11 Gender trouble in cyberwar

Multiple masculinities and femininities of a cyberspy in the War on Terror

Winifred R. Poster[1]

In the internet age, looks can be deceiving. Abu Zeida would appear online as a male Al- Qaeda affiliate who hangs out in militant chat rooms for recruiting and training. He wears a scarf, has dark hair, and is pictured pointing a gun at the camera. He is from Afghanistan and Pakistan, and has participated in attacks on churches, consulates, and UN headquarters. But in the offline world, Abu Zeida is Shannen Rossmiller, a female former municipal judge from rural Montana in the US. She was born into a farming family, and is white, middle class, and middle-aged. She has bright, blond hair and was on the cheerleading squad in high school. She has never served in the military nor been to countries like Afghanistan and Iraq. Yet she has made a career out of posing online as male militants from those countries for the US state.

Technology is changing the nature of war, and one of the new fields is intelligence gathering in virtual spaces. Experts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) use the internet to infiltrate networks and collect information to identify plots and threats. The work involves entering extremist chat rooms, posing as militants from Iraq and Afghanistan, gaining their confidence, and acquiring details about plans for attacks. Shortly after 9/11, Rossmiller became one of the FBI's first and most successful transnational cyberspies. She exposed weapon caches, bomb plots, and cells in over 200 operations, which she handed to the FBI and Department of Homeland Security (Rossmiller 2007).

In this chapter, I bring up the case of Shannen Rossmiller to explore how military masculinities are shifting with the onset of the information and network society (Castells 2010; Hearn 2009). Identities online, including military masculinities, are inhabitable. Catching the enemy in military practice increasingly involves becoming the enemy. This dynamic is shocking in several ways on the surface – that such an unlikely participant can carry it out, and that such overt stereotypes of the 'Middle Eastern terrorist' are recreated in the process. Yet these are only small parts of the story.

I will show how virtualization enables a proliferation and hybridization of identities. The military masculinities that Rossmiller inhabits are pluralized, layered, and juxtaposed with femininities. So while she is Abu Zeida in her online life, she is a myriad other male personas as well, all with very different

physical features, temperaments, and behaviors, including levels of aggression and displays of masculinity. Digging further, we find an additional set of 'meta' masculinities. She creates the exterior characters by first inhabiting deeper interior personas aligned with the US military – one who is highly nationalistic and vengeful, and another who is diplomatic and mediating. Outside of all this, in her offline life, she enacts yet another set of personas. These are feminine in their display, ranging from patriotically domestic to career feminist. Thus, what comes with this pluralization of roles is an internal contest of political wills, between identities that are highly supportive of US military masculinity and others who seek to transform it. Unpacking all these personas, and exploring their implications for dominant military masculinities, both on and off the internet, is the aim of this analysis.

Military masculinities in cyberwar

In considering the relation of gender to warfare, Jeff Hearn writes (2011: 36):

> The military is one of the clearest and most obvious arenas of men's social power, violence, killing and potential violence and killing, in their many guises. It is an understatement to say that men, militarism and the military are historically, profoundly and blatantly interconnected.

Military masculinity is a broad concept, linking manhood to formal and informal war efforts. A Critical Studies of Men perspective also notes how military masculinity is about 'understanding men and masculinities as socially constructed, produced, and reproduced' and 'as variable, changing across time (history) and space (culture)'.

Too often 'military masculinity' is treated as a static, monotholic category rather than as a fluid dynamic that waxes and wanes, with internal differentiations and tensions (Cockburn 2011; Higate and Hopton 2005). My task in this chapter is to explore such variations within the particular context of the US War on Terror. This military paradigm was initiated by the US state after 9/11 and the attack on the World Trade Center. It has involved a quest for control over the perpetrators (Al-Qaeda) and aggressions in several Middle Eastern and South Asian countries (Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan especially). Although launched by the Bush administration, the War on Terror has continued in the same form more or less by successive presidents and against a growing number of targets (like ISIS).

There are many kinds of military masculinities circulating in the War on Terror. They vary according to: position in the global hierarchy (north/south), nationality and region (US, Iraq, etc.), and political stance towards militarism (war-making, diplomacy, etc.), as well as individual personalities. As I will show, Rossmiller enacts many of these masculinities at the same time.

Cyberwar refers to the integration of information and technology based platforms within military staging (Latham 2003; Osler and Hollis 2001). It includes a wide range of activities; from the use of physical military force for controlling media and communication outlets, to the manipulation of information for war propaganda, to the infiltration of online informational databases for the purposes of disruption or theft, to the use of ICTs to coordinate military personnel who are geographically dispersed. Cyberwar is distinct in two key ways from traditional ground warfare. First, conflicts are fought in virtual spaces. The battleground is located online, where political actors turn to networks for mobilizing, virtual military camps train soldiers, global positioning and satellite systems are used to plan attacks, databases become the targets, and so on. Second, battles are fought through virtual bodies. Soldiers may adopt an avatar, or online representation of one's self, in order to enter into virtual space and interact with colleagues and the enemy. This fundamentally reconstitutes the role of the body in war, and in how agency is practiced.

