CONVERSATIONS

Friendship, intimacy, and power in research on conflict: implications for feminist ethics

Jenny Hedström (she/her/hers) and Zin Mar Phyo (she/her/hers)

School of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences, Örebro University, Örebro, Sweden; Burmese Women’s Union, Chiang Mai, Thailand

KEYWORDS: Feminist ethics; conflict; friendship; empathy; methodology

Introduction

Agnes speaks about what she has seen. She repeats the story about the child running with her little brother in a basket on her back, and the little brother being dead. This is the second time she tells the story, when the age of the children in the story sinks in. The girl running is no older than four or five; the dead boy, in the basket, a year or two younger. Their age seems impossible. How did this young girl learn to pick up her brother and run? How many times has she run? Where are their parents? Why is she running on her own with her now dead brother in the basket? The woman telling the story has a low voice, whispers, the recorder doesn’t quite pick up her words. Jenny strains to hear. Zin Mar Phyo looks as if she will cry as Agnes relays in detail the blood on the dead child in the basket, the blood covering the sister, as she explains how she and her uncle drag these two children, one dead, one alive, into their house and clean the blood off them. Zin Mar Phyo thinks of her own daughter, three years old, and how she has no experience of shelling, and that if they were shelled her daughter would not know what to do — she knows how to draw castles and cats and paint her fingernails pink and dress up her dolls like princesses. She does not know how to pick up a younger brother in a basket on her back and flee from shelling and continue to run even after the bomb that hit their area kills her brother, blows out her eardrums, and covers her in blood. Agnes goes quiet and fiddles with her fingers. Zin Mar Phyo looks at Jenny, takes a deep breath, and asks Agnes if she is OK.

The vignette above comes from an interview conducted in Kayah State, Myanmar, in late 2019, with a young woman called Agnes. Agnes came forward to speak to us when we (Zin Mar Phyo and Jenny Hedström) were researching civilians’ experiences of everyday peace in ethnic minority regions in Myanmar. We had met her the night before, when we had been...
sitting in a local women’s shelter learning from different activists working in
the area about women’s rights and everyday life in post-transitional
Myanmar. Knocking on our hotel door early the next morning, Agnes insisted
on telling her story again, this time in more detail. She was excited about her
story being told to a wider audience – she was insisting on being heard. We
kept in sporadic touch with her after the interview, mostly through Facebook,
where she shared glimpses of her life: her son’s school performances, a new
haircut, her participation in a local military parade, a photograph showing her
shyly looking into the camera dressed in her best military fatigues.

Kayah State, the smallest of Myanmar’s ethnic states, has for decades
suffered from conflict fought between the Tatmadaw (the Myanmar army),
illogically driven minority ethnic armed groups, smaller splinter groups,
and militias aligned with the state military. Although Myanmar transitioned
from a military regime toward a more democratic form of government in
2011, rural conflict-affected areas of Kayah State, where Agnes lives, still
experience intermittent outbreaks of fighting and skirmishes between
different armed actors. Traveling throughout the state, we were reminded
of the civil war, whether when traversing (official as well as unofficial) military
checkpoints, visiting forced relocation villages, or speaking to civilians about
their experiences of violence and torture typically executed by the Tatmadaw
or one of the armed groups aligned with them.

The encounter with Agnes touches on several critical aspects of what it
means to do research with people living through such violence and
trauma, and the different ways in which civil war affects everyday life, even
years after the war has officially ended. Agnes, for example, growing up
within a family involved with a non-state armed group referred to here as
the Karen People’s Force (KPF), decided to return to this armed group
upon fleeing from neighboring Shan State, where she had been trafficked
by her mother. In Shan State, she cleaned and cooked for the family that
bought her, sold yaba,1 and ultimately experienced rape by a soldier (prob-
ably) involved in a poppy-growing operation, an incident that finally
pushed her into fleeing and that left her pregnant. This was also where the
shelling incident above took place, in the troubled border areas between
Shan and Kayah States, at a time when Myanmar’s transition was at its
peak. Agnes, taking charge of her life once back in Kayah State, proudly
joined the KPF as an active member of their women’s wing in order to
“prevent other women from experiencing what I did,” meaning being
trafficked and raped. Asking around about this armed group’s activities and
interviewing their leaders, we learned that they may also have a stake in
the drug economy in which Agnes was forced to work. They run a series of
brothels with Bamar women brought in – possibly trafficked – from the
lower delta.2 This (somewhat paradoxical) position nevertheless afforded
Agnes the agency to move her life forward, and gave her space in which to discuss and share her experience of violence.

