

THE TERMINISTIC FILTER OF SECURITY: REALISM, FEMINISM AND  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY

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This study uses Kenneth Burke's concept of terministic filters to examine what the word security means to two different publics within the academic discipline of international relations. It studies the rhetoric feminist international relations theorists and contrasts their view security with that of realist and neo-realist interpretations of international affairs. This study claims to open up the possibility for studying the rhetoric of emergent movements through the use of dramatistic or terministic screens.

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# **Chapter 1: The Rhetorical Turn in IR**

## **Introduction to the Study**

Interdisciplinary inquiry is nothing new. What is new is the way in which philosophy from various “conceptual ecologies” (Toulmin 45) have become applied to one another, thus creating a crisis in which the claims of different traditions advance arguments concerning the practices of a field which are evaluated against a tapestry of previous disciplinary claims. Post-structuralism and post-modernism have attacked the very basis of claim-making in many academic disciplines, suggesting that many of the ways in which statements were formed in the past were either erroneous or at least hopelessly incomplete because of their ignorance of agency (specifically non-governmental agency) and its interactions with identity formation.

Some philosophy has come to disregard the communicative, or rhetorical, aspects of purposive action. In other words, certain philosophy suffers from a misunderstanding of communicative action and its effect on manufacturing frames of reference that direct our political action. Ultimately rhetoric expresses our ways of knowing, guides our physical actions and paints a foreground for our physical and psychological life-worlds. This process is no secret to students of communication. Since Aristotle, most scholars of rhetoric understood that the basis of political action was communicative action, that the affairs of the polis are intricately tied, if not intimately connected, to knowledge structures replicated every day by conventions of language and processes of persuasion. It is not surprising to communication scholars that states achieve deterrence and military security primarily through perceptual factors rather than scientific calculation. What is

new is other disciplines' awareness of rhetoric, its omnipresence in claim making and of what many scholars refer to as the "linguistic turn" (Beer and Hariman 47) in philosophy.

It is this rhetorical turn that is the subject of this paper. Specifically, this study will focus on the rhetorical turn taking place in international relations (IR) theory and how the term security is the focal point of increasing disputes between traditional Humean positivism and the politics of identity, shaping the nature of claims being made in that field of argument. The study will explore theories of power, influence, and scientific modeling to demonstrate that the rhetoric of realism is simply that: a rhetorical economy expressed through an elaborate political apparatus and expressed through the collection of claims related to the negotiation of the term security. Indeed, this account will reveal the dialectical struggle occurring between conventional views of IR and more contemporary narratives, particularly feminist IR theory. In many ways, the statist configuration of current norms of IR study with its concomitant attachment to political realism render the voice(s) of most alternatives, in particular feminism, mute. Realism asserts its hegemony as the singular most explanatory principle based on simple undeniable certainties in international politics. Yet, if those contexts are proven contingent, the realist paradigm turns on its head. Feminism provides a broad-based critique of realist thought at numerous points of reference. The central question of this dispute is how a group defines security.

Indeed, many have questioned whether feminist epistemology might be more appropriately designed for its own area of study. And many major universities designate them as such. Nonetheless, it would be ludicrous to likewise assume there were no feminist insights relevant to IR. This study argues that feminist IR theory provides a

viable critique of positivism at all levels of discussion and in so doing satisfies the criteria discussed by Francis Beer and Robert Hariman in their book Post-Realism: The Rhetorical Turn in International Relations (1997), and also explores the possibilities for resistance embodied in feminist analysis, explaining how this increases our ability to resist terministic filters and details the possibilities for new spaces for public dialogue opened by the feminist critique of IR.

Beer and Hariman arrange the scenery for this play. They offer a place situated somewhere between rhetoric and international relations for our discussion. Using strong critiques of conventional IR based on principles of communicative action (Habermas, et al) and terministic screens (Burke 1966) their critique of structuralism stresses the importance of uncovering realism as simply one possible explanation for history instead of remaining the fundamental immutable principle of unfolding relationships. Yet Beer and Hariman have been criticized for not considering strongly enough feminist insights into power and action and further for being incomplete in their departure from realism and embracing of narrative (Bjork 345). Quite literally, Beer and Hariman wish to meet IR halfway. But the space they allocate for discussion might still fetishize feminine experience at the very least and, at worst, eliminate it as a possibility because of a *crypto-zero sum-ish* view of the world. In other words, Beer and Hariman will gladly open the ivory tower for women to enter, once the dragons and ogres have been slain below. So, Beer and Hariman provide us with an important connection with IR theory but in so doing the radical voices revealed/unrevealed offer back some relevant criticism of an argumentative reality based on perceived scarcity.

## Statement of the Problem

The basic problem addressed by this study is the ways in which dominant discursive communities (such as IR) deploy terministic filters to direct debate and obscure certain forms of agency from the field of discussion in order to control or limit change in global human relationships. This study identifies the problems faced by theories of feminine agency in IR and explains how the centering of the intellectual discipline of IR around a particular definition of the word security begins a process of reducing the space for argument relative to different forms of agency undeniably relevant to understanding political and social power. But, paradoxically, resistance communities such as feminism spring up around the question of security. Ideally, this study's uncovering of the terministic lens of security will help in some way to reveal the myriad ways entrenched concepts of material privilege, academic rigor and the conflation of identity work together to impoverish communicative rationality by attempting to control variables which confound the explanatory potential of realist models. In the same way, the language of security can also be a path to possible solutions. Thus, this study helps link terministic screens with the revealing/unrevealing aspects of language, a key question for ontology. In those spaces un-problematized for the purposes of positivist epistemology live the voices of alternative ways of knowing -- such as feminine agency -- which only await a fuller awareness of the interpersonal context of global relations in order to better fulfill the aims of Jurgen Habermas's vision of social action based upon communicative rationality and a free flow of ideas.

A twin problem is the lack of information on terministic filters and a lack of an appropriate lens to view the rhetoric of emergent movements. Often scholars of

communication complain because studying social movements can be difficult since many methodologies allow studies of only rhetoric that is finished, or a movement that has completed its cycle, in order to gauge its effects. This study opens up the possibility for studying the dynamic rhetoric of academic and discursive movements while they are occurring rather than after they have happened, giving scholars a new look at fresh and contemporary rhetoric that changes our world(s) daily. Additionally, it provides more guidance into how to analyze terministic filters as a method of rhetorical criticism.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study is limited in several important ways. First, it focuses on the terministic filter of security. Second, it focuses on the relationship between rhetoric and international relations as argument communities. Second, it is limited specifically to discussing the questions of the relationships between realist theory and feminist interpretations of IR. Last, it is limited by methodological factors, which keep it solidly a study of argument and its impact on intellectual communities.

Quite simply, this is a study of one term and what that term has come to mean in terms of the arguments of the IR community. This study argues simply that the term security is a critical focal point around which constellations of arguments have developed, illustrating the way term can serve as a sounding board for understanding the debate occurring in international relations between the politics of science and masculinity and the emerging question of identity. In that sense, we are only looking at one word and examining the impact that term has on the way arguments are framed and how arguments in turn frame how we interpret security in our everyday lives. This is both an incredibly important and extremely simple concept for rhetorical study.



One should not discount the importance of limiting this study to only a study of international relations. Indeed, positivism, which in many ways is what many feminist authors critique, is not limited to the discipline of IR. Scientific positivism has been applied to many of the social sciences, including communication theory. offering a general critique of positivism and scientific inquiry might take a lifetime.

Consider also the definition of “realism.” There are many shades of this term. Indeed, nearly every discipline elucidates a concept of “realist” inquiry (even art). Defining the many realisms is really the main goal of postmodern scholarship. Instead of trying to express all of the many shades of realism, this study confines itself to a discussion of classical realism and neo-realism in IR theory.

A focus on feminist argument is also an important limitation to the study. It does not attempt to explain the relationship between all resistance philosophy and IR such as the study of post-realism, post-modernism, geopolitics and others. Feminist claims make very specific arguments with respect to IR rather than making sweeping generalizations about IR scholarship. They criticize certain key concepts (such as security) and uphold other basic IR notions (such as internationalism). This helps keep the study within certain parameters but may also limit its universal applicability.

This study also has a certain kind of temporal limitation. As it is with academic disciplines, discussions tend to focus on the most salient new theory of late. From an examination of the literature it seems as if the “feminist moment” in IR has already passed in some respects. Scholars debate feminist concepts in IR and certain writers continue to address the subject, but since 1998 there has been little published concerning feminism and IR. Discussions now focus more on the postmodern project of liberating all

identities without a specific focus on feminism. In a sense, the literature on this subject is historically bound.

Last, it is important to note that our method is strictly limited to a study of argument, how those arguments relate to one another and the impact of those relationships on discussions in the public sphere. In this way, it is nothing more than a study of argument in the classical sense, with some additional refinement. This study does not make broad assertions about communication theory, but refines it in much smaller strokes, allowing us to examine the arguments of emergent social movements in all their modalities.

The scope of this study, then, is international relations theory and its knowledge claims relative to those of emergent feminist IR. It is an argument study of those communities and their claims that examines their impact on knowledge regimes. It seeks to strengthen our understanding of argument as well as test certain assumptions of contemporary argument theory.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study offers several insights that are important for fully understanding the communication phenomenon of terministic screens and provides at least some kind of guidance as to how a scholar interested in understanding terministic filters might be able to study and interpret them in a sound and coherent way. In many ways, the problem of studying terministic filters is that Kenneth Burke, who coined the term “terministic screen” (Burke 45) does not provide much guidance into how to do such a thing. Terministic filters are nice insight at this point, but there is little literature out there on how to study such filters.

This study also uncovers a more layered explanation for the ways terministic filters serve not only as methods for control, but also as targets of resistance and criticism and thus are vital chokepoints for rhetorical analysis of the manufacture and enforcement of codes of knowledge. It is not simply a tool for analyzing feminist texts. It melds the philosophy of Habermas, Nancy Fraser, Burke and Beer and Hariman to outline one way in which we can rhetorically analyze resistance vocabularies and their relationships to dominant vocabularies. In a sense, then, this study has two problems to address: first, the existence of dynamic rhetoric to study and second, devising an effective rubric for evaluating the relationship between that rhetoric and the terministic demands of its academic field of study. In this way, we can better understand the relationship of academic movements to their respective disciplines and uncover the negotiation of meaning which takes place when disciplines' foci are contested or undergo change.

Last, this study offers a way to understand how dominant publics and resistance publics can come to view the same vocabularies in different ways. It will unpack the process of marginalizing alternative viewpoints by the dogmatic assertion of realism as somehow an immutable principle of human nature. This study will address the arguments of feminist writers related to the formation of positivist epistemology in International Relations. It will evaluate how those arguments challenge existing doxa and uncover how those constructions interact with resistance vocabularies in order to limit space for new arguments and fields within that community as Burke suggests. This study will then explain how feminist inquiry challenges realist orthodoxy in a way consistent with the ones described by Fraser, Habermas and Beer and Hariman. Thus, feminist international relations theory satisfies the criteria for a legitimate movement in academic thought and

creates more space for discussing and understanding the contingent nature of authority and the diffuse nature of power through argument and the formation of claims and thus illustrates the curious way terministic filters serve as philosophical two-way mirrors, allowing us to take the perspective of the outsider and thus have a more complete picture of the available means of persuasion in a given situation.

This study will argue that feminist IR satisfies both Beer and Hariman's standard for displacing realism as a dominant philosophy as well as satisfying the criteria for a more liberating dialogue in the nexus between Habermas's conception of the public sphere and Nancy Fraser's "subaltern counterpublics" (p.56) It will analyze tenets of feminist IR and suggest contributions from that perspective to help the models developed by Beer, Hariman, Habermas, and Fraser to become more reflexive, in order to better adapt to the changing pressures of identity formation and development of self(s).

## **Methodology**

### **Filters and Spheres: Beer, Hariman and Burke**

As I stated earlier in the chapter, one problem with Burke's explanation of terministic filters is his lack of attention to the methodological questions posed by his insights into terministic screens. For example, Burke does some analysis of terministic filters, but his work focuses mainly on literary analysis which has little bearing on the fundamental questions of movements and their rhetoric. He provides little guidance with respect to methodology. Burke describes studies of childhood behavior by Bowlby, Watson and St. Augustine (Burke 49). He makes note of the fact that all three studied childhood behavior but because of their backgrounds and the way(s) of looking at objects they had developed. each came to different conclusions about the meaning of childhood

behavior. Burke suggests that this explains how terministic filters operate. Several scholars may approach the exact same term but view it in fundamentally different ways. They may then codify their interpretations and offer them as explanations for key and important concepts. In this way, the meaning of the object of study is relative to its context. And each investigator may view the same data in different ways depending upon how that data is represented.

Burke describes his analysis as “a methodic tracking down of the implications in the idea of symbolic action, and of (wo)man as the kind of being that is particularly distinguished by an aptitude for such action.” (Burke 54) That is the extent of his explanation of methodology. He does explain that certain types of terms lend themselves easily to this kind of analysis. He suggests the terms like competition, games, cooperation, etc. Security is similar to these terms, but because of our attention to IR as an object of study, we focus on it as a way of limiting our discussion to a specific movement within a particular public sphere.

For the purposes of this study, the first part of the method involves the selection of a filter that represents an area of discourse satisfying Beer and Hariman’s conception of post-realist discourses. Beside the simple fact that a chapter on gender and IR was included in their text, it seems that feminist IR study fits the description of a discourse which recognizes that a decisionmaker is surrounded by a complex array of media, technology and perspectives which ultimately affect the ways they evaluate a situation, the range of plausible solutions and the outcomes of those solutions.

Second, a study must show the way(s) a term comes to construct and define a controversy. One of the most important concerns related to a terministic filter is the

particular way it frames reality. A term comes to mean a particular thing to a community in the process of creating points of discussion. As that meaning takes shape, it includes and excludes certain things, as all 'good' terms do. This investigation takes note of the manner in which the terministic filter of security shapes and defines the debate concerning international relations. It explains how the epistemological and discursive points of resistance revolve around the definition of security according to the needs of discreet communities and examines some of the effects that has on theory building.

Last, this study examines the way that terministic filters function to define the bounds of what is considered legitimate 'ground' for discussion and thus become important points of resistance for out groups. In many ways an inside/outside function reaffirms the distinction between what subjects are considered appropriate for an IR 'public' and what might be better reserved for the outside or 'private' realm. This is pointedly so with feminism. This study will analyze how the terministic screen of security reinforces this public/private divide in an attempt to remove relational and feminist perspectives from the intellectual landscape. This, in many ways, explains the way terministic filters operate to control the resistance of subaltern counterpublics even in the most ideal of speech situations revealing a fundamental insight into the operation of power in a type of democratic public sphere.

But the curious thing about a terministic screen is that it becomes a critical site of resistance for subaltern counterpublics. Because of the way a terministic filter helps the dominant discourse define reality, a coyote might use the same term to form a new vocabulary of representation that celebrates a totally different set of virtues. In many ways, this is the most important insight this study provides into the operation of

terministic filters: the way the certain terms can be appropriated for resistance purposes. The fact that such coyote actions can occur in many ways proves Burke's point about a dramatic screen: if we put on a different color of glasses to view the world, our opinion of it might change even though we are looking at the exact same scene. This study, in many ways, investigates the implications of using a dramatic screen that examines a word from all possible angles. Hopefully this study can make a contribution in that regard.

While Beer and Hariman claim to liberate the possibilities for scene, agent, agency, purpose and act, it seems their purpose remains static, the ever present source of their fragility and lack of flexibility. And so because they hope to equip the critic "to compete" (405) in the modern technocracy, they continue to modify existing rationales for realism and thus justify perpetuating masculine regimes of security. Bjork (345) criticizes Beer and Hariman for being too exclusive and eager to embrace certain forms of reasoning and particular metaphors of competition and victory. Her review is short, but her assessment cautions us that "post-realism" may still leave us wanting for a liberatory praxis rather than continued dispassionate, rational calculation.

The structure of their analysis provides a cogent conversion table for uncovering the textured network of signals that underlie decision-making and strategic analysis. So in that way, the third level of their pyramid is a useful starting point for recognizing the omnipresence of uncertainty in decision-making and criticism. So we shall accept the metaphor of the three levels of the pyramid (with some reservations) for the purposes of our study. These levels correspond roughly to simple, classical and post-realism(s).

## **Habermas and Fraser: Insights into Post-Realist Public Spheres**

It is Beer and Hariman's work that serves as the starting point for this study. I hope to describe the workings of terministic screens and their relationship(s) to the public sphere a bit further, to give it a better understanding of different versions of agency and objective(s) and return to view "kritik" (Beer and Hariman 390) from the perspective of those left out of the competitive model of social relations through the other side of the terministic filter. I believe this will produce an interaction of method and artifact which results in a synthesis of new possibilities for argument -- that is, the discussion of claims in conditions of uncertainty (Willard, Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research 56) -- as well as a discursive "space" for further "kritik."

The upcoming discussion of Habermas -- specifically Fraser's critique of Habermas -- offers much to the modified model for analyzing terministic filters. The modifications to Beer and Hariman's model of post-realist analysis are slight, but important. For example, we will not accept their proposition that the competitive state of nature is "logically prior" to other considerations. This corresponds to the master trope in realist discourse: that there is some base, self interested reality that exists independent of -- and therefore logically prior to -- socially constructed meaning (Beer and Hariman ix). While Beer and Hariman attempt to control the excesses of realism through a new metaphor for strategy, they do not provide for the possibility of repudiating a competitive view of the primitive state of nature. And while their evaluative criteria do permit broader understandings of different views of "strategic" situations, it does less to counter the problems with the notion of strategy in general. That is where Habermas and Fraser come in.



Habermas brings into the debate a constitutive view of power rather than an individuated and self-interested one. Power is the power to work together to accomplish common welfare (Habermas 106). Habermas also stresses the importance of “bracketing” real world concerns like status and influence in order to make fair decisions based upon the inherent worth of each person. Habermas and Fraser also stress the importance of finding new ways of expanding the possible sites of dialogic interaction, reason giving and debate. So, instead of closing off dissent in favor of the possibility of quick decision-making, we should initiate as many dialogues as possible at every level of the pyramid so that when the moment for decisive action occurs, we have examined the possible ramifications of action in advance.

Habermas also reveals the nature of hierarchy. Habermas is concerned primarily with the question of authority, specifically, who has authority with respect to decisions of common interest. He worries that public opinion is rendered unable to assert its sovereign position with respect to decision-making (Habermas 105). Specifically, Habermas hopes to support patterns of authority which give more decision-making power to real publics and attempts to prevent discourse from becoming ensnared in the late capitalist trap of commodification -- where “public opinion” is devoid of argumentative force except as a strategic asset for the advancing of current lists of claims (Habermas 206). This requires us to investigate patterns of authority, how those authorities shape spaces of public argument and the kinds of resistance authorities face when asserting the persuasive attractiveness of their claims (Fraser 60). We will assume the perspective of an outsider to traditional scholarship and investigate the claims to attention of realism from a skeptical perspective, one which -- ironically -- may actually offer a possibility of

refreshingly optimistic change in knowledge practices of IR and communication alike. Beer and Hariman are perhaps too enthusiastic about appealing to the insider's perspective to truly allow for the possibility for an escape from realist patterns of disciplinary authority, even considering their endorsement of ongoing "kritik" (359) of developing practices. They provide us a large, well placed interdisciplinary rock to dive into the cool deep waters of a new approach to rhetorical criticism.

Fraser would criticize Beer and Hariman's model as paying only lip service to genuine resistance and as still maintaining a strong separation between affairs considered public and those relegated to a murky private realm. Indeed, it seems as if in some ways, Beer and Hariman's model for strategic thought is at least expanded, and in some ways confounded, by feminist epistemology. So we will accept the first two layers of the pyramid with the caveat that they represent a prominent world-view, but certainly not the only or most explanatory view for both the primitive and control situations. This study disagrees, however, with Beer and Hariman's assertion that those points are logical starting places for criticism. Indeed, criticism can emanate from many spots within knowledge structures. All that is necessary is that some "subaltern" publics (Fraser 57) develop around changing principles and procedures and we work toward an understanding of their numerous forms of agency and any means for its expression. In studying those new identities we unveil the interactions they have with established patterns of authority in late capitalist societies (Habermas 105; Willard, Perspectives on Argumentation 356; Fraser 61), locate sites of meaning where conventional discourse would have us remain silent (Beer and Hariman 345; Milliken and Sylvan 330), and find new argumentative possibilities in the nexus between personal/private and civic/public

discursive space (Fraser 58). Such criticism clearly explains the relationship between terministic filters and the public sphere.

The position of this study is that feminist analyses of IR -- focused around the terministic lens of security -- have opened a discussion concerning the standards for establishing authoritative proof as well as finding new languages and realities, thus re-inscribing common narratives of being and reality and revealing/unrevealing the ways in which private and public space interact to form new locations for the negotiation of meaning in argument communities. In this way it fits what Beer and Hariman describe as a rhetorical, or post-realist perspective on the construction of knowledge in IR. As such, its discursivity renders the bounds of that field of argument more mutable, permits new forms of destabilizing criticism to occur -- in particular communicative criticism -- of IR and its adherence to realist practices and beliefs. As such, we take a look in through the filter seeing the distorted images shifting around inside. Then the terministic filter is a two-way mirror. One side reflects the arguments of the dominant community while the other mirrors the claims of resistance. The argument of this study is that the perspective of the resistor is the appropriate stance, for hers is the two-way side of the mirror. Often, dominant perspectives see only their own reflection(s) in the mirror, unaware that someone is watching from the other side.

