Chapter 2

International security and language: expanding the peace journalism framework

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In this chapter I first discuss the peace journalism framework, then look at the types of language being used in security discourses, and finally propose ideas for expanding the peace journalism framework in two important ways – in scope, from journalism to school textbooks to computer games; and conceptually, to address gender equality criteria. I point out that war journalism styles of writing about global events not only dominate the news media, but also school textbooks (especially history ones) all over the world. In this sense, those who control the present also control the past. Students from a young age are taught a special version of the past. One-sidedness and violence dominate the entertainment industry too, even as this industry claims to portray the truth (and I demonstrate this here by pointing to an analysis of the '*Black Hawk down* document complex'). I also make a point of the fact that not only are nonviolent solutions to conflict generally under-reported but so too are the peace actions and writings of women. Writing from a peace journalism perspective means giving a voice to the voiceless. Women, however, are often made invisible not only as victims but also as peace activists.

Peace journalism

Peace journalism derives from insights first introduced in 1965 by peace researchers Johan Galtung and Mari Holmboe Ruge in an article featured in one of the first issues of *The Journal of Peace Research*. The article, 'Structure of foreign news', examined the presentation of

the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus crises in four Norwegian newspapers (Galtung & Ruge 1965). In this article, the authors showed how dominant conflict reporting patterns emphasise official sources over 'people sources', events over process and violence over peace. In further writings on peace journalism, Johan Galtung (2002, 2006) makes a distinction between 'war journalism' and 'peace journalism' and proposes four main points of contrast between the two approaches:

War journalism	Peace journalism
War/violence-oriented	Peace/nonviolence-oriented
Propaganda-oriented	Truth-oriented
Elite-oriented	People-oriented
Victory-oriented	Solution-oriented

Adapted from: Galtung 2006, p1.

Rune Ottosen (2010, p259) notes that peace journalism is people-oriented in the sense that it focuses on the victims (often civilian casualties) and thus gives a voice to the voiceless. In their book on peace journalism, Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick emphasise that journalists have a set of 'choices of what stories to report, and how to report them – that create opportunities for society at large to consider and to value nonviolent responses to conflict' (Lynch & McGoldrick 2005, p6).

The language used in security discourse

Language can be used both to generate and conceal meanings and to distort extra-linguistic realities. The same phenomenon can be given different names depending upon who does the naming. The same person may be called a freedom fighter by some and a terrorist by others for committing exactly the same acts. Carol Cohn (2009) notes that the way 'security' is employed by both academics and policy elites, in what is commonly referred to as 'security discourse' (for example, 'international security' or 'national security' discourse), has nothing to do with the everyday meaning of this word – that is, 'freedom from danger and

fear'. It has implicit in it extraordinarily narrow assumptions about the nature of security. During the Cold War, the Norwegian Parliament changed the name of its 'Military committee' to 'Defence committee', which seemed to sound more reassuring (Brock-Utne & Garbo 2009). But the term 'defence' is also dubious, not least in a world where nuclear powers like the United States (US) and other North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member states insist on their right to use thermonuclear bombs, while seeking to prevent 'rogue states' from imitating them. Can anything be 'defended' through the use of atomic weapons?

In the dominating security discourse, this question is neglected through euphemistic language that defence intellectuals have developed for military hardware and its impact on human life. In 'rational' expert speak – the war journalism framework – human beings, human deaths and suffering, as well as dying humans, are made invisible. When the term *security* is used in what among defence intellectuals is called 'security discourse', it means something totally different from daily concerns. It also means something different from the way peace researchers talk about security. It does not refer to the social and economic conditions and relations within which people live. Among peace researchers this security discourse is often discussed in the context of Galtung's negative and positive peace concepts. While negative peace can be seen in terms of security from physical and direct violence, positive peace is seen also as security from structural and cultural violence (Brock-Utne 1989, 2008, 2009; Galtung & Vincent 1992; Ife 2007).

Abstract terms, which stand in for real weapons, conceal the reality of these weapons and how they would function under real-world conditions. This professional terminology serves to make questions from concerned citizens seem uninformed and näive. Through her own work with defence intellectuals, Carol Cohn (1987a) has come to understand that 'security discourse' is not a discourse about the multiple dimensions and determinants of 'security' broadly writ; but rather, it is a discourse which has as its principal referents 'weapons' and 'war'. Cohn (2009) discusses what she describes as the American civilian nuclear defence intellectuals. These intellectuals are mostly men, who, from the time of the first nuclear bomb, have formulated the paradigms

most commonly used to think about the use of nuclear weapons, strategies for 'nuclear war fighting', deterrence, and nuclear arms control, all within a war journalism framework. Elsewhere Cohn has argued that both the specific language that they use and the professional discourse within which it is embedded serve to radically disconnect defence intellectuals from the very realities they purport to be addressing (Cohn 1987a, 1987b).

