

In the Eye of International Feminism: Cold Sex Wars in Taiwan

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# In the Eye of International Feminism

## Cold Sex Wars in Taiwan

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This paper proposes that sex work and feminism have been knotted and kept apart in much of Anglophone feminism in part due to historical and historiographic reasons. This conundrum casts a long shadow on former cold war territories like Taiwan, and has a bearing on the shape taken by feminist politics therein, notably in the “sex wars” of the 1990s.

A battle for hearts and minds is under way, and feminism is one of the contenders (Halley 2006: 22).

If historiography is where we can read about the constraints operating on previous generations of historians, why not read, as many of us do already, our own historical work and the work of our contemporaries as though it were *already* historiography? (Barlow 2001a: 419).

**A**re sex workers feminists? Is sex work feminist? Halfway through the second decade of the 21st century, sex work and feminism still or perhaps more than ever seem to compose an oxymoron: “a combination of contradictory or incongruous words.”<sup>1</sup> Still, because Anglophone feminist writings have argued for sex workers as feminists since the 19th century, yet culminating in the United States (us) sex wars of the 1970s, whose “internationalisation” has cast a shadow we are still contending with. More than ever, because the past two decades have witnessed heightened global media representation that tend to conflate sex work with trafficking in persons, with the United Kingdom (uk) and the European Union (eu) considering the Nordic model of a feminist state management of sex work: criminalising clients and procurers, but not the victim-prostitutes, towards eradication of demand and desire for all commercial sex.<sup>2</sup> This continued polarisation despite more than a decade’s worth of feminist interventionist works aimed at explaining and complicating the divide.<sup>3</sup>

This paper suggests that sex work and feminism, and sex work feminism, have been knotted *and* kept apart in much of Anglophone feminism in part due to historical and historiographic reasons.<sup>4</sup> From the site of Taiwan, a strongly uninflected state in East Asia, these historical and historiographic reasons can be gleaned through the reflective essays of feminist historians, sociologists, and legal scholars writing out of the us and uk in the past decade (including H Laville, L Yoneyama, T Barlow and H Eisenstein). These writings, in turn, compose a meta-story of how sex work contra feminism is the effect and ruse of a “congealing historiography” (Barlow 2001a).

In the late summer of 1997, what has come to be known as Taiwan’s own “sex wars” erupted through then Taipei city Mayor Chen Shui-bian revoking the licence of the city’s 128 licensed prostitutes.<sup>5</sup> The city’s abolitionist move and moral rationale met with unprecedented resistance from mostly middle-aged prostitutes who took to the streets, with the support of labour groups working with women workers. The resulting Taipei licensed prostitute’s movement gradually transformed into a sex worker’s and supporters’ coalition group,

I am grateful to interlocutors and readers in presentations of parts of this argument in Dhaka, Chungli, Taipei, Sydney, Hong Kong, and Hsinchu. My thanks especially to two readers with whose questions I continue to work. All mistakes are mine.

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with sex worker activists today struggling to maintain one brothel site in Taipei city as public cultural heritage against the latest wave of urban gentrification and private development.

In the spring of 2013, Catharine MacKinnon—considered the foremost us feminist in the sphere of legal activism—was invited to give a series of lectures in Taipei. The sponsoring institution and respondents attest to the solemnity of the event.<sup>6</sup> The audience response is enthusiastic as MacKinnon continues to espouse a global feminist legal strategy while endorsing and admiring Taiwan's state feminist legal reform successes.

Sixteen years after Taiwan's "sex war" this visit from a major proponent of the Nordic model compels me to return to the prior moment of Taiwan feminism's "family division" (*jiabian*). *Jiabian* was the term coined by the media for the split within and among the women's movement groups in the wake of the Taipei licensed prostitute movement. I have tracked this split in previous work; entrenched hostilities in part explained through tracing intra-household women's fraught relations as the latter unevenly translate into class-ethnic divide in compressed state industrialisation of the 1970s (Ding 2007, 2010). This paper, however, comes at the "family division" from outside in, revisiting one small corner of a field of us feminism of and since the us sex wars, towards a vantage point within a co-constructed Taiwan, that is, a us knowledge and language inflected Taiwan. I propose that a heretofore invisible frame of one corner of us feminism shares continuity with—even as it partially determined the division of—Taiwan feminisms in 1997. The sex work supporters (camp) have been represented as derivative of the us pro-sex feminism and obstructive of local democratic political progress. In one version of this story, sex work supporters are product of, to the extent they are tolerated by, political liberalisation and democratic advances exemplified in state feminism since the turn of this century. Undergirding such readings are nation-statist aspirations modelled almost exclusively on the us (Chen 2001).

