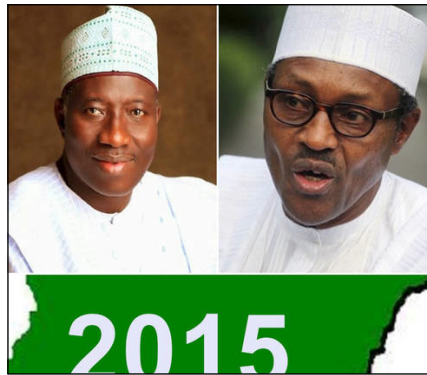


## Preventing Violence in Nigeria's 2015 Elections

By John Paden, Clarence Robinson Professor of International Studies at George Mason University, [jpaden@gmu.edu](mailto:jpaden@gmu.edu)

Ernest Ogbosor, S-CAR PhD Candidate, [eogbosor@masonlive.gmu.edu](mailto:eogbosor@masonlive.gmu.edu)

Nigeria's then-President, Goodluck Jonathan and the opposition leader, Muhammadu Buhari, signed a peace pact in January 2015, referred to as "Abuja Peace Accord." The peace accord was signed in the presence of the former Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, to ensure that the political parties were committed to peaceful elections. United States Secretary of State John Kerry and former South African President, Thabo Mbeki also met with the two top presidential contenders on different occasions to reiterate the need for free and fair elections in Nigeria devoid of



From left to right: Goodluck Jonathan and Muhammadu Buhari. Photo: Flickr user CityPeople News Nigeria.

violence. However, in spite of these efforts, there were fears and anxiety that the forces working against the peaceful conduct of the upcoming elections might be difficult to contain. The shift in the election date; the new alliance between Boko Haram and the ISIS; the challenges of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC); and the deadly campaign strategies of the two major political parties, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressive

Congress (APC); suggest that peaceful polls might be elusive. This article reviews the factors likely to undermine the conduct of the 2015 election.

In 2011, Nigeria experienced post-election violence that left about 800 people dead and previous elections in the country had followed a similar trend. Threat analyses conducted by various organizations showed that the likelihood of violence was higher this time than in previous elections partly because of the strong opposition that suddenly sprang up to challenge the dominant party. As such, violence preventive measures were initiated by various stakeholders, both within the country and from the international community, to forestall issues that could undermine the conduct of the election and destabilize the country. However, the current developments in the country make one question whether the various violence prevention efforts are yielding results.

First, let us reflect on the reasons for the election postponement. Prior to February 14, 2015, INEC and Nigeria security agencies assured Nigerians that they were ready for the elections. However, on February 7, one week before the commencement of the election, Chairman of INEC, Professor Attahiru Jega announced a shift in the election dates to March 28 (Presidential election) and April 11, 2015 (Governorship election).

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COMMENTARY

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# Feminist Dinner Parties and the Necessity of Feminist Curiosity

By Lisa McLean, S-CAR PhD Student, lmclean3@masonlive.gmu.edu

Alice Peck, S-CAR MS Student, apeak2@masonlive.gmu.edu

**O**n April 2, 2015 Dr. Cynthia Enloe of Clark University presented the keynote address, "How to Take Militarized Masculinities Seriously Without Losing Your Feminist Curiosity," at the Center for the Study of Gender and Conflict's third annual research conference. Before her address, CGC staff members, Lisa McLean and Alice Peck interviewed Dr. Enloe, and a lively conversation on a range of subjects ensued, including integrating gender analysis into university curricula, harnessing key skills for feminist activists and academics, and militarized masculinities and policing in the United States.