### **Method in a Can: Painting by Numbers**

In order to begin this investigation, we must first select a metaphor, a pervasive terministic filter that guides the ways in which we view nature and the social. This is Burke's suggestion and is similar to the approach found in Milliken and Sylvan. While they spent much of their time uncovering many sayings, this study will speak narrowly to

the question of “security.” A terministic filter must be interpretable from all levels of the pyramid and, this study argues, beyond that barrier into a new post-modern space where audience and actor become indistinguishable parts of a web of social relations. In order to understand the ways in which terministic filters operate to limit debate and close off spaces of argument, we must begin with an evaluation of a body of post-realist rhetoric such as feminist IR (Peterson, The Rhetorical Turn in IR 259) and follow the recommendations of Habermas, Beer and Hariman and Fraser.

Since this study describes a debate about claims to authority and their negotiation in an uncertain public sphere, it is important to understand how a single term may come to stand for the entire question regarding an important controversy. In order to do so, a term must establish clear patterns of meaning through the creation of rules and theories in favor of its deployment. To this end, my investigation attempts to uncover the links between resistance dialogues and public spheres in ways that solidify the link between the uses of terministic filters and explain more fully the effect such filters have on the production of knowledge.

This study will explain the base questions of current epistemology in IR and note how feminist analyses confound traditional ways of doing statecraft calling for new and dynamic forms of rhetoric to address alterations in the authority framework. This study will dissect several important tenets of positivist IR and examine how a particular terministic screen mirrors both sides of IR epistemology, offering changes in scientific principles which reflect a rapidly changing cultural palate. It will pay strict attention to knowledge structures and how those regimes of knowing subtly enforce norms of influence and power which persist and fester forever driving a cycle of insecurity and a

science based around determinacy which may never be achieved at best, or may be a dangerous gamble at worst.

This study will also investigate the question of meaning inherent in terministic screens. Does feminist inquiry challenge contemporary vocabularies in IR? If so, does that inquiry focus around a particular term which surmises the question of debate? And then, in what way(s) can we escape this terministic trap? Beer and Hariman speak directly to this question, arguing that it is most important to expand existing languages of action in order to formulate new and better solutions to complex international problems (356). The primacy of language, they suggest, allows us more and more control over the ways in which truth is disseminated and thus changes the social and political climate increasing the possibilities for resistance. This study will outline how feminist interpretations of security destabilize the conceptual center of IR theory and create new vocabularies for describing emergent phenomena.

This study will analyze the new metaphoric connections to security provided by feminist analyses and explain how such agents are indeed counterpublics for the purposes of unlocking the assumptions underlying this type of academic public sphere. What sorts of new understandings of the term are developing as a result of changing beliefs about what constitutes a secure world? How does the term security weave together the yarns of IR into a blanket of resistance and dominance? This study will outline the omnipresence of social knowledge in the creation and perpetuation of existing security metaphors and the capillary way power operates among people as a process rather than an independent social force, manipulable by a skilled elite at the expense of the feeble minded lumpen.

Last, this study will test one democratic public sphere and possibly expand the discussions there to encompass a more inclusive politics of meaning. Feminist analysis must redefine the notion of public in order to inscribe a more inclusive vision of discourse, one not based in a rigid separation of public from private and civil society from government. This level of discussion clarifies how communities come to limit discussion by separating spheres of discourse and expounds on ways to link personal action with civic concern and so become a new and interdependent realm of political action, a fifth column of resistance with the ability to envision methods of combining civic knowledge with institutional change that are more likely to be egalitarian and empowering.

## **Review of Literature**

### **Communication and IR**

Study of international politics is also not new, it is simply uncommon in communication studies. Following the tradition of scholars of Cold War rhetoric, Beer and Hariman introduce a relatively new method for attending to the various narratives that develop to govern international affairs. For instance Medhurst, Wander and Scott (1996) undertook a comprehensive study of the rhetoric of the Cold War and suggest the governing metaphors of Cold War policy shared a role in creating the reality of international tension in the post-war world (10). Lynn Hinds and Theodore Windt (216) outline the existence of the “Cold War” as the emergence of a specialized vocabulary responding to a particular contingency, replicating itself through everyday actions and exercises of power and persuasion.

Cori Dauber provides a strong critique of deterrence theory in her text concerning crisis stability and deterrence as means of persuasion. She argues that strategic decision making takes place as a form of textual analysis, which begins, for military planners, with a basic position toward their adversary, or if indeed there is an adversary. Her basic claim is that all deterrence arguments are grounded in perceptual appeals to persuasion rather than basic scientific calculation the way many military planners would have the public believe (4-5). Thus, like Beer and Hariman, she argues that realism's claims to attention are mitigated hopelessly by perceptual and institutional factors at work which blunt the edge of deterrence's persuasive ability because it is founded upon 'indeterminate language variables' instead of hard calculation (165) and focuses on univocal communication and an outdated sender-message-receiver view of persuasion. In other words, to military planners, the United States acts, other countries (specifically the "Soviet Union") respond and the United states interprets that response and formulates a new set of actions to elicit different responses, assuming the responses will remain constant over time (5). In a sense, planners and strategists assume their data is neutral and thus accurate in the same way that realists assume the world of persuasion is grounded in objective fact and empirical correlation. But Dauber argues that correlation and causation are very different concepts. However, realist foreign policy analysis proceeds from the very sketchy assumption that past correlation will prove a reliable guidepost for future action based on a model of communication which doesn't even provide for feedforward, feedback or even context, since most military plans of action are worked out in advance based upon assumption of what will happen geopolitically (160). Thus, Dauber argues that a complex world relies upon the ability to interpret and understand complex threats

which are made viable through rhetoric but stops far short of Beer and Hariman's claim that the actual rhetoric of IR shapes its reality, maintaining instead that the structure of the communication relationship is too simplistic for the communication of modern threats. She does not make any of the feminist or more radical claims about the rhetorical construction of threats and its potential as a self fulfilling prophecy, she is more interested in carving out a space for communication studies in the resolution of international disputes. She also proceeds from the somewhat dubious assumption that a nation can act as a speaker (14) and does not acknowledge the possibility of indeterminacy based upon the diffuse nature of messages, power and agency.

Ed Schiappa offers a somewhat more interesting analysis of actual language structures and the conduct of military policy. He claims that military planners use what he calls "nukespeak" to gain legitimacy for their weapons of mass destruction (Schiappa 256). He draws upon two strands of rhetorical theory of importance to the study at hand. First, he invokes Haiman's (1976) claim that much has been lost in the public sphere because of the waning of deliberative rhetoric's influence there. Then he outlines Burke's concept of terministic screens to explain how weapons-talk helps perpetuate the reality of mutually assured destruction and the maintenance of certain countries' genocidal arsenals (Schiappa 254).

Schiappa argues that the language of nukespeak either serves to domesticate -- that is to treat the euphemistically, making them seem friendly and benign or to bureaucratize nuclear strategy, thus removing it from discussion by making it seem too complex for ordinary people to understand, thus blunting deliberation concerning its dangers. He cites Burke's concept of terministic screens to interpret the ways in which



managerial rhetoric overwhelms deliberative understanding and thus limits and controls discussion in the public sphere (Schiappa 260).

Charles Kauffman (1989) also discusses the process of naming weapons and the importance of that process in maintaining the reality of deterrence and nuclear armaments. Naming distances a person from acts of violence and thus when the Department of Defense names an MX missile a “Minuteman” missile, it invokes an air of the frontier, the past, Americans’ shared histories. It breathes life into the missile and thus confers responsibility for its destruction from those who fashioned it to the machine itself. Thus we have no one to blame but the missile, and the missile, like a minuteman, stood ready for action -- ready to defend our honor carefully and deliberately like a good soldier. Kauffman describes the Russian interpretation of the SS-20 missile as contrasted with allied accounts. He describes the SS-20 as named “the pioneer”, which in Russian is the equivalent of “Boy Scout” -- a young explorer, out on the frontier checking out the possibilities, taking stock of one’s surroundings. Allied communications refer to the SS-20 as a “satan” missile, or “firestorm” bomb (Kauffman 277). Both interpretations are fashioned according to a certain *terministic filter* which guides the ways in which those who learn about such weapons come to view them and, Kauffman contends, the acceptable situations for their use (279).

G. Thomas Goodnight (1997) studied Hans Morgenthau’s *In Defense of the National Interest* and explained how this book was influential in not only describing the theoretical foundations of realist foreign policy but also changed the ways in which nations began to seek their national interests through the expression of actual policies and political actions. Morgenthau’s point is clear enough: the realm of international politics is

one of struggle for national interest, defined by competing claims and scarce resources. Goodnight argues that realism persuades by using re-readings of history as guideposts for present choices, criticizing (un)realistic alternatives and indicting resistance as a departure from the basic principles of reason and logic (The Rhetorical Turn in IR 145). Yet, he argues that Morgenthau's interpretation of realism recovers space for discussion in the public sphere because it revisited the notion of civic action, argued that more alternatives make for better policy and that a skeptical view of those alternatives will expose their incompleteness as possible solutions to international dilemmas (148). Goodnight argues that realism is reflexive enough to cope with challenges from different discourses. He cites Habermas as justification for combining the realist research tradition with other communicative possibilities thereby initiating a conversation about the nature of community action in a public sphere (160).

### **IR and Communication**

While communications scholars reach out to the field of international relations, IR has seldom reached back. One study by R.J. Lifton and Richard Falk (1982) outlines the ways in the language of nuclear deterrence form a vocabulary of specialization that numb everyday persons to the dangers of real nuclear conflict and make nuclear weapons more palatable based on their reconceptualization as "peacekeepers" (120) among other things. Much of the book is devoted to mobilizing a peace community around elimination of nuclear weapons, so it comes off more as a motivational guide than an analytical tool. However, it is a powerful look into the numbing potential of nuclear weapons as means of communication. Lifton and Falk suggest that "we domesticate these weapons in our language and attitudes. Rather than feel their malignant actuality, we render them

benign.” (106) Their study outlines the twin processes of making weapons both friendly and likable to the average person and obtuse and threatening at the same time. In this way, they argue, military planners use verbal smoke and mirrors combined with outright coercion through superior force to justify the nation state to safeguard the existence of weapons having no practical use, save genocide.

The solution, they argue, is not to rid the world of nuclear weapons but instead to challenge the assumptions of the realist paradigm itself. They suggest an overthrow of what they call the “Machiavellian world picture” by entertaining the possibility of alternative world scenarios, including the possibility of utopian thinking (220). In this way, their project is very much like the one Beer and Hariman suggest: displace realism as the dominant dialogue by discussing alternative theories with equal explanatory power.

So long as the Machiavellian world picture predominates, it constrains human freedom to overcome the mortal dangers and remove the terrible burdens of nuclearism. Its acceptance of war, unconditional state power, and of the finality of partial human identities confines rigidly the political imagination and dooms any project of social and political reconstruction (Lifton and Falk 241).

Lifton and Falk thus agree with Beer and Hariman that anti-realist political action is useless until the overarching metaphors of realist dialectic are put under scrutiny. They offer hope that various movements continue to mobilize around the failure of the state to provide security in the most basic sense of the word. While they do not criticize security in the sense that feminists do, they do suggest that the current view of security, that is, deterrence (specifically nuclear deterrence), relies on a threat of massive destruction (and massive insecurity) in order to purchase a sense of psychological well being about the

safety of a nation (Lifton and Falk 100) and create “what one Defense Department memo once described as a “psychological impact...on the countries of the world” (Lifton and Falk 31). Although writing in 1982, Lifton and Falk seem to prophesize our new post-Soviet world full of Gulf War(s), anti-terrorist bombings in Central Asia, air campaigns in Yugoslavia and mass migration. The new state searches for enemies in revolutionary and disruptive societies, concerned for the dramatic pace of social change and the revolutionary zeal of new movements.

And we then look elsewhere for targets for our increasing terror about nuclear instability and find such targets in countries with pressures toward social change and revolution. We thus contribute to an atmosphere of extreme polarization that favors technological terrorism: either the use threat or violence by governments in possession of high technology, or the attempt of small, oppositionist groups to invoke violent threats by interrupting that technology (37).

In that way, Lifton and Falk argue that states engage in the process of threat construction in order to stockpile weapons which justifies the need for complex procedures and bureaucracies to tend to the weapon’s existence and protect them from threats external and internal (147). Thus, the protection racket is perpetuated.

Paul Chilton (1997) relies heavily on Murray Edelman’s *Politics as Symbolic Action* for his conclusions about the centrality of language, in particular metaphor, in the formation of ideas and knowledge regimes. He argues that metaphor is exclusive: it selects some perceptions while ignoring others. Chilton’s justification for linguistic analysis is abbreviated, but is very similar to Burke’s explanation of terministic screens and his theories of language in his book *Language as Symbolic Action* (Chilton 200).

Chilton argues that concepts of security, specifically “national security” in the current sense have become oriented around “taking care from” rather than “taking care of” metaphors (Chilton 197). He argues that the language of statism has focused on container metaphors, establishing insides and outsides, contents and limits. Inside the container, one can feel secure because there is always something around one’s self, shielding and protecting it. Thus a person can feel “secure” in the sense that he is invincible, or carefree. On the other hand, Chilton points out that other metaphors of security might focus on “taking care of” complex problems vexing interstate relations (198). One can remain ever aware of the personal and political contexts interpolating with affairs of the state and in that awareness make choices based upon a richer more interconnected view of security, one which views security in terms of a person’s responsibilities to address structural problems underlying political disputes, or *basic security* (Chilton 212) as he puts it. To Chilton, these metaphors must be adapted to the needs of the coming century. He suggests we move to a world where “caring for” others is at least as important as establishing perimeters so that one can feel safe enough to be “carefree” or “careless.” Indeed, it seems as if survival in the coming age may even demand it, if you believe Chilton’s conclusions (200). Carelessness doesn’t sound like a viable virtue, but the pursuit of carelessness through total and complete military control has become the defining moment of security analysis for the last two thousand years or more. Don’t discount the pervasiveness of hegemonic masculinity in its persistence. In fact, feminists use this very insight as a springboard to criticism of IR theory, claiming that most attempts at achieving a more just and peaceful world founder at the gates of

realism. They claim this occurs because of the inexorable link between realist philosophy and patriarchal reason (including standards of objective truth).

Chilton also argues that the solutions to problems of IR container metaphors rely on rethinking the metaphors of “linking” different containers to a more web-like description and break the connection between the language of force and the concept of a “path” to the proper solution (Chilton 211). He seeks to uncouple these metaphors from their existing meanings and revise them in favor of multilateral action between different containers.

The realist mode of thinking is, however, neither immutable nor absolute...In fact, it may be argued, the more the global economy, global migrations, and global communications evolve, the more this system of thought, with its self-contained sovereign states, appears unreal. The understanding of boundaries is particularly problematic. The point is not that identities and boundaries are irrelevant, unnecessary, or disadvantageous to human living; rather the point is to ask which boundaries are desirable and which have negative effects (Chilton 210).

Jennifer Milliken (1997) analyzed the metaphors of prestige in IR. Her research follows the rhetorical tradition of justifying war making on the basis of positioning or prestige relative to perceived adversaries from anti-Communist crusades in Korea and Vietnam to the emergent rhetoric of the Gulf War. She suggests refiguring metaphors along the lines of cooperation and common interest rather than relative prestige, prompting one to consider the possibility that realism and its wars are not the product of pure disembodied rational calculation (Milliken 230).

In a more intriguing article detailing U.S. rhetorical stances in Indochina during the Vietnam War, Milliken and David Sylvan (1996) explain how the use of certain vocabularies helped create the possibility of dehumanization of the Vietnamese people that made continued participation in this foreign war compelling to varied publics. They argue:

Presidents and Cabinet Secretaries do not themselves get the chance to drop napalm canisters, throw prisoners out of helicopters, or collect body parts as trophies. High level officials do get the opportunity, though, to order such actions to be carried out; and they do this through medium of words. Indeed, the words that they write and speak have extraordinary power. With the stroke of a pen, people can be transformed into friends or enemies and their villages are turned into targets and free fire zones. Some words are even able to make things disappear so that entire bombing operations (as in Laos and Cambodia) are rendered silent and invisible. In short, the words that we propose to discuss were the world of those officials who uttered them, and those words helped create the world in which millions of other people lived, suffered or died (Milliken and Sylvan 323).

Milliken and Sylvan make a very controversial claim in IR about the pervasiveness of semiotic systems. Indeed they suggest that the lifeworld is constructed by the systems of signs and representations that form the language describing its processes. The position of sign and signified are the very places where identities can be transformed from “productive” to “dangerous” and thus labeled for the purposes of state formation and linguistic classification (Milliken and Sylvan 342). They take this criticism

a step further, however, in a lengthy critique discourse of writing in contemporary IR. They suggest that scholarly writing, like the writing studied in this account, possesses an important rhetorical dimension and thus implicitly supports the continuing language of domination akin to what happened in Vietnam and thus makes wars such as the one in Indochina more and more acceptable to critical publics. Milliken and Sylvan argue that people's lives in Vietnam turned on the words used to describe them and those words formed metaphors of security that made the extermination of millions of people possible, indeed acceptable to various publics on the American scene. They suggest we invert the power curve in IR and start paying attention to the arguments of those who have been left out of the race for capital and position (Milliken and Sylvan 354).

Roger Epp (1997) described the rhetorical stance of Martin Wight, a prominent lecturer and defender of realism as a theory. Wight drew a sharp distinction between domestic and international politics and was profoundly pessimistic about the possibilities for far reaching change in the modern world. Ultimately, Epp argues that Wight's views would be complimentary to the rhetorical turn in international relations because Wight believed that IR should not be constrained by rigid demarcation between itself and the study of other questions of inquiry. Epp argues that Wight's rhetoric justifies this linguistic turn in IR (130).

These studies, in particular Milliken and Sylvan, indicate a growing sensitivity in IR toward the importance of mediated communicative relations among diverse communities which challenge traditional assumptions about statecraft, national security, and agency. They represent an important trend to open new spaces for public dissension within IR discourse and, in turn, the discourse of the state itself.



## **Burke, Realism and Terministic Screens**

Beer and Hariman base many of their observations on Burke's concept of "terministic screens" or "linguistic filters" which act as selectors for concepts to be officially sanctioned for debate. The existence of terministic screens raises questions about the deployment of language to achieve strategic objectives. While Schiappa is more concerned about motives which frame words rather than words which form motives, he invokes the Burkean concept of "terministic screens" to draw a link between the metaphors used in international discourse and the realities of how its practices are constituted. Burke conceives of words which form "terministic screens" by which we come to view the world as a result of our interpretational lens (Burke 45). Interpretive screens help us dispense with uncomfortable subjects by classifying them neatly or in connection with something we already understand. New information which does not really fit into the screens we have established makes us feel uncomfortable and can either serve as a catalyst for reflexivity, hopelessness in the face of indeterminacy or recasting of the new information along old terministic lines. According to Burke, "terministic screens" are like color-filtered photographs. He describes the process of viewing the same picture with different color filters on it so different nuances are highlighted each time a new filter is applied. Thus, the same objects pictured using the same camera can look very divergent from one another. Burke states:

Also, many of the "observations" are but implications of the particular terminology in terms of which the observations are made. In brief, much that we take as observations about "reality" may be but the spinning out of possibilities implicit in our particular choice of terms (46).

We become, then, in Beer and Hariman's words, "constrained not only by reality, but our definitions of reality" (Beer and Hariman 389) This move, they argue, helps foment the view of power as completely disembodied from communicative action and thus some part of objective reality instead of what it really is: one account of history among many (Beer and Hariman 368).

Language, according to Schiappa, is "never a neutral vehicle of thought" and when language is combined with metaphor, its significance in "shaping a community of language-users understanding of reality" is evident (255). Schiappa describes words which "domesticate" and words which "bureaucratize". A "domesticating" term makes nuclear weapons seem friendly or cool ("slick'em", "Little boy", "patriot" missile, etc.). A "bureaucratizing" term makes nuclear weapons seem somehow magical or far too technical for the average lay person to interpret (ex. "radiation enhancement weapon", "countervalue strike", "multiple, independently targeted, reentry vehicle") (Schiappa, 257). In many ways, Schiappa's claim is similar to Burke's assertion that there are words which divide and words which compose. These "screens" limit the range of options so that more problematized interpretations are filtered out. But the oppositional flavor of the dialogue itself might poison alternative vocabularies as well. Beer and Hariman explain:

The immediate implication is that terms such as "justice" are the fodder of human illusion, while self interest is not constructed rhetorically but rather is a material condition. The full implication is that the essence of power is "something that is correctly communicated only through artlessness"; the realist "abjures explicit textuality because power is not itself textual. As rhetoric is extrinsic to reality, so

power becomes objectified, something existing independent of language, texts, and textual authority.” (390)

This allows practitioners of realism to reconstruct human nature according to the needs of their paradigm. Burke argues that there is no real “human nature” and even if there were, it would pass through a terministic lens before being expressed and thus would be viewed according to the needs of the observer of a social milieu. He explains:

In brief, behavior isn't something that you need to observe; even something so objective there as behavior must be observed through one or another kind of terministic screen, that directs the attention in keeping with its nature (49).

Burke then offers what I consider a two-valued claim, suggesting that there are only two types of words: terms that put things together and terms that take things apart. While I will not spend much space discussing the varied interpretations of words that make some words variant from Burke's claim, I will use this moment to pause and consider the implications for this paper of his proposition.

