Gender and Global Issues

Introduction
gender, but this time to account particularly for the contemporary contradiction between increased attention to gender equality and “women’s issues” in international politics inquiry and policy and the worsening of global crises. We retain the notion of gender as a lens on world politics, but we emphasize that the power of gender acts as a meta-lens that fosters dichotomization, stratification, and depoliticization in thought and action, sustaining global power structures and crises that prevent or mitigate against meaningful advances in social equality and justice. Also as in previous editions, we employ the matrices of the gendered divisions of power, violence, and labor and resources not only to track the positioning and re-positionings of diverse women and men in relation to global governance institutions, global security apparatuses, and global political economy formations, but also to show how the power of gender operates in these contexts to maintain interlocking inequalities based on gender, race, class, sexuality, and nationality (including inequalities among nations and with respect to national origin). We argue that inattention to the interlocking nature of these inequalities—an insight derived from intersectional analysis—has resulted in problematic gender equality policymaking. Such policymaking tends to target only women and fails to take into account inequalities among women. It further deflects attention from such interlocking forces as neoliberal governmentality, militarization, and globalization, which undercut equality and social justice efforts. These forces are responsible for what we refer to as the crises of representation, insecurity, and sustainability that diverse women and men are resisting at local, national, and transnational levels.

**GENDER AND GLOBAL CRISSES**

Gender “is not synonymous with women” (Carver 1996). Rather, it generally refers to the socially learned behaviors, repeated performances, and idealized expectations that are associated with and distinguish between the prescribed gender roles of masculinity and femininity. As such, it is not the same as and may be wholly unrelated to sex, which is typically defined as the biological and anatomical characteristics that distinguish between women’s and men’s bodies. Contemporary feminist analysis argues that our sex is socially constructed through the meanings given to and the marshaling of particular biological and anatomical characteristics that sex difference, as an unequivocal binary, is naturalized and enforced, including surgically when children born with ambiguous sexual organs are made into either “girls” or “boys” to sustain the idea that there are only two sexes (Fausto-Sterling 1992 and 2000). Gender analysis includes challenging not only the biologically deterministic idea that dualistic gender identities and roles arise from natural sex difference, but also the notion that sex difference itself is natural and dualistic, calling into question even our assumptions about a world made up of only “females” and “males,” “girls” and “boys,” “men” and “women.” Thus, gender is as much about the socially constructed categories of “men” and masculinity as it is about the socially constructed categories of “women” and femininity. It also recognizes that there are multiple genders, as well as sexes, because race/ethnicity, class, sexuality, and other cultural variations shape gender identities and performances.

Moreover, gender analysis reveals that masculine and feminine “natures” are not simply inscribed on what are assumed to be distinct male and female bodies, but also are applied to other objects, including things, nonhuman beings, groups, institutions, and even nations and states. Consider references to a ship or car as “she,” invocations of “mother nature,” characterizations of opposing sports teams as “wimpy” while one’s own is “mighty,” notions of “motherlands” and “fatherlands,” and categorizations of “strong” and “weak” states. Everyday parlance is rife with gender appellations and metaphors. As we discuss at great length in Chapter 2, this constant gendering of natural, artificial, and social worlds through language and, thus, thought is no trivial matter. Gendering operates to set up and reinforce dualistic, dichotomous, or either-or thinking, but it also fosters hierarchical thinking in which those people and objects assigned masculine qualities are valued or given power over those assigned feminine qualities. Thus, as part of feminist IR inquiry, our approach is foremost about how gender, as a meta-lens that orders thinking and thus social reality and action, serves as a major source of power projections and inequalities in world affairs. We refer to this as the power of gender. Making the power of gender visible, however, first depended on making women and their positionings visi-
human communities. Both are the result of narrow constructions and obsessions with “growth,” the pursuit of which enslaves all and mitigates against reprioritizations that are not market-based. We relate these crises to gendered divisions of power, violence, and labor and resources (described at the end of Chapter 2) from which they arise and that sorely limit the re-positionings of women and other subjugated people(s) to have a say in world politics and to resist global power structures and the crises they induce.