Cohn's exploration of the language of security started in the mid-1980s (Cohn 1987a, 1987b). The community of nuclear defence intellectuals she studied was located at a prominent, elite university in the north-eastern US. She explains that the highly specialised professional language these men used was so riddled with acronyms and abstractions that it was practically opaque to her. She explains that when she began to be able to decode the language, she realised that the acronyms and abstractions often functioned as a kind of euphemism. She adds:

> One particularly stunning example is the term 'collateral damage' (which at the time only appeared in nuclear weapons discourse, although it has since become common in the discourse of 'conventional' wars, such as the current war in Iraq). The term 'collateral damage' sounds like it refers to something minor, something peripheral to the main event, a reference to some kind of objects that get in the way. So I was stunned when I first learned that 'collateral damage' is the phrase the defence intellectuals were using to refer to human beings, human deaths. Suffering, dying human beings are made invisible in the strategists' focus on destroying the other side's weapons, their 'targets'. As one defence intellectual commented ironically, 'The Air Force doesn't target *people*, it targets shoe factories'. The people killed are no more than 'collateral damage'. (Cohn 2009, p35)

The 'technostrategic discourse' that Cohn learned to understand did not only consist of acronyms, abstraction and euphemisms. It also consisted of sexual and domestic metaphors. Sexual metaphors were liberally sprinkled throughout the discussions the defence intellectuals carried out. Cohn tells how she listened to very serious men in suits

and ties sitting around conference tables, talking about 'thrust to weight ratios', 'soft lay-downs', 'deep penetration', 'the comparative advantage of protracted versus spasm attacks', or what one military adviser to the US National Security Council called 'releasing seventy to eighty percent of our mega-tonnage in one, orgasmic, whump'.

> Additionally, there was an anxious preoccupation with 'hardening our missiles' and worry that the Russians were 'harder than we are'. Of course, what we needed, it was said, was better 'penetration aids'. As these conversations wore on, I would glance around and wonder if at some point someone would realise what it sounded like, and perhaps give me a glance that was a bit embarrassed or sheepish – but it never happened. (Cohn 2009, p36)

Cohn has also examined the language used by security experts and politicians to warn against 'nuclear proliferation'. This term does *not* mean a multiplication of nuclear weapons or 'new generations' of weapons in the nuclear arsenals of the US. It means nuclear weapons in *other people's* hands, people described as primitive, rogue and unpredictable. This racialised imagery serves to legitimise the responsible Self's access to weapons which should be denied to primitive Others. This kind of rhetoric is likely to make the possession of nuclear weapons even more attractive to the have-nots. It is a rhetoric that fits perfectly into the elite-oriented war journalism framework which makes human suffering invisible.

Who controls the present controls the past

In his book *Nineteen eighty-four*, George Orwell (1949) described a superstate called Oceania. The language of war in this state was a language full of invented lies that passed into history and became truth. 'Who controls the past', ran the Party slogan, 'controls the future and who controls the present controls the past'. What appears in the news media today will be recorded in the civics and history books of tomorrow. It has taken me many years to realise that the history we study in school is a highly political subject. Some facts are deemed important enough for us to study, others are left out of the history books because

they are disturbing and may give a negative picture of the 'mother' land. Some facts are distorted. Howard Zinn and Anthony Arnove's 2004 book, *Voices of a people's history of the United States*, and Howard Zinn's 2007 book, *A young people's history of the United States*, both give another version of US history than the one normally found in history books in the US. In the book *Lies my teacher told me: everything your American history textbook got wrong*, James W Loewen (2007) analysed 18 leading history textbooks in common use in high schools all over the US. He shows the embarrassing combination of blind patriotism, mindless optimism, sheer misinformation and outright lies found in these books. They omit the ambiguity, passion, conflict and drama of the past and make history a dull and uninteresting subject. Zinn and Arnove (2004) and Zinn and Stefoff (2007) deal with the truth about Columbus' historic voyages. They tell about the injustices done to 'Indians'.[1] These authors use a peace journalism framework looking at events from the perspective of the victims. Loewen does the same, but he also tells how these voyages and the resistance by the Indians have been portrayed in school history textbooks. Loewen deals with the immediate past as well as the more distant one and has an eye-opening chapter on the lies surrounding 9/11 and the Iraq War.