Of MacKinnon's critics in the us and elsewhere, Janet Halley's sympathetic reading of her "power feminism" as the embracing of power in redress for an unalloyed victimisation is astute. Yet the Taiwan audience's positive response is also to do with a us cultural export of feminism since at least the late 1980s, if not earlier. This context is explicitly referred to by MacKinnon near the end of her last talk in Taiwan, when she mentions the "successful" Nordic model of state feminist fight to contain if not eradicate commercial sex, and how she helped incubate the idea of radical legal containment in the us where implementation had not been as successful. MacKinnon goes on to laud Taiwan feminists and women's organisations for achieving legal reform surpassing those in the us. I especially note here her mention in passing of a quasi-failure, or at least not total success, of the litigation (power) feminism that seems then all the more urgently pushed amidst contestation in Europe and Africa.<sup>7</sup> An (insufficiently) "failed" tutelary feminism and its suasion in contexts outside of its originating locale need further thought and are a more helpful lesson.

I read a selection of historians and sociologists located in the us and uk on women's organisation for how feminism as

language (and in English) emerges as a pedagogical imperative from the 20th century post-war, cold war period into the present. This particular lineage of feminism is traceable through new cold war histories of the last decade examining the role of feminism as tutelage for us-brand democracy. These fragments of a story are placed alongside some of these scholars' self-reflections on the state of us feminism as thought and lesson, as the latter continue to exert juridical and moral influence in many worlds. In crossing habituated divisions in everyday thought practices these critical scholars presume as they query the defining of cold war as a historical period. I read such crossing of divisions in thought as moments of a potential failure in a cold war feminist pedagogical imperative; a failure by no means assured, yet a condition for hope. Other moments of hope arise in locales to the side yet central in cold war politics, such as Taiwan—where a moral exemplarity is exhorted but tends to fall short (Huang 2007).

Helen Laville's account allows us to see how and the extent to which women's organisations mediate the us's post-war international cultural work. Laville's work correlates with that of Lisa Yoneyama on the us discourse on Japan in examining a mediation that can be read as contiguous with a new language of faith facilitating the making of appropriately gendered possessive individuals in post-war 20th century's remaining hinterlands of the world, often seen as tending towards socialisms (Cullather 2010: 1).

### Cold War Feminism

I revisit the sex wars of the 1970s and early 1980s in the us as a series of us feminist domestic crises whose divisions of thought and political work will by the early 1990s be transposed to the international front, in post-war organisations such as the UN, as well as through non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as the work of Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW).<sup>8</sup> This is where Tani Barlow's reflection (2000) on an ascendant us–United Nations (UN) international feminism and its avatars in classrooms at home aligns with critiques of a feminism variously termed capitalist feminism, cultural feminism, and cold war feminism.<sup>9</sup> I read these as composing an uneven us high feminist discourse from the late 1980s onward that as Gayatri Spivak had already noted then, forgets as it reproduces axioms of imperialisms.<sup>10</sup> If Laville explains how the maternal subtends cold war feminist international work, by the 1990s, the common ground whereupon international feminism rests is sexual exploitation and violence, with sex work (sexual slavery) often the principal target. The us sex wars contextualised in this way would show a relay between seemingly apolitical patriotic women's organisations in the post-war period and the us radical–cultural feminist legal work abroad and in the UN today.

One invisible frame that is a cornerstone of a global edifice I am calling "cold sex wars" follows what I have learned through recent histories of cold war feminism, and turn of this century's critiques of an international feminism located in and operating out of the us. Whereas the term re-education comes from the uk-based historian Helen Laville, who uses it to describe

what happened in post-war Germany via cultural exchanges between women's groups from the us and West Germany, funded and instituted by the us. These are re-education cultural programmes that helped tutor women away from enemy patriarchal-cum-socialist influences. These readings together help render cold war frames legible through tracing continuities in modes of engagement and sites of organisation, culminating in state remaking projects.<sup>11</sup>

### A Sentimental Re-Education

Sometimes I think that the difference between our Victorian grandmothers and ourselves is that they thought that a good woman could create her own oasis of quiet goodness in a bad world by staying within her own home and garden and making them as nearly perfect as anything could be in this imperfect world. But we know that the weeds outside the garden will blow over the wall and the germs of the unswept streets will be tracked on the cleanest floor.<sup>12</sup>

Laville gives us the post-war/cold war story of a continuing saga of what is now a 21st century international feminist pedagogical imperative (Laville: 54–55). Laville's history of us women's organisation work in the Cold War details a shift from international sisterhood to nationalist propaganda work (Laville: 9), from a stress on democracy to emphasis on anti-communism, conjoined with a cold war us state and agenda (Laville: 90–91). This work is part of the last decade's new cold war histories revisiting us domestic and foreign policy and actions, showing how these intertwine to advance but also mark the limits of what have come to be "universal" race and gender politics.<sup>13</sup> Laville painstakingly traces how women's organisations came to take on the position of "Cold War warriors" partially in response to anti-communist duress in the home country (Laville: 108).