Our interview began by discussing the critical need for the broad implementation of gender analysis in academic programs, research, and practice in order to create deeper understandings of the dynamics of conflict and war. Dr. Enloe addressed the central issue that confronts feminists in academia and beyond, one aptly captured by the assertion of Mason's Dr. Ingrid Sandole-Staroste (2011) that, "gender is all too often understood to mean 'women' [...] and it is mostly left to feminists and other female scholars to address gender relations." We asked Cynthia for her perspective on gender courses that are framed merely as an 'option' or elective, as opposed to fully integrated into core political science and conflict resolution curricula. She responded:

*Why do you really think that your analysis of conflict is reliable when you've got no gender analysis in here? What do you really think you can say about the causes of war, or the ongoing dynamics of war - as in Iraq over years, or what makes for sustainable peace, or a just post-war society? What makes you think you can understand any of those things if you don't ever put your mind to investigating the workings of masculinities, femininities, and the lives of women[...] If you can't understand the workings of relationships between men and women, then you can't, in fact, make reliable sense out of any conflict.*

This perspective merits emphasis. It is not merely an argument that women's voices, needs, and expertise should be considered in conflict analysis and resolution, but that it is impossible to fully conceive of the causes of conflict, its consequences, or paths to its just resolution without attention to the gendered dynamics of war.

Cynthia is not alone in voicing this critique; numerous feminist scholars have called for such a paradigm shift and important gains have been made within the academy in international institutions like the UN, and in peacebuilding programs. Enloe warns, however, that young feminists should not be complacent in pushing for change to realize



Dr. Cynthia Enloe. Photo: Clark University.

these goals. Reflecting on her recent book, *Seriously!*, Enloe described an imaginary dinner party attended by prominent and revolutionary feminists from around the world. The central toast of this dinner party was the message "never accept later":

*Never accept later. Never be satisfied when they say, "that's a great idea, we'll work on that, it will come later," because later never comes, and when later does come, it's too late. All of the other systems are firmly established so that when you do get your demand met, the structure is so elaborate and so institutionalized that by the time your request is respected, in fact, it will have no effect on*

*the workings on power. "Not now, later," simply becomes another system.*

Rejecting the 'add-women-and-stir' approach, Enloe argues that a feminist curiosity is not merely "a side dish of brussel sprouts," but requires "a profound rethinking" of academic programming and practice in conflict resolution.

To successfully pursue necessary structural and institutional change is an extremely fraught and complex issue. Enloe suggests three political skills that all feminists should embrace to ensure their work is oriented to positive social change, without perpetuating the "unreliable" status quo. The first is to recognize and resist tokenism: "how to tell if you're a token? One of the hallmarks of a token is that it is visible, but it changes nothing." The second skill is to be cognizant of co-optation, which Enloe admits is a challenge: "some of us cannot tell that we've been co-opted until it's already too late and we have lost the trust of the people with whom we thought we were allied." The third skill is to acknowledge when you are becoming complicit: "While being co-opted usually means that you believe that you are still the force for positive change, you don't realize that you've been hugged to death. Complicit really means that you've sold a little bit of your soul. That you've lost some capacity to really see what your own goals have been warped to become." These skills are important not only to feminists, but to everyone committed to social justice work. A 'feminist curiosity' about power, positioning, discourse, and the ways in which these are used to support the status quo, or challenge structures of power is critical for burgeoning activists.

A curiosity regarding gender and conflict enables scholars to explore spaces commonly overlooked in analysis of conflict and violence, and to consider the ways in which militarism seeps into areas of everyday life. A curiosity about gender reveals the gendered experiences of violence in places not typically considered 'warzones.'

*Continued on Page 8*

network

# Dual Degree Students have a "Dual" Day of Career Development and Exploration

By Jacqueline Finch, Career and Academic Advisor, [jfinch@masonlive.gmu.edu](mailto:jfinch@masonlive.gmu.edu)



From left to right: Jenna Maynard, Nicole Eisenschenk, Durrell Quarles, Joshua Maynard, Jared Purkey, Peter Farrugia, Lauren Corboy, Roksolana Burianenko, Dr. Omar Grech from the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, Thomas Schmidt, Political, Economic, and Commercial Officer at the US Embassy and Thanos Gatsias, Teaching Coordinator. Photo: Thanos Gatsias.

On Friday, February 27, 2015, the cohort from the USA-EU Collaborative Dual Degree Program in Malta had a "dual" of a day! To start out their Career in Diplomacy exploration day, they visited the U.S. Embassy in Malta, where they observed the multi-faceted work of the U.S. Diplomats in action. They returned to campus to meet with U.S. Diplomat in Residence Terry Davidson, via Skype. They explored with him further the advantages of a career with the U.S. Department of State and learned how to apply for employment and other job options available to them upon graduation. Thanos Gatsias, the teaching coordinator explained: "The session lasted for more than an hour and the students seemed to be genuinely interested in it." A student, Joshua Maynard, said that it was a most useful and helpful event.

