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SEEING (IN)SECURITY, GENDER AND SILENCING: POSTERS IN AND ABOUT THE BRITISH WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

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Feminist Security Studies has focused on expanding the referent object to individuals and non-state collectives, looking beyond the military sector to include questions of identity, and uncovering (in)security in unexpected places. An important part of this debate is over silence, particularly about how certain individuals are silenced and how they might be brought into view. This article looks at the ways images can be used to make gender-specific security problems visible. It holds that text, images, and practices interact to construct (in)security and it outlines a tripartite text-image-practice model for analysing these interactions. Through a case-study of the British women's suffrage movement it illustrates the potential of the text-image-practice model. The suffrage movement leveraged visuals, militancy, and practices like hunger striking to resist attempted silencing by the government across textual, verbal and visual planes. Using the suffrage campaign, the article shows how posters were used to try to silence Suffragettes and how Suffragettes resisted that silencing. Thus, it demonstrates that images are important sites of feminist resistance and security politics that can also communicate a politics of the body. The article also offers an illustration of how historical cases of gender insecurity and resistance as well as their visualisation can be brought into Feminist Security Studies.

Key Words
Feminism, Feminist Security Studies, Silencing, Suffragettes, Visual Politics

INTRODUCTION

Feminist Security Studies (FSS) has problematized the fact that security, in orthodox International Relations (IR) terms, refers to the state as both agent and referent, as well as the fact that security is predominantly conceived in masculinized political-military-state terms (Alison 2004). Feminist work has exposed how states are frequently implicated in violence against individuals and collectives within and beyond their national borders, making them sources of *in*security. It has specifically highlighted the gendered dynamics of this violence and politics more broadly, showing that gender can be the reason for individuals' insecurity (Hansen 2000). Gender establishes whose security matters, what 'security' means, and whether a security problem is or can be seen, acknowledged and countered (Shepherd 2016). FSS advocates expanding the referent object beyond the state to include individual and collective transboundary security concerns, as well as looking beyond the conventional military sector to include questions of identity.

There is a significant body of FSS work re-conceptualising what 'security' means, how scholars ought to address gendered security issues, and who or what counts as a referent object. An important part of this debate is over silence, particularly about how certain individuals are silenced and how they might be brought into view. Although feminist work foregrounds individuals' security concerns and brings in social security problems, Lene Hansen (2000) has shown that gendered security problems that are not or cannot be vocalised are often left unknown/unacknowledged. Hansen encourages including the visual and bodily as additional epistemological focuses through which security speech can be read (2000, 300). There is still work to be done on this, especially with regards the silencing of certain actors and their resistance to that silencing (2000, 301). Visuals are one way to trace that resistance and bring silencing into analytical view.

There are currently two ways that gender and security are being engaged in visual IR. First, through a general debate on gendered representations in images (e.g. Shim and Stengel 2017; Shim 2017; Kearns 2017; Zalewski 2010). Second, in thinking about how images can overcome (gendered) silences—what Hansen calls the 'silent security dilemma' (2000,300). However, there is a third, as yet unexplored, way that this article unfolds: how images are used to silence or resist silencing and marginalisation. These resonate with feminist IR's guiding question—"where are the women?"—which is about locating, *seeing*, and elevating experiences of/in global politics that are silenced and/or ignored (Enloe 1989).

This article furthers the feminist-visual IR connection by using posters for and against the British suffragette movement to examine the visualisation of (in)security by individuals marginalised because of their gender. It focuses on the way images are used both as a strategy of silencing and political resistance. Silencing, here, meaning the ways the government actively sought to make Suffragettes silent; resistance the ways images were used to make 'visible' gender-specific security problems that are not solely put into words, be that through choice (Parpart 2010), inability or fear of exacerbating insecurity (Hansen 2000). This is important for generating conversations about how gendered subjectivities are visualised and exploring the ways gendered insecurities are communicated both through and/or outside of language, ultimately giving space for speech and silence/ing to co-exist in a complicated way.

Despite recent historiography in IR, the Suffragettes have gone unacknowledged. In Britain between 1905 and 1914 the government chose to torture these militant female political activists rather than classify women as political subjects worthy of the vote. Suffragettes resisted with deeds and images (Tickner 1988). Prohibition on a women's vote is unsurprising given that states, per definition, are exclusive and hierarchically constructed entities both internally and externally (Peterson 1992). Who has rights to their protection is continually contested through

inside/outside, Self/Other, and gendered security politics. What is surprising, however, is the lack of interest in a movement that influenced "first age" IR—and all subsequent formations—and inspired the foundation of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, an international lobbying organisation that, today, has significant political power (Ashworth 2011,26–27). Their images have not hitherto been addressed as a fundamental part of feminist politics and activism within IR.

Guided by a question about how women's security problems were articulated through visuals and deeds, alongside failed speech acts, this article proceeds as follows. First, it discusses feminist scholarship on security and silence, linking it with work from the visual turn. Encouraging a shift towards a visual discourse analysis, it demonstrates how the non-discursive—visuals and bodily practices—can be used to negotiate silencing and constitute security problems that are otherwise trivialised, ignored and/or dismissed. Hence, it is suggested that images can take the place of, as well as complement, speech, especially unheard, ignored and silenced speech. Then, it introduce the Suffragettes, the laws and politics against which they resisted and the strategies they used to do so.

This leads into the article's third, most significant, move: seeing silenced gendered subjects. It does so by examining the ways that gender and embodied resistance were visualised and norms challenged and reinforced through posters with a combination of text and image in the women's suffragette movement. Not currently addressed by IR's visual turn, posters are a form of political communication that function as sites of contestation and security that can garner political support or opposition (Bleiker 2018,3,24-26). In this case, they also communicate the politics of the body. The medium of the poster is interesting from a FSS perspective because it provides space for drawn representations, calling attention to insecurities and practices of resistance in instances without photographs or other visual documentation (Chute 2016; Bleiker 2018,20–23).

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Drawn representations provide the opportunity for illustrators to accentuate and call attention to certain ideas, events and experiences that have perhaps been silenced/made invisible (Aradau and Hill 2013; Chute 2016). Through drawing, bodies are/can be visualised and, thus, the interaction and inseparability of text-image-practice analysed.

