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## *The Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire.* Cynthia Enloe.

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Cynthia Enloe, *The Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004. \$50.00 hardcover, \$19.95 papercover.

Cynthia Enloe's early scholarship on the militarization of women's lives in the 1980s paved a way for her later work, which challenged assumptions about the proper role of women in international politics. In this book, Enloe, a Research Professor of Women's Studies and International Development at Clark University, continues her exploration of the relationships between masculinity, femininity, and militarization through a series of accessible critiques that are grounded in, as Enloe describes it, a feminist curiosity dedicated to "taking women's lives seriously." While she casts her theoretical net to the lives of women broadly, her chronicles of ordinary lives seek to unravel the complex cultural and economic relationships between the powerful and the marginalized.

In Part I of the book, Enloe explores how cultural values of feminine respectability and sense of duty buttress the globalizing economic forces that draw corporations such as Reebok and Nike to Southeast Asia. Through a gendered line of inquiry, she demonstrates that it is not only the imperial instruments of power that keep the workers of Asian "tiger" economies beholden to US corporations: the role of the dutiful daughter is highly complicit in these economic arrangements.

Enloe further demonstrates in Part II of the book how patriarchal cultural values are necessary features in the maintenance of patterns of violence against women in places such as Bosnia and Okinawa. Her analysis highlights the ways in which masculinity and militarism are frequently intertwined to inform nationalist agendas and showcases the way in which military expertise has become equated with political leadership, particularly in the U.S. context.

Through analyses of the post war societies of Vietnam, Bosnia, and Rwanda, as well as commentaries on the more recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, Part III examines the implications of persistent militarization in postwar societies. These essays suggest that the stubborn persistence of masculinity requires a feminist response that demands, among other things, institutional

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accountability. Throughout the book, Enloe reveals her professional and personal development as a feminist through a series of interviews with feminist scholars, editors, and specialists in international relations. The autobiographical content culminates in Part IV as Enloe sifts through her memoirs to assess just how her own girlhood was militarized.

The *Curious Feminist* is a lively and readable collection with a sardonically comical edge. Despite the often-harrowing content, Enloe remains optimistic and forward looking. She achieves this by demonstrating how gendered analyses can be used to identify sites for feminist organization and action. Simultaneously, she sets forth a research agenda for the feminist study of international politics that emphasizes the urgent need for a sustained feminist curiosity. Ultimately, as Enloe suggests, the possibility of instituting change in unequal power structures requires it

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