in a given conflict situation. Structural violence (e.g. creating poverty or security policy) is largely the preserve of government systems yet is less visible than interpersonal or direct violence. Perhaps this why Buscher and Ling portray, in their account, "the IRA getaway car" as being solely responsible for the death of the McGuire children—despite the fact that an Army vehicle was engaged in a high speed chase.

Other issues deserving further attention in the book include questions surrounding gender roles in the Peace People. Although women made up the vast majority of those attending the early rallies, their numbers were less proportionate when it came to their representation in the eventual structure. Also, what lessons can be learnt from the Peace People about the importance of internal democratic processes and grass-roots consultation in the effectiveness of peace groups? Glossing over the controversies of funding, procedures, and general "back-room" politics within the organisation does little to equip future peace/human rights activists or global leaders with the thinking tools necessary for such work.

On the whole, part of the problem may have been that the authors didn't consult the wide variety of critical sources available on the story of the Peace People. But is it also possible that they were so wedded to the portrayal of "Great Women" that they may have been unable to pursue any genuine analysis of their political context or the effectiveness of the organisation? A story written in the vein of "hagiography" to provide role models for younger women is problematic in itself, as critical historical social and political contexts tend to be sacrificed in order to measure individual successes and failures. Also, such an approach risks committing the authors to become apologists for the women's lives and work, rather than facilitating genuine dialogue around issues of conflict. While making women's peace histories accessible at the secondary level does indeed represent a significant pioneering effort, it is perhaps even more crucial that such stories present fundamental complexities of being an activist for peace, justice, and human rights.

THE AFTERMATH: WOMEN IN POST-CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Sheila Meintjies, Anu Pilay, and Meredith Turshen, Eds.
London : Zed Books, 2001.

BY ANNE GOODMAN

This is an important book about a neglected subject: women in post-conflict situations and the possibilities of their effecting transformation. Based on an international conference in Johannesburg, South Africa on "The Aftermath: Women in Post-War Reconstruction" in July 1999 that brought together activists, academics ,and governmental representatives from many parts of the world, the book presents a wide diversity of experiences and perspectives.

A primary aim of the conference was to develop new theoretical frameworks for women's experiences in the aftermath of armed conflicts; the subject matter of the first part of the book. A key understanding that emerged was that there is no real "aftermath" for women. Given the violence and misery that continue for women even after a ceasefire, it is more accurate to see this period as simply a different phase in the war system. The book points out that there is no one typical aftermath, that "women" cannot be seen as a single category, given the many other aspects of their identity, and that war effects a further fragmentation, as women have a range of experiences and connections to the conflict.

Despite the differences, common features emerged. There are many losses for women in war, but some unexpected gains, and in either case there are changes in roles, gender relations, and women's sense of themselves. Seeds for transformation are planted in wartime through the survival strategies women develop on behalf of their families and communities, their creativity, and their peacebuilding abilities. Seeds are planted in unlikely places like refugee camps and practices of sorcery. And they are planted, paradoxically, by the way war acts to surface and reconceptualize conflicts which have become normalized in peacetime, like sexual violence against women. Developing out of their wartime experiences, many women want more than a reconstruction of the past after the conflict ends; rather they have a vision of a transformed society that includes equity in gender relations, including specific rights related to women's gender roles, access to resources and political decision-making.

The Aftermath discusses the many reasons why the opportunities for gain that emerge in conflict are in fact seldom realized in the aftermath. Post-conflict peacebuilding programs, typically based on an assessment of human needs or human rights narrowly defined as civil and political rights, tend to reconstruct the patriarchal order. Women may not internalize their wartime shifts as an ongoing part of their self-identity. A male backlash against women is typical after an armed conflict, and women's issues must often take a back seat to other priorities, especially in nationalist or class struggles.

