator and curator is always assumed to be a man. Not only do men possess the power of the gaze, but women internalize their role as object/surveyed and begin to self-regulate, "A woman must continually watch herself. She is almost continually accompanied by her own image of herself...And so she comes to consider the *surveyor* and the *surveyed* within her as the two constituent yet always distinct elements of her identity as a woman...how she appears to men, is of crucial importance for what is normally thought of as the success of her life" (Berger, 46, 1973). Success for women is access to male patronage that requires conformity to the desires of men, and acceptance of women's role as subordinate. For women their own bodies become canvases where identities are inscribed. They inhabit flesh that is no longer their flesh; the female body betrays the female. There is no escape from our fleshy integument, "To be on display is to have the surface of one's own skin, the hairs of one's own body, turned into a disguise which, in that situation, can never be discarded" (ibid, 54). Put simply, the male gaze is embodiment as spectacle/performance.

Looking is a site of power that both creates and reflects power. Power here being broadly understood the ability to make decisions over, and operate one's own life. Women exist as looked at and looked after, while men exist as lookers and custodians. When you possess the power to look you also possess the power to create culture, which must necessarily be suited to your taste. The ability to curate culture is a site of power for men as spectators, "the social presence of a woman is different in kind from that of a man. A man's presence is dependent upon the promise of power which he embodies...But the pretense is always towards a power which he exercises on others. By contrast a woman's presence expresses her own attitude to

herself...” (Berger, 45-46, 1973). However, a woman’s attitude toward herself is not her own, but that of the internalized male viewer rendering women both hyper-visible and invisible in a fantastic cheat (Foucault, 1980).

Female-ness is to be always available, always under surveillance, always (re)producing one’s own image in the image of male desire to reify masculine power and prestige, which is dependent upon the construction of the ideal woman. Simultaneously women are erased as autonomous subjects with agency. Women are reduced to surfaces instead of selves. Flavio Rando posits that if men are the creators and females the created then the construction of “the feminine is a way to organize that knowledge” (Rando, 51, 1991). In other words, social relationships are predicated on gender mediating power in the exchanges between individuals which allows for political action (ibid). The male gaze is the location where gender is instrumentalized as political power.

The male gaze is dependent upon Western understandings of “normalized corporeity” (Ponterotto, 2016). In the West gender is constructed as a binary, whereby the ideal human subject is white, male, heterosexual, and affluent. “This aesthetic ideal has been so rooted in popular consciousness that it has been raised to the status of standardized norm...once these models become conventionalized and universally accepted, they obviously assume the status of cultural norm, a socially sanctioned myth of the ideal body” (ibid, 135). Because women operate within this socially sanctioned imaginary they view self-worth as being inextricably linked to being, “fit to be looked at” (MacSween, 156, 1993).

Women’s internalization of the male gaze in Western culture is operationalized in the form of consumerism. The ideal female body is thin, white, ageless, soft-featured, and fit. Entire industries exist for the maintenance of this ideal form: cosmetics, magazines, Barbie,

plastic surgery, Weight Watchers and its kin, and beyond. All of these create, what Susan Bordo terms, an “empire of images” that have political and ontological weight. Pushing beyond the bounds of the social imaginary domain to the performative, “some associations between bodily experiences and abstract concepts are *situated* in that they develop from socio-cultural contexts and are thus informed by cultural imperatives, values, and habits” (Ponterotto, 142, 2016). Masculinity is dependent upon the female body as a resource to situate its power, and that conversion from ideology to embodiment is called the male gaze.

If we are operating under the assumption that women have an internalized male viewer that regulates their being in the world, then the question for me becomes, how do we unseat him? Sandra Lee Bartky suggests, “We women cannot begin the re-vision of our own bodies until we learn to read the cultural messages we inscribe upon them daily and until we come to see that even when the mastery of the disciplines of femininity produce a triumphant result, we are still only women.” (Bartky, 1990, 82) Women living a patriarchal society have internalized a panoptic male viewer, and become their own disciplinarians (ibid, 72). Drawing on Foucault, Bartky articulates the creation of *docile bodies* was a counter-movement that occurred simultaneously with the rise of modern institutions; examples of modern institutions are the prison and the school (Foucault, 1977). There are spatial and temporal aspects to this creation. For the purposes of this discussion the spatial aspects are most generative.

Bartky’s intervention was to incorporate women into a Foucauldian critique of power by showing disciplinary practices produce a recognizably female body in three ways: regulating the size of women’s bodies, the space women occupy/their bodily compartment, and ornamentation. Even though we are all situated under the “panoptic gaze” that gaze is uniquely masculine. Drawing upon the work of Iris Marion Young, Bartky suggests there is an imaginary space

surrounding women which they cannot trespass, “Women’s space is not a field in which her bodily intentionality can be freely realized but an enclosure in which she feels herself positioned and by which she is confined” (Bartky, 67, 1990). Construction of this imaginary space is only possible, because of the existence of the male gaze, which Bartky refers to as a “male witness.” Women see themselves not through their own eyes, but through the vision of the male witness leading to feelings of *shame* (ibid, 72). However, the male witness is internalized so the woman’s body becomes a site of self-betrayal leading to feelings of alienation and shame.

Bartky locates women’s subjectivity as being disclosed within a field of *shame*. Shame is an *imaginary landscape* in which women locate themselves and are fueled by the presence of an internalized male witness, “...it requires if not an actual audience before whom my deficiencies are paraded, then an internalized audience with the capacity to judge me, hence internalized standards of judgment” (Bartky, 86, 1990). The male witness regulates women’s diet and exercise, bodily comportment, and ornamentation. Women’s bodies become deficient. There are three ways of thinking about conditioned female bodily deficiency.

First is the infantilization of the female form whereby the ideal is that of the girl child, “The body by which a women feels herself judged and which by rigorous discipline she must try to assume is the body of early adolescence, slight and unformed, a body lacking flesh or substance, a body in whose very contours the image of immaturity has been inscribed” (ibid, 73). Second is paternalism toward, “...the face of the ideally feminine woman must never display the marks of character, wisdom, and experience that we so admire in men” (Bartky, 1990). Third, I have termed the self-project, whereby women conforming to these harmful standards gain access to male patronage, “but little real respect and rarely any social power. A woman’s effort to master feminine body discipline will lack importance just because she does it: Her activity

partakes of the general depreciation of everything female. In spite of unrelenting pressure to “make the most of what they have,” women are ridiculed and dismissed for the triviality of their interest in such “trivial” things as clothes and make-up. Further, the narrow identification of woman with sexuality and the body in a society that has for centuries displayed profound suspicion toward both does little to raise her status” (ibid). If women attempt to divest themselves of the male witness they are in effect de-skilling by revoking access to male privilege that is the source of power in the West. There is a social and physical alienation that has been lived experience of women.

In the West we have a very unhealthy relationship to women’s bodies. This relationship is manifest in the discourses about women’s bodies that pervade media, commerce, and psycho-social interaction. One such discourse I have noticed is becoming increasingly prominent speaks to childbirth. When a woman has a baby the conversation centers on how she will “get her body back after baby”. Where did her body go? It has undergone a transformation as part of a natural process, but it has not been lost. This is an example of female alienation where women are made to feel betrayed and powerless in their own bodies. It is directly related to the construction of women as mothers and caregivers that is positively sanctioned by cultural narrative. Women’s bodily integrity is directed by sexuality. Female sexuality is either positively linked to mothering and childbearing or negatively reflected in myths about promiscuity and danger for women who do not conform to the available women’s role. In order for the positively sanctioned role of mother to be available for women they must not only perform it, but they must meet physical standards of beauty that make them competitive for male patronage. Immediately after performing the only function they are deemed worthy of women are then expected to resume the maintenance of beauty standards to feel secure in their position as wives and mothers or face

forfeiting even that “privilege.” From cosmetics to hide and cover up, cosmetic surgery to permanently alter, reproductive laws dictating how women can care for their bodies, there are regimes of truth that regulate female bodily comportment and mobility, and reduce women to one facet of their being in the world-sexuality.

This experience has been differentially arrived at for women because of divergent histories, cultures, economies, physical abilities, sexual orientations, and skin color. What makes this project uniquely feminist when forms of oppression are multitudinous and not always uniquely bounded by being a woman? Confrontational resistance to the shared oppression of silencing can be theorized as a uniquely feminist project by looking to Audre Lorde’s conceptualization of the erotic as a form of emotional intelligence. Emotions have been housed within the construction of female-ness not as a way of knowing, or as a privileged position, but as the foil to rational man. Emotions are situated in the body and intelligence is situated in the mind. As explained above, women have been traditionally relegated to their physical attributes. Locating the male gaze as the subject position from which men enact patri-normative power creates conditions for creating an embodied feminist theory of resistance that acknowledges the historical material conditions of women’s oppression without reification.

There is a tension in feminist theory between universalizing and atomizing (I am borrowing this phrasing from Sontag’s discussion of the photographs of Arbus and Steichen in *On Photography*) the conditions of woman-ness, male-ness, and human-ness. It is in this tenuous space that I believe a feminism can emerge that responds well to ambiguity and embraces nuance; both of which are shuttered out in the cold in positivist approaches, and become too abstracted in the work of many feminist scholars, “What enormous power lies in the objectifying consequences of this male gaze...And that is why perhaps the best form of

resistance is, first of all, the simple awareness that the female body is *a gazed upon body*, and secondly, the unrelenting conviction and steadfast commitment to reject that condition” (Ponterotto, 148, 2016).

Visibility is a characteristic of the construction of racialized and gendered bodies. In order to elucidate the similar work being done in both contexts, which overlap in conceptualizing feminist theory, Amey Adkins reads together Fanon and Beauvoir. Adkins suggests that for both racialized and female bodies the gaze creates a condition of alterity (Adkins, 698, 2013). Fanon is able to capture this through his recounting in *Black Skin, White Masks* of his “epidermalization” by a mother and her child shouting “Look! A Negro!” (ibid, 699). Epidermalization is the location of identity in skin, your physical characteristics. Beauvoir echoes Fanon’s concerns surrounding racialization when she discusses gendered “othering” in *The Second Sex*, “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (Adkins, 702, 2013). In both instances it is not a natural condition that produces the subject as racialized or gendered. Rather both require being taken as other, “The moment of being caught in the gaze is the one that inaugurates the possibilities – or to say, the limitations – of being a black man” or woman (ibid, 705). Again we find an affirmation of the primacy of the gaze in conceiving subjectivity.

Although both are theorizing alterity, Beauvoir is attentive to the production of racialized bodies in her work, while Fanon is silent towards women’s oppression. Adkins suggests that before the white male gaze Fanon interprets women as competition for white male patronage that has the ability to authorize or deauthorize subject positions. Whether or not this is consciously or unconsciously his project it brings into relief the power of the white, patri-normative gaze. The ability to look at connotes the ability to name. To name is to other, to authorize/deauthorize, and exercise dominance over.

Often Women of Color feminists talk of making theoretical interventions that do not engage with western, white, positivist, patriarchal, and historically primary ways of thinking and knowing. I do not believe it is possible to accomplish this aim, because the very need for radical paradigmatic shifts in knowledge production is based on reacting to historical omissions and violence. Even suggesting such a project is possible seems counterproductive to the aim, because it ostensibly silences the reason for the imperative in the first place. Historical material conditions that constitute racialized and gendered embodiment are necessary explanatory models to support theoretical interventions.

