

WHO'S AFRAID OF JESSICA LYNCH? OR ONE GIRL IN ALL THE WORLD? GENDERED HEROISM AND THE IRAQ WAR*

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Abstract: On March 23 2003, in the middle of the current Gulf War, a U.S. military supply convoy was ambushed just outside the city of Nasiriya in Iraq. The surviving members of the Army's 507th Maintenance Company were taken prisoner. Private First Class Jessica Lynch was spectacularly rescued, in a joint Special Forces operation, and became the 'face of the Iraq War'. While the politics of war, gender and heroism were playing themselves out on and through the shattered body of Jessica Lynch, the speculative saga of Buffy the Vampire Slayer was drawing to a close with the programme's seventh and final season. The meanings and mediations of gender, identity, and combat in the early twenty-first century are present in the 'real' story of Jessica Lynch (whose 'real' story may never be told) and in the mythologies of the "warrior of the people" – Buffy Ann Summers. There are obvious similarities: they are both small, blonde and photogenic. They have both been cheerleaders. And both reveal the tensions that simultaneously underpin, and threaten to destabilise, the supremacy of the male warrior-hero.

What do *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (BTVS)¹ and Jessica Lynch have in common other than being small, blonde and photogenic? One is the fictional rescuer of the world and a speculative warrior-hero; the other is the 'real' girl-next-door-would-be-soldier, rescued from a fate worse than death, but cloaked in 'spin' and public speculation. Both Buffy and Jessica Lynch were at the centre of war 'stories' in 2003 which hinged upon particular constructions of femininity, masculinity, and heroism. The stories surrounding both young women exist as counters to the archetypal masculine soldier: in the case of Buffy this counter is one of empowerment that is subversive to the potency of masculine soldier mythologies; in the case of Jessica Lynch she has served, in many ways, to uphold the idea that women can never be 'real' soldiers. It is important to note that the use of a fantasy character like Buffy as a lens for viewing alternative narratives is *not* a means of trivialising the events and suffering of the very real war going on in the Middle East. There are three reasons why BTVS provides a useful comparison to the stories that put Jessica Lynch on the road from small-town supply clerk to the most recognisable face of the early stages of this war: (1) The simultaneity with which the "end of days"² for Buffy as the only Slayer in the world, and the capture and rescue of Lynch, occurred with both taking place in April and May of 2003.³ (2) The stories played out in the fictional world of Sunnydale, and those that surrounded Jessica

Lynch, both reveal patterns in the narration of gender and heroism and beg the question what is 'real'? Stories surrounding Lynch have all been *mediated*, and her voice has largely been drowned out in the cacophony of the larger Iraq war narrative.⁴ Buffy, as a character and a serially developed story, is simultaneously a product of media conventions and an attempt to subvert western meta-narratives of gender and heroism.⁵ Both young women have been projected as possessing attributes that make them the perfect objects of gendered narratives of heroism – for example their youth, attractiveness and heterosexuality – but these attributes take them on very different narrative trajectories. (3) The 'ideal' soldier is no less speculative than a television character, and incorporates elements of the super-human and super-hero in the ways in which 'he' has been narrated. This is true too of the ideals of masculinity and femininity that are played out in the realms of the 'real' narratives of the media, just as it is true of the fantastic realms in which heroes like Buffy fight the good fight. If war is the dominant narrative of the West without which 'there would be fewer stories to tell'⁶ and the narration of war (his)stories are always about gender,⁷ then the politics of representing gender in the early twenty-first are laid bare by the comparison of these two young women.

Buffy is by no means the only speculative female warrior hero whose depiction has accompanied the increased visibility of women in the United States' military. The 1980s and 1990s saw a number of women depicted in transgressive warrior roles on large and small screens, from Ripley of the *Alien* movies,⁸ to Sarah Connor in *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*,⁹ to *G.I. Jane*,¹⁰ and of course *Xena: Warrior Princess (X:WP)*.¹¹ On the big screen, while definitely making an often startling visual impact, characters like Ripley and Sarah Connor have been reined in by the use of tropes traditionally used to contain women who move out of traditionally 'feminine' roles. Some of these devices include their separation from other women and other soldiers (see below), their depiction as mothers¹², and in the case of Sarah Connor her mental instability. Jordan O'Neill in *G.I. Jane* is as much a speculative warrior as Ripley or Sarah Connor, as up until now no woman has ever been accepted into the Navy SEALs, nor is this a possibility in the immediate future. She too is separated from her male counterparts, and the other women she encounters, ultimately subsuming all overt traits of femininity and camouflaging her gender, in order to succeed. Jordan O'Neill may be strong, but her strength was one of camouflage and conformity, not breaking the mould of the gendered warrior. *X:WP* poses more of a potential disruption to traditional warrior narratives, and the invisibility of women in the record of war through the ages was something the creators consciously used and consciously played with in creating the series.¹³ However, Xena also stands apart from other women, or rather she towers over them being more than six feet tall. While there are communities

of warrior women depicted in *X:WP*, and Xena does not fight alone all the time, she is still very much separated visually and through her actions from other women and other warriors. The lesbian subtext of the series is another aspect that can be read as less than subversive when considering the ways in which military women have often been cast as either homosexual or promiscuous or both. The aspects of mainstream femininity that are maintained in *BTVS* are some of the ways in which, paradoxically, Buffy asserts her subversive potential. She disguises neither her gender nor her identity in fighting the good fight and yet the trappings of 'girliness' do not detract from her potency – unlike the portrayal of 'real' women soldiers like Jessica Lynch.¹⁴ Buffy comes from a long line of Slayers, a line with history and tradition, just as Xena is an attempt to rectify some of the silences in warrior mythology, and many women soldiers also come from families with military traditions.

It is not unusual for fictional or mythic heroes to be prominent in traditions of military masculinity and the war stories that dominate Western historical narratives. For example, Rambo has become synonymous with the Vietnam War and with the rehabilitation of the 'new warrior' in the wake of the antimilitary backlash that immediately followed that conflict.¹⁵ Pertinent to this examination, critical commentary on early media coverage that depicted Lynch 'fighting to the death', has described it with reference to Rambo – an obvious reference to the robust fighting machine and a stark contrast to the physical stature of Lynch.¹⁶ Female speculative warriors are not granted the same status when examining women and war, just as narrative traditions that highlight women's contributions, and the continuity of their participation, have been largely marginalised within Western discourse.¹⁷ It is important to examine the fictional points of reference used within the 'real', and the comparison of the 'real' and the fictional is relevant in capacities other than just as 'hooks', or metaphorical guides, for the reader. The fact that these points of comparison exist at all indicates a fluid relationship between the speculative and the 'real', and reveals the performative nature of gendered war stories. The examination of both the fictional hero, and the 'real' rescuee points to the constructed nature of war and its telling and the exposition of these narratives reveals the ongoing patterns and tensions within Western traditions of gendered heroism. This paper uses the narratives surrounding these two young women to explore the ways in which heroism in the 'real' world remains coded as masculine. Both narratives are war stories,¹⁸ and both reveal the ways in which the power of women is diminished by patriarchy both in the realms of the 'real' and the representational.¹⁹ Heroic narratives will continue to marginalise women unless the 'one girl in all the world' paradigm from which Jessica Lynch emerged, and Buffy evolved, shifts to allow for the representation of collective feminine agency and the sharing of power.