These are times when feminist scholars have begun inventing their own vocabularies of terms which express that subtle point of being which lies at the intersection of opposition: in words that express dis/continuity, the process of absencing and presencing described in Heidegger's ontology, for example. For Heidegger (60), the word was not the thing, but interacted with the thing to reveal parts of its essence, yet conceal other elements of its presence. Thus, a word never constructs or deconstructs according to Heidegger -- it does both simultaneously and what it reveals/conceals to interactants depends mostly upon the context in which it is used and the manner in which agents represent it. This is not really a much different from what Burke contends, but this

study takes issue with Burke's assertion that words serve only two purposes. A more accurate statement might read: "according to the existing realist view of language, there are two types of words..." This may seem like a small point, but it is one we must pay attention to for the purposes of this study, since our enterprise criticizes the very structure -of persuasion itself and thus offers criticism back of the method used to evaluate its claims. Burke cites Socrates for support, saying that the original tenets of dialectic hold true: there is composition and there is division (Burke 49). Ontology and other postmodern pursuits have brought us some understanding of how mathematics can be the root of philosophy, but is not the sine qua non of good philosophy. While few postmodern critics would disagree that discontinuity and continuity are powerful forces always at work, feminist scholars suggest that there is value in exploring those places where there is both consensus and dissensus working oppositionally/cooperatively toward different/similar goals (Dow 108). Indeed, M. Lane Bruner provides a thorough critique of Burke's oppositional view of language indirectly, arguing that feminist experience appears as varied "enabling constraints" on action (Bruner 185). While the article does not deal explicitly with terministic screens, it does explore the way in which feminist argumentation might proceed with similar/different vocabularies. Bruner crafts a place for feminist argumentation in the space left by Burke in the middle of language -- the place where words support/prevent political action. Burke, through his tendency to over-generalize ("Man is..." etc.) commits the essentialist trap. He tries to build a general theory of "Man" from a masculine view of epistemology.

(T)hese studies indicate a trend in feminist argumentation theory within rhetorical studies that tends to essentialize and reify gender stereotypes rather than

problematize them, and more importantly perhaps, the dichotomization of “patriarchal” and “feminist” argumentation strategies tends to forcibly separate the constraining and enabling dimensions of all language systems (Bruner 99)

And while Burke is critical of terministic systems which perpetuate the threat of “thermonuclear, chemical and bacteriological war” (Burke 49) his assumptive view of the oppositional nature of language ties him to that same system of violence, continuously perpetuating itself through everyday practices. Bruner describes what s/he calls “limit work”, similar to the destabilization process elicited by Beer and Hariman.

(L)imit work is a theory of subjectivity based upon the assumption that all language systems, and more specifically all identities are simultaneously enabling and constraining...(L)imit work asserts that any process of over-identification, any identity that is assumed to be natural and unproblematic (e.g. naive essentialism) is a site of potential violence (100).

Burke ultimately defends a modified version of this terministic screen which he calls a dramatistic screen (Burke 54-5). The dramatistic screen, Burke suggests, supersedes other terministic screens in that it encompasses a fuller range of symbolic representations. Certainly, Burke’s final project is “a technique of analysis of language and thought as basically modes of action rather than as means for conveying information” (54) and thus does not hold rigidly to any particular scheme of linguistic constraints. Rather, Burke seeks to expose, in general, the varied languages often describing similar processes, albeit his understanding of those processes was purely oppositional, based in scarcity and competition. Even his vision of dramatism is rife with conflict and opposition, repellent forces. Yet, he leaves little room for enabling limits, cooperative

conflict but he does leave open the possibility of resistance, provided that resistance expresses itself in culturally acceptable ways.

Some say that if you read a whole chapter of Burke, he will recant at least once. His vision of dramatism is one of damage control. He suggests that dramatisitic screens will enable us to see “the complications and paradoxes” (56) and keep us “asking always about actives, passives, and middles (reflexives)” but does not explain exactly how to explore the “middles” between dialogue and motion. Instead Burke focuses on the oppositional nature of discourse as a pathway to value understanding. This is not inconsistent with Burke’s view of value systems in general, suggesting they emerge from the metaphysical “no”. In this way, Burke represents “yes”. One’s “yes” is determined by the limits of one’s “no”. The explanation could easily be reversed, however. The “no” could simply be an inferential product of one’s “yes”, depending upon how one viewed the principle of difference and the concept of affirmation, as feminists do.

Beer and Hariman rely heavily on Burke’s concept of terministic screens to arrive at their method(s) for critical analysis of realist discourse(s) (Beer and Hariman 390). Their observation is that realism reifies itself through rhetoric and is itself a rhetorical construction, yet it pretends that other discourses are merely textual while asserting a probable link between self interest and actual actions in the world, thus defining other alternatives away by using a sleight of hand. So-called “utopian” solutions are defined away as pipe dreams, only defensible on paper and utterly unaware of the reality of self-interested behavior as opposed to the chimera of cooperation (Beer and Hariman 31). Thus the realist can establish a connection between the structuralist view of international relations and ontology seen in the tradition of Hobbes and Darwin to be hopelessly

steeped in competition and violent struggle of all against all. But this supposed connection to being renders the realist account untenable. It is too inflexible as a terministic screen. Realist discourse provides an appearance of stability which is the source of its attractiveness to a broader public, but like Newtonian physics it is also the source of its vulnerability: not being capable of adapting to new perspectives reflexively, but silencing them by asserting that they are unattainable in a world where realism controls theory. In this way realist discourse engages in tautology: it justifies its hegemony based on the threat it creates by its existence. This protection racket collapses on itself as an explanatory principle. Beer and Hariman explain:

The realist speaker gives us a real world by contrasting it to a textual world and denigrates opposing perspectives by associating them with their means of expression. In short, realism is not nature's own discourse, and it is very much a matter of style. It is an explicit preference for one style of communication that is presumed to be rational because it is unadorned...The consequence of this rhetorical design for strategic thinking should be obvious. The realist is disposed by his or her own discursive habits to deny the relevance of any linguistic art to strategic analysis. Because realism is created the textual practice of defining reality against textuality, turning toward a text must be a turn away from what really is the case, and that could hardly be strategic. Realists do not incorporate explicitly interpretive cognitive practices into their analyses, even when it is strategic to do so. Therefore, unless one presumes that unreflective use of this trope will always be the best means of thinking, there arises the suspicion that the realist may be trapped by his or her own rhetoric (391-2).

## **Habermas, Public Sphere(s) and Argument**

Habermas initiated a ground-breaking investigation of the so-called “public sphere” with the publication of The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere in 1962 (Trans. 1989). Habermas studied the rise of an 18th century middle-class coffee-house public taking part in a rational-critical debate about social policy and the nature of government (Habermas 96). This culture developed in the wake of the loss of legitimacy for the aristocracy and initiated a vibrant dialogue among its participants about the role of politics and the importance of self determination. Ultimately, however, the experiment failed because of interference by powerful elites in the forum of communication that limited the ability of social activists to bring about meaningful change (Fraser 60)

One of Habermas’ most important insights is his recognition of a distinct sphere of public discourse existing independent of state apparatus and economic production, an area -- a space -- where discussion can take place on questions of importance to varied publics without the constraints of commodification and appropriation (Fraser 70).

Fraser sums up Habermas’ insights into four basic assumptions: (1) that it is possible for interactants in a public sphere to bracket status and deliberate “as if” they were social equals (known as the ideal speech situation); (2) that a single public sphere is superior to the fragmented and diffuse nature of multiple publics; (3) that discourse in public spheres should be restricted to discussions about the common good and private interest should be avoided; (4) that a functioning public sphere provides a separation between civil society and state (62-3).

Habermas has had a profound effect on communication theory as well as philosophy, bankrupting much of postmodernism’s claim to the deconstructive moment



(Mumby 20). Habermas' model is both a theory of rationality and a theory of society (Mumby 10). For Habermas, rationality is not a transcendental characteristic, but is instead achieved in the negotiation of viewpoints between dialogical partners in an environment free from coercion (Habermas 67). Habermas in this way uses a Wittgensteinian view of the mediated or strategic self, seeing identity as intersubjective: constructed in dialogues between individual(s) and culture(s)(Mumby 25) It also allows him to escape traditional views of truth, viewing truth as a contingent question rather than a definitive answer but also renders his theories vulnerable to claims of universalism, focusing on the possibility of truth at all as a result of any discussion, much less heated debate (Polan 270).

For example, Habermas, unlike traditional modernists, argues that science and philosophy both have become unreflexive, focusing on supposedly immutable inquiry free from the politics of interest (Honneth 206). Unlike many realists, Habermas understands that no discussion can proceed without an understanding of the interests (or context) pertaining to its occurrence. Habermas discusses the development of modern science as a history of interests and choices rather than the logical expression of truth. Habermas (like Horkheimer) distinguishes between the biological need to work with natural forces in order to survive and what he calls the "technical cognitive interest" -- that array of interests and forces which compel science to not only appropriate the natural world, but create a need to dissociate humanity from nature, the mind from the body (Honneth 217). In this way, Habermas claims modernity is simply an unfinished project, needing only to recognize its own shortsightedness and to liberate new methodologies

instead of being caught in the discursive trap of unidimensional adherence to realism.

Honneth explains:

(Habermas) initially insists on the existence of alternative forms of theory construction only indirectly, in that he shows that positivism has systematically obstructed the view to all further cognitive interests with the generalization of the empirical-analytic form of research as the only scientific method (217).

Habermas contends that language is simply another way of human survival, the way in which humans secure communicative understanding and thereby work together to deal with common problems an essential element of species survival. Yet communicative action is not predictable or explainable in the way that positivist science suggests, and thus the realm of speech acts is profoundly discursive and inexorably bound with interests so that meaningful correlation is problematic, if possible at all (Honneth 220). In this way, his subjectivity is in direct contrast to a deterministic model developed by Hume and later championed in the psychological science by Skinner and others. Habermas does not deny the applicability of traditional scientific research in certain situations, he merely suggests that it is not the immanent explanatory principle for all modalities of human endeavor (Honneth 230).

What Habermas decries primarily is the loss of dialogue that comes with domination of the free exchange of ideas by technicization of language. Technical discourse oversimplifies its communicative elements and thus appears as truth when it is simply one point of view. Technical discourse then solidifies its verbal hegemony by casting alternative interpretations of method as incoherent and indeterminate, something the scientific system of understanding supposedly eliminates through its rigorous testing

of correlation. In Habermas' view, traditional positivism cannot open discussion and create spaces for dissension because it appropriates the natural world for its own purposes rather than interacting with it for common good (Honneth 220). Stephen Best (1996)

Explains:

For Habermas, the problem with modernity is not one of too much rationality, but of too little rationality. More precisely, in the modern world we find the hegemony of instrumental rationality, which seeks a technical mastery of nature and society over a communicative rationality that raises different validity claims requiring redemption under conditions of argumentation while seeking consensus over issues of social regulation (48).

Habermas' "public sphere" then is an attempt to avoid the complexification of knowledge/language structures so as to make them inaccessible to informed argument. His project in this public sphere is to expand the notion of "public" so all can be included in decision making on issues of common interest in an environment free from domination. And in this public sphere, discussion should be bracketed as if the participants in the discussion were fundamentally equal giving consideration to each view, whether or not the person stating it was an expert in the subject or not (Best 56). Unfortunately, today's public sphere is constrained massively by media and capitalist interests which drive public discussion further and further underground, engaging in a process of discursive specialization which has the effect of limiting debate in favor of decisiveness and certainty of political action (Best 33).

In this way, Habermas believes that what he calls the "lifeworld" is being colonized by the "system" -- an amorphous blend of corporations, media conglomerates,

public figures and institutions (Doxtader 187-88). These powerful groups possess both the motive and the means to manipulate and dominate public consensus. In this way, the free exchange of ideas is glossed over in favor of a Pavlovian view of need satisfaction based in small portions of information meant simply to produce a given predictable effect on unwary listeners (Polan 260). Thus, the lifeworld should somehow be free from the colonizing activities of technical rationalities meant to obfuscate the real questions which face people trying to cooperate in a world of conflict and risk (Mumby 20) in order to bring about textured communication concerning issues of group and personal interest and foment movements organized around liberation themes such as feminism(s) (Mumby 21). If only the repressive effects of the system(s) are exposed and the benefits of emancipatory action are explained, the truth of cooperation is readily apparent and thus achievable within modernity. Habermas states:

The effects of the system on the lifeworld, which change the structure of contexts of action in socially integrated groups, have to remain hidden. The reproductive constraints that instrumentalize a lifeworld without weakening the illusion of its self-sufficiency have to hide, so to speak, in the pores of communicative action. This gives rise to a structural violence that, without becoming manifest, as such, takes hold of the forms of intersubjectivity of possible understanding. Structural violence is exercised by way of systemic restrictions on communication; distortion is anchored in the formal conditions of communicative action in such a way that the interrelation of the objective, social and subjective worlds gets prejudged for participants in a typical fashion (187).

It is important to note that Habermas seeks to liberate dialectical accounts of factuality and thus render truth and knowledge more contingent than conventional accounts of modernity. He hopes to uncover possibilities for practical (seeking understanding) and emancipatory (free from systemic oppression) forms of rationality to replace the overly technicized language of contemporary reasoning (Mumby 15). Dennis Mumby explains:

Habermas is a modernist who (a) replaces the sovereign subject with an intersubjective model of rationality, (b) presents a dialectical consensus -- rather than a correspondence or representational -- theory of truth rooted in a model of communicative rationality and intersubjective understanding, (c) views communication as constitutive of (not merely representative of) human (Lifeworld) experience and social reality, and (d) articulates a theory of communication that is also a theory of society (11).

However, since the publics discussed in Habermas's account are mostly wealthy white males, the applicability of his historical analysis has been called into question. Indeed, Habermas has been criticized extensively for investing too much faith in the open exchange of ideas and for providing little guidance with regard to opening spaces of public discussion without also simultaneously limiting the access of other discursive communities to the means of communication (Fraser 79; Polan 265; Negt and Kluge 28). Nonetheless, the existence of an intersubjective field of deliberation engaged in dialogue concerning the nature of collective action is difficult to deny, and Habermas' insights began this vital discussion by uncovering the ways in which argument is subverted by the totalizing practices of public communication. Doxtader described this process:

Habermas' position is that in a complex society, public deliberation decays when interested individuals can neither codify procedures for resolving which issues are appropriately called public nor define the rules for debate about these issues.

Today, Habermas claims, these abilities are usurped by institutional systems that instrumentally define the scope and force of public opinion. Enacting, what Habermas calls, the colonization of the lifeworld, the force of institutional systems stems from a dynamic of self-sealing rationalities deployed in order to appropriate the experience of citizens (187).

So the problem with modernity is its lack of maturity. The tendency of modernity's critics is to approach the status quo with guarded skepticism and negativism. In contrast, Habermas sees enormous potential in the withering of traditional rationality but does not agree that eliminating institutional contexts would reduce the problem of achieving unfettered communication. Instead, he argues that we should open institutional doors to argumentation, and in this way we allow all those involved in a community to work toward the common good. Best explains:

It is only in modernity that the subsystems of purposive rational action, economics and politics, burst through the normative fetters of cultural tradition to become independent ruling logics in the form of money and power. Habermas refers to the process of economic and political control over the social context from which they have been abstracted as the 'colonization of the lifeworld.' With the one-sided development of instrumental rationality, ever more personal relations, services, and phases of life are being transformed into objects of administration, or into commodities (141).

The public sphere should not be separated from the technical or personal spheres. Indeed, the most significant way of improving everyday life is by finding a balance between the various spheres of rationality and by recognizing the omnipresent communicative element in any knowledge system (Best 130). The critic's job, then, is to uncover the ways in which communication is distorted by rules that appropriate the experiences of agents and thereby reduce argumentation concerning issues of common concern through the use of claims to attention and different types of language:

A Habermasian politics, therefore, turns on the distinction between instrumental and communicative rationality, on the critique of the colonization of the lifeworld by economic and political forces, on the attempt to salvage the remaining remnants of communicative rationality within a public sphere that can initiate greater democratic participation, and on the project of fostering moral and practical rationality that challenges the hegemony of science over ethics and politics...The movement toward greater democratization begins with a revival of a public sphere organized around open discussion and the redemption of normative validity claims. From this, Habermas seeks to promote the gradual, nonviolent extension of democracy without advocating the overthrow of the social order (Best 179)

Goodnight notes that over technicization of discourse is not the only way in which public discussion has become controlled in recent years. He suggests that research should move in the direction of this study, with movements concerned with identity opening new and dynamic spaces for public deliberation (Goodnight, The Rhetorical Turn in IR 148). Indeed, he argues:

Ironically, publics of the year 2000 are likely to be challenged by questions of both technology and identity. As the last of the Cold War culture thaws and fresh controversies grow, thinking in dichotomies and deferrals should gradually relax its hold on the critical imaginary (Goodnight, Communication Monographs 275).

Nancy Fraser describes the same process from a citizen's standpoint. She emphasizes the ways in which resistance groups produce counter-discourses and fora for those discussions independent of institutional constraints (Fraser 60). She describes what she calls "subaltern counterpublics" and suggests studying the new languages and fora created by out-groups as resistance strategies to the status quo (Fraser 58). These critical safe-houses can be incubators for dynamic social activity. She contends they "function as spaces of withdrawal and regroupment; on the other hand, they also function as bases and training grounds for agitational activities directed toward wider publics" (62). Thus, an important way of understanding the existence of a public is by examining the criticisms of its counterpublic(s) and a truly open public sphere is based around principles of inclusion rather than limitation and is more likely to be a place of instability and argument, with constantly shifting rules of the game and different levels of participation. This nuanced view of the public sphere leaves room for the discussion of feminine identity than a narrow approach focused solely on institutional rhetoric. To Fraser, a modified public sphere "includes sufficient participation and sufficient representation of multiple interests and perspectives to permit most people most of the time to recognize themselves in its discourses" (Fraser 73). Thus, Fraser argues we should recognize non-liberal, non-bourgeois competing public discourses as a middle ground between individual action and immobility in the face of collective expression while



acknowledging the importance of understanding the process of distinguishing argument in a communicative public sphere (Goodnight, Communication Monographs 272).

Fraser is critical of Habermas. She is even critical of his example of a capitalist literary society which developed in response to the withering of the aristocracy and the rise of a new merchant class. Habermas characterized the society as built around relatively open debate and explained how it created dialectical space for discussion that previously had not existed. In that way he hoped to illustrate his principles of communicative action and an epistemology built around communication as philosophy as well as art. Fraser argues that other authors dispute Habermas, even suggesting the male coffee house debates fetishized a developing salon culture as effeminate and aristocratic - thus denying again the possibilities for feminine agency (Fraser 78).

Fraser's claim is that the so-called bourgeois public was never the whole public in the way that Habermas describes it. The public is more likely an amalgam of competing forces, counterpublics and resistance movements comprised of not just the bourgeois, but also out-groups such as minorities and women (Fraser 75). She thus disputes Habermas' claim that a public sphere based on a multitude of perspectives emerged as a result of modernity. Instead she argues that the voices of women and minorities were always there, however, modernity is a hegemony and not overt repression. It survives through the manufacturing of consent. Thus the appearance of free and open dialogue is an important part of its legitimating potential (Fraser 76). She describes the monolithic public she believes emerges from Habermas' work:

(T)he official bourgeois public sphere is the institutional vehicle for a major historical transformation in the nature of political domination. This is the shift

from a repressive mode of domination to a hegemonic one, from rule based primarily on acquiescence to superior force to rule based primarily on consent supplemented with some measure of repression. The important point is that this new mode of political domination, like the older one, secures the ability of one stratum of society to rule the rest. The official public sphere, then, was -- indeed, is -- the prime institutional site for the construction of the consent that defines the new, hegemonic mode of domination (Fraser 62).

Fraser also argues that the public sphere Habermas describes is characterized by other communicative markers of status that make it more difficult to bracket social inequity “as if” it did not exist (Fraser 63). One of the best examples I can think of is manners. The person who is trained in the proper ways of speaking and acting normally receives more consideration than the person who is not. Pierre Bourdieu studied norms of politeness and manners as measures of social control and stratification and even Foucault has written that manners are a constant expression of disciplinary power evidenced in everyday life. A more educated, refined person is likely to be perceived as more credible. Thus Habermas’ observation that interests cannot be bracketed in the sciences turns his assumptions of the possibility of an ideal speech situation in a stratified society on its head, Fraser claims.

The result is the development of powerful informal pressures that marginalize the contributions of members of subordinated groups both in everyday life contexts and official public spheres. Moreover, these pressures are amplified, rather than mitigated, by the peculiar economy of the bourgeois public sphere. In this public sphere, the media that constitute the material support for the circulation of views

are privately owned and operated for profit. Consequently, subordinated social groups usually lack equal access to the material means of equal participation (65).

Fraser also takes issue with the assumption that a single public sphere is superior to multiple fragmented publics. She claims first that such a public sphere has the effect of magnifying the problems confronting subordinated groups in expressing their identities. In a sense, she argues that those discourses should be allowed to develop into enclaves of consciousness and not necessarily be part of an overall larger social discussion. Fraser even describes feminism as one of her “subaltern counterpublics.” (Fraser 67) This movement has developed its own journals, conventions, festivals, meeting places, etc. all while remaining officially demonized by the majority of the world’s citizens. Ultimately, I am less positive that her view of competing discourses is dissimilar to Habermas’ but her objective is certainly different. For example, both Fraser and Habermas want to create room for the discussion of a wide array of topics from an even wider scope of perspectives. Fraser argues that this is better served by analysis of the competing claims of many publics while continuing to expand the possible audiences for those claims through discursive adaptation. Yet she argues that as a public widens it is subject to an ever increasing series of filters which distort and change its message and fits into a more acceptable expressive frame, thus blunting some of its revolutionary potential, in the same way the Burke describes terministic screens. Fraser continues:

(P)ublic spheres themselves are not spaces of zero degree culture, equally hospitable to any form of cultural expression. Rather, they consist of culturally specific institutions...These institutions can be understood as culturally specific

rhetorical lenses that filter and alter the utterances they frame; they can accommodate some expressive modes and not others (69)

She suggests, then, that an overarching public sphere would assure that cultural assimilation is a sine qua non of participation in such a marketplace. This, she argues will destroy the multicultural ideal.

