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GENDERED DISCOURSES, GENDERED PRACTICES: FEMINISTS (RE)WRITE CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY

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GENDERED DISCOURSES, GENDERED PRACTICES: FEMINISTS (RE)WRITE CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY ROUNDTABLE

A report for the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development

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> "A humane world where people can live in security and dignity, free from poverty and despair, is still a dream for many but should be enjoyed by all. In such a world, every individual would be guaranteed freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to develop fully their human potential.
>
> Building human security is essential to achieving this goal. In essence, human security means freedom from pervasive threats to people's rights, their safety or even their lives. Human security has become both a new measure of global security and a new agenda for global action."[1]

Canadian foreign policy increasingly appears to be driven by these moral pronouncements, heralding a brave new world of peace and security for all. Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy's rhetorical obsessions with human security, soft power, and capacity building suggest a new, more inclusive and people-focussed foreign policy. International crusades, from the ban on anti-personnel landmines to the creation of an International Criminal Court, from a campaign against the transfer of small arms to the protection of children, are at the heart of this new, more humane, foreign policy agenda.

But who constitutes the "human" in this more humane agenda? Axworthy's claims to motherhood and apple pie notwithstanding, the human security agenda and all that is related to it continues to be defined by (mostly masculinist) state constructs. This research collection seeks to deconstruct the gendered nature of discourse on and about Canadian foreign policy. In so doing, it asks the fundamental question of what constitutes foreign policy as *policy*. What makes foreign policy "different" from other policy spheres? How do definitions of what is deemed to be foreign policy-*relevant* keep gender / women out of analyses? Why should feminists bother with the study of Canadian foreign policy at all, given its inherently statist and institutionalist biases?

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[1]Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, *News Release* No. 117, May 20, 1999 ("A perspective on human security" -- Chairman's summary, Lysøen, Norway, 20 May 1999).

With these questions as a backdrop, round table participants met twice -- in Winnipeg in May 2000, and in Quebec City in July, 2000. The goal of the roundtable was to discuss how to deconstruct the dominant concepts of the discourse surrounding Canadian foreign policy as articulated by key government officials and agencies (these central concepts include middle power internationalism, soft power, governance, globalization, human security, human rights, justice, peacebuilding, partnership, humane foreign policy, democratization, and multilateralism). This deconstruction problematizes the notion of who defines policy, and the statements from government are construed as a starting, but not necessarily an end, point.

This deconstruction of discourse is, however, but an initial step. The second goal of the roundtable was to consider the practices of foreign policies, that is, to ask how the discourse becomes/creates/ignores/silences/limits particular policy practices and ways of thinking and doing. Gendered discourses are strengthened and reified through gendered practices, while at the same time, legitimating such practices. Finally, the deconstruction of gendered discourses and the foreign policy practices they construct should point to ideas of what a "reconstructed" foreign policy would look like.

The papers presented at the roundtable are outlined below. They will form the basis for an edited collection that is currently under consideration by Oxford University Press.
The round table examined the discourses and practices surrounding Canadian foreign policy as defined around the four themes outlined below. These themes have become central in the articulation of Canada's foreign policy and in the practices engendered by its application into the 21st century. An additional chapter which focuses on the ethical and pedagogical implications of this analysis will be added to the collection.

Section One: Discourses and practices related to human security

"Myths of Canada's Human Security Pursuits: Tales of Tool Boxes, Toy Chests and Tickle Trunks"

Ann Denholm Crosby (York University)

This paper advances the argument that the Canadian government's human security agenda directly contradicts the primacy of the government's economic interests, since pursuing the conditions that would work *against* processes of "economic privation" and *for* the ability of peoples to "take charge of their own destinies" (both elements are pillars of the human security agenda) is at odds with pursuing trade and investment initiatives designed to promote the prosperity of Canadians. This contradiction exists given that the global economy as currently constructed thrives on relative 'privation' and necessarily situates the destinies of peoples within that system. The management of this contradiction is the subject of this paper, and the argument outlined suggests that although the human security agenda reflects a change in focus in the Department of Foreign Affairs' foreign policy agenda, it does not represent a significant change in content, and rather serves as a "conditioning framework" for business as usual.