This then is how a feminist universalism stressing maternal responsibility in public work (Laville: 78) and voluntary association as ideal form came to embody an ultimately nationalist sentimental "re-education" in Germany (and Japan) as part of post-war us occupation (Laville: 43–44). Occupation is displaced by us women's organisations and by media representation in a narrative of German (and Japanese) women's victimisation and emancipation. The logic of victimisation differentiates between a fallen (male and patriarchal) regime versus the women who are then seen as the victims of the totalitarian regime and its feudal family (Laville: 70). The victims then become subjects for re-education in the mirror of us democracy, exemplified in the free and equal association between and amongst women of erstwhile enemy nations (Laville: 45).

One of the first documents of the Psychological Strategy Board (psb), set up by President Harry Truman in 1951 to co-ordinate all aspects of the us psychological battle with Soviet communism, suggested for future action 'that a series of projects be assigned to veterans, youth and women's organisations, which appear to be institutionally inspired, which could permit contact with similar groups in other countries whose goals, aspirations and activities have a common aspect'. As an example the report proposed that contact between American women's organisations and women's organisations in Japan be encouraged in order to 'ensure continued pro-Western orientation' (Laville: 47).

Such pro-Western orientation, shored up through an "emotional anti-communism" (Laville: 98–99) is now usefully

recalled with a twist at the turn of this century. In *Liberation Under Siege: us Military Occupation and Japanese Women's Emfranchisement* (2005), Lisa Yoneyama reads us media representations of its post-war occupation of Japan as liberation of Japanese women from the feudal family and authoritarian state. In contrast to Japanese men, Japanese women are represented as passive victims awaiting help and needing liberation, an implicitly infantilising discourse in line with Laville's analysis of us women's groups' "re-education" projects for women in post-war Germany. Such media discourses justify military occupation under the sign of women, progress and modernisation, while simultaneously rendering us women exemplary subjects of freedom and equality (Yoneyama 2005: 889). By the turn of this century, the cultural memory of a beneficent occupation of Japan, in Yoneyama's analysis, serves to invoke success for new "just wars" under the Bush administration. Whereas Laville tells the complicated story of how women's organisations turned to patriotic service under the sign of women's international work rather than feminism, Yoneyama analyses the uses of feminism as rhetoric in the service of a nation's new wars.

Yoneyama thus coins the term "cold war feminism" for a mode of us media propaganda that upholds "the superiority of antilabor, anticommunist American-style democracy" (2005: 898) while disseminating "depoliticized and desocialized ... understandings of gender liberation and democratization" (Yoneyama: 900). Importantly, Yoneyama notes that us media reportage's "liberation" of Japanese women ignores the occupation's disenfranchisement of colonised subjects living in Japan (Yoneyama: 905).

### '...a Path to Modernity'

United States-financed international feminism is likely to form a future neoliberal orthodoxy. Indeed, because the elements of international feminism are already so pervasive, my undergraduate students tend, rather uncritically, to embrace arguments that reconsolidate the liberal relation of universal and particular in international law, which not only universalizes law but also regards [sexual] crime as a common ground for all women (Barlow 2000: 1102).

For students from South Korea, India, or Ethiopia, what I was teaching them in women's studies courses was the stuff of daily life. It was their bridge to the United States. In short, my lessons in feminism were, to them, not oppositional at all. *They were a how-to course in being us citizens*. I was giving them a powerful means of acculturation. In watching how my students absorbed and reacted to the material I offered them, I was in effect observing how closely the ideas embodied in us feminism represented a path to modernity (Eisenstein 2009: 13).