Fraser also argues that Habermas' public sphere is based upon a civic republican view of governance in which "individuals are transformed from a collection of self-seeking, private individuals into a public-spirited collectivity, capable of acting together in the common interest" (72). She argues that this civic republican view is based on a conflation of deliberation as only discussion pertaining to the common good.

Consequently, it limits deliberation to talk framed from the standpoint of a single, all-encompassing "we" thereby ruling claims of self-interest and group interest out of order. Yet, this works against one of the principal aims of deliberation, namely, helping participants clarify their interests, even when those interest turn out to conflict...In particular, the less powerful may not find ways to discover that the prevailing sense of "we" does not adequately include them (Fraser 73).

In other words, the prevailing view of what should be considered "public" discussion and what should be excluded because of its "private" nature will usually win out in this civic republican view of consensus so that even when subordinated groups pass the first barricades and become officially licensed arguers in such a sphere, the formal equality they received does little to help them toward recognition of actual liberation from oppression. In fact, often civic republicanism considers this licensure the stopping point for inclusion rather than its genesis (Fraser 70).

Another related civic republican view is that the forum for discussion must present a rigid separation between the state and certain economies, thus fostering a freer exchange of ideas. Thus, often elites make rhetorical attempts to economize certain issues and thereby render them untouchable to regulation by sociopolitical actors. For example, power is rendered an economy in which people cannot share because to exert one's power is to take away someone else's. Power is conceived of as power over and thus is economized and then detached from the discussion as a natural state of being.

Habermas thus thinks of civil society as independent from state apparatuses because it functions as a necessary fifth column against state intrusion. State involvement in this free society will only introduce distortion that will render an opinion public a governing public and thereby limit the range of possible choices. Fraser argues instead that rethinking this sharp separation of civil society and governance will empower people to understand that opinion formation can be a form of governance and future making, not simply an important aide to those elite who make public decisions for us.

What is needed, rather, is a post-bourgeois conception that can permit us to envision greater role for (at least some) public sphere than mere autonomous opinion formation removed from authoritative decision making. A post-bourgeois conception would enable us to think about strong and weak publics, as well as about hybrid forms. In addition it would allow us to theorize the range of possible relations among such publics, thereby expanding our capacity to envision democratic possibilities beyond the limits of actually existing democracy (Fraser 77).

Gerald Hauser (1997) contends that Habermas is consistent with Fraser's analyses of counterpublics. He finds space in the public sphere for subaltern groups. In fact, he argues that the existence of the public sphere allows common frames of reference which permit the debate between such publics to take place. He maintains that the public sphere provides fora for discussion of private interests, however it is an unfolding process, changing every day (277).

But Hauser still maintains a strong separation between the affairs of the polis and the public sphere. He is careful to protect the integrity of the public sphere against government regulation, as if it could be free of the informal constraints constantly reinforced by statist norms. Hauser argues that the notion of civil society encompasses the dissent of dissident cultures but does not answer Fraser's more nuanced claim that allowing for expression of views is not enough, that one must find new ways of conceiving of political action that are independent as well as directly involved in the affairs of state action, rather than limited to mere formation of opinion publics with no official governing power (278).

Hauser does suggest that the modern conception of the public sphere is more fragmentary. There are many "public spheres" in which struggles are expressed through disagreement and dissent (Hauser 279). He argues that this does not necessitate consensus as a defining metaphor, but it does illuminate the ways in which shared frames of reference can interact with language to influence and persuade people.

The emerging view of the public sphere stresses its contested nature. One aspect of this discussion is stressing uncertainty as a necessary precondition for controversy. The public sphere is not a place of decided relationships, it is a site of uncertain

boundaries and unclear affiliations, a place where “neither consensual or dissensual norms are privileged” and oppositional rhetoric is celebrated as opening new sites for argument (Goodnight, Communication Monographs 273).

Goodnight decries the loss of rhetorical innovation which comes from a decrepit public sphere and argues that the pressures to limit discussion will grow in the next millennium such that the only way to invigorate public debate concerning important issues is to explore as many versions of a context as possible and thus make more informed choices about the real issues of our lives and others’ lives throughout the world (273). Yet he does not support resistance for resistance’s sake. Thus he might take issue with post-modernism in general with respect to IR, but would have less trouble agreeing with a feminist paradigm which combines resistance with a positive vision instead of simply resistance qua resistance. He argues that separating dissent from consensus simply chokes off invention, which he believes is the key to reinvigorating dialogue concerning important public issues. Consider:

Because such a strategy must answer everywhere and always to a demanding skepticism, it can scarcely imagine affirmative public duties, learn from episodes of productive change, engage in democratic practices, compare relative merits of among discourse practices, or expand possibilities for hope -- even among dissenting publics. Because it defers commitments to alternate models and paradigms, such a politics forces binaries readings of rhetoric and the public sphere -- either modern (consensus) or post-modern (dissent). Its promise of recognition for innovation (a third way) must remain either an empty category or a self-aborting claim (Goodnight, The Spaces of Public Dissension 274).

Riley, Klumpp and Hollihan explore the importance of expanding the public sphere to encompass new sites of power/resistance in the workplace, suggesting that what was considered private interests can now be fully analyzed within the communicative constraints of the public sphere. They go further to contend that politics is currently no longer a viable site for democratic discussion in the United States (Klumpp, Riley and Hollihan 206). They suggest a move to a politics in which “argument is formative rather than instrumental” and thus are strongly within the Habermasian view of democratizing space for argument, yet they test the limits of public space in the way that Fraser would recommend.

### **Plan of Reporting**

Chapter 1 introduces the study. Chapter one will state the problem and explain the backdrop of communication theory which justifies the leap into rhetorical criticism of realism in international relations. Chapter one will also explain the reach of the study and outline the method I will use to analyze feminist and realist interpretations of security. Finally, chapter one will review the relevant literature on the questions of IR and rhetoric, terministic filters and communication’s relationship to IR and finally offer some insights into the construction and maintenance of certain types of public spheres.

Chapter 2 will explain contemporary realist interpretations of security and analysis of international relations. Chapter 2 will make note of the historical development of realism, explain how its rhetorical economy helps maintain it and last will explain how the realist interpretation of the rhetorical aspects of international relations establishes a template for evaluating claims that obscures alternative interpretations from view.



Chapter 3 will examine the feminist critique of positivism and scientific inquiry in IR. Arguing that such analysis is the point of application of realism's security apparatus, this study will describe the dilemmas for positivism presented by feminist(s) narrative(s). This dispute is the vortex of an acrimonious disciplinary (and interdisciplinary) debate about the nature of evidence, the accuracy of predictive principles and the essentialism of statist science.

Chapter 4 will describe how the changing views of security from traditional realism to feminism satisfy the criteria for uncentering realism set forth by Beer and Hariman. It will explore the ways that the terministic filter of security is deployed to limit discussions of differing agency in a type of public sphere. Chapter 4 will also argue that through its critique of security, feminist IR broadens the dialogue in IR and thus increases the potential for discussion of issues of traditional "public" importance as well as other more esoteric concerns related to multiple publics with varied and divergent interests. All of this turns on the question of security, its meaning and the applications and effects of its invocation. Ultimately, chapter 4 will explain how the terministic filter of security serves as the critical chokepoint around which the entire debate concerning feminist IR revolves. It is in the interpretation of the term security that the differences between conventional IR and feminist analyses emerge. Thus, feminist IR helps us understand firmly that terministic filters are real, that they are multifaceted and that they illustrate the ways in which power and language work together to constitute reality.

Chapter 5 will offer some insights into argumentative and rhetorical theory from beyond the barricades. Feminist analysis creates an intellectual environment of inclusiveness in discursive practices which challenge the existence of perceived scarcity,

the basis of many competitive models of argumentation. It also offers another critique of the link between communicative and political action, suggesting that all communicative action contains an important political element, and that arbitrarily pushing those discourses into various “spheres” contributes to hierarchalization of discourses and an economized, purely public view of power. Post-modernity shatters this, introducing struggle at all levels of discussion and identifying political power at all levels of participation, including in the home. But this model hardly does anything to de-center the zero sum nature of power in the way feminism does. In many ways, feminism does not suffer some of the pitfalls of pure post-modernity. It does not lock us into cycles of disagreement and struggle but instead sees disagreement as an essential part of living and turns that into an ethic of respect based on care for difference rather than for the sameness we feel. In that way it preserves space for argumentative discourse but reduces the ability of argumentative norms to exclude certain ways of knowing while not threatening the existence of all norms.

## **Conclusion**

Thus, the end of public discussion is best served by theories which celebrate both the power of resistance and the importance of collective action while not engaging in overly dualist, or limiting, methods of framing problems and solutions. Beer and Hariman draw upon this claim as the basis for their reasons that studying the unfolding stories of realist political thought unmasks the hegemony of realism and re-invents the language of innovation which sees rhetorical change as a vibrant part of idea generation (see Beer and Hariman 6). At the same time, scholars such as James Rosenau, Rob Walker and others are challenging the fundamental reality of international relations in favor of a narrative view of positivist analysis (see Rosenau, 106; Walker 35). These scholars see the emerging international reality governed by numerous rules of persuasion and their project centers on the discussion of the varied voices possible in IR and what means scholarship can use to hear these sometimes frail and pensive stories. While rhetorical analysis of international metaphors is nothing new to communication scholars, the experience can be very disconcerting to IR scholars who are used to a steady diet of scientific number crunching. It has led at least one scholar to suggest that IR is undergoing a “reflective moment” in which fundamental change in the discipline is possible (Walker 38). His point is that the discipline has room for other forms of analysis but the interests of those in power there are best served by leaving those traditions on the fringes.

Chapter two will outline the realist interpretation of security and the purposes of inquiry in IR. It will explain the realist view of the state of nature as well as realist conclusions about the nature of communication and action. Finally, chapter two will explain the way security is deployed by realist practitioners in IR as a terministic screen.

## **Chapter 2: Realist Security**

### **Beer and Hariman: Realism Revisited**

Many interpretations of realism exist, but most have several important factors in common. First, realist accounts focus on a vision of so-called “human nature” to justify their conclusions. Second, realist accounts offer a certain interpretation of “security” that involves assuming the existence of perpetual insecurity as a guiding principle. And last, realist accounts survive on a particular view of agency that allows analysis of essentialized identity and an economy of power that makes the realist account self-evident.

While Beer and Hariman replace narrow and classical realism with what they refer to as “post-realism,” (Beer and Hariman 387), it is actually a revised and more complicated form of realism. They argue that post realism begins with the proposition that recognizing the relationship between language and action is not a simple task, and that separating the two is often murky, difficult and dangerous (Beer and Hariman 387). They suggest that “our understanding of events is always determined by our discourse” (387) and thus becomes the determinant factor in taking one or another political action. Their claim is that through this understanding, people can engage in a more reflexive realism that allows for the possibility of contingent events and uncorrelated actions. In this way, they argue that terministic screens impair our ability to comprehend complex crises and in an international sense leave us vulnerable to rogue actions that have little basis in realistic thinking. Thus, realism walls off other approaches to problem identification and assessment and demonizes alternative vocabularies as being too discursive, too concerned with reflexivity to benefit rational decision-making (Beer and

Hariman, 390). Therefore, the question of realism seems to hang on the notion that speech and action are somehow distinct, and that mere words are not correlative with engaged and preemptive action based upon the politics of self interest. But a new literature -- initiated by Habermas' conception of a public sphere -- criticizes the difference between rhetoric and action, arguing instead that they are bound together inexorably and a clear view of one can help illuminate the processes and motivations of the other so that they remain indistinguishable in many senses. Rhetoric is undeniably a form of action, yet realist argument has proceeded as if rhetoric and action were unconnected, or loosely connected at best. Beer and Hariman argue that Burke contributes much to this discussion. I also argue that post-modern criticism also has a great deal to say about the question of the pervasiveness of language in defining and determining social and political acts. In particular, Habermas, and more specifically Fraser, speaks to this question directly, creating a more nuanced view of the functioning of terministic screens in order to craft a relationship between rhetoric, feminism and resistance.

### **Realism and Human Nature: Thomas Hobbes and Charles Darwin**

Hobbes described human nature as a competition of all against all. In many ways, a Darwinist interpretation of ecology reinforces this primitive view. To most realists, the state of nature is much like the way that Beer and Hariman describe it: primitively competitive. Realists argue that any theory not taking into account this base competitive situation must fail, as they do not accurately represent a basic fact of human history: humans compete for dominance in social as well as environmental terms. Realists argue that this is an inescapable axiom of human relations.

Realist analysis begins with an assumption about the primitive competitive situation described by Hobbes and Darwin. This is the place Beer and Hariman, for example, suggest that strategic analysis of a problem begin: by assessing the competitive interests involved in any struggle for resources. They argue that the primitive situation is characterized by the basic competitive state of nature:

It is simple, adhering to a small though powerful array of conditions and calculations; it is universal, an immanent structure potentially available during any human interaction; it is harsh, as different actions produce starkly different outcomes; and it is logically prior to other, more complex though less comprehensive patterns of interaction (Beer and Hariman 394).

This ability to form a constant in human relationships gives realist writers a basic template from which to form claims to attention. It also provides realist scholars with a stable factor with which to work with in terms of creating models of scientific predictivity related to nation states. Indeed, if the competitive state of nature is a constant in human relationships, then it must also be so in terms of the expression of state will, as states are simply extensions of human nature applied on a mass scale. Third, it gives the state system a feel of naturalness and inevitability. If we were to rid ourselves of nation states, they would simply re-appear because they are logical extensions of human impulses. Thus realist interpretations fulfill the existentialist fantasy: because they exist they must be logical and natural.

Realists claim to see the world “as it is” rather than “as it should be”. In fact, many realists embrace the concept that “as it is” is indeed “as it should be” because to assume anything else is dangerous and leaves one open to charges of Pollyanna and

increases the risks of rogue players wrecking the game. Thus a person who is unprepared for the presence of inevitable competition will fail ultimately to accomplish their aims. Thus a true strategist must understand basic human nature when forming theory or else be caught up in cycles of utopianism without any basis in what is really happening.

In many ways, this gives realists a corner on history. Things are natural because they are here. Thus, realists argue that their theory has a basis in the actual reality of human relations. Realist and neo-realist writers express their claims in terms of their “is-ness” suggesting that things that are simply cannot be denied.

Realist writers suggest that in such a world the motive to gain advantage is all-encompassing and most questions come down to how to best achieve victory, the only means of assessing success. The operative mentality in this world is *reactivity*: (Beer and Hariman 394) being able to effectively counter one’s opponent on the field of play. This system has the advantage of simplicity and determinacy, some argue, because outcomes are easily recognized and it offers a clear definition of objectives in a world of all against all. It filters choices out until there are only a couple of simple calculations and then takes its meal from the available plate. This formula has the advantage of simplifying things in order to make them more amenable to interpretation and possibly prediction. It also seems to have a link to the so-called reality of things.

The realist epistemology also provides scholars with a framework for understanding state action. By melding all of our identities into the rubric of the state, it reduces complex variables and allows scholars to develop models that predict the behavior of states as individuals in the international arena. Casting states as individuals

for the purpose of prediction helps scholars solve basic problems in their Humean equations that make such predictions and correlations possible.

And last, such an interpretation of human nature demands a certain application of the concept of security. If indeed everyone is in competition with one another, then constant preparedness for the presence of war a violence becomes a necessity. Studying the effects of wars and how to prevent them become important questions of study. Violence becomes an inescapable aspect of system so no one asks questions about states' monopoly on the means of violence. Such a monopoly is justified, realists argue, because it prevents the diffusion of small scale violence to mass anarchy and large scale violence.

Thus realists assert the presence of an abstracted competitive state of nature. They also suggest the persistence of violence justifies the presence of states which are natural expressions of the identity of individuals. Realism then suggests that these states act as individuals in an international arena characterized by perpetual violence and anarchy, governed only by self interest and preparedness for confrontation. This provides them with a coherent and manageable view of states that understands that they are persistent and inevitable.

A realist framework does have a few problems. First, it inevitably fosters complexification. The way to confound one's enemy is to complexify the kinds of plans one makes and thus reduce an adversary's ability to accurately predict political action and then render actions predictable again when desired stimulus occurs. In other words, realism is vulnerable to rogue players. Those who do not recognize -- or choose not to recognize -- the rules can go far in this high stakes game. One only need look at the situations in Yugoslavia, Iraq and North Korea to behold the inadequacy of the primitive



view of strategic analysis. The rogue player disrupts the game by not responding to appropriate stimuli or over-responding to others and thus renders the explanatory power of the primitive competitive situation suspect. It seems as if people not only respond to win or lose, that calculations of win and loss include various “face saving” concerns which are profoundly rhetorical rather than evidence of the base state of competitive nature.

Second, this interpretation leads to indeterminacy, while pretending to be determinate. Actual outcomes in the competitive situation are likely also determined by intangible factors in the execution process. For example, often you might hear a sports coach refer to the fact that they “had the game plan but couldn’t execute it.” That means that all the planning in the world doesn’t work when Deion Sanders intercepts the ball and runs it back 75 yards for a touchdown. Thus, simple realism posits the possibility of empirical data suggesting the existence of reliable outcomes or predictable schedules, but as all air travelers know, just because the planes left yesterday on time doesn’t mean they won’t all be delayed today. Many factors are at work, and only a handful can be controlled in any meaningful way. This makes empirical prediction a beggar’s game: there is no outcome that produces something for everyone, yet the possibility of complete failure by all actors remains an imminent likelihood.

Third, this view of primitive nature is inherently masculinist. There is equal evidence that cooperation and sharing are part of the base, primitive situation and that competitive relations are constructed in the same way that many current social relationships are: in the image of masculine notions of all against all. But feminists argue that this is not the state of nature, but merely one version of the state of nature (Tickner

54). One should certainly be aware of the competitive view of nature, but needn't assume that it is a universal principle of human relationships.

### **Realism and Control: Shades of Machiavelli**

The second tier of the realist pyramid, which Beer and Hariman refer to as the “control” calculus (396), is a more sophisticated view of realism. This stage corresponds to a mature realism, one which recognizes expanded contexts, and is “accustomed to authority” (Beer and Hariman 396). This mature realism recognizes the importance of self control on the part of a rational actor. Mature realism is based in Machiavelli and stresses the importance of anticipating future problems by patience and self control (Beer and Hariman, 400). But this view still merely accepts the competitive view of the primitive situation and refines it, stressing the importance of restraint and retrenchment before action occurs. The Machiavellian strategist is likely to have a firmer understanding of contingency and the uncertainty of political outcomes. In this world, the Prince understands that control of all the players in an entire game is impossible and so focuses on control of himself (Machiavelli 1235). The control of oneself, Machiavelli argues, provides an important measure of stability in an unpredictable milieu and that zone of stability permits the sort of dispassionate calculation which is necessary for effective decision-making and recognition of the traps other people set (Machiavelli 1240). Beer and Hariman describe this vision of the Prince:

The successful prince will be one who is ever alert to threats from within and without, constantly training for war, always assessing the political utility of any customary activity, and habitually exercising restraint from distractions and impulses alike (398).

This view is rote with rhetorical considerations. Indeed, all things are potential means of persuasion (Beer and Hariman 393) in the Machiavellian sense. The Prince survives first by subduing himself and creates a new self by issuing threats and actions against others so everything becomes a potential mechanism toward ultimate victory. Ultimately, this process occurs in order to secure consent from the governed and to increase the holdings and position of the Prince (Machiavelli 1283).

Beer and Hariman argue that this level of analysis is essential for realist interpretations of events, but they criticize mature realism for two main reasons. First, they argue that while mature realists do develop a more complex strategic intelligence than simple primitive calculation, it is vulnerable to becoming a self-perpetuating process when it has outlived its utility (Beer and Hariman 24). The Prince, first and foremost, is concerned for his position and status and the maintenance of the power that keeps him in charge. Eventually, threats to his power subside, yet his legitimacy rests mostly in his ability to counter external threats. Thus it becomes important to invent new and more dangerous external threats to capture his subjects' attention and satisfy his eternal paranoia that someone may be chasing him. Beer and Hariman surmise that the Machiavellian trap is that it is devoted to the development of a role, a character, which is constructed according to the needs of society but applied through the emotive context of the body (Beer and Hariman 24).

In the final analysis, the problem with Machiavellianism is that it never ends. It is a self-perpetuating cycle of insecurity based in the understanding of human nature (or at least certainly political nature) as mired in the politics of all against all. In this sense, it is anti-feminist. But again, one can stress that this is only one filter, one lens for viewing the

intermediate level of rational calculation. It only takes the perspective of the prince. What if the princess were in charge? Would that result in the same level of calculation and defense based in perpetual insecurity, or would perhaps the satisfaction of basic needs and cooperative action be more suitable for her philosophy? It is difficult to tell. In a manner that gives an early indication between gender and biology, women rulers tend to be as ruthless or controlling as their male counterparts. But again, that is to suggest that Machiavelli's Prince needn't be a man, s/he need only subscribe to a masculine understanding of (in)security. The point here is that there are ready examples of compassionate cooperation occurring at the same time that there are "Princes" walking around making dispassionate calculations in their heads, it simply depends on where you look, or what color sunglasses (terministic filters) you put on before you look.