Confronted with this – a messy narrative of everyday conflict and politics – we focus in this conversation upon an experience, the interview with Agnes, where our feminist ethics takes us in slightly different directions. The discussion that follows is then concerned with the ethical tensions and dilemmas brought up by doing feminist research in these settings of conflict and violence, and the questions that this raises about exactly what makes research ethical and feminist – is it, as Zin Mar Phyo proposes, practicing solidarity with our research participants or is it, as Jenny suggests, being self-reflective? Our conversation also explores just what it means to do justice in writing to someone like Agnes: a mother, a women’s rights activists, a sexual violence survivor, and a member of an armed group potentially complicit in the very militarized drug economy that caused herself to experience harm.

This article emerges from a series of conversations between the two researchers involved in this research project. These conversations – undertaken while hiking, or sharing a meal after interviews, or in video chats and on social media – have allowed us both to reflect on the process of doing research with women living in conflict-affected areas of Myanmar, research that was facilitated by our existing friendship and inspired, in part, by our (professional as well as personal) commitment to feminism. Between 2005 and 2008, Jenny was working with a Burmese women’s organization. After she left in 2008, she remained connected to it through ongoing volunteering commitments as well as friendships. This is where she met Zin Mar Phyo, initially a junior member of staff. By the time that we conducted the research in Kayah State, Zin Mar Phyo had become a leader of the organization and was in many ways a veteran of the women’s movement. When we traveled to Kayah State, we had been friends for close to 15 years and knew each other well. This means that Jenny’s presence in the research setting was mediated by personal and professional connections, and Zin Mar Phyo’s interaction with Agnes was similarly mediated by her prior connections and, significantly, her positionality as a women’s rights activist. We take the perspective that these cumulative experiences were key not only for facilitating access to the research site but also for creating a context in which Agnes came into being, not as a victim, but as a women’s rights activist herself, as we will see further below.

**Conversation**

*Emotions and knowledge*

**Jenny:** This research project involved speaking with (mostly) women who have experienced or are still experiencing some form of violence, as Agnes
had. Speaking about, or even hinting at, violence triggers an affective response – I wanted to hug Agnes, you looked like you would cry. These were emotional responses that, to me at least, framed our interview with her – emotional responses contained and shaped how I heard and responded to Agnes during the interview, but also affected how I thought about the interview in retrospect. For me, it is important to acknowledge and own these responses – rather than saying that emotions make research subjective and invalid, I believe that attention to emotions may actually help us in analyzing what we hear and learn (see Behar 1996; Hedström 2019; Page 2017). Thinking about the stories that Agnes shared with us, how do you think emotions – ours, Agnes’ – affected the research?

**Zin Mar Phyo:** When we hear traumatic stories, like the one Agnes told us about the shelling, we may feel like we can’t speak – we feel like we have something in the throat, or like something in the chest is blocked. I think these feelings are good because they help us understand and know about the real impact of conflict on people’s lives – they build knowledge about conflict and how it is felt and experienced in the everyday. It is so easy not to feel, to ignore what is happening in our country, but when you listen to, or read, these traumatic stories, it will make you feel. You can’t ignore what is happening. But it is not all sad emotion – I was happy too! I was happy that she came to us to share her story. This is a story that can help raise awareness about issues of peace and conflict in the country, which are typically not seen as women’s issues. So emotions can help change people’s perspectives about events in the country.

If we don’t see emotions, it is harder to build trust and build connections. Emotions make these connections happen – through these, we can have solidarity and action. If we listen carefully, especially to emotions, we may gain trust and learn about what the people we speak to want to tell us, instead of asking someone about something they feel unwilling to talk about, and then maybe doing harm.

**Jenny:** The way I see it, emotions infuse those connections you talk about (Behar 1996), the ways in which solidarity comes about. Emotions infuse and affect the relationships between us and those who talk to us; they filter the ways in which we understand and interact with people like Agnes. And this connection, this relationship, affects the ways in which we understand and engage in the research we do, and the way in which we do it, whether we take a step back or push forward with certain questions.