The Dual Degree program combines the faculties of two renowned educational institutions: George Mason University's School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, the oldest and largest program of graduate conflict studies in the United States, and the University of Malta's Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, which has been offering advanced degrees in diplomacy and building bridges between Europe, North Africa and the Middle East for the past twenty-five years. The program is delivered over the course of three semesters on a full time basis beginning every September. Throughout the first two semesters, classes are held on a block basis; the third semester is devoted to the completion of dissertation/project work. If you are interested in more information, please check out the website: [scar.gmu.edu/academics/maltaprogram](http://scar.gmu.edu/academics/maltaprogram) or [www.um.edu.mt/imp](http://www.um.edu.mt/imp) ■

initiatives

## "Ferguson" by Laura Villanueva, S-CAR PhD Student

*Shooting, Looting,  
No more apple pie,  
Media Outlets,  
Scribble, Scrabble,  
What headline can we chime?*

*Testimony, witness story,  
chanting on the rise,  
hands up, buckle up,  
ain't no end in sight.*

*Show up, Blow up  
Time, Time, Time,  
these lives matter,  
those lives matter,  
tear gas got me high.*

*Badges, clashes,  
do not cross the line,  
Monticello, Histories gallows,  
Get ready for the ride.*



Laura Villanueva.  
Photo: Laura Villanueva.

# ISA Honors Christopher Mitchell

By Kwaw de Graft-Johnson, S-CAR Newsletter Editor, [kdegraff@masonlive.gmu.edu](mailto:kdegraff@masonlive.gmu.edu)

**A**t this year's International Studies Association's (ISA) annual convention, the Peace Studies Section proudly honored Dr. Christopher Mitchell with a Distinguished Scholar Award. Dr. Mitchell, who was honored alongside Dr. Vivienne Jabri of King's College London and Dr. I. William Zartman of Johns Hopkins University, is well-known for the depth of his theoretical work as well as his use of the problem-solving workshop to engage in track II diplomacy. As we at S-CAR know, Chris is regarded as one of the most significant scholars in the field of conflict resolution and one of the general pioneers of the idea of a scholar-practitioner. Since writing his now classic *Structure of International Conflict* in 1981 (A new edition of this book, *The Nature of Intractable Conflict*, was published in fall 2014), his research has focused on peace making.

Chris has held academic positions at London University, the University of Southampton, and City University, London, and has taught at the University of Southern California, Brigham Young University, and the University of Maryland. He was a full time teaching faculty of S-CAR for 17 years and was the School's Director for four. In the 1960s, he was a member of the pioneering research team at University College, London, which, under the leadership of Dr. John Burton, developed the basic



From left to right: Landon E. Hancock and Christopher Mitchell.  
Photo: Roger Mac Ginty.

ideas of conflict resolution, problem solving workshops, and informal "Track II" interventions into protracted conflicts. He has been involved in Track II interventions that have tried to address the sources of and solutions for conflicts between Greek and Turkish Cypriots, Israelis and Palestinians, Somalis and Ethiopians, British and Argentinians,

Nationalists and Unionists in Northern Ireland, Basques and Spaniards, Moldovans and Trans-Dniestrans, and among diverse Liberian factions.

His first serious research into conflict sources and dynamics involved work in the Horn of Africa before it was afflicted by the Cold War, followed by an examination of peacemaking and peace breaking in Sudan on the 1970s and 1980s. His later work involved efforts to develop solutions for the conflict over the Falklands/Malvinas Islands, which involved an examination of the intellectual dead ends provided by concepts such

as "territorial sovereignty," "self-determination" and uni-dimensional "national identity." With over two decades of teaching experience, Professor Mitchell has supervised numerous doctoral dissertations and mentored many young scholars.