For example, Peterson (and most feminist writers) criticize this world view as oppositional and thereby grounded in the masculine creation of dichotomous relationships which stress the oppositional flavor of things instead of exploring interdependence as a possible guidepost for action(s) (Peterson, The Rhetorical Turn in IR 268). Peterson argues that maintenance of these rigid dichotomies and the search for victory rather than cooperation ultimately damages public discussion and obscures the means of production for symbolic and material power (Peterson 275). It is this "us-them" or "man-nature" that ultimately reproduces binary logic which permeates our lives with oppositional choices and fetishizes other options, specifically personal ones, as unimportant to the larger, more important discussion of state at hand. It also reinforces the relationship between self/other and protector/protected, the very basis of the protection racket (Peterson, Gendered States 35). Machiavelli's account places his Prince

as one against the world, perpetually uncovering the actions of others and interpreting them strategically in order to win against the outsiders. Feminism unpacks that view of security by revealing its fundamental basis in insecurity and thus illustrates the fragility of the realist regime's state-sponsored protection racket.

So the fixed categories that Beer and Hariman argue are specific domains for a particular kind of world view can be criticized as inappropriate starting points for strategic analysis, or at least, incomplete descriptions of the primitive and bureaucratic worlds. And certainly those visions are quite unfriendly to the feminine voice(s) because of their focus on competitive and commodified views of power which lead to narrow calculi involving self interest as a primary starting point. Yet, one must also include room for the possibility of different forms of agency. It is difficult to deny the applicability of masculine concepts to certain situations. But the problem is that existing accounts filter out alternatives to hegemonic masculinity and do not permit other masculine accounts of love and sharing to exist. In short, the current conception of argument is far too confrontational and concerned with vulnerability and insecurity to offer a diverse enough metaphor to assist agents in negotiating through the complex technocratic world of the next 2000 years.

In order to "rectify the simplicity in previous patterns of definition" (Beer and Hariman 401) the third level of the pyramid is concerned with ongoing "kritik" of IR discourses and resistances. The purpose of this kritik is retain the reflexivity for varied and creative action on questions of traditional and late-breaking significance. Beer and Hariman turn to Clausewitz to justify their view of modified realism, maintaining his distinction between the tactical and operational level as well as critical analysis, bringing

higher order perspectives in strategic engagement in order to find the most comprehensive form of action (401). Yet, Beer and Hariman stick to suggesting that the strategist must “be able not only to assess the array of forces, and to gauge political objectives and constraints, and to control dangerous impulses,” (Beer and Hariman 402) but also must understand the panoply of meanings attributable to the rhetorical fabric of persuasion.

Recognition of the indeterminacy of meaning frees strategic thinking from the realist’s trap of empiricism and grounds it firmly in the imagination, increasing the possibility for innovation. But, Beer and Hariman argue that post-realist analysis is simply one more way to accomplish the same old purpose: ultimate victory over a chaotic nature. And while this study supports the notion of cooperative action, there are certain aspects of the “ultimate victory” metaphor that leave me uneasy with respect to feminism. And it seems that Beer and Hariman’s conception of “the strategist” is not unlike Machiavelli’s description of the Prince. They construct a character of “the strategist” (403) who is everything and more, everything, that is, except for a feeling person who cannot help but be affected by information they receive every day.

In the same vein, this strategist is very similar to the “political man” suggested by Morgenthau. Morgenthau’s political man is exists somehow abstracted from moral constraints and hopelessly driven toward power and its maximization. Morgenthau suggests that the political man is an appropriate model for devising relationships between states, that states influence one another through the expression of their social and economic power in the same way that political man is driven toward control (Morgenthau 185).

## **Realism and Security: Dominant Vocabularies and Terministic Screens**

International relations developed as a discipline after World War I and formed around finding solutions to the seemingly inescapable cycle of war and international violence (Tickner 9). This led initially to the formation of new structures for the management of war, such as the League of Nations and the growth of international law. However, with the outbreak of World War II, widespread disillusionment with so-called “utopian” solutions to the problems of world politics moved many scholars toward what became known as “realist” views of world politics (Tickner 10). Many practitioners of international relations began to advocate a more detached, professionalized view for the conduct of states, warning of the dangers of over-involvement by an uninformed general public (Morgenthau 180). The success of Josef Stalin, Benito Mussolini and Adolph Hitler convinced many scholars of the dangers of populism and the imperfection of democratic governance leading to the conclusion that war was a persistent and inescapable part of understanding the world. Many scholars began to suggest that war’s inevitability was as persuasive as its effects. Thus, the center of discussion shifted in IR from understanding peace to the analysis of war, its causes and the manner in which states rise and fall through the expression of their political and social interests. Realist writers, reacting against the idealism of the early twentieth century, devised a lens for viewing international relations focused on the presence of a dangerous world without any central authority to manage its escalating conflict (Steans 40). This “anarchal” international system demands, according to realists and neorealists, the amassing of military power to uphold state control, maintain its domestic space and manifest its interests around the world (Tickner 11). The ultimate goal of this security formulation is

to increase the possibility of control of some elements of a chaotic international environment and to free nations from the sorts of moral constraints leading to appeasement during the 1930s and, according to realist views of security, culminated in the Second World War. Thus, the focus of security in the realist formulation is on the state and its security as an expression of national will. Realism, it seems, developed around the question of security and the problem of its definition in a world of multifaceted identities.

The primary underlying theme of realist discourse seems to be the persistence of war as an institution (Cuomo 32). To the realist thinker, war is the basic state of nature in the international environment, and the purpose of scholarly research is to find ways to prolong the periods of peace which will inevitably be interrupted by the presence of war (Tickner 27; Steans 51). Because of the anarchic nature of international politics, realists contend that the only path to security is damage control, constant preparation for war because of its omnipresence and then working to prolong peace from a position of strength (Tickner 29; Steans 40).

For example, Morgenthau describes his theory of *power maximization*, (Morgenthau 243) which is the root of contemporary realist thinkers' understanding of security in the international political environment (Tickner 30). According to Morgenthau, states can best provide for their security by consolidating power through the securing of national boundaries and control of natural resources and technologies for their exploitation which all culminate in a stronger military position relative to other states, the very core of contemporary theories of deterrence. In this way, states engage in power maximization (Morgenthau 45; Steans 42).



A state maximizes its power by accumulating superiority in those areas and then it can accomplish its aims supposedly from a position of strength rather than accommodation (Tickner 34). Certainly the aims of the state involved also have something to do with the ways in which this kind of power is used, however the model itself is not currently under scrutiny by most theory practitioners in IR (Beer and Hariman 295). Morgenthau's theories form the framework for the primary method for attaining security in realist constructions of world politics: the amassing of military might and the political will to use it through the support of a nation's citizenry, including the IR community, for the acceptance of war as a permanent state of international affairs and the necessity of preparation for war as a way of dealing with not only external threats but to influence the outcome of events deemed important to security far beyond national boundaries (Tickner 30). In this way, interests are seen as connected to one another and form the outlines of a more complex world of deterrence and strategic calculation. In many ways, this has come to define the research agenda in International Relations (Steans 41).

Kenneth Waltz describes a world of international politics based upon self gratification and self interest. States are not interconnected, or more so they should not be, according to Waltz. Peace is maintained not through building relationships with other nations (unless, of course, those relationships are strategically important and politically viable) but through a balance of power that persuades other nations to avoid risking conflict with a superior or roughly equal adversary (Waltz, Man, the State and War 65). While Waltz's theories seem narrowly tailored to strategic considerations, his logic underlies the very essence of an arms race mentality. One must be permanently armed for

war, and develop similar or superior weapons than one's adversaries so they will be persuaded to capitulate to one's demands (Waltz, A Theory of International Politics 283). The main danger to peace, Waltz argues, is the development of asymmetrical relationships in military acquisition (Waltz, A Theory of International Politics 285). When one nation develops weapons much faster than its adversaries, Waltz contends, it is a danger to its neighbors and reckless in its intentions (Waltz, Man, the State and War 27). Another potential danger is the multiplication of deterrence scenarios. As long as two main adversaries compete for military and political superiority in such an environment, with all other actors subordinate to the intentions of those great powers, the calculations necessary for maintenance of international relationships are simpler and thus more stable than the introduction of rogue elements into the conduct of such a game. So, according to Waltz, the world system is more stable and less prone to the outbreak of persistent war when it is characterized by a bipolar (such as described above) world rather than a multipolar one in which many different nations have similar capabilities (Waltz, Man, the State and War 28). In such an environment, states cannot expect other nations to assist them in their development economically, militarily or politically, but instead should engage in self-help, pulling themselves into a wider arena by their own bootstraps, so to speak. Waltz maintains that these competitive relationships will develop whether they are intentional or not. The most important concern for state leaders is how to best strategize and achieve the perception that their nation has superior position or resources relative to other potential adversaries in a dispute (Waltz, A Theory of International Politics 141).

Waltz and Morgenthau form the base of the realist view of world politics. Both proceed from unmistakable Hobbesian views of political relationships, basing their philosophy on the persistence of rogue elements and the ever present danger of conflict and war. Morgenthau is more explicit than Waltz. He describes what he calls “political man,” which he references as abstracted from human behavior (Morgenthau 140). He contends that *political man* is amoral and is hopelessly driven to power accumulation (Tickner 36). Any failure to understand the political person’s desire for power will founder hopelessly and leave those who would bring peace wanting for a solution that appeals to all participants in a dispute. Morgenthau’s “political man” is an amalgam of classical philosophy’s descriptions of a “will to power,” without acknowledgment of other forms of agency readily apparent in the political matrix and apparently without consideration of the writings of Bourdieu, Foucault, Nietzsche and Marx as well as a wide body of feminist research suggesting that there may be a different view of power which suggests that it needn’t be accumulable (Tickner 44).

Morgenthau claims that individuals are engaged in a perpetual struggle for power whenever they are in contact with one another -- thus human relationships are characterized by domination in every sphere of existence: the home, the workplace, the polity and the international community (Morgenthau 156). This will to violence is immutable and is only modified by the conditions of its occurrence. It is not avoidable but must be managed through the creation of elaborate networks of security and military persuasion and while nations may opt to control violence at home, states utilize it in the form of war abroad (Tickner 32).

To illustrate this vision, I am reminded of a recent statement by Madeliene Albright concerning the conflict in Yugoslavia after the tragedy in Littleton, Colorado in which three students took over their school and killed numerous students in an act of violence that shocked many peoples' consciences. A reporter asked Mrs. Albright what a teacher is supposed to tell a student when s/he asks why it is okay for the government to kill, but not students. Mrs. Albright responded that our government should be willing to "use force" abroad to "further our interests." In the United States there would be no murder because "we are all Americans and Americans do not kill each other" but the government must remain ready to "use force," if necessary, to protect "our country's interests"(Reuters Newswire). This is classic Morgenthau: the government can attack other nations and use violence because its legitimacy rests on the accumulation of the means of violence. To allow killing at home by any other person than an official state representative would challenge the state's monopoly on violence, the very essence of its supposed purpose in a Hobbesian world: to control of individual aggression through an accumulation of the means of violence.

This view of human nature can be traced back to the warrior culture of Greek city-states and is further supported by the writings of Machiavelli, who glorifies this will to power as the way to proper governance through the overcoming of laziness and the celebration of manliness (Peterson, The Rhetorical Turn in IR 267). Noble pursuits resided in giving one's life for one's country and represented the ultimate sacrifice in the Greek (and modern) conception of virtue. One need only look around at the films of today (Armageddon, Independence Day, etc.) to find this theme of heroic practice in the classic Greek sense. All of these themes are continuously redefined and repackaged in the

media and in official state discourses. In that respect, realism appears normal and everyday, not simply a social construction that persists still even after Greek and Roman temples have crumbled and become tourist sites and feline breeding grounds.

All of these descriptions add up to a view of the international states system as characterized by persistent violence and perpetual insecurity. Comprehensive security is not possible in such a world, so a nation must instead constantly prepare for the probability of insecurity because feeling secure is a country's principal danger. When national leaders "feel" secure, according to realist discourse, their states are in the most danger because they are blind to the inevitability of rogue players and the perpetual state of violence – a powerful undercurrent to every social relationship, according to realist thinking in IR.

Thus, the term security weaves a fabric of discourses that make possible three basic tenets forming contemporary international relations theory. Most importantly, the existence of perpetual insecurity and the need to deter adversaries through superior strength demands the creation of an epistemology capable of producing results through the application of supposedly neutral principles. This gives realist theory a foothold in scientific discourse. Indeed, Tickner argues that since the printing of Morgenthau's Politics and Nations in 1948, theorists have been most concerned about creating a positivist science out of international relationships, attempting to find universal principles which will permit the prediction of the outcomes of particular security relationships and deterrence practices (Tickner 23). The definition of security as characterized by the perpetual threat of war serves to narrow the range of possibilities and thus make positivist models appear more predictive and empirically sound. The claims of realist views of

security reinforce this scientific view of international relations and increase its legitimacy to hold the attention of most of the world's people.

Realism's prescriptions for national security ... rest on the claims of its scholars that they are presenting a rational, objective assessment of the international system and the behavior of states that constitute it. Labeling those who believe in the possibility of eliminating war through international law, international cooperation or disarmament "idealists," realists claim that only through this realistic understanding of the nature of the international system can states undertake policies that will be successful in preserving their national security. Politics, Morgenthau tells us, is governed by objective laws that have their roots in human nature. Therefore it is possible to discover a rational theory that reflects these objective laws (Tickner 34).

The second service such a definition of security provides for IR scholars is a unitary vocabulary of representation that characterizes states as individual actors and not collective identities. Realism posits states as complete entities rather than amalgams of identity and community. Even the term "national security" carries with it some essentializing characteristics. An essentializing discourse is one that tries to assert that there are certain characteristics common to an entire group or category (Warren xi). Viewing security purely in terms of a nation's position relative to other nations assumes both that the identity of a single nation is readily intelligible and that the identities of the other nations involved are somehow fixed and predictable. When one refers to "the United States", one is -- in certain ways -- making an essentializing move. What exactly is "the United States" when making an argument concerning, say, international trade? Is

it the physical boundaries of the United States? Is it the citizens of the United States? Is it the President? Is it all of those things? Is it true that all citizens participate in every United States action? How is it that we can make such an assumption? Does our assumption of an essentialized identity ultimately confound policy and produce indeterminate effects, thus rendering the action of “the United States” unpredictable at best?

A good example of this phenomenon is much of United States government’s rhetoric concerning the continuing problem in Iraq. During the Gulf War and beyond, it has not been uncommon to hear the entire country of Iraq referred to as “Saddam.” And indeed, the United States and its allies wanted to make clear during the war and the subsequent economic sanctions against Iraq that the U.S. government was not waging war on *the people* of Iraq, but instead on Saddam Hussein, when -- with respect to economic sanctions -- that is exactly what the nations of the world were doing. An essentializing vocabulary provides a verbal unification of Mr. Hussein with those he governs for the purpose of blurring the distinction between the objectives of policy and its actual outcomes. It is a vindication device. Yet, naming the entire country “Saddam” in order to effectuate bombing helps make all persons in Iraq somehow part of or complicit with the Iraqi president’s intentions and hides the fact that U.S bombs (as well as economic sanctions) do not discriminate between innocent people and the Iraqi leader and rarely, if ever, actually put Mr. Hussein in jeopardy. This scenario illustrates the communicative double bind faced by the average Iraqi: held hostage by the Iraqi government yet prodded to revolt through economic warfare which denies the wherewithal to resist. Like Lot’s wife, Iraqi citizens are transformed into conspirators

when they look to see the remnants of their broken cities and blasted homes because they have sympathy for those destroyed by the wrath of God -- their mere association with the damned renders them subject to the same fate. The difference is, everyday Iraqis are conveniently excluded when the personal effects of bombing are reported in the media of their day.

Realism has its advantages, but also is subject to several important limitations. While realist authors pretend that realism is based in a fundamental truth about people, in fact it is simply another rhetorical game that can be done and undone according to human desires and beliefs. While realism offers some explanatory potential, its ability to explain the world is by no means incontrovertible and is a historically contingent rhetorical system rather than a basic fact of human nature. The point made by Beer and Hariman and others is simply that realism is one way of explaining the world, not the only (or necessarily the accurate) way of interpreting history and society.

Chapter three will analyze feminist insights concerning International Relations. It will make note of the realist agenda with respect to human nature, scientific prediction, states as units of analysis and finally the relationship between contemporary IR and deliberation in a public sphere.



## Chapter 3: Feminist Security

### Humyn Connection: Alternative Visions of the State of Nature

As for the realist assertion that practitioners have firm understanding of the state of nature, feminists argue that their interpretation offers a different way of understanding the primitive situation. Beer and Hariman argue that we must be aware of the base animal-like, competitive state of nature because competition and war principles are possible actions in any situation, so in that sense they argue that a Hobbesian view of human nature is unavoidable, and indeed “logically prior” to other forms of thinking. But nurturing and sharing are also universally possible in all situations, and there is much biological evidence to support the sharing relationship between mother and child, or for that matter, parent and child in general (Peterson, The Rhetorical Turn in IR 270) feminists argue. Thus, one would be foolish likewise (according to feminist writers) to ignore the feminist dimension of the primitive worldview: that primitivism may be about scarce resources, but everyone needn’t compete for those resources because they can be divided and shared as well as taken and controlled. Put simply, Beer and Hariman’s model assumes a view of human nature (and rationality) that is masculinist while not mentioning that feminism has as much validity in the primitive, biological context as self interest. Indeed, patriarchal reason thrives on the fixity of certain ontological factors, the definition of human as “atomistic, autonomous and power-seeking” (Peterson, The Rhetorical Turn in IR 266). In this way, it creates a view of security based in perpetual insecurity with respect to the intentions of other actors in the game (Peterson, The Rhetorical Turn in IR 271). Feminist IR offers a critique of Beer and Hariman’s basic

view of human nature and an explanatory principle that perhaps illuminates some inconsistencies in their assessment of the primitive context.

Feminist thinkers, for example, attempt to reconstruct power along cooperativist lines, including criticism of the supposed “state of nature.” Adam Jones’s survey of feminist IR literature reveals that feminists hope to redefine power according to a value framework instead of purely a disembodied attempt to discover the places of disciplinary application of power. Jones is critical of feminist scholarship, but does credit feminist thinkers with re-conceptualizing power as “power-to” or “power with” rather than “power-over,” which is a very important insight for the discussion at hand (Jones 415). But V. Spike Peterson (Globalization: Theory and Practice) argues that the recognition of context inherent in feminist analysis helps redefine the nature of power for feminists because power can never be removed from the social conditions of its application, a proposition that Jones clearly supports (Jones 420). Power is defined “as mutual enablement rather than domination” (Tickner 63). Some feminists, Jones argues, even go as far as Hobbes, claiming that there is a particular “woman’s experience” that is a different form of agency than the competitive, patriarchal mode of existence based in the nurturance and care of children (Jones 416). Although I have problems with such claims, it is only because I have the same problems with the assertion of self interest as an ontological fact: I believe, and it is the position of this study, that such experiences are formed in a social context rather than independent questions of being and are therefore questions of persuasion and rhetoric. Nonetheless, it is ludicrous to repudiate the powerful evidence that a feminine view of the state of nature contrasting with a self-

interested view and offers as much or potentially more explanatory power and, for several reasons which will later become apparent, may be preferable from an ethical standpoint.

For example, Richard Fulkerson criticizes existing competitive views of argument by uncovering what he calls the equity critique of competitive views of rhetoric and the cognitive/epistemic view (Fulkerson 201). The equity critique suggests that competitive views of conflict privilege unjust strategies that survive on domination of identity rather than a relational ethics based upon difference (Fulkerson 203). The cognitive/epistemic view suggests that feminine persons are conditioned to reason (for example connect ideas and solve problems) differently than masculine people. This feminine reasoning process is “not linear and hierarchical, but web-like, emphasizing context” (Fulkerson 202). Feminine rationality is not direct and analytic, but indirect and holistic emphasizing different values such as caring and connectedness.

While Fulkerson’s focus is not explaining human nature per se, he does note the different views of human nature offered by feminist discourse and hegemonic masculinity and suggests that these “natures” may be simply a sociopolitical phenomenon rather than some essential part of our being(s). Fulkerson, like Beer and Hariman, searches for common ground with current views of realist discourse. Fulkerson hopes to find some middle way between feminist analysis and traditional rationality. He suggests we find a sense of cooperative argument, or cooperative conflict effecting work toward communal understanding and goals (Fulkerson 216) in the same way that Bruner seeks to study the “enabling constraints” of rhetorical action.

The competitive framework is also inadequate because it locks us into a particular set of solutions and a particular lens for understanding the problems of international

politics. Because it focuses mainly on binary logical schemes, taking on a team metaphor by which one side arrays against the “other,” it reduces our range of choices in any situation given that accommodation is not really an option (Beer and Hariman 23). The way one assesses the problem, then, will ultimately guide possible solutions to it. Then the language of how one addresses the issue helps determine courses of political action, a profoundly rhetorical process (Burke 54; Milliken and Sylvan 340).

Nonetheless, it is at least clear that the so-called primitive state of nature described by Beer and Hariman does not exist alone as the *only* state of nature in the world. In the state of nature there are examples of both cooperation and competition. While I accept part of Beer and Hariman’s pyramid as one perspective to be aware of, I remind the reader to remain calm and confident, for there is as much potential for progress in a precarious situation as often as there is for danger. Thus we must be ever aware of the danger posed by traditional competitive models in the primitive state of scarcity, but should remain also aware of the cooperative examples provided in this sphere and remain hesitant to view the primitive state as savage and frightening. There is more nurture in nature than there is conflict, but both are portions of a primitive state of being.

