War and the British: Gender and National Identity, 1939-1991


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Abstract

Popular memory of World War II was the dominant factor contributing to a sense of national identity in the Falklands War of 1982 and the Gulf War of 1991. This text looks at public and private ideas of national identity, how they were arrived at and the extent to which they were shaped by gender. It provides a synthesis between the key concepts of “national identity”, “popular memory” and gender as a social and cultural construct. Recent studies of World War II, and popular memory of the war, have focused on the extent to which it is remembered as a “people’s war”. This book builds on this work by examining how ideas about gender shaped the experiences of the war and its memory and concludes that despite women’s wartime role in “total war”, men in the armed forces were encouraged to regard themselves as being bound together in unity by masculinity and common experience, while women remained individuals with prime responsibilities to home and family. Their role as active participants remained “problematic” and remained so even the Gulf War in 1991.

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4 Groups: bonding, hierarchy, and social identity. Introduction A. Male bonding B. Ability to work in hierarchies C. In-group/out-group psychology D. Childhood gender segregation

Conclusion

1. Causality runs both ways between war and gender. Gender roles adapt individuals for war roles, and war roles provide the context within which individuals are socialized into gender roles. Gender norms outside war show similar diversity. The puzzle, which this chapter eschews out and the remaining chapters try to answer, is why this diversity disappears when it comes to the connection of war with gender. That connection is more stable, across cultures and through time, than are either gender roles outside of war or the forms and frequency of war itself. $39.50. - War and the British: Gender and National Identity, 1939–1991. By Lucy Noakes. London: I. B. Tauris, 1998. 9 In addition to the already noted works by Lant (Blackout) and Gledhill and Swanson (Nationalising Femininity), see Dawson, Graham, Soldier Heroes (New York, 1996), 10 See Dawson, Soldier Heroes; Segal, Lynne, “Look Back in Anger: Men in the 50s,” in Male Order: Unwrapping Masculinity, ed. Chapman, Rowena and Rutherford, Jonathan (London, 1988), pp. 68–96.