Both gender and race project onto the body “to-be-looked-at-ness” (Mulvey, 1992). Gendered and racialized bodies are sites for the articulation of masculine power (Rondo, 1991). Gender is situated knowledge, because it is both an abstract concept and a bodily experience (Ponterotto, 2016). The male gaze describes the movement between ideology and embodiment that women and men undergo as part of the gendering process. By internalizing a male witness women feel betrayed by and alienated from their bodies leading to female subjectivity being disclosed through feelings of shame and powerlessness (Bartky, 1990). It is this state of vulnerability and precariousness before the gaze of men that is codified in Western cultural beliefs about femininity that are written into scripts as mundane as whether or not to wear makeup, as sacred as virginity taboos, and as institutionalized as laws governing forms of assault. Visibility is enacted in media representations of gender and violence.

v. Media

I would like to make connections between cultural narratives and media by a consideration of authorship and authorization. Whose voices and lived experiences are authorized/deauthorized by cultural narratives? How do cultural narratives influence our

epistemologies and daily lived experiences? Who authors these narratives? I would like to demonstrate Western media relies on gender to curate meaning. Edward Said described Orientalism as, “the distribution of a geopolitical awareness into an aesthetic” (Said, 12, 1978). An aesthetic is interpretive, a way of seeing, a set of principles for analyzing work being done, a frame, a modality of vision. This succinct description is useful for thinking about reporting as aesthetic and the relationship between cultural narrative craft and media craft.

Gender is the scaffolding of the social imaginary constructing meaning for individuals, social groups, political organizations, and economic systems. Race, class, and ability also function in this role, but are not the primary focus of my research. Unconsciously and consciously when we write and read stories there is subtext informed by imagined communities (Anderson, 2006) of shared knowledge about the world. This shared knowledge is codified as gender, race, class, and ability. These code words elicit meaning without requiring further explanation or deep engagement. When “woman” is seen or heard there are a whole series of qualifications that are culturally specific and known among members of a community. I have spent time above explicating the cultural assumptions underlying man and woman in the Western cultural imaginary. These communities may be formed in the social imaginary, but they are enacted by bodies. When discourse becomes corporeally animated I find it problematic to continue referring to it as imaginary. Understanding, of course, there is no biological condition existing outside the fictive construction gender it is nonetheless a material reality. Anderson’s theory of “imagined communities” has been uncritically taken up by the academy as a way of describing deeply embodied ways of knowing. While I find the framework useful I want to be careful not to abstract gender to the point of meaninglessness. One approach is to consider how gender mediates knowledge in media that is inscribed on bodies and locations.

Mediatization is an intensification of the internalization of media logic that aids in and constitutes social and cultural reproduction (Deacon, Stanyer, 2014). Framing, handmaiden to mediatization, involves a process of selection whereby culturally weighty themes are employed by the media based on social norms and values to frame stories for the audience in ways they will respond to and understand (Easteal, Holland, Judd, 2014). These frames are typically nuance-free and value-laden, and elicit a type of cultural currency, because their comprehensibility is based on societal norms and structures. These conceptual tools for evaluating media effects are in part responses to the previously widespread hypodermic needle theory and the theory of limited effects. Instead of positing either complete obedience to media messages or total autonomy from them, framing and mediatization help us think through media as a “community of discourse”, a “vocabulary of interaction”, as “ensembles of texts” (Tuchman, 1979).

CHAPTER III

WAR IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

“US sovereignty is no longer an issue of secure borders and secure interests...instead a certain drive toward, self-display, a certain style of national masculinity; and war becomes the material arena for its performative constitution, self-making rather than self-defending. The sublime spectacle of overwhelming power is the mechanism through which the feminizing humiliation of whatever enemy can be dredged up is to be accomplished, but more than that, it is the material sign of the superpower’s superpower.” ~Mann

On April 6, 1994 Juvenal Habyarimana, the President of Rwanda’s, private aircraft was shot down over Kigali, Rwanda. In the next 100 days approximately 800,000 Tutsis were massacred by Hutus. The genocide was justified by the Hutu power regime as a response to the assassination of Rwanda’s Hutu President by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF); a Tutsi rebel group working outside Rwandan borders to overthrow the government. Although we will never know with certainty, it is now widely believed the aircraft was shot down by Hutu extremists within the government to legitimate the mass killing of Tutsis. The RPF, operating from Uganda and without the aid of the International community, invaded Rwanda, led by General Paul Kagame, and ended the genocide. Immediately after the RPF captured Kigali, Hutu militias and civilians began fleeing en masse over the border into neighboring Zaire, because they feared reprisal killings by the new Tutsi government.

Over one million Hutus arrived in hastily constructed refugee camps directly over the border causing another immediate humanitarian crisis. Cholera broke out and killed 50,000 refugees in the first month. The militias were never disarmed as they entered the camps, and quickly began running them as recruitment centers for a reinvasion of Rwanda. Hutu militias

began extorting relief workers and stealing relief supplies. Reports of rape became widespread. President Mobutu Sesse Seko refused to send military or police forces to help secure the refugee camps. Due to the increasing militarization within the camps international aid agencies began to pull out their workers, including MSF.

Having established power in Rwanda the RPF wanted to find the Hutu genocidaires. In the Zairian camps it was impossible to tell soldiers and civilians apart. Between November 1996 and May 1997 the RPF began staging cross-border raids into the refugee camps to murder suspected perpetrators of the genocide. This caused Hutu refugees to flee the camps seeking safety further in the interior of Zaire. As they fled they were actively pursued by RPF soldiers supported by the Armed Forces for the Liberation of the Democratic Congo-Zaire (AFDL). The AFDL was a disaffected rebel group in Zaire working to overthrow President Mobutu. This collusion between the Rwandan government and a Zairian rebel group further incentivized Mobutu from sending in troops to disarm the camps, which were now largely lawless. In May 1997 the leader of the AFDL Laurent Kabila succeeded, with the help of the RPF, in sending Mobutu into exile, and taking power in Zaire. They renamed the country the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Still processing the genocide, the United Nations was concerned with Hutu refugees now missing in the forests of DRC and presumed dead, and the ongoing RPF military incursions, and decided to send in investigators. President Kabila refused to cooperate with UN investigators, because of his alliance with the RPF. Finally, in 1998 President Kabila decided it was time to demonstrate his autonomy from Rwanda and ordered the RPF troops pull out of Eastern DRC. Rwandan President Paul Kagame refused to order his troops to withdraw out of fear that President Kabila had shifted his support to the Hutu militias, and would help them invade

Rwanda. In retaliation, President Kabila began to encourage discrimination against the Banyamulenge an ethnic Tutsi minority living in Eastern DRC. Rwanda sought the help of neighboring Uganda, and invaded DRC to overthrow President Kabila. Their attempt was unsuccessful.

Afterward, Paul Kagame and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, backed the creation of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), a rebel group composed of the Banyamulenge. The RCD wanted take possession of the mineral rich areas of Eastern DRC and force Kabila out. Clashes between the government and RCD lead to the outbreak of a full-blown civil war in 1998. Meanwhile President Kabila enlisted the support of Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia to help him retain power. As the war continued the RCD eventually split into two forces, one allied with Rwanda and the other with Uganda, and more and more rebel groups began to proliferate within Congo's borders. Within this conflict economic exploitation, looting, murder, torture, rampant corruption, lack of social service infrastructure, IDP's, incitement of ethnic rivalry, and overwhelming sexual and gender based violence took over. It is within this context, and the history of the failure to intervene to prevent or end the genocide in Rwanda, that the United Nations felt compelled to act in the DRC.

In 1999 the Lusaka Peace Accords were signed. The United Nations monitored the implementation of this ceasefire between DRC, Rwanda, Angola, Uganda, Namibia, and Zimbabwe; all supporters of various rebel groups operating in DRC during the civil war. There has been some debate over whether the conflict in the DRC constitutes an interstate war, because the rebel groups are not official state parties, and they are operating within the boundaries of one country. However, six nations involved signed the Lusaka Peace Accords, which I feel recognizes the legitimacy of their participation in a multi-state conflict. In July 2002 Rwanda

and the DRC signed a peace deal known as the Pretoria Accord. It called for the removal of all Rwandan troops from DRC, and the cooperation of Congo's government in the disbanding of any Hutu Interhamwe still operating in the Eastern forests. In 2003 a transitional government was established in DRC, followed by disarmament of rebel groups, and the writing of a new constitution. In 2006 elections were held for the first time in almost 50 years. In spite of this progress in DRC violence among militias along the border between Rwanda and DRC is still ongoing.

The United Nations Mission in Congo (MONUC) began in 1999 during the Lusaka Peace Accords. It was conceived of initially to monitor the ceasefire between Angola, DRC, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. MONUC also helped to organize elections in DRC. This was a Chapter VI deployment without permitting the use of force. On July 30, 2006 the first free and fair elections were held in DRC in 46 years. In 2011 MONUC was replaced in DRC with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Congo (MONUSCO). The Lusaka Accords did not provide the lasting peace and stability hoped for. In March 2013 the United Nations passed resolution 2098 authorizing an Intervention Brigade be established and sent into DRC under MONUSCO's mandate to, "neutralize and disarm Congolese rebels, foreign armed groups" (UN Resolution 2098). It is the first time since the inception of the United Nations the Security Council deployed UN troops under Chapter VII, which means they have the prior authorization to use force offensively to *enforce* peace. In March 2014 the UN passed resolution 2147 renewing the Intervention Brigade mandate.

When the Intervention Brigade was deployed to DRC in July 2013 it was a force of 3,069 troops. They went into Eastern DRC and issued an ultimatum to M23 rebels in Goma to disarm by August 1. As of November 2013 the M23 rebel group had stopped fighting, and agreed to

disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR). This has since been heralded as a great victory for the Intervention Brigade, and a sign of the success in deploying a UN army in place of traditional peacekeepers, which have been criticized for being too risk adverse to be effectual in the field. The Intervention Brigade has long-range artillery, armored personnel carriers, drones, attack helicopters, and snipers. There is no confusion that this is a military unit. The Office of the United Nations Secretary General has stated that the Intervention Brigade was a unique response to special circumstances that will not become a model for future UN missions. However, now that the boundaries for peacekeeping have been expanded to include peace enforcement, will the legitimacy of future UN missions be undermined or enhanced by the Intervention Brigade in DRC?

MONUSCO's original mandate was to address human rights violations, promote stability in the Congo, protect IDPs, protect civilians, manage positive relationships with neighbor countries, promote economic growth and apprehend rebel leader Joseph Kony of the Lord's Resistance Army. Challenges to this mandate were, and continue to be, the presence of unstable refugee camps in Eastern DRC, widespread SGBV, resource exploitation and control by rebel groups, DDR of armed combatants, and accusations of UN soldiers operating with impunity; raping civilians, and operating corruptly undermining their authority. To help address these ongoing challenges the UN decided to create the Intervention Brigade and opt for military intervention over diplomacy. The war is ongoing. What are other standards by which to evaluate the Intervention Brigades success?

It is not possible to distinguish MONUSCO troops from Intervention Brigade troops. They both wear the same blue helmets, ride on the same transports, and operate from the same bases. Traditionally under International Humanitarian Law UN troops are peacekeepers, and as

such are not allowed to be targeted, because they are a non-party to the conflict. The Intervention Brigade is a party to the conflict, and jeopardizes the safety of UN personnel operating alongside them, because they can be targeted as combatants. Furthermore, civilians have a difficult time differentiating between different types of UN troops, and may not seek protection for fear of being caught up in battles.