How images can be studied to see silencing, contestation, and gendered subjectivities is explored by analysing the empirical case of the Suffragettes and their use of the visual and the bodily. Inspired by the Suffragettes' combined use of words, posters, and deeds—e.g. hunger-striking— this article uses a trilateral text-image-practice approach. The Suffragettes used this combination to contest political structures prohibiting women's participation in politics and the right to control their bodies, as well as to resist laws permitting the torture of women for resisting said political structures (Tickner 1988). This allows for an analysis of the complicated interaction between (silenced) words, posters and deeds that made up the Suffragettes' campaign.

SILENCING IN FEMINIST SECURITY STUDIES

Feminist scholars have shown that world politics is fundamentally gendered and that the personal is political. Accordingly, feminist research foregrounds the lived experiences of people, not just women, navigating the complex web of political structures that organise the social world. Driven by an experiential epistemology, FSS focuses on telling different stories about what security means by those "whose voices have historically been silenced" (Shepherd 2016,265; Alison 2004,447). Dichotomous conceptualisations of gender—men as political agents/speakers versus women as apolitical victims/silent—establish who is/can be visible/speaker and who is invisible/silenced in ways that privilege masculine actors and qualities (Alison 2004; Tickner 2005). Recognising that not all actors are given equal status as speakers, if any, feminists tend to emphasise the inscription of silence as a "violence committed against groups…presumably united by their perceived identifying characteristics, like women" (Dingli 2015,723; Hansen

2000). Feminists strive to make those voices heard and hidden (in)securities knowable (Hansen 2000; Cohn 1987; Elshtain 1987; Stern 2006; see also: Tickner 2005).

By putting the amplification of silenced individuals' voices at the heart of the endeavour to overcome silencing, feminist works foreground the discursive plane over the corporeal and visual (see: Hansen 2000,300). While useful in revealing security threats, emphasising verbal and written text creates epistemological boundaries that preclude looking at visual and/or bodily discourse. Concern with speech alone has the danger of (re)producing a dichotomy and leaving little space for a more complicated, multi-modal, relationship between speech and silence/ing that operates beyond a binary (Dingli 2015). Silence or silencing on one plane—e.g. discursive—does not mean absence or preclusion of enunciation on another: speech may take place in other ways, through the visual for example (Hansen 2000,300).

By thinking about communication as something more expansive and complex, enacted through and exceeding words, looking at how images and representations of embodied practices construct (in)security and counter silencing offers a way of navigating the predication on articulating and analysing (in)security through discourse (see: Hansen 2000; 2011). It also allows an exploration of the ways that text, image and body speak security independently and concertedly (Hansen 2000,300). Locating and analysing both discursive and non-discursive resistances to silencing is particularly important in cases where there is a struggle to keep an issue on the political agenda accompanied by attempts to silence it.

If scholarship remains locked in a silence/discourse dichotomy it risks missing security issues that do not unfold exclusively in the planes of the discursive or sayable but also—or only—through non-discursive means, be that forced or chosen. In particular, it misses how the visual is used to counter silencing and/or illustrate embodied resistance. To proceed with a focus on

language as spoken and written, means that other ways of speaking, and thereby feminist politics in general, get disregarded and silenced. Gendered security problems often involve elements of silence/ing where a body is unable to speak and be heard in discursive terms (Åhäll 2018). Images function as outlets for voices that have been marginalised, silenced and/or ignored (Campbell and Shapiro 2007,132). Thus, greater engagement with the visual, as a form of representational practice, should be encouraged.

To acknowledge that visual and body talk complicate notions of silencing, raises questions about how gendered security problems are being shown by means beyond conventionally conceived 'speech'. The visual turn can complement gender scholarship by creating space for new ways of thinking about silencing and textual/vocal, corporeal and visual means of constituting (in)security as well as their (combined) communicative force. It is not to say that "vision has prime explanatory" power, nor is it to say that words do (Zalewski 2018,283). A more complex relationship than is currently acknowledged exists between text, image, and the body. Recognizing 'speech' as having both discursive and non-discursive forms inevitably complicates how security is studied and silence conceived.

There are three ways of moving beyond a speech/silence dichotomy. First, conceptualising silence as withheld speech and thus resistance (e.g. Parpart 2010). This, however, still conceptualises speech in textual/verbal terms. Second, seeing speech as not just textual/verbal so that images can be a way through which insecurity is announced (Hansen 2000). Ergo, no vocalisation does not mean 'silence' or successful silencing. Both the first and second support a third way: looking at the way bodies are visualised and how this can be a form of resistance. As bodies "convey meaning, identity and symbolism", their depiction is important for the way in which security is performed: particularly vis-à-vis constructions of Other/Self, threatening/non-threatening (Parashar 2013,621–622; see also: Hansen 2011,59–60).

The tripartite model used here is one way to examine text-visual-body interactions without privileging one mode of communication over others. There is not one method of communication: text-image-practice interact and communicate together (see: Barthes 1977). This model offers a base for studying marginalised women, their precarious positions, and the interrelation of speech and acts of speech—communications without words—in Security Studies and IR. Saying nothing can be doing something and doing something can be saying something. This reframing offers space for locating security 'speech' in non-verbal/-textual communicative actions. Here, K.M. Fierke (2013) and Banu Bargu's (2017,7) works are helpful. Bargu writes about embodied resistance as drawing "upon the nonlinguistic materiality of the body to communicate without speaking" and as "'performative' mechanisms that produce new subjects". When visualised, the performative practice and reproduction of embodied resistance—hunger-striking and its illustration, for example—is turned into a spectacle and audiences must decide whether to interpret the injured/dying/dead body as "witness to injustice" or "criminal" (Fierke 2013,103).

Both the act of embodied action and the visual representation of bodily suffering make the body the site of resistance through and upon which politics is played out. Both are important political expressions for those deemed inferior/dangerous. Images of political self-sacrifice and the reality of the "injured or dying body" communicate "a larger experience of social suffering" against the gag of the repressive government and express the absence of political subjectivity, thereby materializing "the injustice experienced by the community" and creating "conditions for its restoration" (Fierke 2013,79,83). Images of self-sacrifice evoke "emotions that go beyond words" such that, as we see in the case of the Suffragettes, they can pressure governments to act (Fierke 2013, 11–12). The physical act of embodied action and images of it communicate with and without words as acts of speech. If exclusively text were present something would be

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missing; the text-illustration interaction unpacked below makes posters uniquely powerful for communicating the politics of the body—self-sacrifice and the agency thereof—immediately and unambiguously.