Textbooks play a dominant role in schools and ought to be of great interest as research topics for subject specialists. Yet normally they are not. One Norwegian political scientist claims that there exists within Norwegian cultural and political debate no other examples of literature published in such quantity, being read by so many unsettled minds and with such controversial content that is 'left in peace' or as unscrutinised as textbooks within social science (Koritzinsky 1972). Analysis of school textbooks for elementary and secondary schools does not carry high prestige among researchers. This is a pity, since in most countries textbooks largely determine the mode and scope of teaching and studying. Several studies show that teachers regard textbooks as national curricula in hard copy, dominating the work in the classroom with the same legitimacy (Kilborn 1982; Gustafson

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1   The original inhabitants of the US were called Indians by Columbus and his sailors because Columbus thought he had come to India.

1982; Svingby 1986). There is a need for international and comparative textbook research, as there are many unanswered questions begging for answers. For example, are textbooks mirrors of a war journalism framework? How is peace defined in various textbooks around the world? How are human rights defined? What parts of the whole human rights construct are emphasised? How is development defined? How are the causes of underdevelopment explained? How are conflicts that have been resolved nonviolently treated? How are women's human rights addressed? (Brock-Utne 2007, 2010a). How are the accomplishments of women treated? Are they treated at all?

Ladislav Bognar (1996) has analysed books used in Croatian primary schools both before and after the Croatian war of independence. He found that, before the war, equal numbers of texts existed that spoke positively and negatively about other nations. There were three times more texts that spoke in favour of war and violence as a way of national conflict resolution than in favour of peace. After the war there were more texts that spoke negatively about other nations, especially about Croatia's neighbours, but fewer texts that spoke out in favour of war (however, these still numbered twice those that actively spoke *against* warfare). His analysis of primary school books before the war showed that 17 percent of the texts dealt with war. Of these texts, 73 percent spoke positively about war, 25 percent of the texts advocated peace, and two percent were neutral in that regard. An example of a poem from one book from the fourth grade of primary school follows:

> The war is, my brothers, the war for heroes.
> Take the gun, point the sabre.
>   Saddle the horse, let go the infantry.
> Let that be where our fame is!
>   The greatest happiness is to be killed in war:
>   Be happy, sad mother.
> Your worthy sons have fallen
>   Like heroes, like Croats.
> They have shed blood for their homeland.
> (cited in Bognar 1996)

Bognar concludes, through his analysis of Croatian primary school texts from before the war, that these texts provided children with a positive image of the war. What changed after the war? According to Bognar's analysis, there are now fewer texts on the theme of peace and war. They have been reduced from 17 percent to eight percent, but most of them still speak in favour of war. In the second grade, children are already learning that a homeland is something they have to defend at all times and in different ways, but, primarily, with a gun. In the third grade, children are asked to give their lives for Croatia.

Texts concerned with Croatia increased from six percent before the war to 19 percent after the war. Most of these texts focus on the Croatian language and on negative relations with other countries. The following nationalities are portrayed in a negative light: Turks, Hungarians, Venetians, Bulgarians, Austrians, Serbs and Montenegrins. The poem 'The pit' figures in a reading book for the seventh grade. Here the crimes of Croat fascists in the Second World War are described. Below the poem appears the question: 'Are you reminded of the present crimes against Croatians in this poem?' (cited in Bognar 1996)

In the new books there are valuable texts against war and for peace. In one text, the possibility of nonviolent conflict resolution is described. This is a text about the Croat King Kresimir, who tried in a peaceful way to resolve problems between Croats and Venetians. In a paper presented in Norway, Ladislav Bognar (1996, p7) noted: 'In our history the Republic of Dubrovnik maintained freedom for many centuries in a nonviolent way, but we have no texts about this in our reading books'.

Bognar (1996) sees the non-existence of a paradigm of nonviolent conflict resolution in Croatian education as a big problem. He quotes Marko Hren from Slovenia who thinks that a main reason for the war in the former Yugoslavia is that in the period after the Second World War there was a dearth of education and promotion of nonviolent change methods. He proposes that the best way to build peace would be for Croatians to gradually affirm nonviolent communication on a micro-social level – within families, peer-groups, schools and in everyday life.