The seeming contradiction between rising international attention to ameliorating gender inequality—which is now seen by many UN agencies and many member states as a significant source of global political, economic, and social problems—and the deepening of global crises that are undermining this acknowledgment and its implementation constitutes our central theme. This contradiction relates to some current conundrums in feminist IR inquiry. Whereas prior editions of this book were devoted to introducing the case for the relationship between gender inequality and global crises that was featured in initial feminist IR inquiry, the problem now is somewhat different. First, despite some gender policy gains at international and national levels, attention to the relationship between gender inequality and global problems is still insufficient. Second, policymaking bodies have interpreted gender equality narrowly to mean only raising the status of women relative to men, without regard to inequalities among both women and men that arise from class, ethnicity/race, sexuality, and national divisions. Just as problematically, such bodies have used stereotypes of women and men to promote raising the status of women so that women are cast—whether as peacemakers, responsible debt-payers, or innocent victims—as the solutions to global problems, while certain men—usually lower-class men and men of color or of the global South—are cast as backward, violence-prone rogues who stand in the way of gender equality and constitute the main sources of global problems. Some feminist scholars and activists have sometimes contributed to this kind of stereotyping or “framing,” for example, when arguing for women’s empowerment on the world stage. But this stereotyping is more pernicious when taken up by policymaking power structures to deflect attention away from larger causes and results of gender and other inequalities, which include militarization and global capitalism.

In our previous editions, we connected the dominant world political commitments to militarization and global capitalism, on one hand, to the power of gender to sustain dichotomous and hierarchical worldviews, on the other. In this edition, we emphasize even more that the power of gender in world politics remains intact despite policy and positional gains for women. In doing so, we complicate the category of “women” and the notion of “gender” by engaging more consciously in “intersectional analysis” in order to minimize reproducing stereotypes of women and men that can be deployed by policymakers to avoid the more complex challenges of changing world-politics-as-usual.

Intersectional analysis holds that there are no generic women and men; our gender identities, loyalties, interests, and opportunities are affected by intersecting and cross-cutting gender, race, class, national, and sexual identities. Whereas some parts of our identities may confer privilege, others may serve to disadvantage us. For example, a white American working-class lesbian would be privileged by race and nationality but not by class, gender, and sexuality. This has implications for theorizing about the gender categories of masculinity and femininity but also for analyzing inequalities. It is now accepted that there are multiple forms of masculinity that not only vary over time and across cultures but also confer different levels of power. What is referred to as “hegemonic masculinity” (Connell 1987 and 1995) is the ideal form of masculinity performed by men with the most power attributes, who not incidentally populate most global power positions—typically white, Western, upper-class, straight men who have conferred on them the complete range of gender, race, class, national, and sexuality privileges. “Subordinated masculinities” (Connell 1987 and 1995) are embodied by those who lack one, some, or all of these privileges and thus are rendered “feminized” on these scores. Although all femininities are subordinated to all masculinities, it is also the case that some femininities are subordinated more than or differently from others. The idealized image of Western femininity remains associated with Victorian notions of womanhood that celebrated the gentility, passivity, decorativeness, and asexuality that was imposed on white, middle- to upper-class women who were the only ones who could enact such standards. Working-class women, women of color, and/or lesbians are either denied the (dubious) status of feminine because they cannot meet these standards, or are feminized (that is, devalorized) in
We learn that women's experiences of globalization differ from those of men, with women often facing more challenges and obstacles. This is particularly evident in the context of women's access to education, employment, and political participation. Women's experiences in different parts of the world vary significantly, with some facing greater barriers than others.

Globalization and Women's Rights

Women are often excluded from decision-making processes and are not always given the same opportunities as men. This exclusion can be seen in the political arena, where women are underrepresented in governments and other decision-making bodies.

The Role of Women in Global Politics

Women's role in global politics has been increasing, with more women being elected to political positions and taking on leadership roles in international organizations. However, there is still a long way to go before women are represented equally in all areas of global politics.

Gender and Global Relations

Gender and global relations are closely intertwined, with gender inequality and discrimination often contributing to conflicts and tensions at the global level. Understanding gender dynamics is crucial for addressing these issues and for promoting more equitable and just global relations.

Gender Gains: Re-positioning of Women in Global Politics

The process of global politics is complex and multifaceted, with various economic, political, and social factors influencing its outcomes. Women's role in global politics is an important aspect of this process, and understanding their position and influence is crucial for promoting gender equality and justice at the global level.

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identities of men and women. In this sense, “gender refers to characteristics linked to a particular sex by one’s culture” (D’Amico and Beckman 1994: 3). The specific meanings of and values given to masculinity and femininity vary dramatically over time and across cultures. For example, Western ideals of “manliness” have undergone historical shifts: From the early Greeks through the feudal period, the emphasis of idealized masculinity was on military heroism and political prowess through male bonding and risk-taking, whereas more modern meanings of masculinity stress “competitive individualism, reason, self-control or self-denial, combining respectability as breadwinner and head of household with calculative rationality in public life” (Hooper 1998: 33). Moreover, not all cultures have associated either of these conceptions of masculinity with leadership qualities: “Queen mothers” in Ghana and “clan mothers” in many Native American societies have been accorded power and leadership roles in these matrilineal contexts on the basis of the feminine quality of regeneration of the people and the land (Okojo 1994: 286; Guerrero 1997: 215). Furthermore, there is some play in gender roles even within patrilineal or patriarchal cultures, given that men are not exclusively leaders and warriors, and women are not exclusively in charge of maintaining the home and caring for children. Due to the variation in meanings attached to femininity and masculinity, we know that expressions of gender are not “fixed” or predetermined: The particulars of gender are always shaped by context. However, these variations still rest on concepts of gender differences and do not necessarily disrupt gender as an oppositional dichotomy and as a relation of inequality.