IMAGES AS GENDERED

There has been increased interest in images and politics following the aesthetic and visual turns in IR. This has generated a small but growing literature on the relationship between gender, images and security. As mentioned above, images and gender interface in three ways: gendered representations in images (Zalewski 2010; Shim 2017; Shim and Stengel 2017; Kearns 2017); overcoming gendered silences with images (Hansen 2000); and images as attempting to silence or resist silencing. Visual communication is not silence: it is both showing and/or saying. So understood, visuals are methods of communicating insecurity, be that in conjunction with text or alone, that can construct security situations and become symbols of resistance. Images are visual discourse that can counter silencing; using them to identify security articulations is important (Hansen 2000).

Actors fight to control narratives of images because they can facilitate, induce, and/or aggravate conflicts. They use images to set and control narratives with the hope that audience(s) side with their intended message. Hence, visuals do not necessarily have their own 'voice' but are multivocal with audiences determining what they say through their interpretation(s) (Barthes 1977). Visual gender (in)security happens through different strategies. Strategies through which gendered subjects are made to speak, sought silenced or resist being silenced. The case of the Suffragettes also allows an analysis of the ways in which images capture embodied forms of resistance.

Aesthetic scholarship emphasises the importance of context in visual work. Images are understood, read, and experienced in a particular, intertextual, context thus only come into existence through constitutive interactions with audiences and producers (Heck and Schlag 2012,7). Perception and interpretation affect what an image communicates because audience(s) read meanings into an image by drawing on their own knowledge and experiences (Barthes 1977,46–47; Hansen 2011,58). Visuals are polysemous, meaning the same image can have multiple competing meanings, or interpretations, simultaneously depending on the ability of the audience to decipher its intertextual locale.

Based on the notion that images are polysemous, Hansen advocates looking at four elements to study images of security: the image and its constitution; its immediate intertext; wider policy discourses; and other text(s) ascribing meaning to the image (2011,54–55). The first requires looking at the image and its strategies of depiction, including the specific references an image makes to other texts or images that came before: they may make references to or position themselves against hegemonic (gendered) ideas, events and norms (2011,54) . The second, analysing the text on or immediately surrounding the image. The third, means looking to "dominant policy discourses in the country/locale in question" (2011, 55). The fourth requires studying accounts of, or debates about, what images say within a given context. I do not analyse discussions/debates over the meaning of the posters in this article, thus my reading may not have been accepted by pro-/anti-suffrage actors.

As suggested by Hansen, this model can be tailored to specific genres—here, the political poster. These have a specificity in that they always contain text and image—making them especially intertextual/visual—and they always make specific links to policy. They are, therefore, explicit interventions in wider policy discourses. In this case, there is also the fact that they contain a gender aspect. When analysing gendered images, it is important to look at how bodies are

constructed as non-/conforming with spatio-temporally bound gender norms—e.g. were the Suffragettes portrayed as performing 'femininity' acceptably—and the political work that portrayal does to entrench or resist (gender) norms. With pro- and anti-suffrage posters, there was also a visual back-and-forth, an intervisuality, that highlights how images can be used to both impose silence and counter silencing. It is important, therefore, to look at the intervisual aspects of depictions of women—and gender identities more broadly—and how images speak to and with one another. Here, I analyse how masculinity and femininity are depicted then go further by looking at how norms and silencing were resisted through images.

Colour is another significant factor in these gendered political posters. A chromatological approach posits colour as political because it can enact and/or (re)appropriate security, emphasise certain securities over others, and set the boundaries of what is seen and hidden. Colour (re)constructs boundaries and hierarchies and creates meaning (Andersen et al. 2015,3–4). It marks "individuals, groups, ideas, values" into "symbolic categories" like nation, race, gender, and class, etc., demarcating who is in/secure and/or threatening/ed (Andersen et al. 2015,441). Colour is also, however, intertextually constituted: blue and pink do not a priori signify gender but cultural norms have imbued them with such symbolism.

This article draws attention to the poster as an important medium for looking at the ways in which visual strategies of silencing and resistance to silencing are enacted. Still relatively new to IR, visual scholarship has not engaged the poster. Historically, activists and politicians have used posters to communicate their causes. A specific genre of political argument in visual form, posters are generally comprised of illustrations and text, or graphically-designed text. This article is concerned with posters with visual and textual aspects, rather than text alone. Most specifically, it is concerned with the poster as a political argument, which, like editorial cartooning, is conducive to processes of 'fast-read' visual linking and differentiation—i.e. the

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juxtaposition of valued and devalued (gender) identities (see: Hansen 2006;2011). That is to say, the construction of gender-conforming Self and dangerous gender-non-conforming Others.

Like comic books (Hansen 2017; see also: Thorsten 2012) and magazine covers (Hansen 2015; Heck and Schlag 2012), posters are single frame images where text is usually part of the visual itself, thus deconstructing text/image, discursive/non-discursive, agent/agency-less dichotomies. The visual-textual interaction constituting posters issues calls to action and/or makes the message of the visual clear(er). This makes the poster particularly politically powerful. On-image text clarifies intended meaning to audiences. This is important in the case of suffrage posters. As a battleground through which explicitly gendered politics was simultaneously contested by disenfranchised women and supported by those with power, text clarified each poster's intended messaging.

Because text and image are inextricably linked, both aspects must be addressed to unpack the intricate communicative processes constructing (in)security. I incorporate discourse analysis (Hansen 2006,17–36) with visual approaches to unpack the interaction of the visual and textual elements constituting posters (Hansen 2017,3–4). This avoids privileging the visual side of the discursive/non-discursive dichotomy.

While photography is given documentary status and regarded as more objective and 'realistic' than illustrated images (Barthes 1977,17–19), drawn images also aim to accurately represent "nature or the real" in order to convey "meanings about people…and events" (Sturken and Cartwright 2009, 146). Creators of drawn images use memory and lived experiences to inform their depictions, actively repeating and reconstructing traumas to counteract them (Chute 2016,3). Both camera-created and illustrated images, however, are representations of the world, not copies, that stake a claim to truth (Aradau and Hill 2013; Bleiker 2018). Whether through

photography or drawn media, thinking about how bodies are represented in relation to the resistance of Suffragettes, silencing, and invisibilities, means thinking about the 'work' particular genres of representation do, in what context they are used, and for what purpose.

Images of pain/embodied resistance make 'sensible' (Bleiker 2018,20) unseen/unseeable actions, opening up political possibilities like the women's vote. Drawing can overcome a (visual) absence. Rather than solely representing experiences, drawing "lend[s] itself to practices of resistance" (Aradau and Hill 2013,370). In this sense, the denotative meaning of an image—the explicit, literal meaning (Barthes 1977,17)—that captures or depicts embodied acts holds regardless of genre. What changes is the (truth) value ascribed to different genres of representation (Aradau and Hill 2013).