The first quotation is from 2000, in an essay where the historian of Chinese feminism Tani Barlow writes of a us-financed international feminism on the cusp of becoming neo-liberal orthodoxy. Barlow notes how this feminism in her us classrooms is ingrained through international law and gender violence as common sense. Less than a decade later, sociologist Hester Eisenstein (2009) reflects on the arrived orthodoxy of that us financed international feminism in the preface to her study of a 21st century feminism "seduced" by capital—in part become the "feminist capitalism" historian Alice Echols coined in 1983 (Echols 1983). Teaching in New York shows this

feminism as a pedagogical imperative for the us branded modernity; a necessary and desired indoctrination especially for first and second generation immigrant students. What forces move such tectonic shifts?

In a series of essays Tani Barlow reflects on the rise and expansion of an “international feminism” whose reach by the 1990s is global and whose medium is women’s and gender issues via the work of transnational NGOs. The theory of this international feminism seems a version of a us 1980s cultural feminist narrative that might be caricatured as: women have been socially oppressed and sexually exploited and violated by men throughout history and in all societies, nowhere more so than in those places with recidivist patriarchies.<sup>14</sup> This logic of women most victimised in places most hostile to the us and housing most recalcitrant patriarchies tend to replay the rhetoric of Laville’s women organisation turned cold war warrior (Barlow 2001b: 413).

I read Barlow as advocating an overcoming of a cold war division of knowledge with its high-modern way of seeing and its debasing of women and knowledge caught in muddier byways. In this division system which Laville and Yoneyama show as installed in Germany and working through the media representation of Japan during the post-war/cold war era, us women’s organisations and domestic media reportage aggrandise the superiority of American freedom, peace, equality and democracy. Women’s organisations and gender issues are the rendered prism through which these qualities become exemplars for the world.

As Laville relates a shift from international sisterhood to sometimes unwitting nationalist propaganda work among us women’s groups in the 1950s, Barlow notes the reverse—the naturalisation, or making invisible (as way of telling)—of a cold war feminist discourse in the guise of, by the 1990s, a universalist feminist pedagogy in us classrooms (Barlow 2000: 1103). In the process, socialist and other schools of feminism are subsumed and relegated to the partial, historical, and problematic (2000: 1104). (And in the case of Taiwan, the illegible.)

In what matrix was a certain form of sex (seen as backward and criminal) translated into one of the universal lessons in women’s rights and feminist modernisation? One route from within the us is the sex wars and its devolution especially in places marked by a-synchronic United-States-ism in East Asia.

### Cold Sex Wars

Through the medium of the UN, the Soviet Union and the USA became involved in a battle [during the cold war] over which political system best assured the ‘status of women’ (Laville 2002: 115).

We [at CATW<sup>15</sup>] believe that State-sponsored prostitution is a root cause of sex trafficking. We call legalized or regulated prostitution State-sponsored prostitution because although systems vary, the common element is that the system of prostitution itself becomes sanctioned by the State. The term State-sponsored prostitution signals that in any of these systems that recognise the sex industry as a legitimate enterprise, the State effectively becomes another pimp, living off the earnings of women in prostitution. State-sponsored

prostitution is a provocative term, especially in these days when the term is used in the context of state-sponsored terrorism. And it is meant to be provocative. State-sponsored prostitution is a form of state-sponsored sexual terrorism posing as sexual and economic freedom for women.<sup>16</sup>

How did the us sex wars brew cultural feminism’s moral crusade against exploitative sex in ways translatable into an international feminism for the 1990s, global media supported and us–UN allied movements against sex work as one major form of violence against women? The quotations above present two moments of intra-women’s group alliances and intra-feminist divisions initiated in the us that by the 1980s impelled movement towards a global arena.

The second quotation is part of a testimony statement made by Janice G Raymond to the us Congress on 29 October 2003. Earlier that year, on 25 February, the Office of the Press Secretary in the White House had issued “for immediate release” a “National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD).” These special directives from the President were first set up in 2001. In her statement, Raymond cites the February NSPD, the “Trafficking in Persons National Security Presidential Directive,” to refer Congress to the political force and security rationale upholding her statement. The argument and language she uses indexes a minor history in feminist debates, two decades earlier.

