have liked Ellis to make more explicit the relationship between individual stories of women and their collective efforts of resistance. This book is a rich text of women's thoughts and action under conditions of war and violence, a source which invites debate and analysis.

MAIREAD CORRIGAN AND BETTY WILLIAMS: MAKING PEACE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Sarah Buscher and Bettina Ling.
New York: Feminist Press.1999.

BY MARIE HAMMOND CALLAGHAN

Although women's peace movement history is largely marginalised within the academe and general media, occasional efforts are made to highlight the peace-building work of individual women considered to have risen from "ordinary" circumstances to meet "extraordinary" challenges. In a series entitled "Women Changing the World," Nobel Peace Prize winners Mairead Corrigan and Betty Williams take their place as two of the world's "global leaders for human rights" as well as becoming role models to "inspire future world-changers." Prefaced by Charlotte Bunch (founder and executive director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University, U.S.A.) the feminist perspective guiding the book is clearly laid out. She asserts that, regardless of global cultural and social differences, "women often share similar problems and concerns about issues such as violence in their lives and in the world, or the kind of environment we are creating for the future."

This dual biography by authors Buscher and Ling provides a brief but engaging narrative of the Corrigan/Williams stories focusing on their family influences and the conditions they faced in their communities in violent political conflict. Largely descriptive in style, the main focus of the book is to explain how their lives became intertwined through a tragic accident which took the lives of the McGuire children in West Belfast and led to their founding of the Peace Women/Peace People in August, 1976. Attractively formatted and written in highly accessible language, the target audience appears to be American secondary/high school (especially female?) students. In this sense, it represents a pioneering (and laudable) effort to make women's peace history visible, especially for younger readers.

In the context of women's peace history and feminist peace studies, however, there are some serious theoretical and historical (as well as pedagogical) problems with this account. Key points at issue here include historical perspective and interpretation as well as social analysis.

The contemporary women's peace movement in Northern Ireland began in the early 1970s with groups such as Women Together for Peace in Belfast (1970), the Derry Peace Women (1972), responding to the outbreak of conflict which followed the brutal state repression of the civil rights movement. So many women who later joined the high profile Peace Women /Peace People (1976) had already been active in peace and reconciliation, as well as civil rights, work for some time previously. While the authors are clearly aware of the unprecedented level of public attention focused on women's peace activism in Northern Ireland, they seem unconcerned with providing any analysis of the media frenzy surrounding the Peace People. Neither do they appear inclined to question the high level of state support—from Queen and Westminster to the security forces—for this movement.

Secondly, this book seems to reflect the assumption that "all women" would or should have been involved in the Peace People. There is now considerable feminist scholarship on women's experiences and activism in the conflict revealing the experience of being a "woman" or a "mother" in Northern Ireland was not the unifying force anticipated and idealised in the peace movement. Other critical influences—such as class, political history, and location as well as various social discourses—cut across gender conditions, thereby problematising the issue of peace for many women (and men). The binary construction of "peace women" and "men of violence" articulated in mainstream media and amongst many British politicians shaped a specific perspective in the public that those who did not support the Peace People were in fact supporters of the IRA—who in turn were deemed largely to blame for the conflict. Despite their initial historically-balanced background to the conflict, Buscher and Ling appear to advance this view uncritically on numerous occasions throughout their narrative on the Peace People. Strangely, they fail to ask why the so-called "guerrillas of peace" might be encouraged by state and security force officials to inform on neighbours and even family members within their communities. Might there have been some political utility to the notion that the peace movement was a potential ally for the government in a situation where a military solution was applied to a political problem and therefore found to be failing? Also, the authors appear to accept the notion that the conflict was fundamentally about a war of religious identities. Why did they fail to explore the "peace and justice" assertions of republican opponents to the Peace People in their narrative?

Feminists theorising around militarism along with peace studies scholars have recently highlighted the importance of interrogating concepts of peace and violence. Also, they have long argued that violence is perpetuated at many different levels

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 re-conceptualize 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