### **IR and Science: Sources of Authority**

Feminist writers question not only effects of political and social action but also how argument communities arrive at those actions, including the methods those communities use to formulate problems to address. Realism posits the existence of a disembodied human nature, persistent in every individual. Nations, in turn, relate to one another according to this calculus since they are merely the physical manifestation of

Morgenthau's (1948) "political man" or some combination of the Hobbesian/Machiavellian view of human nature and are thus logical formations meant to regulate the means of violence so that individuals do not destroy one another. Realist worldviews thus rest on the assumption that violence continues to be an ever-present part of international relations and thus is a natural and understandable force in world politics capable of being forecasted or predicted using the appropriate models of scientific inquiry. The persistence of violence is a permanent factor which justifies the existence of the state system which, in turn, justifies the need for states to protect individuals against the threat of massive violence which, ultimately, will be waged upon them by other states. The purpose of research in such a world is to somehow work to predict the danger signs of conflict, calculate the correct response (choosing from a wide range of possible responses) and then express the will and strength to make a solution both possible and successful.

Feminists make three objections to this approach. First, it ignores identity and its omnipresence in forming agency. Second, it assumes a static and predictable agent that maintains certain immutable characteristics that make it possible to predict the outcomes of action as well as control the ways in which problems are framed. Last, it reinforces binary modes of thinking and epistemology that limit our ability to pursue resistance-oriented problem solving and rigidly demarcate the boundaries between legitimate "public" discourse and the private realm of necessity. In other words it simplifies a complex problem in order to make it more intelligible, but in the process places stock in singular solutions and excludes key variables which might make for a more detailed vision of what actions are appropriate in a world of shifting identities.

## **Identity and Scientific Prediction**

Feminist writers note foremost that identity is not a stable or predictable category, easily pigeonholed into positivist frameworks. IR theory draws from its view of essential human nature to construct what we previously identified as sovereign or political man. Curiously, Morgenthau abstracts this sovereign man from political theory and applies to the state as a source of identity, a predictable unit of analysis which forms the basis for a positivist science of IR, opening space for a research agenda focused on understanding the roots of state behavior and predicting future behaviors in the international milieu (Steans 210; Weldes 45).

For the purpose of theorizing, realism invests the state as ‘purposive individual’ with particular characteristics. Sovereign man is a rational, choice-making individual able to legitimize violence. Sovereign man is in some sense held to embody the truth about international relations. Discussions in IR are framed in terms of ideas about rationality and the pursuit of instrumental interests. The idea of sovereign man is placed firmly at the center of the conceptual universe. In this way, sovereign man becomes the subject of knowledge. International relations are understood as relations between him, the state as both actor and knowing subject, and a series of marginalized or displaced others (Steans 53).

This process constructs states as static entities, preordained social facts, rather than, as Roger Tooze suggests, “temporary outcome(s) of strategies of social struggle necessary to problematize identity” (Tooze xx).

Feminists argue that this concept of agency is hopelessly gendered and attempts to universalize masculine experiences as a neutral category of identification. The problem is

not necessarily that feminists feel that the many possibilities for agency have not been discussed, they have merely been rendered unproblematic by a unitary concept of participation (Walker 190; Beate 243). While IR scholars have tried to create an objective category for analysis, they have invented a decidedly subjective and gendered concept of action. The argument goes that feminist writers are not introducing gender as a category to IR. IR has always been gendered and feminists are merely exposing that phenomenon. Fiona Robinson (Globalizing Care) suggests IR has already been constituted through accounts of ethical responsibility while Walker adds that he believes IR is already cognizant of some of the complexities of identity, but sees them as variables in the eventual logical circle of IR theory (203). Ultimately, Walker argues, those identities become encompassed in the study of “rational man” embodied in Morgenthau and other realist texts (Walker 190).

It is this attempt to appropriate agencies of resistance such as feminism that has created a new debate in IR. The emergence of uncentered identity in contemporary philosophy has placed the concept of “rational man” at risk of extinction. Quite simply, feminists note that identity is not an unproblematized concept. Indeed, it is very much in question. Some of us identify ourselves by nationality at times, but mostly our identities spring from our personal experiences. Indeed, many of us may not even list nationality as an integral part of our identity but instead relegate it to a descriptivist ethos (Steans 30; Beate 101). Thus, feminists argue that the concept of “rational man” is a construction meant to serve the ends of masculine agency and to stabilize identity, allowing positivist science to function properly. Jan Scholte explains:

Multiple identity categories simultaneously impinge on consciousness -- race, class, gender, religion, age, family, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, humanity -- each of them increasingly ambiguous both in itself and in its relationships to the others. What is it to be black, woman, Arab, heterosexual, Western, etc? Identity is less easily taken for granted, and instead has become a subject of much personal anxiety and public debate. An acute sense pervades of the contingency of identities -- of their historical rather than natural character -- and of conflicts within, and overlaps and alliances across, identity categories. Identity is much more up for grabs and contested: in speech, dress codes, rituals and artifacts (66-7).

Thus, feminists argue that unproblematizing identity renders the explanatory power of realist accounts of IR suspect methodologically. The process of rapid globalization and technological diffusion has only speeded this along, Scholte argues, so that as time passes realist accounts will fade even more in their ability to express the human condition(s) (Scholte 66).

Scholte argues that globalization and the diffusion of technology have uncentered traditional identities and made new ones more accessible to new and different groups of people (Scholte 66). She describes what she calls “identity surfing” (66) where people move from traditional identities into the global communication environment via the media and Internet and become aware of new connections and possible identities. She argues that people used to need physical mobility in order to make these kinds of changes, but the movement of trade, media and technology have made it possible to “surf” (66) in place, selecting from possible identities from the comfort of one’s own



home. This “surfing” illustrates the devolution of identity taking place in contemporary international society and seems a useful illustration of feminist writers’ complaint about identity within current IR study. Robinson adds that this lack of attention to the diffuse nature of identity has made IR “inhospitable” to the claims of feminist and resistance philosophy. V Spike Peterson explains:

(F)eminist studies have established that the identity of the modern subject -- in models of human nature, citizenship, the rational actor, the knowing subject, economic man and political agency -- is not gender neutral, but masculine. The unacknowledged privileging of elite male experience and perspective -- androcentrism -- has profoundly structured our categories and concrete activities (Peterson, Women’s Studies International Forum 13).

Realism’s unrecognition of this concept has thus impoverished conventional accounts of identity in IR and rendered many of the epistemological claims of realist analysis indeterminate.

Dominant malestream theories of IR, such as realism and neorealism which claim to describe or explain the world ‘as it is’ shape our behaviors with concrete consequences for the real world actors and events. They are responsible for making the world ‘as it is’, for the reproduction of global hierarchies of gender and other social hierarchies such as race, class, and ethnicity ... From feminist perspectives, however, their failure to see the mutually historical, cultural and politically constructed boundaries of gender, the state and international relations limits the ability to explain historical change and continuity in world politics (True 225).

Feminists resist this attempt to constrain identity through the creation of new epistemologies with what seem to be more explanatory potential. But this re-visioning of IR will require a shift in the methodological principle of unity embodied in the rational subject and emphasize difference over parsimony and rigor (Murphy 530-1).

Feminist writers argue that unconstraining these identities will lead to a fuller appreciation of gender as an approach to analysis and will incorporate fundamental concepts of identification into what has become a very stale outlook on international agency. Spike Peterson argues:

Identities are politically important because they inform self-other representations, embody subjects in meaning systems and collective agency and mobilize purposive, politically significant actions. They are important windows on 'reality' because internal subjective self-change and external objective social change are inextricable. In this sense, identifications bridge agency and structure, are multiple and sometimes contradictory, and can be understood as strategies. When we neglect identities, and cultural dynamics generally, we cannot account for significant social practices (Peterson, Women's Studies International Forum 12-3).

So Peterson argues we must analyze international relations from a more inclusive standpoint, one that better accounts for the complexities of identification and gender.

### **The State and Gender**

Conventional IR studies rely on the state as the fundamental unit of analysis for the purposes of theory formulation. Critics of state-based IR are not confined to feminist writers. Many theorist have come to question the centrality of the state as a unit of

analysis when examining relations on a global scale. Feminist writers (and others) raise two relevant objections to the state as a unit of analysis.

First (discussed previously in some detail), it un-problematizes identity to a simple calculus of the identity of nation-states thus eliminating the real faces of international relations, which are people. In this way, they argue, placing the nation state as the conceptual center of IR along with the concomitant embrace of key realist ideas relegates alternative vocabularies of IR (such as feminism) to the periphery by fiat -- that is eliminates them from the discussion because they are not included in the definition of the discipline (Weldes 53). Gillian Youngs notes:

Dominant realist and neorealist perspectives of global relations have, through their particularistic preoccupation with a state-centric worldview, effectively erased the political individual from the analytical terrain. The state has been continually defined as key actor, the individual entity that counts in interpretations of international affairs ... It is epistemological in that it identifies the state-centric prism as the means of gathering knowledge about how that world works, what influences shape it, and perhaps most importantly, how it will change. It is methodological in the way it utilizes state-centrism as a way of avoiding the complexities of the operation of social relations within and across state boundaries. It locates political identity, to the degree that it is considered important in global politics, at the level of the state. On this basis, political essence and individuality are located at this level too. The state is articulated as the collective personification of political presence on the international level (Youngs 29).

V. Spike Peterson argues that this melding of personalized identification with the depersonalized concept of states is the core expression of hegemonic masculinity embodied in statist/realist discourses (Peterson, Globalization: Theory and Practice 9). She suggests that national identification works in tandem with masculine concepts of reason and rationality to produce “intergroup hostility” by demonizing the roles served by non-masculine praxis (Peterson, Globalization: Theory and Practice 7). So this move to establish firmly the identity of the state, Peterson argues, wipes away the possibility of what she calls “multiple, fluid identifications” (7).

For Peterson, rectifying this problem requires a new understanding of identification in the context of global security. Indeed, she argues that the focus on external violence such as wars and riots have blinded researchers from understanding what she describes as structural violence -- classism, racism and hegemonic masculinity -- which often lay at the roots of those very same external violent altercations (Peterson 49). When studies in IR can reveal the underlying structural violence which makes the external violence persistent and possible, she suggests, IR will offer a more accurate understanding of the real functioning of civic power and unpack the complexities of interstate relations (Peterson, Gendered States 50). By revealing the various overlapping layers of identification, Peterson argues researchers can better reveal how people’s constructions of who they are and what they believe come to shape real-world “political possibilities” (Peterson, Gendered States 50).

Sandra Whitworth (1989) notes that classical realism can create discursive space for discussing some of the issues related to gender and global relations but cannot offer the textured analysis of identity necessary to accommodate feminist theory building

because of its commitment to the state as a unit of analysis (366). She argues that all decisions made at the international level are the result of changing material conditions and social affiliations as well as a broad interpersonal context underpinning most national associations (Whitworth 367). She also criticizes realist theory's preoccupation with power as a mechanism of control as contravening a feminine interpretation in which management of power recedes into the background (Whitworth 367). Ultimately, however, she argues that the conflating of personal identity with the state renders the explanatory potential of realism minimal with respect to gender study (Whitworth 367).

The attempt to center the discipline clearly and concisely in one place -- the study of the state and the relationships between states -- has the effect of removing the feminine subject from view by its commitment to essentialization of identity and the conveyance of a rationality created by those states to serve states' needs. This fixes the discursive boundaries of the discipline, but in many ways is suspect because of its effect on new possibilities for envisioning civic action. It effectively controls and limits the discussion of possible ways to frame the issue of global relationships.

Within this view, codified over many years by IR theorists, there is little room to question the core assumptions, the nature of identity and its construction as a social process and the potential dis-aggregation of the state. Neoliberalism similarly allows little room for such fundamental questioning of the unit of analysis, although the state is viewed more as a collective, but nonetheless remains as the necessary core unit of analysis. (Tooze xix).

Second, feminists argue that upholding the unitary identity of the state suggests the locus of power rests in the state rather than interpolating with all social relations such

that power is not necessarily a resource held by the state, or public sector, but can be one held by people at all levels. The argument then becomes that state power is necessary to protect citizens from themselves or from the excesses of other states. By considering other forms of social epistemologies, feminist writers suggest we will come to understand violence as system which permeates all levels of our thinking and so also see how rhetorical constructions of our everyday social identities weave together with the affairs of the nation-state to reproduce our conceptions of the political each time we discuss them (Boulding 150; Beate 45).

Jacqui True argues that it is impossible to separate the tenets of classical realism and neorealism from hegemonic masculinity because many of the key terms have already been defined in ways which exclude feminine agency from the field of discussion. Primarily, she suggests that realist theory reconstructs the world to its own advantage by advocating that we should deal with the world as it is rather than try to make draconian steps to change it (225). The construction of power relations which centers the important expressions of that power through only officially sanctioned state channels limits our ability to explain the ways in which personal contexts interact with civic action to produce new and different conceptions of the expression of power, True contends. In this way, the ability of IR to explain change and continuity in world politics is reduced (True 225).

Whitworth contends that there are three criteria by which practitioners of feminist inquiry should assess the ability of IR to accommodate the needs of different forms of agency. First, whether it permits a discussion of identity and the social construction of meaning, second, whether it helps researchers understand historical variability in how

decisions are made and last whether it permits feminists to theorize about power “in ways that uncover the very masking of those power relations” (Whitworth 267). If power relations are not reconstructed, Whitworth argues, then the dynamic of gender oppression cannot be addressed because so much of masculinity has to do with the construction of power and its trading as a commodity (Whitworth 266).

J. Ann Tickner outlines what she refers to as a concept of power which is shared rather than hierarchal. She borrows from psychologist David McClelland’s understanding of female power as relational and cooperative. Feminine power is more oriented around a collaborative model. McClelland’s research suggests feminine people achieve power more through coalition-building and cooperation for a common goal (Tickner 63). Tickner calls this approach “mutual enablement” rather than control or domination of one’s context.

Indeed, Christine Sylvester outlines a model for a research agenda that she calls “empathetic cooperation” (Sylvester 317). She describes empathetic cooperation as exposing the arguments made and the slippage in positions and fields over time which are revealed through the resistance stories of those on the outside of “malestream” theory (Sylvester 317). She argues that relational autonomy and an ethic of care are useful starting points for research in IR because it includes traditional research but alters it in some ways as well, making its claims more textured and honest (Sylvester 159). For Sylvester, the appearance of choicelessness through the construction of power relationships is the main problem holding back feminine agency from study in IR. In her view, revealing gender is about widening the array of possible choices available to real people wishing to study global relations (Sylvester 159).

## **Gender and the Private Sphere**

Last, feminists (and others) argue that a commitment to state action to relate to foreign “others” reproduces the binary dualism of other types of masculine thought that help maintain the inside-outside, good-bad, public-private divides in order to divide and conquer resistance discourses such as post-modern feminist IR. Eventually, the importance of national (public) concerns take precedence over the needs of individuals at home (private) because the need for order is more important than the needs of individuals. Supporters of realist theory maintain that people should cope with existing structures and maintain order for order’s sake. In so doing, realism argues that we should place the structures of the state as the conceptual center of IR in order to limit discussion to a concise set of assumptions. An effect of this process is a depersonalization of context, leaving little room for feminist voices in IR (Jabri and O’Gorman 201).

Jill Steans describes this process as related to the masculine feminine views of self (Steans 57). According to Steans, the masculine self is isolated from others and must make relationships with those others in order to work in concert. Since those others are not part of oneself, there remains always an element of mistrust or fear (Steans 58). She links this dichotomization of inside and outside with the self-other dichotomy which makes up the basis of objectivity which she then suggests is the essence of hegemonic masculinity: the separation of one’s self from others (Steans 58).

Steans argues that the inside-outside divide arose from the need to trump more traditional forms of security (such as personal security) by creating a larger threat as well as by trying to create an imagined community abstracted from organized and dangerous others (Steans 65). This creation of others threatening the integrity of a collective thus



justifies centering identity in the state because the state will represent those involved in any exigency. The interposition of states in the negotiation of relationships with foreign others also justifies its control in arbitrating meaning between others domestically as well. Steans (1998) suggests the basis of state legitimacy rests upon the masculine view of self which interposes arbiters (men) at all levels who oversee the reproduction of social relationships among disconnected others and, eventually, creates a new logic of identity in world politics (62).

True believes the inside-outside divide is meant to create a relationship in which men and nations outside protect women and nature inside from other men and nations outside (True 231). In her view, states need “others” to justify their existence. Without such distant threatening “others” people might simply opt to use more localized forms of political action and need large-scale political organization less and less -- rendering the state more and more meaningless in the real workings of global relationships (True 230).

According to True, men must control nature through domination and then must protect their dominated nature from being controlled or taken by other men. The illusion of unitary identity convinces men that they can build nations because all men are fundamentally the same. Anything that shakes the tree of unitary identity is a threat to the natural order of masculine agency and thus should be controlled, as women and nature inside the barricades are (True 227). True explains that this logic and its reproduction makes itself evident in the recent trend toward globalization and the expansion of international trade. She suggests that many nations often use the justification of “outside” market forces and economic challenges as justification for separating social policy from

economic restructuring, for creating rigid public and private spheres and for dividing labor along strict class and gender lines (True 226).

Feminist writers also concern themselves with the way statist versions of security place the so-called “public realm” at arms length from the “turmoil” of everyday survival and the politics of necessity (Hansen 290; Peterson, Gendered States 35). Through the lens of security, it is argued, a disembodied, masculine view of self underpins most assumptions in IR theory by creating the political self as independent from the needs of the body, free of personal attachments, disembodied and de-personalized for the purpose of “rational” decision-making (Peterson, Gendered States 23). She explains:

As one consequence, the public-private dichotomy legitimating the political order maps on to the culture-nature (subject-object) dichotomy of objectivist metaphysics, legitimating domination practices (such as the objectification of woman, nature, other) more generally. Implicit in the dichotomy of culture-nature (subject-object) is the intention of domination and control -- fending off the unpredictability or instability of nature by imposing predictability and order through the power of classificatory systems and/or actual physical control. The construction of maleness underpins these dichotomies. Through the male-identified capacities for reasoning, abstracting, and formalizing, the man/masculine identity becomes the agent/subjectivity uniquely capable of transcending the realm of necessity -- understood as nature, material and sensual embodiment and concrete reproduction (37).

This subordination of the body to politics allows a fundamental misunderstanding of power relations to persist. The state constitutes itself as outside everyday existence, as

the appropriate realm for the expression of power and the interplay of politics. This view of politics ignores the diffuse nature of power, the fact that it persists at all levels and often, in the personal realm, is used disproportionately to silence personal considerations (Hansen 287; Peterson, Global Gender Issues 104). Thus states perpetuate their legitimacy. Since international relations treats states as the primary unit of analysis, by definition the politics of the personal are not relevant. They are literally eliminated from the field of study by IR's focus on national politics as the basic unit of analysis. Jill Krause explains:

For the purposes of theorizing, International Relations invests the state as "purposive individual" with particular characteristics -- sovereign man is a rational, choice-making individual who is able to legitimize violence. Sovereign man is in some senses held to embody the truth about International Relations (45).

Feminist analyses in many ways call the very center of IR study into question. The positivist methodology, in an attempt to locate sites of order in a chaotic world, actually fix identity in such a way as to blur the importance of making any meaningful assertions about the actions of communities at all. In fact, the entire question of IR shifts when one inspects the public-private question more closely (Jabri and O'Gorman 203). If indeed the personal is the public and discussion expands as a result, can one make determinations about the behavior of even nation-states? Chris Farrands explains:

But beyond noting the importance of the relationship between history and all forms identity, identity remains radically indeterminate. This makes it interesting. It makes it remote the kinds of scientific or historical generalization which have sometimes characterized writing on international relations (6)

Peterson argues that neglect of private considerations and the question of identity leaves critical stones unturned. For example, how can one make meaningful statements of the reasons and motivations for behavior without a firm understanding of the social practices and personal relationships comprising any political unit. As a result, she argues, “we lack understanding of how people are willing to kill and be killed so that a particular group can thrive” (Peterson, Globalization: Theory and Practice 113). This leads, in her view, to reproduction of ways of knowing that are “reductionist, ahistorical and static” (Globalization: Theory and Practice 15).

### **Realist Problems with Feminist Alternatives**

Realist authors criticize feminist scholarship for a few basic reasons. First, Realists argue that feminist IR is not necessarily an alternative to contemporary realism in the way that practitioners suggest (Keohane 250). Indeed, Robert Keohane argues that feminist insights have significant contributions but he suggests that both realism and feminism be considered as valid for the purposes of inquiry. He argues that conventional models of realist IR provide predictive power as long as people believe in them and thus studies that attempt to predict state behavior have basis in empirical study.

Others (Jones 410) have accused feminist authors of their own version of essentialism, arguing the “is-ness” of alternative vocabularies at the exclusion of realist interpretations of politics. Many feminists do contend that cooperation is human nature while competition is not necessarily critical to the human endeavor. Consider this: a baby entering the world cannot survive without cooperation, but will perish if there is too much competition for resources. Indeed, in nature the lack of competition causes species

to thrive. Thus some feminists make the essentialist claim that the feminine standpoint is superior and logically prior to the competitive vision of human nature.

Last, realist authors argue that to ignore the competitive state of nature is to leave scholarship open to the possibility of rogue players who thrive on dominance and control (Beer and Hariman 396). This makes theory vulnerable to twisting and appropriation for the dual ends of dominance and control. Thus, realists suggest that history teaches us that there will be those who believe in zero-sum interpretations of events and in order to be prepared to deal with those people we must fully understand their viewpoints.

