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Rebecca Forgash. *Intimacy across Fencelines: Sex, Marriage, and the U.S. Military in Okinawa.*

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INTRODUCTION BY RONNI ALEXANDER, KŌBE UNIVERSITY

As school children, many of us learned about the world and our place in it relative to others using maps with colors delineating difference and/or borders. Those maps helped us to imagine global spaces as separate, clearly definable places. While our history lessons may have revealed that some of those places were created through military conquest and colonial, or perhaps decolonizing, ambitions, rarely were we encouraged to think about the ways ordinary lives intertwine to construct, solidify, permeate, reject, and also to be constructed by those borders. Rebecca Forgash, in *Intimacy across the Fencelines: Sex, Marriage, and the U.S. Military in Okinawa*, her ambitious ethnography of international marriage in the militarized spaces of Okinawa, challenges us to think about those relationships. Using a lens of intimacy, Forgash interrogates the ways in which the lives of Okinawan women and their U.S. military spouses engage with the physical, social, political, and symbolic spaces defined by the ‘fencelines’ surrounding U.S. military installations on Okinawa. Using material from interviews as well as archival sources, Forgash illustrates the ways that not only categories of identity such as gender, race, and class but also international politics intersect in the personal lives of Okinawan-U.S. military couples. The scope of Forgash’s work is matched by the insightful reviews by Mitzi Carter, Sealing Cheng, Nicole Constable and Mire Koikari, each of which focuses on the book in its entirety, as well as addressing particular issues of concern to each author. Carter, for example, draws on critical scholarship in Black studies to focus on race and mixed identities, Cheng addresses feminism and sexuality, Constable discusses intimacy and Koikari views the book in light of other studies of Okinawan-American intimacy.

Not surprisingly, as the reviews from Koikari, Constable, and Cheng point out, the concept of “fencelines” is apt; Forgash describes ways in which the couples she interviews engage in fence-crossing and uses the term as a “heuristic for thinking about the reach of militarization in Okinawa and its impact on the everyday experiences of residents” (3). Here fencelines are portrayed as physical and symbolic borders, with emphasis on the ways they cast their binary shadows on social and intimate relations between the U.S. military and local Okinawan communities. In her review, Koikari echoes Forgash’s emphasis on the porous nature of fencelines. The text provides numerous examples of ways in which the reach of the military exceeds the installations enclosed within the fences, and illustrates how colonial and militarized histories come together and are entwined along the fencelines. Forgash also provides examples of how couples try to negotiate that permeability, attempting to avoid scrutiny by both the military and local communities, with their success revealing the “limits of state institutional power and U.S. military empire” (19). What is not clear to me, however, is the extent to which Forgash’s fencelines are permeable from the other side; how do the women, or perhaps how does Okinawa, or even Japan, change the contours of the fence for the U.S. military? As Chapter 4, “The Marine Corps Marriage Package” dramatically illustrates, military rules governing international marriage are made from a military perspective. The couples find this uncomfortable, to say the least. Forgash examines the marriage package workshops with a lens of cultural citizenship, underscoring the ways cultural and racial differences are both recognized and denigrated by the military. Over time, some of the more onerous aspects of military governance of marriage between soldiers and local women have changed, yet the problem is far from solved. I was left wondering, on the one hand, the extent to which Okinawa and/or Japan may have served to bring about any of those changes. At the same time, I wondered what form the ideal situation might take. From the perspective of national security and management of soldiers, some of whom presumably will suffer injury or die as a result of their military activities, intimacy might not matter, but a marriage license with its attached rights and responsibilities is no doubt important. Similarly, keeping soldiers occupied and mentally fit is also an issue for military governance.¹

¹ In this regard, work on emotion and affect in IR is useful. For example, Linda Åhäll and Thomas Gregory, eds., *Emotions, Politics and War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), particularly Alison Howell’s chapter “Making war work: Resilience, emotional fitness, and affective economies in Western militaries” (141-153) on affective relations underpinning military mental health programs. It raises the question of why some fencelines are more difficult to cross than others. In this regard, Howell’s work on affective relations underpinning military mental health programs are insightful.

That said, the fencelines portrayed in this volume are permeable in the sense that some Okinawan women, as described in Chapter 1, use the bases and military as a way to “marry out” (24, 36, 40-43, 47, 48). Some of the couples tried to escape some of the regulation of military life by living off-base, and some of the former soldiers chose to remain in Okinawa rather than returning to the United States or moving elsewhere. It is very clear that the military sought to regulate the lives of the couples, a strategy that can be seen as at least demeaning, if not racist and degrading, for the women. Still, some of the couples opted to go through the arduous procedures to obtain U.S. visas, presumably with hopes that the women would eventually be able to fully cross the fence. While these examples show the tenacity and creativity of many of the couples, Forgash does not engage with the question of fence-crossing as a means of moving the fence itself. As Carter suggests, discussion of the mixed-race children of these couples or of issues such as domestic violence might help to give a more nuanced vision of cultural citizenship and the ways the military marginalizes those perceived to be on the ‘other’ side of the fence.

I would be remiss in leaving out a further, if perhaps less direct, concern about the use of the heuristic of the fence. In citing my work,² as a precursor to her concept, Forgash talks of the way “Guamanians” view the lines of the fence (10), reconstructing a military/local distinction used far more often by the military than by the local people themselves.³ This suggests a linear understanding of fences, resulting in the homogenization of a diverse group of people into a binary based on colonial understandings of political legitimacy and race. On Guam, the fact that most people have U.S. citizenship and almost all families have someone connected with the military blurs the lines of the fence in ways that are different from those in Okinawa. If nothing else, marriages between local women and soldiers would likely not be considered ‘international,’ even if they were intercultural. One of the most interesting things about fences for me is that while on the surface they reproduce binary understandings of linear and symbolic space, careful inspection leads us to the discovery that those binaries are only one of the ways to tell the story.

In Forgash’s book, feminism seems to be another symbolic if not literal fence. Personally, while I do not live in Okinawa, I identify as an anti-base feminist, and position myself within a range of (sometimes changing) political understandings and preferences held by my anti-base feminist colleagues and friends. Like Cheng and Koikari, and Forgash herself in her response to their criticism, I question the cohesiveness of groups on both sides of the binary of Okinawan women married to U.S. soldiers and “feminists and others” (71) or “feminist scholars and anti-base activists” (108). In addition to the feminist work cited by the reviewers, another angle of importance would be to address how being positioned inside the fence in the first place, and then experiencing both sides of the fence through their marriages politicizes the soldiers, not just toward the regulation of their intimate relations, but toward the continuing colonial and military project of the United States and Japan in Okinawa.⁴

Life experiences take people to places they do not necessarily anticipate, putting them in positions about which they may feel ambivalence and even discomfort. For Chamoru soldiers, serving in the military can be a politicizing experience, sometimes forcing them to question whether in fact the military in which they are, or were, serving in fact reflects their own values.

² Ronni Alexander, “Living with the Fence: Militarization and Military Spaces on Guahan/Guam,” *Gender, Place and Culture* 23:6 (2016): 869-882.

³ ‘Guamanian’ is a colonial term that was used after World War II until the 1970s to describe indigenous Chamorus. Today, it is used by some residents to emphasize unity but understood by many, especially Chamorus, to homogenize the diverse population of Guam. For a short explanation see Gina E. Taitano, “Adoption of ‘Guamanian’” in *Guampedia*. Available at: <https://www.guampedia.com/adoption-of-guamanian/>.

⁴ See, for example, Michael L. Bevacqua, “The Exceptional Life and Death of a Chamorro Soldier: Tracing the Militarization of Desire in Guam, USA” (33-62) and Keith L. Camacho and Laurel A. Monig, “Uncomfortable Fatigues: Chamorro Soldiers, Gendered Identities, and the Question of Decolonization in Guam” (147-180) in Setsu Shigematsu and Keith L. Camacho, eds., *Militarized Currents: Toward a Decolonized Future in Asia and the Pacific* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010), and Ronni Alexander, “Gendered Security: Learning from Being and Feeling Safe on the Island of Guahan/Guam,” *Jendā Kenkyū*, No.22 (2019): 25-42.

When interviewing U.S. veterans on Guam, I have often heard about how Chamoru soldiers felt more in common with the values and social relations of the local community outside their bases in the Middle East, rather than with those of the American military community inside of which they were supposedly a part.⁵ Forgash does discuss the motivation for some of the women to seek out military men, describing how the couples met and giving illustrations of how the women attempt to combat or avoid stereotypes about sex workers and soldiers. It might also be interesting to examine what it is that motivates the U.S. soldiers to seek out Okinawan women as lifetime companions, and the reasons the men have joined the military and find themselves in Okinawa to begin with. In this regard, Carter's remarks about engaging with critical scholarship in Black Studies to think about not only how the Okinawan women, and perhaps their children, navigate racialized identities but also how it is done by the soldiers, Black and otherwise.

As the title suggests, Forgash's book focuses on intimacy, which in the case of the couples introduced in the text, is regulated by "multiple state bureaucracies" (10). In their reviews, Constable and Cheng both question whether, given its importance to this text, Forgash has analyzed intimacy sufficiently as a construct. In her response to this criticism, Forgash refers to intimacy as a symbolic fenceline separating the public and private, "erected and maintained by the U.S. military and Japanese government policies and integrated into Okinawan community norms" (quote from response). Intimacy is simultaneously personal, the language of love, and political. Forgash recognizes this private aspect but suggests that "intimate relationships are in fact a useful vantage point for viewing the dynamics of power that pervade society at large" (10). In thinking about intimacy as power, a discussion of the relationship between intimacy and sex would be useful, particularly because of widespread associations between the military (and U.S. military bases), sex work, and sexual violence in such places as Okinawa or Korea.⁶ Forgash addresses the issue of sex in particular in her descriptions of the ways the Okinawan women attempt to distinguish themselves from women providing sexual services to U.S. military men, as described in some detail in Chapter 3, "Living Respectably and Negotiating Class." As Forgash argues, post-colonial scholarship provides numerous opportunities for thinking about the colonial constructions of intimacy and local resistance to them. Perhaps including examples from other colonized militarized islands could also be useful. Laura Souder, for example, discusses intimacy during colonial times and how it affected not only social relations at the time but also the long-term implications for Chamoru culture.⁷ This is also a place where further attention to issues of raising children can be instructive.