Although there is an ideological component to this conditioning process, the main framework is constructed from the debates that are presently exercising politicians and bureaucrats from both the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAIT) and the Department of National Defence (DND), as well as a range of interested observers and academics, about the roles of human, as opposed to state-centric, security practices. These debates are essentially about means rather than ends and can be reduced to whether the Canadian state, in its pursuit of prosperity and employment, should address related and contingent security issues with instruments to be found in DFAIT's tool box of soft power resources, or with the means to be found in DND's toy chest of military technologies. Either way, the debate is implicitly about how to address with one hand the ills we produce with the other, and serves to disguise the fact that this is what is being done. In the latter context, both the soft and hard power advocates are equally skilled and similarly inclined in the art of prestidigitation (or conjury) for both dip into the tickle trunk of disguises to dress the discourse and practice of human security in the garb of humanitarianism.

"Militarized Masculinities and the Politics of Peacekeeping: The Canadian Case"

Sandra Whitworth (York University)

Through an analysis of the events surrounding the brutal murder of Shidane Arone at the hands of Canadian soldiers – peacekeepers – in Somalia in 1993, this paper asks to what extent the skills of war are at odds with those required for peace operations. While peacekeeping may have resolved what was a crisis of legitimation for post-Cold War militaries, it did so in a way that is not fully or properly, militaristic. Within traditional military culture, peacekeeping and peace operations are often ridiculed and demeaned; much as they have become increasingly important within the post-Cold War era, there is not the same prestige associated with a 'blue beret fight' for the (mostly) young men trained to do battle who we deploy on these missions. The resolution of the military's legitimation crisis becomes to some extent a crisis of masculinity. The tensions which emerge, and their sometimes horrifying consequences, are made clear by examining the case of the Canadian peacekeeping mission to Somalia. Rarely are the events of Somalia associated with the problems of militarized masculinity and the use of soldiers – people trained to destroy other human beings by force – in peace operations. The events in Somalia, however, reveal not only some of the contradictions of one of Canada's "core myths" about the nature of Canada as a peacekeeping nation, but underscore as well the pervasiveness, and effects of, militarized masculinity within issues of international security.

Ironically, it is often the non-military contributions which Canadian peacekeepers make for which they are best remembered. In Somalia, these included re-opening a local school and hospital. In other settings, it has included building parks for children, and serving as mediators in difficult situations. This means that we need to acknowledge that soldiers don't always make the best peacekeepers – sometimes it is carpenters, mediators, and doctors who best perform that function, and who best contribute to a people's meaningful sense of security. It means also that when we do send soldiers on peace operations, they need to be soldiers who have been trained and encouraged to understand that properly masculine behaviour need not be dependent on misogyny, racism, or violence. Keeping the peace positively demands it.

"Masculinities and Femininities in Sustainable Development Strategies: Gender and Canadian Foreign Policy"

Rebecca Tiessen (Dalhousie University)

In this paper, a gender analysis is used to reveal the masculinities and femininities in the sustainable development strategy (SDS) adopted by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). The paper argues that despite Canada's national and international commitments to gender, environment, and sustainable development, masculinities continue to pervade DFAIT's SDS, thus perpetuating gender inequality. This analysis is couched in a broader framework that defines environment and sustainable development as security concerns, a discourse from which gender is notably absent.

The SDS and sustainable development policies are areas for new battles that reveal masculinities in new forms of conflict and struggle. The DFAIT SDS in particular draws on the specific masculinities in Agenda 21, leaving out the femininities and breakthroughs of this document. In so doing, it perpetuates the masculinities in Canadian foreign policy and international relations more generally. Many examples of theses masculinities can be found in the language adopted in DFAIT's SDS as well as in its institutional practices.

Section Two: Discourses and practices related to multilateralism and globalization

"Internationalism in Canadian Foreign Policy: Gendered Constructions for Whom?"

