

Resistance



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Resistance The gendered and racist nature of violence has been a topic of interest for sociologists since the disc connecting identity and politics had emerged. One definition for violence has been that it “ entails acts of physical coercion or their threat” (Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank, 2000, p. 2). Here, the connection between gender and violence can be established if gender relations is understood as a discourse “ signifying relationships of power” (Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank, 2000, p. 3). In both cases of violence and gender disparity, thus an exercise of power is involved. On the contrary, resistance is “ a reflection of the potential for subversion and contestation” within the premises “ of established order” (Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank, 2000, p. 3). This is to suggest that resistance is more concerned with opposing the undemocratic exercise of power, which is often part of the establishment, rather than the simple or violent exercise of power. War has been the greatest exercise of power in human history. As the ethics of war has changed from protecting civilians to deliberately targeting them, the most vulnerable groups, which have lost their “ personal security” are women, children and the ethnic minorities (Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank, 2000, p. 5). There is a continuation of this situation in non-war conditions as well in the form of domestic violence, as far as women are concerned. On the other hand, it has also been argued, “ women have been central in democratizing processes” (Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank, 2000, p. 9). This doubled role of being the victims and the menders of the existing system is what makes women a key factor in all resistance movements (Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank, 2000, p. 9). Women have a long history of resistance to violence that has happened “ within their communities, sometimes in the name of their protection” (Jacobs, Jacobson and

Marchbank, 2000, p. 15). But this resistance has been largely personal and cultural rather than taking on an organized form. It is in and around this aspect that pacifism is viewed as a useful strategy, by a section of the society. Resistance shown by women's collective actions, on the contrary, never was totally pacifistic (Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank, 2000, p. 195). But the approaches like the "maternalistic approach" regarding violence have ruled out the role of violence in resisting crime. The ethnicity of violence is yet another less explored side. Globalization has merged international boundaries and resulted in an increased occurrence of cross-border migrations. This has made women from ethnic minority groups and developing nations migrate in huge numbers to Western developed countries, either to marry men in those countries or creating a new "maid industry" (Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank, 2000, p. 195). And these women have become one of the most vulnerable groups to become targets of domestic and state violence, internationally (Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank, 2000, p. 6). Medicalization of domestic violence is advocated in such a scenario where these women could have access to an inclusive medical network. Immigrant women of color also face a problem of white supremacy in their host countries when they arrive either as servant maids or wives (Jacobs, Jacobson and Marchbank, 2000, p. 10). Here, 'women of color' is a term used to define women who belong to races other than the western, white people. But this definition has been criticized for being not so precise because it is argued, race is not simply defined by color of the skin alone. Any way, the terminology has come to stay in the current social discourses. Crime rates against immigrant women in the United States are on the rise according to many studies and hence a comprehensive approach

is the need of the hour with a perspective on the connections between gender, race and violence (Freilich and Guerette, 2006, p. 200). The personal and collective resistance of women against violence continues among mainstream white women as well as among women belonging to different racial and other minority groups. References Freilich, J. D. and Guerette, R. T. (2006) *Migration, culture conflict, crime and terrorism*, Farnham: Ashgate Publishing. Jacobs, S. M., Jacobson, R. and Marchbank, J. (2000) *States of conflict: gender, violence, and resistance*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.