

Journal of Vincentian Social Action

Volume 4
Issue 2 *WARS, CONFLICTS, AND THE
MARGINALIZATION OF DISSENT*

Article 4

September 2019

INTRODUCTION: WARS, CONFLICTS, AND THE MARGINALIZATION OF DISSENT

Tuija Parikka
St. John's University, parikkat@stjohns.edu

Basilio G. Monteiro
St. John's University - New York, monteirb@stjohns.edu

Sejal Singh
St. John's University, singhs2@stjohns.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.stjohns.edu/jovsa>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#), [Business Commons](#), [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Curriculum and Social Inquiry Commons](#), [Disability and Equity in Education Commons](#), [Educational Methods Commons](#), [Law Commons](#), [Life Sciences Commons](#), [Medicine and Health Sciences Commons](#), [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Commons](#), and the [Urban Studies and Planning Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Parikka, Tuija; Monteiro, Basilio G.; and Singh, Sejal (2019) "INTRODUCTION: WARS, CONFLICTS, AND THE MARGINALIZATION OF DISSENT," *Journal of Vincentian Social Action*: Vol. 4 : Iss. 2 , Article 4.
Available at: <https://scholar.stjohns.edu/jovsa/vol4/iss2/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by St. John's Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Journal of Vincentian Social Action* by an authorized editor of St. John's Scholar. For more information, please contact JoVSA@stjohns.edu.

INTRODUCTION: WARS, CONFLICTS, AND THE MARGINALIZATION OF DISSENT

Tuija Parikka, Basilio Monteiro, and Sejal Singh, Guest Editors

Compulsion for war and imperative for peace: These two impulses have driven human history, which is elegantly played out in Homer's Iliad. Achilles and Priam, two proud warriors and fathers, are capable of unspeakable brutality and at the same time capable to rise to the nobility. Conflicts, wars, and crisis, unfortunately, abound, transform, and become metastasized in unexpected ways. The vast majority of armed conflicts today are not fought by nation states and their armies but rather informal entities, such as gangs and warlords using small arms, improvised weapons, and media technologies. Few, usually poor resource regions, get global attention, thus deprived of political will and economic resources needed to resolve the conflicts. As women and other minorities are becoming primary targets and suffering unprecedented casualties, they are profoundly affected by practices and cultures of warring, yet often remain voiceless in the global arena.

This special issue of the *Journal of Vincentian Social Action* attempts to draw attention to glossed-over conflicts through an array of voices, perspectives and disciplines. Minna Aslama Horowitz focuses on the problematique of warfare in the digital age. As contemporary information wars are fought by using communication as specific kind of weaponry, she examines how such wars affect the most vulnerable on societal, institutional, and individual or collective levels, and calls for solutions and accountability in an effort to restore and sustain healthy democracies.

The American military occupation of Fallujah, Iraq, in 2004 provides the context for Jason Jarvis who analyzes the ideologically preferred way of publicly

commemorating the occupation on the precondition of forgetting the severe material effects of war, as well as the American responsibility for these acts. Jarvis warns us about the digitally mediated master narratives that ask us to omit key details from the public memory of the occupation.

Kathleen German and Rosemary Pennington explore counter-narratives regarding women's role in armed conflict, especially in the context of ISIS. The authors' exploration of recruitment of Western and non-Western girls and women to ISIS, effectively enabled by contemporary communication technologies, shifts focus from victimhood to active agency. The authors illustrate how Western understanding of female empowerment plays out in the recruitment practices of ISIS, and calls for strategies to counter such attempts.

Jorge Restrepo introduces gender into cultures of warring through the case of Colombian conflict which took place between the Colombian government and guerrillas in the 60s. Restrepo narrates the conflict as giving rise to uber-males who were bolstered by the conflict through the cruel marginalization of women, non-gender confirming, and other minorities, which was followed by painful aftermath of seeking justice for all.

Brian Harte's contribution focuses on Guinea-Bissau as the site of widespread and persistent corruption, crime, and political instability. Harte calls attention to the plight of the people living in one of the poorest countries of the world, and emphasizes the urgent need for more research and other resources in order to find effective solutions

to multilayered problems of Guinea-Bissau. Adrian Pandev sheds light on an atypical minority - foreign professional workers - affected by the U.S foreign policy and trade negotiations since the Trump Administration took office in 2017. Pandev points out how being neglected, in this case, inadvertently turned out to the advantage of these workers.

This special issue ends with Juan Chebly's commentary on current turmoil in Venezuela. His sharp criticism targets the causes and consequences of turning a promising democracy to utter despair and destitution. If indeed, power invested in one person, like Chelby maintains, is at fault, then what unites the papers in this special issue is a shared belief in returning it to the people.

Optimistic reading,

Tuija, Basilio, and Sejal

ABOUT THE EDITORS

Tuija Parikka is Associate Professor of Communication Arts at St. John's University. Her current research focuses on the relationship between globalization, gender, migration, and digital media.

Basilio Monteiro is Associate Professor in the Collins College of Professional Studies at St. John's University. Among many interdisciplinary research interests, he specializes in media, communication, and peacebuilding.

Sejal Singh is an Assistant Professor in the Legal Studies department at St. John's University. Her research focuses on juvenile rights, employment, and immigration law.