THE SUFFRAGETTES

In Britain, the right to vote was judged near-exclusively on gender until 1928 when suffrage was granted to women on equal terms with men. Considered a public, political, and traditionally 'masculine' activity, voting de facto excluded women, precluding them from being 'full' citizens and political subjects (Tickner 1988,4). Women were deemed incapable of participation in formal politics. The 1867 and 1884 *Representation of the People Acts* reformed voting legislation and respectively expanded the male electorate from roughly one-million to two-million then five-million. Nonetheless, these reforms still left roughly forty percent of men and all women without a vote, leading women and some men to organise collectively and challenge their exclusion from politics (Tickner 1988,4). Within this context, the suffragist movement was born and both local and national women's suffrage groups lobbying for a women's vote multiplied.

By 1903, despite unrelenting requests by suffragists from the National Society for Women's Suffrage (NSWS) and National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), a women's vote

had been repeatedly denied (Van Wingerden 1999). In 1870, 1886, and 1897 women's suffrage bills were defeated in Parliament. Consequently, Emmeline Pankhurst founded a militant organisation, the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), arguing that militancy was necessary because the peaceful words and constitutional actions of the NSWS and NUWSS were failing (Van Wingerden 1999,96). "Deeds not Words" was their motto and the term "suffragette" was coined by the *Daily Mail* in 1910 to describe the WSPU's militant members. Borrowed from French, the suffix "-ette" forms diminutive words (e.g. novelette), feminine nouns (e.g. usherette), and/or imitation products (e.g. leatherette), indicating the precarious status of politically active and militant women as feminine subalterns playing make-believe in men's political domain.

Suffragettes differ from suffragists. While both pursued the women's vote, their strategies differed. The label "suffragette" is predominantly associated with the WSPU and its membership. They embraced and self-identified with their new name soon after its coinage. All Suffragettes were suffragists—people campaigning for the vote—but not all suffragists were Suffragettes using militancy. Transgressing the boundaries of acceptable femininity and confusing what it meant to be a woman more so than the peaceful political action of suffragists, the Suffragettes made multiple moves to deconstruct gender norms of feminine frailty and apoliticality (Van Wingerden 1999,102–103). Doing so, they articulated patriarchal structures as threatening to women through deeds and visuals. Using posters, the Suffragettes focused on publicising the punitive measures used by the government against them and how gendered laws made women's lives precarious (Tickner 1988). Intertwined with their visualisation of women's experiences as women and as Suffragettes were political violence and self-sacrifice in the form of window-smashing and hunger-striking (Purvis and Holton 2000; Van Wingerden 1999).

Albeit disunited on means, militants and constitutionalists were linked through their use of a new type of political spectacle—posters—and "the production of an iconography" in service of a mutually desired end: the women's vote (Tickner 1988,10). For Suffragettes, images complemented their militancy; for constitutional organisations, engaging in visual "war" against anti-feminists, images were used in place of militancy. Recognising that visuals can affect political change and societal revolution, visuals of all kinds—posters, photographs, cartoons, and procession banners—were used on an unprecedented scale to bring women's suffering, their lived daily experiences, into the public sphere. The movement developed a visual rhetoric that used and challenged the traditional understandings of femininity prohibiting certain possibilities, activities, and access to institutions for women through law, custom, and precedent. Combined with the spectacle of militancy, it became hard to ignore these means of communication, which by making 'sensible' suffragette suffering, were used to achieve status as a legitimate referent object worthy of political subjectivity.

Here, four of thirty-nine posters drawn from the London School of Economics and Museum of London's archives are analysed. Only posters published between 1905-1914 were collected because Suffragettes' militancy, self-sacrifice, and image-production peaked during this time (Purvis and Holton 2000; Tickner 1988). Anti-suffrage posters are addressed first because they show silencing and the dominant power relations, anti-suffrage arguments and gender norms against which the Suffragettes mobilised and created their visuals. Themes included monstrosity, sexual deviance, and masculine insecurity/feminisation. Analysing anti-suffrage posters foregrounds how elites viewed the suffrage campaign, provides contextualisation and demonstrates the threat under which the elite (men) believed themselves to be.

In the pro-suffrage material there are posters with Joan of Arc-type stylisation. The posters analysed here are chosen because they have more of a complexity. They targeted specific policies

and represented the body in pain, torture, and Suffragettes' struggles to achieve political subjectivity through embodied self-sacrifice. Posters were fundamental to communicating not only the Suffragettes' political goals but also their practices of embodied resistance in service of those goals. They visually represented, and thus brought into the public sphere, the bodily practices, like hunger-striking, that often took place in spaces inaccessible to public scrutiny, e.g. prisons. This inspired the trilateral text-image-practice approach adopted in this paper. Addressing similar audiences—the British public—pro-/anti-suffrage imagery had divergent referent objects and subjects, and, thus, threat depictions. On text in the text-image relationship in posters, posters were only included if they targeted policy and/or contained calls-to-action.

SEEING SILENCING AND RESISTANCE: THE VISUAL, THE BODY AND THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

Connecting FSS and visual IR, the way pro- and anti-women's suffrage narratives unfolded through words, posters and deeds is unpacked below. Posters displaying women's (in)security and Suffragettes' political self-sacrifices were entangled with WSPU arguments that women were agents and political subjects who deserved the vote. Alongside embodied action, posters, which visually represented some of those practices, were fundamental to the Suffragettes' materialisation as political subjects prior to such recognition in law: it made their suffering sensible, challenged "dominant configurations of seeing, sensing and thinking" and was a struggle to make visible what was previously invisible—torture and self-sacrifice (Bleiker 2018,20–21). Their imagery provoked a visual response from suffrage opponents, leading to anti-suffrage posters that contested Suffragettes' agency and constructed them as threatening.

Complementing the production of images by the main suffrage organisations, the Artists' Suffrage League and Suffrage Atelier concentrated solely on producing and distributing images.

The former focused on artistic, highly skilled work, producing fine art and protest banners. The latter, founded in 1909 to support WSPU demonstrations, emphasised visual propaganda as a cheap, immediate, circulable, reproducible means of countering dominant, conventional understandings of femininity which "permeated the legal, political, and social institutions" of society (Tickner 1988,xi; see also: Hansen 2011,53). Their establishment alone testifies to the role visuals played in pro-suffrage activism.