Borgnar contends that a number of good people from many countries have been of assistance to Croatians in developing resources

on nonviolent change, and there are now books about nonviolent communication, conflict resolution, cooperative games and human rights in Croatia. He argues that the next step must now be taken to develop nonviolent conflict resolution in the other states of the former Yugoslavia, especially in Bosnia and Hercegovina, and Serbia. It is important, he maintains, that Croatians connect with people in other parts of the former Yugoslavia who are ready to do the important work of peacebuilding. The project 'Peace Bridge', based in Mohács, Hungary, has done a great deal of this work in Serbia. So too has the Peace Centre based in Osijek, Croatia. Some peacebuilding activities have also started up in Bosnia and Hercegovina where a group of peace activists connected to the Bahai faith have been running a peace education program, supported economically first by Luxembourg and then by Switzerland.

The invisibility of nonviolence in textbooks

The phenomenon examined by Bognar – the lack of a paradigm for nonviolent conflict resolution in textbooks – is not limited to Croatia. In fact it is a problem faced by peace educators all over the world: peace journalism approaches have not yet influenced textbooks. War and violence have much higher visibility both in the media and in history books than do accounts of conflicts that have been solved nonviolently. For instance, in 1905, Norway and Sweden were on the verge of war over the dissolution of their erstwhile union. There were armies lined up on both sides of the frontier. The war was avoided through diplomacy, yet this accomplishment is hardly mentioned in the history textbooks. If there had been a war, however, it would probably have filled several pages.

Christopher Krügler and Patricia Parkman (1985), from Harvard University's Program on Nonviolent Sanctions in Conflict and Defense, found in their research that history books give more attention to violent struggles that fail to achieve their objectives than to nonviolent struggles that succeed. There is a vast history of nonviolent sanctions but these do not reach the history books. Gene Sharp defines nonviolent sanctions as pressures that do not kill or threaten physical harm but which, nonetheless, thwart opponents' objectives and cause them to

alter their behaviour (Sharp 1980, p289). Forty years ago, he described 85 major cases where nonviolent sanctions have been used (Sharp 1970). Yet conflicts that have been resolved through nonviolent means are both under-researched and are made invisible in history's record. Krügler and Parkman (1985) show through their analysis that when both violent and nonviolent actions have been used in a conflict, it is the violent ones that are described in history and that are celebrated, and they describe the case of the uprising against the dictatorship of Martinez in El Salvador in 1944. The violent actions of 2 April did not succeed in getting the dictator to resign. The nonviolent actions of 9 May *did* succeed. Yet 2 April is the date celebrated, not 9 May!

When violent sanctions fall short of achieving their objectives, the conclusion is rarely drawn that violence has been tried and found wanting. Instead, military analysts ask what conditions favoured the winner, and where did the loser go wrong? The assumption is not made that there is something wrong with the whole idea of using violence to solve a conflict. When nonviolent struggles are not successful, however, it is frequently concluded that nonviolent methods are not useful. Questions should be asked about ways of improving nonviolent means of conflict resolution. In most cases where nonviolent sanctions have been used, they have been improvised under harsh conditions, with little or no advance preparation on the part of those using them.

In an article in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, peace researcher Elise Boulding (1982) holds that our whole educational system should be geared toward creating more confidence and competence in conflict resolutions by means other than violence. When the capabilities for nonviolent problem-solving are not developed at lower levels in the education system, it becomes more difficult to develop them later on. Formal education, it seems, does little to teach young people nonviolent conflict solutions or to train their capacity for visionary thinking. History books concentrate on violent solutions to conflicts between states such as wars, ignoring the fact that, statistically, the normal relationship between states is one of non-war, or peace, and that most conflicts in the world, both between people on the micro-level and between states, are solved through nonviolent means. School children could benefit

from learning more about nonviolent solutions to conflicts, and less about violent ones. This would necessitate more research on nonviolent conflict resolution, and a rewriting of history.

It is extremely important that such a review be done in a scientific manner, whereby the nonviolent actions started and led by women are not to be left in the hidden history. Any such omissions would make this rewriting of history incomplete. It should be remembered that Mahatma Gandhi stressed time and again that he had learned most of his nonviolent tactics from the British suffragettes (Gandhi 1939; Gandhi in Hunt 1981). Indeed, insofar as Gandhian thought, comprising the principles of *swaraj* (self-rule), *ahimsa* (non-violence), *swadeshi* (use of local goods and products) and *sarvodaya* (universal welfare), is a critique of the masculine ideology of colonialism, it is defined as feminist (Poonacha 2008, p52).