A focus on gender in IR arose not because other axes of difference and bases of inequality (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, religion, age) are less important than—or even extricable from—gender, as we discuss later in this chapter. Rather, gender became a significant lens through which to view world politics as feminist researchers and social movement activists increasingly documented the worldwide institutionalization of gender differences as a major underpinning of structural inequalities of significance to world politics. Through a complex interaction of identification processes, symbol systems, and social institutions (explored in subsequent chapters), gender differences are produced—typically in the form of a dichotomy that not only opposes masculinity to femininity but also translates these oppositional differences into gender hierarchy, the privi-
The power and influence of women in society is often underestimated. While the media and popular culture often portray women as powerless and subservient, the reality is quite different. Women have made significant contributions to society in a variety of fields, from science and technology to politics and business. Yet, despite these achievements, women continue to face many challenges and obstacles.

Studies have shown that women are often subjected to gender-based discrimination and violence. These issues are not limited to women in certain countries or cultures, but are widespread and pervasive. The international community has recognized the importance of promoting gender equality and has established several initiatives to address these issues. However, progress has been slow, and there is still much work to be done.

In conclusion, women have played a crucial role in shaping our world, and their contributions should be recognized and valued. It is essential that we continue to work towards gender equality and ensure that women have equal opportunities to thrive and succeed.

femininity—can influence the very categories and frameworks within which scholars work.

In short, how we understand and value masculine and feminine characteristics profoundly shapes how we care about, perceive, understand, analyze, and critique the world in which we live. Gender thus influences not only who we are, how we live, and what we have, but also how we think, order reality, and claim to know what is true, and, hence, how we understand and explain the social world as well as what alternative realities could be created in that world.

Although the power of gender continues to structure and limit our vision, in recent decades feminist IR researchers—whether in academe, NGOs, or IGOs—have accumulated increasing evidence that gender equity is strongly related to the quality of life for everyone in every country (Eisler, Loye, and Norgaard 1995; Eisler 2007). The fundamental message from this research has been that “empowering women and improving their status are essential to realizing the full potential of economic, political and social development” (UN 1995: xvii). Hence, all those who seek a better world have been advised to take seriously the bettering of women’s positions. These findings and arguments have not fallen on deaf ears. IGO and state policymakers—facing new challenges in the post–Cold War and post-9/11 contexts that feature widening violent conflicts, economic inequalities, social and cultural divisions, and environmental breakdowns—have become increasingly open to accepting that the improvement of women’s positions can bring improvements in world conditions. This acknowledgment was hard won by scholars and social movement actors who have built access to and influence on UN and member state governments since the beginning of the UN Decade for Women in 1975. From this acknowledgment has flowed an unprecedented array of national and international gender policies, referred to by one feminist IR specialist as “the new politics of gender equality” (Squires 2007). This shift in policymaking, which constitutes in a sense the re-positioning of gender on the world politics agenda from relative absence to increasing presence, relates to the re-positionings of women (and men) that constitutes a running theme in this text.

**Gender in International Policymaking**

Angela Merkel of Germany, Michelle Bachelet of Chile, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan (assassinated in 2007), and Hillary Rodham Clinton of the United States—these are only a few of the women who most recently have become or sought to become heads of state and/or government. Although 2008 was the first time that a woman was taken seriously as a candidate for U.S. president, some fifty-eight other women have been elected as presidents or prime ministers during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in almost as many countries (Hoogensen and Solheim 2006: 15). Albeit comparatively late, Clinton’s historic candidacy in the United States did serve to make gender—for a time—a major political topic in the country. Their numbers are still comparatively very low, but arguably women as world leaders have become slightly less anomalous. Nevertheless, severe barriers remain (discussed in Chapter 3).