The authors suggest that the post-conflict period is too late to effect change, but see great potential in the transitional cusp between war and peace. The need for women's participation in peace negotiations came up repeatedly, with authors noting this rarely happens. It will be interesting to see the effects of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, passed

in October 2000 as a result of persistent efforts by women's peace organizations, which calls for increased participation of women at all decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes.

Transformation is not just about external structures and conditions; it implies internal changes in consciousness and agency. Some of the most important work for change is subtle, involving education, shifts in framing, consciousness-raising, and sharing of stories such as those in the second part of this book. As many of the contributions in the book make clear, the roles women play in war and its aftermath are less important than the way they conceptualize them. Traditional domestic roles can be politicized and interpreted in an expansive way; conversely, without a real change in the underlying ideas, women's changing roles can be accommodated within the existing social order.

Reading this book caused me to reconceptualize a project I was involved in Toronto during the 1991-92 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina called "Woman to Woman." The project involved ex-patriate women from all sides of the conflict, and because of our different political outlooks, we opted for what we saw as a humanitarian project: providing small bags of essential toiletries to women in the war-zone. I now recognize its potential as a political act of caring for the Other (following Lepa Mladjenovic's chapter in the book).

I see this book as being useful for both academics and activists. Through pointing out the obstacles to change, as well as the conditions and contexts that make change possible, it indicates many suggestions for more effective political organizing and activism and further study.

WOMEN WITHOUT MEN: MENNONITE REFUGEES OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Marlene Epp.
Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000.

BY SHANNON STETTNER

Immigration histories that focus on a single gender generally trace the voluntary movements of males. Marlene Epp's *Women Without Men* differs from such histories because it traces the forced relocation of Mennonite women and their children from Russia during World War II. Numerically, these refugees represent a small number: between 1947 and 1952, 8,000, overwhelmingly female, Mennonites came to Canada. Yet, Epp argues that these women are worthwhile subjects because of "the intersection of multiple identities—those of woman, of widow, of Soviet, of ethnic German, of Mennonite," which "combined and contrasted to produce unique choices and experiences." This observation informs the three major themes she explores: 1) the intersections of gender, war and immigration; 2) how the women's ethno-religious identification as Mennonites affected their experience; and 3) family fragmentation and reconfiguration, with particular emphasis on the role and attitudes of the widows. Ultimately, she cautions that their status was one "to be endured, not relished," their widowhood both "liberating" and "debilitating."

Many immigration histories inadequately address conditions in the sending society. *Women Without Men* avoids this shortcoming through a detailed account of the dislocation process in Russia, the refugees' retreat with the German army, and their experiences in refugee camps, all of which are important to understanding their adaptation to Canada. Establishing this context is particularly germane since Epp's analysis relays the constant struggle between "the way in which Mennonite women's roles were deconstructed prior to and during the war and then reconstructed after immigration." While female-headed families became necessary in Russia, they were problematic for Mennonite communities in both Paraguay and Canada. In Paraguay female-headed families were considered weak (spiritually and physically), while in Canada they were viewed as morally suspect because they defied the nuclear family norm. Epp employs this dichotomy of strength versus weakness to illustrate the complications confronting the refugees' adaptation.

In the exploration of the challenges of adaptation, Epp convincingly exposes the conflict between generations of immigrants. She utilizes, among archival sources, 34 taped oral histories, which are particularly valuable in contrasting individual and group or "social" memories. Early immigrants from the Soviet Union had romanticized memories of the country which clashed with the harsh ones held by the recent refugees. Conflict is also demonstrated in Epp's discussion of the differences in religious expression. Both groups argued that their faith was stronger; one because of their regular church attendance and strict adherence to doctrine, the other because their faith had been tested through dislocation and resettlement. Tension between the old and new immigrants most clearly ignited over the issue of remarriage. As many husbands had "disappeared" and their deaths were never verified, the Mennonite community in Canada struggled over whether to allow refugees to remarry, even though remarriage would negate the problematic presence of single women in the Mennonite community. On this issue, Epp's analysis is interesting because it highlights the sometimes conflicting treatment of remarriage