Another hallmark of UN missions has been impartiality. Neither MONUSCO nor the Intervention Brigade has remained impartial in DRC. Since the arrival of UN troops they have been closely allied with the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo (FARDC). The FARDC is known for committing the same crimes against civilians as other rebel groups; including rape, looting, and torture. By aligning themselves with this group citizens may perceive the UN as condoning or participating in these crimes, which continue to go unpunished due to the lack of judicial infrastructure. In addition, remaining impartial allows the UN access into areas controlled by different rebel groups to administer aid to non-combatants, and create safety corridors for refugee return. If MONUSCO is seen as an arm of the government military they will not be able to maintain relationships with all parties, and service their primary role as a safeguard for civilians.

Historically, the protection of civilians has been the primary concern for UN troops. MONUSCO has chosen not to intervene during civilian massacres and blatant abuses of human rights despite their expanded mandate in the DRC. On June 6, 2014 there was a civilian massacre in the town of Mutarule, and despite having just under 20,000 troops in the country no MONUSCO or Intervention Brigade officers were deployed to assist. In September 2013, 941 surrendered fighters were sent to Kotakoli Camp in Equateur Province in Northwestern Congo awaiting DDR. By September 2014 none of the soldiers had been reintegrated, and forty-two of

the former combatants, five wives, and fifty-seven children had died at the camp from starvation. The camp is also being guarded by an FARDC army commander. There are no medical supplies, it is a remote location, and in the past year the government has paid the equivalent of twenty dollars US twice to each man to afford food. At the behest of Human Rights Watch the head of MONUSCO visited the camp on September 11, 2014, and hopefully the Intervention Brigade will see it fit to intervene to stop these blatant human rights violations.

Lastly, the use of force by UN troops has traditionally been reserved for self-defense. MONUSCO's mandate has expanded the definition of self-defense to include "defense of the mission" as written in its Capstone Doctrine. If this becomes the accepted definition of self-defense then any UN mission under Chapter VI or VII could claim self-defense for the mission to validate use of force. Claiming the mission is itself an entity that requires violence to ensure its success is a dangerous precedent to set.

CHAPTER IV

(RE)PRESENTATIONS OF RAPE IN THE CONTEXT OF WAR IN CONGO

“To produce an authentic contemporary document, the visual impact should be such as will nullify explanation” ~ Robert Frank (as quoted in On Photography)

“Language’s endeavor to confuse is a mask behind which looms an even greater undertaking to dispossess.” ~ Frantz Fanon

i. Introduction

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is not the only place branded by the media, governments, and aid organizations as the worst place on Earth to be a woman. Other countries indicted include: India, South Africa, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and recently Sweden. Domestic violence and rape in South Africa are cited as evidence. In Afghanistan, lack of access to education and ability to make choices over their lives earn women a nomination. In India bride burning, dowry murder, and rape are exemplary qualifications. Other factors cited include impunity for sexual violence, lack of healthcare services, human trafficking, son preference, and poverty. Some or all of these conditions exist for women everywhere, but are reported to occur with higher frequency in these countries. Sources for these claims are as diverse as the countries listed, ranging from women’s magazine Marie Claire to Amnesty International.

Utilizing the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a case study, I employ content analysis and text mining to document media discourses of women’s bodies that will help increase our understanding of the ways in which media shape and are shaped by the fetishization of women as vulnerable. Specifically I will analyze reporting and policy briefs on the DRC beginning in 1996 with the first Congo war and continuing through today to investigate how U.S. construction of gender informs coverage. I anticipated finding that coverage is dominated by

narratives that construct women as alternatively pre-victims or victims, which reduces the agency of Congolese women representationally and discursively, and indicates larger structural bias toward men as agents. Media analysis allows me to uncover how the media is in dialogue with theory and public policy, and how women's bodies become a site where those relationships are acted out. Further, it enables me to deconstruct taken-for-granted understandings of masculinity and femininity that continue to pervade American culture.

I make use of content analysis, text mining, and discourse analysis to document how means of mass communication collectively regarded can describe the customs and practices of individual people and culture, and how they make meaning of/in the world (Macnamara, 2005). Media informs public opinion, and can operate to advocate or to disempower, but is always present in decision making. Furthermore, media operates at the institutional level influencing the construction, understanding, and implementation of laws and policies that render salient gendered cultural messages. It is widely understood that media influence is not unidimensional, and audiences have the power to (re)interpret and frame media within their lived experience, but this does not detract from the formative relationship between media and society (Easteal, Holland, Judd, 2014). How do we interact with media? What is the relationship between knowledge and access to information? Is this unidirectional or multifaceted? What is the role of "the other" in storytelling/reporting? How does othering make stories intelligible for a Western audience?

It is my objective to think about and re-contest conventional understandings of rape as I conduct my analysis. Rape is about power, and does not exclusively violate the body of a victim, but the larger body politic. Farwell posits there is a tension between acknowledging rape in the context of war and accepting it as an inevitable component of war because, "women experience

rape in the context of war against themselves or their compatriots not as an individual crime or as medicalized symptoms, but within a sociopolitical-military context” (Farwell, 401, 2004). In patriarchal society women are seen to embody the culture, religion, and state including the men who are also its subjects. By strategically raping women you are pursuing a political objective. There seems to be a discontinuity expressed in literature and media on rape in the context of war that contradictorily recognizes rape as a weapon of war as a political tool, but insists uncritically that it be prosecuted as a sex crime. In wartime rape is not sexual violence, but sexualized violence, and this nuance is lost when it is categorized as a sex crime. The question for me became not why do soldiers rape, but what can be done to make women non-instrumental targets for rape in the context of war, and sexual violence more broadly.

Why is rape an effective tool of war? Through my research I have identified eight primary reasons women are effective and accessible targets for rape in the context of war. Women are seen culturally as mothers of the nation. Raping women terrorizes civilian populations into compliance, because it indiscriminately targets noncombatants. Rape is an effective strategy for driving communities from their homes to conquer territory. Rape continues to cause physical, emotional, psychological, and social harm to the survivor and the community after the initial attack. The intention of some rape is to mutilate and sterilize the woman so that she can no longer bear enemy children. Men are also targeted physically, and psychologically through women’s bodies. Mass rape signals defeat, because the men are unable to protect their homes, and may humiliate men by depriving them of the ability to father children. Rape attacks cultural norms and taboos regarding sexuality, particularly regarding incest and virginity, demoralizing and profaning communities, it creates mistrust and social alienation. Finally rape is cheap, by which I mean it requires no capital or training.

Broadly, I will open up the conversation about rape in the context of war by suggesting that the recognition of rape as a weapon of war, while intended to be a positive step forward for women's rights and recognition may serve to foreclose female agency (Buss, 147, 2009). Does recognition of rape as a weapon of war institutionalize a discourse of women as pre-victims/victims? What are the macro-structural problems related to simultaneous privileging of violence and masculinity in power relationships (Enloe, 2000)?

Additionally, I am interested how media stories gesture towards instrumental narratives about women and/or what other narratives will be provided. Instrumental narratives about women include women as embodiments of the nation, women as reproducing the home, and women as objects making them targets for violence directed at the state, which is largely spatially constructed as the domain of men, or a particular community. An example of women as objects is the ubiquitous linking together of raping and looting in descriptions of wartime violence. These narratives are part of larger power structures and cultural fetishes regulating gender and sexuality that go unexamined, and can be paradoxically reinforced by the media in the process of uncovering them (Buss, 2009). Categories are intended to demystify, but the work they perform I argue does just the opposite.

My point of intervention is theoretical, and concerned with the production of knowledge about women's bodies. My results are intended to help increase understanding of sexual and gender based violence as part of larger structural forces that reinforce social constructions of gender and patriarchy. Words matter, and while I am in no way under the naive impression that editorial boards are a secret cabal bent on the oppression of women worldwide, the stories they author and publish by design both inform and are informed by the world around them. Hopefully this intervention will lead to an improved understanding of this mutually constituent

relationship. The stories we tell about ourselves and others in the media become fodder for policy recommendations and institutional pre-deployment and field gender training on how to approach gender in conflicts. Currently NGOs, INGOs, governments and various international organizations, such as the United Nations and NATO, are incorporating gender training into their implementation policies and strategies.

As I conducted my data analysis there were three areas I focused on: authorship, audience, and content. Authorship refers to the publisher, author, source(s), and intent behind writing the piece. Audience includes readership and why the issue and message presented matters to readers. Content means the ideas, values, and points of view, both overt and implied, who or what is left out, and how might this affect interpretation. I am operating from the premise culture creates common understandings of media messages. Throughout my work I have referred to these common readings as culturally authorized narratives. By combining my theoretical framework with the results of my data analysis I will demonstrate the representational work being done with awareness raising reporting.

In total I compiled and analyzed 42 news articles, country reports, and policy briefings from sources including but not limited to: the New York Times, Time Magazine, The Washington Post, The Huffington Post, CNN, ABC News, Christian Science Monitor, Marie Claire, the United Nations, and International Red Cross. I compiled articles from a sampling of Western media outlets that reproduced the phrase "rape capital of the world" in reporting on the DRC over the period of 1996-2016. I located sources online, through the University of Oregon library microfiche collections, and in current newsstand publications. Once I had a diverse sample of articles meeting these conditions, I conducted a close reading of each text identifying and coding references to: gender, masculinity, femininity, SGBV, including but not limited to

rape as a weapon of war/war rape, and repetition of the phrase "rape capital of the world", "worst place on Earth to be a woman", and other similar narrative phrases. Next I identified quotations within each text that spoke to these themes. I then grouped the excerpts based on content into categories. Based on these categories I mapped my theoretical framework onto the selections from my larger data set, and began to code for patterns of representation that linked the theory with the data.

The articles I present do not represent a comprehensive analysis of all reporting on war in the Congo. Instead I chose to conduct a systematic analysis of a sample of reporting that best captures the representational work being done in the circulation of awareness raising representations of rape in the context of war in the DR Congo. I focused on American media outlets, because as an American, I am best able to speak to the context in which they produce and disseminate stories. A limitation of my study is that I cannot say that all coverage does this work. However, I was looking specifically for articles that have this kind of coverage to reveal how it works in practice. The themes that emerged reflect the theoretical framework I have built, which represents a large part of my thesis work and the data analysis I did. Further, the analysis of the articles I put forth is intended to demonstrate the circulation of discourse about rape in the context of war inflected by my theoretical analysis.

Based on the articles and policy papers I compiled, I have identified five themes that capture aspects of representation that I have labeled: performativity (Butler), the single-story (Adichie), instrumentality (Branch), lootrapeandpillage (Enloe), and coming to voice. Four are deductive, meaning they are defined in part by my theoretical framework, but came about through an interactive process putting the data and theory into conversation. However coming to voice was inductive, because it emerged independently during the process of my data analysis.

Each of these themes represents an aspect of my theoretical framework and demonstrates the circulation of discourse about rape in the context of war. Performativity is deductive, and refers to identity construction as a result of reading from preauthorized cultural scripts that inform how to frame stories to make them legible for a Western audience. The single story is deductive, and is the thematization of the Congo wars around SGBV, specifically rape in the context of war. Instrumentality is deductive, and refers to the construction of masculinity and femininity that is uncritically (re)produced in narrative form. Lootrapearandpillage is deductive, and describes the repetition of the words rape, loot, and pillage in descriptions of wartime violence, “women who suffer rape in wartime usually remain faceless...they merge with the pockmarked landscape; they are put on the list of war damage along with gutted houses and mangled rail lines” (Enloe, 108, 2000). Coming to voice is inductive, and is the way Congolese women narrate their lives in reporting. Commonalities between all five are the equation between woman and victim and the simultaneous privileging of violence and masculinity. These themes emerged during my research and guided my data analysis. Before I delve into the categories any further I would like to step back and look at the statistics reported by NGOs and reprinted by the media on the prevalence of rape in the context of war in the Congo. These offer context for thinking through the way Congolese women are overwhelmingly portrayed as victims.