Scholars of cyberwar have captured changes to the body with the notion of the cyborg soldier. As 'hybrid of machine and organism' (Haraway 1991: 149), the cyborg represents how various robotic, electronic, and bio-technologies are integrated into the soldier's body to enhance his or her abilities (Gray 1997; Masters 2005; Weber 2009b). They wear breathing masks, night vision goggles, body armour, etc., that improve 'senses, intelligence, strength'. Technologies turn soldiers into 'armchair fighters'. They sit at computer terminals, oceans away from their targets, operating robotic drones that roam the streets of the enemy, shooting missiles and doing the work of war for them.

This conceptualization, however, leaves questions regarding online militarization – what happens to the cyborg soldier who is completely virtualized? Popular media has been interested in this idea, as fiction, television and film features soldiers in cyberspace who inhabit online bodies and play different roles and characters, like the movie *Avatar*. And, while there is a thriving literature on virtualization in other life contexts, like social and entertainment websites (i.e., online games and networking) and employment and organizational contexts (i.e., virtual teams), there remains little research on war and militarism. How will soldiers react to the disconnect of their mental selves from their virtual selves? Will soldiers behave more or less aggressively when they are playing someone else online? And more specifically for this analysis, what happens to female military personnel who inhabit male avatars (and other kinds of gender-crossing)?

While militarism has been associated with masculinity, scholars have shown us how women around the world have held critical roles in war efforts (Enloe 2007; Peterson and Runyan 2010). Some are closely linked to social ideals of femininity and domesticity, such as military wives or nurses,. Other roles are more associated with masculinity, for example, participating in warfare itself as soldiers or peacekeepers. Women have also worked in intelligence gathering. For the US military, they have served as couriers, guides, code-breakers, and analysts, and even in some cases as covert operatives or spies (National Women's History Museum 2007). Again, Rossmiller incorporates many of these 'female' roles as part of her personas.

Cyberwar pushes the boundaries of this literature. In many ways, femininity has been conceived as separate from masculinity within militarism (for example, 'women in the military' as its own topic). Yet the introduction of virtualization forces us to consider masculinity and femininity through a more complex lens. It means seeing gender as a more situational dynamic and a tool of agency.

In particular, Rossmiller's case represents what Butler (1990) calls 'gender trouble' – her agency involves improvised performances of femininities and masculinities rather than stable categories that are fixed to biological sex. It may not necessarily illustrate a challenge to core premise of gender binarism *per se*, given that both masculinity and femininity are real categories for her. But it does illustrate a *troubling* of gender, in that she invokes both femininities and masculinities at will and partakes in acts of crossing. Moreover, she layers and integrates these roles during military staging, and uses them to both support and contest military masculinities.

I use a variety of sources in the analysis below. In 2010, I conducted an in-depth interview on the phone with Rossmiller. Afterwards, she sent me some of her personal materials – documents from her business and powerpoint slides from her public lectures. I analyzed her website and academic journal publications for additional readings on her point of view. Finally, I did secondary research with news articles to gain a more rounded perspective of her background from third parties. So, while I do not have a direct observational perspective of her activities online or the technology she uses, my aim is to understand how Rossmiller presents herself to the world both online and offline. I label her various roles as masculine and feminine in accordance with the way that she presents them. My aim is not to essentialize her activities, but rather to show she takes on so many identities simultaneously. Below, I peel back and examine the layers of gendered imagery that Rossmiller enacts (Figure 11.1), starting with male virtual personas.

These are images that Rossmiller has collected and named on her own to create the characters. I have blurred the face of one to protect his identity.

Online militant masculinities

Rossmiller ended up in cybersecurity indirectly. After studying criminology in college, she worked as a paralegal and eventually became a municipal judge (the youngest woman in the country to do so, at the age of 29). When the attacks of 9/11 occurred, she was not working for the military, but took it upon herself to do something about the Al-Qaeda threat. She noticed the role that technology played in the attacks, and how little the US military was paying attention to it. In 2002, she started to peruse Middle Eastern political websites and community forums like www.alneda.com, alfirdaws.org, arabforum.net, and the Paradise Jihadist Supporters Forum, as well as Yahoo chat groups such as 'bravemuslims', etc. She learned that this context could be very effective for acquiring information on potential security breaches and catching people in the planning stages of violent acts.[2]

Getting into the chatrooms requires making up a persona of a character who is likely to hang out there – an avatar or alter ego. Encountering many kinds of masculinities in the chatrooms, Rossmiller found that she needed personas to correspond and interact with them. She developed a process for constructing the characters. This starts by observing the micro-behaviors of her targets (Rossmiller 2010b):

> The identities I create online, they're created in response to whoever I'm looking at. And that's the beauty of it, that I can create … an identity, a character that will be able to be attractive, valuable to my target. And so, knowing how to do that, and the right things that will make or break that whole process, is critical.