In 2003, war dominated Western newspapers and television screens. Familiar narrative patterns emerged as the war in Iraq was characterised not only as a struggle to dominate a rogue state, but also as a means of casting and maintaining the ideal of a just, male, warrior.²⁰ Dubious motivations, missing weapons of mass destruction, and the killing of civilians, all compromised the potential of this ideal warrior and by extension the states he represented. The capture and then dramatic rescue of Jessica Lynch was used to shore up American public support for the war, and to bolster the heroism of the (male) soldier on the ground. At the same time that the rescue and rehabilitation of Jessica Lynch was playing itself out in the media, the eponymous hero of *BTVS* fought her last good fight in the seventh, and final, season of the television series. Its writers, careful to distance their product from the events that were playing themselves out in the 'real' world, had through their disclaimers invited an even closer comparison of the gendering of war and heroism.²¹ The contrasts between a programme that has continuously explored themes of female empowerment and culminated with not one, but an army of girl-heroines, and stories that effectively worked not only to marginalise Lynch, but all female soldiers, are a way to open up traditional portrayals of women even when they find themselves in non-traditional occupations.

Private First Class Jessica Lynch became the 'face' of the Iraq War when she was captured in the wake of an ambush of a military supply convoy outside Nasiriyah on March 23 2003. Initially she was reported as a warrior who went down fighting until she had no ammunition left. Following her rescue it transpired that she had in fact been unable to fire her weapon and that her injuries had been sustained when the vehicle she was in rolled over. She was taken to an Iraqi military hospital and later transferred to a civilian hospital in Nasiriyah. The stories surrounding the ambush, Lynch's capture, and her rescue, underwent a number of permutations from the time she was taken prisoner until her biography was released at the end of 2003. She was painted as a warrior and a hero, a little girl protected by her fallen comrades, a helpless victim, and a broken body. Each narrative strand shifted as different information rose and receded in prominence in a maelstrom of media and military attention. The continuities in her story were provided by her physical fragility and the dramatic nature of her capture, but more particularly of her rescue. She was rescued in a joint special forces operation that was captured on film, and an edited version of this footage was widely shown on news and current affairs media. A photograph of Lynch, smiling in her uniform, in front of an American flag, appeared on the cover of *Newsweek* and *People Magazine* in April 2003, and this and other images were widely circulated in other publications such as *Time* magazine, daily newspapers and television network news programmes.²² Lynch's

prettiness, her fragility, diminutive stature and her youth, and her economic motivations for joining the army,²³ all played a part in her casting as the all-American heroine, and linked her to collective castings of women in general as vulnerable, both physically and sexually, while simultaneously separating her from other soldiers, particularly women soldiers. Her story overshadowed those of other women killed and taken prisoner from her own company, and the activities of all the other U.S. military women who were present in Iraq. As Deepa Kumar has pointed out, even when the *Washington Post* initially depicted Lynch 'fighting to the death', her need to be rescued, combined with her physical vulnerability, meant that, '[w]hile Lynch is a hero, her heroism is tempered by sexist notions of women's bravery. Ultimately despite her courage she is still in need of rescue by her male counterparts, the real heroes.'²⁴ Sexist notions of women's bravery also mean that bravery is *not* an attribute ascribed to women collectively, but just as hero status singles out an individual, bravery separates the individual woman from women as a group.

Separation of the individual, through actions or the narration of those actions, is a part of what makes a hero: an act, quest, deed, or kind of life that separates and elevates someone from everyone else. A hero is also always active, something women are rarely characterised as, rather than a heroine who is passive in comparison. Lynch's heroism has been ascribed to her survival, something over which she had very little control, cannot be described as active and which therefore puts her more in the category of heroine than of hero. Buffy stands out in contrast by being active, rather than reactive, and through her actions as rescuer, rather than rescuee. The paradoxical passivity of Lynch's 'heroism' links her to other women, while the active stance taken by Buffy seeks to undermine this cartesian association of collective vulnerability with femininity. However, when thinking about men and heroism there is always a link between the single male hero, and collective perceptions about masculinity and heroism – again an aspect that the final season of *BTVS* seeks to disrupt (see below). David Morgan, in his analysis of masculinity and the 'Theater of War', identifies two competing strands within soldier identity that attempt to bridge the necessary gap between the importance of individuality to the construction of masculinity and the necessity for the elimination of individual autonomy in order for military cohesion and hierarchy to function. Morgan points out that one strand focuses on 'the warrior, the heroic individual' and the other focuses on 'brothers in arms'.²⁵ These two strands allow for the separation of the individual and an ongoing connection and similarity to his fellow soldiers. In a specifically U.S. context, James William Gibson contends that, '[t]he long history of U.S. victories from the Indian Wars through World War Two reinforce the centrality of wars and warriors as symbols of masculine virility and American virtue'.²⁶ The 'New Warrior' in the wake

of the Vietnam War was a way to resurrect the soldier as a symbol of virtue and just conduct. He was also a way to reassert masculine dominance in the arena of popular culture during the 1970s and 1980s when *manpower* shortages necessitated an increased recruitment of women in the U.S. military following the 1973 abolition of the draft.

Gibson extends his analysis, refracted through the figure of the 'New Warrior' to include the ways in which speculative texts, like *Rambo*, have been incorporated into a broader tradition of masculine heroism and warrior culture. Both Gibson and Morgan identify the special forces, or paramilitary troops, as objects of admiration and as central figures of warrior heroism. The emergence of the 'New Warrior' in the twentieth century strikes a chord with the more general male population regardless of their own martial experience, or lack thereof.

The New War culture was not so much military as paramilitary. The new warrior hero was only occasionally portrayed as a member of a conventional military or law enforcement unit; typically, he fought alone or with a small, elite group of fellow warriors. Moreover, by separating the warrior from his traditional state-sanctioned occupations – policeman or soldier – the New War Culture presented the warrior role as the ideal identity for all men. Bankers, professors, factory workers, and postal clerks, could all transcend their regular stations in life and prepare for heroic battle against the enemies of the state.²⁷

Constructions of masculinity, which extend the warrior as an ideal to which all men have access through the idea that to be a warrior is 'natural', are reinforced when considering men's military experience. Regardless of whether a male-soldier is a cook, a supply clerk, or a typist, he can be considered a warrior, in the same way that the fictional and mythic warrior can be viewed as a part of historical traditions of martial masculinity.²⁸

While soldiering is considered to be a natural extension of masculinity and manly endeavour, regardless of the processes needed to *make* men into soldiers, or the large numbers of male soldiers who never see combat, soldiering is considered anathema to the construction of femininity and 'real' women. As Leisa Meyer in her study of women in the U.S. military during the Second World War has pointed out, the notion of the 'female soldier' was and still is considered to be an oxymoron. The 'centrality of wars and warriors' in the construction of an ongoing history of American virtue does *not* include women as soldiers, just as Gibson contends that the woman warrior, does not, as either real or speculative *woman* have a place within the 'new warrior' tradition. According to Gibson, the woman warrior

who emerged at the same time as the media fixed its attention upon the female soldiers of the first Gulf War, Sarah Connor in *Terminator 2*, merely mimics her male counterpart rather than disrupting his potency as symbol and as soldier.²⁹ Unless her gender is camouflaged the effectiveness of the woman soldier *as* a soldier will continuously come into question,³⁰ and perceptions of femininity as the embodiment of vulnerability, domesticity, and passivity continue to work against the recognition of women in the military as both belonging there and as capable. The 'Saving of Private Lynch' is an example of the fate of one woman being cast as the fate of all women, and by extension proving Meyer's thesis of the oxymoronic status of the female soldier. Lynch is both 'one girl in all the world' and the exception that proves the rule that a woman cannot be an effective soldier.