Among the recent developments that could significantly increase the numbers of women heads of state and governments is the adoption of some form of gender quota in at least 90 countries (Dahlerrup 2006b: 3). Drude Dahlerup identifies this as “a global trend” stretching back to 1990 when the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) supported the goal lobbied for by women’s movements to have 30 percent of world decision-making positions held by women by 1995 (2006b: 6). As of 2005, only 16 percent of the world’s parliamentarians were women; however, 17 countries had reached or exceeded the 30 percent target, with post-genocide Rwanda topping the list at 48.5 percent (and in 2008 becoming the first country with more female than male legislators), followed by the Nordic countries, and a mix of Latin American and other northern European and African states (Dahlerup 2006b: 6–7). Almost all of these had legal or party gender quota systems in combination with proportional representation systems (defined and discussed in Chapter 3). Although quota systems vary in form and efficacy, they were specifically promoted in the Platform for Action arising from the UN World Women’s Conference in Beijing in 1995, which was unanimously supported by the world’s governments, as the “fast-track” way to increase women’s political representation. Following that conference, in Latin America alone, 11 out of 19 governments had adopted either constitutional or legal gender quotas by 2000 (Araújo and García 2006: 83). There are many reasons for this recent “contagion” of gender quotas, but among them is a growing international consensus or norm, advocated by women’s movements worldwide and supported by feminist scholarship,
The idea that women have human rights and their own legitimate interests that need to be protected and promoted as well as to be enjoyed is one of the cornerstones of women's human rights. This principle is enshrined in international human rights law, which guarantees women the right to equality before the law and protection against discrimination. The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is the primary international legal instrument in this field.

CEDAW, adopted in 1979, was the first international treaty to address the rights of women. It emphasizes the need to ensure that women have the same rights as men, including the right to equal pay, the right to education, and the right to participate in political and economic life.

Despite these legal guarantees, women continue to face significant challenges in many parts of the world. Sexual violence, domestic violence, and economic inequality are just a few of the issues that women face. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these challenges, particularly for women and girls.

In response, the United Nations has called for a gender-responsive approach to the COVID-19 response, emphasizing the need to ensure that women's needs and rights are protected and that gender inequalities are addressed.

In the context of economic recovery, women's participation in the labor market and access to education and health care are essential. Women's economic empowerment is crucial to sustainable development and poverty reduction.

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is a key instrument in this regard. It provides a framework for states to report on their progress in implementing women's human rights and to hold each other accountable for their commitments.

In conclusion, women's human rights are fundamental to achieving gender equality and sustainable development. It is crucial that we continue to advocate for and implement women's rights at the national and international levels.
2000, only 25 countries (including most glaringly the United States, as well as a smattering of Muslim and least-developed countries) had failed to ratify CEDAW, making it the second most widely ratified human rights convention (UN 2000: 151). As of 2009, only eight countries, including the United States, remain non-signatories, although the Obama administration supports CEDAW and is seeking congressional approval for it. Through CEDAW and subsequent UN conferences on human rights, particularly throughout the 1990s, women’s movements and NGOs made the case that “women’s rights are human rights,” achieving international recognition that reproductive and, to some degree, sexual rights were just as important as and connected to political and economic rights. As long as women are denied choices about if, when, and under what conditions they bear children or terminate pregnancies, are subject to sexual and domestic abuse, and are limited in their sexual expressions and orientations, they will not be able to exercise their political and economic rights. Although women’s and other human rights continue to be violated on a massive scale, the widespread ratification of CEDAW has given women’s movements throughout much of the world a major tool through which to hold their governments accountable for continued abuses.

GLOBAL CRISES:
RE-MASCU LINIZATIONS OF WORLD POLITICS

Just as women were gaining voice and ground in international forums and policymaking arenas, particularly in the first decade of the post-Cold War period, a series of political, economic, cultural, and environmental shocks heightened both direct and structural violence in world politics. While so-called hot wars raged in the global South (often as a result of East-West conflict) throughout the Cold War period and into the post-Cold War time (including conflicts in the global North arising out of the unraveling of the former Soviet Union as well as the first U.S.-waged war against Iraq), decisions made in the aftermath of 9/11 produced not only wars in Afghanistan and Iraq waged largely by the United States, but also the so-called global “war on terror.” Far from reaping the substantial peace dividend hoped for by this point in the post-Cold War era, world military spending has skyrocketed, reaching almost $1.5 trillion in 2008, with U.S. military spending accounting for 48 percent of the total (Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation 2008). Although there was a reduction in military spending primarily by former Warsaw Pact countries in the 1990s, military spending has returned to Cold War highs (WCC 2005: 4). Even more problematic in the U.S. case are the facts that, as of 2004, nine times more was spent on the U.S. military than on homeland security and other nonmilitary security programs with additional evidence that military spending had “rightened spending on social services such as education, health care, and environmental protection” (WCC 2005: 9–10).