The Atelier leveraged the power of images to affect the masses by exploiting the printing press and producing simply designed posters and postcards (Van Wingerden 1999,96; Tickner 1988,20). Linked to the WSPU, it was the driving force behind the establishment of the poster as a mainstay in politics, resistance movements, and protest (see: Florey 2013,153). Its WSPU links meant much of its work was distributed by the organisation, even if not specifically produced for it. This is important because militant tactics pioneered by WSPU Suffragettes, like window smashing and blowing up post-boxes, and self-sacrifices in prison transformed and reinvigorated the suffragists' near-moribund peaceful campaign.

For Suffragettes, drawing their experiences as disenfranchised women was a means of actively resisting silencing. It showcased their daily experiences of law and gender bias as well as self-sacrificial acts—e.g. hunger-striking and endurance of force-feeding in prison—that would otherwise have gone unseen/unknown. Being prisoners made photographing in-prison resistance impossible. Drawing and printing their self-sacrificial acts facilitated the production and dissemination of a specific message that emphasised the horror of Suffragettes' treatment. It also supplemented the initial self-sacrificial act, which was previously unseeable to the general public.

Monstrosity

Suffragette militancy caused all suffragists, including peaceful, to be constructed as mad unladylike monsters by some men and other women. This comes through in anti-suffrage imagery which was dominated by themes of monstrosity, sexual deviance, masculine insecurity/feminisation, and "Suffragettes as spinsters, viragos, or men" (Tickner 1988,34). Assuming the traditionally masculine quality of political action, Suffragettes became confusing figures—masculine and/or feminine, perpetrator and/or victim, political and/or emotional— uninterpretable by traditional gender norms (Butler 1990). The resulting government counter-move—spanning visual, verbal/textual mediums—constructed the Suffragettes' transgression of gender norms as a threat to societal stability and political order.

Subsequent legislative moves—banning posters in certain public spaces (Florey 2013,153), permitting force-feeding, and the 1913 'Cat and Mouse Act' allowing suffragette prisoners' medical release and subsequent re-imprisonment once deemed 'fit'—were efforts to depoliticise Suffragettes' actions, sustain incumbent definitions of masculinity and femininity, and contain and control women's bodies and their actions. The stability of status quo patriarchal power structures relied on the successful linking of women's political actions with mental dysfunction and subhuman monstrosity. The Suffragettes were vehemently punished for the "radical" unfemininity of political activity (Purvis and Holton 2000, 137–138).

Turning to posters that demonized Suffragettes, Figure 1 is a case in point. It shows a deformed being with short brown hair. The individual is identifiable as a suffragette by the purple top, green hairband—both WSPU colours—and pink flowers in her hair; she is flawed femininity incarnate. The individual is set against a blue background, which indicates her opposition to traditional masculine/feminine roles given the association of blue with masculinity. Colour is used as a delegitimising weapon, demarcating the abnormal, unnatural, and intrusion of women

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into supposedly men's spaces. The suffragette appears alone, excessively masculine, and is "plain and unmated" (Tickner 1988,212). She has sharp, fang-like, teeth, exaggerated features and appears to be unclean, which emphasises her dangerousness and deranged, animalistic, monstrous nature. While posters, both pro- and anti-suffrage, emphasised illustrations and symbols over text (Florey 2013,147), any ambiguity as to the subject of the poster—that is, if one were completely oblivious to WSPU colours and the women's movement—is overcome with the accompanying text "We Want the Vote". The text explicitly links the poster to enfranchisement and the illustration identifies it as anti-women's suffrage.
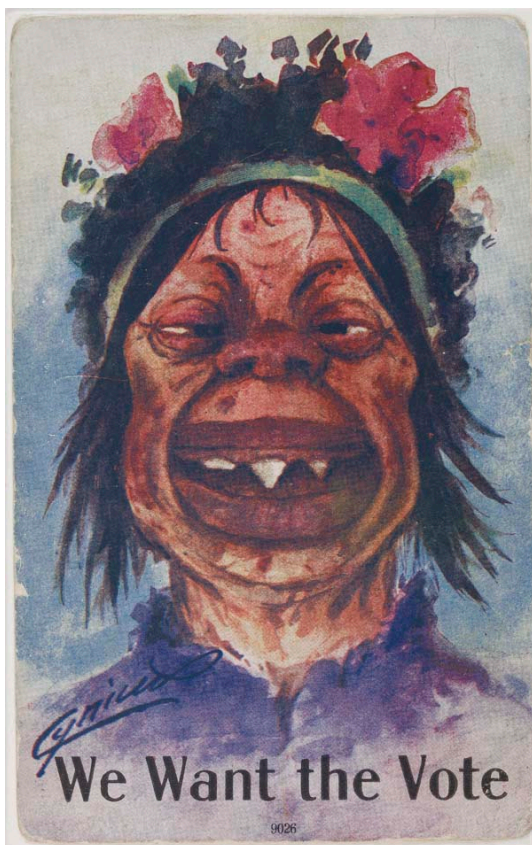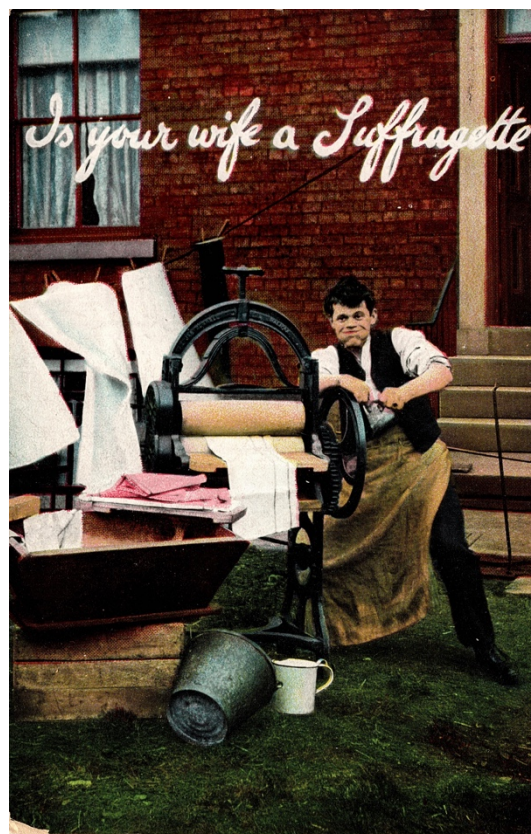

Figure 1. Anonymous. *We Want the Vote.* 1908.