Women who have taken up arms have historically either been ridiculed, designated as sexually deviant, treated as singular aberrant examples, ignored, or a combination of these.³¹ One of the most effective patterns of marginalising women's contributions is to distil the actions of many women into the legendary figure of one exceptional woman – or 'one girl in all the world'. Linda Grant de Pauw has succinctly used an example from the America Revolutionary Wars to illustrate this pattern – 'The Legend of Molly Pitcher'. According to this legend Molly Pitcher was one woman who followed her husband onto the battlefield and took over the firing of his cannon when he was wounded.³² It is interesting to note that not only was she singular, but her motives have cast as relating primarily to devotion or heterosexual love for her husband, rather than as a desire to be a soldier. De Pauw posits that the attribution of the legend to *one* woman obscures the contributions of many women during the Revolutionary Wars, particularly the many women who carried water onto the battlefields, necessary for cooling the cannons. These hundreds of women may all have been referred to as 'Molly Pitcher', through the vessels used to carry the water.³³ The narrative metamorphosis of the activities of many women, into the actions of one extraordinary woman – or 'Molly Pitcher Syndrome' as de Pauw calls it – emphasises the aberrant appearance of women in wartime, and avoids disruption of the gender order through the focus on an individual in a time of crisis.

So how can a comparison be made between the 'real' story of Jessica Lynch³⁴ and the speculative saga of a Slayer of vampires? Superficially, there are a number of points of comparison stressed in the stories presented about both: both Jessica Lynch and Buffy are blonde and diminutive. Both had aspirations of becoming cheerleaders. Buffy was kicked off the cheerleading squad when she was under the influence of a spell.³⁵ And, according to Rick Bragg, Jessica Lynch ultimately decided the sartorial switch from little skirts to shorts for the cheerleaders at her high school was

not to her liking, so she never did join the team.³⁶ Buffy was thwarted in her desire to be home-coming queen,³⁷ while Jessica Lynch was voted Miss Congeniality at her local county fair. Both girls, at different levels, have been scripted as 'girlie girls'. Lynch has been described as 'waiflike' and 'doe-eyed' in a number of publications implicitly referring to the characteristics of fragility, vulnerability and gentleness – all anathema to soldier-identity.³⁸ Buffy's small stature, however, has at once been a part of her disguise as well as part of her ongoing appeal to mainstream television viewers.³⁹ Bragg's biography does its best to stress Lynch's femininity, going out of his way to paint her as even 'girlier' than other young women. This extends from her painted toe-nails, to her matching shoe-laces and hair ribbons, to the surprise with which her family and friends greeted news of her enlistment. While Lynch's story as a soldier has been cast as *extraordinary*, Bragg goes to great lengths to emphasise Lynch's commonality with other girls who do *not* become soldiers. Where the trappings of femininity do not detract from the Slayer or her mission, stories about Jessica Lynch, including Bragg's publication, utilise the cultural construction of 'girliness' to emphasise fragility. This fragility is not confined to Lynch herself, but provides a connection between the individual girl who tried to be a soldier and the implicit physical vulnerability of women in general.

Frances Early, in her discussion of Buffy as 'transgressive woman warrior', has utilised Sharon MacDonald's term 'open images' in describing the rebellious and subversive nature of Buffy as female warrior.⁴⁰ According to MacDonald, 'closed images' operate to define and reinforce the social and gender order by acting as stereotypes that appear 'fixed in public consciousness'.⁴¹ 'Open images', on the other hand, are not 'meant to reflect or define the social life itself'⁴² and are therefore 'inherently unsettling to the way things are'.⁴³ In breaking from traditional narrative patterns that isolate and marginalise female heroism, and stereotypes that construct women collectively as physically and emotionally weak, *BTVS* has worked to redefine and undermine myths of feminine fragility. The stories and images that have circulated around Jessica Lynch have worked in much more 'closed' ways and appear to uphold dominant, and seemingly opposable, stereotypes of women and the 'ideal' soldier. *BTVS* provides an important counter to the closed narratives that have presented Lynch as a girl disguised as a soldier, rather than presenting the possibility of being a woman *and* a soldier.

The underlying premise of *BTVS* is that in every generation there is a chosen one, *one girl in all the world*, who can act as a Slayer and save humanity from destruction at the hands of vampires and other demons. If this were strictly adhered to then *BTVS* would in fact fit the 'Molly Pitcher'

tradition, or the narrative of the oxymoronic woman soldier, rather than seeking to exploit and explode myths of collective feminine weakness. But, Buffy rarely works in isolation and since the second season has actually *not* been the only girl in all the world but has fought alongside two other Slayers, as well as enlisting the talents of those around her in the fight against evil. She is very much both a warrior *and* a woman, her trappings of femininity often an asset rather than detracting from her capacity as a soldier.⁴⁴ Unlike Buffy who is the heir to a tradition of women warriors that pre-dates the written work, in the U.S.A, women do not have a seamlessly narrated military tradition. Their involvement in the military has been narrated as staccato and auxiliary, and only the result of times of crisis. This has continued right up until the recruitment needs of all-professional armies of the late twentieth century required women to be maintained as part of the regular forces. So, up until very recent times, military women have been represented as aberrant individuals, as already stated, or as collective auxiliaries. And these narrative structures have not gone away with the constant present of fifteen percent of the U.S. military being female.⁴⁵ Instead, they have shifted to camouflage the collective contributions of women, whilst highlighting certain individuals – like Jessica Lynch. The fact that in *BTVS* there is an ongoing Slayer-line, or one girl in each generation, is particularly pertinent to a Western tradition that treats every woman warrior as an anomaly and defies the notion that the legacy of heroism can only be passed between men. *BTVS* is an effective critique of the marginalisation of women from dominant western traditions of war and heroism.

BTVS also makes implicit comment on the ways in which women's ongoing contributions to society have been marginalised in written histories. The legacy of the Slayers has been recorded by their Watchers in secret diaries handed down to each generation.⁴⁶ This written record is largely controlled by the patriarchal Watchers' Council, who in controlling information seek to control each individual Slayer. The record remains hidden from the general public. In the final season of *BTVS*, when asked why she does not want the world to know about her life, Buffy's response speaks volumes: 'What I do is too important to tell the world!'⁴⁷ The Watchers dictate the invisibility of this 'one girl in all the world' but she, like her predecessors accepts this message as a part of her mission. Buffy's comment is about heroism on the margins, and suggests that institutional invisibility is compounded by the gender blindness of the historical record and the selective vision of the media. The failure to represent women within dominant narratives, rather than in opposition to them, is exposed in the Slayer's commentary on the importance of her actions. Similarly the ongoing struggle to negate a warrior culture that continues to deny and

undermine the importance of the contributions of women is emphasised through this throwaway quip.