**Zin Mar Phyo:** Yes, I think that having a strong feeling, of empathizing strongly with the women we talk to, is important for building trust and for
properly understanding the situation of the participants. When we pay attention to emotions, we can be more attentive to what is actually important for the people we interview – rather than following a specific questionnaire, this allows the participant to be in charge of the interview. Her issue is what is important. This gives us critical information about what matters for the woman we speak to and allows her to in some ways take the lead in the interview. In the case of Agnes, she came to us and wanted to tell us a story about violence, even though we were doing interviews on something slightly different. If we don’t pay attention to emotions, we may miss things, or hurt the person we speak to, or we may not be able to build the connections needed for doing research. Through observing emotions – hers, ours – we can change the ways we do the interview: what we ask, and how we ask it, and even if we ask. It helps us understand the situation. For me, this is about respect – respecting the people we meet and their experience.

**Feminist friendships, research, and activism**

**Jenny:** In a way, the research we conducted in Kayah State was made possible because of two main things: one, our prior relationship, and two, our commitment to and experience of feminist activism. This meant that we could access the research site, and then once we were there, we could through our existing networks find other women activists to talk to and involve in the research (see Holvikivi 2019). So our collaboration on this project was informed and shaped by our shared interest in women’s issues in Myanmar, and our prior activist work on these issues in the country. But beyond this, I noticed that when you introduced me to our female research participants, you would always emphasize the fact that I had volunteered with women’s groups and often introduced yourself as belonging to a women’s organization. So it seems to me that you believe that the prior context of our relationship and (feminist) work commitment was important not just for finding ourselves in a position to meet and listen to Agnes, but in actually creating the affective setting of the research encounter itself. Can you tell me a little bit about why you did this – introducing me as a former volunteer and you as a women’s rights activist?

**Zin Mar Phyo:** In the type of research we do, speaking to women who live in conflict-affected areas of Myanmar, without much access to power or resources, and with experiences of trauma, it is important to build trust when we do the interview. We can do this by emphasizing the fact that we are not strangers to their situation, that we empathize with them, and that they are safe in speaking to us. I want them to know that you, although an outsider, understand this issue of women in Myanmar. These are the same reasons that I share these facts about myself – I want to let them know that I understand the situation, that I have heard many similar stories
before, and that they are not alone in experiencing what they have experienced. For me, this is related to our doing responsible and accountable research that matters to the women we meet. These women, like Agnes, don’t know about university research procedures, so talking to her about research ethics and consent forms doesn’t matter so much as our telling her that we know the situation, that we have heard similar stories, and that her story is safe with us. This is true whether I am working with you on university research projects or doing my own work in this area. I think this is what a feminist ethics means to me – to build trust and to be accountable and responsible in our research, and communicate this in a way that matters and makes sense. And the reason why we need to do this is because of long-lasting trauma and fear, because of the violence that never seems to end in these women’s lives. And I think that being a woman really helps, because our gender means that we have some shared experiences of discrimination so we can empathize with her, and our experience in women’s rights work is something that she can relate to, and feel comfortable with. This is why I start the interviews by introducing you as a long-term volunteer for the movement and me as a women’s rights activist, even though you haven’t asked me to do this.

**Power and empathy**

**Jenny:** I think you touch on something really important here – the fact that our gender and our backgrounds may facilitate trust and empathy, and that it is particularly important to generate trust with the people we meet when doing research on and about conflicts. Feminist research (often) suggests that researchers should not strive to put emotional distance between themselves and the research. I think that is true and yet this brings up potential pitfalls. How does our own positionality and experience shape the narratives shared with us? Agnes, for example, told us that she had recently joined the women’s wing of a non-state military organization in order to “work with women.” Having experienced and survived sexual violence, in addition to the trauma recounted above, she wanted “to raise awareness about the issues and … to support the women who are going through the same experience as me.” She didn’t talk about herself as a victim, but as a survivor, as someone with agency to help other people. As you say above, our gender probably facilitated her sharing this experience. But also the fact that you now work with a women’s organization, one that I used to volunteer for, probably contributed to her sharing her story. She actually repeated this twice: the first time we met her, she explained her commitment to women’s rights in great detail; the next time we saw her, she repeated it again. It then seemed important to her, this fact that she was working for women.
But it was also a fact that was somewhat incongruous – Agnes had joined not an independent women’s group but the women’s wing of an armed organization. This armed organization is infamous in the area we stayed in for running brothels. So, isn’t there a paradox there, in Agnes positioning herself as a women’s rights activist, while working for an outfit that actually hurts other women? Why didn’t we question her on this? What good does our empathy do then? Where does it lead us?