Forgash has given us a rich description of the lives of Okinawan women and their soldier (ex-soldier) partners. As the reviewers note, there are limits to what can be put into a single volume. Yet the intersections of gender, race, class, culture, militarism, colonialism, and imperialism on which this book is built are an invitation to ask for more. For me many of those details became more visible on the second or third reading; it takes patience and careful attention to untangle the entanglements covering the fenceline. If I were to be greedy and ask for still more, I would suggest the importance of recent work by Jane L. Parpart, Swati Parashar, and others concerning silence.⁸ It is common for feminist and other movements to call for giving voice to women, associating women's silence with disempowerment and a lack of agency. Yet, as Parpart and

⁵ See op. cit. Alexander (2019) and Ronni Alexander, "Islands as Safe Havens: Thinking about Security and Safety on Guahan/Guam" (17-28) in *The Challenges of Island Studies*, ed. Ayano Ginoza (Singapore: Springer, 2020).

⁶ See, for example, Catherine Lutz, ed., *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts* (London: Pluto Press, 2009); Maria Höhn and Seungsook Moon, eds., *Over There: Living With the U.S. Military Empire from World War Two to the Present* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Saundra Pollock Sturdevant and Brenda Stoltzfus, *Let the Good Times Roll: Prostitution and the U.S. Military in Asia* (New York: The New Press, 1992); Anni P. Baker, *American Soldiers Overseas: The Global Military Presence* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2004); David Vine, *Base Nation: How U.S. Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2015).

⁷ Laura Marie Torres Souder, *Daughters of the Island: Contemporary Chamorro Women Organizers on Guam* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992).

⁸ See, for example, the edited volume, Jane L. Parpart and Swati Parashar, eds., *Rethinking Silence, Voice and Agency in Contested Gendered Terrains* (London: Routledge, 2019).

Parashar suggest, “At the most basic level, silence can be a coping mechanism, a choice, an action that can help deal with toxic and often dangerous situations”⁹. It can also create space for reflection, healing, and also resistance. The couples in this book navigate military and civilian worlds, as well as American, Okinawan, and Japanese cultural and community relations, but they also contend with different understandings and expressions of agency. A better understanding of silence might lead to a more nuanced and dynamic understanding of, for example, the position of the Okinawan women and also the soldiers regarding U.S. bases in Okinawa.

Intimacy Across Borders is a good read for scholars, but also for those who are interested in how people negotiate relationships across borders, some of which are visible and others of which might be hard to discern. It answers many questions and, in the tradition of all good books, it raises many new ones. In focusing on intimacy across the military fencelines in Okinawa, it successfully demonstrates the complex ways bureaucratic, political, and social relations infiltrate the private and personal space of love and intimate relations. In providing detailed illustrations of the ways couples engage with racial and gendered stereotypes on an everyday basis, we come to understand intimacy as more than something occurring within private, and perhaps public spaces but as an embodiment of how the personal is both political and international.

Participants:

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Ronni Alexander is a Professor in the Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies, Kōbe University and serves as Director of the Gender Equality Office and Adviser to the President for Diversity. She holds degrees from Yale University (BA, psychology), International Christian University (MA, public administration), and Sophia University (Ph.D., international relations). Ronni engages in peace research, peace education, and peace activism. Her current scholarly work uses narrative and story-telling with two different projects: intersections of militarization, gender and security on Guam, and use of art in disaster support. Both emphasize feeling safe, as opposed to being safe. She established the Popoki Peace Project in 2006, and her work includes continuing activities using art and stories in the areas affected by the 2011 Fukushima disaster and interrogating the COVID-19 pandemic through art in Popoki’s Mask Gallery. Her publications include the *Popoki’s Peace Book* series (*Popoki, What Color is Peace?* (Kobe: Epic picture book series, 2007), *Popoki, What Color is Friendship?* (Kobe: Epic, 2009), *Popoki, What Color is Genki?* (Kobe: Epic, 2014), as well as such scholarly publications as, for example, “Feeling Unsafe ~ Exploring the Impact of Nuclear Evacuation,” *Journal of Narrative Politics*, 4:2 (2018): 55-87; “Living with the Fence: Militarization and Military Spaces on Guahan/Guam,” *Gender, Place and Culture*. 23:6 (2016): 869-882; “Remembering Hiroshima: Bio-politics, Popoki and Sensual Expressions of War,” *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 14:2, (2012): 202-222.

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⁹ Jane L. Parpart and Swati Parashar, “Rethinking the Power of Silence in Insecure and Gendered Sites,” in Jane L. Parpart and Swati Parashar, eds., *Rethinking Silence, Voice and Agency in Contested Gendered Terrains* (London: Routledge, 2019): 1-15, here 5.

methodology of militarization in Okinawa and transnational understandings of Blackness and race in Japan. She is working on her first book which will trace her mother's journey from war-torn Okinawa to a racially segregated U.S. South as a lens for capturing Black Okinawan life (and *afterlives*) in the "Black Pacific." Carter received her B.A. in Cultural Anthropology from Duke University and her M.A. and Ph.D. in Anthropology from UC Berkeley.

Sealing Cheng received her doctorate of philosophy from the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford. She is currently Associate Professor in the Department of Anthropology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Her book *On the Move for Love: Migrant Entertainers in U.S. Military Camp Towns in South Korea* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019) received the Distinguished Book Award of the Sexualities Section of the American Sociological Association in 2013. She is currently working on a book on the meanings of intimate relations for asylum-seekers in Hong Kong.

Nicole Constable is Professor and Chair of the Department of Anthropology and Research Professor in the University Center for International Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. She is author of four books including *Romance on a Global Stage: Pen Pals, Virtual Ethnography and "Mail Order" Marriages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007) and two edited volumes including *Cross-border Marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004). She is currently finishing a book about "real but fake" passports.

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REVIEW BY MITZI CARTER, FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Ethnographies of the militarized borderlands in Okinawa are exceedingly difficult to write. Navigating through the messy bricolage of practices along the fencelines require a keen eye for understanding how the viscosity of these militarized borderlands are often shaped by gendered and racialized markers of belonging. *Intimacy across the Fencelines* captures many of these complex forms of sociality and affective dimensions that are shaped in this geopolitically triangulated space.

Like any scholar doing work on Okinawa, Rebecca Forgash first explores how and why research in this heavily militarized space is uniquely different than in mainland Japan. *Intimacy across the Fencelines* begins with a strong argument that in Okinawa, ideologies of romance and love with someone marked as an outsider in Okinawa can only fully be understood against the multiple narratives of romance circulating in U.S. military communities, the Okinawan oral and literary traditions that frame exogamous relationships in particular ways, as well as in the policies shaped in the Ryūkyū Kingdom, in the postwar years, and in contemporary Japan. This background helps readers understand the strategic discursive moves made by some international military couples to blur the inequalities of power and resources that might be symbolically attached to their bodies in intimate proximity to one another. She asserts, “talk about love redirects attention away from the larger context of the U.S. military presence and toward individuals’ subjective experiences of intimacy, while simultaneously absolving them of any wrongdoing” (47). This is a very interesting and bold assessment that needs more historical contextualization. While the third chapter does offer a brief historical explanation of why the reliance on the discourse of love is a potentially powerful and strategic one for some women, there needs to be a more nuanced discussion of the genealogy of sexuality in Okinawa and more space for the alternative strategies women use to displace the tropes of prostitution and respectability that hover around them.

Intimacy across the Fencelines demonstrates how Okinawan women are acutely aware of how memories of the postwar sex industry hover over their international relationships, even across several generations. The analysis of the different strategies women employ to contest those imaginaries, or even to reinforce them by casting them onto more racialized or economically vulnerable Others is rich. Annmaria Shimabuku’s¹⁰ reading of how the actual grammar of the postwar laws impacted Okinawan women could add a significant dimension to this section of work. Shimabuku makes the case that in this period, a new political subject was being formed on the island, the ‘petitioning subject’¹¹ who “must ask for things because it has little to nothing.”¹² In this new biopolitical order, the foreclosure of movement in liminal spaces¹³ along the fencelines is partially what led to prostitution and “pure love” being positioned as polar opposites¹⁴. With this framing, women’s complex narratives about love have the potential to be more than attempts to nudge the militarized framing away from their bodies and could be understood as more directly linked to how most Okinawans have been subject to the biopolitical conditioning of their bodies as ‘petitioners.’ This analysis allows a shift in the ethnographic inquiry, and we may hear from other Okinawans who do not buy into these women’s framing of love as truly flexible given how many of these routes have

¹⁰ Annmaria M. Shimabuku, *Alegal: Biopolitics and the Unintelligibility of Okinawan Life* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019)

¹¹ Shimabuku expands on Ichirō Tomiyama’s coined concept of the petitioning subject. In her reading of his work, Shimabuku argues that this new technique of petitioning was not to produce good and services to gain middle-class status like on the mainland, rather to produce “themselves as subjects before the law” (61). For Shimabuku, simply casting blame on Okinawan elites for being complicit in the actions is too simplistic.

¹² Shimabuku, *Alegal*, 61.

¹³ Shimabuku, *Alegal*, 64.

¹⁴ Shimabuku, *Alegal*, 62.

been severely blocked, yet who may accept and resonate with their longing to ambiguously belong on the fencelines in other ways because it is a familiar and deeply internalized practice for themselves.¹⁵

While the scholarship focused on affective transactions is opening up new windows into how emotions are linked to social and political oppositional tools, there is still a lack of attention to intersectional racial identities.¹⁶ *Intimacy across the Fencelines* fortunately is attentive to these intersectional identities. The second chapter clearly demonstrates how contemporary racial attitudes about intimate relations with Black men can be devalued because there are non-specific links to racial memories from the occupation-era in Okinawa but in other instances, more easily conjured narratives can be summoned to contribute to anti-Blackness. Together these stories convey the complicated palimpsest of racial memories that move sloppily through time and space and shape the affective realms of interracial partnerships in Okinawa. In this chapter, Forgash also implies that a *méconnaissance* of racial discourses clutter the militarized memoryscape. For example, younger Okinawans who are further from experiences of the earlier occupation racial narratives may not easily access the same putative racialized scripts as older generations.

This was illustrated well in the Katsuyama Cave Incident excerpt which details how the remains of three Black marines from an early postwar segregated Marine Unit were found buried in the locally named *Kurombo Gama* (Cave of the Negroes). Forgash's explanation of how these memories were hidden and then recuperated to articulate their subjectivity against island-wide protests against the bases is fascinating. These types of narratives, myths, and public memories, she argues, sometimes offer a set of readily available scripts to contest or judge Okinawan women's involvement with Black men.