BTVS seems to suggest that only in moving away from the margins and destabilising patriarchal power collectively can the constraints of the past be destroyed. And it is this that makes the end of Season Seven such a potent comment on the politics of representing gender and heroism. The army of 'little girls' who break with the way in which a 'bunch of men' have always said things should be done ultimately represents women collectively as powerful and completely breaks with the idea there can only ever be 'one girl in all the world'. According to Slayer lore, there are many potential Slayers, but only one at a time can ever be activated, can ever be 'chosen'. When one Slayer dies the next is called and inherits her super-strength and Slayer abilities. In bringing all the potentials together, and activating them at the same time in the final episode of *BTVS*, this tradition is severely weakened: Every girl can be a hero. From then on if a girl 'can stand up, [she] will stand up',⁴⁸ and the strength and heroism become truly shared amongst many rather than embodied in one. This democratisation in power meant not only that it was shared, and increased, but that the gender camouflaging of heroism was removed revealing the heroic potential of women universally. This is a vastly different picture to the one that refracted military women collectively through the singular, broken, body of Jessica Lynch, denying the strength of many by focussing on the individual.

The recognition of collective women's agency, so important to *BTVS*, has not fared so well in the narration of 'real' war in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Women in the U.S. military, in active (although never 'combat') roles, seemed to garner major media attention for the first time in the Gulf War of the early 1990s. While they were visible as a group it was the contradictions between being a woman and a soldier that were highlighted with images of women reservists leaving their children (lending the title the 'Mom's War' to the conflict) and an emphasis on women maintaining the trappings of heterosexual femininity despite desert conditions.⁴⁹ The attention military women received may have arisen as a result of their novelty, but it may also have been a result of the restrictions placed on media access to the front lines. If military women in the Gulf were the human interest aspect of the war, then it is possible that while media coverage made the women's presence visible, it simultaneously reinforced conceptions of women as support or auxiliary to the "real" soldiers on the ground – the men.⁵⁰

By the time the U.S.A invaded Iraq again in 2003, pictures of uniformed men and women working side by side were no longer a novelty.⁵¹ While women in uniform collectively have faded in and out of focus since the

early 1990s, the strategies for the gendering of the war have shifted to emphasize certain individuals in this twenty-first-century conflict in Iraq.⁵² While Buffy learned that in order to be powerful power must be shared and that she could not, and actually never had been, the only girl in all the world, the injured body of Jessica Lynch obscured the 50,000 servicewomen who had seen service in Iraq without needing to be rescued. Although legislators in the U.S.A have removed many of the boundaries that halt the progress of military women's careers, the realm of myth, icon and representation demonstrates that speculating on the capacity of the female warrior remains just that, speculation. The symbolism of collective feminine weakness has always overshadowed the abilities of real military women in arguments over their presence in combat. Lynch's journey from supply clerk to icon saw arguments for and against military women re-emerge in the public arena, and overshadowed the continuing contributions of thousands of female military personnel in Iraq.

Proponents of the expansion of women's roles in the military have argued that Lynch's predicament in the ambush, where she was unable to fire her weapon and was protected by her comrades until they were dead and she was captured, illustrates why all women should be properly trained for combat. Lynch's ordeal indicates the futility of designating 'combat support', or any position in a war, as being out of harm's way. According to this discourse, Lynch survived in spite of the supposed weakness of the feminine body, and proved that people possess different kinds of strength – regardless of gender.⁵³ Opponents of women in the military, however, cited Lynch's ordeal as the reason why women should be kept out of harm's way, and mobilised arguments that revolved around notions of chivalry and played on the supposed barbarism of 'the Enemy'. That Lynch came so close to death, and worse still, that she was exposed to the threat of sexual assault, was used by conservative commentators in the attempt to have the Clinton administration's policies opening up key military positions to women in 1994, revised and repealed.⁵⁴

When the story of Lynch's capture initially broke, much of the speculation surrounding the nature of her injuries centred on whether or not she had actually been shot or stabbed. The subsequent information that Lynch's injuries had actually been sustained when the vehicle she was in rolled over lessened the possibility to characterise her as a warrior hero than if she had in fact been penetrated by a bullet or a knife. As tales of torture began to circulate the possibility Lynch had been sexually assaulted entered the picture.⁵⁵ Bragg made much of the sexual assault allegations in interviews and in his book at the end of 2003; all of which have proven inconclusive.⁵⁶ While Lynch conceded it was possible this had occurred, she has never confirmed or denied an actual sexual attack. What these allegations did do,

however, was reinforce the vulnerability of the female soldier, heighten the barbarity of the Iraqi soldier, and magnify the chivalric masculine heroism of Lynch's rescuers. They obscured the large numbers of women who continued to work without being violated by Iraqi soldiers and worked to disguise the ongoing problems the U.S. military has had with sexually assault within the ranks.

Despite the prominence given to Lynch, she was not the only woman in Iraq, nor even the only woman who suffered during the ambush of her convoy. While Lynch's photograph became common currency, the two other women involved in the incident have remained largely marginalised: Pfc Lori Piestewa and Army Specialist Shoshana Johnson. Piestewa was killed in the same fire-fight with reference to which Lynch's persona as a warrior was originally constructed. A single mother who wanted a better life for her children, Piestewa had enlisted at the same time as Lynch and they were firm friends. The coverage on Piestewa has been minimal in comparison to the attention paid to Lynch. Indeed, Piestewa's story was a 'sidebar' when *People* ran a feature on Lynch's rescue.⁵⁷ Where there has been media attention to Piestewa it has been to mention in passing that she was the first U.S. servicewoman to die in the conflict, and that she was "the first Native American servicewoman ever to die in combat".⁵⁸

Shoshana Johnson was taken captive during the ambush and was later paraded in front of video cameras alongside six of her male comrades from the 507th Company. Like Piestewa, Johnson was a single mother, and had enlisted in the Army in order to train as a cook and for the steady income the Army provided. She and her fellow POWs were rescued on April 13 2003, twelve days after the dramatic rescue of Jessica Lynch. There were no headlines for Shoshana Johnson, however, nor any photographs of her adorning glossy magazines.⁵⁹ As Amy Alexander has pointed out, the Jessica Lynch story fits the paradigm in which 'this Plucky Young White Woman Narrowly escaped Death at the hands of Saddam's Godless Minions'.⁶⁰ Johnson's story cannot fit this narrative: she is not white, she was not a teenager, and she did not win a Miss Congeniality Contest at her local county fair. The rescue of the young, white, fragile Jessica Lynch by the men in the special forces reinforces the strength of the male just warrior and heightens the representation of the barbarism of the U.S.A.'s enemies. The death of Lori Piestewa and rescue of Shoshana Johnson could never hold the same prominence. Both these women "went down fighting", Johnson in firing her weapon, and Piestewa in driving a vehicle, they were active rather than passive. They both, therefore, disrupted not only the idealised seamless masculinity of the military,⁶¹ but its whiteness as well. Although the flipside to the same coin of oxymoronic woman-warrior, blonde, photogenic, *white* Buffy in some ways succeeds in upsetting the

masculine warrior tradition in *not* disturbing its colour.⁶² The mediated bodies of both young women uphold an heroic ideal that remains coded white, regardless of hero or heroine status.