This latter effect of military spending is what is referred to as structural violence, or making populations more vulnerable to social, economic, health, and environmental harms. Not only has the United States increased structural violence against its own population in favor of waging direct (and structural) violence abroad, but also a number of other countries, some of which have the weakest social safety nets, have made similar choices, given that most “developing” countries spend as much or more on militaries than on basic social services (WCC 2005: 18). Moreover, nonsecurity-related foreign aid has also been sacrificed to military spending, with almost no “developed” country giving the UN-recommended minimum of .07 percent of GDP annually for this purpose (WCC 2005: 20).

Another major source of structural violence is neoliberal globalization, or the expansion (and imposition) of global capital interconnecting the world’s economies, which, in its contemporary form, began in the 1970s and accelerated in the 1990s onward (Peterson 2003). As we write this, the world is gripped in an economic crisis precipitated by poor and poorly regulated lending practices by U.S.-based transnational banks and investment firms, which, for a time, artificially propped up the global capitalist economy in which almost all countries and many of their peoples were expected to become deeply enmeshed. Critics of globalization have long argued that extremely unregulated capital flows render the global capitalist system unstable. Advocates of deregulation argued that an unfettered market would raise all boats, but it has, in fact, only enriched the few at the top; created unprecedented income and wealth gaps between the rich and the rest; shifted sites of industrial
Global Center Issues in the New Millennium

Women's human rights were ни reason for the war, despite the
women's unison with the other inhabitants of the planet, which was widely recognized as a result of the war's impact on the
population and the world community. The war's impact was felt not only in the
humanitarian field, but also in the economic and social spheres, leading to
enormous changes in the global economy and society. The war's
impact on the global economy was profound, as it led to a
reduction in economic growth and a rise in unemployment
rates worldwide. The war's impact on the environment was
also significant, as it led to the
destruction of natural resources and the
pollution of air and water.

In the wake of the war, there was a
shift in the world's political landscape,
with many countries turning to
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The war also had a significant
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early rhetoric about this from the Bush administration, nor could they be achieved by war, which most often vastly increases insecurity for women. A more comprehensive examination of gender and global security appears in Chapter 4, but suffice it to say here that masculinism is deeply implicated in increasing militarization and silencing alternatives to armed conflict and resolving conflict nonviolently.

Masculinism has also shaped and propelled globalization. Charlotte Hooper’s (2001) study of the discourse, or language, used by Anglo-American neoliberal economists and leaders to promote globalization in the 1990s revealed a new kind of hegemonic masculinity emerging: It combined older forms of “hard” masculinity that celebrated war heroism and risk-taking frontiersmanship with newer forms of relatively “softer” masculinity that applauded rational calculus, technological prowess, and global networking. This new model served to elevate global capitalist development to the most manly pursuit, even over war, to which all men and many countries should aspire. Those (whether women or men, movements, organizations, institutions, or states) who were concerned with what globalization was doing—the loss of industrial jobs and the shift to low-wage service economies in the global North, the exploitation of labor and the environment in the global South, the decline of the welfare state and the privatization of social services, and the disinterest in human development and environmental protection in favor of only capital accumulation that went to the very few—were seen as anachronistic (feminine) and thus should be brushed aside as being unready for the brave new world of the “new economy.” Infusing martial values into the global capitalist cause, already replete with competitiveness values, encouraged the hubris that enabled the risky ventures that have currently brought the world economy to its knees.

Long preceding this economic crisis, however, evidence had been piling up that most women were bearing the brunt of the new economy (Marchand and Runyan 2000). For example, as reproductive workers in the voluntaristic economy, or household members given by gender ideology the most responsibility for the creation and care of family and community members on an unpaid basis, women—who are also the largest consumers and providers of social services because of their reproductive roles—have lost the most with the reduction or privatization of social services. The retreat of the welfare state has meant that women have had to take on additional roles in the private or domestic sphere that used to be public services, for which women also used to be paid or paid better. As productive workers in the cash economy, women, who have been rendered as “cheap” labor by gender ideology, became the preferred labor force in low-wage service and light-industrial assembly work created by offshore production. Some women have benefited to a degree from this newfound employment, but their working conditions—including low wages, lack of union protections, poor health and safety regulations, sexual harassment, and polluted and dangerous workplaces and living spaces—have kept them in subordinate and precarious positions. Subordinate men, such as those in the working classes, have suffered as well, having their skills, wages, and jobs “feminized” (devalued or eliminated). But this effect, too, boomerangs on women in such forms as enduring higher incidences of domestic violence, taking full responsibility for both wage and reproductive work, and/or being left behind to sustain the household alone when men migrate for jobs elsewhere or having to migrate themselves to find work, thus leaving their families behind. Chapter 5 more fully addresses the impact of gender on the global political economy, and the impact of the global political economy on gender, and this analysis will promote our thinking alternatively about how to make more sustainable and just economies.