Heather Smith (University of Northern British Columbia)

The concept of internationalism is central to literature on Canadian foreign policy. Using the characteristics of internationalism defined by Kim Richard Nossal as a springboard (multilateralism, community, good international citizenship, and voluntarism), this paper argues that the internationalism which is a central feature of government rhetoric on Canadian foreign policy does not match the reality of state practices. To understand the gap between discourse and practice, the paper turns to neo-gramscian feminist theory, and asks the question of "internationalism" for whom? An examination of the gendered nature of the language that infuses the rhetoric of internationalism makes it apparent that the rhetoric and practice of "good international citizenship" does not always translate to practices directed toward those who are "foreign" or "others" within our own borders. This section identifies the various "others" that in an era of market oriented internationalism have no voice or who are viewed as somehow threatening to Canada's well-being. Drawing on cases related to the environment and on the recent example of the Chinese migrants in British Columbia, this analysis encourages us to think carefully about the various components of internationalism. Are we promoting "community" (in itself a gendered concept), or a system of global apartheid? Is "good international citizenship" marked by behaviours which result in environmental degradation?

This paper deconstructs the concept of internationalism. It shows us that we must continue to challenge the myths that are perpetuated by the dominant discourse, and present in government rhetoric. Internationalism is a concept which appears to challenge the sovereignty of states, proposing a model which seeks to build an inclusive community and rests on the gendered assumption that we must provide for the common good. In practice, however, this analysis demonstrates that Canada's internationalism reaffirms the state, perpetuates differences, and silences multiple voices.

"Insiders Playing Games: Global Competitiveness on the Field of Canadian Multilateralism"

Claire Turenne Sjolander (University of Ottawa)

Multilateralism is an "article of faith" in Canadian foreign policy; in Sergio Marchi's words, it is "part of the Canadian DNA". Starting from the perspective that multilateralism as a process for managing Canada's international economic relations has been at least as, if not more, important to the architects and practitioners of Canadian foreign policy than has multilateralism as a means to the achievement of a specified series of ends, this paper critically examines the economic outcomes which the processes of multilateralism have structured. The outcomes which have emerged and taken hold in the era of globalization are based on the norms of a neo-liberal global economic order and a neo-liberal state, and the Canadian state, through its enthusiastic participation in the multilateral institutions which have structured these outcomes, is a key architect of the global economic order.

The paper examines the discourses surrounding Canada's "insider" participation in multilateral economic institutions and processes, and seeks to uncover the gendered bases of the images of the global economic order concealed therein. In the first instance, what is most evident is the attempt to conceal the political bases of the global economy. Where the imagery of team sports and competition has long been associated with the "high politics" of national security and military deployment, Canadian discourse on international trade and investment increasingly uses this same imagery. Canadians are players on the playing field of globalization, they work together best when they are a team (and here, the entire structure of government programs known under the rubric of Team Canada only serves to underscore the point), and they must do what is necessary to win against the forces of globalization "out there". Politics are absent from this analogy, a discursive turn which mirrors the institutional bifurcation of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade into political and trade commissioner services. The paper then draws parallels between this discursive analogy and the explicit attempt by DFAIT to develop programs which respond to the needs of women in the global economy. Rather than a softening of the "macho" imagery of team sports where there are winners and losers, the gendered language and images of competitive sports are reinforced in those programs targeted specifically to women. In focussing on the potential of gender-less individuals to win and lose in a zero-sum game, the embedded structure of the global economy, and in particular, its gendered nature and consequences, is both obscured and denied.

"Gendering Canadian Trade Policy: The Last Feminist Frontier?"
Laura Macdonald (Carleton University)

This paper examines the specific ways in which gender and trade are linked, given that despite increasing attention in the past couple of years to the social dimensions of trade, DFAIT has paid no attention to the burgeoning literature on gender and trade. The paper begins with an overview of the literature on gender and macroeconomic policy, arguing that trade policies are not gender neutral, but that they often reinforce existing gender, class and racial hierarchies. Using this literature as a starting point, the paper then traces the different manifestations of the problem of gender and trade, focussing in particular on the liberal feminist and the socialist feminist approaches.