The one thing Lynch, Johnson and Piestewa all had in common (apart from being a part of the ill-fated convoy), were their reasons for enlisting, which were largely economic. This does not mean that these women did not have other motivations such as patriotism or family tradition.⁶³ However, enlisting in the armed services provided these working-class women from small-town U.S.A with opportunities which they would not ordinarily have had. Jessica Lynch was hoping to be able to pay for college tuition to become a kindergarten teacher, her family otherwise unable to afford expensive educational fees. Both Lori Piestewa and Shoshana Johnson enlisted to support their families, Johnson using the military as the means to train as a chef. Women soldiers have been distanced from the main, masculinized body of the military when representations of socio-economic factors and gender are taken into account. Unlike Buffy, who continues her mission often to her economic detriment (the mission is, or should be, its own reward), the fiscal motivations of these women potentially undermine the possibility of their being 'real' warriors. In this way *BTVS* upholds the traditional idea of a higher calling for a warrior and a bigger commitment than an economic one. Buffy is thereby connected to idealised masculine martial narratives, rather than isolated from them. The emphasis on the economic motivations of the enlistments of Lynch, Piestewa and Johnson, is a means of separating them from their male counterparts who are not described in these terms, despite the probability of similarly mixed reasons for their signing up. Reports on male soldiers, their actions and their deaths, do not utilise post-service aspirations, economic motivations or involvement with family and community to detract from their status as soldiers. However, these same preoccupations are utilised to criticise military women. It is, after all, a manly thing to do, to provide for one's family, and the manliest occupation of all is soldiering. As victims of the economic draft, women are once again cast as *unnatural* soldiers.⁶⁴

As can be seen here, narrative patterns which have isolated the contributions of military women for centuries and separated them both from their male military comrades, and other women, have continued in representations of Private Jessica Lynch. Linda Grant De Pauw has questioned whether or not in the lionizing of Lynch we are seeing the re-emergence of 'Molly Pitcher Syndrome', whereby the actions of one individual are conflated with, and used to cover up, the contributions of many women.⁶⁵ During the 2003 conflict, U.S. military women were used to frisk suspected female guerrillas, serve on combat ships and fly combat aircraft. These women have been largely absent from media coverage,

which is an extension of how gender camouflage continues to code the military as masculine –perhaps what they do is too important to tell the world? Similarly overshadowed have been the accidental killing of Iraqi women at a checkpoint at about the same time as Lynch was rescued, and the damage done to civilians during the war. The presence of effective female soldiers, whether real or speculative, could potentially cause as much damage to narratives of heroism as reference to just what being an effective male warrior means – injury and death to civilians. So to efface the complications of the female warrior, or the reality of the male soldier it is Lynch the rescued damsel in distress who dominated briefings and media coverage: Lynch who did not really want to be a soldier but was just trying to become a kindergarten teacher; Lynch who should not have been in danger as a supply clerk in a maintenance crew, not a combat soldier.

In a twist on ‘Molly Pitcher Syndrome’, Jessica Lynch became one of two ‘girl(s) in all the world’ when the story of the atrocities at Abu Graibh prison broke, starring another small town girl from West Virginia: Lynndie England. England, one of seven personnel to be court-martialled following the release of photographs and stories of the torture of male Iraqi prisoners, dominated coverage of the Iraq War in 2004. Images of this small young woman holding a naked prisoner on a dog-leash have prompted an outcry that saw military authorities, from Donald Rumsfeld down, claiming these activities were not sanctioned and that the soldiers who participated were not representative of the soldiering corps as a whole. England was dubbed the ‘anti-Jessica Lynch’, and as Dan Kennedy points out graphically utilising a traditional trope, the two young soldiers are respectively ‘Angel and Whore’.⁶⁶

Despite being placed in opposition to one another, there are elements of commonality in the representation of these two women, beyond their backgrounds and the economics of their enlistments. The stories of Lynch and England both overshadowed the thousands of other servicewomen in Iraq. Where Lynch was a waif, England was ‘pixie-ish’.⁶⁷ Both have been represented as ‘girls’ rather than women, childlike and fragile (in body in the case of Lynch, in mind in the case of England). Both stories were utilised in conservative condemnation of the use of women in the military.⁶⁸ The possible sexual assault of Jessica Lynch emphasised the possibility to portray Iraqi forces, collectively, as inhuman and monstrous. The speculation over Jessica Lynch has blanketed the treatment of Iraqi civilian women by American forces, and the impact of war on civilians in general. The sexual assaults perpetrated by England and her companions have been treated as unsanctioned extremes. What is missing from the treatment of the Abu Graibh scandal has been inquiries into the treatment of female prisoners. The prisoners depicted suffering at the hands of the Abu Graibh

seven were all men. The assault of Iraqi men does not disrupt the gendered nature of war and the feminizing of a captured foe in the same way that the abuse of female prisoners would destroy the appearance of chivalry so important to the “just warrior”. While neither injuries to, nor the deaths of, nor the abusive behaviour of individuals led to the calls for men to be brought home (although the rising casualty rate has), these two young women have been utilised to reignite debates on the roles of women in the military and to illustrate the ongoing oxymoronic use of the term ‘woman soldier’. These two young women who were ‘chosen’ by fate, and the media, exemplify the ongoing difficulties of representing collective feminine agency and heroism.

So who is afraid of Jessica Lynch? On the face of it Lynndie England might be more the one girl in all the world of whom we should be afraid. However, she has been firmly and neatly contained representationally as aberrant as a woman and a soldier (but this exceptionalism is not necessarily a problem for as her as a woman-soldier). Lynndie England is in some ways a neat example of MacDonald’s ‘closed image’ thesis. Lynch’s story, despite the changes it underwent, initially also appeared to uphold the stereotypes so important to the gendered characterisation of war and warriors. Jessica Lynch was silent for a long time, her shattered body treated as a kind of *tabula rasa* upon which could be inscribed the collective frailty of feminine corporeality. When her silence was broken, Lynch refused to confirm the stories Bragg and others were so keen to circulate. She also refused the mantel of hero and acknowledged ways in which her ‘image’ had been used by the military and the media.

The Jessica Lynch saga relies on the construction of the human body as fragile and penetrable, and the female warrior as either invisible or aberrant. Narratives that cast Lynch as ‘one girl in all the world’ were very much about maintaining power and the gender order. In those narratives the answer to ‘who is afraid of Jessica Lynch’ was, superficially, no-one. How could anyone be afraid of this fragile girl, a pawn in the global military system? The real heroism of Jessica Lynch, when her own voice was finally heard, is the reason those who cling tightly to a masculine militarized definition of power should be afraid. Just as the story of Buffy concluded with Buffy refusing the isolated role assigned to Slayers by a ‘bunch of men’ millenia ago, Lynch has broken from her script as one girl in all the world in her refusal to accept the mantel of hero or victim. If the Gulf War ‘did not take place’ except in the realms of the representational⁶⁹, then the narrated patterns of gendered heroism revealed in the ‘real’ world of Jessica Lynch, and the ‘fantastic’ world of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, pull up the curtains to reveal the Iraq War as the greatest show on earth.

ENDNOTES

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¹ Joss Whedon (Creator), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Seasons I-VII, Mutant Enemy, 1997-2003.

² 'End of Days' is the title of the final episode of *BTVS*. (22.7).