Intimacy across the Fencelines offers another significant perspective that is often overlooked in ethnographic studies of militarization in Okinawa – how the legacy of transnational eugenic thinking is used to explain away military violence. Forgash successfully points out that racial narratives of crime are shaped by racist military historians and clumsily mesh with other locally formed racial discourses and within military communities at large. Crime statistics presented by Okinawa prefecture are often widely contested by those with Status of Force Agreement (SOFA) status and often portrayed as manipulated, or dismissed as politically doctored to legitimize the anti-base positions. Without using this explicit phrasing, *Intimacy across the Fencelines* demonstrates how reactions to these numbers are often couched in white supremacist ideologies. For example, she notes that prominent military historians deflected high crimes rates of occupation-era U.S. soldiers onto segregated Black troops or the later segregated Filipino unit, naturalizing the eugenic idea that there was a seamless proclivity toward criminal behavior because of their poorly under-resourced environment or that they were innately criminal because they were Black or Filipino (70-73). When those segregated troops left, the crime rates did not subside nor was there any discussion of the intrinsic relationship between militarization and violence outside these narratives of race. It was left as a taken-for-granted, uncontested explanation to exorcise all 'bad apple'-type behaviors onto Black and Brown men.¹⁷ This story about racialized criminality, she argues, then imbricates violence and Black bodies and potentially shapes some discomfort around Black and Okinawan intimacies.

¹⁵ See opening introduction in Mitzi Carter, "Mixed Race Okinawans and their Obscure In-Betweenness," *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 35:6 (November 2014): 646-648, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/07256868.2014.963531>. Okinawan women in proximity to their visibly mixed-race Okinawan children may convey sexualized imaginaries for some, but their pairing may also create small apertures for shared remembrance for others and potential community-building with others.

¹⁶ Bianca Williams, *The Pursuit of Happiness: Black Women, Diasporic Dreams, and the Politics of Emotional Transnationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018).

¹⁷ See Khalil Gibran Muhammad's *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 2010) for a more nuanced history of the ways crime statistics were used to institutionalize Black inferiority.

The discussion on how diachronic racial memories repeatedly haunt and traumatize subjects across time is intriguing, but the burgeoning scholarship on the Black Pacific that would buttress these important points is not discussed. This work situates Afro-Asian intimacies in creative ways in militarized spaces and its application here would raise new questions for this body of work: How do Okinawans in the pre-reversion era remember the profound moments of kinship with Black military personnel in places like Koza? How has the Black Lives Matter movement challenged Okinawans who grew up in these intimately shared Black Okinawan spaces to painstakingly conjure past racialized memories of Blackness with contemporary understandings of recognition and radical love? How do Okinawans use these excavated memories to articulate how they both suffer from being unintelligible to state power? How do Okinawan women frame stories about anti-Blackness at diasporic *kenjinkai* events and subsequently, how do those stories move transnationally to Okinawa? This nuanced rendering of Blackness in certain historical moments could add more depth to how racial meanings Okinawa shift, potentially leading to a quest for more informants who could offer an alternative narrative the meanings of racial difference in Okinawa.¹⁸

Black feminist scholarship, especially those works on the ways in which Black (after)lives are shaped in the affective dimension would have also proved especially useful to expand on how locally shaped events unhinge themselves from particular locales and attach onto more mobile representations of Blackness that circulate and shape the affective field and routes for intimacy globally.¹⁹ Leaning on this body of work may have deepened the narratives of the Black men and their Okinawan partners that often feel slightly two dimensional in the ethnography because there needs to be more discussion on the conditions that shape their affect and desire. Questions that could potentially be answered with this framing might include: How are Okinawan children socialized to learn about the lower embodied capital type of Black bodies/mixed Okinawan Black bodies as circulated in these translational spaces? What discursive strategies are used by Okinawan women to navigate Black spaces on or off base to support their newly racialized identities as women married to Black men or as mothers to Black Okinawan children?²⁰

The strongest section of this book lies in her analysis of the Marine Corps Marriage Package program, which are the set of procedures and regulations Marines and Navy corpsmen must abide by to legalize international marriage in Japan. *Intimacy across the Fencelines* provides readers with a rare vantage point to understand how the Marine Corps headquarters developed practices to institute and regulate international marriages in Japan, and this ethnographic focus clearly reveals the state

¹⁸ Many scholars and writers of mixed Okinawan and/ or Japanese ancestry have laid the groundwork for this type of inquiry and are documenting this kind of *champru* (mixed) space. See, for example: Mitzi Carter, "Nappy Routes and Tangled Tales: Critical Ethnography in a Militarised Okinawa," in Daniel Broudy, Peter Simpson, and Makoto Arakaki, *Under Occupation: Resistance and Struggle in a Militarised Asia-Pacific* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013); Fredrick D. Kakinami Cloyd, *Dream of the Water Children: Memory and Mourning in the Black Pacific* (New York: 2Leaf Press, 2019).; Ariko Ikehara's *Koza X Mixtopia Research Center* in Okinawa City: <https://kozamixtopia.wixsite.com/website-2>; Annmaria M. Shimabuku, *Alegal: Biopolitics and the Unintelligibility of Okinawan Life* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019); Kathryn Tolbert's War Bride Project: <https://www.warbrideproject.com>.

¹⁹ See, for example, Deborah Thomas, "Blackness Across Borders: Jamaican Diasporas and New Politics of Citizenship," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 14:1 (2007): 111-133; Bianca Williams, *The Pursuit of Happiness: Black Women, Diasporic Dreams and the Politics of Emotional Transnationalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018); and Elizabeth Hordge-Freeman, *The Color of Love: Racial Features, Stigma and Socialization in Black Brazilian Families* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015).

²⁰ Referring to more critical scholarship in Black Studies would have also further strengthened her analysis on how Black men in particular are rendered invisible in some spaces but then highly visible in others, like in court cases as a way to offset crimes by White military men in Okinawa as Sarita See has explored in her work "Trying Whiteness: Media Representations of the 1996 Okinawa Rape Trial," *Hitting Critical Mass: A Journal of Asian American Cultural Criticism* 5:2 (Fall 1998), 57-78. Intimacy in many Black communities is also related to the political depths of affect crafted with Black women and understanding how Black men negotiate interracial military relationships with Okinawan women with these emotions in mind at the fencelines is a significant factor in thinking about the ways race and gender intersect in these borderland spaces.

ideologies about gender, family and affect. Forgash draws upon Aihwa Ong's research on cultural citizenship to explore how state marriage procedures normalized enormous power inequalities²¹ In the detailed analysis of the procedures and rationale of the marriage package, readers are drawn into a dynamic world of confusing bureaucratic practices and pre-marital training seminars that are littered with binary and Orientalist perspectives of gendered norms and patriarchal views of Asia.

Forgash paints a clear picture of how the state produces subjects not only in the mundane practices on and off base but through discourses of incommensurable differences that are taught and practiced in shaping legitimate, marriageable couples. The disciplining effect on the couples is apparent in her examples: Okinawan spouses were expected to be passive dependents, lack autonomy and legal authority over themselves in the marriage orders in order to be awarded permission to be married. In the making of this type of cultural citizenship designed and crafted through Japanese/U.S. SOFA regulations, the marriage package clearly outlined the dimensions of marginality that effectively disempowered and pushed Okinawan women into the most vulnerable positions. No other ethnographic work has successfully showcased these types of maneuvers, and it is a great contribution to the knowledge on cultural citizenship.

The concluding chapter details the notable gaps and quiet stories that lingered at the edges of some of the main ethnographic excerpts: domestic violence and abuse, mixed race children; comparative notes on militarization elsewhere, and how narratives travel across different military communities. These are all striking silences. Not all books can be exhaustive, and it would be an ambitious task to attend to all the areas, but this particular list, especially the former are critically missing.

²¹ Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural logics of Transnationality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019).

 REVIEW BY SEALING CHENG, THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

This book joins a growing literature of works on the intersection of the politics of militarism, race, gender, and sexuality that highlight how intimate relations are entangled in broader historical currents and gendered structures of imperialism, colonialism, and nationalism.²² Intimate relationships between U.S. military servicemen with Okinawan women transgress multiple gender, racial, and nationalist ideals, exposing the women to different forms of marginalization and isolation, as well as unique opportunities and spaces for experimentation. My own work deals with similar webs of love, desire, and violence through the interactions that were both commodified and intimate between Filipina entertainers and GIs in U.S. military camptowns (*kijich'on*) in South Korea in the 1998-2000. State prerogatives of border security, racial purity, and monetary interests ensured the migrant women's marginalization but also engendered their creative projects of aspiration.²³ What distinguishes Forgash's work is her longitudinal approach that includes couples who entered military international marriages in the postwar era as well as those who met in the post-1972 reversion period, some of whom were in their twenties and thirties when Forgash started her fieldwork in 2000 (24 Okinawan women and fourteen U.S. American men who were in, or had been in, military international marriages, a third of whom were married before the 1972 reversion). Juxtaposing the experiences of these different generations of Okinawan women and their U.S. spouses in forging and managing their relationships illuminates the effects of changing geopolitics as well as national politics on "individuals' strategies and subjectivities in relation to shifting community norms regarding sex, marriage, and family and changing formulations of Okinawan identity" (4). As such, Forgash ushers a temporal dimension into her writing that weaves together analyses at the macro (transnational/geopolitical), meso (national/Okinawan), and micro (individual/familial) levels. She sensitively conveys the "structures of feeling"²⁴ in these intimate negotiations, while toggling between her analysis of U.S. militarism and empire, and the historiography of Ryūkyū Kingdom, Japanese ethno-nationalism, and anti-base activism. Readers come away not only with a deeper understanding of the effects of war, U.S. imperialism, and Japanese colonialism, but also of the vitality of these men and women as historical agents.

The rich, moving, and often rugged journeys of military international couples who married before 1972 bring out Forgash's argument about "fencelines" most effectively – from how they met in postwar Okinawa against military, social, and familial censures, to the ways they braved intense stigma and scrutiny with "love-at-first-sight" infatuation, to their resilience and creativity in dealing with relational, financial, and transnational challenges, to finding their own place in Okinawan society through social and ritual maneuvers. These longitudinal and transnational experiences embody the intricate effects of "fencelines" – which for Forgash offer a "heuristic for thinking about the reach of militarization in Okinawa and its impact on the everyday lives of residents" (3). In these ways, Forgash's work contributes significantly to a body of literature on borders and contact zones,²⁵ anchoring our understanding of race, militarization, and Empire through the life histories of individuals.