Here is a sampling of the numbers published to convince Western audiences DRC is, “the worst place on Earth to be a woman”. A 2011 study published by the *American Journal of Public Health* estimated 48 women are raped every hour in DR Congo (Time Magazine, Jessica Hatcher, 2012). According to the UN Population Fund in 2009, 8,000 women were raped. The UN Children’s Fund reported having treated 16,000 rape victims in 2010, half of whom were children. Dr. Ange Rose Valimamdi, supervisor of Goma’s sexual violence prevention and

response organization, assesses the majority of rapes are never reported (Washington Times, Heather Murdock, 2011). According to an article published in The Nation, “Tens of thousands of rape victims have survived” (Ann Jones, The Nation, 2008). I decided to conduct a general comparison of the statistics on rape and sexual violence between the United States and DR Congo. This comparison shows the link between awareness raising representations of rape in the context of war in the Congo, and American self-perception of sexual violence. It is my belief that othering sexualized violence impacts self-perception, a discussion which I will go into further below.

Before looking at the numbers it is important to understand exactly what is legally understood by the terms rape and sexual violence in America. The US Department of Justice (USDOJ) defines rape as, “Forced sexual intercourse including both psychological coercion as well as physical force. Forced sexual intercourse means penetration by the offender(s). Includes attempted rapes, male as well as female victims, and both heterosexual and same sex rape. Attempted rape includes verbal threats of rape”. The USDOJ defines sexual assault as, “A wide range of victimizations, separate from rape or attempted rape. These crimes include attacks or attempted attacks generally involving unwanted sexual contact between victim and offender. Sexual assaults may or may not involve force and include such things as grabbing or fondling. It also includes verbal threats”. According to the National Sexual Violence Research Center (NSVRC), 91% of all rape victims in the U.S. are women. One in five women will be raped during their lifetime, and one in four girls will experience this rape before they turn eighteen (ibid). Further, one in three women who are raped as girls will experience rape again as adults (NSVRC). Rape is considered the most underreported crime (ibid). It is estimated 63% of

sexual assaults are not reported (ibid). In eight of ten cases the woman knew her rapist (NSVRC).

Humanitarian organizations working in the DRC put the total number of women raped in Congo around 500,000. As of July 2016 the UN reports the population of the Congo is **4,748,259; roughly half of whom are women**. If you do the math that puts the prevalence of rape among the female population at one in five. This statistically matches U.S. rape figures. If roughly the same number of women will experience sexual assault in their lifetimes in both the U.S. and DRC numbers alone cannot account for the distinction of world rape capital. It was generative for me to keep this in mind as I attempted to find alternative accounts for this distinction.

Throughout the articles, claims are made about SGBV and rape in the context of war that rely on socially constructed understandings of gender that go unacknowledged, but without which many of the conclusions drawn about victims, perpetrators, and cultural explanations for violence could not be drawn. In order to illuminate covert assumptions about gender replicated in awareness raising reporting I mined the articles for examples of the performance of gender. The performance of gender includes descriptions of attributes ascribed to masculinity and femininity. In the figure below you will see examples of the performance of gender that include: women's value is linked with their virginity, women discussed as cultural conduits, masculinity presented as inherently violent, male rape discussed by calling the survivors masculinity into question, and woman being equated with victim and man being equated with perpetrator. I am using Judith Butler's explanation of the link between language and speech, and the way we perform gender through our bodies. This performance is based on heteronormative gender roles. She calls this performativity. In other words, it is not just that I am labeled from birth as female

or male, but my lived experience reflects the doing of my gender. Media reflects the performance of gender, and uses it as a justification for sexualized violence.

ii. Thematic Analysis

Now that I have framed how I am approaching my data selection and analysis I will move into showing how the data reveals the five themes I have identified. Further, I will highlight quotations mined from the articles I selected that link my theoretical interventions with the work being done in awareness raising reporting on rape in the context of war in the DRC.

a. Performativity

In the section Gender & Human Rights I use Mann to explain how gender operates as a justificatory project in the United States parallel to Branch's work on human rights as a mobilizing narrative. Mann explains, "...gender is a structure of the social imaginary that binds us together in a community with others. It is at the same time a structure of and operation of language that shapes how we think and what we can think" (Mann, 8, 2014). We can see how language is operating in reporting on rape in the context of war that employs the structure of gender to shape how we think about the issue. For example, "I'm working around the hypothesis that when men are not able to achieve what are often rigid standards of what makes successful manhood, they become extremely anxious and volatile, and they will revert to dangerous and violent behavior in order to try to assert themselves as men." (Laurent, 2014) Here gender is a justificatory project to explain why men commit rape, because they feel their manhood threatened. Since gender is fundamental to our being in the world it generates feelings of social worth or worthlessness (ibid, 175). In tandem with a perceived assault on manhood is the perception of femaleness as inherently vulnerable and in need of preservation.

Figure 1. Examples of Performativity in media data sample

“Virginity is a precious thing,” she said. “If she loses it, she loses a very important part of herself.” (Murdock, 2011)

“I’m working around the hypothesis that when men are not able to achieve what are often rigid standards of what makes successful manhood, they become extremely anxious and volatile, and they will revert to dangerous and violent behavior in order to try to assert themselves as men.” (Laurent, 2014)

“I think this issue is universal,” he says. “Myself, I was raised to be quite masculine – playing football, fist fighting. It took me a long time to be in touch with myself and get away from that social posturing.” (ibid)

“She had become a message to her people.” (Kristof, 2008).

“In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a rape survivor is an outcast, blamed and shamed by local tradition and religion for the only crime pinned squarely on the victim. *She* (my emphasis) is dirtied...”because rape is a crime *women* and *girls* (my emphasis) have learned to suffer in shame and silence...” (Jones, 2008)

“As direct targets of men at war, women and girls suffer terribly...Men singly or in gangs’ rape women and girls...” (ibid)

“It’s true that long before the war Congolese men treated women as lesser creatures...It’s true that Congolese men hold notions that promote rape: that having sex makes men stronger...And it’s true that child rape is traditionally considered an offense only against the father whose property is “spoiled”, an offense resolved by “compromise” – that is, a man-to-man payoff...” (ibid)

“Cultural factors are insufficient to explain the frequency and unspeakable brutality of rape in the DRC...” (ibid)

“Look at DRC from the outside and it’s hard to see it as anything but a war against women.” (ibid)

“It is often said that raping women is intended to humiliate men.” (ibid)

“Cultural norms die too when women are raped.” (ibid)

“...the women of CFK broke the cultural silence and began to talk to survivors and their families about rape.” (ibid)

“...culture of impunity” (ibid)

“Men here, like anywhere, are reluctant to come forward. Several who did said they instantly became castaways in their villages, lonely, ridiculed figures, derisively referred to as “bush wives”.” (Gettleman, 2009)

The recognition of femaleness as vulnerable works together with the rejection of masculine vulnerability. In the 2011 Washington Times article “Congo a Country of Rape and Ruin” Heather Murdock explains, ““Virginity is a precious thing,” she said. “If she loses it, she loses a very important part of herself”. This example shows how women are equated with their virginity, their sexuality, which is precarious and can be taken away from them. Another

example of female vulnerability is presented by Jeffrey Gettleman in the New York Times: “Men here, like anywhere, are reluctant to come forward. Several who did said they instantly became castaways in their villages, lonely, ridiculed figures, derisively referred to as “bush wives.”” In the articles I see two sides of the same coin, “. . .the injurability of the female body, its penetrability, its shame, and masculine invulnerability and pride are evoked by the same frame” (Mann, 2014, 147). Male rape survivors have their masculinity called into question, because the act is equated with feminization. For a man, rape is an act of power that affirms masculinity. To be the victim of rape takes away access to male privilege, because the body is injured and vulnerable, which is seen as being feminized. This equivalency shows the power gender has in producing and justifying violence, which is echoed in the line, “It is often said that raping women is intended to humiliate men” (Jones, 2008). This signals the co-constitution of masculinity and femininity, and persistent vulnerability of women in the face of militarized masculinity. However, it is important to remember Enloe’s caution against accepting ‘mere maleness as sufficient cause for wartime rape’ when there are multiple layers of power at work.

b. The Single-Story

I would like to return to a discussion I began in the introduction. Chimamanda Adichie succinctly and cogently reminds us that historically Africa has been spoken for and about, like Congolese women in these articles, but the words of Africans are omitted. Adichie tells us instead of looking at the complexity of nations, cultures, and peoples we homogenize Africa and Africans in categories, for example as poor or ignorant. She names this phenomenon the single story, “If all one hears about Africa is the people are poor, poverty becomes the single story about them” (Adichie, 2012). As my analysis of reporting on DR Congo shows, victim has

become the single story told about Congolese women, and when you, “show people as one thing and only one thing over and over again,” that is all they become (ibid).

The most prolific single-story told about the Democratic Republic of Congo is it is the rape capital of the world. This phrase is reprinted in every one of the articles I compiled. It is attributed to Margot Wallstrom, the United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, “Margot Wallstrom has called Congo the “rape capital of the world”. (Hatcher, 2012). The single-story is also another aspect of performativity whereby women are reduced to either pre-victims or victims of rape, because of their vulnerable status as women. In addition, the link between the reproduction of the phrase and its origin with the United Nations, which has the world’s largest troop presence in the Congo, is an example of instrumentalization.

Instrumentalization is, according to Branch, and as discussed below, a global administrative dimension of power where human rights are actuated in policy decisions and funding allocations that become permanent and self-referential institutions. The administrative dimension of power is another layer that operates along with gender, which, as Enloe reminds us, is one of many ways power can do work, and why masculinity alone cannot account for rape in the context of war.

Figure 2. Examples of the Single-Story in media data sample

“...the women all across Africa –the worst place there is to be a woman – who somehow manage to carry that entire continent on their backs.” (Cooper, 2005)

“The rape capital of the world is Eastern Congo... a former U.N. force commander there, Patrick Cammaert, says it is “more dangerous to be a woman than to be a soldier”.” (Kristof, 2008)

“Maj. Gen. Patrick Cammaert, former deputy U.N. force commander in the DRC, said, “It is more dangerous to be a woman than to be a soldier right now in eastern DRC”.” (Jones, 2008)

“...the most dangerous place in the world to be a woman” (Radia and Hughes, 2009)

“...the use of rape as a weapon of war has affected hundreds of thousands of *women* (my emphasis)” (Kelemen, 2009)

“Sexual violence against women has been a feature in most recent conflicts” (ibid)

“The more we know about conflicts, the more we realize that women, who do not start conflicts, are often the victims.” (Hillary Clinton, as quoted by Kelemen, 2009)

“U.N. officials have called the rape capital of the world...” (ibid)

“Aid workers struggle to explain the sudden spike in male rape cases. The best answer, they say, is that the sexual violence against men is yet another way for armed groups to humiliate and demoralize Congolese communities into submission.” (Gettleman, 2009)

“The United Nations calls Congo the rape capital of the world” (Gettleman, 2009)

“...countless women, and recently many men, have been raped.” (ibid)

“The United Nations has named the Democratic Republic of Congo the “rape capital of the world”.” (Elbagir, 2010)

“...the UN calls it the “rape capital of the world”.” (Baldauf, 2010)

“...the rape capital of the world...” (UN News Center, 2010)

Figure 3. Examples of the Single-Story in media data sample cont.