S-CAR Dean, Kevin Avruch, has described Chris' work in the conflict resolution field, as using his practice to inform his research and theory-building. "Indeed, he has often said that his work as a practitioner is the basis on which his research and theorizing have grown and matured over the years. He shares this commitment with his mentor John Burton. One result of closely linking practice to theory is the way he has of connecting micro-level aspects of conflict resolution (for example, the various roles of different sorts of third parties) with meso- and macro-level concerns (for example the broader context of asymmetric power relations among the parties and other structural features of the conflict)."

We at S-CAR would like to congratulate Chris on his award and his continued commitment to S-CAR and the field. As Landon Hancock said, "It was the distinct pleasure of the awards committee to include Chris as one of this year's honorees and to have S-CAR as a partner in sponsoring this event. We look forward to continued partnership with S-CAR as we try to build the Peace Studies Section into a vibrant community to bring together scholars and students of peace and conflict resolution. Hopefully, we will have the opportunity to recognize the many accomplishments of S-CAR's faculty, students, and alumni as we all work together to strengthen the field." ■

EVENTS

## Upcoming S-CAR Community Events

### Monday, April 20, 2015

Cognitions, Emotions and Mental Constructs  
1:30pm-3:00pm

### Wednesday, April 22, 2015

Celebration of Achievements  
5:30pm-8:00pm

### Thursday, April 23, 2015

Syria: Coordinated Disengagement, Local Governance, and Functional Coexistence  
5:00pm-7:00pm

For more, visit [scar.gmu.edu/events-roster](http://scar.gmu.edu/events-roster)

# Student Opinion: Let's Talk about U.S.-Southeast Asia Relations

By Nhina Le, S-CAR PhD Student, mle14@masonlive.gmu.edu

S-CAR's Asian graduate students organized a meeting, to discuss U.S. - Southeast Asia relations. This also served as an exciting reunion between two old friends, Dennis Sandole, a Professor of International Relations and Conflict Resolution at S-CAR, and Daniel Chew, a former Senior Cultural Affairs Specialist at the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Chew served as a program officer for Sandole's U.S. State Department lecture tours to Malaysia and Southeast Asia (SEA) for twenty years.

Convening this meeting demonstrated Sandole's ability to sustain the connection between S-CAR and Asian officials and scholars via track-two diplomacy. This kind of diplomacy involves informal dialogue and problem-solving activities aimed at building relationships and encouraging new thinking that can inform policy-making. It includes academics, entrepreneurs, and leaders of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs) who interact more freely than state officials.

Our discussions included three themes: (a) the rise of the so-called Islamic State (IS) and security implications for SEA and America, (b) "lesser-known" stories of the U.S. "pivot" toward Asia, and (c) SEA opportunities for recent graduates from S-CAR and other universities in America. The discussion allowed all participants, including myself, the opportunity to think deeply and broadly about these themes.

## *The rise of IS and implications for SEA and America*

Most participants in the meeting were interested in understanding the linkages between IS and SEA. IS is a predominantly Sunni jihadist group seeking to sow civil unrest in Iraq and the Levant with the aim of establishing a caliphate - a single, transnational Islamic state based on sharia. The group emerged from the ashes of the U.S.-led invasion



From left to right: Asaka Ishiguro, Yerin Lee, Nhina Le, Elmilia and Daniel Chew, Dennis Sandole, Naphaphanni Singsuwan, and Willy Torres. Photo: Nhina Le.

to oust Saddam Hussein; al-Qaeda in Iraq, and the insurgency that followed provided IS fertile ground to wage guerrilla warfare against coalition forces and their domestic allies.

Chew explained that, as the U.S. sought to assemble an international coalition to combat this threat, it looked mostly to the Middle East and Europe, the regions that seem to face a direct threat from militant Islamist groups. However, other parts of the world were just

as anxious about IS—above all, SEA. The top concern for SEA governments was that IS's extremist ideology could prove attractive to the region's Muslims. It may lure some Muslims to the Middle East to fight as part of the group, and carry the ideology and fighting experiences back to SEA. Singapore has revealed to mainstream media that several of its nationals have made their way to the Middle East to join IS. The Philippine government has suggested that local IS sympathizers are attempting to recruit from among the Bangsamoro populations from southern islands of the country. Still, the greatest concern comes from Indonesia and Malaysia. In Indonesia, radical groups have declared support for the Islamic State in Jakarta, Surakarta, and other cities. In Malaysia, the police have arrested 19 IS-inspired militants planning attacks in and around Kuala Lumpur against pubs, discos, and a Carlsberg brewery. Three Malaysian women were alleged to have left for Syria to wage a "sexual jihad" (jihad al-nikah), offering offering their bodies to IS fighters to boost their morale.