²² See Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); Katharine H.S. Moon, *Sex among Allies: Military Prostitution in U.S.–Korea Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Sealing Cheng, *On the Move for Love: Migrant Filipinas and the U.S. Military in South Korea* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010); Mary Louise Roberts, *What Soldiers Do: Sex and the American GI in World War II France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

²³ Cheng, *On the Move for Love*.

²⁴ Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (London: Hogarth Press, London 1992).

²⁵ For example, Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute, 1987); Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge 1992); Kevin Mumford, *Interzones: Black/White Sex Districts in Chicago and New York in the early Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Nicole Constable, *Romance on a Global Stage: Pen Pals, Virtual Ethnography, and 'Mail Order' Marriages* (Berkeley: University of

The complex and nuanced stories Forgash presents challenge the binary of an “off-base” world co-existing with one that is “on-base” – language that shaped U.S. military operations and anti-base activism in Okinawa. Forgash’s careful analysis of the U.S. military’s attempt to regulate international marriages, in particular through the Marriage Package (military directives specifying the requirements for servicemen and their prospective Japanese spouses to fulfill before their marriage could be approved since Forgash’s field in 2001) powerfully illuminates the U.S. government’s attempts to craft these intimate lives according to U.S. national and cultural prerogatives over the decades. Soldiers and their spouses may resent and resist such encroachments into their private lives, but the attraction of access to military privileges and welfare may ultimately summon compliance. What piques my interest is Forgash’s argument that the Okinawan women in these military relationships may “articulate subject positions that are markedly different from their feminist counterparts in the anti-base movement” (119). What kind of subject positions do these feminist activists occupy? Do they share a unitary position? How have their narratives developed with the emergence of narratives of Comfort Women in the 1990s and subsequently the trafficking of women into forced prostitution (a topic that Forgash refers to with reference to Filipina entertainers) in the 2000s, and how do they depart from or collude with Japanese nationalism in policing women’s sexuality? In turn, if and when there are fractures in these anti-base activism, how do they shape the reactions and practices of women in military international marriages – who may or may not identify as feminists?

Forgash carefully relates the voices of her research subjects through an abundance of their quotations. Her writing is, however, most powerful when conveying the struggles about sexual morality, class, and ethnicity that saturate everyday interactions of her subjects – like the scene from a private party of Okinawan women and their U.S. military boyfriends in which the women joked about Filipina “grandmas” doing the “banana show” (103). The women’s efforts to distinguish themselves from the racialized and aged Others only serves to reproduce what Gayle Rubin identified as the “sex/gender hierarchy.”²⁶ Forgash demonstrates both critical analysis and empathy when she laments that these hierarchies are what marginalized the women in the first place. Another impressive moment occurs when one of her subjects felt uncomfortable waiting outside the gate for her husband alongside other women dressed in mini-skirts, heavy make-up, and high heels that denoted a particular eroticized femininity for the consumption of U.S. soldiers. If the latter were the “bad girls” who deserved moral condemnation for their presumed sexual promiscuity, then how did “good” Okinawan women dress, and to whose gaze did they cater? What kind of pleasures did they pursue in these intimate relationships? Were marriages always about “love”? Furthermore, even though “sex” is mentioned in the book title, it largely operates as a negative set of liaisons, practices, and assumptions. Ruth Ann Keyso documented the voice of at least one woman in her thirties who had sex with a GI who was in his early twenties for physical pleasure.²⁷ This is not to say that sex is the same as pleasure – far from it. I am reminded of Professor Chungmoo Choi’s account of her shock at her own ambivalent behavior when a military vehicle steered by a young soldier drove past her on the Pacific Highway in California – she caught herself both preening and sitting up straight, reliving her struggles from when she was a ten-year-old girl in destitute postwar Korea under U.S. military occupation: her behavior dictated by both the “Korean ideology of chastity” as well as her “double oppression” by both the colonizer and the colonized men of her own nation.²⁸ It is exactly “the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized as a gendered and sexualized relationship, not only in the metaphorical sense but also at the level of corporeality, which

California Press, 2003); Mary Louise Roberts, *What Soldiers Do: Sex and the American GI in World War II France*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013). Elisabeth Schober, *Base Encounters: The US Armed Forces in South Korea* (London: Pluto Press, 2016).

²⁶ Gayle Rubin, “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality,” in Carole S. Vance, ed., *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality* (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 267-319.

²⁷ Ruth Ann Keyso and Masahide Ota, *Women of Okinawa: Nine Voices from a Garrison Island* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000).

²⁸ Chungmoo Choi, “Nationalism and Construction of Gender in Korea,” in Elaine H. Kim and Chungmoo Choi, eds., *Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism*, ed. (London: Routledge, 1997), 14.

institutes military sexual services.”²⁹ In this vein, embodied anxieties, pleasures, and practices could provide a distinct mode of understanding of human agency in negotiating the persistent effects of colonialism and militarism.

The stories in *Intimacy across the Fencelines* convey for readers the multiple valences and struggles of men and women whose unions *embody* the fencelines. Forgash has effectively demonstrated that the military international marriages in Okinawa are necessarily embattled in global, national, and local politics, but are never defined only on these terms.

²⁹ Choi, “Nationalism and Construction of Gender in Korea,” 12.

REVIEW BY NICOLE CONSTABLE, UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Intimacy across the Fencelines offers a fresh angle from which to view the relationship between Okinawans and the U.S. military. Prominent media in the United States and Asia often report on U.S. military men or military contractors who are charged with rape, sexual assault or murder, or on Okinawan anti-base or anti-U.S. protests. While not avoiding topics of sexual violence and anti-base protests, this book points to the bridging of social divides or the crossing of “fencelines” between Okinawans and U.S. service men in the form of marriages. Although such marriages are at the core of the study, the book’s primary contribution is its wider and deeper attention to, and insightful analysis of, the structures, histories, laws, and policies that shape such marriages and U.S.-Okinawan relations more generally. Specific policies and histories create both the possibilities for such marriages to exist and the many challenges that such couples face, but the book is about more than that.

Intimacies across the Fencelines is based on research that Rebecca Forgash conducted in 2000-2001 and intermittently up to 2017. She conducted interviews with 24 Okinawan wives of military men and fourteen U.S. military men married to Okinawan women, some of whom she revisited many times. She also participated in and observed a range of military family programs including those for international spouses. To expand on the stories of married couples, she also interviewed anti-base and feminist activists, social workers, and others to provide a more nuanced and complex picture of problems and failed marriages. She also utilized many primary and secondary written sources.

“Fencelines” is an apt concept, both symbolically and (infra)structurally. Fences surrounding military bases can be topped with barbed wire intended to keep some people in and others out, but fences also have gates that allow individuals (with proper permits) to come and go from the enclosure. Members of the U.S. military are well known to leave the confines of U.S. bases to visit “red zones” or entertainment districts, which contributes to popular assumptions that military wives are all former bar workers or prostitutes. Less known, perhaps, are other points of intersection between U.S. military members and Okinawans that might also lead to marriage. In early years of U.S. military occupation, for example, young Okinawan women could get part-time jobs on bases that involved talking to and dancing with enlisted men. Locals also work on U.S. military bases in a range of occupations.

This book presents fascinating details about the policies and histories that shape and define the fencelines. U.S. military and Okinawan and Japanese colonial histories, and laws or policies relating to citizenship, permanent residence, marriage, property ownership, and Okinawan ideas about family and ritual are relevant to marriages and other relationships. Despite the social, legal and physical barriers, marriages have taken place between Okinawan women and U.S. military men since World War II. Determined couples found ways to maneuver around restrictions and requirements, devising ways to live together and marry, off base, with or without the blessings of the military, their families or local communities.

In addition to the socio-historical and physical barriers that divide U.S. post-World War II occupation forces and local Okinawans, Forgash identifies important socio-economic and regional divisions among Okinawans, and further divisions between Okinawans and Japanese. The U.S. military is also diverse, and Okinawans may hold varied views of Black, White, Japanese, and Filipino service members. Different branches of the military and the different ranks within each branch can all have implications for couples and their experiences.

The primary social division is between Okinawans and the U.S. military. This is powerfully illustrated in the author’s discussion of Okinawan memories of gendered and racialized violence wrought by early U.S. occupying forces. While they are not openly spoken of but widely known, such events are tied to the pain and violence of horrific rapes and sexual assault of local women. They help explain why older Okinawans deplore and mistrust military men, and strongly oppose the marriage of their daughters or granddaughters to U.S. servicemen. As in many contexts of occupation and colonization,

colonizers' sexual relations with local women are loaded expressions of power, domination, and oppression.³⁰ Women who have relationships with U.S. military men risk their own reputations and those of their families. Yet such marriages, Forgasch reminds us, can “succeed” and provide benefits for such couples on both sides of the fence.

Intersecting histories of Japan, Okinawa, and the United States are highly relevant, including the role of Japanese colonialization of Okinawa in the nineteenth century, the U.S. occupation (1945-1972), and the “reversion” of Okinawa to Japanese rule in 1972. Many U.S. military camps were established after 1945 throughout Okinawa and were central to the growth of the U.S. military empire. U.S. occupiers set up policies to govern and largely to deter relationships between members of the military and Okinawans. By the 1990s, military family policies and marriage policies had shifted. Couples who married then had greater sources of economic and social support from the military. Some such changes were associated with the shift to an all-voluntary U.S. military in 1973, which was linked to plans to attract career recruits by offering better pay, housing and family policies.

U.S. military men and Okinawan women who sought to marry faced varying forms of familial and military opposition, Japanese or Okinawan, and significant U.S. military bureaucratic red tape, hurdles and challenges. Yet both “sides” of the fence, Forgasch shows, offered opportunities and resources. In some cases, U.S. men were eventually accepted, trusted, and became like family to their Okinawan in-laws. Okinawa might become “home,” and couples are accepted in local communities, as in a few cases of former military husbands who settled there. For some, Okinawan-U.S. marriages are a path out of poverty or an escape from Okinawan familial and cultural expectations. For some women they create economic opportunities and life improvements.

Despite the title, this book has relatively few “intimate” stories of married couples, and no firsthand interviews with women who experienced abandonment, divorce, and single parenthood. The focus on specific couples in the early chapters is largely overshadowed by the wealth of detail regarding specific military bureaucratic procedures and military policy shifts through time. “Intimate” topics are touched on, but the author’s analysis emerges not so much from the men and women who were interviewed as from other sources. The reader is left with more of a sense of the wider tensions pertaining to race and gender and U.S. military power in Okinawa, and to Okinawan family relations and anti-U.S. prejudices, than with the intimate lives and stories of specific individuals or couples. Love, sex, and romance are noted but not developed in relation to personal stories and recurring themes or tensions. “Intimacy” is understandably private or difficult to talk about with an interviewer, but the men and women say little about their expectations, personal difficulties, or disappointments. Couples’ experiences remain more general than intimate, and their uniqueness is obscured by more authoritative voices of social workers, family counselors, local leaders, or activists.