She does extensive research on the background of that character, with a checklist of items like his job, location, tribe, and political affiliation.

Her repertoire of these militants includes many aliases (Figure 11.1). She has posed as a recruiter, a trainer, an Algerian Al-Qaeda operative, and many others. Some are older and more rural looking, like Abu Abdullah (an Iraqi courier) who has a beard and head scarf. Others are young and hip, like Abu Musa (a weapons supplier) and Abu al Haqq (a financier) who are shaven and don sportswear. She develops full identities for her alter egos, keeping files on her computer with their date of birth, city of origin, biosketch, and photos from the internet (Colbert 2010).

Bringing the characters to life requires adopting ethnic, national, and regional habits: 'I learned to act like them … I learned to be like them' (Hayasaki 2009: 1). I have called this kind of geographic posing for one's job 'national identity management' in my wider research (Poster 2007). Participants often have to: use an alias; learn a new language or else geographically-situated lingo; understand cultural practices in order to make convincing small talk; and prepare scripts in case their cover is blown or questioned. Rossmiller did so by learning Arabic and reading over fifty books on the Middle East, including the Koran, from which she collected quotes and stories.

This posing also means taking on masculine behaviors. Many chatrooms in the first two decades of the internet's existence have been characterized by a masculinization of the virtual space – with various codes of conduct and norms of behavior for interaction that are set by and privilege male users (Kendall 2002). But as Kendall also notes, there are variations in how this is carried out. Accordingly, Rossmiller learned by trial and error how to detect and perform the subtle nuances of military masculinity. For some activities, she adopts a lighter male persona. If she wants an invitation to a chatroom, she uses a 'demanding tone' (Hitt 2007: 264) and acts like a bully. For deeper interactions, she uses a stronger masculinity (Rossmiller 2010b):

> One of them I had out there was, I claim, a right hand guy to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi [a real person who masterminded bombings in Spain and Amman]. And he was a nasty, blood-thirsty guy, and so I knew my character had to be that bad. I knew how to do it, and I knew the things to say that would make him believable.

This extreme aggressiveness is also a feature of Abu Zeida (Figure 11.1). Other male avatars are business and finance oriented, like Abu Zahir (Figure 11.1). Keeping track of each distinct avatar is a major part of the cyberspy routine.

Meta-masculinities

The 'Militants', however, are only one layer of Rossmiller's cyberspy act – the exterior part for visible display. Underneath the avatars above are two additional sets of masculinities – what we might call 'meta' personas. These are guiding identities for the virtual sphere that inform and shape how the avatars play out. They are not literal or formed in a concrete way, but rather symbolic amalgams of motivations within her inner psyche that spur action in different directions. Both represent her US standpoint, but on opposing sides of how the military should operate in the Middle East.

The 'Soldier' persona pushes characters towards the agendas of dominant military masculinity. It reflects Rossmiller's role in working for the benefit of the US state. For instance, the Soldier appears in her discourse on how she got started as a cyberspy (Rossmiller 2008): 'When President Bush launched the WOT [War on Terror], some private citizens heard it as a personal call to arms. I am one of those private citizens.' The Soldier has a clear hand in creating the look of the avatars, choosing pictures that duplicate the US imagery of the warfaring Middle Easterner. As in Figure 11.1, some of the militants are displayed as 'bearded, gun-toting, bandanna-wearing men in long robes or military fatigues' (Gerami 2005). Rossmiller invents and reinvents the terrorist, drawing on pervasive derogatory characterizations of Middle Eastern and South Asian men in US policy and media (Nayak 2006; Puar 2007; Shepherd 2006). Likewise, we can see the Soldier persona in Rossmiller's actions, as she exploits the chat-roomers for information and sets them up in some cases to get caught by US officials. Her findings have led to arrests in the Middle East, deportations from the US, and military strikes on the Afghanistan–Pakistan border (Colbert 2010). Thus, through the Soldier, Rossmiller transforms her role from a civilian into an agent of institutionalized militarism, acting in accordance with the principles of its hegemonic masculinity.

Alongside the Soldier, however, is a *counter*-meta-persona – one that enables and promotes an alternative military masculinity. The 'Mediator' has a more empathetic, thoughtful, and conciliatory orientation. In stark contrast to the Soldier, the Mediator disagrees with Bush's military strategy in the War on Terror: 'I'm not a Republican, I'll tell you that right now … You get tired of seeing your government looking like a bunch of walking idiots' (Harris 2006: 3). Bush administration anti-terrorism tactics, she asserts, 'created more discord' and increased 'the number of brothers interested in violence'. Moreover, the

Mediator is preventative of aggression, if not peace-oriented: 'the goal is to collect intelligence information to *prevent acts of terrorism* and to *work proactively within the law*' (Rossmiller 2008, emphasis added). The Mediator commits broadly to this agenda, regardless of which side is threatened with violence. When Rossmiller found a chatroomer attempting to thwart the Middle-East peace process by plotting to assassinate the president of the Palestinian Authority, she passed information on to the US state and the chatroomer was arrested (Harris 2006).