This study is not subject to those dilemmas, per se, as it suggests that feminism is simply one alternative to realism that can be examined. This study does not conclude that feminism is the best or most explanatory principle for international relations. Indeed, many feminists also disagree with the essentialist view (Warren 12). This study along with most feminist writers in IR, simply suggest that feminine identity is simply another possible lens to view the object of international relations.

## **Conclusions**

Feminist theories of international relations challenge realist and neo-realist interpretations of history and politics at several important levels. For the purposes of study, it is important to note that the object of study, in many ways, remains the same for the purposes of either public in IR. Both publics conceive of security from a particular standpoint, their perceptions and dialogue framing the reality of IR in terms of the way they interpret the lens of security, for example.

Realism, as a theory, has met with clear challenge from feminist interpretations of history, biology and culture. Feminist IR suggests that the explanations of realist

interpretations of human nature could be incomplete or invalid, as they do not represent the metaphoric lens of “cooperation”, a term mentioned by Burke as a chokepoint for dramatic filters, (Burke 54) that may characterize human relationships just as accurately as competitive metaphors of representation. So, feminists argue, their view of human nature as contingent, historical and situated is perhaps more explanatory than static interpretations of identity commonplace in realist texts. This creates twin claims: first, realist methodology is hopelessly flawed in its predictive potential and thus an observer should be skeptical of its explanatory potential; second, a new methodology that considered these multifaceted claims might have more explanatory potential.

Feminists argue that situating the state as the unit of analysis in IR study obscures basic questions of identity and represses alternative vocabularies of representation by essentializing them into a larger politic that does not represent their interests. Focusing on national politics also deflects the potential of subaltern counterpublics to operate as a potential fifth column of resistance to state and corporate intrusions into the lives of everyday people and civil society. States as actors take away personal contexts of understanding that are relevant to understanding international relations, feminists argue. Through the focus on national security, state discourse can eliminate a more personal vision of security expressed through international channels from view. Feminists argue that different conceptions of security might provide different dramatic angles to create the possibilities for different kinds of knowing and doing in IR.

Feminists suggest that IR divides and conquers alternative vocabularies by arguing that the study of nations is the center of the discipline and that study of more personal interpretations of security might be more appropriate in other areas of study.

Yet, the existence of international issues such as ritual killings, human rights violations, reproductive health and AIDs has convinced many scholars that the building of personal relationships using the possibilities inherent in new technologies and the connection of individuals can be much more effective in dealing with “international crises” than the sometimes sloppy and tortoise-like movements of official state agencies. So the question of interpersonal agency is unquestionably relevant in the international context. Feminists argue that IR’s focus on the state has much to do with the inertia of man-craft at the institutional level. New theories of what constitutes legitimate ground for “public” discussion in a specific type of discursive sphere open spaces of resistance that make possible the production of new types of knowledge, having a myriad of different possible effects, feminists argue (Hansen 298).

Realism’s combined problems create some significant doubts about the explanatory power of realist interpretations of international history and stir up some troublesome questions about realism’s ability to establish meaningful correlations between historical and political events in IR. The interlinked questions of methodology and epistemology revolve around the creation of a specific vocabulary of representation, allowing procedures to develop around its use. The unitary vocabulary of security, as chapter four will suggest, creates such a framework for IR. A particular terministic interpretation of the word security provides realists a grounding of their theory of representation in a particular speech community, allowing realists to proffer a vision of human society, identity and being.

Chapter four will analyze the way that the term security comes to encapsulate an entire debate and will explain how the term security means different things to different

publics and the effect this has on rhetoric. Last, chapter four will suggest that the term security can be used to unlock the potential of civil society and create the possibility for new discussions of the contingent nature of history in both communication studies and IR.



## Chapter Four: Analyzing Security as a Filter

### Feminism, Rhetoric and IR

The first concern of an analysis of terministic screens, as noted in chapter two, is to identify feminist IR as a potential alternative explanation of human society that resists traditional realism. The study must show how feminist IR offers a an alternative vocabulary challenging the existing doxa of realist thinking. It is important that feminism offer as much explanatory potential as realism when accounting for social and political personhood.

Political realism's rhetorical hegemony faces challenges from emergent fields of feminist discussion. Feminism is enriching the dialogue of IR by exploring new communicative possibilities and exploring the dynamic possibilities for public discussion of issues previously relegated to the "private" or feminine domain. This space permits a fuller understanding of the communicative possibilities of IR amid its current commitment to scientific positivism. The move feminists try to make delimits the explanatory power of everyday communication in the interplay of identity and sovereignty that defines the nature of agency in the modern world. Jacqui True explains:

(P)ower is a complex phenomenon of social forces that interpolates and reproduces our personal and sexual identities as men, women and national citizens. In order to understand the nature of power at the international level, feminist and other critical theorists urge that we study the domestic and transnational social forces and power relations that not only support the foreign policies of states, but actually constitute the state as the dominant social form

(233)

V. Spike Peterson analyzes the rhetorical nature of realism and defines the explanatory power of feminism as a way of knowing relative to questions raised in the IR theory. Peterson describes the process of state making in the Athenian context, which she asserts is the root of Western notions of statecraft and sovereignty and traces it to Machiavelli and Hobbes. She then explains how state formation is gendered according to masculine concepts of reason and rigidly demarcates zones of discussion, relegating private concerns to inferior status in favor of claims to public knowledge. In this way, Peterson argues, the state (and IR's focus on the state as the unit of analysis) eliminates questions of feminine agency by using the rhetoric of realism and the political apparatus of the state in a mutually reinforcing protection racket that survives on the labor of women and minorities (Peterson, The Rhetorical Turn in IR 265). Realist discourse does this primarily by increasing the rhetorical salience of so-called public issues and fetishizing "private" interests through characterization, discussion and research (or lack thereof) (Peterson, Globalization: Theory and Practice 11; Tetrault 115).

Feminist scholars are interested in changing the focus of IR in a way that stresses the importance of communication at all levels, including kinship, family and interpersonal (Robinson, Alternatives 127). Because realism seeks to distance itself from the personal realm and thus distinguish itself from the affairs of home and family, it extinguishes much of what it means to be feminine with respect to IR. Feminist IR scholars seek to situate the interpersonal contexts in which dominating social relations are reproduced within the study of international politics, expanding the discursive realm of field study. In so doing, they need the help of communication scholarship to support their contentions about language and terministic screens. Thus, feminist IR and

communication studies have something important to share: a commitment to expanding the scope of public discussion by the destabilization of universal explanatory principles.

Robinson explains:

Indeed, the suggestion that only an impersonal, impartial, universal-prescriptive ethics is useful in these contexts is what maintains and upholds our disposition to “keep strangers strange and outsiders outside.” Recognition of the place of care in international ethics, however, may help prevent “our becoming comfortable with essentially distancing, de-personalizing, or paternalistic attitudes which may not be the only resorts if roles and institutions can be shaped to embody expressive and communicative possibilities.” (Alternatives 128)

Feminist scholars seek to uncover a wider context in which to view the discursive events of IR history and theory. So, in that sense, they argue for an understanding of the types of filters one uses when viewing the controversies intersecting with contemporary IR debates. In the very same sense, that Beer and Hariman admonish us to be aware of our vocabularies and the ways they re-create the strategic environment of which we operate as a part, feminist scholars warn us to be ever aware of the pervasiveness of communication and how everyday practices help to reinforce patterns of domination we see occurring at all levels of society. Robinson continues:

The challenge of relational thinking is not just to deepen an interest in care, but also to recast issues of difference and exclusion as problems of dominance or subordination in order to disclose the social relationships of power within which difference is named and enforced. Seen in this way, then, the relational turn (in feminist ethics) thus represents not a denial or a lack of interest in conflict and

disunity but “a focus on the interpersonal and social contexts in which these and all other human relations occur.” (Alternatives 127)

Patricia Malloy argues that we should fuse the critical insights of post-realism and communication to create a new critical pedagogy based around real experience and its implications for international peace (220). Malloy explains:

Rather, it also involves discovering “what the hooks are in the images and metaphors of old story lines.” Indeed, “in this postmodern version of the relations between lived [real] and imaginary narratives, imagined stories are a valuable resource because they may hold a key for disrupting and de-centering old discourses and narratives.” The key to displacing old discourses and unwanted patterns of desire, in Davies’ analysis, lies in positioning oneself in relation to language and recognizing how we take certain discourses as if they were our own. In other words, in “recognizing the constitutive force of discourse, rather than seeing it merely as a tool for describing the real world, we can see ourselves as spoken into existence.” In this way we can both refuse to accept those discourses that naturalize and codify those metaphysical dualisms of masculine/feminine (and us/them, self/other, enemy/ally) and speak and write ourselves into new discourses which can allow for the “imagined possibility of multiplicity.” (237)

Thus, as critics, we are engaged in a real struggle to find new ways of communicating which may not re-create the patriarchal reality that currently enjoys top billing in the theory market. To do this, we must understand how status quo patterns of communication have come to constrain our methods of political action.

Feminist IR analyses not only help us to locate that larger context and find new answers but also to reformulate IR questions. Feminist insights expose the undeniably rhetorical dimension of even the most accepted norms of everyday life and examine the ways in which those patterns are reproduced within a fabric of society and culture. Feminist IR teaches communication scholars to look beyond the barricades for new ways of analyzing problems and to find the myriad linguistic possibilities for describing nurturance and cooperation which they argue are manifested daily in billions of situations. Peterson explains:

An irreducible basis of nurturance ought to be the most obvious given of the human condition -- and would more likely be the story told if mothers were the author(itie)s. To insist on this nurturance is not, however, to deny conflict, but to situate conflict in the larger context of actually existing cooperative relations and simultaneously in a discursive context: a world of meanings, arguments and arguers. Thus, it looks for interactions between conflict and consensus, and between material necessity and rhetorical practice...Finally, it prompts us to change the international relations question from: "how is cooperation possible?" to "How is cooperation manifested in specific contexts, including that of international politics?" (The Rhetorical Turn in IR 267)

### **Security Metaphors, Realism and Feminist IR**

The question of security permeates dense fabric of claims made in contemporary IR study. Indeed, the current conception of security has become the center of a hurricane of debate concerning the direction and focus of IR inquiry and methodological practices. This section focuses first on the importance of security vocabularies in shaping the

direction of IR theory development, then on the ways in which current languages of security create knowledge regimes of which feminists are critical. This section will also detail how the debate about security also reinforces statist agency and creates a research agenda dominated by static views of symbolic action and identity at the expense of more personal concepts which rely less on essentializing moves to express themselves. Last, this chapter will outline feminist criticisms of how current vocabularies of security rigidly enforce boundaries between public and private discourses, relegating the latter to inferior or irrelevant status within the academic discipline of IR.

Perhaps no term could more likely be dubbed the intellectual center of international relations save the word *security*. As we note in chapter two, it seems as if the question of security and the means to achieve it have become an inescapable framework for understanding the philosophy of international relations, in particular realist interpretations of international studies.

A narrow conception of security permits scholars to make important assumptions about the predictive behavior of states and forms the basis of positivist epistemological claims. Indeed, the creation of a vocabulary oriented around inter-*national* relations suggests the presence of nations (or states as the case may be). Scholars use realist reasoning and applications from the natural and anthropological sciences to claim that the nation operates as a system, an ecology with its own sets of laws and behaviors (Tickner 29). Integral to the definition of security in such a world is the presence of a secure nation with boundaries and limitations, citizens and interests.

Realist assumptions about states as unitary actors render unproblematic the boundaries between anarchy and order and legitimate and illegitimate violence...

Certain feminists have suggested that, because of what they see as a connection between sexism and militarism, violence at all levels of society is interrelated, a claim that calls into question the realist assumption of the anarchy/order distinction (Tickner 28).

Feminists claim that the realist representation of security obscures important bases of labor, symbolic and material power (Peterson, The Rhetorical Turn in IR 270).

Peterson contends that realism never presented a complete or accurate view of the world in the way it purports to do. She argues that the system of security that has developed around realist interpretations of politics relies on a disembodied and disembodied form of reason to justify its conclusions and that the system asserts its truth based upon previous statements made by the system (Global Gender Issues 203). Tickner agrees, suggesting that the instrumental rationality supported by realist writers only provides a dim and partial view of rationality and society (62).

This instrumental view of security, feminists argue, also provides realist accounts with a justification for casting states as individuals for the purpose of study (Jones 414). Because states behave in rational ways and because they are theoretically all seeking self interest at the expense of other states, realism gives scientific calculations a ring of truth offering the possibility for predicting outcomes of certain kinds of stimuli. Tickner explains:

(N)eo-realism has depicted states rather differently, as abstract unitary actors whose actions are explained through laws that can be universalized across time and place and whose internal characteristics are irrelevant in the operation of these laws ... (T)he rationalization of global politics has led to an antihumanism

whereby states, posited unproblematically as unitary actors, act independently of human interests ... But this reification of state practices hide social institutions that are made and remade by individual actions (42).

Sandra Whitworth argues that realism could potentially accommodate feminist insights into IR, but it would require major departures from existing realist dogma (267). Yet, she suggests, realist and neo-realist preoccupation with the state as a purposive actor on the international stage fly in the face of such attempts to bring new scholarship into the fold (268).

As a result, feminists argue that the realist vision of security creates a methodological double bind. First it cannot represent itself as contingent and still be able to make the kind of empirical predictions that it has in the past. Second, it cannot admit its subjectivity, because to do so would eliminate the explanatory potential of realist accounts. Instead, realist thinkers re-make the world in their image in order to maintain their hold on the scientific prediction state behavior (True 225).

Fiona Robinson argues that the changing face of interpersonal and social identity combined with the diffusion of technology have brought the world to a point where a more personal context of state relationships is both easier to analyze and easier to accomplish (Globalizing Care 134). She suggests that feminist analysis is a tool for supplementing realism with alternative vocabularies of representation. Some authors argue for replacing realism, but Robinson and Beer and Hariman all suggest instead that realism has some explanatory power and that a combination of perspectives would provide a fuller and more accurate representation of the world status quo (Globalizing Care 203).



Christine Sylvester argues that security and its accomplishment are a significant determinant of the types of social relationships that develop in IR. She suggests an accommodative relationship between what she dubs “empathic cooperation” (316) and traditional realism. This, she argues, will help scholars find a middle way between the radical fringes on both sides (Millennium 317)

### **Feminist IR, Security, and the Shrinking Public Sphere**

Through the creation of rigid categories of inside and outside, the realist narrative of security demands a rigid demarcation between the affairs of the state and the concerns of ordinary citizens: family, kinship, personal relationships. This permits theorists in the IR community to focus on the ways in which a nation behaves and filter out the ways in which the myriad personal relationships interpolate with state relations and confound the predictive accuracy of international modeling. It also serves to demarcate spaces for legitimate discussion within the discipline to a more narrow set of aims, which IR writers suggest helps retain the coherence and intelligibility of the discipline to foreign policy practitioners and boards of regents alike by abstracting the public affairs of the nation from the dense web of personal and private ties that hold the system together (Keohane 246).

The ontology of conventional IR thus conceives the private sphere - like the international sphere where order is seen as the primary consideration - as a natural realm of disorder; where women are represented as reproductive beings akin to nature, and who, like nature, must be controlled. The lower being represented by women, the body, and the anarchal system must be subordinated to the higher being present in the mind, rational man and the order of states. Jean Elshtain

insists that the realist narrative of IR in particular pivots on the public-private division and its essentialist construction of femininity and masculinity as the cause of disorder and the bringer of order respectively (True 231).

Characterizing the state as the unit of analysis in IR helps define the reasonable limits of what constitutes the realm of the public state and the private realm of personal concerns. A conventional definition of security helps demarcate that space for discussion in IR. If, for instance, one conceives of security as the security of states, one then makes many assumptions about the nature of security and whom (or what) it should serve (True 240).

Indeed, True argues that states require the existence of “others” to justify their existence. Eventually, she argues, gendered relations are reproduced as men and states come to stand against anarchy outside and distinguish themselves from the feminine “inside” that must remain subordinate to the needs of rationality and the public state (True 232). In many ways, then, the masculinized state becomes the bearer of order and the protector of the inside, requiring a particular understanding of security in order to justify its monopoly on collective violence.

Placing such a masculine understanding of the state as the central unit of analysis, feminists argue, only reinforces a hubristic and patriarchal vision of relations on an international scale. Peterson argues that the existence of statist protection rackets at the center of security discourses eliminates the feminine perspective from view by only revealing a competitive and simplistic vision of power, by creating rigid demarcations on what constitutes legitimate objects of study and by stressing a vision of security that is

preoccupied with the existence of perpetual insecurity and fear of reprisal (Peterson, The Rhetorical Turn in IR 268).

Peterson (Gendered States 203) suggests that the insecurity of those women and others on the inside is perpetuated by the obsession with external security concerns. For them, it appears to be the largest historical red herring: external security threats are invented and then become justifications for elaborate measures to compromise personal security in ways far more damaging to individuals than the external threat constructed. She argues that with respect to IR, the problem is a question of focus. Since IR scholars engage in predictive behaviors related to states, they eliminate any discussion of the structural violence that interpolates within such a system by subordinating it to more important national security concerns. (Peterson, Gendered States 201)

Peterson also argues that viewing structural violence as natural only further entrenches masculinized interpretations of security. When a study reveals the presence of structural violence, it is not uncommon for one to hear arguments such as “what can be done” or “that’s just human nature.” Those arguments are an example of the red herring at work. The truth is, those behaviors are likely the product of consistent systems of stimuli that culminate in certain actions replicated on a mass scale. Writing it off as “human nature” oversimplifies the issue and obscures important controversies relevant to the question of realism. Yet many studies indeed do write off such assumptions, she argues, and receive no dispute, while others may make the opposite claim with strong and credible evidence only to have the discussion wafted away by purveyors of realist understandings of IR (Peterson, Global Gender Issues 68).

Peterson suggests that seeing structural violence as historically contingent rather than the product of some basic human trait is the key to unlocking alternative methods of representation more inclusive of feminist ideals. Thus, until we recognize the insecurity of the interactants in a system, we can never truly address the fundamental question of the security of the system relative to other systems of representation. Until we politicize structural violence and remove it from the obscurity of privatization, we may never have a truly comprehensive understanding of how the term security can be used both to control and to liberate, a consistent mark of terministic filters. Peterson suggests that the framing power of language represented in this case by the terministic filter of security allows scholars to focus research on an agenda dominated by entities that constitute themselves through the creation of “profound and pervasive insecurities” (Peterson, Gendered States 49).

The unpacking of the relationship between defining security and the division of discourses into rigid spaces for legitimate “public” discussion is reshaping the principle of claim making in IR (Murphy 530). Robinson argues that redefining IR along a more interpersonal context, reinvigorating the concept of political economy as relevant to IR, will produce a richer understanding of meaning (Robinson, Globalizing Care 65). In many ways, she argues, infusing IR with identity will expose the vulnerability of such theories to the widest possible rational unrestrained consensus (Murphy 530).

In this way, historical insecurities associated with womens’ situations become permanent, perpetuating themselves over time. Elise Boulding argues that the continuous process of reinforcing male power through the demarcation of what is legitimate “public” discussion has perpetuated gender violence and hidden it pervasively for eons. She argues

that gender is the hidden side of history that is revealed when larger spaces for “public” discussion are opened and feminine concerns can be heard (Boulding 132).

Beate argues that IR constructs itself out of basic concepts of gender, creating a possibility for rigid separation of the public and private spheres. He suggests that the state was invented to serve the needs of men and then re-inscribed again and again in the writings of scholars in IR, giving it that thing-like quality that characterizes its unique monopoly on perception and reality (Beate 23). He argues that the state is consistently re-invented every time it is used as a unit of analysis in IR. Thus, studies in IR inadvertently further the existence of this growing division of public and private simply by choosing the state as their primary unit of research study (Beate 201).

Lene Hansen argues that IR has come to view security as “silence”. She argues that security and how a community views it is highly contingent and situational. Yet most studies of nations see security as a reality, rather than as a rhetorically contingent speech act. She suggests that vocabularies of security reinforce the public private distinction by the construction of viable subjects “at both ends” of theory – states and citizens alike such that the control of realism over all aspects of agency is complete (Hansen 290). She sees the realist vision of security as relying on the strategic silence of those in the loop who must experience the insecurity of their everyday lives that in many ways exists only because of said definition of security. She argues that a masculine understanding of security is more of a “subsuming security” that attempts to cast a wider net over what could conceivably “threaten” us at any given time (Hansen 289).

## **New Vocabularies for Feminist Subaltern Counterpublics**

The way the terministic filter of security first creates a basis for realist assertions, then constructs states as “things” for the purpose of study and finally creates a rigid demarcation between what is considered legitimate “public” discourse in a particular sphere and a new politics of identity that concerns itself with a more personal understanding of agency in international relations makes the debate about security and its meaning a critical point of resistance for feminist writers interested in changing the intellectual gradient of IR. Defining peace as the absence of war makes it simply an index character to violence. And again, what is war? Feminists might argue that if war is violence then war is constantly occurring in our homes and families such that the supposed international “peace” is really an essentialized identity made to obscure the presence of persistent and dramatic personal violence. Indeed, feminist writers argue that state security is founded upon a protection racket based on a monopoly on violence.

The point is, of course, that as protection rackets, states and marriage are implicated in the reproduction of hierarchies and in the structural violence against which they claim to offer protection. It is illuminating to review how the systemic costs and insecurities of protection rackets are effectively mystified. First, individual participants making “rational” choices to “accept” protection, simultaneously act “irrationally” by reproducing systemic dependency ... Preoccupation with maintaining whatever security one can, or jockeying for marginal improvements, may resituate certain protectees but reproduces the asymmetrical system dynamics and “competition” for “scarce” security. Similarly, to the extent that protection is “working,” the protected lack incentives

to risk destabilization and/or potential loss of whatever security they have (Peterson, Gendered States 51-2).