Other studies of transnational or cross-border marriages, especially those involving U.S. men and Asian women, cite problems tied to money, sex, love, and romance. My research on cross-border marriages and “correspondence” relationships between U.S. men and Chinese and Filipino women raises possible comparisons.³¹ The U.S. men I encountered, like those in this book, were ethnically diverse and had varied class backgrounds, and some were former military men who first met “Asian” women while stationed overseas. They openly talked about how “Asian” women make “better wives” than U.S. women, because of their “traditional” gender roles and family values. The military marriage manuals and workshops Forgasch describes convey similar gendered expectations in which wives should support their husband’s military careers. Yet we hear surprisingly little from the military men about their gendered expectations, nor from Okinawan women about their resistance or negotiation of such expectations.

³⁰ Ann Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

³¹ Nicole Constable *Romance on a Global Stage: Pen Pals, Virtual Ethnography, and “Mail Order” Marriages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

Studies of men who actively seek Russian, Eastern European, Asian, or Latin American wives echo similar views about submissive and family-oriented women, whereas foreign women assume that Western men are more egalitarian or “liberated.”³² Such stereotypes often prove wrong. U.S. ethnic Chinese, Vietnamese, or Hmong men seek brides in their “ethnic” homelands, and rural Korean and Japanese men seek foreign brides from poorer parts of Asia, assuming that such women will be more willing to live in the poorer countryside than local women.³³ Filipino and Chinese women I knew were often openly critical of the misconceptions of U.S. men. The U.S. military presence in the Philippines has shaped popular culture and local understandings and assumptions about love, sex, and romance. By contrast, Chinese women described their discomfort with U.S. or western romantic expectations, such as being expected to say, “I love you.” Men and women with long term marriages were highly critical of the naive stereotypes of submissive Asian women. Key sources of conflict were that wives expected to control the family finances and that husbands were unwilling to provide financial support to the wives’ families. Such “intimate” conflicts and misconceptions are common in many U.S.-Asian marriages.

In the past two decades, a burgeoning anthropological and sociological literature on transnational intimacies (including cross-border marriages) has developed, accompanied by new analyses and understandings of “intimacy” that includes various forms of paid and unpaid labor (for example, care, sex, and household work) done mostly by women (wives, sex workers, care givers), and the relevant entanglements of love, romance, sex, and money. “Intimacy” in this book’s title and sex in the subtitle are not developed as an analytical concept. Prostitution and sexual violence are mentioned, and Okinawan wives are shown to distance themselves from such negative stereotypes. Did the men also distance themselves from the stigma of meeting a partner in the Red Zones? How is “intimacy” expressed and talked about and how is it tied to money and trust or mistrust? Are there processes of negotiation between men and women in relation to the meaning of “intimacy” in their relationships? We hear about a divorced woman (the principal of a school for Okinawan-U.S. children), but we do not learn firsthand about women whose U.S. partners deserted their children, or about the U.S. men who volunteered at the school, other than of their existence.

The primary strength of this book is in its rich, detailed and well-developed discussions of U.S. military history and policies and of Okinawan history, and Okinawan local and Japanese policies linked to the U.S. military that shape relations and divisions between Okinawans and the U.S. military. Forgash deals insightfully with the political-economic framework within which many different sorts of relationships exist. She identifies the structures that shape and divide Okinawan society itself and that shape the changing role of the U.S. military in Okinawa through time, including racism, sexual violence, sex work, and abandoned children. As Forgash notes, *Intimacy across the Fencelines* is limited by its focus on (still) married couples, the relative silence of/about sex workers and entertainers who marry military men, and the relative lack of attention to the children of U.S. military men and Okinawan women. The book largely makes up for these shortcomings by utilizing a range of sources. Discussions of domestic violence and reports of rape by U.S. military men are based on written sources or on interviews with social workers and activists, not with the married couples or individuals who were involved in, experienced, or perpetrated such violence. This book thus reveals insights about U.S., Okinawan, Japanese relations in the U.S. military complex post-World War II, but there remains a disconnect between the “intimacies” in the book’s title and the married couples who were interviewed and who steered clear of topics of power, gendered violence, and U.S.

³² Jennifer Patico “For Love, Money, or Normalcy: Meanings of Strategy and Sentiment in the Russian-American Matchmaking Industry” *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology* 74:3(2009): 307-330: <https://doi.org/10.1080/00141840903053097>; Felicity Schaeffer-Grabiel, “Planet-Love.com: Cyberbrides in the Americas and the Transnational Routes of U.S. Masculinity,” *Signs* 31:2 (2006): 331-356: <https://doi.org/10.1086/497347>.

³³ See articles in Nicole Constable, ed., *Cross-Border Marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), especially, Caren Freeman, “Marrying Up and Marrying Down: The Paradoxes of Marital Mobility for Chosŏnjok Brides in South Korea”; Louisa Schein, “Marrying out of Place: Hmong/Miao Women Across and Beyond China”; Nobue Suzuki, “Tripartite Desires: Filipina Japanese Marriages and Fantasies of Transnational Dispersal”; Hung Kam Thai, “Clashing Dreams in the Vietnamese Diaspora: Highly Educated Overseas Brides and Low-Wage U.S. Husbands.” See also Minjeong Kim, *Elusive Belonging: Marriage Immigrants and “Multiculturalism” in Rural South Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2018), and Sari K. Ishii, ed., *Marriage Migration in Asia* (Kyoto: University of Kyoto, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 2016).

imperialism. Nonetheless, this book provides a valuable study of the fencelines that both deter and promote Okinawan-U.S. military relations of many sorts.

REVIEW BY MIRE KOIKARI, UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

Intimacy across the Fencelines: Sex, Marriage, and the U.S. Military in Okinawa is an ethnographic study of sex, marriage, and intimacy in the densely militarized space that is Okinawa. Utilizing the notion of “fencelines” as its heuristic device, the book examines the effects of physical fencelines encircling military bases as well as symbolic fencelines informing unequal relations between Okinawans and Americans. The fencelines are “a product of shifting local, national, and international history and politics alongside everyday economic transactions, social interactions, and cultural beliefs developed within the contexts of Japanese colonialism, war, postwar U.S. occupation, and continuing militarization” (22). As a result, the boundaries between insiders and outsiders, locals and foreigners, civilians and soldiers, and Okinawans and Americans are never fixed. International marriages (*kokusai kekkon*) between American male soldiers and Okinawan women reflect the permeable nature of fencelines, as the military couples negotiate with cultural, political, and economic forces to overcome their differences and sustain their unions. Subverting a variety of state sanctions and fighting against all odds, the military couples defy the dominant workings of power, revealing “the limits of state institutional power and U.S. military empire” (19).

The introduction, “The Intimate Effects of U.S. Empire,” presents the book’s framework, defining Okinawa as a site of “dual colonization” (4) and highlighting key concepts informing the analysis – militarization (Catherine Lutz), fencelines (Ronni Alexander), and intimacy (Ann Stoler). Chapter one, “International Marriage in Japan’s Periphery,” offers a historical overview of Okinawa, starting with Ryūkyū Kingdom (1429–1879), moving through Japanese rule (1879–1945) and American occupation (1945–1972), and ending with post reversion (after 1972). While useful for those unfamiliar with Okinawa, this overview, referencing select facts and select studies, does not recast Okinawa’s history in terms of sex, intimacy, and empire. Given the book’s objective of understanding the politics of intimacy within the overlapping contexts of empires, a different kind of review might be called for. It would be meaningful to know, for example, what cross-border affinity and affiliation existed between Okinawans and Japanese (especially Japanese imperial soldiers) during the Japanese colonial era, or even those between Okinawans and Chinese during the Ryūkyū Kingdom era. A lack of historicizing is also evident in the book’s research period (2001–2017). Arriving in Okinawa in August 2001, Forgash was ideally situated to observe the impact of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 on the ground. The onset of “permanent war” caused visible shifts in American empire and masculinity, sparking intense discussions among scholars.³⁴ The same period also witnessed an expansion of the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF), whose presence is by now conspicuous across Okinawa’s island chain. These historic and historical shifts constitute a significant backdrop for Forgash’s study, and yet the ethnographic accounts read as though none of these events has taken place. A ‘disconnect’ between historical reflections and ethnographic discussions remains a salient feature in the remainder of the book.

Chapters two through five discuss how Okinawan women and American servicemen negotiated with social expectations, cultural sanctions, and state regulations to pursue cross-border intimacy. Chapter two, “Race, Memory, and Military Men’s Sexuality,” focuses on race. Following an Okinawan woman’s statement that “White people resemble Japanese persons in skin color, but black people are different” (74), a sentiment often repeated by other Okinawan interview subjects, Forgash approaches race as a matter of societal stereotypes, cultural prejudice, and negative attitudes based on skin color. Rather than analyzing the unmarked nature of whiteness as part of race dynamics, she focuses on anti-black sentiments among Okinawans, tracing their origin to events such as the Katsuyama Cave Incident in 1945 (where three African American Marines were murdered by Okinawans), the U.S. military’s racism during the post-WWII occupation, and the rape of a twelve-year-old girl in 1995. Because the stereotypes of black soldiers are generalized to the entire body of American soldiers, Forgash argues, the U.S. military suffers from negative perceptions (56–58). In Okinawa, however, race is a far

³⁴ Catherine Lutz, “Anthropology in an Era of Permanent War” (CASCA Keynote Address 2008), *Anthropologica* 51, 2009, 367-379. In addition, see, for example, Inderpal Grewal, *Saving the Security State: Exceptional Citizens in Twenty-First-Century America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017); Anne McClintock, “Paranoid Empire: Specters from Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib,” *Small Axe* 13:1 (2009), 50–74; Keith Brown and Catherine Lutz, “Grunt Lit: The Participant Observers of Empire,” *American Ethnologist* 34:2 (2007), 322-328.

more complex and multifaceted phenomenon that demands additional inquiries. How do Okinawan women think, feel, and talk about their racial identities? How do black and white soldiers construct their racial identities in relation to each other and also to soldiers of other national and racial backgrounds? How does race inform sexual fantasies and desires of Okinawans and Americans? What role does race play in the history of militarization and demilitarization in Asia and the Pacific, in which Okinawa constitutes a ‘keystone’?³⁵ Exploring these questions would help situate race in the complex matrix of power that blankets the region, but the book stops short. Observing how Okinawan women are unable to pinpoint “specific ways of talking, thinking or doing” of African Americans, Forgash concludes, “[I]t (race difference) simply *is*” (emphasis in the original, 78).