The Mediator views the 'enemy' quite differently than the Soldier. The Mediator empathizes with and even appreciates the chat-roomers mentally and technically. Rossmiller calls them 'some of the most creative and talented people I've ever known' (Rossmiller 2010b). When constructing the online characters then, the Mediator refrains from collapsing them into a single category. Instead, the Mediator varies and localizes the characters along many dimensions. S/he recognizes that some personas are deeply religious and others weakly so; some are educated and urban, others are not; some carry arms, while others are middlemen. This is a more diverse representation of militarized masculinities in the Middle East and South Asia, rather than the essentialized notions of 'Islamic' or 'Muslim' masculinity (Gerami 2005; Ouzgane 2006) created by or portrayed in the US. Conscious of her role in constructing these identities, Rossmiller broadens the range of personas by deriving them from the chatroom participants she encounters. She mirrors the masculinities online, carefully observing features of militant behavior and mimicking them.

In fact, the Mediator identifies with the characters in a very personal way. Rossmiller talks about it as 'immersion' and taking on their 'cognitive processes' (Rossmiller 2010a: 6):

> Throughout the character-creation process … it is critical that the investigator approach the situation with a mindset alteration that serves to effectively place her or him in the milieu of the subject … the investor must also strive to adopt the actual cognitive processes of the subject for an effective immersion of the created character into the socio-cultural norms that are consistent with the subject's milieu. Essentially, the investigator must become *of* the subject's society and all of the associated factors which effect and provide an underlying premise for the subject's mindset.

This means that the act of being a cyberspy and playing the Militant is more than just putting on an exterior costume. It is a unification with the character, and by extension, with the other participants in the chatrooms. It is an example of what Hochschild (2003) calls 'deep acting', i.e., reflecting on one's inner self to pull up and perform an outward affective display. When done for one's job, it is 'emotional labour'. For Rossmiller, the bonding is so intense that she cries when the avatars 'die', i.e., when she has to kill off or martyr the characters because they are no longer useful.

Thus, the act of creating online avatars is not done directly or through a single masculinity, but by layering them and using them as intermediaries. It involves acting upon acting: *first acting as the meta-personas of the Soldier and the Mediator, and then acting as the surface-personas of the Militants.* She becomes the Militants *through* the eyes of the Soldier or Mediator, sometimes both at once, as they wrestle for influence. As we see next, these online masculine identities intersect with another set of militaristic identities.

Offline femininities

In her offline world, Rossmiller presents another set of personas – ones that are deliberately and vividly 'feminine'. Even in domains that are not considered so, like business and technology, she interjects these selves and activities with a sense of womanhood. Like the masculinities above, these roles are strongly connected to the military. They vary in their orientation toward it, however.

One of these identities is the 'Homemaker'. The home is a crucial part of Rossmiller's offline identity. In a practical sense, she situates the base for her cyberspy operations in her house. She does this to care for her children on one hand, while enabling participation in the cyberspying on the other. She's quite proud of the Homemaker, and in her public lectures features a picture of herself on her computer at the kitchen table (Figure 11.1). Critically, the Homemaker structures her material life so that it can facilitate her virtual work for the US military, thereby recasting the household as a site of both militarism and domesticity. It is a femininity therefore that is both traditional (childrearing, domestic, etc.) and non-traditional (working, cyberspying, etc.), both supportive and transgressive of stereotypical women's roles. To be sure, however, the femininity of the Homemaker is comfortably aligned with dominant military masculinity.

Other femininities, however, – like the 'Entrepreneur' – are more resistant to dominant military masculinity. Rossmiller-as-entrepreneur is averse to the US military. In fact, she is resistant to such an extent that she decided to open her own organization for counter-surveillance outside the state, in the private sector. The Entrepreneur is pro-woman, if not self-identified as a feminist. She directs all the financial, corporate, and technical operations, and is the CEO over a staff almost entirely of men. She has told the press that she doesn't like being presented in stereotypically gendered terms, like the 'Montana mom' or 'the stupid little woman patrolling the Internet' (Harden 2006). The homepage of her website is flanked with historic posters of women, like the iconic character of 'Rosie the Riveter', emphasizing her strength in work and for nation (Rossmiller 2011).

Most significantly, the Entrepreneur distances herself from the formal military. While still working within the framework of military espionage, she wanted to be independent of the formal bureaucracy and organizational culture of the US government, referring to the FBI as 'a man's world' (Rossmiller 2010b). She also wanted to be able to develop intelligence technologies in her own way, sometimes challenging traditional military systems.

This leads to her third role offline. As 'Technology Designer', Rossmiller set a primary goal in changing intelligence-gathering machines to become less militaristic. Instead of the popular 'shoot first and talk later' forms of computerization being deployed in the military (e.g., robotic 'drone' soldiers), she moves in a different direction – towards technologies of cautious introspection, cross-cultural understanding, and conflict avoidance.