So how do we make sense of the contradiction of the rise of the new global politics of gender equality (or the re-positionsings of women and men) at the same time that re-masculinizations of states and economies have been in ascendance? Our short answer is the power of gender, the principle concept informing this book and the other running theme of it. As a filtering and organizing mechanism that produces both world-views and world structures, the power of gender is particularly resilient and adaptive, accommodating some changes in the positionings (or re-positionings) of women and men, while sustaining, through shifting formations of what constitutes ideal forms of masculinity and femininity, masculinist values in world politics that devalue other ways of identifying, seeing, structuring, and acting in the world. Our somewhat longer explanation in the following pages lies in the interactions of gender with the other identity markers and power relations of race, class, nation, and sexuality. These provide more complicated pictures of social orders, enabling us to see how even the concept of gender equality is manipulated
to recognize some form of universal citizenship rights in the case of black women. As a result, these universal citizenship rights have been extended to other women, including African American women. However, these rights have not been fully extended to other women, including African American women. The concept of intersectionality is crucial in this context, as it recognizes the complex interplay of multiple dimensions of identity and experience that shape the lives of women of color and other marginalized groups. This approach to understanding women's experiences is essential in advancing social justice and equality for all women.
oxymoron because dominant constructions of black men’s sexuality, foisted by whites and internalized by blacks from slavery on, are so tied to images of aggressive heterosexuality.

This brings us to the fourth meaning of intersectional analysis—namely, the kind of masculinity or femininity one is assumed to have rests on the meanings given to one’s race, class, sexuality, and nationality. For example, Africans brought as slaves to the Americas were defined by their captors as subhuman with largely animal instincts, which included the assumption that animals mate indiscriminately. The idea that slaves, whether men or women, were “oversexed” was a convenient mythology for male slaveholders who could thereby justify their sexual assaults on female slaves while upholding slavery and later Lynchings in the name of protecting white women from “naturally” sexually predatory black men. The contemporary terms for this kind of thinking are the gendered racialization and sexualization of groups to render them as “other” or different and less than the groups doing the labeling. As raised earlier, hegemonic masculinity—currently identified with and exercised by those individuals, groups, cultures, organizations, and states coded with the full privileges of Western-ness, whiteness, wealth, and maleness born out of long histories of conquest and colonization—carries the highest representational (or labeling) power to render others “other.” If we focus only on a narrow definition of gender or singular notions of masculinity and femininity, we miss the complexity of unjust social orders and fail to see how they are upheld often by pitting subordinated groups against each other, especially when such groups are coded as homogeneous without both cross-cutting and conflicting interests within them that hold potential for coalitions and more comprehensive resistance to unjust social (and world political) orders.

Contemporary feminist scholars engage in intersectional analysis to avoid the practice of “essentialism,” or the assumption that, for example, all women or all men or all those within a given race or class share the same experiences and interests. Only by recognizing how, for example, some women have benefited by the racial, class, sexual, and national origin oppression of other women, whereas many men subordinated by these very characteristics still exercise gender oppression, can we advance a more comprehensive notion of gender equality that sees it as indivisible from racial, class, and sexual equality and equality among nations. Unfortunately, the new politics of gender equality observable at the international level has largely separated gender equality from these other forms of equality. As a result, international efforts to increase gender equality can fail to address other sources of inequality (such as race and class discrimination) that disadvantage certain groups of women. At the same time, when such efforts blame only men, and mostly nonelite men, for gender inequality, and fail to address forms of discrimination that subordinated men experience (based on class, race, and/or sexuality), then subordinated men may withhold support for gender equality. It also maintains the power of gender even as the socioeconomic positionings of women and men may be somewhat altered.

Another reason to avoid essentialism is also to avoid “universalism,” or universal prescriptions for how to achieve comprehensive gender equality. Not only do women not share the same experiences or interests as a result of their multiple identities derived from their differing social locations in the world, but also the sociopolitical, cultural, and historical contexts in which women live vary significantly, requiring varying strategies for social change. These complex realities have made many feminists skeptical of resorting to “global” solutions just as they have recognized that “global” problems take many and differing “local” forms to which agents of social change must be attentive to create context-specific and context-sensitive solutions that do not backfire (Grewal and Kaplan 1994). This skepticism also extends to global actors, whether IGOs or NGOs, because they tend to be among the elite whose interests and analyses may reproduce inequalities on the local level even as they purport to be ameliorating them (Spivak 1998). Thus, global norms and global actors are double-edged swords that can both reduce and reproduce inequalities. On the other hand, local efforts to reduce inequalities at the local level that are not attentive to how those inequalities may be, at least partially, the result of more global processes that produce similar inequalities across locales risk failing to see these interconnections, thereby leaving inequalities largely intact or simply shifting them to “other” places.