Chapter three, “Living Respectably and Negotiating Class,” shifts the focus of analysis from race to class, examining the two stereotypes that are frequently invoked in local discussions of international military marriage – prostitutes who consorted with Americans during the postwar occupation, and *amejo* who seek sexual relations with Americans in more recent times. The chapter discusses a series of discursive strategies Okinawan women adopt in order to maintain distance from the ‘promiscuous’ and ‘immoral’ women and assert their class respectability. The interview materials focus on Okinawan women’s pronouncements on class, but not those of American soldiers. An intriguing dynamic that is mentioned more than once in the book – American soldiers experiencing an upward class mobility as a result of marrying Okinawan women who bring land and other assets to their unions – is left unanalyzed.

Chapter four, “The Marine Corps Marriage Package,” makes yet another shift, this time from class to gender. Focusing on the U.S. military’s “marriage package,” the chapter discusses a series of rules and regulations imposed on the military couples that reinforce the traditional ideals of ‘men’s roles’ and ‘women’s roles.’ The concept, ‘biopolitical governance,’ which is first mentioned in the introduction, reappears here, yet there is little to no information on how the couples talk about the body, sexuality, and reproduction. Focusing on disciplinary dynamics originating from the United States, the chapter does not analyze those emanating from Japan, either. Did the Japanese state try to regulate international military marriages? If so, how do Japanese disciplinary tactics collaborate with or work against those of the United States? Caught between the two, what strategies do the military couples devise? The question of resistance looms large, yet except a few instances of grumbling by American soldiers, the ethnographic materials reveal little about their agency and that of their spouses. Reversing the pattern in the previous chapter, the interview materials here focus on American soldiers, leaving Okinawan women’s perspectives unknown and unanalyzed.

Chapter five, “Creating Family and Community across Military Fencelines,” examines how the military couples sustain their unions by tapping into (mostly economic) resources made available by the U.S. military and Okinawan families. Despite numerous challenges and obstacles, the couples eventually gain acceptance and enjoy “balanced and secure lives” (158). To gauge the degree of acceptance, however, it would be necessary to examine what Okinawan parents, relatives, friends, and neighbors think, feel, and say about international military marriages. As the chapter focuses on the couples who have resided either tentatively or permanently in military communities in Arizona, Texas, California, Maryland, or Virginia, the site of analysis shifts from Okinawa to the United States. What history of militarism and militarization exists in each of these locales? What negotiations do the Okinawan-American couples pursue as they move through these communities? What geopolitical dynamics connect these communities scattered across North America and the Pacific? Exploring these questions would help identify the scope and power of transnational military-family network, in which Okinawa is a distant yet significant post.³⁶

³⁵ For a study that sheds light on the complex intertwining of race, soldiering, and de/colonization in Asia and the Pacific, see Simeon Man, *Soldiering through Empire: Race and the Making of the Decolonizing Pacific* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018).

³⁶ For an excellent study of military communities in the United States, see Catherine Lutz, *Homefront: A Military City and the American Twentieth Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001).

The conclusion, “On Stories and Silences,” features Ralph Dickson, a retired U.S. Marine residing in Okinawa who makes a brief appearance in the preface. In this final chapter, Dickson’s story comes alive with intriguing details: his arrival in Okinawa in 1955; interest in local culture sparked by *Teahouse of the August Moon*; occupation-era work as a venereal disease (VD) contact tracer; sojourn in Hawai‘i; the loss of his beloved wife Chiemi; and his eventual remarriage with Tatsuko and resettlement in her hometown Yomitan. Each of the elements animating the narrative – *Teahouse of the August Moon*, VD contact tracing, Hawai‘i, and Yomitan – is of obvious significance in U.S.-Okinawa relations, begging for critical analysis.³⁷ Yet, Forgash instead asks Dickson, “What do you most want to tell young military guys who are getting married in Okinawa today?” Dickson responds, “You ask them: Do you love her? Do you *love* that girl? You have to love her like your own hand. If your hand hurts, you don’t cut it off. You treat it, you heal it. You cannot do without it” (emphasis in the original, 171). As the sentimental, albeit moving, story of Ralph Dickson concludes the book, ‘love’ is abstracted from geopolitical dynamics in the region, where intimacy has rarely, if ever, been outside the realm of power.

Despite its thematic emphasis on border crossing, the book reinforces a number of ‘fencelines,’ (re)drawing lines between history and ethnography, black and white, and love and geopolitics. Perhaps one of the most conspicuous fencelines (re)erected in the book is between feminists and military wives. In chapter two, the epigraph showcases Suzuyo Takazato, a leading Okinawan feminist activist whose criticism of U.S. military violence is well known and reproduced here. Takazato’s statement, which highlights the link between gender, violence, and geopolitics, is immediately followed by Forgash’s reframing of the issue: military violence against women and girls is part of the widespread “negative stereotypes” or “negative attitudes” among Okinawans (51) which are “appropriated” by anti-base protestors to promote their own cause (52). The stories of military violence “are the basis for claims by local politicians, feminists, and advocacy organizations that the U.S. military presence has been especially dangerous and oppressive for Okinawan women” (167–168). As a result, “many military spouses and girlfriends do not feel that their experiences and concerns, including widespread popular misunderstanding and discrimination, have been adequately represented by such organizations” as Okinawan Women Act Against Military Violence (107). In the end, “the voices of Okinawan spouses as they articulate subject positions (are) markedly different from their feminist counterparts in the antibase movement” (109). At the end of the book, Forgash emphatically notes, “instances of rape have been co-opted by politicians and activists to mobilize local people against the U.S. bases. While arguments concerning the links between sexual violence, U.S. military training, and the ongoing U.S. military presence may be legitimate, the power of military rape as a political symbol has also contributed to the dehumanization of female victims” (167).

It is difficult to make a case that U.S. military violence is a matter of negative attitudes and stereotypes in Okinawa or elsewhere. It is equally or even more difficult to sustain an argument that feminists share the same set of interests with other social actors such as politicians, anti-base activists, and advocacy organizations. Yet, Forgash refers to “Feminists and others” (71), “Feminist scholars and activists” (108), “local officials, women’s organizations, and family members” (136), “Feminist scholars and antibase activists” (156), which suggests that they comprise a uniform entity whose stance is always already opposed to that of military and military wives. This is far from the reality. The boundaries between ‘feminists’ and ‘military wives’ are far more porous. Furthermore, feminism is a heterogeneous category, including ‘security feminism’ whose pursuit of ‘gender equality’ relies on and reinforces, rather than opposes, military and militarization.³⁸

Placing ‘feminism’ on the other side of the fence, Forgash rarely taps into rich insights on sex, military, and empire in gender and feminist studies. As each chapter addresses a single dimension of power (race in chapter two, class in chapter three, and gender in chapter four), the book does not use the intersectional framework proposed by gender and feminist scholars, missing a chance to analyze how multiple vectors of power sometimes work with and other times against each other. Also

³⁷ For the significance of Yomitan in the politics of Okinawan war memories, see Norma Field, *In the Realm of a Dying Emperor: Japan at Century’s End* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).

³⁸ For the discussion of security feminism, see Grewal, *Saving the Security State*.

amiss is the voluminous work of Okinawan gender scholars, which results in a number of problematic statements.³⁹ Two instances are worth mentioning. One involves *tōtōmē*, a uniquely Okinawan custom of ancestor worship and family inheritance that has generated intense debates among gender scholars in Okinawa. Forgash approaches *tōtōmē* as though it were interchangeable with its mainland Japanese counterparts, *ihai*. To make sense of *tōtōmē*, she draws on an anecdote of *ihai* in Matthews Hamabata's *Crested Kimono: Power and Love in the Japanese Business Family* (152–153), blurring the boundary between the two.⁴⁰ The problem thus created cannot be rectified by the addition of a footnote: “My use of the example from Hamabata’s (1990) ethnography of Tokyo business families is not meant to suggest that Okinawan and mainland Japanese altars and rituals are identical” (196). Another instance concerns *kokusai kekkon* (international marriage). Forgash argues that the term is “used to refer to marriages between Okinawans and persons from mainland Japan,” in addition to those between Okinawans and foreign nationals (25). If *kokusai kekkon* is indeed commonly used in reference to Okinawan-Japanese marriages, it would be useful to find out how the term, *kokusai*, which invokes national difference between the islands and the mainland, might compete with another term, *kengai*, which highlights prefectural difference. An equally intriguing question to explore is which generations of Okinawans subscribe to the said use of the term and in what social contexts. The work of Okinawan gender scholars would provide invaluable insights into these matters.

It is useful to compare *Intimacy across the Fenceline* with other studies on Okinawan-American intimacy. Most notable are Kaori Miyanishi's *Okinawa Gunjin-zuma no Kenkyū* [A Study of Okinawan Military Wives] (2012)⁴¹ and Akemi Johnson's *Night in the American Village: Women in the Shadow of the U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa* (2019),⁴² both of which critically engage with Forgash's work. Similar to Forgash, Miyanishi, an anthropologist, addresses issues of *amejo*, anti-black racism, and marriage package. In addition, she also covers topics that are essential in studies of intimacy: sex in marriage, child rearing, language barriers, and faith and religion. Exploring Okinawan military wives' views on war, military, and violence, she shows how their perspectives range from acceptance to ambivalence to apprehension, indicating the heterogeneous and diverse nature of 'military wives.' However briefly, she also discusses post-9/11 deployment and its impacts on Okinawan military spouses. With the ample use of Japanese- and English-language sources, Miyanishi offers a complex picture of cross-border intimacy in Okinawa.

Akemi Johnson, who was described by John Dower as a “truly gifted” storyteller, has produced a book that “melds intimate contemporary portraits and vignettes with deep post-WWII history to give us a powerful picture of Okinawan people and political culture today.”⁴³ A journalist and alumnae of the Iowa Writers Workshop, Johnson offers a vivid portrayal of Okinawa, in which local women and foreign soldiers, pro-base and anti-base activists, and feminists and non-feminists constantly step across physical and symbolic fencelines to engage with each other. Foregrounding U.S. military sexual violence, Johnson nevertheless keeps distance from the victimization narrative, illuminating the agency of Okinawan women with details and complexities. Familiar with scholarship on Okinawa, she makes frequent and critical interventions in academic discourses, providing a series of fresh perspectives. The discussion of 'feminism' takes on a markedly different turn

³⁹ See, for example, the multi-volume series *Naha Onna no Ashiato* [Footsteps of Women in Naha], compiled by a woman's collective comprised of scholars, educators, activists, and journalists. The volume on post-WWII history is especially relevant: *Naha Onna no Ashiato: Naha Joseishi – Sengoben* (Naha, Okinawa: Nahashi sōmubu joseishitsu, 2001).