Her new technology, called 'Asylumm', offers a software database and analytics for studying the social dispositions of actors in Middle Eastern conflict zones. It encourages US ground forces and cyberspies to gain an understanding of the social milieu before entering the field (Rossmiller 2010a: 1):

> Implicit within the mindsets of the observer and the subject are the cultural, religious and ideological biases of each. Rather than eliminate these effects, we seek to account for them over the course of the interaction, thereby effectively allowing the observer to view the interaction from within the mindset of the subject while taking her own mindset into account. … the significance of this problem cannot be overstated. The cost in terms of lives and treasure expended in the course of foreign operations is huge in numbers and in the effect upon morale, both civilian and military. Many times, this cost is increased simply because we do not bother to study the minds of the enemy or others in the theater whose roles have a direct or indirect impact on the outcome of these operations.

The idea is to expose 'biases' that military actors may have about each other within their interactions. This goes both ways – how foreign people may view Americans, as well as how US personnel may misjudge foreign nationals. Paying more attention to their own ethnocentrisms, US military personnel may be able to avoid flashpoints that trigger unnecessary attacks. In this sense, the Designer seeks to temper the violence within conflict zones and use military technology for more diplomatic, conciliatory ends.

Throughout this venture, Rossmiller infuses the Designer role with femininities. Sometimes this is done subtly, by integrating femininity into the discourse of the technology itself. In her writing about Asylumm (as in some of the quotes earlier), she switches from female to male pronouns when representing the subjects, objects, and users. Other times, she does this more overtly, by projecting her image visibly to the public as a woman who creates counter-surveillance technology (Figure 11.1).

Examining Rossmiller's offline personas, therefore, we see another side of or layer to her agency. Juxtaposed with the masculine avatars in her virtual life are the self-defined feminine roles of the Homemaker, Entrepreneur, and Designer. And while the offline and online worlds tend to be marked by different genders (although not exclusively), they coexist within her subjectivity and daily activities where she regularly transgresses the borders of masculinity and femininity.

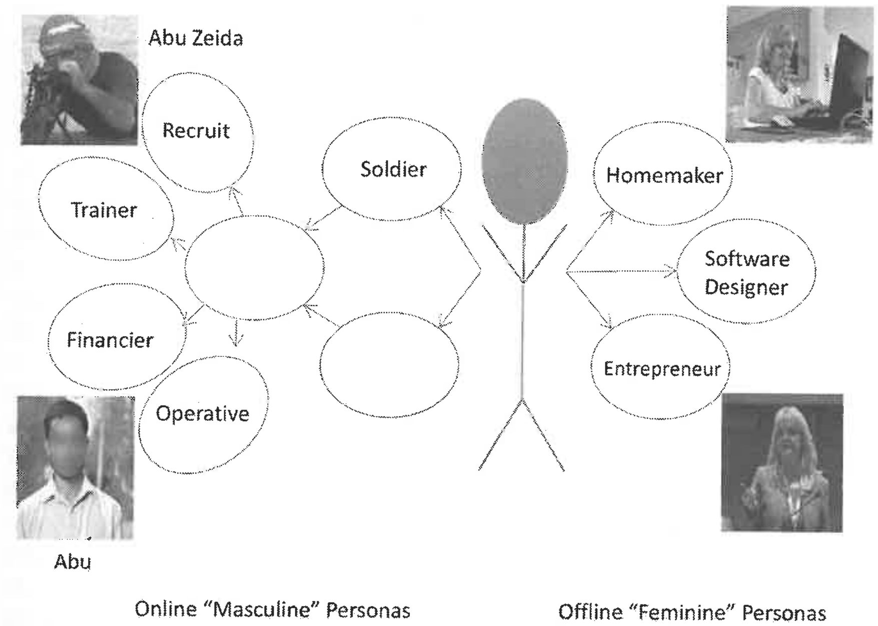

Figure 11.1 Rossmiller's cyberspy personas
Photo sources: Colbert 2010; Rossmiller 2008.

Conclusion

Rossmiller is an amalgam of gendered multiplicities – stacked, alternated, and integrated. She is an emerging form of the cyborg soldier (Gray 1997). While this metaphorical figure is often thought of in physical terms, Rossmiller represents the hybridities of *virtual* technologies and humanness, as well as masculinities and femininities, war and negotiation. Her case also extends our thinking on the gendered hybridities of militarism, as provocative research reveals how male soldiers display 'feminine' coded behaviors of intimacy (Persson 2011), and female militants display socially-coded 'masculine' behaviors of violence (Parashar 2011). On the internet, however, a military actor can inhabit an entire persona, rather than just selected behaviors, and moreover, enact countless masculine and feminine military roles *at once*.