Malloy argues that feminists must resist current regimes of security which are steeped in strategic thought and “provide an alternative to strategy” (Malloy 292) rather than alternative strategies for addressing important contemporary disputes. She suggests that the redefining security is a critical element in displacing the Hobbesian view of human nature and contests Morgenthau’s narrow understanding of political “man” (230). At the very least, feminist authors such as Ann Tickner contend that the masculine definition of security is certainly incomplete and seemingly unaware of its shortcomings. Understanding security in a fuller sense requires finding the interconnections between our personal relationships and larger international systems of violence, Tickner claims. This integration will produce a broader, more nuanced debate about security, albeit acknowledging the unpredictable and diverse nature of state relations and an understanding of peace and war as interdependent concepts rather than oppositional terms (Petersen, Gendered States 13). Robin Schott explains:

Similarly, the terms used to describe postmodern war undervalue the way in which gender hierarchies remain entrenched in meanings, institutions and interactions. One may choose to break open the rigid categories of gender, but the violence of rape and sexual abuse may be stronger than one’s choice to resist gender dualisms. However, the more one can understand how hostilities and aggressions are catalyzed along gender lines, the more one can explore strategies for diffusing this aggression. It is in this spirit that inquiries into the relation between gender and war may serve the struggles for peace (28).

True argues that feminists must come to understand security in a new, more comprehensive sense if international relations is ever to accept the possibility of feminine agency as important to the study of national interest and the persistence of war. She contends that national systems bear strong resemblances to protection rackets and notes that the key to breaking the monopoly of protection lies in a new understanding of security.

In sum, as a result of taking women's experiences of protection rackets seriously, feminists urge that security must be redefined ... State security apparatuses create their own security dilemmas by purporting androcentric control and "power over" to be the name of the game; a game we are persuaded to stay in, in order to achieve absolute and relative gains in state security. Ann Tickner argues that ideas and key concepts such as "rationality" and "security" and "power" might also be building blocks of explanation for a feminist theory of international politics.

There is nothing inherent in the terms which suggests that they must be wholly discarded, rather it is their narrow and exclusionary meanings in IR theory and practice which is problematic for feminist perspectives (235).

Hansen agrees that a re-examination of the term security and its implications is the most important way to bring IR realities more in line with the theory of gender inclusion (Hansen 290). If feminist writers are not able to articulate their alternative visions of security, Hansen argues, then the positive gains initiated by the Copenhagen school will not be realized for discourse. She suggests that writers such as Habermas and others have created new space for discussion of subaltern viewpoints, but conventional understandings of security may hamstring the efforts of such scholars to open up new



spaces for public discourse (289). Hansen argues that the vocabularies of security used by existing studies of IR only reinscribe the politics-as-usual of international identity and prevent the emergence of alternative systems of representation. Re-characterizing security along social and personal lines, Hansen suggests will create a newer and more inclusive politics of meaning (Hansen 292).

It seems, then, that the definition and scope of term “security” is very much at issue with respect to the formulation of the new debate occurring in IR. The meaning of the term has come to be a crucial site for contestation about the aims, practices and outcomes of international identity and its expression through political means because from the definition of security flows a theory of human nature constantly expressing itself through the conduct of mass violence by nation states. The feminist project means to reconfigure classical views of the state and introduce the possibility of different forms of agency and alternative interpretations of the state of nature. From the locus of security, feminist writers are seeking a new space for the discussion of not only new ways to act, but also new ways to evaluate the problems at hand.

Feminist ethical questions about war are not reducible to wondering how to avoid large-scale military conflict despite human tendencies toward violence. Instead, the central questions concern the omnipresence of militarism, the possibilities of making its presence visible, and the potential for resistance to its physical and hegemonic force (Cuomo 35). Instead, feminists see war as imbedded in a particular set of social arrangements that are reproduced at many different levels at once (Peterson, Global Gender Issues 230; Boulding 33). Through a richer understanding of human action, feminists argue that many problems confronting people can be viewed more as contingent

and changeable rather than some inevitable product of twisted human nature. In this way, feminists hope to create a different interpretation of praxis as situated and personal rather than statist and impersonal (Beate 20). In the next century, feminists argue, more personal visions of relations may come to characterize communication even among peoples from different cultures and over vast distances. Thus, perhaps feminist insights into identity will become more relevant in the years to come as technology advances and people become more and more interconnected at many different levels.

### **Conclusions**

The terministic filter of security allows realist interpretations of politics to provide a coherent explanation of the world of states and nations. In contrast, the same terminology provides feminists with segues into IR study that opens up the possibility of new interpretations of agency in that discipline.

The filter of security allows realists to create a unitary vocabulary of representation for the state in international affairs. Yet, different interpretations of security also provide a framework for rejecting that unitary vocabulary, thus illustrating the peculiar way that terministic filters create frameworks of perception that guide our political actions. One public uses the term security to solidify its hold, to suggest that it is inevitable and even desirable because it provides a stable view of international politics. The other publics (feminists) use the term security as a method of destabilization of contemporary orthodoxy concerning IR. This illustrates clearly the way such filters work to create new knowledge and how understanding the vocabularies of different groups helps us uncover important dialectics that might otherwise have gone unnoticed.

In many ways, then, the filter of security has come to encapsulate the debate between two different publics in IR. Since security and its achievement accurately sums up the goals of both realist and feminist accounts of international relations. It brings together the scientific accounts of the state as a unit of analysis. It sets the stage for an essentialist view of identity that makes new understandings of security necessary. Security and its negotiation also allow the predictive methodology of statecraft to establish meaningful correlation and causation in IR.

Last, the filter of security also weaves a web of distinction between what is legitimate ground for public discussion within a particular sphere and what is not considered relevant “public” information within the discipline. This analysis shows how the terminology of security helps maintain a rigid divide between the politics of personal identity and the positivist models of scientific prediction. Yet, in many ways, broadening the concept of security is the key to inclusion of the outsider in discussions relevant to the discipline of International relations. When feminists appropriate the term security for their own ends, they expand its meaning and create kinship that helps unpack its inevitability and offers the possibility for replacement of existing metaphoric representation of security in favor of a more liberatory methodology.

Thus the terminology of security satisfies the criteria set forth by the method in chapter one. Feminism offers similar or equal explanatory potential to realism in terms of security analysis. Realist security revolves around a particular set of assumptions that are directly related to the negotiation of the question of human nature and its relationship with epistemology. Last, it provides a clear looking glass into the exclusionary practices of limiting the public sphere to only those questions deemed worthy of “public”

discussion. In this way, the study illustrates the curious relationship between terministic screens and the reality of human communication and knowledge production.

Chapter five will take us beyond the barricades. It will examine the contributions of this study to future research and describe more fully the conclusions we can draw from this investigation. Finally, chapter five will conclude our discussion of security and explain how creating new visions for the word security can create new realities in IR.

## **Chapter 5: Un-Colonizing the Future**

### **Some Conclusions: New Insights into Method and Object**

As a result of this investigation, we gain several important insights into communication theory as well as the relationship between communication and action in the academic discipline of International Relations. First we gain a keener understanding of how to interpret terministic filters. Second, we go a long way toward establishing a clearer method for evaluating terministic filters. Third, we get a clearer picture of how terministic filters operate in a public sphere to provide a vocabulary for both dominant groups and resistance publics. And last, this study helps resolve the dilemma faced by much rhetorical criticism: how do researchers study the rhetoric of contemporary discursive movements without waiting until the movement has completed its cycle and thus can be judged according to its effects.

Interpreting terministic filters is no easy task given the lack of guidance Burke provides into how to do such an investigation. Burke really provides no clear definition of what terministic screen is except to say that it culminates in a world view and changes our perception of our contemporary situation. We note that terministic filters can be identified by the curious way they come to represent different things to different publics even the basic terminology remains the same. Then changing the word woman to womyn is not an example of a terministic filter. For a term to be a filter, it must be the same word yet mean very different things to dominant and resistance publics.

A good example would be the word “queer”. While someone in a dominant group might refer to a gay person as a “queer” in a derogatory fashion in order to control or oppress “queers”, the term “queer” has also been appropriated by gay and lesbian

resistance groups as a term of solidarity, thus re-inventing the term and unlocking its potential to liberate people as well as oppress.

Another problem we address in this study is the question of method. As I stated in Chapter one, Burke provides even less explanation of how to approach a terministic filter and do a study on how it works. This study suggests that analysis of terministic filters has three parts. First, a researcher must identify a clear terministic filter that suits our definition of a screen outlined in the previous paragraphs and in Chapter one. The filter must encapsulate an entire debate. It must also be usable by at least two separate publics with very different ends. Second, a researcher must unpack that filter and explain the many meanings it has to both dominant and resistance publics, explaining how the term can be both a source of oppression and liberation according to what spin a public puts on it. Last, a researcher must outline how the filter creates a distinction between what is acceptable and unacceptable discourse and thus serves a gate-keeping function for different publics in specific spheres. This study provides a much clearer framework for analyzing terministic filters in the context of dynamic and emerging communication.

Finally, by studying the effect of particular vocabularies on subaltern counterpublics we gain a lot of insight into how words both absence and presence in the way Heidegger (1972) describes. We come to understand the connections between the words that we use and the implicit and explicit implications of those vocabularies on public argument. It is the position of this study that by understanding the multiplicity of meanings available in a term we open up the possibility of viewing history and society as contingent rather than natural, as products of changing social circumstances, not necessarily as an inevitable product of human nature.

Our discussion of the word security bears this assertion out. We successfully dissect the meaning of security to different publics and conclude that perhaps the driving force behind the orthodoxy of Hobbesian human nature is rhetorical and situational rather than inevitable and natural. In that way, Habermas and Fraser would argue that this study takes some baby steps toward true postmodern criticism, the focus of which, in many ways, is simply to see history as unstable and chaotic rather than orderly and productive. This study illustrates succinctly the unstable way history develops such that even the things we think make the most sense, like that the world of nations is inevitable and irreversible instead of unstable and subject to change through rhetoric.

Last, our investigation gives us a firmer basis for evaluating the claims of emergent and discursive movements. One problem some encounter in rhetorical study is analyzing the rhetoric of emergent movements as well as movements that don't fit the mold (McGee 235; Cathcart 272). Not all movements hold rallies or show up at the WTO to protest. Some exist only in the writings of certain authors. Post-modern inquiry in many ways bears out this assertion. Another problem is examining the rhetoric of discursive movements within particular types of communities. The method described for understanding terministic filters helps researchers understand how particular terms and vocabularies come to serve as critical chokepoints for debate between communities with very different perspectives. In this way, it helps future researchers understand how discursive and emergent movements utilize terministic filters to gain footholds for resistance in dominant vocabularies. This seems to open the door for further movement research.

Communication theory provides little guidance into how to investigate the rhetoric of emergent movements. Some suggest researchers focus on meaning rather than phenomenon (McGee 233) others suggest a functional approach (Stewart 298). Others still see no place for the study of movement rhetoric as a unique area of inquiry (Zarefsky 246). This study builds on Burke's suggestion that we unpack the many angles of particular terms and examine them, but he provides little insight into how terministic filters function in specific public spheres or how to clearly analyze them in different communities (Burke 50). Yet Burke is on to something. His description of terms that come to represent meanings that frame realities that ultimately unconstrain/constrain our actions as personal beings is cogent and identifies something very important about words, action and persuasion in particular discourse communities.

This study takes it a step further. It identifies a metaphor, security. This study notes that the metaphor comes to encapsulate much of the debate between two different publics in the academic discipline of IR. This study identifies how the use of such a terministic filter serves the needs of a dominant community to maintain its explanatory power. This study also notes how the same term becomes a rallying point for resistance theories, illustrating Burke's observation about words and dis/continuity (Burke 49). This study illuminates the curious way that dramatistic (or terministic) screens become two way mirrors, reflecting the needs of different communities yet using the same vocabularies of representation.

This study incorporates the views of several theorists on the subject to form a more coherent and understandable method for approaching social movements and their relationship to terministic screens. It moves to the next level Burke suggests: the



dramatistic screen where the critic unpacks the many interpretations of a term and understands its potentials for both unity and division of social relations. In many ways, it provides a clearer and firmer set of procedures for investigating the special relationship shared by words and the myriad interpretations of them.

It also demonstrates how a study might be conducted that examines emergent discourses within existing communities as they emerge rather than making note of them after the fact and explaining their effects. It gives rhetorical studies a fresher perspective and allows the study of new arguments without lapsing fully into relativity and ethnographic investigation. In this way, it offers a middle way for argument scholars. The terministic filter approach allows us to understand the claims of new communities and how existing vocabularies are appropriated for the needs of resistance.

In many ways, this study fills some holes in the study of words and the ways they frame our realities. It helps future study practitioners understand some basic ways to interpret and clarify the way(s) terministic filters operate to both limit and expand discourse in particular public spheres. It provides a step toward understanding the process of claim formation relative to vocabularies of representation in specific publics. In that way it further expands our understanding of a basic communication concept.

### **IR and Research: Defining a New Agenda**

Some feminist writers suggest a reorientation of research strategies in IR, emphasizing relations between distant others in a more personal context, one which emphasizes imbedded identities through a relationship of care and a recognition of the principle of difference (Robinson, Globalizing Care 126; Krause 105-6). Many feminist writers also advocate a research and praxis agenda emphasizing a view of security

(including international security) stressing the provision of security from a basic needs approach (Tickner 30; Sylvester, Gendered States 172; Peterson, Gendered States 58).

Part of the problem, these movement scholars argue, is that war is defined in the system as more of an event to be avoided, rather than part of a system of violence which permeates our social practice (Cuomo 35). When there is no international war, we are presumed to be living in a “peace” according to standard international relations theory. Yet, persistent violence every day at the personal level is removed from the equation even though one might find everyday violence and its persistence at the root of state violence and its continuance. War is not seen as a system of components, but merely the fracturing of consensus brought together by the state system to prevent its occurrence (Cuomo 38).

All of this turns on the question of rhetoric. How do the vocabularies we use come to frame our actions and control as well as liberate discussion in a public sphere? One problem has been the lack of interdisciplinary discussion between IR and communication studies. Beer and Hariman and others unlock this potential through the lens of terministic filters. But IR could use a better understanding of the relationship between communication and action, understand the basic Burkean principle that communication is action and has pervasive and sometimes unpredictable consequences. In many ways, this study brings IR closer to an understanding of the rhetoric of scholars and nations as more than just talk, but instead as symbolic action with profound implications for the study of history and nations.

Many resistance scholars call for a fuller discussion of political economy in IR theory (Youngs 32-3; Sylvester, Millennium 327; Murphy 532). This would incorporate

more sites of study into the research agenda for IR. Tickner argues such a research agenda would focus more on the ways in which states and their internal publics interact (Murphy 533). This will liberate, resistance scholars argue, new vocabularies for understanding the complex ways that domestic/private life (including affairs of the home and family and economic relations) interacts with public life in the creation of systems of international identity and conflict.

Political economy facilitates a move away from abstract ideas of unified identities. It recognizes that individuals do not live as a coherent whole. Their involvement in the world is in the form of fragmented activities which feature continuities and discontinuities and are rarely without contradictions within and across them. Their subjectivities are formed and reformed through these engagements and the ways in which these impact on, affirm or challenge existing understandings of identity (Youngs 33).

But the key to bringing this political economy into play is to convince IR publics that interpersonal contexts of meaning are important to understanding international relations. The search for political economy attempts to get to the grassroots level to participate with actual people in resolving dilemmas and meeting needs. This study brings into play the notion of civil society and subaltern counterpublics as a way of illustrating to IR practitioners that there are important communication phenomena at work in IR and that those phenomena can offer a new explanation for the link between individual actions and the actions of complex systems and international society.

This could be a rejection of some tenets of positivist science that have been the foundations for IR over the last 40 years. In other ways, however, it is a reaffirmation of

certain fundamental principles that do not render unproblematic the question of behavior and its relationship to political action. Yet, positivism needs to be aware of the communicative elements of its assertions or else be rendered incoherent by the complexification of identity in international relations. The changing historical and technological environment offers a unique opportunity to fuse the insights of IR and communication theory to produce a more diverse interpretation of the relationship between language and action.

For example, understanding the links between communication and action in IR would expose the not only the networks of violence at work, but also the potentialities for cooperation and resistance at a level which is comprehensible to those actually involved in a given situation. Rather than abstracting “sameness” from the political situation, it proceeds instead from the respect for difference that characterizes feminist philosophy (Robinson, Alternatives 126; Scholte 70). From this principle of difference evolves an ethics of care which suggests we have a responsibility to provide care for those different others (Robinson, Alternatives 127). Understanding care ethics means unpacking the international character of security and revising its gaze to a more comprehensive view of security, one which recognizes the interpersonal and social contexts which interpolate with the political affairs of nations to form the templates which guide elite actions (127).

Such a research strategy would also expose the ways that violence is a persistent phenomenon in international relations, emanating from social roots that stress certain forms of agency over others. By recognizing the presence of systems of personal and social domination researchers can problematize the notion that wars only happen between nations and thus break the cycle of beliefs culminating in international violence

(Robinson, Globalizing Care 203) by understanding violence as learned behavior, as the product of system that functions on basic questions of language and meaning to accomplish its aims. Such a research agenda would welcome resistance to its fundamental claims rather than relying on unitary concepts to fix its intellectual center and would celebrate the possibilities inherent in interdisciplinary dialogue.

How would this look in real terms? Research would proceed from the social level, stressing the concerns of private and civil society. Rather than abstracting knowledge of state behavior from previous historical events, researchers would proceed from an understanding of the shifting social relationships and interpersonal dynamics guiding the responses of citizens and state officials. This would have the effect of making the prediction of state action more uncertain and time consuming, as well as subject to shifts in political and moral theory. Constraints exist which many IR researchers would be willing to admit to now, but they have not taken the time to incorporate into their predictive models or open spaces in IR discussions for alternative discussions to take place.

Such a research agenda would likely include more discussion of non-state actors and grassroots empowerment movements evident in the writings of such scholars as Vandana Shiva, or in recent women's movements in Iran (Kandyoti 134). It could mean, for example, that indices of economic statistics would reflect the informal sector as well as the formal sector. It might mean that discourses of development would focus more on the subsistence practices of existing societies instead of supporting export cropping as a method of economic integration. It might involve studies of democratic movements within countries and change the standard for the real subject of moral and political law. It

would seemingly incorporate more fully the notion of civil society into the current discourses of IR.

Even so, alternative means of expression need to emerge to fully express the security dilemmas of modern times. In addition to changing the focus of research, feminist and post-realist writers offer a new set of linguistic possibilities for describing different visions of international security. Thus, this study brings IR closer to devising a new system of representation that celebrates a different understanding of security and truly acknowledges the profound link between symbolic action and the games nations play.

For example, Paul Chilton argues that we should examine metaphors that offer a particular kind of descriptive power, a synthesis between bodily and cultural experience which interacts to form not only a vocabulary, but also institutional apparatuses to see to the maintenance of those vocabularies (Chilton 197). Chilton is interested in uncovering basic preconceptual structures underlying the languages that come to define our cultural realities. He suggests analysis of these lexicons begin with an understanding of image schema -- which he maintains is the source of metaphorical expression -- in particular the first image schema of the container (197). The container has three components: interior, boundary, exterior. Chilton contends that this container metaphor is bounded in the conceptualization of the human body as well as certain relationships to operations of the womb (Chilton 198; Tickner 102). It is this preconceptual body which allows people to construct elaborate states, based on creating a view of other nations being “outside” the “body politic” of a state and thereby somehow different and invasive, in the manner that a disease is to a body (Chilton 197). In the language of the container, the state can form a

unified body out of many and appear a logical outgrowth of our understanding of our bodies and thus seem a perfectly logical extension of personal space (198). But again, this study would caution that our understanding of the body as a container is bound in the metaphors with which we represent the body. For example, if our view of the body was not that it is a container, but embedded permanently in a mesh of physical and metaphysical experiences, including constant environmental interaction so as to render the body never free from its surroundings and thus a component of many systems, constantly functioning to bring life, create sensation and facilitate regeneration. So the body is not necessarily a container, depending upon how you represent it, and neither is the womb, in that sense either. This study will argue that the primary impetus for the growth of states resides in structures of metaphor and systems of representation embedded in human institutions of cultural expression.

Chilton argues that these observations lead us to three basic conclusions for the purpose of criticism:

- (1) The concepts in political discourse are drawn from the same lexical foundations as language as a whole.
- (2) It is possible to conceptualize different models than the ones offered by the status quo. Different cultural models will select different ways of expressing the same phenomena.
- (3) Because existing metaphors seem to fit, they will be difficult to dislodge. Their persistence makes them seem acceptable and permanent (Chilton 202-3).

Thus, Chilton argues that following this pattern of linguistic analysis can provide an important insight into how to envision alternative realities as well as alternative vocabularies to describe the realities we interact with daily.

### **Conclusion**

Chilton's example illustrates that many of the things we think of as stable or arrived at are actually the product of complex human interactions and communicative events. Thus, it seems that much of the problem with contemporary realism is a matter of metaphor. It is not necessarily the terms themselves that restrict scholarship, but instead the systems of meaning(s) that have sprung up around interpreting a term in particular ways. This study makes note of that simple insight.

This study suggests that it is possible to destabilize realism. Indeed, realism instead of being a basic fact of life is instead a historically contingent system of rhetoric and knowledge that can be replaced by new orthodoxy if the situation calls for such a change. This study helps unpack realism in such a way and offers the possibility for viewing historical institutions as transitory and changeable instead of natural and inevitable. Hopefully future studies can do the same thing with a bit more guidance as a result of this inquiry.



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