Such insights that arise from intersectional analysis help us to make sense of the paradox between increased global attention to gender equality and increased global crises associated with reassertions of masculinism and other subordinating fundamentalisms. These insights also inform this book, which we map here in concluding this chapter.
Mapping the book, Global Center Issues in the New Millennium: Why "Global Center"? An Introduction to the Concept of Global Issues and Politics

The (Re)Positioning of Women, Men, and Gender

Cultural and Global Issues

...
determining which women “move up” and which men stay down or “move down.”

Another common feature of our “issues” chapters (3, 4, and 5) is attention to the re-positioning of gender in global policymaking. Not long ago, gender was absent as an explicit focus of policymaking by IGOs. Today, gender—either referring to women or to gender equality between women and men—is on the agenda of many IGOs in relation to a range of political, security, economic, and social issues. We address recent key gender policies, but also critique them in terms of, on the one hand, their appropriations and depoliticizations of gender analysis and demands and, on the other, their insufficiencies in re-positioning women and men, attending to inequalities not only between but also among women and men, and alleviating the global crises to which they acknowledge gender is related.

The Power of Gender

As our other recurring theme, we deal with gender as a dimension of the way world politics is studied, thought about, and thus conducted by referring to the effects of gender on world politics, or the power of gender as a meta-lens, or mental ordering and filtering system, that produces and reproduces global inequalities, injustices, and crises. Chapter 2 elaborates the power of gender as a meta-lens; other chapters reveal how it operates to perpetuate inequalities between and among women and men, insufficiencies in the re-positionings of diverse women and men, and appropriations of equality, nonviolence, social justice, and environmental sustainability demands. Thus, the (re)positionings of women and men and the power of gender are two interacting themes—two sides of the same coin—that frame and cut across the material presented in this text.

These interacting phenomena provide a gender-sensitive lens on global processes that foregrounds the relationship between gendered thinking and actors and gendered actions and consequences. Those consequences have most severely culminated in what we refer to as the interlocking global crises of representation, insecurity, and sustainability throughout the text, but we also deal with them serially and in more depth in the issues chapters. Such a lens alters both the “what” of world politics and “how” we view it. We see the extent and structure of gendered inequalities, the role of gender in combination with other inequalities in structuring the experience of women and men worldwide, the significance of gender in relation to other power relations in shaping how we think about world politics, and the process by which gendered thought shapes world politics itself. In shifting our vision, a gender-sensitive lens, which is most concerned with uprooting the power of gender from which inequalities and injustices flow, also shifts our attention from questions of order, control, and growth at any cost (which are ostensibly best left in the hands of experts at the top) to questions of representational equity, nonviolent security, and human and ecological sustainability that actually require multiple voices from multiple social locations to address.

Gender Lenses in World Politics Inquiry

Although a gender-sensitive lens on world politics alerts us to the power of gender as a hegemonic worldview or meta-lens, there are multiple gender lenses, or feminist perspectives, in world politics inquiry. These are addressed in Chapter 2, but here it is important to point out that we will be applying a range of these lenses in our engendered examinations of traditional categories of world politics inquiry: global governance (Chapter 3), global security (Chapter 4), and global political economy (Chapter 5). The employment of multiple feminist perspectives foregrounds the substantial body of work that now exists in feminist IR, affords more complex and sometimes conflicting analyses of these world political constructs, and ensures no single or hegemonic analysis that produces fixed or static approaches that foreclose debate within gender inquiry. At the same time, we point to weaknesses in and appropriations of gender inquiry and policy when they fail to address the power relations among women and among men that forestall more comprehensive critiques and resistances to processes that widen and deepen global and local inequalities. Our final chapter (6) examines some resistances that seek to change the inequalities between and among women and men and/or transform perspectives on world politics. Although varied, incomplete, and sometimes conflictual, resistance strategies attempt to confront the crises of representation, insecurity, and sustainability through enabling more participatory and nonhegemonic governance, nonviolent forms of security, and more just and environmentally sustainable economies.
In the context of understanding and addressing the experiences of LGBTIQA+ individuals, it is crucial to recognize the systemic barriers and discrimination faced by this community. The discrimination is often rooted in societal norms and cultural attitudes, which perpetuate stigma and prejudice. This, in turn, leads to various challenges, including limited access to healthcare, employment discrimination, and a lack of legal protections. The intersectionality of gender, sexuality, race, class, and other factors further complicates these experiences, highlighting the need for a comprehensive approach to addressing discrimination.