There is also a whole African history of nonviolent conflict resolution and indigenous approaches to building peace which is under-researched and has frequently been overlooked by Western researchers. In a couple of interesting articles, the African peace researcher Tim Murithi (2006, 2009) shows how indigenous traditions with regard to governing and resolving disputes in African societies were corrupted by the centralising power of colonialism. He notes, however, that the Truth and Reconciliation Committee in South Africa is rooted in an African worldview, the worldview of *ubuntu* or social solidarity. A person who possesses *ubuntu* is a person who is considered to be generous, hospitable, friendly, caring and compassionate. The idea behind *ubuntu* is that a person is a person through other people. We are human because we live through others – we belong, we participate and we share (Murithi 2006, p17). According to Desmond Tutu (1999), a person with *ubuntu* is open and available to others and does not feel threatened when others achieve, because he or she recognises that they belong to a greater whole. The principles of forgiveness and reconciliation, which this tradition advocates, provide us with strategies for peacebuilding.

The 'unknown knowns' – the role of the entertainment industry

Young students not only learn of the one-sided glorification of violence in school textbooks, but also from the entertainment industry. Most

young people, especially in the industrialised West, spend more time watching television or playing computer games than reading history textbooks. The German peace researcher Holger Pötzsch (2009) has analysed the '*Black Hawk down* document complex' – a succession of Western mass-media representations dealing with the US intervention in Somalia in 1992–93.

In the middle of the 1990s, journalist and author Mark Bowden started to conduct research regarding the failed US intervention in Somalia. He succeeded in making contact with US soldiers involved in what had happened and began collecting their stories. The results of his work were published in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* between November and December 1997.[2] He later reworked and published them in the historical novel *Black Hawk down* (1999). Bowden's novel served as the factual basis for Ridley Scott's (2001) tremendously successful screen adaptation of the same title. The movie was followed by *The true story of Black Hawk down,* a documentary produced for the History Channel – and the release of the video game *Delta Force Black Hawk down* in 2002. In 2004, some of the involved soldiers' tales were published in a separate volume (Eversmann & Schilling 2004).

Taken together, these representations form what Pötzsch terms the *'Black Hawk down* document complex', a clearly biased account where the American soldiers are depicted as humane helpers, while the Somalis are dehumanised and depicted as an invisible threat. The soldiers' tales, collected and reproduced by Bowden, are the source of the ideological and perspectival bias found in the narrative. The fact that interviews were largely carried out within military facilities and that interviewees had to obtain official permission from their superiors is not made apparent to audiences.[3] Bowden relied almost without exception upon material presented to him by military sources. These factors throw significant doubt over the neutrality of the dataset on which his account is based.

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2   The newspaper series can be accessed on: inquirer.philly.com/packages/ somalia/sitemap.asp [Accessed 28 October 2007].

3   On Bowden's methodology and sources, see Bowden 1999, p481.

Pötzsch argues that the documents forming the complex reproduce a biased narrative that implicitly privileges military approaches to the resolution of conflicts. He draws attention to a US Department of Defense press briefing from 2002[4] regarding developments of the war in Afghanistan and the ongoing debate at that time about alleged Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. In connection with this press release, the then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld made his notorious remarks regarding different categories of knowledge: the known-knowns (the facts we know that we know), the known-unknowns (the facts we know that we do not know), and the unknown-unknowns (the facts we do not know that we do not know). The latter category is the one claimed by Rumsfeld to be of most importance for war planners. Pötzsch points out that there is a fourth category that was evaded by Rumsfeld and that proves even more crucial for war preparation – the unknown-knowns, the knowledges we do not know we have, the attitudes and conceptualisations which subconsciously guide and influence individual and collective behaviours.

Today, the mass media play a major role in the formation of such unknown-knowns. Through the application of a particular set of cinematic techniques, representations reproduce unknown-knowns – myths concerning the Self, the Other, and the nature of conflict between the two. Pötzsch shows that, in spite of its explicit claim to realism, *Black Hawk down* employs the same representational strategies as do fully fledged, fictitious action and horror movies when representing the Self and the Other. He demonstrates that in order for the audience to distinguish between dichotomies such as self/other, good/evil, and order/chaos, the film places the US soldiers and their enemies in very specific surroundings. The enemy stronghold is characterised by filth and decay where chaos, danger and deadly threats lurk behind every corner. The American soldiers, however, are located in surroundings where order, sanity, technological confidence and control are paramount. The type of analysis that Pötzsch adopts in his article is one in which our teachers should be trained. Although we cannot prevent young people from

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4 February 12, 2002. [Online]. Available: www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2002/02/mil-020212-usia01.htm [Accessed: 7 March 2008].

watching films and playing games that focus on violence, we could nonetheless make what Kellner (1995) refers to as critical media literacy part of the school curriculum.