Note: This article is continued online at: <http://scar.gmu.edu/newsletter-article/let's-talk-about-us-southeast-asia-relations>

## Recent S-CAR Media Appearances

### Voices: In Midst of War, Life Goes on for Syrian Kids

April Umminger, S-CAR MS Student  
*USA Today*, 4/26/15

### Cyclone Pam is Just the Start

Yvett Clarke and Michael Shank, S-CAR Alumnus  
*Newsweek* 3/19/15

### Virginia Arrest Records Show Racial Disparities

Johnny Mack, S-CAR PhD Candidate  
*WAMU 88.5 FM American University Radio*, 3/10/15

**Conflict Analysts from S-CAR have appeared on 16 occasions since the last newsletter. These 3 represent a sample of those publications. For a complete list, please visit: <http://scar.gmu.edu/media>**

NEWS

## Carol Daniel Kasbari, S-CAR PhD Student

By Kwaw de Graft-Johnson, S-CAR Newsletter Editor, kdegraft@masonlive.gmu.edu

In 2011, Carol Daniel Kasbari was invited to give a TEDx Talk about her work with Palestinians and Israelis. "My talk was focused in urging both people to step out of their respective comfort zones, and to engage in actions and activities that will bring conflict transformation." Carol's message was borne out of her professional experience of working in the region for over 20 years as well as her personal background. "It is only through personal commitment, activism and collaboration that we can see a genuine sustainable peace process in the region that is based on equality, justice, and shared responsibility."

Carol joined the S-CAR community in Fall 2014 as part of the incoming PhD cohort. "After more than a decade out of school, I decided to further my education out of a desire to conduct a broader and deeper theoretical analysis that can be used to develop new frameworks of peace-building." Carol's focus thus far in the program has been on the role of the media in conflict resolution. "My interest in this area comes from my long years of work with media professionals on the conflict coverage."

In 1998, Carol co-founded the Israeli Palestinian Media Forum (IPMF) to enable partnerships between both sides to emerge through

productions, exchange of articles, and joint initiatives. Carol also worked to establish a similar organization in Cyprus for media professionals there to collaborate. All of this made her realize how crucial the journalist's role is in transforming the conflict and creating a new reality. Her work was supported by UNESCO for eight years and later by USAID and international NGO's such as Search for Common Ground and Catholic Relief Services. Her widely published op-eds are an example of articles she calls "sensitive reporting." She talks about Jerusalem in a way that anyone can identify with and not argue about. Her reflections on the dialogue between conflicted parties bring hope to the reader that peace is possible if we follow the people. After completing her PhD, Carol would like to become a scholar in the field of war and media. The link to Carol's Tedx Talk, can be found at: [scar.gmu.edu/articles/tedxjaffa-carol-daniel-kasbari-israel-palestine-going-beyond-dialogue-of-words](http://scar.gmu.edu/articles/tedxjaffa-carol-daniel-kasbari-israel-palestine-going-beyond-dialogue-of-words) ■



Carole Daniel Kasbari. Photo: Carol Daniel Kasbari.

## Asha Noor, S-CAR MS Student

By Kwaw de Graft-Johnson, S-CAR Newsletter Editor, kdegraft@masonlive.gmu.edu



From left to right: Imam/Professor Johari, Asha Noor and Kojo Nnamdi. Photo: Asha Noor.

On April 14, 2015, Asha Noor was invited on the Kojo Nnamdi Show, to talk about the recent terrorist attacks by Al-Shabab, and the challenges facing Somali-Americans. "I agreed to be on the show because many individuals thought I could better represent

the concerns and views of the Somali diaspora as this issue is something I have been working on for several years." Asha has been involved in the Somali diaspora in North America and some of the organizations that she has been a part of are the Somali Diaspora Youth, ADAR Foundation, IRUSA, and Global Somali Diaspora. "What continues to drive my involvement with these groups, are our collaborative efforts to see a better future for Somalia."