The complexity of Rossmiller's case prompts many interpretations. Some may see Rossmiller's project as the ultimate demonstration of dominant or hegemonic military masculinity. It shows the disconnect and *freeing* of hegemonic masculinity from the body. One does not need to be a man to do the virtual work of posing as militant men and enforcing the principles of the US War on Terror. And by enabling the transformation of women into virtual men, the internet drives women further into the hegemonic dynamic of military masculinity.

The critic would also say that the act of constructing so many personalities is an aid to, and an advancement of, the core narratives of the War on Terror. Rather than presenting a static role of the 'Terrorist', Rossmiller-as-the-Soldier has elaborated this imagery for the post-9/11 era online. She has perfected the process of cybertyping (Nakamura 2002, 2008), developing a more nuanced construction of the terrorist through the internet. Ironically, this makes her better at maintaining the system of hegemonic military masculinity online than many of her male colleagues inside the FBI. Her virtual work, furthermore, ultimately assists (even if indirectly) the larger project of the War on Terror, whose casualties have been disproportionately Middle Eastern, civilians, women, children, and the elderly (Weber 2009b, 2010).

Finally, the critic might also point out that her role as Designer may be especially dangerous in enhancing surveillance of the public, and Middle Easterners in particular. Asylumm may be considered a prime example of the state's foray into 'data mining', i.e., the collection of information on wide populations and sophisticated statistical analysis to enhance profiling of suspected militants (Guzik 2009). Her work as Entrepreneur is reflective of the growing 'security-industrial complex' (Peterson and Runyan 2010: 163) in which the military is privatized and extended into the market (Higate 2011; Lenoir 2008). Moreover, some feminist critics argue that military technologies themselves have become masculinized (Masters 2005, 2008; Weber 2009a, 2009b). In turn, the features of the soldiers who hold, wear, or operate them (gendered or otherwise) no longer matter.

Others might look at the same scenario from a different point of view. They would note that the fundamental aim of her cyberspy work to has been to prevent acts of violence, not commit them. Her goal as Mediator is to expose online plots *before* they are carried out and instead thwart the perpetrators through legal means. And while her focus has been protecting US personnel and citizens, she has acted on behalf of Middle Easterners in some cases as well. These supporters would note that, as Entrepreneur, she has rejected formalized militarism, to the extent that she has refused to work within it.

Online, Rossmiller's pluralized construction of the characters may be seen as an attempt to counter the stereotypes, by making the personas less homogenized and more realistic in their diversities. Her deep symbiosis with the Middle Eastern avatars has likely influenced the direction of her offline work, in developing technology that is more thoughtful and conciliatory and less reactionary and violent towards foreign peoples.

This parallels several technology-based projects aimed at promoting alternative masculinities within the military. Tim Lenoir's 'Virtual Peace' project (2008), for instance, has gained permission to 'recycle' and 'repurpose' the military's number one training game – 'America's Army' – for use in peace and conflict resolution. Likewise, engineer Elaine Raybourn has been hired by the Army, the Marine Corps, the Army Special Forces and DARPA to design online games that foster communication, negotiation, consensus-building, and self-awareness (Raybourn 2005). Research on identity shifting in online spaces finds that gender swapping can help men find their peaceful side and women find their assertive side (Bruckman 1993; Turkle 1995).

Thus, some might say that the information age is an opportunity for transformation of the military as an institution, as it is for gender (Gray 2000; Haraway 1991; Turkle 1995). Rossmiller's case shows that, while combat has been the last holdout for women's exclusion in the military, the internet is eroding traditional barriers for many kinds of participants. And if anyone can be a cyberspy and cybersoldier, such participants may introduce a greater diversity of voices, personalities, and orientations to the world of virtual warfare – not simply 'feminine' ones but 'human' ones (Penttinen 2011). The disconnect of the body from the spirit online may be an occasion to enact military roles in a different way – as the Mediator rather than the Soldier.

Clearly, Rossmiller has a hand in both reinforcing and challenging dominant military masculinities. Her many personas – across their gendered markers – coalesce at different moments in support of the War on Terror, and at other moments against it. Yet if Rossmiller's experience suggests that online soldiers may be deploying a fractured, plural set of identities, this may be a site of intervention for alternative agendas of gender and resistance in the future.

Notes

1 Many thanks to Jeff Hearn and the GEXcel centre at Örebro and Linköping Universities for supporting this research. I am grateful to my fellow Theme 9 participants at the 2011 workshop for their sharp insights. Co-editors of this book, Ernesto Vasquez del Aguila and Marina Hughson, provided helpful comments. Much appreciation goes to research participants for offering their time and stories for this analysis. Thanks to Amy Wilhelm for editing assistance. All opinions expressed herein are my own.

2 For more on her personal history and pathway into cybersleuthing, see Poster 2012.

References

Bruckman, Amy S. 1993. 'Gender Swapping on the Internet'. Proceedings of INET, 1–6.

Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity.* New York: Routledge.

Castells, Manuel. 2010. *The Rise of the Network Society.* 2nd edn. Malden MA: Blackwell.

