



Gender and Conflict: Embodiments, Discourses and Symbolic Practices (Gender in a Global/Local World)

By Georg Frerks, Annelou Ypeij

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Through an in-depth analysis of the multifaceted manifestations of gender and conflict, this book shows how cognition and behaviour, agency and victimization, are gendered beyond the popular stereotypes. Conflict not only reconfirms social hierarchies and power relations, but also motivates people to transgress cultural boundaries and redefine their self-images and identities. The contributions are a mix of classical ethnography, performance studies and embodiment studies, showing 'emotions and feelings' often denied in scientific social research. Strong in their constructivist approach and unorthodox in theory, the articles touch upon the dynamic relation between the discourses, embodiments and symbolic practices that constitute the gendered world of conflict. The localities and research sites vary from institutional settings such as a school, rebel movements, public toilets and the military to more artistic domains of gendered conflicts such as prison theatre classes and the capoeira ring. At the same time, these conflicts and domains appropriate wider discourses and practices of a global nature, demonstrating the globalised and institutionalised nature of the nexus gender-conflict. A first set of chapters deals with 'breaking the gender taboos' and renegotiating the stereotypical gender roles - masculinities or femininities - during conflict. A second set of chapters focuses more explicitly on the bodily experience of conflict either physically or symbolically, while the last set straddle body and narrative. The inductive quality of the work leads to unexpected insights and does give access to worlds that are new, and often surprising and unconventional.

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Editorial Review

Review

'Gender and Conflict presents fascinating ethnographic accounts that challenge gender stereotypes worldwide. It includes valuable insights into gendered conflict as well as conflict of gender as experienced in everyday life. The book will be a "must read" for everyone interested in conflict studies and gender studies. With its rich case studies the book makes a valuable contribution to anthropology but also to theoretical discourse on body and embodiment.' Bettina E. Schmidt, University of Wales, Trinity Saint David, UK

'Focusing on civil wars, prisons, urban public spaces, performance rings, schools, militias and national militaries, Gender and Conflict makes a persuasive case for both reiterating and revisiting our assumptions on the relationship of gender to violence. Attentive to diverse histories of militancy in varied geographical sites, it highlights the gendered performativities of armed violence to ask what happens to militarized, machismo men and women, and gender relations themselves when the violence is either reconfigured or over.' Neloufer de Mel, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

About the Author

Prof. Georg Frerks holds a chair in Conflict Prevention and Conflict Management at Utrecht University as well as a chair in International Security Studies at the Netherlands Defence Academy. Till 2013 he also occupied the chair of Disaster Studies at Wageningen University. As a sociologist and policy analyst he focuses on conflict and disaster-induced vulnerabilities and local responses as well as on policies and interventions implemented at international and national levels. Frerks acts as an advisor to several governmental and non-governmental organisations and has paid attention to gender aspects of conflict since early 2000. Frerks has widely published in the area of conflicts, disasters and development. He was co-organizer of the international conference 'Ethnographies of Gender and Conflict' (Amsterdam, 2011).

Reinhilde Sotiria König is a cultural anthropologist with roots in the German feminist movement and trained as an ethnographer at the University of Amsterdam. She developed classes about 'the anthropology of death and loss' and has published on transnational migration and diasporas. She conducted fieldwork in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Congolese diasporas in Europe. Her interest lies in power relations, historiography and memory, comic strips, palaeoanthropology and currently the changes of the university education system. She is an expert on winter fertility rites. Reinhilde works as a thesis coach in Amsterdam. She is the director of the annual LOVA International Summer School (2012, 2013, 2014) and was co-organizer of Lova's international conference 'Ethnographies of Gender and Conflict' (Amsterdam, 2011)

Annelou Ypeij is a feminist anthropologist and works at Cedla (Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation). Her current region specialization is Peru where she studies gender and poverty in urban settings as well as in tourism areas. She has published a wide range of articles and books on these themes.

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