Asha is a master's student at S-CAR and her

research focus has been on the challenges of social reconciliation projects relating to mining disputes and resources in Somalia. In the summer of 2014, while she was in Somaliland to conduct field research, she discovered that some of the mining disputes were related to terrorism. "I found out that some of the coal depletion in the communities, were as a result of terrorist networks taking advantage of this resource as a funding source." To try to address this issue, Asha worked with the Academy for Peace and Development to look to provide official contracts for mining purposes in order to track how much of this resource, terrorists groups were actually exploiting.

After graduating, Asha would like to continue her work with local diaspora organizations and pursue a doctoral degree. "I will like to become a scholar on Somali affairs where I would utilize all the skills, expertise and knowledge that I acquire to help Somalia rebuild from years of conflict." The link to the Kojo Nnamdi show can be found at: [scar.gmu.edu/radio-broadcast/challenges-facing-america's-somali-diaspora](http://scar.gmu.edu/radio-broadcast/challenges-facing-america's-somali-diaspora) ■

## Preventing Violence in Nigeria's 2015 Elections

Continued from page 1

According to Prof. Jega, the reason for the shift, was the security concern expressed by the National Security Adviser. Prof. Jega defended the postponement as in line with the constitutional provisions of section 26 (1) of the Electoral Act, as amended. Nonetheless, the decision to postpone the election was criticized within and outside Nigeria. The manner in which the election postponement was carried out at the eleventh hour left a lot of doubt and suspicion on the part of the agencies responsible for this change. It also made some people wonder if the security agencies were committed to holding the elections or whether there were forces that are making them act differently.

Since the beginning of February 2014, the Multinational African Union Force, consisting mainly of some ECOWAS and regional neighbors with Nigeria, started a mop-up operation against the Boko Haram extremist group. Boko Haram originally controlled about 52,000 square kilometers of Nigerian territories. The National Security Adviser requested to shift back the election date by six weeks to enable the Multinational force to complete their mop-up operation. But was six weeks enough to eliminate a group that had killed 13,000 Nigerians in the past 5 years? If so, then it was likely that the counter-insurgency operations were politicized. The Multinational force recently made some gains in retaking territories initially taken over by Boko Haram. But as a twist of fate, the recent allegiance between Boko Haram and the ISIS should not be taken for granted. Many analysts have argued that the recent pledge of alliance by Boko Haram is a way of gaining media attention after having been fractured by the AU Multinational force. However, Boko Haram's alliance with ISIS should not be dismissed; the group is capable of evolving strategy that can frustrate the Multinational force. The history of how the group emerged from a peaceful Islamic group to deadly sect should not be forgotten, including the heavy-handed response by the Nigerian military.

Apart from the security challenges, there was the question of whether INEC was really ready for the elections after many years of preparations. The issue of the distribution of the permanent voter's card (PVC), and the use of card readers have continued to surface. The INEC claimed that the election was postponed due to security concerns, but only about 66.58% of the PVCs were distributed prior to the original date of the presidential election, and it's doubtful that all the PVCs will be distributed before the rescheduled election. The introduction of card readers by INEC to prevent election fraud was seen as a positive development, but many have raised questions about the place of election card readers in the Nigeria constitution. Another issue that was raised about the card reader was the experimentation with a high profile election such as the presidential election, when the card reader has not been used before. These questions will continue to



John Paden and Ernest Ogbozor.  
Photo: Evan Cantwell.

generate concerns, even as the elections are over. This development has also led to recent calls for the sacking of the INEC Chairman by some people of the PDP, a situation that could further aggravate the problems. The parties are deeply divided over the issues of the PVCs and the card readers.

In addition, the two main parties continued to attack each other. The APC criticized the ruling PDP of corruption, mismanagement of the economy and the inability to address the issues of insecurity and infrastructure provisions. The PDP also questioned the morality and legitimacy of Buhari's

presidential aspiration, having overthrown a democratic government in 1983 as a military leader. The other criticisms of the opposition leader were the issues of his age (72), and alleged health concerns. These issues of concern continued to create further divisions and exchange of words in the run up to the election. The dangerous aspect of the campaign strategies was the use of social media to twist issues of contention between the parties. The strategies also went beyond focusing on issues to attacking personalities: allegations of sponsored character assassination programs, hate speeches, and inciting statements. The use of social media magnified these events for more public consumption, creating widespread discontent and hatred.