In the early 1980s, feminists in the us had engaged in battle (“horizontal hostility” in the words of Catharine MacKinnon) over feminine sexuality as “pleasure or danger,” butch-femme, sado-masochism, prostitution and sex work, as well as pornography over and against issues of representation and censorship. By 1989, Dorchen Leidholdt and Raymond edited a volume entitled *The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism* (1989), a volume of presentations at a conference in retaliation against the feminist critique of the anti-pornography campaigns and the, by then already influential, legal reform spearheaded by Catharine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin.<sup>17</sup>

The term “sex wars” refers to a series of confrontations among the us feminist and lesbian-feminist groups. A historic one in this series was the 1982 Barnard Sex Conference in New York, where a group of anti-pornography feminists protested and boycotted the conference and branded its organisers as condoning and even promoting “pervert” sex and sexuality in “anti-feminist” ways before and during the event. Call-ins to college administration led to the university’s confiscation of the conference booklet in the name of pornography.<sup>18</sup> The conference organisers finally got the college to pay for reprints of the booklet, but only after removing the sponsoring organisations (the college and the Helena B Rubinstein Foundation) from the offending publication. The booklet was mailed to participants after the conference (in June), and in August was resent by Andrea Dworkin with a covering letter quoted in part for the first time by Gayle Rubin in her essay “Blood Under the Bridge” (2011) on the event and its aftermath.

This *Diary* shows how the S&M and pro-pornography activists... are being intellectually and politically justified and supported. It shows too the conceptual framework for distorting and significantly undermining radical feminist theory, activism, and efficacy. There is no

feminist standard, I believe, by which this material and these arguments taken as a whole are not perniciously anti-woman and anti-feminist. It is doubtful, in my view, that the feminist movement can maintain its political integrity and moral authority with this kind of attack on its fundamental and essential premises from within (Rubin 2011).

The “political integrity” and “moral authority” of this particular strand of anti-pornography, anti-patriarchal perversion, anti-prostitution as radical feminism purportedly remain consistent, that is simple and feminist.<sup>19</sup> In the decade following the sex wars, this perhaps aided its expansion in global influence as it eventually accessed and lobbied the US Congress, State Department and the UN in efforts to eradicate sexual terrorism globally.<sup>20</sup> Its success is in part attested to by the passion of its conservative opponents lobbying at the UN for protection of family rights and against gay marriage and gay rights.<sup>21</sup>

Nonetheless, by the first decade of this century nations and states are now yearly ranked and policed in a US State Department TIP Report (Trafficking in Persons Report)<sup>22</sup> for whether or not they are toeing the line, with international NGOs such as the CATW in crucial mediating positions.<sup>23</sup> This is how one lineage of what Barlow has termed as US–UN allied feminism work on moral and juridical fronts through influencing decisions on whether or not to continue funding particular organisations, domestic as well as international.<sup>24</sup> The US will of course also derive part of its authority and difference in spearheading feminist rescue operations.<sup>25</sup> The hierarchy of nations and asymmetry of states vis-à-vis the UN and the US state and public (as addressee), is as clear in an essay by Madeleine Albright on the UN as it is in Raymond’s testimony for the US Congress.

Thus, Raymond in her testimony to the US Congress in 2003 states: “The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women recommends that no country legalizing prostitution should be in Tier 1. Rather, it should be noted that these countries have legalized brothels and pimping that contribute to ‘significant numbers’ of women being trafficked into these countries for sexual exploitation.” While in the same year, Albright reassures those in the US who worry that dealing with the UN might be too constraining: “The United Nations’ authority flows from its members; it is *servant, not master*. [...] Questions about US sovereignty are misplaced and appear to come primarily from people aggrieved to find the United Nations so full of foreigners.”<sup>26</sup>

Albright’s (2003) comment registers impatience with a segment of the US population and its uppity parochialism, countering it with a shared sense of (national) superiority vis-à-vis the organisation, admonishing that the UN be properly seen as “servant” not “master.” Needless to say, this is not a sentiment shared by most (states or persons). This positional superiority can also be glimpsed in Janice Raymond’s testament to Congress insofar as she addresses a state with power over and against most other states. I take this positional superiority as possibly strategic (feminist instrumentalising of statecraft) but also marking a moment of forgetting. This is a forgetting of the socialist and radical feminist critique of imperialism in the 1960s and 1970s. It also forgets historical continuity in military-industrial backed governance from pre-war colonial sites to cold war

us-backed authoritarian governments (such as Taiwan). This forgetting in turn enables a post-war cold war sentiment that conflates and projects outward its anti-communism as anti-authoritarianism.<sup>27</sup> Finally, the ascendance of US cultural feminism by the 1980s, and its alliance with a law and litigation feminism in and through international organisations is in part propelled by US women of colour, queer and post-colonial critiques of radical and cultural feminism on the fronts of domestic and international racial, sexual, and class politics (Echols 1983). A “simple and feminist” argument that impels convergence on “woman” in terms of sexual harm could be at once transparent, efficient, expansive and transhistoric—international.