³ *BTVS* has over the course of its seven seasons garnered a significant fan base, as can be evidenced when viewing the number of fan websites on the internet. This audience is probably smaller in number than those who followed the events surrounding Jessica Lynch's ordeals in Iraq, which dominated mainstream news coverage in the United States, and in places like Australia. However, the size of the audience should not prevent a comparison being made in terms of narrative structures and devices, particularly when one of the main premises of *BTVS* was to explore the way women have been narrated into the margins and to provide an alternative. There have been other female warriors in popular culture throughout the 1990s and into the early twentieth-century such as *Xena Warrior Princess*, and Max in *Dark Angel*, however neither of these play with the narrative traditions of heroism in quite the same way, or to the same effect, as *BTVS* in my opinion. See Sara Buttsworth, 'Bite Me: *Buffy* and the Penetration of the Gendered Warrior Hero', *Continuum*, v.16, No 2, 2002, pp. 185-199; *Body Count: The Politics of Representing the Gendered Body in Combat in Australia and the United States*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of Western Australia, 2004, Chapter 5.

⁴ There has been constant speculation over the 'real' story of Jessica Lynch including whether or not she was sexually assaulted while a prisoner, and whether or not her dramatic rescue was staged by the military to boost flagging public support for a war of dubious origins that was definitely not going to be over in a few months. There is no doubt Lynch suffered gravely, but her treatment, the kinds of injuries she suffered, and whether or not the commando operation was necessary to retrieve her are all questions that have gone unanswered. The rescue was filmed, and an edited version of it was made available to media outlets by the U.S. military. This presented a 'could have been made for tv' opportunity to promote the heroism of the special forces and catapult Lynch even further into the role of hero(ine) of the nation. Major doubts were expressed over the veracity of this footage in a BBC documentary entitled *War Spin*, which was first aired in the U.K in May 2003. This documentary created a stir in the U.K and other places like Canada and Australia but received considerably less media attention in the United States, where it was downplayed considerably. For an analysis of this see Deepa Kumar, "War Propaganda and the (Ab)Uses of Women: Media Constructions of the Jessica Lynch Story", *Feminist Media Studies*, v.4, No 3, 2004.

⁵ The diminutive, and shrinking, appearance of Sarah Michelle Gellar who plays Buffy has been the subject of much commentary, particularly when considering the potential of mainstream norms of femininity, thin bodies, and beauty to undermine any subversive potential held within a mainstream television show. See particularly Paula Graham, 'Buffy Wars: The Next Generation', *Rhizomes*, Issue 4, Spring 2002, <http://www.rhizomes.net/issue4/graham.html>, accessed July 2002; S. Owen, 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Vampires, Postmodernity and Postfeminism', originally published in *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, Summer 1999, <http://daringivens.home.mindspring.com/susanowen1.html>, accessed March 2001.

⁶ Jean Bethke Elsthtain, *Women and War*, Basic Books, New York, 1986, p.x.

⁷ See Joshua Goldstein, *War and Gender*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001, especially Chapter One.

⁸ Ridley Scott (Dir.), *Alien*, 20th Century Fox, 1979; James Cameron (Dir.), *Aliens*, 20th Century Fox, 1986; David Fincher (Dir.), *Alien 3*, 20th Century Fox, 1992; Jean Jeunet (Dir.), *Alien Resurrection*, 20th Century Fox, 1997.

⁹ James Cameron (Dir.), *Terminator 2: Judgement Day*, Tristar Pictures, 1991.

¹⁰ Ridley Scott (Dir.), *G.I. Jane*, Buena Vista International, 1997.

¹¹ R.G. Tapert (Creator), *Xena: Warrior Princess*, MCA Television Entertainment, 1995-2001.

¹² Ripley's mothering instincts are portrayed in the first film with her relationship with the cat Jonesy, and in the second film with the little girl Newt. Ultimately she becomes the monstrous-mother in the fourth film, or rather she becomes 'the monster's mother'.

¹³ One of the writers has put it this way: 'Here's the way we rationalize it. First Xena is a dark character, and few people want to write about a dark character, so her participation in certain events would have been omitted [by the Ancients]. Second, the "authorities" on mythology disagree among themselves. [The Roman Poet] Ovid disagrees with Plato who disagrees with [compilers of Greek tales] Robert Graves and Edith Hamilton. Also Xena was a woman. Most of the histories were written by men.' Stever Sears, writer, *X:WP* quoted in Robert Weisbrot, *Xena: Warrior Princess. The Official Guide to the Xenaverse*, Doubleday, New York, 1998, p.38.

¹⁴ Sherrie Inness has established that one of the aspects that detracts from the potency of the female super-hero is often the disguise she wears, and that part of that disguise is the vulnerability of traditional femininity. Xena is therefore exemplary in not disguising identity. Buffy, similarly, breaks with this tradition. See Sherrie Inness, *Tough Girls: Women Warriors and Warrior Women in Popular Culture*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1999, p.36. For a more in depth examination of these warriors see Sara Buttsworth, *Body Count*, Chapter Five, 'Speculative Bodies: Popular Culture and the Female Warrior Hero'.

¹⁵ John Wayne provides an earlier example of an 'ideal' soldier who has become a part of the war-story tradition, particularly the Second World War, to such an extent that he was awarded a medal for embodying the ideal of U.S. military manhood – despite never having been in uniform. See Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America*, Harper Perennial, New York, 1992, p.243. For discussion of Rambo as representative of the 'new warrior', see James William Gibson, *Warrior Dreams: Paramilitary Culture in Post-Vietnam America*, Hill and Wang, New York, 1994; Rambo became representative of the Vietnam War to such an extent that in Boston in 1985, following the release of *Rambo: First Blood Part II*, veterans gathered to protest at a venue where Stallone was due to receive a 'Man of the Year Award'. The veterans were accosted, and their protests dismissed, by a group of teenagers who screamed that Stallone was the 'real veteran'. See Kevin Bowen, "'Strange Hells': Hollywood in Search of America's Lost War', in Linda Dittmar and Gene Michaud (eds), *From Hanoi to Hollywood. The Vietnam War in American Film*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick & London, 1990, p. 229.

¹⁶ Kumar, 'War Propaganda and the (Ab)Uses of Women', p.301.

¹⁷ Frances Early, 'Staking Her Claim: Buffy the Vampire Slayer as Transgressive Woman Warrior', *Journal of Popular Culture*, v.35, No 3, Winter 2001, pp. 11-27. Until the 1980s there appears to have been a reluctance on the part of feminist scholars to engage with women's contributions to war. Jean Bethke Elshtain, Cynthia Enloe and Linda Grant de Pauw have all sought to revise the silences regarding women and war and to examine the ways in which women have been grouped as 'types' in order to marginalize their contributions. See Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War*; Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You? The Militarization of Women's Lives*, Pluto Press, London, 1983; 'The Politics of Constructing the American Woman Soldier', in E. Addis, V.E. Russo & L. Sebasta (eds), *Women Soldiers: Images and Realities*, St Martin's Press, New York, 1994, pp. 81-110; Linda Grant De Pauw, *Battle Cries and Lullabies: Women and War from Prehistory to the Present*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1998.

¹⁸ For an explanation of the ways in which *BTVS* is a war story, as well as fitting within the action, horror, and fantasy genres, see Dennis Showalter, 'Buffy Goes to War: Military Themes and Images in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*', Conference Paper given at the *Slayage Conference on BTVS*, Nashville Tennessee, May 2004, archived at http://www.slayage.tv/SCBtVS_Archive/Talks/Showalter.pdf, accessed December 2004.