Figure 2. Watkins, Eustace. Is Your Wife a Suffragette? 1918 1907. (From LSE Library collections, TWL.2004.1011.18)

Emasculated Husbands

Requiring slightly more deciphering, Figure 2 relies more heavily on symbolic value than Figure 1. However, it captures the threat under which elites felt gender roles to be. It features a man

doing laundry—traditionally viewed as a woman's job—and using a mangle in the garden. This feminizes the man, and all presumed-male individuals, by situating him/them within the private feminine space rather than his/their assumed position in the public realm. The poster poses the rhetorical question: "Is your wife a suffragette?" Again, the text plays a crucial role: this time drawing the audience in and asking what might happen if their wife, or any relation or friend, is a suffragette. The illustration provides the answer: gender destabilisation.

This poster has two main functions. First, to illustrate the potential feminization of men and the disruption of masculine identity if women can enter, or are recognised as having already penetrated, the public political realm. Second, forcing husbands/men to question their identity if their wives/women are Suffragettes and have left the home in disarray because of their activities. This provocation is achieved through the interaction of the illustrated and written, which is why posters are important for visual politics: they blur, even eradicate, the dichotomy between speech/silencing, textual/visual, working in tandem to construct political argument. The poster also verges on recognising the private and political as intertwined and traditionally women's work as important in society and politics, which becomes even more potent since the man appears tired and struggling. It can be assumed this was not the intention.

Although the image shows how masculinity is under threat and attempts to shame, humiliate and quasi-castrate men whose wives are or support Suffragettes by constructing them as failed masculinity, it is also ambiguous. The man still appears masculine: he has not been completely feminized, suggesting he, and society, can still recover his/its masculinity and restore gender order. Depicting a 'real man' in a feminine role emphasises that society is not beyond gender normalcy and saving, leaving it open to interpretation what the potential even-more-feminised future/man looks like. This ambiguity increases the image's security constructing potential

(Hansen 2011, 58). Able to be read in so many ways, this is an example of ambiguity and the interaction between text-body-image in the tripartite model.

Humiliation of this sort, which portrays 'men' as feminised subjects, makes them equally as confusing figures as the Suffragettes: they are unable to fit neatly into masculine/feminine, man/woman dichotomies. So, if men's masculinity has been compromised, they too could become abnormal and Other when read against traditional conceptions of masculinity. Their power status, privilege, and eliteness were at risk. Unacceptably performing bodies, like the Suffragettes, destabilised "relations of coherence and continuity among sex, gender, sexual practice and desire" (Butler 1990,23). This translated as a threat. An existential threat to be countered not just by men but women who disagreed with Suffragettes' gender performances and claims to the political.

Self-Sacrificing Bodies

Denied political prisoner status, which afforded greater in-prison comforts, imprisoned Suffragettes began hunger-striking. In response to hunger-striking, the government institutionalised force-feeding, which it legitimised with arguments and depictions of Suffragettes as mentally disordered and monstrous, like in Figure 1. Force-feeding—a practice ordinarily reserved for mentally ill patients/prisoners—was permitted out of fear that death would add political fuel to the suffrage fire (Purvis and Holton 2000,145). This raises questions about whether Suffragettes were genuinely perceived as mentally ill because of their gender non-conformity or whether this was political strategy—a question beyond this paper. Having the opposite effect, force-feeding martyred the Suffragettes, giving them a platform from which to project their voice and the imagery to support it (Figures 3-4). The result was "intense admiration" for those who endured this torture (Van Wingerden 1999,90).

Figure 3. Pearse, Alfred. The Modern Inquisition (for WSPU). 1910.

Recognising this, the WSPU's visual strategy played on the victim role—arguably a double-edged sword that reproduced women's so-called inferiority and status as protected—as well as depicting women as political actors. This was a strategy of showing the harsh treatment of Suffragettes—thereby concretising their status as victims of patriarchal power constellations—to rally the small group of already-enfranchised elite men and provoke a reaction against the treatment of women. Illustrating suffering does not eradicate agency but demonstrates silencing in action; it reflects Suffragettes' lived experiences of violation and subjugation (Parashar 2009,244).

Refusing victim/agent dichotomies, Suffragettes constructed themselves as simultaneously victims and/or political subjects seeking reform: they became simultaneously referent object, speakers and visual communicators. So, while many pro-suffrage posters portray women as victims, they also imbue them with the political subjectivity to show and be seen—both of which seek to rally support. These self-destructive acts and their visualisation are an "empowered refusal" that rejects a "fundamentally compromised, stunted, hollowed" existence while also critiquing conventional political subjectivity (Bargu 2017,11). Negotiating imposed verbal/textual 'silence', political subjectivity was sought through showing insecurity and destroying the body.

The visualisation of the government's actions and their endurance of them became a way of communicating with an audience that was ignorant to or otherwise unable to see law and its real-life embodied effects in action. The *Modern Inquisition* poster (Figure 3) does exactly that. It became instrumental in visualising the actions of the government and was widely circulated and even reprinted in *The Suffragette* magazine four years after initial publication. Given its authorship, it can be concluded this is a pro-suffrage poster; the barred window, accompanying text, particularly the word "torture", and force-feeding confirm this.

This and similar images of force-feeding became demonstrative of women's constructed inferiority and subhumanity by showing how female prisoners were treated (Lytton 1914,336). Male prisoners were not force-fed unless mentally ill, reinforcing that political women were read as dangerous. Publicising women's corporeal experiences of law, such posters emphasised the role Suffragettes' self-sacrifice played in confronting patriarchal power structures and made numerous, overlapping, visual moves to construct the government as existentially threatening to suffragette prisoners' lives. Posters became a way to communicate Suffragettes' insecurity in the public political spaces they were previously silenced in. The immediate impact and national

circulability of such posters (Tickner 1988,48–50) meant that they were unavoidable and a crucial outlet for constituting (in)security that was not registering through other means.

Conceived as political self-sacrifice—the voluntary self-destruction of the body in service of political ends (Fierke 2013,2)—hunger-striking becomes a self-imposed, conventionally silent, performative, and bodily communicative act. Both the act and its visualisation "silently, corporeally" speak politically (Pugliese 2002,para.22); something discourse-focused scholarship cannot address. It was a move to fight controls placed on women's bodies and choices because they were women. The invisibility of hunger-striking, the government's response, and its lack of political currency when hidden from public view, was overcome through drawn images (see: Bleiker 2018,20–21; Dauphinee 2018). Hunger-strikers exploited their silencing, in terms of conventional speech, to mobilise politically and resist through hunger-striking and visualising their treatment in prison. They spoke and drew attention to Suffragettes' suffering.