**Zin Mar Phyo:** Yes, but our empathy must be guided by our overall goal: our feminist struggle. I think this means that we have to be attentive to power when we do the research – we cannot push people who are vulnerable and unsafe. Our role, with someone as vulnerable as Agnes, is first of all to listen to her and build a relationship with her. So yes, to answer your first question, I feel like maybe we shaped the way Agnes talked about herself, in that she wanted to emphasize the connection to the women’s group because of our connection to the movement, and she wanted to build a connection with us. But that was a good thing – we needed to give her the space to feel proud of herself and her work. She hadn’t been given many opportunities to feel pride – she had lived through a lot of very traumatic events, from the shelling incident above to sexual violence and a loss of family. Her well-being had to be at the center of our research.

With Agnes, I think we gave her plenty of opportunity to speak but we also practiced empathy in not pushing her because she was in a very vulnerable position and I think we needed to give her the space to direct the interview. This didn’t mean that we did not question what she told us, but we connected her story to our overall knowledge of the conflict and the situation she lived in, and used her story to bring about action. For Agnes, she was a victim, she experienced abuse in many different ways, but then she found a place where she felt protected and able to protect other women like herself. She had power in that space. We must understand the overall context in which someone lives and experiences harm, so we do not cause more harm but provide an outlet for telling a story and a means of changing power structures.

**Jenny:** I agree with you, but I can’t help thinking that if we had given more space to Agnes, we might have learned something new about the ways in which military power is experienced (and possibly resisted?) in the everyday. Agnes’ position in the armed group, and her experience of violence and her understanding of what the group does, told us something important about the relationship between gender, power, and militarization in Myanmar. Her analysis of this situation could have given us a fresh perspective on the workings of militarized patriarchal power, whether experienced as direct
bodily harm (as in the shelling incident above) or as a foreclosing of possibilities and knowledge. What concerns me here is that we did not ask Agnes because I think we assumed she would not have a satisfactory answer, rather than giving her the opportunity to share her reasoning with us. Isn’t there potentially an ethical issue with writing about the conflict by drawing on her perspective without giving her the chance to comment on the further assumptions that we made?

**Zin Mar Phyo:** But we don’t have to know everything – it is not our right to know everything. We can only request, not push. It seems greedy to push and want more and more information. Do you think we have to know everything? Maybe that is the academic approach, but for me I don’t think we need to ask everything. I also think that there is not just one answer, one way of doing research. We always have to pay attention to the specific situation, and the person we speak to. We can’t have just one approach, we cannot generalize. For example, *how* we ask questions, *what* we ask someone, and *when* we ask it – we have to think carefully about this and take into account the impact of the questions on the people we speak to.

**Jenny:** But at the same time I think we assumed a lot of things – for example, that she would not be able to talk about the KPF’s activities – and, in doing so, potentially restricted Agnes’ power to speak for herself. It is not only about the fact that the group runs brothels, but also that the group might be one of those who shell civilians, like the one in the story Agnes narrated to us. If we had asked her what she thought of this, we would have given her the opportunity to give us her opinion on this, which might have challenged our assumption. But instead we did not question her about her life choices, because we either assumed she would not be able to have an informed opinion about the actions of the armed groups or we assumed she was too vulnerable and too disempowered to be able to engage in a conversation about this. And this is harmful, or at the very least restricting, because instead of giving her an opportunity to speak for herself, we restricted her voice. So we failed in paying attention to power here, because we assumed we knew better than Agnes, instead of asking her what her thoughts and opinions on this matter was. So, our empathy seems to have been limiting, rather than liberating.

**Zin Mar Phyo:** But Jenny, what does power mean to you? You seem to assume that Agnes did not have power. For me, Agnes had power and strength in sharing her experience. Maybe she did not have power when she was abused, but in coming to us, and wanting to speak out, she had power. I think she felt we could provide her with a safe outlet for sharing her experience more widely. In that sense, our empathy enabled her to do so.
Jenny: Right, so power is relative, and maybe ambiguous too! I remember when we met Agnes, she came across, at least to me, as somehow both scared and determined – she spoke very quietly, she looked down at her knees, and at the same time there was strength and focus in the way she told her story, and the way she insisted in telling it. So maybe she had no, or little, power when she was abused, but then in joining the armed group and in speaking out about her past, she experienced or held more power.