It is essential to acknowledge the unique challenges faced by LGBTIQA+ individuals, particularly in the context of healthcare. Access to quality healthcare is often hindered by discriminatory practices and policies. This includes a lack of understanding and cultural competency among healthcare providers, as well as the lack of accessibility to gender-affirming care. The importance of creating inclusive and supportive healthcare environments cannot be overstated.

Additionally, the impact of discrimination on education and employment cannot be ignored. The lack of representation and inclusivity in these areas perpetuates marginalization and limits opportunities for development and growth. Therefore, it is crucial to advocate for policies and practices that promote equality and inclusivity in all aspects of society.

In conclusion, understanding and addressing the experiences of LGBTIQA+ individuals requires a multifaceted approach. It is essential to recognize the systemic barriers and discrimination faced by this community, as well as the unique challenges they face. By working towards creating inclusive and supportive environments, we can help to promote equality and acceptance for all.
European superiority that arose from this conquest and is often used interchangeably with “Western-centrism” in more recent times. “Orientalism” (Said 1979) is one effect of Eurocentrism (or “Occidentalism”), consigning the “non-West” to the status of cultural, political, economic, and technological backwardness. Such backwardness is assumed, in Eurocentric and Orientalist thinking, to need stimulation from the West to “develop” or “modernize” or “progress.” It is for this reason that we try to resist such labels as “developed” versus “developing” countries or the oft-used terms of First and Third Worlds, as they maintain notions of upward continuums and hierarchies. Moreover, like “industrialized” and “nonindustrialized,” they are not accurate because there are postindustrial, industrial, and nonindustrial formations in most countries. We instead use, where possible, the terms “global South” and “global North” to denote social locations of subjugation and privilege respectively. At times we invoke the global North or North or the global South or South to refer to the geographic locations associated with First and Third worlds, but at other times, we mean to include nonprivileged groups in both the geographical South and North when we refer to the global South. We also remind readers that there are elites in the South who share the privileges of the global North.

Although after World War II, resistance to direct colonial rule was largely successful, the global North continues to exploit the global South through less direct and differently manipulated forms of “neocolonial” or “neocolonial” rule (sometimes referred to as “recolonization”). Most recently, “neoliberal governmentality,” or the marketization of all life, has been put forward as the current form of neocolonialism. “Neoliberalism” refers to what we earlier called market fundamentalism, and “governmentality” is a form of governance that posits a right or normative order and entails a range of often noncoercive disciplinary mechanisms that enable the standardization of human subjectivities to it (Foucault 1991). Neoliberal governmentality is sometimes used interchangeably with a contemporary notion of “Empire.” Empire today refers not to sovereign actors pursuing economic and military power beyond their territories but a deterritorialized, decentered apparatus of rule operating across all dimensions of the social order and constituting the paradigmatic form of “biopower” in which subjectivities inculcate “self-discipline” to conform to market and other dominant logics (Hardt and Negri 2000; xxi).

The United States leads but does not (cannot) control this new form of rule. The Bush administration, however, forcefully promulgated a cultural logic and normative order presupposing global capitalism and the “war on terror” as inseparable components of the only “right” conceptualization of democracy and world order—an orientation that is somewhat changing under the Obama administration but may not significantly or sufficiently disturb the dynamics of Empire. This contextualizes what we mean by “the imperial(ist) impulse”: the practice of thinking and acting from a position of presumptive power and moral superiority in ways that reproduce essentialized and oppositional categories that silence, condemn, or preclude alternative ways of thinking and acting, and do so in the name of knowing unequivocally the one “best” answer, policy, or global project. It is a key argument of this text that the “power of gender” constitutes just such an imperial(ist) impulse by underpinning, naturalizing, and reproducing it.

Notes

1. The new Obama administration is taking a strong stand against lax definitions of torture enabled under the Bush administration, planning to close the military prison for terrorist suspects at Guantánamo Bay and retreating from the terminology “war on terror.” The implementation and effects of these policy shifts remain to be seen.

2. See Web Resources listed at the end of this text for the online location of the full text of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPA). A list of acronyms and to what they refer is also provided at the front of this text for handy reference.

3. See Web Resources listed at the end of this text for the online location of the full text of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

4. See Web Resources listed at the end of this text for the online location of the full text of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). On women’s rights and as human rights see Cook 1994; Peters and Wolper 1995; Peterson and Parisi 1995; Ackerly 2008; and UNDAW in the Web Resources section of the text.

5. Crenshaw (1991) is credited with introducing intersectionality as an analytics. Recent discussions include McCaill 2001; Brah 2002; Knapp 2005; Phoenix and Pattynama 2006; Yuval-Davis 2006.