To many ordinary Nigerians, the PDP and the APC are birds of the same feather. The APC and PDP were recently described as Siamese twins obsessed with the same idea of dispossessing the Nigerian people. According to some people, the PDP candidate is described as not committed to a transformation agenda for the country. A Buhari candidacy was recently described as incapable of sanitizing the behavior of the APC. A modified statement of how a politician described the two parties is "I have discovered that the umbrella does not guarantee protection from the rain, and the broom does not sweep properly unlike vacuum cleaners." The ordinary Nigerian is less concerned about who wins and becomes the next president of the country than what happens after the election.

The common opinion of many analysts is that even though Muhammadu Buhari has won the election, there may still be violence in the country. "There may be unsettlement in the Niger Delta, and if Jonathan had won, there might have been an intensification of violence in the north." The ethno-religious and regional implications are obvious. To avert these two extreme scenarios, some have canvassed the option of an interim government or a unity government between the two major parties, as the election might not produce the much-acclaimed dividend of democracy. As Nigerians watch events unfold, the current situation requires new strategy to prevent likely violence post the 2015 election. As the saying goes "a stitch in time saves nine." The question is whether the time for conflict prevention has passed or last minute peace efforts will prevail. ■

## Feminist Dinner Parties and the Necessity of Feminist Curiosity

Continued from page 2

For Enloe, asking questions about the hidden manifestations of militarism and violence is critically important; such questions force us to consider, “how any masculinity can get militarized[...]. And that means that we find ourselves talking about what kinds of mindsets, what kinds of structures, and what kinds of physical environments encourage a step-by-step militarization of masculinities, but also of femininities.” Consider policing in the United States, the militarization of which is much discussed. Enloe encourages us to consider how people in our own communities are constructed as ‘enemies,’ who benefits from this construction, and how this sense of living in a world of enemies militarizes gendered relations of power.

Enloe describes how the militarization of the police creates a “hierarchy of masculinity” even among the police officers themselves, distinguishing those issued standard gear from those who receive military-issued hardware. One of the issues that captured Enloe’s attention in relation to the coverage of Ferguson was how it appears that changing the equipment police are assigned also serves to “change their own notion of gender.” Creating hypermasculinized units, decked out in tactical military-grade gear, shifts the gendered dynamics within the police force, and between the police and the community. As the police are positioned as masculinized, armed protectors of the community, a



From left to right: Leslie Dwyer, Elizabeth Mount, Lisa McLean, Cynthia Enloe, Oksana Anderson, Alice Peck, Christina DiBartolo and Emily Allen. Photo: Alice Peck.

divide between these militarized, hypermasculine ‘protectors’ and those who have been cast as the enemy becomes entrenched:

*If you have just a nightstick and the power to arrest, you still are likely to think you are amongst your fellow citizens. If you’re equipped with an M16, or you are driving around town in a DOD-issued armored vehicle, your fellow citizens don’t look like fellow citizens, they look like the enemy. And when you have police people thinking that their fellow citizens are, to their minds, the enemy, you are way down the path not just to militarization, but to the shredding of democracy.*

Through these examples, Enloe demonstrates not only the consequences of militarization in our communities, essentially ‘bringing the war home,’ but also the gendered nature of this process.

It is through curiosity about gender, and through an explicit attention to the gendered dynamics of power woven into all relations and structures within society, that we can begin to add complexity and nuance to existing interpretations of conflict. This curiosity to gender must go beyond the focus on women to acknowledge and deconstruct the ways in which rigid constructions of masculinities and femininities shape everyday life. A link to the conference can be found at: [scar.gmu.edu/event/dr-cynthia-enloe-how-take-militarized-masculinities-seriously-without-losing-your-feminist-cur](http://scar.gmu.edu/event/dr-cynthia-enloe-how-take-militarized-masculinities-seriously-without-losing-your-feminist-cur) ■



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