### Surfacing

The US sex wars are a moment of sign system change and rigidifying in a major artery of feminism in international English. One part of feminism in the throes of a US domestic split in the early 1980s is propelled outward into the international arena, where international law becomes medium of translation.<sup>28</sup> If (US) feminism’s name and radicalism was disavowed in cold war women’s groups to facilitate free citizen associations, woman-centred anti-sex work-ism in the name of (a) feminism is become one kind of moral progressivism in (Taiwan) state compliance with the UN and global media.

Let me end provisionally by returning to May 1998, less than a year after feminist groups’ “family division” amidst a protracted struggle between sex workers and their labour and queer supporters Collective of Sex Workers and Supporters (COSWAS), fractured and regrouping women’s groups, and the city government. In May 1998, COSWAS (comprising licensed prostitutes and labour activists from Taiwan’s autonomous labour movement) holds its first of a series of cultural events in the form of a three day international conference on sex worker rights and sex work industry policy. Sex worker activists and sex worker groups from Holland, Australia, Germany, India (DMSC, Sonagachi), Sweden, Japan, Hong Kong, Thailand and the US congregate in support of Taipei’s licensed prostitutes’ movement, in laboriously translated dialogues among a surfacing Taipei sex worker struggle and international participants and groups with what might be termed, following Kotiswaran, “synthetic forms of feminism” (Kotiswaran 2011: 47). Whereas sex work advocates not just in the developing world have been “mischaracterised as liberal” (Kotiswaran: 46), Kotiswaran notes how India and China (Ziteng) are two sites where sex worker activists and groups articulate a residual socialist “sex as work” position more than individualist right amidst public/private split. I would add that Ziteng is located in Hong Kong and Shenzhen as well as other cities in China, with organisers whose trajectories include labour activism in a non-socialist context, coinciding in part with the composition of some COSWAS members in Taiwan. Tentatively then, the components of these cobbled-together sex work feminist forms include resources—linguistic, emotional, and analytic—that traverse a cold war bifurcation of nations/non-nations in its international politics, incidentally showing up in silhouette nation-statism in some international feminism.