The liberal feminist approach concentrates on increasing the access of women (particularly microentrepreneurs) to credit or markets, and is best exemplified by the Women Leaders' Network in APEC (a network which is heavily supported by CIDA). Noteworthy is the attempt to establish a Women Leaders' Network of the Americas based on this same elitist model. On the other hand, the socialist feminist approach focuses on an overview of women's (and particularly the National Action Committee on the Status of Women – NAC) advocacy on trade issues beginning with the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement, and leading up to the recent establishment of a Women's Forum in the Hemispheric Social Alliance, and the Centre of Concern meeting in Grenada. In recent years, advocacy on trade issues has led to an increasing internationalization of women's economic analysis and activism. The discussion here also highlights some of the problems with this approach, including the fact that the mainstream women's movement in the US lacks any economic analysis, that Third World women's organizations are less likely to reject trade agreements in the same way NAC does, and the danger of imposing First World perspectives and showing insensitivity to Third World women's perspectives. The paper ends with a discussion of various reasons to explain why Canadian trade policy remains gender blind, and concludes with the possibility that spaces for feminist struggle may be opened up by the consolidation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Section Three: Discourses and practices related to women's rights

"Women's Human Rights and Canadian Foreign Policy"
Shelagh Day (Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action)

This paper begins with a discussion of the tradition of the division between civil and political rights on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights on the other. This division, initiated by the elaboration of the two UN central Covenants on human rights, has created a distinction between formal equality, and substantive equality. Despite the fact that this division is perpetuated within Canada, for women from other countries, Canada appears to be a leader on women's human rights issues. Canada is considered one of the progressive countries by many.

However, Canada's leadership role at the international level is not parallelled by leadership at home. It is noteable that Monica Townson has just reported that women's poverty and economic inequality in Canada has not changed significantly in 30 years, that is since the time of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women.

Consequently, there is a kind of schizophrenia in Canada's approach to women's human rights. Canada has a desire to be, and to be seen to be, a leader on women's human rights at the global level and simultaneously, at home, refuses to treat international human rights commitments to women as serious matters. Some UN treaty bodies are beginning to scratch away at Canada's teflonized reputation on human rights, taking account of representations made by women's organizations and other NGOs regarding Canada's failures to comply with central undertakings in the human rights treaties that Canada has signed. The Concluding Observations of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1998) and the UN Human Rights Committee (1999) are recent important examples of this. The paper concludes with a discussion of the strategies for Canadian women seeking to advance the cause of women's human rights.

"Discourses, Dollars and Feminist Dilemmas: A UPCD Tier 2 Project on Prostitution in the Philippines"

Edna Keeble (St. Mary's University) and Meredith Ralston (Mount St. Vincent University)

Funded as one of the partnership programs of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development (UPCD) program administered by the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC) provides opportunities for Canadian academics to initiate and direct a development project in their area of research expertise. The UPCD program which provides five-year funding for universities is divided into two tiers, depending on the amount of the grant awarded. For Canadian feminist scholars wanting to ameliorate the hardships faced by women abroad, the UPCD program can be a vehicle facilitating their direct involvement in making a difference in the lives of women in other countries. This paper outlines a UPCD Tier 2 project on prostitution in Angeles City, Philippines, and examines the challenges inherent in such a project: facing a discourse that revolves around alleviating poverty, and not sexual exploitation, facing dollars that are limited and constrained by strict guidelines, and facing feminist dilemmas that are numerous and fundamental. At the same time, the paper argues that the space created by, and within, the project, although small, is significant enough to warrant not only action, but optimism, in helping prostituted women in the Philippines.