The invisibility of peace actions and writings by women

As history is presently taught, important phenomena like the effective use of nonviolence and the important role of women are made invisible, hidden, or forgotten. For example, the achievements of Austrian heroine Bertha von Suttner (1843–1914) who devoted her life to nonviolent conflict solutions and to disarmament have been made virtually invisible, if not to her own generation, then to those that have followed. She was the founder of the International Peace Bureau and, without her, there would have been no Nobel Peace Prize. Yet Nobel, who took the money for the prize from his profits on weapons and dynamite, is the one who is remembered (Brock-Utne 1985, pp37–45; Heffermehl 2010). She is hardly mentioned in any history books, and there is no statue of her in the Nobel Institute in Oslo.

Some years ago I was asked by a Swedish research unit working on peace education to evaluate a set of eight publications in peace education which were in use in Swedish schools (Brock-Utne 1992, 2010b). The publications had been launched under the name *Fred, frihet, rättvisa* (*Peace, freedom, justice*) and sponsored by the Myrdal Foundation, the UN Association of Sweden, and the Red Cross. My main criticism of the teaching material had to do with the invisibility of women in the textbook and accompanying teacher guide meant for secondary education. The teaching guide gives advice to teachers to see to it that certain books are in the school library. Under the heading: 'Some classical books which ought to be found in the school library', they name ten books. All of the books were written by men! They also encourage students to search for books in the library under the heading; 'Books you can ask for in the school library'. Here they supply a short list of four books, none of them written by a woman!

They do not mention, for example, the beautiful novel *Die Waffen nieder* (*Lay down your arms*) by Bertha von Suttner (1889). Leo Tolstoy wrote to her that he thought her impressive novel would make an end

to all war in the same way that Harriet Beecher Stowe's book *Uncle Tom's cabin* had contributed to the end of slavery (Brock-Utne 1985). Neither do the authors behind the guide for Swedish teachers in secondary schools mention many other topical books by women, including *Väckerklocka* (*Alarm clock*) by the Swedish author Elin Wägner (1941), one of the earliest books written on the human destruction of our environment; *Silent spring* written in 1962 by Rachel Carson on the same theme; Rosalie Bertell's (1985) tome on the destruction of the environment by nuclear testing, that combines data from stillbirths and births of deformed babies with data from nuclear fallout; and Susan George's writings (1989, 1994) on the debt crisis. In my analysis of the Swedish teaching material, I provide a list of more than ten wellknown works, from the many available, on peace issues written by women (Brock-Utne 1992). The experiences of women, especially when it comes to war and peace, have been silenced all over the world, in industrialised as well as in developing countries.

Turshen and Twagiramariya (1998) are aware of the fact that mainstream studies of wars in Africa generally suppress women's voices in recounting and interpreting their own experiences of wars or violent conflicts. That is why they edited the book *What women do in wartime: gender and conflict in Africa*, which gives voice to the silent victims of war in Africa (Turshen & Twagiramariya 1998). In this sense, the book is written from a peace journalism perspective. The concept of the 'unknown-knowns' employed by Pötzsch, in other words, the knowledge people do not know they have, can be put to use when analysing why men, even within peace studies, render invisible the contributions of women. I do not believe in any conspiracy theories among men aiming at the suppression of women, but, rather, in subconscious attitudes that achieve the same results.

Almost 40 years ago, I sat on the board of the Norwegian film making company, Norsk Film. It was once suggested that we have a day's workshop discussing ideas for new films. Each board member listed ten creative people in Norway whom they would like to invite for that day. The people did not have to be filmmakers, but people with creative ideas. Of the nine board members, I was the only woman. I had written

down a list at home with ten names. Being gender conscious, my list consisted of five women and five men. Three men read out their lists before it was my turn. Each list featured ten men. Without frowning or saying a word, I silently changed my list and read out the names of ten women. And *then* they all reacted: 'You've just concentrated on women'. I answered: 'And what have you done?' The point of the story is that these men had not noticed their bias before they heard my list. When they were asked to think of creative people, their thoughts did not extend to women! Even though they seemed like nice men, they still held sexist attitudes and that subconsciously influenced their behaviour.