“If women continue to suffer sexual violence, it is not because the law is inadequate to protect them, but because it is inadequately enforced.” (ibid)

“...the persistent scourge of violence against women, including sexual violence...” (ibid)

“Congo is known as the rape capital of the world...” (Tovrov, 2011)

“Congo a Country of Rape and Ruin” (Murdock, 2011)

“...the rape capital of the world” (ibid)

“Activists say rape in Congo...drives the people further into poverty...” (ibid)

“...the rape capital of the world” (Seligson, 2011)

“Nottage says. Ruined “is the story of the Congo.” Her Congo journey made her realize “that a war was being fought over the bodies of women.” (ibid)

“I wanted to understand who these women were beyond their status as victims,” says Nottage. Several of the women became the basis for the four characters in her 2009 Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Ruined*.” (ibid)

“Speaking out on sexual violence doesn’t reflect the need for greater empowerment overall – “It really requires going beyond looking at women as victims.” (ibid)

“Margot Wallstrom has called Congo the “rape capital of the world”.” (Hatcher, 2012)

“It is as sure as the sun is shining in the sky that women are raped everyday”, says Vuhaka.” (ibid)

“...rape capital of the world” (Meyer, 2012)

“Congo itself, which is considered by many the rape capital of the world...” (Allimadi and Ngemi, 2012)

“As the UK held the first-ever global summit aimed at ending sexual violence in conflict zones, Pete Muller was asked to present his portraits of Congolese women who had been victims of such crimes... Yet, he tells TIME, these photographs don’t tell the whole story... [Behind the story] of almost every brutalized women, there’s a man. But somehow it’s become a women’s issue...” (Laurent, 2014)

“...says Muller. “In society, a soldier with a gun is seen as a powerful man, but within the structure of the military, these guys are often unpaid for months at a time, they can’t provide for their families, they are often on combat operation consistently, sometimes for years.” (ibid)

In the section titled Gender & Sexuality I discuss Sharron Marcus’ concept of a rape script, which provides some context for how the repetition of the phrase “the rape capital of the world” in discussions about DRC frames women as pre-victims/victims of sexualized violence. Marcus explains a rape script is, “a scripted interaction which takes place in language and can be understood in terms of conventional masculinity and femininity...inscribed before an individual instance of rape” (Marcus, 390, 2002). What Marcus is referring to are the ways in which before a rape occurs we have a culturally embedded understanding of who will be the victim and who

will be the perpetrator informed by gender norms. For example, in a piece aired on National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* Michele Kelemen states, "...the use of rape as a weapon of war has affected hundreds of thousands of *women* (my emphasis)". This assumption that women are the exclusive victims is repeated by Jessica Hatcher in Time Magazine, who quotes an aid worker saying, "It is as sure as the sun is shining in the sky that *women* (my emphasis) are raped every day."

There are articles that mention male rape as well, but treat it as an aberration or exception to the rule. Jeffery Gettleman writes about male rape for The New York Times claiming that, "Aid workers struggle to explain the sudden spike in male rape cases. The best answer, they say, is that the sexual violence against men is yet another way for armed groups to humiliate and demoralize Congolese communities into submission." When a woman is the victim and a man is the perpetrator this is socially perceived as a legitimate act of violence (Marcus, 2002). When a man is the victim or a woman the assailant it violates the culturally authorized narrative of sexualized violence or rape script. This supports data gathered in the study by Desiree Lwambo I discuss in the same section where Congolese men surveyed stated they felt in gender training and sensitization programs gender was synonymous with woman, and, "while it is true that a great majority of individuals suffering from SGBV are female, a single focus on this group renders the equality aspect of programs obsolete" (Lwambo, 21, 2011). Furthermore, "Legislation backs up the objectifying violence of the rape script by not defining rape as an assault, which would fall under the rubric of subject-subject violence against persons, but as a sexual offense" (ibid, 397). Branch's explanation of instrumental narratives helps us conceive of the link between single stories, the social construction of gender, and administrative and political structures, such as legislation.

c. Instrumentality

Policy decisions, resource distribution, funding allocation, and laws are reactions to popular understandings of what is needed for redress in situations of conflict, political crisis, and human rights deprivations. When one aspect is over emphasized it receives the largest share of money, resources, and institutional capacity to the detriment of other needs. Humanitarianism can also become a regulatory mechanism whereby stereotypes about people as violent, lawless, and in need of saving become institutionalized. When Branch discusses instrumentalization he is problematizing how human rights discourse is used to justify physical interventions. In the *International Business Times*, for example, Daniel Tovrov writes, “170 women were raped... In response, the Security Council renewed the Peacekeeping mandate in the DRC... 20,000 UN troops in the Congo, the biggest force anywhere in the world”. In the course of this process the structures of power that author and authorize become “mystified” (Branch, 2011), and the administrative structures left behind normalize models that are not natural, but constructed. Nicholas Kristof writes about the need for intervention in the *New York Times* as well: “The United Nations Security Council will hold a special session on sexual violence... just may help mass rape graduate from an unmentionable to a serious foreign policy issue.” The United Nations is not only in a position to disseminate information about rape in the context of war and support I/NGOs with their interventions, but creates international law.

Figure 4. Examples of Instrumentality in media data set

“The United Nations Security Council will hold a special session on sexual violence...just may help mass rape graduate from an unmentionable to a serious foreign policy issue.” (Kristof, 2008)

“To help Fatuma’s group fund itself, IRC bought them a field and trained these experienced cultivators in some advanced farming techniques... Writer/photographer Ann Jones is working as a volunteer with the International Rescue Committee...” (Jones, 2008)

“She announced that the American government would train doctors, supply rape victims with video cameras to document violence, send American military engineers to help build facilities and train Congolese police officers, especially female police officers, to crack down on rapists.” (Gettleman, 2009)

“They are also distributing fuel-efficient stoves, since many sexual assaults occur when women leave their villages looking for firewood.” (Tovrov, 2011)

“170 women were raped...In response, the Security Council renewed the Peacekeeping mandate in the DRC...20,000 UN troops in the Congo, the biggest force anywhere in the world.” (ibid)

“Supported by Hope in Action and Norwegian aid, most of their money is used for taking problematic cases to hospitals where, in the absence of public health service, they pay for treatment and rehabilitation.” (Hatcher, 2012)

In the section Rape in the Context of War & International Law, Nicola Henry, echoing concerns raised by Marcus with the rape script, suggests international law is not necessarily the most effective tool for addressing rape in the context of war, because, “law has the power to define and legitimate some narratives, while at the same time, silence and suppress other meanings and stories...” (Henry, 2014, 97). She is concerned with the creation of victim hierarchies where, for example, intimate partner or civilian rape, may not garner as much support or attention in juridical structures compared to “war rape”. Human rights intervention in the Congo utilizes “war rape” as one of the primary reasons for their continued mandate. This is supported by media who rely heavily on awareness raising representations of raped Congolese women to tell the story of ongoing conflict in the DRC. This is the closed loop where instrumental narratives do their work. In Branches investigation he found, “In Uganda, human rights interventions, in pursuing their own goals, ended up providing tools useless against the

forms of domination people faced, and so ended up naturalizing that violence, domination, and inequality, putting it beyond question or contestation” (Branch, 153, 2011).

In order for individuals to access the services provided by these various interventions they begin to self-regulate into the available categories. One of the categories is victim, particularly rape victim: “Supported by Hope in Action and Norwegian aid, most of their money is used for taking problematic cases to hospitals where, in the absence of public health service, they pay for treatment and rehabilitation.” (Hatcher, 2012). Offering medical services to Congolese is admirable work, and I am not questioning the need to offer health services to rape survivors. However in a country without any public healthcare it is not just survivors of SGBV that are in need of care. What can end up happening when rape in the context of war is overemphasized is other medical services are forgotten or funding is diverted away from them to address rape. Not all Congolese are survivors of rape, but they are all survivors of war, and the ongoing conflict that creates conditions where the government incapable of offering public hospitals.

In addition to creating a permanent need for outside intervention to provide public goods such as healthcare, conflict becomes the preeminent historical condition of Africa and Africans. This leads to an understanding of Africa as a continent of violence where, “intervention becomes highly self-referential and self-justifying” (Branch, 30, 2011). In other words, human rights interventions rely on the single-story of Congolese women as victims for their legitimacy. Similar to medical interventions only assisting rape survivors, there are other much needed services that are directed as redress for SGBV. For example in *The Nation* Ann Jones writes about funding directed to train rape survivors in farming, “To help Fatuma’s group fund itself, IRC bought them a field and trained these experienced cultivators in some advanced farming

techniques... Writer/photographer Ann Jones is working as a volunteer with the International Rescue Committee..." (Jones, 2008). This example is especially poignant, because the author, Ann Jones, is also employed by the International Rescue Committee who is distributing aid to the Congolese rape survivors. The link between the circulation of discourse about rape in the context of war and policy decisions could not be more overt.

d. Lootrapeandpillage

In descriptions of armed conflicts, more often than not, the words rape, loot, and pillage occur together with little to no distinction between the acts. One of the numerous examples appears in Time Magazine article "Things Fall Apart: Masculinity and Violence in Congo" by Olivier Laurent, "The group carried out a mass rape and looting..." Other examples can be found in the Christian Science Monitor, "Systematically looting local homes and gang-raping" (Baldauf, 2010) and the title of a 2016 NPR online article, "Ex-Congolese Vice President Convicted of Rape, Murder, and Pillage". When war includes assaults on individuals and their property how do you best situate rape in that context? When rapes are committed to pursue a political objective is it still a sex crime? Can it be both? Although looting and rape are acts that often parallel one another, Enloe warns us that there is a danger in normalizing sexualized violence alongside property destruction and theft, "Rape evokes the nightmarishness of war, but it becomes just an indistinguishable part of a poisonous wartime stew called "lootrapeandpillage" (Enloe, 108, 2000). It lends itself to the conceptualization of women as natural resources, which is an influential part of current thinking on war rape.

