

# Does Khaki Become You?



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By A Customer

This book covers controversial subject matter, which will not appeal to everyone, and may even offend some readers. In the age of global 'terrorism,' the military and especially the US military has been glorified. Enloe's criticism of the military may smack indelicately on those Americans who are very patriotic. Subsequently, this book requires someone willing to put aside pre-established or hegemonic systems of knowledge in order to evaluate and remain receptive to Enloe's arguments. The implied reader must be willing to debate feminism as a valid political location, otherwise this book is a non-starter. Nevertheless, while a background in political science is probably helpful in reading this book, it is written in such a lucid manner that anyone can grasp Enloe's basic arguments. In addition, this book must be approached with the caveat that Enloe does not posit men as the enemy. Far from seeing all men as an undifferentiated enemy who can never be trusted as fathers, friends, colleagues, sexual partners of political allies, Enloe merely explores why and how the military exploits women. According to Enloe, the military controls men and women's sexuality

and gender in order to maximize military operational efficiency. What also becomes clear is that the military is a patriarchal institution. But support from the patriarchal institution doesn't come only from men, but also from many women. Complicity is key to the maintenance of the military as a patriarchal institution. I think it would have been interesting if Enloe had discussed whether the military could ever become a matriarchal or egalitarian institution. I also think it would have been interesting if she had discussed whether women are less prone to violence than men. Of course, this would have widened the scope of her research a lot more, and made the book much fatter to read. Nevertheless, while some critics might argue that Enloe doesn't consider why wars are fought, or whether any wars are just, I think that she would take the position that organized violence rarely if ever is justified. Clearly, this book does have a bias, it is biased toward women. But so what? Many books are biased toward men. Moreover, all books are subjective, the rhetoric or "fair and balanced" is really just rhetoric. Those that fail to see many of the valid points that Enloe cites are perhaps in denial. While I wouldn't say that everyone needs to subscribe to what she says part and parcel, this book is very interesting from the point of feminist curiosity.

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