It is sad to see that even an edited volume created to celebrate peace on the occasion of Johan Galtung's 80th birthday features 30 male and only six female authors (Johansen & Jones 2010), none of which focuses on peace actions started and/or led by women. And this in a country where women like Ingrid Eide and Mari Holmboe Ruge, the co-founders, alongside Johan Galtung, of the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO), have been peace activists all their lives and active in the Norwegian chapter of the Women's International League of Peace and Freedom. The book *Bestemødrene på Stortings plass* (*Grandmothers in front of Parliament*) tells about an organisation of older women who, from 1983 to 2003, gathered in front of the Norwegian parliament once a week and distributed leaflets to make people aware of current conflicts and the importance of protest and action (Aas 2006). A new organisation, 'Bestemødre for Fred' (Grandmothers for Peace), has taken up the same work. Yet these women are not heard from in the abovementioned book celebrating peace research. In my book *Educating for peace: a feminist perspective* (Brock-Utne 1985, pp33–69), I write about peace activities started and led by women. I note the following three characteristics among the women:

They are concerned about human life, especially that of children.

They make use of a varied set of nonviolent techniques, actions and strategies.

They work trans-politically and often trans-nationally, aiming to reach people, especially other women, in the opposite camp.

I conclude in my book (Brock-Utne 1985, p63) that women's struggles for peace and human rights have for the most part been made invisible, and have sometimes been met with opposition. I mention, for example, the 1982 peace march by Nordic Women for Peace to the Soviet Union. The male-dominated peace organisation 'No to Nuclear Arms' did not want to have anything to do with this peace march as the women were visiting 'the enemy', and it actively discouraged its members from participating or giving money to the march (Brock-Utne 1985, p69).

The role of the mass media

British academics David Edwards and David Cromwell have published *Media Lens*, a publication that since 2001 has observed the treatment of international affairs by mass media in Britain and also, to a degree, in the US.[5] When Edwards and Cromwell detect biased reporting, direct lies, or the neglect of relevant news, which they do continually, they try to engage the responsible journalists or editors in an exchange of views on the reports. Their book *Newspeak in the 21st century* contains a gold-mine of knowledge about the ways in which mainstream descriptions of world events are being produced (Edwards & Cromwell 2009).

One of the most striking examples presented in *Media Lens* was the political treatment of data presented in several articles in the *Lancet* medical journal (2004 and 2006) concerning the issue of mortality after the 2003 invasion of Iraq. There is no easy way of finding out the precise number of Iraqi fatalities, but a group of trained experts had carried out a cross-sectional cluster sample survey of the same kind that is used in opinion polls. Doctors collected data from 1849 households in 47 population clusters across Iraq. They estimated that after the invasion, 655,000 more Iraqis had died than would have been expected in a non-conflict situation. However, the British government refused to accept the results, claiming that the findings were based on too thin a sample. US President Bush asserted that the methodology

5 I must thank the author and journalist Gunnar Garbo for opening my eyes to this very valuable source in a lecture to my peace studies class at Wartburg College on 1 April 2010.

had been discredited, even though the survey used methods that were recognised by statisticians all over the world. All mainstream media then backed the position of the two governments. The same group of expert researchers also carried out a study to estimate mortality in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, using precisely the same methods. These findings received widespread media attention and were accepted without reservation by the US and British governments. Unlike Iraqis, the Congolese were not killed by Western powers.

Mass media sometimes refer to a decline in war deaths due to 'smart' bombs and different strategic priorities. This is not a reflection of reality, as is made obvious by news reports from Afghanistan. In a US opinion poll where people were asked to estimate the number of deaths during the Vietnam War, the average estimate was 100,000. According to a similar opinion poll in Vietnam, however, the war resulted in three million deaths, 300,000 missing persons, nearly four and a half million wounded persons, and two million people harmed by toxic chemicals. In 2008, the *British Medical Journal* published a study estimating that 3.8 million Vietnamese were killed during the war; close to the country's citizens' own calculation. The editors of *Media Lens* add that to turn a blind eye to our own crimes, while focusing on the crimes of others, is to guarantee more of both. Unfortunately, this is what mass media tend to do through their use of war journalism.

A visit to the peace researchers

While Carol Cohn, whose work I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, made a study of the defence intellectuals working in institutes for strategic studies, Lothar Brock (2009) is more concerned about discussions taking place among peace researchers. To what extent do peace researchers play on the same field as strategic analysts, using their vocabulary and their concepts? Are peace researchers afraid of being branded as näive if they use the concept of 'peace', or if they study peaceful and nonviolent solutions to conflicts? It could be argued that the name change of the *Bulletin of Peace Proposals*, edited by the Peace Research Institute of Oslo, to *Security Dialogue*, is more than just a name change.