Figure 5. Examples of Looting and pillage in media data set

“...systematically looting local homes and gang-raping.” (Baldauf, 2010)
“During the attack [the rebels] looted [the] population’s houses and raped several women.” (ibid)
“170 women were raped during a raid on a village...the paramilitary group also stole medicine, goats, motorcycles, and cell phones.” (Tovrov, 2011)
“...militias continue to attack villages, looting and raping.” (Murdock, 2011)
“Most of the women have been raped, and most of the homes have been looted bare.” (ibid)
“...committing massacres and mass rapes while plundering resources.” (Allimadi and Ngemi, 2012)
“The group carried out a mass rape and looting...” (Laurent, 2014)
“MLC soldiers searched ‘house-to-house’ for remaining rebels, raping civilians, pillaging their belongings...” (Sieff, 2016)
“Ex-Congolese Vice President Convicted of Rape, Murder, and Pillage” (Wagner, 2016)

As I previously discussed, women are often metaphorically understood to be mothers of the nation, and literally (re)produce future generations as well as the home. Targeting women within the confines of their normative womanhood achieves strategic objectives that are reified when rape in the context of war is discussed alongside looting and pillaging. However, if rape in the context of war was not understood as a sex crime, but rather an act of sexualized aggression, it would make sense not to separate these acts, but to conceive of them within the larger context of conflict.

e. Coming to Voice

Figure 6. Examples of Coming to Voice in media data set

“Mr.Mukuli is now the lone man in the rape ward at Panzi Hospital, which is filled with hundreds of women recovering from rape-related injuries. Many knit clothes and weave baskets to make a little money while their bodies heal. But Mr.Mukuli is left out. “I don’t know how to make baskets,” he said.” (Gettleman, 2009)

“I’m laughed at,” Mr.Mukuli said. “The people in my village say: ‘You’re no longer a man. Those men in the bush made you their wife.’” (ibid)

“One distraught Congolese woman had told her that “a dead rat is worth more than the body of a woman”.” (Elbagir, 2010)

“Furaha, 25, said her rapists were men in uniform, but she doesn’t think the attack was an act of war.” (Murdock, 2011)

“She worries how the attack will affect her life. “I’m not sure I’ll find anyone to marry me because everyone knows,” she says.” (Hatcher, 2012)

“Mama Fahida explains: “My job is to look for those who have been violated.” (ibid)

Often missing in articles discussing SGBV in the DRC are the voices of Congolese women. In place of survivors narrating their own experiences, we are supplied with quotations from aid workers, foreign diplomats, government officials, and celebrities. It was important for me to identify and highlight when Congolese women’s voices were included. Also, to look at how they explain and interpret their experiences in their own words, or how they come to voice in reporting. I do this with the understanding that the quotations chosen are partial glimpses, that they have been excerpted from longer experiential narratives to frame and support the article’s objective. All of the articles share the desire to raise awareness of rape in the context of war, and present Congolese women as victims in need of intervention. I am troubled by the under-representation of Congolese women telling the stories of their lives. They are spoken for and about instead of with. What do they say when their voices are present?

I also included two quotations from male rape survivors. One of my findings is the omission of male rape from awareness raising representations of rape in the context of war in the Congo. The way men speak about rape when they are included in the articles may help explain why this is the case. Jeffrey Gettleman shows this in the New York Times, “Mr. Mukuli is now the lone man in the rape ward at Panzi Hospital, which is filled with hundreds of women recovering from rape-related injuries. Many knit clothes and weave baskets to make a little money while their bodies heal. But Mr. Mukuli is left out. “I don’t know how to make baskets,” he said.” As previously detailed, constructions and performances of masculinity tell part of the story of the silence surrounding male rape, “I’m laughed at,” Mr. Mukuli said. “The people in my village say: ‘You’re no longer a man. Those men in the bush made you their wife.’” (ibid).

When Congolese women are quoted they speak of being afraid to come forward and discuss their rape, because they worry about being stigmatized, and ostracized in their communities, “She worries how the attack will affect her life. “I’m not sure I’ll find anyone to marry me because everyone knows,” she says.” (Hatcher, 2012). Another woman quoted in Nima Elbagir’s piece for CNN feels women are devalued in the DR Congo stating, “...a dead rat is worth more than the body of a woman”.” These quotes gesture toward cultural explanations for violence against women. In many instances women and men who have been raped are forced out of their homes and communities. Foundations like the Panzi Hospital, mentioned above, offer healthcare and psycho-social programs to help survivors recover from the physical trauma as well as the social alienation. However, it is also worth noting that the protracted Congolese conflict has left over 2 million refugees and IDPs roaming the countryside. Sexualized violence alone does not account for the millions of displaced people in Congo, and I am not implying these quotations suggest this. Rather, it demonstrates how myopic focus on one aspect of

conflict narrowly directs much needed resources. This can be further elucidated by considering this quote from the Washington Times: “Furaha, 25, said her rapists were men in uniform, but she doesn’t think the attack was an act of war” (Murdock, 2011).

Interestingly, there is no follow up by Murdock in her article “Congo a Country of Rape and Ruin” even though this Congolese woman seems to be speaking directly to concerns raised over the silences in the pervasive narrative of rape as a weapon of war. We do not know why Furaha believes her attack was outside the scope of war. Murdock does state that both soldiers and civilians rape in the article, but she does not explore why this may be the case. There are eleven references to rape by militias and rape as a tactic of war, and only three references to civilian rape. I am not refuting that soldiers rape, but I do question if it is productive to overemphasize that aspect of violence to the exclusion or silence of the violence of war. Understandably, news articles cannot exhaustively elaborate every frame of war, but there is an overwhelming pattern of representing the Congolese war as a war against women where rape is the primary weapon.

Now that I have established patterned representation of women as victims and thematization of Congolese conflict around rape in the context of war in U.S. media coverage, I present an in depth analysis of three articles that both support and challenge my findings.

iii. Narratives & Counter-Narratives

To explore the way in which stories are told about rape in the context of war in the DRC I have chosen three case study articles to present in detail. The first article was published in Glamour Magazine in May 2016. It represents the problematic aspects of awareness raising representations discussed throughout my work. The second and third articles were published in The Atlantic in 2011 and 2012. These articles present a counter-narrative to the first, and hope

for the ways in which reporting can challenge accepted norms and stereotypes, and push beyond scripted roles to capture a complex portrait of sexualized violence.

Before I delve into the textual analysis here are some facts about the audiences and publications. According to Conde Nast, owner of Glamour Magazine, Glamour has 30 million readers, 85% of which are women. Glamour is published in eighteen countries only one of which, South Africa, is on the African continent. The Atlantic was first published in 1857. According to The Atlantic's managing editor 1.2 million people either subscribe to or purchase the magazine monthly; there are ten issues a year. The average age of staff reporters for the magazine is 35. Mark Twain's stories were first published in The Atlantic as well as Martin Luther King Jr.'s now famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail" in 1963.

A special mention about publication and audience is necessary for The New York Times. Not only are nine of the articles I analyzed sourced from the NYT, but it is a standard bearer for news nationally and internationally. Stories featured in the NYT are syndicated internationally and widely quoted by other news agencies. For example an article from National Public Radio (NPR) online titled "Ex-Congolese Vice President Convicted of Rape, Murder, and Pillage" by Laura Wagner, from March 2016, excerpts the NYT: "The New York Times reports that "largely because of pressure from human rights advocates and women's groups, organized or mass rape is increasingly being recognized and prosecuted as a weapon of war, not as a byproduct of it." The NYT Company reports having 1.1 million print and digital subscribers and 1 million digital only subscribers. Its most prolific African correspondent, and author of five of the articles I analyzed, Jeffrey Gettleman, won a Pulitzer Prize in 2012 for his reporting on conflict in Africa; one of a total 119 Pulitzer Prizes awarded to NYT reporting.

Glamour's article on the Congo was printed in the magazine section titled: *All about You*. Genevieve Roth, the author, travelled to DRC with actor Ben Affleck to write her article. The title of the piece is a quote from Affleck, "I've Never Seen Women so Brave", and the photo below features a smiling Affleck with Christine Musaidizi, a Congolese woman who runs an organization to help child soldiers. This is one of four images accompanying the text. Two feature Affleck, one depicts Lake Kivu, and the last and smallest image is of a Congolese woman farming coffee.

The subtitle of the article reads, "Ben Affleck is Batman, and he may also be the strongest supporter the women of the Congo have ever had" (Roth, 150, 2016). Focusing on Affleck as a superhero plays on Western cultural gendered stereotypes and popular folklore of men as heroic saviors, knights in armor, and women as weak damsels in need of saving. The subtitle goes on, "Glamour's Genevieve Roth traveled to Africa to get their story – and his" (ibid). Referring to Africa instead of specifically the DR Congo continues the tradition of telling a single story about the continent as if it were one place and one people. In addition, the fate of Congolese women is linked with the success and power of Affleck. Here Congolese women are coming to voice through a white, Western, male. Affleck's fame not only seems to qualify him to speak for and represent Congolese women in print, but has allowed him to speak before Congress four times directly impacting funding allocation and diplomacy (ibid, 152). This illustrates how discourse becomes instrumentalized as public policy. Further, Affleck founded a non-profit organization that has more than ninety active projects in DRC (ibid, 151). These projects range from training female journalists, to healthcare, and prosecuting SGBV cases (ibid).

In the articles “Do We Have the Rape Crisis All Wrong” by Laura Seay and “Gloria Steinem on Rape in War, Its Causes, and How to Stop It” by Lauren Wolfe, both featured in *The Atlantic*, a counter narrative is presented for making sense of rape in the context of war. Both pieces question the dominant assumptions that women are always the victims, rapes only occur as a strategy of war, and the effectiveness of policy responses that are organized around these misunderstandings. Furthermore, Steinem points to the social construction of gender as a means of deconstructing the motivations behind rape in the context of war. While the majority of reporting failed to address these concerns, and the average consumer of media is not going to be compelled to invest energy and resources seeking them out, it is important to point out instances where alternate and more nuanced portraits are crafted to discuss war rape. One obvious limitation is that neither *Atlantic* article features Congolese women speaking. However, this is mitigated, because the subject is how Western media and awareness raising representations are telling an incomplete story.

Seay begins by quoting the current statistics on the frequency of rape in the Congo, and inviting the reader to question why rapes are so frequent and how they can be stopped. Then she says, “But the story on the ground may be far different than how it appears in studies and in the media” (Seay, 2011). It is not Seay’s intention to question the prevalence of rape, but to challenge the single-story being perpetuated about women victims and rape used only as a tactic of war. She goes on to say, “A growing body of literature suggests that the prevailing journalistic and activist accounts of the nature of rape in the Congo are often incomplete, and, in many cases, simply wrong. While no one disputes that armed men engage in rape against civilian populations, the story of who is raping whom turns out to be significantly more complicated than the popular narrative suggests” (ibid). Complications include rape by civilians

and intimate partners, “We have also learned that not all rapists in the Congo are men, and not all victims are women...women are committing acts of sexual violence against other women at a surprisingly high rate “(ibid). This article is the only one to reference the prevalence of female perpetrators and one of the minority to discuss male rape.

Additionally, Seay writes that rape is not the, “main mechanism of violence”, and, “the overwhelming international focus on rape also means that other services are shortchanged” (ibid). When resource distribution and allocation goes toward war rape it does nothing to address intimate partner and civilian rape, or other medical needs. In conclusion Seay encourages us to think through the way, “...humanitarian focus on rape...feeds into some of the worst popular stereotypes about Africa. It makes it easier for policy makers to dismiss the Congolese crisis as savagery rather than the product of a political crisis in the midst of state failure” (ibid). Gloria Steinem echoes these sentiments in her interview on rape in war.

Lauren Wolf predicates the transcript of her interview with famed feminist Gloria Steinem by stating, “Across the Democratic Republic of Congo, hundreds of thousands of women are suffering the fallout of the *sexualized violence* (my emphasis) that has torn apart their bodies, their families, and their communities” (Wolf, 2012). Wolf is the only journalist from my sampling that refers to rape in the context of war as sexualized violence. Steinem echoes this point, “There’s a reason why it’s a truism that rape is not sex, it’s violence” (ibid). When asked why she employs the term sexualized violence Steinem replies, “Because there’s nothing sexual about violence...People, especially men addicted to “masculinity,” may think that inflicting pain is the only way they can get sexual pleasure” (ibid). This rightly attributes sexualized violence to the socialization of masculinity and femininity. However, Steinem is not opposed to

categorizing sexualized violence as a weapon of war, because she feels it is vital to raising consciousness.