## NOTES

- 1 Merriam Webster online (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/oxymoron>, 2014/4/30).
- 2 The US based CNN and the UK Guardian have both contributed reports on this front from opposed yet sometimes convergent camps. The CNN's Freedom Project and Julia Bindel's articles in the UK Guardian, with the former often conflating anti-sex work with anti-trafficking, while the latter celebrates Iceland as most feminist state in its eradication of strip clubs and lap-dancing (<http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2010/mar/25/iceland-most-feminist-country>, 2014/4/30).
- 3 For a definitive overview of the debates, see Chapter Two, Part One in Prabha Kotiswaran (2011).
- 4 Anglophone is used here to refer to feminist writing published in English with an assumption not always reflected upon of global dissemination and readership. The disparity in scale, distance, and time in global are often absent from discussion.
- 5 See the Collective of Sex Workers and Supporters (COSWAS) website: <http://coswas.org/>; for English version of COSWAS story: <http://www.bayswan.org/taipei.html>, 30 April 2014.
- 6 The sponsoring organisation is the Wanguo Faxue Jiangzuo (the Thousand Nation Law Seminar). The Catharine MacKinnon Seminars were held at Taiwan National University with foremost feminists, women's groups, human rights lawyers and legal experts responding to each talk. A series of reading workshops of key works were held in preparation for the talks. Audience exceeded 1800, and the seminar series had to be relocated to accommodate audience number (<http://catharineackinnon.blogspot.tw/>, 16 January 2015).
- 7 "Jacqui Hunt, London director of the human rights group Equality Now, said: "[...] It is no accident that three of the top four countries with the highest level of gender equality have adopted the Nordic model as a way to combat sex trafficking and sexual exploitation. We are urging all governments, including the UK, to adopt legislation on prostitution, to promote the core principle of equality so the exploitation of women and girls can become a thing of the past" (<http://www.theguardian.com/society/2012/dec/26/government-pressure-review-prostitution-laws>, 22 September 2013).
- 8 "Coalition Against Trafficking in Women – The World's First Organization to Fight Human Trafficking Internationally," <http://www.catwinternational.org/WhoWeAre/Board>, 20 September 2013.
- 9 Alice Echols coined "capitalist feminism" in 1983, referring to the entrepreneurial work and spirit of a group of separatist feminists. In the last chapters of *Daring to Be Bad* (1989), Echols traces how cultural feminism arises with the decline and eclipse of radical feminism, in part against the collapse of these two terms in current usage.
- 10 British imperialism in Gaytri C Spivak's essay (1985) that coined the term, and for Angela Davis, women of colour critiques, and sex wars of the 1980s: US neo-imperialism. Spivak critiques a literary high feminism whose effectively trans-disciplinary assumptions take an international, legal turn by the 1990s.
- 11 Singapore-based scholar Geoffrey Benjamin theorises nation states as "imitable institutions" whose formations are imprinted as much by evolving forces external ("international community") as internal. At the same time, these "imitable institutions" are talked about as if each a possessive individual, installing liberal capitalist forms and feelings from onset of imagined membership. Benjamin differentiates for analytic purposes between historically primary and secondary nation state formations, with empire and colonialism mediating imitative drive. Part of Benjamin's point is an invisibility of nation-statism, concomitant with "seeing like" a nation state. In some (secondary) formations, this is expressed as beneficent authoritarianism, or coerced implementation of progressive mores. The invisibility of an imitable nation state desire and vision in disciplinary languages and dogma is most pertinent to this essay's understanding of some Anglophone feminism (Benjamin 1988: 14–21, 37–46).
- 12 Helen C White, "Liberal Education, 1944," *Journal of the American Association of University Women*, 38:1 (Autumn 1944), p 6; quoted in Laville (2002: 26).
- 13 See Mary L Dudziak (2004) for how the civil rights movement against racial segregation was aided and constrained through instrumentalisation by the US state to showcase the more progressive democracy.
- 14 See Alice Echols (1989), especially last two chapters, for how a radical (and in some cases socialist) feminism was displaced and in parts assimilated to a cultural (anti-socialist) feminism. See also Janet Halley as former "cultural feminist" for a working definition of the kind of convergent feminism in the US (I would add emanating from the US) from which "we" need to take a break, i.e., "m/f, m>f, and Carrying a Brief for F" (2006: 17–20).
- 15 The quotation begins: "Mr Chairman and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity of presenting testimony before this committee. Today, I will focus my remarks on sex trafficking. To put my remarks in context, I should tell you that my organisation, the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW), has been working for 15 years to promote women's right to be free of sexual exploitation. We have organisations in most of the major world regions of Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America. And we conducted the first US-based study, funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), that interviewed numbers of victims of sex trafficking. Our organisation, in various parts of the world, has also interviewed 146 victims of trafficking in four other countries; funded and initiated trafficking prevention programmes in Venezuela, the Philippines, Mexico and the Republic of Georgia; helped set up shelters for Nigerian and Albanian victims of trafficking in Italy; provided legal assistance to victims of trafficking in the United States, the Philippines, Bangladesh and the Republic of Georgia; and helped draft the new UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime."
- 16 Janice G Raymond, "The Ongoing Tragedy of International Slavery and Human Trafficking," Testimony of Janice G Raymond, PhD, "Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Human Rights and Wellness" of the Committee on Government Reform, House of Representatives, One Hundred Eighth Congress, 29 October 2003 (accessed on 20 September 2012).
- 17 The contributors of the volume include: Catharine A MacKinnon, Andrea Dworkin, Sheila Jeffreys, and Janice G Raymond.
- 18 "[A]nti-pornography feminists made telephone calls to Barnard College officials and trustees, as well as prominent local feminists, complaining that the conference was promoting anti-feminist views and had been taken over by 'sexual perverts.' [...] Within days, Ellen V Futter, President of Barnard, interrogated the staff of the women's center, scutinised the program, and—concerned about the possible reactions of funders to sexual topics and images—confiscated all copies of the conference booklet" (Carole Vance, quoted in Rubin, "Blood Under the Bridge," *Deviations* 2011: 204)
- 19 "I would like to see in this movement a return to what I call primitive feminism. It's very simple. It means that when something hurts women, feminists are against it. The hatred of women hurts women. Pornography is the hatred of women. Pornography hurts women. Feminists are against it, not for it." Andrea Dworkin, "Woman-Hating Right and Left," in *The Sexual Liberals and the Attack on Feminism*, Pergamon Press 1989, 40.
- 20 "Since *A Passion for Friends* was published in 1986, the vibrancy of the international women's movement has given new meaning to women's friendships. [...] Much of the feminist organising that I have been engaged in over the past decade [from the 1990s]—opposing the globalisation of the sex industry and the creeping legalisation/regulation of prostitution as "sex work" where pimps are redefined as "third party business agents"—transforms female friendships into international policies, national and regional legislation, and institutional viability. And it also transforms feminist organising into female friendships. The policy and institutions we create acquire not only institutional memory but result in effective institutional structure—and give our ideas and friendships consequence in the world. [...] A growing involvement in international woman-power—coalitions, networks, meetings, actions, organising, conferences, and forums underpins the feminist friendships of the new millennium." Janice G Raymond, Preface to new edition of *A Passion for Friends* (2001a: xv).
- 21 See the United Families International blog, especially on family issues, where cultural, radical, and socialist feminist and sexual politics are conflated: <http://unitedfamiliesinternational.wordpress.com/family-issues-guides/> 1 October 2013.
- 22 See <http://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/>, 1 October 2013.
- 23 "The National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) on Combating Trafficking in Persons, signed in December 2002, states that "prostitution and related activities are inherently harmful and dehumanising, identifying these activities as contributing to the phenomenon of trafficking, and opposing the regulation of prostitution as a legitimate form of work for any human being." *The policy directs all agencies to review matters including training, personnel and grantmaking to accommodate the provisions of this Directive. [...] We applaud this policy but caution that any policy is only as good as its implementation. One problem is that US NGOs supporting prostitution as work, and decriminalisation of the sex industry, are still being funded.* For example, the Freedom Network, organised by the International Human Rights Law Group and CAST, has received a DOJ grant which began in April 2003, to conduct nationwide trainings and mentoring activities over a three-year period for law enforcement, government agencies and NGOs. There are, of course, some NGOs in this network who do not support prostitution as an employment choice but this is not the issue. The central problem is that this anti-trafficking network is organised and led by well-known, pro-"sex work" advocates. CAST, through the Little Tokyo Service Center, has received almost \$2 million in grants from the Office of Victims of Crime and the Office of Refugee Resettlement" Janice G Raymond; italics added.
- 24 "Borrowing rhetorical devices from Cold War