¹⁹ According to Drew Goddard one of the writers of *BTVS* the whole of the final season of *BTVS* was about female empowerment and the ways men seek to take power of women. Drew Goddard, writer's commentary, 'Dirty Girls', 7:18, *BTVS*, DVD release, 2004.

²⁰ For commentary on the explicit links between the assertion of a robust American 'manhood' and the representation of the war on terror, which can be read by extension as relevant to the war on Iraq, see Matt Hannah, 'Manhood and the War on Terrorism', *Tabula Rasa*, v.17, 2002, <http://www2.uni-jena.de/philosophie/phil/tr/?tr=17>, Accessed October 2002.

²¹ Goddard, writer's commentary, 'Dirty Girls'.

²² 'Saving Private Lynch', cover of *Newsweek*, 14 April 2003. *People Magazine*, 21 April 2003.

²³ When the *Washington Post* broke the story of Lynch's capture, an officer while admiring her guts expressed incredulity that someone so young and so small had such 'guts'. Susan Schmidt and Vernon Loeb, 'She was fighting to the death', *Washington Post*, 3 April, p.A1. See also Walter Kirn, 'When All the Lines Disappear Before a War Starts, the Boundaries Seem Clear. Then Things Get Complicated', *Time*, v.161, No 15, 14 April 2003, p.110; Joan Lowy, 'Conflict with Iraq: Heroics of Female POW Raise Combat Debate', *Naples Daily News*, 4 April 2003, <http://www.cfnapps.naplesnews.com/sendlink/printthis.cfm>, Accessed 10 April 2003; Patrick Rogers, 'Saved From Danger: Brave Young Jessica Lynch Survives Captivity – and Torture – to Become a Hero of the Iraqi War', *People*, v.59, No 15, 21 April 2003.

²⁴ Kumar, 'War Propaganda and the (Ab)Uses of Women', p. 301.

²⁵ The abstraction of heroism through memorials to unknown soldiers is one way in which heroism as a legacy becomes accessible to all soldiers regardless of rank and specialty. David Morgan, 'Theater of War: Combat, the Military and Masculinities, in H. Brod & M. Laufman (eds), *Theorizing Masculinities*, Sage, Thousand Oaks California, 1994, p. 174.

²⁶ Gibson, *Warrior Dreams*, p.13.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.

²⁸ An example of the idea that every soldier can be an effective warrior was depicted in the 2002 film *Black Hawk Down*, where a soldier needed for his capacity as a typist and a coffee maker is suddenly required to be a combat soldier. A more fantastic example is Steven Seagal, in an action-hero role goes from Navy SEAL, to Navy Cook, to single handed defender against terrorism in the 1992 film *Under Siege*. However, it is important to note that within the military a pecking order exists that does see non-combat roles as lesser, and that the men who do these jobs are not held in such high esteem. This has been one of the bug-bears for women who wish to advance their military careers – once a soldier gets to a certain point they require combat experience to advance, and combat experience (or experience defined that way according to official doctrine) is not officially open to women in the army. Mythologies that bridge the gap between the military and civilian society, however, perpetuate the 'every man is a warrior' idea, and training and the possibility for every male soldier to be called upon to fight also reinforce this.

²⁹ Gibson, *Warrior Dreams*, p. 9. Susan Jeffords has a similar opinion on these female warriors. See Susan Jeffords, 'Telling the War Story, in Judith Hicks Stiehm (ed), *It's Our Military Too: Women in the U.S. Military*, Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1996, p.229. Where Jeffords differs is her attempt to see an integrated picture of women's war stories and the incorporation of this mimicry into a pattern of representation.

³⁰ See De Pauw, *Battle Cries and Lullabies* See also Sara Buttsworth, *Body Count*, Chapter 2.

³¹ A primary, much cited example, is Joan of Arc who has been narrated at various times as insane, her sexuality and sexual conduct have been closely scrutinised and questioned, and ultimately her behaviours that set her apart from other women were her undoing, i.e., her military endeavours in masculine garb. Just as much of the speculation surrounding the fate of Lynch, and any female soldier taken prisoner, has been focussed on whether or not she was sexually assaulted, so too much contemporary and historical investigation has focussed on whether or not Joan of Arc was violated or virginal. See Marina Warner, *Joan of Arc: The Image of Female Heroism*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, New York, 1981. See Also, Stephanie Tarbin, "'Pucelle de Dieu" or Wicche of Fraunce': Fifteenth-Century Perceptions of Joan of Arc', in Phillipa Maddern & Andrew Lynch (eds), *Venus and Mars: Engendering Love and War in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, University of Western Australia Press, pp.119-146.

³² There is some dispute as to who the *real* individual Molly Pitcher really was. De Pauw cites Margaret Corbin who was involved in the defense of Washington in 1776, as the most likely candidate while others have thought she was Mary Hays McCaully who was present at Valley Forge in 1778.

³³ De Pauw, *Battle Cries and Lullabies*. See also Linda Grant De Pauw, 'Women in Combat: The Revolutionary War Experience', *Armed Forces and Society*, v.7, No 2, Winter, pp. 209-226.

³⁴ And this begs the question *what is the real story of Jessica Lynch?* The answer to this will probably never be known despite the assertions on the cover of the November 17 issue of *Time*, 'The Real Story of Jessica Lynch' [original emphasis] which contained extracts from Bragg's book and an interview with Lynch.

³⁵ 'Witch', 1:3.

³⁶ Bragg, *I'm A Soldier, Too*, p. 27.

³⁷ 'Homecoming', 3:5.

³⁸ D. Priest, W. Booth & S.Schmidt, 'A Broken Body, a Broken Story, Pieced Together', *Washington Post*, 17 June 2003, p.A01; J. Morse, 'Saving Private Jessica', *Time*, v.161, No 15, 14 April 2003, p. 66.

³⁹ For more discussion on the ways in which collective notions of the size and strength of women are used as bars to their military careers, rather than a focus on actual individual capacities, see Buttsworth, 'Bite Me'. The difference for Buffy is her individual capabilities are assessed as that, individual and lend weight to the idea that women may actually be collectively strong – rather than weak.

⁴⁰ Early, 'Staking Her Claim', Sharon MacDonald, 'Drawing the Lines, Gender, Peace and War: An Introduction', in Sharon MacDonald, Pat Holden, Shirley Ardener (eds), *Women in Peace and War: Cross Cultural and Historical Perspectives*, University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 1-26.

⁴¹ Early, 'Staking Her Claim'.

⁴² Macdonald, 'Drawing the Lines', pp. 22-23.

⁴³ Early, 'Staking Her Claim'.

⁴⁴ Ibid; See also Buttsworth, 'Bite Me.'

⁴⁵ In the fiscal year 2003, women made up 15% of active duty forces and 17% of reservists. See 'Executive Summary of the 2003 Population Representation in the Military Services', United States Department of Defense, <http://www.dod.mil/prhome/poprep2003/#>, Accessed December 2004. 25,400 women deployed to Iraq with the declaration of war. See Women's Research and Education Institute, 'Chronology of significant Legal and Policy Changes Affecting Women in the Military 1947-2003', http://www.wrei.org/projects/wiu/wim/wim_chron01.pdf, Accessed July 2004.