Cockburn, Cynthia. 2011. 'Gender Relations as Casual in Militarization and War: A Feminist Standpoint'. In *Making Gender, Making War: Violence, Military, and Peacekeeping Practices*, edited by Annica Kronsell and Erika Svedberg, 19–34. London: Routledge.

Colbert, Tom. 2010. 'Maneuvering the Media Minefield'. Powerpoint Presentation. Camarillo CA: CommStatim Corporation.

Enloe, Cynthia H. 2007. *Globalization and Militarism: Feminists Make the Link*. Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Gerami, Shahin. 2005. 'Islamic Masculinity and Muslim Masculinities'. In *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities*, edited by Michael S. Kimmel, Jeff Hearn, and R.W. Connell, 448–457. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

Gray, Chris Hables. 1997. *Postmodern War*. New York: Guilford Press.

Gray, Chris Hables 2000. 'Man Plus: Enhanced Cyborgs and the Construction of the Future Masculine'. *Science as Culture* 9(3): 277–299.

Guzik, Keith. 2009. 'Discrimination by Design: Predictive Data Mining as Security Practice in the United States' 'War on Terrorism''. *Surveillance and Society* 7(1): 1–17.

Haraway, Donna. 1991. 'A Manifesto for Cyborgs'. In *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, 149–181. New York: Routledge.

Harden, Blaine. 2006. 'In Montana, Casting a Web for Terrorists'. *Washington Post* 4 June, A03.

Harris, Francis. 2006. 'Montana Mother Fights Al-Qa'eda from Her Sitting Room'. *The Telegraph*www.telegraph.co.uk 26 June, 1–3.

Hayasaki, Erika. 2009. 'Cyber-Spy Shares Her Know-How Tracking Terrorists'. *Los Angeles Times*, www.latimes.com 11 January [Accessed 13 February 2009].

Hearn, Jeff. 2009. 'Hegemony, Transnationalisation and Virtualization: MNCs and ICTs'. Conference presentation, Changing Men and Masculinities in Gender Equal Societies, Roskilde University.

Hearn, Jeff. 2011. 'Men/Masculinities: War/Militarism – Searching (for) the Obvious Connections'. In *Making Gender, Making War: Violence, Military, and Peacekeeping Practices*, edited by Annica Kronsell and Erika Svedberg, 35–48. London: Routledge.

Higate, Paul. 2011. 'In the Business of (In)Security? Mavericks, Mercenaries and Masculinities in the Private Security Company'. In *Making Gender, Making War: Violence, Military, and Peacekeeping Practices*, edited by Annica Kronsell and Erika Svedberg, 182–196. London: Routledge.

Higate, Paul, and John Hopton. 2005. 'War, Militarism, and Masculinities'. In *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities*, edited by Michael S. Kimmel, Jeff Hearn, and R.W. Connell, 432–447. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage.

Hitt, Jack. 2007. 'I Spy'. *Wired*, November, 244–264.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. 2003. *The Managed Heart: Twentieth Anniversary Edition*. Berkeley CA: University of California Press.

Kendall, Lori. 2002. *Hanging Out in the Virtual Pub: Masculinities and Relationships Online*. Berkeley CA: University of California Press.

Latham, Robert. 2003. *Bombs and Bandwidth*. New York: The New Press.

Lenoir, Tim. 2008. 'Recycling the Military-Entertainment Complex with Virtual Peace'. www.virtualpeace.org [Accessed 19 January 2010].

Masters, Cristina. 2005. 'Bodies of Technology: Cyborg Soldiers and Militarized Masculinities'. *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 7(1): 112–132.

Masters, Cristina. 2008. 'Bodies of Technology and the Politics of the Flesh'. In *Rethinking the Man Question*, edited by Jill L. Parpart and Marysia Zalewski, 87–108. London: Zed.

Nakamura, Lisa. 2002. *Cybertypes*. New York: Routledge.

Nakamura, Lisa. 2008. *Digitizing Race*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

National Women's History Museum. 2007. *Clandestine Women: Spies in American History*. Alexandria VA: NWHM. www.nwhm.org/online-exhibits/spies/.

Nayak, Meghana. 2006. 'Orientalism and "Saving" US State Identity after 9/11'. *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 8(1): 42–61.

Osler, Fiona, and Paul Hollis. 2001. *Activists' Guide to the Internet*. London: Prentice Hall.

Ouzgane, Lahoucine, ed. 2006. *Islamic Masculinities*. London: Zed.

Parashar, Swati. 2011. 'Women in Militant Movements: (Un)Comfortable Silences and Discursive Strategies'. In *Making Gender, Making War: Violence, Military, and Peacekeeping Practices*, edited by Annica Kronsell and Erika Svedberg, 166–181. London: Routledge.

Penttinen, Elina. 2011. 'Nordic Women and International Crisis Management: A Politics of Hope?' In *Making Gender, Making War: Violence, Military, and Peacekeeping Practices*, edited by Annica Kronsell and Erika Svedberg, 153–165. London: Routledge.