Zin Mar Phyo: Yes, that was her power. To speak out and share her story, and wanting to be heard. I also think that in that situation, we didn’t have much power – our power came from her, in her sharing a story that was important for our research. If she hadn’t shared her experience with us, we wouldn’t have had anything. So I think we need to remember that too. And when we left, the power of that story lay with us. This means we have to be accountable to what we learned. Power depends on the context.

Sensitive stories

Jenny: So, what does it mean to write against injustice, and what are some of the dilemmas this creates? For example, our access to this research site is enabled by political solidarity and the supportive aspects of existing feminist relationships. But does that mean we should not speak to people that we do not agree with? This is a dilemma that seems particularly important – and difficult – to pay attention to when you research conflict. Could this lead us to marginalizing, or even suppressing, stories that run counter to our own feminist beliefs?

Zin Mar Phyo: We cannot shake the chairs, as we say in Burmese, because in doing so we can never do research again in Myanmar. We have to think about power carefully. I think that power here means three things: military power and authority; the relationship between us and the people we interview; and also patriarchy and masculinity. When we pay attention to these things, these aspects of power, our research becomes, or is, ethical. For me, this means that when we do research, we treat women as the sources of knowledge on conflict; we pay attention to militarized power and authority so we don’t risk our own safety or the safety of our participants; and we try to do no harm to the women we work with through our words or actions but treat them with solidarity and respect, and with the understanding that we are relatively privileged, in terms of power. When we interview survivors of violence, we have a lot of power and privilege, which we need to pay attention to and be careful with – we need to think whether our words will hurt someone, either now or when the research is published.
Jenny: But what about the risk this runs in not listening to stories that we do not sympathize with? In the case of Agnes, we didn’t ask her much about her current involvement in the armed group, or the fact that we tend to only listen to one side of the story: that of the civilians. Do we risk missing out on other stories, other forms of knowledge we could learn from?

Zin Mar Phyo: Of course, we should always be honest and ready to ask difficult questions, and speak to all sides of the story, but especially in Myanmar, this is hard to do. If we publish whatever we want, without any consideration of the power relations in the context in which we work, then we will have no more relationships, no more trust. In Myanmar, especially, there is no freedom of research. For example, we cannot communicate with the state military because of security issues – and I don’t mean just our own security, although we would probably be arrested, but also the larger context in which we do research. If the participants in our research heard about us working with the military, they would not feel safe, and they would not trust us. Just the fact that the state or the military would know that we do research in a specific area would make our participants very nervous. They might also be in danger if the military or the authorities found out that they are speaking to us about past abuses. I don’t think that is ethical.

To me, empathy is critical for ethical research. Without empathy, how can we do ethical research, and for what reason? Empathy doesn’t mean we simply trust what someone says, or avoid questioning them on their actions or their words, but it is about the context that we observe – the interview forms just one part of how we understand the overall story someone tells us. If we had asked Agnes specifically about the armed group, we might have had a very interesting answer, but I think we gave her space to speak to us, about the issues she wanted to share. We asked her indirect, open questions that gave her the opportunity to in some ways be in charge of the interview. You know, we had a long conversation with her, which gave us a sense of the position she was in.

Jenny: Yet this allowed Agnes to construct herself in certain ways (as a women’s rights activist), which meant that there were directions she was not taking, subjectivities or positions she was not claiming. I think this means that our knowledge is created together, and in the interview situation, but this also means that other stories are not being told. What about the things left out? How do we see those?

Zin Mar Phyo: Yes, but if there are things we don’t see, well, that’s it. Building relations and trust is so important that this is what we need to focus on, to do research in these areas in Myanmar, where our research is almost like an
underground activity. It is still a little bit secret, and we have to be careful. And the women we speak to still experience violence. In this situation, we need to build trust, and remember that our feminist ethic, at least for me, is about the rights and the perspective of the people who have suffered. You know it is difficult and sensitive to do research in Myanmar, even today. It is not always easy for people to share their stories, so we need to be careful. Maybe we don’t see and know everything, but we give space for people to talk to us.

**In lieu of a conclusion**

After spending much time going back and forth, discussing issues of empathy, knowledge, and feminist ethics, Zin Mar Phyo suggested that we get in touch with Agnes directly, to ask her what she felt about the interview process and, if possible and she felt comfortable, about her own role in the armed group. “It is not our right to know, it is her right to tell us,” we agreed between us, but we also said that since Agnes initially had come knocking on our door one early November morning – her wanting to speak to us, her wanting the world to hear her story – she would probably be happy to hear from us again. We found out that Agnes, after surviving so much, died in March 2020, in a motorcycle accident.