The paper begins with a discussion of Canadian official development assistance (ODA) policy and the discourse around poverty alleviation. Although scholars have long pointed out that ODA is more about serving the interests of donors as opposed to recipients, resulting in the maintenance of a liberal capitalist system, we argue that the focus on class as opposed to gender as the driving force in the disbursement of aid monies becomes particularly problematic for prostitutes in Angeles City. We then move on to a specific discussion of the UPCD Tier 2 program and the role of universities and scholars in development projects. Here, we highlight

the opportunities and pitfalls creased by human resource development (HRD) strategies and the focus on "capacity building" over overseas partner institutions. Because of the constraints of the UPCD Tier 2 guidelines, the project is actually indirectly helping the prostituted women in the Philippines. Finally, we discuss the project and ground the discussion on feminist dilemmas of working within the system as opposed to working from outside. Are we, and the women's groups with who we work, in danger of co-optation by the state? Given that, for example, we are working with the Philippine National Police, are we in danger of legitimizing one of the main actors to benefit from and protect the sex trade industry in the Philippines? Are we simply making the police and judges more effective in arresting and prosecuting prostitutes? We end on an optimistic note because as feminists (re)write Canadian foreign policy, we become aware of the premises underlying not only what we read as policy, but also what we know as practice in the way that women organize for change.

"Canadian Refugee Policies and Women"

Erin Baines (Dalhousie University)

In the 1980s and 1990s, Canada's interpretation of the 1951 Refugee Convention has made the country a world leader on refugee women's issues. The 1951 Convention provided a definition of refugees based on the applicant's well-founded fear of state persecution based upon grounds of either: race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or participation in a particular social group. The Convention has been criticised because it fails to recognize gender-related forms of persecution; for example, instances in which someone is persecuted as a woman or because she is a woman. In 1993, Canada advanced a set of guidelines on gender persecution which attempted to address some of these critiques, and since then, a number of other states have followed suit.

This paper addresses the challenges of attempting to codify gender-based persecution in international conventions, and the assumptions that the discourse around gender-based persecution contains. In particular, the Canadian discourse assumes that refugee women are vulnerable creatures and need to be protected. More concretely, women who present themselves to Canadian authorities as vulnerable (by crying, for example) have a better chance of getting accepted under current refugee policy. This perpetuates an attitude of Western superiority and the vulnerability of Third World women. Equally, the assumption is prevalent that gender-related persecution always takes place, geographically, in the Third World. This reinforces the cultural "othering" of Third World women, and seeks to mask the injustices at home (where what happens abroad is persecution, while what happens at home is, at worst, discrimination). Despite the leadership shown by the Canadian state, we also need to challenge the assumption that women are granted absolute protection when they arrive in Canada, for in reality, the system often fails them. Finally, the very fact of specifying gender-based persecution as a legitimate criterion for the granting of refugee status, there is still the threat of the further marginalization of women if we don't combat the related assumption that gender persecution equals women, while all other forms of persecution apply to men.

The paper situates these discursive contradictions within the context of developments in Canadian refugee policy, as well as within a global context, where post-Cold War UN

interventions and containment strategies to prevent mass migration and displacement have had important ramifications for refugee rights of both women and men.

Section Four: Discourses and practices related to democratization of foreign policy

"Organizing for Beijing: Canadian NGOs and the Fourth World Conference on Women"
Elizabeth Riddell-Dixon (University of Western Ontario)

This paper examines the government-sponsored mechanisms that were established to facilitate NGO preparations within Canada for the Beijing Conference on Women. These efforts, part of the broader effort to democratize the foreign policy process in Canada, reflected the more general discussion within government circles as to how NGOs could and should be involved in foreign policy processes. The paper underscores that in providing venues through which the attentive public can express its concerns and opinions, consultations and other government-sponsored mechanisms to facilitate the participation of civil society in the foreign policy-making process contribute to greater – although by no means complete – democratization.