⁴⁶ Watchers have existed as long as Slayers within the mythology of *BTVS*. Watchers ostensibly train girls to be Slayers (or rather 'the Slayer' until the final season), but actually also seek to control Slayers and their power. While there are some female Watchers, most are men and the Watchers' Council has been depicted as an instrument of patriarchal control

from which Buffy freed herself in Season Three, and which was ultimately blown up in Season Seven.

⁴⁷ 'Storyteller', 7:16.

⁴⁸ 'Chosen', 7:22.

⁴⁹ Carol Stabile, *Feminism and the Technological Fix*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1994, pp. 107-115. Interestingly, Stabile begins this chapter with reference to Sarah Connor in *Terminator 2*, igniting debates on women and violence, while groups of women were being shipped out to war in the Middle East. The singular female, isolated from the general population, personified this debate while there were ongoing attempts to stress that female soldiers were still 'real' women, and to separate them from their male counterparts.

⁵⁰ Eileen Rose Feinman, *Citizenship Rites: Feminist Soldiers and Feminist Antimilitarists*, New York University Press, New York, 2000, p.17; Linda Bird Francke, *Ground Zero: The Gender Wars in the Military*, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1997, pp. 13-20.

⁵¹ Indeed following the attacks on the World Trade Center in September 2001, women flew combat missions over Afghanistan as well as playing active (if not officially combat) roles on the ground. However, their presence did not attract undue media attention. At the time Lt. Colonel Claudia Kennedy stated that the press dealing with female soldiers as routine stories was a positive step in the successful gender integration of the U.S. military. 'Babes in Battle', *On the Media*, 28 June 2002,

http://www.wync.org/onthemedial/transcripts_062802_babes.html, accessed 4 July 2002.

However, since the 'war on terror' was partially framed in terms of rescuing the women of Afghanistan from barbarism and the oppression of the Taliban, perhaps the invisibility of women in uniform was necessary in order to maintain the gender order implicit in such a chivalrous exercise. See E. Rosenberg, 'Rescuing Women and Children', *The Journal of American History*, v.89, No 2, September 2002, pp. 456-465. See also Kumar, 'War Propaganda and the (Ab)Uses of Women'.

⁵² Lori Manning, Spokesperson on Women in the Military for the Women's Research and Education Institute, Washington D.C., Personal Communication, 2004.

⁵³ J. Lowy, 'Conflict in Iraq: Heroics of Female POW Raise Combat Debate', *Naples Daily News*, 4 April 2003, http://www.cfnapps.naplesnews.com/sendlink_printthis.cfm, accessed 10 April 2003.

⁵⁴ R.C. Kirkwood, 'What Kind of Nation Sends Women Into Combat', 16 April 2003, http://www.visionforumministries.org/sections/hotcon/ht/womeninmilitary/what_kind_of, accessed 16 April 2003; R. Knight, 'Turning Women in to Cannon Fodder', *World Net Daily*, 11 April 2003, http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=31980 accessed, 13 April 2003; Elaine Donnelly, 'First Female Captives Held at Greater Risk', Center for Military Readiness, 2 April 2003, <http://www.cmrlink.org/WomenInCombat.asp?DocID=184>, accessed 21 May 2003.

⁵⁵ Opponents of women in the military have always emphasised the risk to women of rape at the hands of the enemy as the reason why women should not be allowed into combat, ignoring domestic violence statistics, the high rates of sexual assault within the military itself, and the fact that male soldiers can also be sexually violated.

⁵⁶ Bragg, *I'm a Soldier, Too*, pp. 95-96.

⁵⁷ 'In the Line of Fire: Lori Piestewa Becomes the First U.S. Servicewoman killed in Iraq', *People*, v.59, no 15, 21 April 2003, p.54.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Lorenzo E. Martin, 'How About Saving Shoshana Johnson?', *The Sacramento Observer*, 15 April 2003, http://www.sacobserver.com/news/commentary/0441501/shoshana_johnson.shtml, accessed 24 May 2003.

⁶⁰ Amy Alexander, 'Reading Between the Lines: Saving Private Johnson', *Africana*, 21 April 2003, <http://www.africana.com/columns.alexander/bw20030421pows.asp>, accessed 24 May 2003.

⁶¹ Howard and Prividera, 'Rescuing Patriarchy', p.92.

⁶² There have been a number of discussions of the ways in which Whedon has succeeded in playing with gendered stereotypes, and in many ways undermining them, but has maintained traditional depictions of race. For explicit commentary on this and warrior tradition, see Buttsworth, 'Bite Me' and *Body Count*, chapter five. For more general discussions see Lynne Edwards, 'Slaying in Black and White: Kendra as Tragic Mulatta in *Buffy*', in R. Wilcox & D. Lavery (eds), *Fighting The Forces: What's At Stake in Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, Maryland, 2002, pp. 85-97; Kent Ono, 'To Be a Vampire on *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*: Race and ("Other") Socially Marginalizing Positions on Horror TV', in E. R. Helford (ed), *Fantasy Girls: Gender in the New Universe of Science Fiction and Fantasy Television*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, Maryland, 2000, pp. 163-186.

⁶³ Shoshana Johnson was an 'army brat', her father, uncle and sister all having spent time in the military. See Martin, 'How About Saving Shoshana Johnson?'

⁶⁴ For examples of articles that show the integrated lives of servicemen see N. Gibbs & M. Thompson, 'A Soldier's Life', *Time*, v.163, No 3, 21 July 2003, p.28; R. Ratesar & M. Weisskopf, 'Portrait of a Platoon', *Time*, v.51, 5 January 2004, pp.44-59. Opponents of women in the military ignore the mixed motivations of male enlistees, often despite similarities in language in response to questions. See Brian Mitchell, *Women in the Military: Flirting with Disaster*, Regenery Publishing, Inc, Washington D.C., 2001, pp. 169-170. Mitchell has made much of the supposed differences in reasoning for men and women to enlist, ignoring similarities present in statements he himself has used. Mitchell has claimed men will cite economic reasons in order to cover up their embarrassment at expressing national pride and the desire to protect their country. In Mitchell's analysis, however, women are not accorded the same complexities of motivation.

⁶⁵ Linda Grant de Pauw, posting to the H-Minerva Academic List for Women and War, July 23 2003, H-Minerva@H-NET.MSU.EDU

⁶⁶ Dan Kennedy, 'Angel and Whore', *The Portland Phoenix*, 14-20 May 2004, http://www.portlandphoenix.com/features/other_stories/multi2/documents/03831458.asp, accessed May 2004. This is by no means the only article that placed these two young women in opposition to one another. See also 'Two Young West Virginia Women Symbolise War's Glory, Shame', *Boston Herald*, 8 May 2004, <http://news.bostonherald.com/national/view.bg?articleid=22129>, accessed 10 May 2004.

⁶⁷ J. Woestendiek, 'The Small-Town Girl Who Ended Up on Every Channel', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7 May 2004, <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2004/05/06/1083635386181.html?oneclick=true>, accessed May 8 2004.

⁶⁸ See for example, Linda Chavez, 'Sexual Tension in the Military', *Townhall.com*, 4 May 2004, <http://www.townhall.com/columnists/lindachavez/printlc20040505.shtml>, accessed August 9 2004.

⁶⁹ Jean Baudrillard, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, trans. Paul Patton, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1995.