Steinem points to the public/private divide as a justification for the need to signal sexualized violence as a weapon of war, “In the past, what happened to men was political, but what happened to women was cultural. The first was public and could be changed, and the second was private, off limits, even sacred. By making clear that sexualized violence is political and public, it breaches that wall” (ibid). Not only do we assign gender roles spaces in which they can act, but the way we construct masculinity, according to Steinem, is responsible for rape, “If you’re going to get groups of men to risk their humanity, health, and lives in wars of offense, the traditional way is not to pay them a lot, but to addict them to the “cult of masculinity”...at its most basic, “masculine” means not being “feminine” (ibid). This is in line with both Enloe and Mann who do not believe sexualized violence in war is merely a tactic, but inflects soldier’s beliefs about their male privilege. She goes on to point out that rape is committed in times of peace as a way to perform masculinity too, but during times of war, she suggests, it becomes a way of life (ibid). “Violence in the home normalizes violence in the street and in foreign policy. Because we gender the study of childrearing as “feminine” and the study of conflict and foreign policy as “masculine,” we rarely see that the first causes the second” (ibid).

In conclusion Wolfe asks Steinem to advise individuals who are under the illusion that sexualized violence only happens far away, “in societies beyond repair” (ibid). Steinem says we must listen to the voices of women. Also, “no society is beyond reproach...It’s wrong whether men or women are suffering. It’s just that the suffering has to be visible and not called inevitable” (ibid). Nowhere do male rape survivors make an appearance in this article before this brief mention in the second to last line. However, Steinem and Wolfe do a good job

complicating the single-story being told about rape in the context of war, and the problems that can occur from instrumentalizing that narrative of violence in the DR Congo.

By looking at a systematic analysis of these articles I hoped to demonstrate a “feminist curiosity” (Enloe, 236, 2000) about the representational work being done by the media in dialogue with public policy on rape in the context of war. Five broad themes emerged that are in conversation with one another, and reveal how the theoretical interventions I have identified operate in practice via the circulation of discourse: performativity, the single-story, instrumentality, lootraperandpillage, and coming to voice. My selection process identified articles that illustrate the theoretical analysis I performed to best capture awareness raising representations as discursive. While my data may not be generalizable, it clearly shows patterns of representation.

As I conclude my study I remain curious as to whether sexual violence is overemphasized in war correspondence, and, if so, how does this underestimate the ways in which masculinity and violence interact by narrowing the conversation about forms of violence and war? I believe this topic is rife for further investigation in light of the perpetual states of war across the globe, and ongoing conversations about how gender informs living.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

“The Disciplinary power that inscribes femininity in the female body is everywhere and it is nowhere; the disciplinarian is everyone and yet no one in particular.” ~Sandra Bartky

In Western culture, specifically the United States, we fetishize women’s bodies in multiple ways that share the particular characteristic of vulnerability. This vulnerability fetish, the term I will employ as I continue to unpack this phenomenon, is evidenced in a myriad of cultural productions: pornography, dieting, advertising, legislation, and the military to name a few. Evidence ranges from refusal to allow women to serve in military combat missions until the early 90’s, the preoccupation with thinness and subsequent body dysmorphias, to *Row v. Wade*, articles about “getting your body back after baby”(where did it go and how could women lose themselves), and the categorization of activities as “other” or “women’s” like sports. As Iris Marion Young points out in her seminal essay “Throwing like a Girl,” “Women in sexist society are physically handicapped. In so far as we learn to live out our existence in accordance with the definition that patriarchal culture assigns to us, we are physically inhibited, confined, positioned, and objectified” (Young, 42, 2005). I believe it is important to expand the conversation surrounding female body experiences to encompass how sexuality in contemporary America is in an ambiguous, porous space where it may be used to empower or dispossess depending on the narratives we create and popularize.

At the intersection of human sexuality and womanhood too often the narrative is written around crime and victimization. While awareness raising representations of SGBV are intended as socially conscious advocacy for the rights of women, often the very language crafted to protect infantilizes and constructs women as other; placing women in a precarious

representational borderland between rights and discourse. I am borrowing the idea of a borderland from Gloria Anzaldua's discussion in *La Frontera* of in-between-ness, or living in the cracks and gaps, as a conceptualization of Chicana Feminism where, "The new *mestiza*," consciousness emerges, and, "copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity...a plural personality...Not only does she sustain contradictions, she turns the ambivalence into something else" (Anzaldua, 101, 2007). As I conducted my investigation into representational work of women in conflict I found this "something else" or plural space/identity/subjectivity intellectually productive for articulating my thinking and findings. Stories about the raped woman not only impose external boundaries, albeit indeterminate ones, but become internalized structures that influence self-definition.

Gender, specifically the feminization of female-identified bodies, is the primary foregrounding of this work. Race as a social construct is engaged throughout, and also grounds my work, but less explicitly as gender. As my research evolved it became really important for me that my inquiry originate from and speak back to my subject position. It is disingenuous to critique representations of so called others while continuing to speak on their behalf. I have arrived at the conclusion from my reading of feminist scholarship and American reportage that white, Western, middle-upper middle class, traditionally able bodied, and cis-gender women, like myself, access our identity, at least in part, by othering and hypersexualizing the bodies of women of color. Dominant narratives, media, and awareness raising representations of the female body and rape in the context of war elucidate this connection.

In the United States women feel and are made to feel unsafe. Women report feeling vulnerable much of the time: walking home alone, getting into their car at night, being the only woman on an elevator, behind a closed door in a male boss's office, single at a bar, and crossing

the street. Even inside the home can be an unsafe space. It is easier to reconcile this uncertainty when a woman can imagine a community, a space even more hostile and dangerous exists, to which she may set apart her life. This “other” woman, this “other” space eases her fear and anxiety by embodying a depravity beyond the bounds of her circumstances. However, it is my contention that what may vary in degree does not vary in kind, and “the worst place on Earth to be a woman” illuminates what for women everywhere is a place that could exist or not at any moment, an identity we may claim or disavow, a borderland through which we come and go, but may never leave.

Awareness raising representations rely for their efficacy on cultural beliefs that facilitate physical and symbolic interactions, and identification of women’s bodies. It is important and useful to distinguish between woman as symbol and actual women’s lived bodies and multiple subjectivities; both are co-constitutive. As a result of their interconnectedness the textual advocacy for living bodies and thematization of symbolic bodies, i.e. the raped woman, simultaneously may mystify and disempower or demystify and empower. Therefore it is both true that women are being raped in the DRC requiring knowledge dissemination, intervention, and redress, and that the very mechanisms for combatting SGBV make women symbolically vulnerable to sexualized aggression. Femaleness and maleness are ideals not physical conditions, but they are performed on and through the body. While arguably unintended on the part of the press, public, and I/NGOs the thematization of violence in the Congo based on rape in the context of war makes women into symbolic victims. In order to help make sense of this I would like to front load the conclusions of my analysis for consideration throughout the subsequent discussion.

Elaborating rape in the context of war leads to a limited and myopic focus on one outcome of the violence and one avenue for conflict resolution and rebuilding that ignores other affected groups. According to Baaz and Stern (2012) this creates a “perverse incentive structure” whereby funding allocation, distribution, and application is uneven, and disproportionately driven toward the cause celeb instead of based on needs assessments. This does not eliminate or discredit the need for research and funding to treat and prevent SGBV, but calls attention to disconnects between what works for media narrative, and the multifaceted nature of conflict. Further, it is easier to make decisions about “right” and “wrong” when violence portrayed is extreme and violates social taboos; in this case regulating normative gender roles and myths about female purity.

Additionally, Congolese women are reduced to being victims in the stories being told about sexual violence, which may normalize rape as an inevitable consequence of war. Other survivor narratives that do not conform to idealized victim types and expectations, such as male rape survivor or female perpetrator, are silenced or marginalized. In the Congo many rapes are being perpetrated by civilians as well as armed groups, but focusing on rape in the context of war mutes this reality. When rapes continue beyond the end of the war and immediate post-conflict reconstruction they are ignored or misrepresented, because they do not fit the idealized victim. Finally, there is an unequal and unfair burden placed on survivors to be an ideal victim, and not enough emphasis on the political and economic motives behind SGBV both in conflict and peacetime. Awareness raising representations rely on the ideal victim for narrative efficacy.

In order to discuss the work being done by awareness raising representations I am going to begin by adapting and expanding on Susan Sontag’s way of thinking about photography. Reporting is a modality of vision (Sontag, 90). Reporters see the world as an array of potential

stories that alienate them from “world” (ibid, 97). This modality of vision relies on newness for its sustenance; it cannot be ordinary vision (ibid, 99). Constantly seeking the new, the grotesque, the forbidden, the unknown distorts meaning (ibid, 106). Stories become symbols of the world, and the more unforgettable, the more they are depoliticized (ibid, 107). Discourse is partially constituted by how we digest the material; by this I am not referring to material conditions of living, but how information is sorted and selected for storytelling. In turn, this both informs and is informed by our standard for approaching a subject at the outset.

In awareness raising representations Congolese women come to voice through the mouths of readers (ibid, 108). In Marxian terms, they acquire a use-value that becomes constitutive of their general value. However, the sounds being uttered are, “the essence of tragedy” (ibid, 109). News makers and subsequently audiences are trying to get at the essence of the elusive and morbidly desirable tragedy. Tragedy makes individuals feel secure in their positions; removed observers able to see, hear, and inform on, but not be seen, heard, or informed on. It affirms our humanity by being a vehicle for righteous indignation. We are allowed access to other worlds without asking permission, and removed observers are included in production and dissemination of “truth” about them, while being distanced from their own injurability and vulnerability.

This transaction, the acquisition and transferal of “truth”, or I will argue situated truths, “creates a confusion about the real” (ibid, 110). The Western ideology of humanism justifies our entitlement to this transaction. By disclosing human beings as know-able things, things with a use-value that supports the movement to symbolic representation, the human-ness of knowing things, stories transform reality into a tautology (ibid, 111). Consumers unreflectively absorb information from media, “But the truths that can be rendered...have a very narrow relation to the

needs of understanding” (ibid, 112). It is never the less true that awareness raising representations also educate and highlight injustice and impunity. I would like to return to Anzaldua here to emphasize there are different types of work being done by awareness raising representations requiring a tolerance for ambiguity (Anzaldua, 101, 2007). Rather than allowing what could be interpreted as contradictions to alienate us from continuing to better understand and question rape in the context of war, we must, “shift out of habitual formations; from convergent thinking, analytical reasoning that tends to use rationality to move towards a single goal (a Western mode), to divergent thinking, characterized by a movement away from set patterns and goals” (ibid).

In media-systems of disclosures it is the case that stories resemble the world in partial glimpses or constitute what is world by framing and interpreting our vision and experience (ibid, 119). This is what I call *alienated knowing* and is the depoliticization of information. A reporter goes into the field, an aid worker, a foreign diplomat, and accounts for what they perceive, which cannot be labeled as right or wrong, but is necessarily partial. When that version of a world is disseminated it takes on the appearance of a whole truth, but it is a replication of an incomplete vision; one of multiple truths. One’s subject position allows one to relate or disassociate with aspects of another subject position. This is alienated knowing whereby both the process of coming to know and the subject position of the knower are separate from the object being made known.

