Preface

Deborah Nutter

This issue of *The Fletcher Forum* focuses solely on female authors. Not only the practice, but also the study, of international affairs is dominated by men. Congratulations to the editors—male and female—of *The Forum* for their boldness and persistence in conceiving and executing this project that aims to help right the balance.

Several decades ago, as a young doctoral student in political science, I read my first issue of *Foreign Affairs*. This issue is still on my bookshelf and its august grey cover is now beginning to crumble. The articles are marked up with my notes and innumerable sentences are underlined in pencil. It was in this journal that I encountered new and compelling ideas as I worked to understand my field of study. Yet not one article was written by a woman. Over time, I came to realize that almost everything I read, not only in *Foreign Affairs*, but in the entire field, was written by men.

As I was writing this introduction, I received my latest issue of the same pre-eminent journal, with its now crisp and colorful cover. I found that, after all these years, of thirty authors listed in the table of contents, only four are women. We must not, however, single out *Foreign Affairs*; this problem remains endemic. Other journals in the field, including *Foreign Policy* and *The Fletcher Forum* itself, do not begin to approach a balance between male and female authorship.

I am not an expert on gender and women’s studies and I struggle to explain why, after so many years of cultural change and efforts to create

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equality for women, this continues to be a problem. How do we change it? This issue of *The Forum* makes progress by focusing on and promoting women’s research and research on women’s issues in international affairs.

As an undergraduate and graduate student, all the professors in my discipline were men with the exception of one adjunct faculty member who, ironically, taught a course on political utopias. When she applied for a tenure-track position, she was refused. Several of my classmates and I who organized to support her were told she was unsuitable because she lacked sufficient publication. Yet as a woman she faced much greater barriers to publication than did men.

Much has changed since then—and yet so little has changed. Because women are still not publishing in major journals or with major presses at the same rate as men, they are behind in achieving tenured positions, in defining the field, and in influencing policy.

Why, then, do we not have more women writing in major journals? Their absence from such publications represents one part of a larger problem. Women are also not making it to the top levels of leadership at the same rate as men. The United States has had three female secretaries of state and a female national security adviser. Brazil, Argentina, and Chile have female presidents, and Germany has a female Chancellor. This is impressive and encouraging, but these women are exceptions to the rule. As economist and author Sylvia Hewlett has argued, the “marzipan layer” of management, just below the top, is packed with women, “many of whom outperform male colleagues.”¹ Lucy Kellaway, the insightful and humorous business columnist for the *Financial Times*, points out that there is only “a small sprinkling of women emerging from the sticky yellow marzipan into the glorious royal icing on top.”²

We know women have been held back institutionally, and now debates rage as to whether they also hold themselves back. Submissions to *The Forum* suggest this may also be the case. Nearly all of *The Forum*’s unsolicited submissions this year came from men. Does this problem exist in part because women are afraid of rejection, because women want to raise children and have work/life balance—as Anne-Marie Slaughter argued in *The Atlantic* in July 2012—or because women lack confidence, as Katty Kay and Claire Shipman contend in the May 2014 issue of the same magazine?

The Fletcher School, and this issue of *The Forum*, are currently working to address gender inequality. Fletcher students, now over 50 percent female, have begun a gender equality project with wide-ranging implications throughout the school. Fletcher alumni have formed a Global
Women’s Network. And two years ago, a group of women on Fletcher’s Board of Advisers—now over 30 percent female—asked why our women students, who perform brilliantly while at Fletcher, are not as successful in the traditional career sense as male graduates. Two years ago, they created the Initiative for Women in International Leadership (IWIL) to address why, with all their talent, women were outperformed by men in public and intellectual leadership in international affairs.

In the lead article to this issue, former U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright makes a clarion call for broadening the security paradigm to include human security and dignity for both men and women, and for increasing women’s leadership opportunities. She sets the tone for the articles that follow on diverse issues, including many that affect women globally, as well as pieces from women leaders Barbara Bodine, former U.S. Ambassador to Yemen; Najat Maalla M’jid, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Sale of Children; and Icelandic Ambassador Sigriður Snævarr. Of particular note is a ground-breaking article by Cornelia Schneider, recent recipient of the first Fletcher Young Women’s Leadership Award, who writes on the need for mid-level inspirational leadership.

I very much commend the editors of The Forum for their contribution to the aforementioned effort. They have taken an important step to ensure that, in the not-too-distant future, women will routinely publish at least 50 percent of the articles in the best journals of international affairs. I am confident the female editors of this issue of The Fletcher Forum will be amongst them.

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ENDNOTES