⁴⁰ Matthew Hamabata, *Crested Kimono: Power and Love in the Japanese Business Family* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

⁴¹ Kaori Miyanishi, *Okinawa Gunjin-zuma no Kenkyū* (Kyoto: Kyoto daigaku shuppan kyōkai, 2012).

⁴² Akemi Johnson, *Night in the American Village: Women in the Shadow of the U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa* (New York: The New Press, 2019).

⁴³ Akemi Johnson, <https://akemijohnson.com/>, accessed December 31, 2020.

in her book, as she approaches Suzuyo Takazato and Okinawan Women Act Against Military Violence with nuance and finesse. The question of race, too, develops a distinct analytical trajectory, as Johnson, a bi-racial Japanese American, deploys her own identity as a lens through which to analyze U.S.-Japan and white-black relations. The book is an exceptionally engaging read for academic and non-academic readers alike.

Reflecting on the post-9/11 world, Catherine Lutz, an anthropologist whose work has explored the question of military and militarization for decades, points out the particular onus anthropologists bear in the new era of 'permanent war.' Given the long-standing and often 'intimate' relation between military and academia, she observes, knowledge-making is never quite separable from empire building. How do we distinguish between 'anthropology of the military' and 'anthropology for the military'?⁴⁴ Why do we study military, and how? Forgash's study provides a moment to contemplate on this important question.

RESPONSE BY REBECCA FORGASH, METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

I would like to begin with my sincere gratitude to Ronni Alexander, Mitzi Carter, Sealing Cheng, Nicole Constable, and Mire Koikari for their thoughtful engagement with my book and to Masami Kimura and Diane Labrosse for organizing the roundtable and editing the responses. I am all the more appreciative of their efforts considering this strange and stressful pandemic year. Publishing a first book during 2020 has been challenging. Thank you for the opportunity to continue the work in dialogue.

To summarize briefly, *Intimacy Across the Fencelines* examines intimacy in the form of sexual encounters, dating, marriage and family involving United States service members and local residents in Okinawa, Japan. The U.S. military has maintained a sizeable presence in Okinawa since 1945, when the deadliest battle of the Pacific War was fought there. Today, an estimated twenty-seven thousand U.S. troops and more than seventy percent of U.S. military-exclusive installations in Japan are located in the prefecture, which constitutes just 0.6 percent of the nation's land area. With the number of U.S. military personnel, Department of Defense (DoD) civilians, and family members approaching eighty thousand people, encounters between Okinawans and Americans are commonplace, and a distinctive U.S. military base economy and culture have developed on the main island in particular. Due to the U.S. military presence, Okinawa consistently has among the highest rates of international marriage in Japan.

The ethnography draws on field research conducted beginning in 2001-2002, with regular follow-up trips between 2006 and 2017. In addition to observations and interviews with couples, I attended the Marine Corps premarital seminar and workshops for military spouses and families, including meetings of the International Spouse Program on Camp Foster. I also sought the perspectives of social workers and marriage counselors, consulted prefectural studies of military marriage, divorce, and children, and collected military marriage orders, chaplains' handbooks, media accounts, and the written stories of American-Okinawan children.

I analyze the stories of U.S. service members and their Okinawan spouses and family members against the backdrop of Okinawan history, political and economic entanglements with Japan and the United States, and the long-standing anti-base movement. The narratives highlight the repressive and creative power of military fencelines as sites of symbolic negotiation and struggle involving gender, race, and class that divide communities hosting U.S. bases. The book thus anchors the global U.S. military complex and U.S.-Japan security alliance in intimate everyday experiences and emotions, illuminating important aspects of the lived experiences of war and imperialism. Below I address some of the reviewers' most compelling comments and criticisms.

⁴⁴ Lutz, "Anthropology in an Era of Permanent War," 374.

Fencelines and Intimacy as Organizing Concepts

Throughout the book, I attempt to draw the concepts of fencelines and intimacy into productive tension with one another. While the barbed wire fences surrounding U.S. installations are among the most visible public manifestations of U.S. military power and presence in Okinawa, intimate encounters are generally considered private. Yet intimacy is also a domain of power, a target of government surveillance and regulation and a cornerstone of the economy in towns surrounding U.S. bases. Indeed, in Okinawa and elsewhere, the distinction between public and private domains is a socio-political construct, a key symbolic fenceline erected and maintained through U.S. military and Japanese government policies and integrated into Okinawan community norms. I argue that Okinawan-U.S. military intimate relationships are a useful vantage point for viewing the dynamics of power that pervade Okinawan society, underlying the U.S.-Japan alliance and making possible the everyday operation of U.S. empire.

Military fencelines structure physical and social space, influencing conceptions of race, gender, and class and amplifying regional distinctions within Japan. For military-Okinawan couples, fencelines structure opportunities to meet, engage in sexual relations, and develop feelings for one another; marriage and divorce procedures; infrastructure for housing, schools, shopping and social activities; and the training of active duty personnel and relocation of families, all in support of U.S. military objectives. The marriage package, a set of procedures regulating the marriages of marines and navy corpsmen, is discussed in Chapter 4. My analysis centers on the premarital seminar, through which military models of gender and family were disseminated. In the early 2000s, completing the marriage package was required for Okinawan spouses and children to earn official recognition as military dependents, enabling them to access military spaces and resources. The package thus reinforced boundaries between on-base and off-base locales and people in ways that supported institutional needs, even as some couples maneuvered around the requirements in order to outsmart, assert control, or altogether refuse the military's authority.

Constable contends that the main contribution of the ethnography lies in its careful description of the policies and histories surrounding U.S. military marriage, but expresses disappointment that “relatively few ‘intimate’ stories of married couples appear, and no firsthand interviews with women who experienced abandonment, divorce, and single parenthood.” In other words, she argues, while the analysis convincingly illustrates fencelines, it falls short on intimacy. Details of participants' intimate experiences and beliefs are embedded in personal stories throughout the book. They include, for example, a military man who recalled his initial attraction to a woman he perceived as different (i.e., more emotionally available) than the women he met at bars (44), a woman who claimed her sexual encounters with American men had been more satisfying than her experiences with Japanese men (73-76), and a participant who described her struggle to penetrate the emotional walls her African American boyfriend had erected, leading her to judge all Black men as inscrutable (76-78). In addition to participants' own intimate experiences, the book contains examples of participants' indirect commentary on Okinawan-U.S. military intimacy – for instance, the story told by a group of Okinawan women and their U.S. military boyfriends about a Filipina dancer performing the “banana show,” in which sexualized entertainment was cast not as arousing, but as ridiculous (102-103). Such examples are part of the ongoing negotiation of intimacy and its varied meanings, including its relation to race, money, and privilege. My analysis addresses these issues at a community level and in relation to processes of militarization rather than centering on the negotiation of intimacy between husbands and wives for several reasons.

Resonant with Constable's research on cross-border marriages, some of the military men I interviewed voiced a belief in the superiority of Asian wives due to their “traditional” gender roles and family values.⁴⁵ Similarly, some Okinawan women talked about American men as more affectionate and helpful than Japanese men (though rarely as more modern). Often, however, individual biographies and observations of couples revealed patterns of interaction that did not fit these generalizations. Instead, partners praised or complained about one another's habits, relied first on one, then the other in

⁴⁵ Nicole Constable, *Romance on the Global Stage: Pen Pals, Virtual Ethnography, and “Mail Order” Marriages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Constable, ed., *Cross-Border Marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

different settings and situations (for example, when on-base vs. off-base), and presented a united front when facing parental or community criticism. Consequently, I did not scrutinize how stereotypes shaped couples' experiences within their relationships. Rather, I examined the discursive strategies participants adopted to refute or undermine institutional characterizations of military intimacy and the negative judgements of family and neighbors.⁴⁶ To this end, many participants emphasized their pure intentions and emotional fortitude in response to institutional and community disapproval. As I argue in Chapter 3, women's strategies for managing respectability often involved displacing motives and behaviors that are considered inappropriate onto other women, a move that enabled participants to distance themselves from negatively sanctioned emotions and experiences, but simultaneously reinscribed symbolic fencelines relating to race and class. Other examples of couples' discursive maneuvering include the telling of "love at first sight" stories to demonstrate that one had not deliberately set out to defy social mores (43-48) and younger wives' use of the phrase "international spouse" to situate their relationships within a national/global frame rather than a local one in order to avoid the negative associations of terms like "war bride" and "military wife" (139-140).

To Constable's second point, while I did interview women who experienced relationship violence, abandonment, and divorce, those who spoke candidly about such experiences tended to do so from the relative distance and safety of subsequent, less stigmatized relationships. Interviewees who confided about current sexual encounters and still-painful emotional experiences often did so off the record, after the tape recorded had been turned off. I felt an obligation not to expose them to additional public scrutiny and judgement, given the intense politicization and stigmatization of Okinawan-U.S. military intimate relationships. For this reason, I excluded some stories and observations from the book – for example, my encounters with a young Okinawan mother I met while volunteering with a playgroup for mixed-race children. The woman's extreme disquiet and guilt at having possibly exposed her child to sexual abuse by one of the American volunteers was too sensitive to include, especially since she had decided not to pursue legal action. Throughout the research and writing, I worried about the ethics of asking people about their private lives and representing them to a wider audience. My analysis thus focused on participants' discursive moves and the historical, legal-political, and economic conditions that rendered their experiences shameful, inappropriate, and therefore difficult to speak about.