While the government provided funds to facilitate NGO participation at most of the major international conferences and summits convened in the 1990s, the particular mechanisms set up in the case of the Beijing Conference on Women were unique. In particular, the Canadian Beijing Facilitating Committee, whose members were selected through an exhaustive canvassing of women's groups throughout Canada, had its headquarters wholly within the women's movement. The CBFC fed into the Canadian Preparatory Committee, which was established to facilitate consultations between members of the federal Interdepartmental Committee on the World Conference on Women and NGOs in the preparations of Canada's positions on documents pertaining to the UN Conference on Women. Despite the presence of government-sponsored mechanisms facilitating NGO participation, however, outcomes were not affected. While the process did assist NGOs in developing their positions and it facilitated a two-way flow of information between government officials and NGO representatives, it did not result in the NGOs having significant influence over the substance or direction of Canada's positions.

"(Re) Claiming the Economic: Women's Groups and Canadian Foreign Policy"
Deborah Stienstra (University of Winnipeg)

In February 1999, a new coalition of women's groups called the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Actions (FAFIA) was created. It signalled a significant shift in attention by Canadian equality-seeking women's groups to participate collectively in international activities. Its primary focus is to enable women in Canada to have an effective voice in discussions affected by globalization and the liberalization of trade. The creation of this coalition and its subsequent activity around the Beijing + 5 process have illustrated many challenges and constraints for the federal government and the Canadian women's movement. This paper explores the discursive and practical dynamics that have arisen from the work of this coalition and the challenges it has posed for the development and practice of Canadian foreign policy. The paper traces the history

of the involvement of equity-seeking women's groups in the international arena, and presents an analysis of women's groups in Canada in the post-Beijing period. In so doing, it identifies a series of constraints; within the women's movement in Canada, within policy development and implementation, as well as points to the broader structural constraints within the government of Canada which make it difficult to incorporate analysis of women or gender in economic policy-making, and to the constraints within the international system shaping or limiting the framework for international decision-making.

The paper concludes with a discussion of how these constraints have shaped or are reflected in the discourses and practices of Canadian foreign policy. In particular, it identifies three areas characterized by exclusion: the discourse on democratization (where women's groups are often excluded in economic consultations), the discourse on globalization (where an analysis of gender is excluded), and the discourse on human security (where economic analysis is excluded, despite the efforts of women's groups to make these present).

"Canada in Aid of Liberalism: A Feminist Discussion of Cooperation and (Post)Colonialism in the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas"

Teresa Healy (Wilfrid Laurier University)

This paper offers a critique of the liberal project framing the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA) by linking analyses of marginalised women's experiences of new productive and reproductive forms in different places in the Americas with analyses of the gendered character of the ideal form of state that is being fashioned across the hemisphere. The minimalist liberal state has become the ideal form of state promoted by national governments through their domestic policy and through interstate agreements. This is a patriarchal form of state constructed through the extension of market relations in areas of social provision previously fought for and won by feminist struggle within social movements and the state. The economic marginalisation of women who depended on governmental intervention in social provision is one direct outcome. The increased expression of authoritarianism on the part of the state in instituting these marketized economic policies is another, political, outcome. Both are coercive, although obviously, the process is uneven, and does not happen in the same way in every country across the Americas.

Governments, including the Canadian state, are not ushering in a process of restructuring that has material dimensions only, however devastating they may be for many women. The patriarchal liberal state is being constructed discursively as the protector of liberal political freedoms, if not at the national level, then at the level of world order. International declarations in support of the human rights of the individual are the political counterparts to the supposed fairness and predictability of international economics under an open, transparent, rules-based trading system.

The international economic system is left unencumbered by these declarations because of the liberal requirement to maintain the separation of politics and economics. This has the effect of legitimising the institutionalisation of the minimalist state in international trade and investment

treaties. In this way, the authoritarianism of the liberal state is brought together with a paternalist nod in the direction of the protection of women's human rights, along with the rights of others who need protecting, such as children and migrant workers. Such declarations are meant precisely not to challenge the imperialism of globalization. Authoritarianism and paternalism are two sides of the patriarchal liberal state and may be considered the gendered aspects of hegemony.

This theoretical critique is explored by examining the World March of Women 2000 against Poverty and Violence, and in particular, NAC's statements surrounding it, as well as the oppositional social movements which have formed a "Hemispheric Social Alliance" in order to protest the construction of the FTAA.