Persson, Alma. 2011. 'Changing Boundaries, Defending Boundaries: Gender Relations in the Swedish Armed Forces'. Ph.D. dissertation, Linköping University.

Peterson, V. Spike, and Anne Sisson Runyan. 2010. *Global Gender Issues in the New Millenium*. Boulder CO: Westview Press.

Poster, Winifred R. 2007. 'Who's On the Line? Indian Call Center Agents Pose as Americans for U.S.-Outsourced Firms'. *Industrial Relations* 46(2): 271–304.

Poster, Winifred R. 2012. 'The Case of the U.S. Mother / Cyberspy / Undercover Iraqi Militant: Or How Global Women Have Been Incorporated in the Technological War on Terror'. In *Globalization, Technology Diffusion, and Gender Disparity: Social Impacts of ICTs*, edited by Rekha Pande, Theo van der Weide and Nicole Flipsen, 247–260. London: Routledge.

Puar, Jasbir K. 2007. *Terrorist Assemblages*. Durham NC: Duke University Press.

Raybourn, Elaine M. 2005. 'Adaptive Thinking andf Leadership Training for Cultural Awareness and Communication Competence'. *Interactive Technology and Smart Education* 2: 127–130.

Rossmiller, Shannen L. 2007. 'My Cyber Counter-Jihad'. *Middle East Quarterly* (Summer): 43–48.

Rossmiller, Shannen L. 2008. 'Penetrating Minds of Mayhem: Inside the Mind of an Islamic Extremist'. Powerpoint presentation. AC-CIO, LLC Intel Ops.

Rossmiller, Shannen L. 2010a. *ASYLUMM: A Situational Diagnostic Tool*. Helena MT: Advanced Cyber-Counter Intelligence Operations, LLC.

Rossmiller, Shannen L. 2010b. Personal interview, 27 April.

Rossmiller, Shannen L. 2011. Shannenrossmiller.com. Personal website: Accessed 17 October 2011.

Shepherd, Laura J. 2006. 'Constructions of Gender in the Bush Administration Discourse on the Attacks'. *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 8(1): 19–41.

Turkle, Sherry. 1995. *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Weber, Jutta. 2009a. 'High-Tech Masculinities, Oriental Outlaws and Armchair Warfare'. Conference presentation, Men and Masculinities, Moving On! Embodiments, Virtualities, Transnationalisations, GEXcel Conference, Linköping University.

Weber, Jutta. 2009b. 'Robotic Warfare, Human Rights, and the Rhetorics of Ethical Machines'. In *Ethics and Robotics*, edited by Rafael Capurro and Michael Nagenborg, 83–103. Heidelberg, Germany: Deutsche Nationalbibliothek.

Weber, Jutta. 2010. '"Security Architectures", New Ontologies, and the Category of Gender'. In *Gender Change in Academia: Remapping the Fields of Work, Knowledge, and Politics from a Gender Perspective*, edited by Birgit Riegraf, Brigitte Aulenbacher, Edit Kirsch-Auwarter and Ursula Müller, 217–230. Wiesbaden, Germany: VS-Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Part IV

Bodies

Routledge Advances in Feminist Studies and Intersectionality

Routledge Advances in Feminist Studies and Intersectionality is committed to the development of new feminist and pro-feminist perspectives on changing gender relations, with special attention to:

- Intersections between gender and power differentials based on age, class, dis/abilities, ethnicity, nationality, racialisation, sexuality, violence, and other social divisions.
- Intersections of societal dimensions and processes of continuity and change: culture, economy, generativity, polity, sexuality, science and technology.
- Embodiment: Intersections of discourse and materiality, and of sex and gender.
- Transdisciplinarity: intersections of humanities, social sciences, medical, technical and natural sciences.
- Intersections of different branches of feminist theorizing, including: historical materialist feminisms, postcolonial and anti-racist feminisms, radical feminisms, sexual difference feminisms, queer feminisms, cyber feminisms, post-human feminisms, critical studies on men and masculinities.
- A critical analysis of the travelling of ideas, theories and concepts.
- A politics of location, reflexivity and transnational contextualising that reflects the basis of the Series framed within European diversity and transnational power relations.

Third Wave Feminism and Transgender
Strength through Diversity
Edward Burlton Davies

A Feminist Post-transsexual Autoethnography
Challenging Normative Gender Coercion
Julie Peters

Unsustainable Institutions of Men
Transnational Dispersed Centres, Gender Power, Contradictions
Edited by Jeff Hearn, Ernesto Vasquez del Aguila and Marina Hughson

Unsustainable Institutions of Men

Transnational Dispersed Centres, Gender Power, Contradictions

Edited by
Jeff Hearn, Ernesto Vasquez del Aguila and Marina Hughson

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2019
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
A catalog record has been requested for this book

ISBN: 9781138093003 (hbk)
ISBN: 9781315107141 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Taylor & Francis Books

We dedicate this book to our kind friend and inspirational colleag Marie Nordberg (1 April 1955–29 March 2015).