- anticommunists, antiporners denied all dissent on sexual issues as 'collaboration' (in this case, with 'the patriarchy') and treason (against feminism, or against all women). ...We are not just talking about sharp words here. We are talking about sponsorship of state suppression of our livelihoods, our publications, our art work, our political/sexual expression" (Duggan 2006: 5).
- 25 This is presaged by Tani Barlow, and affirmed by Janet Halley. "It is fair to conclude that the international feminism initiative is congruent with ongoing drives to restructure global capital. But no matter what international feminism turns out to be in the end, it is now a series of totalising theories that cannot admit to an outside of feminism and will not admit the tangibility of any social forms in excess of their own drive to represent "the interests of the world's women." This latter claim rests on the pretension that international feminist work lies beyond all specific national and thus is beyond even US parochial concerns. Students [in the US] find this claim incredibly liberating. On the basis of international feminist theory and US capital, they, like [Hillary] Clinton, can participate in what they tend to view as cosmopolitan, generous, antiracist feminism" (Barlow 2000: 1103). And from Janet Halley: "In some important senses, then, feminism rules. Governance feminism. Not only that, it *wants* to rule. It has a will to power. And not only that, it has a will to power—and it has actual power—that extends from the White House and the corporate boardroom through to the minute power dynamics that Foucault included in his theory of the governance of the self. Feminism may face powers greater than its own in its constant involvement with its opponents; but it deals with them in the very terms of power." Janet Halley (2006, p 22).
- 26 Madeleine K Albright (2003: 22), italics added. An earlier comment compares the world system of nation states to a family (of nations) business: "While at the United Nations, I used to joke that managing the global institution was like trying to run a business with 184 executive officers—each with a different language, a distinct set of priorities, and an unemployed brother-in-law seeking a pay-check. [...] the pressure to satisfy members from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe remains a management nightmare" (Albright: 20).
- 27 See William Pietz (1988: 55-75) recalling Aimé Césaire on continuity between colonial methods of rule and western civilisation's totalitarianism, and the will to forget this historical link as a "postcolonialism" in the cold war discourse of key writers.
- 28 Janice Raymond (2001: xiv) on the futility of institutionalising women's studies in eighties US and the subsequent turn to the international: "During these unsettling years, I ranted in Women's Studies curriculum committee meetings and to my students about the fallacies of the "brands of feminism" approach. I particularly scorned *typologies* of radical feminism, always defined by the non-radically feminist, in which radical feminism was labeled ontological, essentialist, simplistic, cultural and apolitical, and as a feminism focused mainly on women's victimisation. The reception of a radical feminist theory and activism, largely by once-upon-a-time socialist feminists now turned postmodernist, has been to *classify rather than engage* with radical feminist thinking."

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