There is no doubt that armament complexes use dangers previously met by civilian bodies as justification for increasing their own budgets. NATO refers to perceived threats such as climate change, globalisation, computer attacks, migration, or breaks in the flow of resources as reasons for strengthening its military forces. Challenges of this kind are best managed through the use of peaceful means and international cooperation. To what extent the *securitisation* discourse within peace circles has contributed to the opposite tendency is a question worthy of further investigation.

With reference to the first Gulf War, President Bush (Sr) proclaimed: 'What *we* say goes'. His son's administration followed in his footsteps. Gunnar Garbo (2009, pp58–59) describes an incident in which Ron Suskind, a veteran Washington columnist, happened to mention the intellectual principles of empiricism and the Enlightenment in a conversation with a presidential adviser, one year after 9/11. 'That's not the way in which the world really works anymore', was the response he received.

> We are an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you are studying that reality, we'll act again creating other new realities, which you can study too. We are history's actors, and all of you will be left to just study what we do.

If we undertake to study the issues that the presidential adviser recommends, we discover how much the military powers lie about security matters. Former president Bush Jnr and UK prime minister Blair started their war against Iraq allegedly to liquidate the country's (non-existent) weapons of mass destruction, and to cut off Saddam Hussein's support to al-Qaeda, which had never existed either. When foes become friends or vice versa, terminology also changes. US representatives had once labelled the Kosovo-Albanian UCK (Kosovo Liberation Army) a terrorist organisation. When Washington saw fit to support these 'terrorists' in order to punish Milosevic and to remove Kosovo from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the UCK suddenly became fighters for a just cause. Dominant media in the West readily adopt this sort of rhetoric,

as exemplified when then US President Bush Jnr started his 'war on terror'.

The UN General Assembly has defined terrorism as the use of violence against a population in order to pressure its leaders to change policy. Hitler did that by bombing London and carrying out mass murders of Poles and Russians. The allied powers also consciously used state terrorism towards the end of the Second World War, killing several million civilians by firebombing German cities and dropping atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The allied powers have never asked to be forgiven for this cruel use of state terror. Neither have they accepted their behaviour as such. From their perspective, terrorism is violence performed by resistance movements, the weapon of the poor, exemplified by suicide bombers, although these so-called terrorists will never possess the power to carry out atrocities comparable to the enormity of state-sanctioned terror. Neither have atrocities committed at Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay, and in bombed Afghan civilian areas been defined as terror, but, rather, as pacification efforts by democratic states. The same language is used to describe Israel's bombing of Palestinians in Gaza. There is a need constantly to look at the language employed in journalism, as well as in the writing of history.

Conclusion

The information disseminated by journalists is frequently hotly debated. As demonstrated in this chapter, news items and journalists' comments are often misleading and very often focus on violent drama, with detrimental humanitarian implications. Such journalism can inadvertently support violent rather than peaceful solutions. 'The gentlemen of the press' have a tendency to respond to the sort of criticism I have levelled here by insisting that their task is to act 'professionally', and they define professionalism in terms of producing stories that sell well, regardless of content or consequence. This definition has been and must continue to be opposed.

After many years of confrontational attacks from Western media institutions, the General Conference of UNESCO in 1978 adopted by acclamation a Mass Media Declaration regarding the contribution of

the media to strengthening peace and international understanding. Article III, Point 2, of the declaration (UNESCO 1978) states:

> In countering aggressive war, racialism, apartheid and other violations of human rights which are inter alia spawned by prejudice and ignorance, the mass media, by disseminating information on the aims, aspirations, cultures and needs of all peoples, contribute to eliminate ignorance and misunderstanding between peoples, to make nationals of a country sensitive to the needs and desires of others, to ensure the respect of the rights and dignity of all nations, all peoples and all individuals without distinction of race, sex, language, religion or nationality and to draw attention to the great evils which afflict humanity, such as poverty, malnutrition and diseases, thereby promoting the formulation by States of the policies best able to promote the reduction of international tension and the peaceful and equitable settlement of international disputes.

Unfortunately, to date, this important declaration has seemingly made little impact.

In this chapter I have shown the importance of including nonviolent historical narratives in textbooks. What appears in the media today will be recorded in the textbooks of tomorrow. Textbook writers coming from a peace journalism perspective should rely on the broader, expanded vision of peace journalism I have outlined here, which I argue must give due recognition to the work of women peace activists and writers. This in turn may lead to a revision, or at least to an important expansion, of the field of peace journalism.

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