The success of posters as political arguments in visual form depends on their simplicity, reproducibility, the interplay of text and image, and calls to action. The latter two are particularly important. In Figure 3 voters are urged to "Put a stop to this Torture by voting against the Prime Minister." Text-image interplay is paired with a call to action. By saying the word "torture", when combined with the emotive response generated by the pain depicted, many possible reactions, beyond voting against the Prime Minister, are unleashed. This speaks to the ambivalence/clarity of images generally and posters specifically: while the text urges suffrage-supporters to remove the incumbent government, this text could easily be removed by the producer or ignored by audience(s). On its own the illustration would still do political work; with text, the poster mitigates some ambiguity associated with other genres, like photography, working to clarify its producer's political stance on the movement. This makes posters a potent form of visual political communication.

The distinction between suffragette prisoners and their punishers in force-feeding posters, achieved by colour in Figure 3, visually articulates the clash between structure (patriarchy) and anti-structure (women's suffrage) that was taking place upon women's bodies through force-feeding. Prisons functioned as correctional institutions for deviant behaviour, where Suffragettes were reduced to sub-human beastliness. The Suffragettes achieved subjectivity by showing their insecurity and self-sacrifice to the public: agency was found both in their embodied suffering and its visualisation. By all counts, force-feeding is torture and such action demonstrated the government's ability to freely police and invade women's bodies at will, reifying patriarchy and silencing women. The revelation of torturous action through posters, which is visually shocking and confrontational, strengthened the Suffragettes' cause. It showed that they were so committed that they were willing to die to resist the patriarchal structures making women insecure. Insecurity is, here, performed and shown, in the visual revelation and physical endurance of torture. The quite explicit and horrific nature of these images provokes a visceral and emotive response in audiences.

Visualising suffering and the national (re)circulation of posters communicated the larger experience of social suffering to a greater degree than talk of force-feeding alone. It left little to the imagination by showing events and inspiring action by those "who would otherwise sit still and do nothing" (Van Wingerden 1999,101). Posters of force-feeding and women's more general suffering were fundamental in revealing women's insecurities by calling attention to the pervasiveness of controls over their bodies and the definitions of acceptable femininity that constrained women to the domestic, private, sphere. When threats to particular bodies exist and silencing is faced, the depiction and presentness of pain and the corporeality of suffering matters. They work to counter (attempted) silencing across both discursive and non-discursive planes without speaking in a purely written or verbal sense. Rather, the visual and/or bodily, in

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conjunction with and/or separately from text/word, show and tell stories. In this case, the presence of text, embodied corporeal action, and their illustration combine to co-constitute a (visual) securitizing move; if there were merely text and no illustration something would be missing.

Death as Agency

In 1913, recognising that forcible feeding martyred prisoners, the *Prisoners Act*, or 'Cat and Mouse Act', was rushed through parliament as an emergency counter-measure against the Suffragettes who had declared war on society. Hunger-strikers would be released and re-incarcerated when deemed fit, which only restarted hunger-striking (Van Wingerden 1999,144). Tantamount to torture, the *Prisoners Act* inflicted psychological and physical harm through repeated incarceration and the enduring cycle of hunger-striking/forcible-feeding (*The Lancet* 1912, 185; Lytton 1914, 335). It became a key target of WSPU posters.

While the WSPU's *Cat and Mouse Act* poster (Figure 4) was iconic in the women's suffrage campaign, it is perhaps the most intertextual poster covered here. It certainly requires the most knowledge of the movement and intertextual contextualisation to fully unpack its message. Its resistive capacity is in how it is intertextually constituted within the broader suffrage movement and its explicitly (written and drawn) policy intervention. At the most basic level, this poster features a cat with a dead/dying/injured woman in its mouth; it is composed on a green background and is surrounded by text. The audience sees the vicious-looking cat head-on and the animal stares out from the picture in an almost predatory fashion. The cat is in the centre of the poster—and thus its message—with emphasis on its mouth holding a limp (suffering) female body between two bloodied fangs. Behind the cat are some buildings, most likely London or Manchester since these are where the British suffragette movement manifested most profoundly.

The poster follows common styles and conventions of pro-suffrage work by targeting particular legislation of the anti-suffrage campaign (Florey 2013; Tickner 1988). In this case, the legislation colloquially named the *Cat and Mouse Act*. The poster draws attention to the vulnerability and suffering of Suffragettes—the metaphorical mice—caused by government legislation—imposed by the methaphorical cat—and heightens the sense of outrage at their treatment (Tickner 1988). Depicting a cat with a dead/dying/injured WSPU woman—identifiable from the colour of her clothes and the (faint) WSPU writing on her sash—in its mouth, the image was a visual move to subvert the Liberal Government, demonize its politics, and show how its torturous laws were threatening women's survival. It also points to there being agency in death.
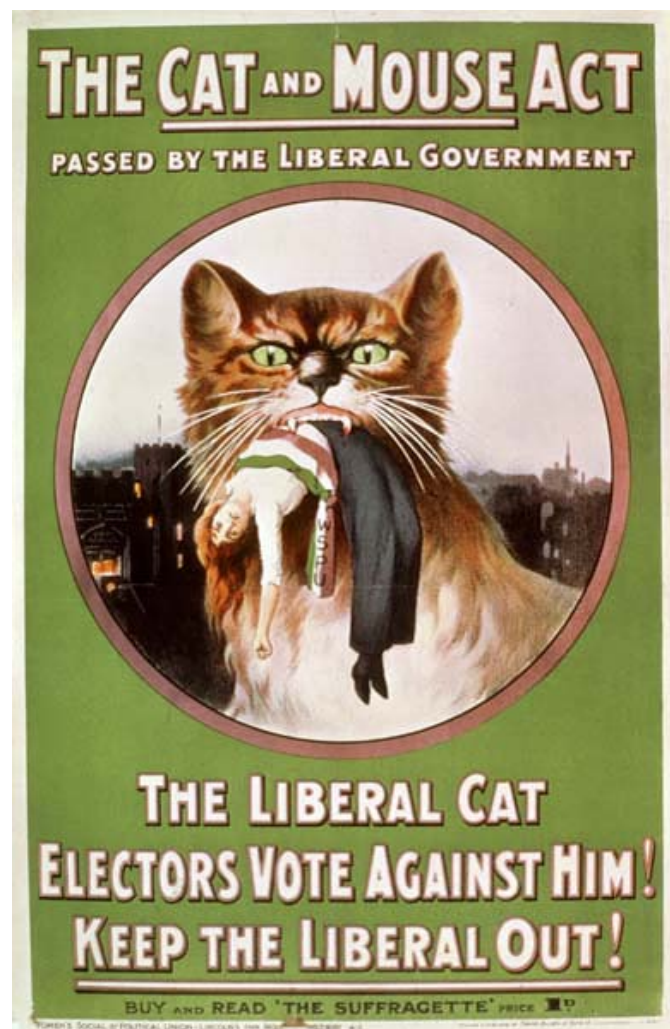