We do not have conclusive answers but we can offer this in lieu of a conclusion. Our friendship, between us as well as with Agnes, encouraged us to traverse the “border of how and with whom knowledge is produced” (Chowdhury and Philipose 2016, 21). To us, this means that friendships open up possibilities for other ways of knowing but also of belonging. Empathy, with all its pitfalls and paradoxes, is crucial for enabling these connections to be made, which can foster solidarity and spur action. But empathy, like ethics, needs to be contextualized – we cannot generalize. This led one researcher to give more weight to solidarity as an aspect of feminist ethics, while inclining the other to focus on reflexivity. Finally, and relatedly, acknowledging that there is not one story but many, and many ways to research, process, and tell this story – Myanmar’s transition looks very different if you look at it from Agnes’ perspective of violence and exclusion as compared to someone holding power in the parliament or within the military, for example – gives rise to the possibility of transforming and disrupting the dominant stories that we hear, and with it the dominant structures of power. Power is elusive and relative, dependent on the context. It can therefore be challenged and changed.

**Notes**

1. *Yaba* is a type of narcotic, typically laced with methamphetamine and caffeine.
2. For further reading about the drug economy, see Meehan (2015) and International Crisis Group (2019). For further reading about trafficking, see UN ACT (n.d.). For further reading about migration, see Boutry (2020).

Acknowledgments

We are thankful for feedback given by the editors, Siân Thomas, Holly Lee Warren, Elisabeth Olivius, Yasmin Chilmeran, and the Burma Studies Group. We also want to give our gratitude to Agnes for sharing her time and story with us. Agnes’ story will be included in Hedström (in press).

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

This research was partly funded by RJ (Riksbankens Jubileumsfond M16-0297: 1) and the Swedish Research Council (2015-01756).

Notes on contributors

Jenny Hedström is a postdoctoral researcher in Gender Studies at Örebro University, Sweden. She holds a PhD in International Relations from the Monash Gender, Peace & Security Centre, Melbourne, Australia. Her research concerns the relationship between households, gender, and warfare; gender, transitions and peacebuilding; and women’s activism and resistance, with a focus on non-state armed conflict in Myanmar.

Zin Mar Phyo is a women’s rights activist originally from Mon State, now based in Thailand’s Chiang Mai. She speaks Burmese and English fluently, and has worked with local women’s organizations in Myanmar since 2005. She is also a feminist journalist, and former editor of Honest Information online media, writing and publishing articles focusing on the situation of gender justice and women in conflict areas in Myanmar.

References

Behar, Ruth. 1996. The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
Boutry, Maxime. 2020. “Internal Migration in Myanmar.” In Internal Migration in the Countries of Asia, edited by Martin Bell, Aude Bernard, Elin Charles-Edwards, and Yu Zhu, 163–183. Cham: Springer.
Chowdhury, Elora Halim, and Liz Philipose. 2016. Dissident Friendships: Feminism, Imperialism, and Transnational Solidarity. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
Hedström, Jenny. 2019. “Confusion, Seduction, Failure: Emotions as Reflexive Knowledge in Conflict Settings.” International Studies Review 21 (4): 662–677.
Hedström, Jenny. In press. “On Violence, the Everyday, and Social Reproduction: Agnes and Myanmar’s Transition.” Peacebuilding.

Holvikivi, Aiko. 2019. “Gender Experts and Critical Friends: Research in Relations of Proximity.” European Journal of Politics and Gender 2 (1): 131–147.

International Crisis Group. 2019. “Fire and Ice: Conflict and Drugs in Myanmar’s Shan State.” International Crisis Group. Report No. 299, January 8. Accessed November 2, 2020. https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-east-asia/myanmar/299-fire-and-ice-conflict-and-drugs-myanmars-shan-state.

Meehan, Patrick. 2015. “Fortifying or Fragmenting the State? The Political Economy of the Opium/Heroin Trade in Shan State, Myanmar, 1988–2013.” Critical Asian Studies 47 (2): 253–282.

Page, Tiffany. 2017. “Vulnerable Writing as a Feminist Methodological Practice.” Feminist Review 115 (1): 13–29.

UN ACT. n.d. “Myanmar.” UN ACT. Accessed November 2, 2020. http://un-act.org/myanmar/.