As I endeavored to research SGBV in the DR Congo a pattern emerged that I could not ignore. As I leafed through page after page of news articles the proverbial liberty leading the people was the raped Congolese woman. There is truth there among the pages, but it needs unmasking. Women are being raped at alarming levels, how many sexual assaults does it take to

qualify as alarming being open for debate. Then there is discourse masquerading as objective truth, and remaining unquestioned in the process: women are rape-able because they are vulnerable and they are vulnerable because they are women.

The very idea of a rape capital of the world is exclusive and predatory. It makes a competition of violence and insecurity, and implies the inevitability of rape. The worst place on earth to be a woman is anywhere a woman is unable to reach her full potential, cannot make meaningful decisions over her daily life, is marginalized, is mentally, physically, and emotionally abused. The worst place on Earth to be a woman is not a geographic distinction, but an individual place of being that can be simultaneously held by many women, but you cannot throw a dart at a map and hope to find it. To make either allegation is to be careless with words and ignorant of meaning. Further, when multiple countries are successively branded the rape capital it signals an ability to move beyond issues of SGBV that inaccurately reflects situations on the ground, but instead demonstrates the demand for new and ever more horrifying stories in the twenty-four hour news cycle.

If awareness raising is the aim let us not sloganize women's flesh or brand them with an award no being would accept. Beyond being macabre distinctions not worthy of merit they are impossible to measure or quantify. Further, since inception their invocation does not appear to have accomplished any results beyond their own self-aggrandizing pronouncement. In fact the adoption and repetition of this jargon to represent Congolese women, or women anywhere, dulls like a blade with its every utterance; making women's suffering more palatable. Western audiences become desensitized, resulting in the belief that women's suffering is necessary to the maintenance of being a woman.

What are the effects of employing rape in the context of war to thematize the Congo war in the media? First, and the central theme of my work, thematizing war in Congo around rape in the context of war erases female agency. By focusing on women as victims instead of men as perpetrators, victim blaming is elevated to a new art, and the root of the problem, why men access power through violence, remains ignored. Male rape is excluded or marginalized. Westerners are left with a partial understanding of the Congo war. Problematic gendered notions of power are reified, whereby, ‘mere maleness becomes sufficient cause’ for wartime rape (Enloe). Rape becomes an inevitable tactic of war. Racist stereotypes about Africa and Africans are perpetuated. When violence occurs in so many forms, and the common denominator is masculinity, why is SGBV used so effectively to make sense and meaning of war? I would suggest it works in the maintenance of male power to see women as powerless in the face of the machinations of men.

I am not suggesting rape is not used as a weapon of war. I am not undermining the reality of rape in the Congo. There is ample evidence to support the existence of both that my work does not desire or attempt to refute. I am asking us to think about the work being done representationally by the Western media’s myopic focus on the rape of Congolese women, and what we can deduce about our own cultural and institutional values that make this story legible. How do Western constructions of gender cross borders? Are violence and gender co-constitutive? Media representations of rape in the context of war rely on the same thinking that creates the condition for rape in the first place.

The same modality of power that authorizes masculinities co-constitution with violence, which relies on control over sexuality for its realization, is that which legitimizes telling the story of the Congo war through the lens of rape in the context of war. Both rely on the vulnerability

and injurability of women for their authority. Women are objectified as victims. Women as objects, rape victims, can be deployed by Western media as a character type to elicit sympathy and make their stories legible/intelligible. They reflect the status of women in the West as living precarious lives as well, but transfer the burden of that precariousness onto an “other” who can silently mirror western cultural values without self-reproach, “The feeling of being exempt from calamity stimulates interest in looking at painful pictures, and looking at them suggests and strengthens the feeling that one is exempt. Partly it is because one is “here,” not “there,” and partly it is the character of inevitability that all events acquire when they are transmuted into images” (Sontag, 168, 1973). This non-white other is seated as the source of women’s disempowerment to mask the progenitor of the narrative.

Commonalities exist across all the articles I analyzed. The stories are framed through the eyes of outside observers: aid workers, politicians, and celebrities. This pattern reflects less an ignorance of the Congolese experience than an intimate knowledge of Western culture. It is necessary to render intelligible to readers Congolese experiences, and that is accomplished by molding them into aspects that are recognizable as right and wrong within the context of the United States. When discussing women’s bodies in the United States the universally understood feature is vulnerability. As previously discussed the vulnerability fetish coincides with traditional gender roles.

At the end of the day what I was most fascinated by is how the stories we tell about others tell a story about ourselves. Focusing on rape in the context of war as an extraordinary crime committed by an “other” allows us to deflect responsibility for the ways in which Western culture authorizes rape by constructing masculinity and femininity.

At the same time as I feel a responsibility to recuperate or somehow intellectually reanimate corporeal experience I must confess that is not the effect of my work. Bodies are canvases for expressing ideas, and ideas become ideals that (de)limit bodily experience. Rape in the context of war and sexual violence are not anomalies but rather are quotidian and should be discussed as such. Why is it so easy to rape someone, but so difficult to talk about rape? Vocalizing SGBV without victim blaming, reducing all men to perpetrators and all women to victims, and accessing only the most barbaric and violent manifestations strips sexual violence of the power it confers. Yet we seem to have a problem with upsetting sexuality as a tool of dominance, power, and control. Women access power through sexuality too. It may be a perversion of power-over as modeled by masculinity. For women being fetishized as vulnerable is a knowable place, and as long as African and “other” women are portrayed as more rape-able American women are exercising power-over.

I hope to have demonstrated that rape in the context of war is not a women’s issue. When women are made visible as victims and men are made visible as perpetrators neither is a natural condition nor a fixed category, “The body...is where we encounter a range of perspectives that may or may not be our own. How I am encountered, and how I am sustained, depends fundamentally on the social and political networks in which this body lives...it follows then that certain kinds of bodies will appear more precariously than others...” (Butler, 53, 2009). Telling a single-story about the Congo as a rape geography makes the bodies of Congolese men and women appear precarious, and strips them of their humanity. It is part of a long tradition of representing Africans as savages who commit primal acts of violence. This distances them from the presumed humanity of white Europeans and Americans who are not only human, but saviors. Recall Mutua’s “savage-victim-savior” structure where, “the *savage* is the African violator of

human rights...the *victim* is individualized but anonymous, defined in terms of a universally applicable set of basic rights...this depoliticized victim image, in need of outside intervention for its redemption...the *savior* is the self-proclaimed enforcer of global law” (Branch, 182, 2011).

Further, there is no such place as the rape capital of the world. The rape capital of the world is an effective narrative for justifying intervention in the Congo by (re)presenting African men as predators and African women as victims in need of saving. The United Nations equates state sovereignty with the responsibility to protect citizens, and every nation is subject to outside intervention when they fail to do so (Branch, 2011). When you equate vulnerability with femaleness and violence with maleness you gender both violence and sovereignty. Sovereign masculinity, “...has such cultural purchase in the United States that it is central to both dominant modes of public discourse and, for many of us, for *enough* of us, private and personal strivings” (Mann, 207, 2014). When the media frames the Congo war around rape it is evoking our personal and cultural investments in gender and statehood.

In addition, when western media thematize reporting on Congo with rape in the context of war it incompletely captures the ongoing conflict, its causes, and possible solutions. Congolese people, both women and men, are not treated as authorities in reporting on their lives. I was able to demonstrate this by data mining and finding a paucity of quotations from Congolese in favor of the words of celebrities, aid workers, and Western officials.

Since the International Criminal Court was created in 2002 it has successfully prosecuted one case where rape as a weapon of war was included in the charges of crimes against humanity. This conviction was Jean-Pierre Bemba, the former vice-president of the Congo, and leader of the rebel group called the Congolese Liberation Movement (MLC) (Sieff, 2016). His trial began in November 2010 and took over four years to complete (ibid). Not only does this reflect the

inadequacy of international legal mechanisms for combatting rape in the context of war, but it also signals a larger judicial bias towards looking at rape as a bi-product of war, and a crime committed by combatants against civilians. We know this is not always the case.

Lastly, the link between policy and discourse hinges on visibility. I have argued the male gaze is the location where gender is instrumentalized as political power. Women and Africans in the United States are presented as vulnerable by the media. In this dynamic there is an irrational commitment to maintaining the female body experience (Young, 2005) as an object of male desire and subject to male authority. Male authority is actualized in men as viewer as women as “to-be-looked-at” (Mulvey, 1992). In awareness raising representations of rape in the context of war women are only visible as victims.

My policy recommendation is to stop implementing laws that single out rape in the context of war as a unique form of assault, because they continue to enforce female vulnerability and injurability by representing women as victims or pre-victims of SGBV. This (re)presentation supports American cultural beliefs organized around normative gender roles. American cultural narratives of gender tell us women make effective targets for violence directed at states and ethnic groups, because they are vulnerable, and they are vulnerable, because they are women.

Gender is not synonymous with woman. While legally and representationally men are assumed to be the perpetrators they are also survivors of SGBV, and this reality is at best relegated to the margins of our current thinking on rape in the context of war. I conclude the current legal framework for understanding and prosecuting rape in the context of war institutionalizes a discourse of women as victims that limits their agency. At the same time this discourse constructs a structural bias privileging masculinity with the ability to enforce. By

singling out sexualized aggression apart from other forms of assault the conversation around wartime violence is foreclosed. Rape in the context of war occurs alongside armed conflict among state and non-state actors, resource exploitation, poverty, impunity, corruption, flows of refugees and internal population displacements none of which exist independently from one another, yet it is isolated and dislocated from the macro political climate fueling war and violence. Repeatedly the literature and reporting on rape in the context of war points to war rape as a political tool, but insists contradictorily it be prosecuted as a sex crime. This discontinuity depoliticizes rape in the context of war by narrowly focusing on one aspect of the assault.

“Perception and policy are but two modalities of the same process whereby the ontological status of a targeted population is compromised and suspended” (Butler, 29, 2009). Sexualized violence is a feature of war. Women are targeted by combatants to be raped during times of conflict. But women are not the only “victims” of rape in the context of war, and civilians as well as soldiers rape. More critically, rape is one of a number of violent tools and tactics in war. When the media, governments, and aid organizations endeavor to raise awareness of rape in the context of war by using it as a lens to tell the story of violence they discursively limit women’s agency by (re)presenting them as victims, reinforce damaging conceptualizations of masculinity as inherently violent, only partially capture the political reasons behind the conflict, and fail to address the many forms of violence. While this may not be intentional on the part of individuals it acts in the service of patriarchal values that should be confronted instead of reinforced. Furthermore, war, the progenitor of violence, goes unquestioned.

As a consumer of awareness raising representations in the media I see there are two ways of receiving them. One is as prescriptive narration, i.e. women are victims, and the other is an accounting, i.e. rape occurs in the context of war. These two functions map on top of one

another, and complicate the story of rape in the context of war. How we receive and think about this knowledge is predicated upon our understanding of masculinity and femininity, just as media reflect our living within these binary categories in reporting. I did not explore the violence done to men as individuals when they are socialized to rape and kill, but I believe that is a form of trauma that needs exploration. Perpetrator is a category too easily assigned without question just like victim. Men are culturally expected to conform to violent masculinity, and their social status and bodily integrity rely on its performance. What does this do to male agency? What scars are left to these violent ends? Until we are able to move beyond reflexively responding to violence through the lens of gender women will continue to be doubly victimized, when they are raped and when they are constructed as rape-able, because femaleness is vulnerability. Until we stop gendering violence men will continue to have their manhood tethered to violent expression, and war will be inevitable.

APPENDIX

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