Figure 4. 'The Cat and Mouse Act' (1914). Anonymous for WSPU.

The text is, again, a fundamental part of this poster and the two are inseparable. Although heavily reliant on symbolism, the illustration does most of the work in constructing the existential threat with the text clarifying its meaning and providing the solution to countering the dangerous cat. The power of this poster is enhanced by combined public illustration of a wounded, perhaps even dead, female body and text demanding action. The image demands action by explicitly revealing the threat faced by Suffragettes and the text reinforces this by suggesting that people ought to support women's suffrage or women's suffering will continue. The only ambiguous part of the image—whether the suffragette is dead, dying or just captured and injured—reinforces the reality of Suffragettes' liminality between life and death. Particularly horrifying with the cat's bloodied fangs, the poster depicts the unjust treatment of women and their suffering at the hands of the law without needing to show torture. The punctured, punished, and bleeding body is a powerful and motivating enough motif on its own. One that also emphasises the lengths to which Suffragettes were prepared to go for their cause: death could be agentic.

An important aesthetic aspect of this poster is the suffragette's depiction. She is beautifully drawn such that, if de-contextualised from the rest of the image, she has an almost pre-Raphaelite quality. One can read this both inter-textually/-visually as a resistance against dominant discourses of suffragette monstrosity—particularly the visual discourse of Figure 1. In the context of the posters Figure 4 was up against, especially Figure 1, this is a powerful illustration of suffragette's 'normalcy' that sought to give women a voice and political agency.

The depiction of the victimised female body reiterates the reality of women's insecurity as political actors: the Suffragettes attempted to become full citizens and improve women's everyday security by engaging in politics and resisting their lack of vote, economic disparities and sexual violation. Such a depiction emphasises asymmetric security and power disparities between

women (governed) and men (governors), as well as the Suffragettes' psychologically sound, thought out, willingness to endure suffering for the cause. It is effective in constructing the liberal government as an existential threat to the lives of Suffragettes and women more generally. Paired with the tortured body, the "KEEP THE LIBERAL OUT!" call to action in Figure 4 functions as an immediate and unambiguous securitizing move against a government who had, "not yet… admitted that they will stop the 'Cat-and-Mouse' torture short of death itself" (Lytton 1914: 335). This poster, in particular, makes the captured, pierced female body iconic: by using torture to secure political masculinities and 'undo' female masculinity, the female body is the location through and upon which gendered power structures operate.

CONCLUSION

This article unfolded how images are used to silence and resist silencing, which is important for locating and promoting experiences of/in global politics and issues that are sought silenced or ignored. It started by discussing FSS and scholarship on silencing, connecting them with the visual turn. Feminist work, despite foregrounding individuals' security concerns and thinking about how those silenced might be made visible, often misses security problems that are not or cannot be articulated through text/words. It focuses on amplifying silenced individuals' voices, thereby only attending to discourse, narrowly defined as text/words, leaving out the corporeal and visual from its analyses. How the visual is used to resist silencing and/or illustrate embodied resistance does not come into view.

To see silenced gendered subjects, this article explored the ways gender and embodied resistance were visualised by the British Suffragettes. Inspired by their use of text, image, and embodied practices (like hunger-striking) to resist silencing the article laid out a tripartite approach that highlights the importance of looking beyond text/word and expanding discourse to include the complex interaction between text-practice-image. Images of embodied action can take the place

of and complement speech such that saying nothing can be doing something and doing something can be saying something. Acknowledging this necessitates a shift towards visual discourse analysis: important insights and acts of speech are lost/hidden when the written/verbal is privileged as the sole concern.

The Suffragettes used images and the (visualisation of) deeds to articulate gender-specific insecurities, challenge discourses of dangerous difference, stake a claim to political subjectivity, and negotiate structurally and culturally imposed silences. Their battle for political subjectivity took place across linguistic, visual, and bodily planes—a then new but effective combination. This necessitated looking beyond legal documents, parliamentary debate, and speeches about or by Suffragettes. Using posters with text and images, Suffragette artists attacked policy (Figure 4) and demonstrated their commitment to women's rights through illustrations of embodied suffering (Figure 3). Conversely, the government mobilized gender destabilisation (Figure 2) and the unnatural, disordered, monstrosity of political women (Figure 1).

It is important and valuable to look at strategies of silencing and resistance to silencing that extend beyond the written or verbal, especially in cases when an issue's position on the political agenda is contested. The back-and-forth interaction between silencing and resistance is clear in the pro- and anti-suffrage posters, especially in competing depictions of ab/normal gender performances. It would not have been possible to identify, analyse or understand the intervisual and political counter-/silencing nature of posters without examining these images. In the case of the British women's suffrage movement, posters assisted in constructions of security and functioned as counter-narratives that would not have registered under discourse-focused scholarship. Posters spoke visually. Political self-sacrifice and "deeds not words" spoke bodily. Both countered silencing.

Today, (online/digital) posters have (re)surged in transnational political movements that see the benefits of visual campaigns. To fully understand threat construction, silencing and contestation requires analysing something broader than text/word. Here, the tripartite model could be a productive analytical lens, particularly in studies of social movements, contentious politics, or in cases of silencing where, having been sought silenced or outright denied a seat at the metaphorical table, actors use the visual and bodily to resist. Moving forward, IR scholarship must decentre its focus on the sayable/said to reveal visual-bodily-textual means of countering silencing and constituting not only gender- but collective and/or individual sexuality-, race-, class-, and/or nationality-specific insecurities. This allows (Feminist) Security Studies and IR to better attend to the inseparable interrelation of text-image-practice.

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