Contextualizing Participants' Stories

Several reviewers identify a need for greater contextualization of participants' stories and experiences. Koikari draws attention to the historical moment in which I conducted fieldwork, namely the months and years immediately following 9/11 when the United States reorganized its bureaucracy and authorized new funding for the War on Terror. In Okinawa, the presence of JSDF (Japanese Self Defense Forces) on the island expanded rapidly following the passage of a series of anti-terrorism special measures beginning in 2001. In 2006, the United States and Japan announced plans to remove approximately 8,000 marines to Guam to mollify local anti-base sentiment.⁴⁷ A detailed discussion of these contextual events does not appear in the book, leading Koikari to identify a "disconnect" between the historical summaries I employ to introduce readers to Okinawa and explore the effects of war/occupation memory on perceptions of military intimacy and my ethnographic descriptions and interviews. Koikari directs readers to emerging scholarship exploring the impact of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the onset of "permanent war" – a term coined by labor activist Sidney Lens to describe the

⁴⁶ Popular images and expectations of Okinawan-U.S. military couples circulating in the Okinawan community are discussed in Chapter 2 on military men and race and in Chapter 3 on Okinawan women and class/respectability. A critical analysis of Orientalist images of Asian wives embedded in military marriage orders is included in Chapter 4.

⁴⁷ At present, the relocation is scheduled to begin in roughly 2025.

normalization of peacetime military spending and permanent war footing beginning in 1947 – and subsequent shifts in American empire and masculinity.⁴⁸

While I discuss the terrorist attacks of 2001 in relation to research hurdles, including difficulties gaining access to military offices and personnel, a more sustained analytical focus on shifting military objectives would have enhanced my discussion of the funding and goals of military family programs, while also suggesting fascinating new comparative questions regarding JSDF-Okinawan intimacies. Connecting fine-grained ethnographic detail to larger political economic trends can be challenging. Interestingly, none of the sources Koikari recommends analyze data gathered using classic ethnographic methods (i.e., no interviews or on-the-ground observations by trained field researchers). Catherine Lutz's work after the publication of *Homefront* in 2001 has been largely programmatic rather than ethnographic.⁴⁹ The grunt lit piece co-authored with Keith Brown involves analysis of accounts published by U.S. military personnel. Inderpal Grewal culls examples from popular culture, media and law, and Anne McClintock analyzes photographs.⁵⁰ Difficulty of access has been an obstacle for scholars conducting critical ethnographic research on the U.S. military. The dismissal of scholars who *have* negotiated access by some in the academic community has also contributed to the dearth of research publicly available. The latter stance unfortunately reinforces prescriptions in academic anthropology concerning what is on- and off-limits to critical ethnography, prescriptions that regrettably resonate with patterns of research and scholarship that *protect* the military, stemming from the channeling of funds to projects considered more immediately useful to the Department of Defense.

I do contextualize the lives and stories of individuals in relation to major policy shifts regarding military families. Chapter 5 situates couples' experiences in relation to the transition to an all-volunteer force during the 1970s and 1980s (147-150), an important element of the neoliberal restructuring of the U.S. military critical scholars have examined.⁵¹ During this period, the draft was terminated and spending increased to support recruitment and advertise military service as an attractive career choice. A variety of programs, including family support services were expanded or newly created to increase retention rates and morale among service members and their dependents. Given the informal sanctioning noted above, sociologists have produced finer grained accounts than anthropologists of how the shift to an all-volunteer force affected the military's approach to surveilling and regulating the bodies, sexuality, and reproduction of personnel and their families. I draw appreciatively from their work.⁵²

Also relating to contextualization, Carter suggests extending my analysis of women's strategies for avoiding the shadow of prostitution from the current focus on women involved in intimate relationships with U.S. military personnel to Okinawans as a whole, building on key insights from Annmaria Shimabuku's recent book, *Alegal*.⁵³ Shimabuku's work

⁴⁸ Sidney Lens, *Permanent War: The Militarization of America* (New York: Schocken, 1987), discussed in Catherine E. Lutz, "Anthropology in an Era of Permanent War" (CASCA Keynote Address 2008), *Anthropologica* 51 (2009): 367-379.

⁴⁹ Catherine Lutz, *Homefront: A Military City and the American 20th Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001).

⁵⁰ Keith Brown and Catherine Lutz, "Grunt Lit: The Participant Observers of Empire," *American Ethnologist* 34:2 (2007): 322-328; Inderpal Grewal, *Saving the Security State: Exceptional Citizens in Twenty-First-Century America* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017); Anne McClintock, "Paranoid Empire: Specters from Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib," *Small Axe* 13:1 (2009), 50-74.

⁵¹ See especially Lutz, "Anthropology in an Era of Permanent War;" Grewal, *Saving the Security State*.

⁵² See, for example, Mady Wechsler Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," *Armed Forces & Society* 13:1 (1986): 9-38; Molly Clever and David R. Segal, "The Demographics of Military Children and Families," *Future Child* 23:2 (2013): 13-39.

⁵³ Annmaria M. Shimabuku, *Alegal: Biopolitics and the Unintelligibility of Okinawan Life* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019).

examines the social and legal conditions surrounding the negotiation of Okinawan sovereignty during the occupation period, identifying a “logic of mutual exclusion” operating on both sides of the fences that rendered Okinawan life unintelligible outside the duality of victim/collaborator.⁵⁴ Following this argument, women who engaged in sexual relations and bore children with U.S. military men had difficulty escaping the stigma of perceived collaboration of the most intimate kind. Employing discourses of pure love and displacing negative imagery onto other women represented possible pathways for escaping such damning assumptions and accusations. Shimabuku’s analysis of postwar politics and new forms of Okinawan personhood was published after my book had already gone to press. I regret not having access to this thought-provoking work, not least because the author approaches military sex work, Japanese anti-miscegenation discourses, and Okinawan sovereignty through the lens of “mixed-race” Okinawans. Shimabuku’s discussion of unique forms of agency available to mixed-race actors as “alegal” subjects sheds light on interviews and anecdotal data I collected from adult American-Okinawan children but was not able to satisfactorily integrate into my arguments regarding fencelines.⁵⁵ Carter’s question about possible resonances between the choices of my interviewees and the limited options available to all Okinawans is intriguing in light of Shimabuku’s work.

Finally, Koikari calls for expanded treatment of the transnational military-family networks many couples claimed membership in, including links between the various locations across North America and the Pacific where couples had resided. Relevant ethnographies of military base communities in the United States include Daniela Brancaforte’s account of the Army Family Team Building program at Fort Huachuca, Texas; Catherine Lutz’s sweeping analysis of militarization surrounding Fort Bragg in Fayetteville, North Carolina; and Kenneth MacLeish’s study of soldiers’ relationships to violence, money, and one another at Fort Hood, Texas.⁵⁶ While I do reference these works, I am intrigued by Koikari’s call for an analysis that spans these various sites while still retaining the detailed texture of ethnography. Considering the focus of the above ethnographies on U.S. Army communities, attention to networks associated with the Marine Corps and other branches of service, as well as comparisons among branches and groups of personnel and their families would be valuable.⁵⁷ Multi-sited projects involving ethnographic fieldwork require considerable inputs of time and funds, leading instead to the publication of discrete “community studies.” The potential analytical reach of a larger transnational project is appealing.

Engaging Local Typologies

Carter, Cheng, and Koikari each identify places in the ethnography where I reproduce participant voices without adequately and critically engaging underlying typologies and stances. Carter argues persuasively for a more nuanced consideration of the genealogies of race and sexuality in Okinawa, particularly of Black love and Black sexuality, not only as objects of community surveillance and fear/discomfort but also as actively and creatively shaping understandings of self, other, and desire in relation to notions of globalized personhood. She cites a growing literature on the Black Pacific that examines “mobile representations of Blackness that circulate and shape the affective field and routes for intimacy globally,” along with a list of works including her own that explore the messy and tangled histories of Afro-Asian intimacies in Okinawa’s

⁵⁴ Shimabuku, *Alegal*, xiv.

⁵⁵ Shimabuku, *Alegal*, 133-141.

⁵⁶ Daniela B. M. Brancaforte, *Camouflaged Identities and Army Wives: Narratives of Self and Place on the Margins of the U.S. Military Family* (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 2000); Lutz, *Homefront*; Kenneth T. MacLeish, *Making War at Fort Hood: Life and Uncertainty in a Military Community* (Princeton University Press, 2013).

⁵⁷ Ethnographies of U.S. military base communities involving other branches of service include Katherine McCaffrey, *Military Power and Popular Protest: The U.S. Navy in Vieques, Puerto Rico* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002); David Vine, *Island of Shame: The Secret History of the U.S. Military Base on Diego Garcia* (Princeton University Press, 2009); and Erin Fitz-Henry, *U.S. Military Bases and Anti-Military Organizing: An Ethnography of an Air Force Base in Ecuador* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

militarized spaces. The questions she poses regarding transitory renderings of Blackness in historical moments from the Koza Riot/Uprising to the Black Lives Matter movement give me much to think about for future extensions of the work.

As Carter correctly observes, my participant sample included just a few military men of color and Okinawan women who commented on relationships with Black and Filipino men. Moreover, I did not foreground the experiences of American-Okinawan children. Grounding my examination of racialized fencelines in a small number of personal stories and perspectives, I assiduously followed participant leads and delved into military histories and popular memories hinging on racial difference. My analyses of racialized memory scripts on popular perceptions of interracial intimacy and the effects of white supremacist ideologies on postwar crime narratives remain important, but partial. Carter's own writings on the refraction of race and racial difference along Okinawa's fencelines – creating a spectrum of identities and experiences for American-Okinawan children, from so-called *shima haafu* to more base-oriented Americanized mixed Okinawans, for example – helps fill this gap.⁵⁸ Her probing questions regarding the experiences of and opportunities available to women with Black Okinawan children are an important area of research under exploration by scholars cited in her review.

Cheng and Koikari identify a second issue relating to my use of participant data, both raising questions about my references to a nebulous group of “anti-base feminists.” Attempting to elicit critical analysis, Cheng asks: “What kind of subject positions do these feminist activists occupy? Do they share a unitary position? How have their narratives developed with the emergence of narratives of Comfort Women in the 1990s and subsequently the trafficking of women into forced prostitution in the 2000s, and how do they depart from or collude with Japanese nationalism in policing women's sexuality?” Cheng's questions point to a kaleidoscope of Asian feminisms arising in response to conditions of Japanese colonialism, U.S. militarism, and Cold War politics. Feminist scholar Kozue Akibayashi has charted their convergence around issues relating to the intersection of race, militarism, and sexism, including Japan's wartime system of military “comfort” stations, the trafficking of women into prostitution in U.S. military camp towns, and acts of sexual violence committed by U.S. military personnel in Okinawa.⁵⁹ Anthropologist Linda Angst has analyzed the narratives of Okinawan feminists, more specifically, in relation to those employed by male leaders of Okinawa's anti-base coalition.⁶⁰

Koikari reasons that my failure to unpack and analyze the category of “anti-base feminist” lends substance to a key fenceline the U.S. military and Japanese government use to divide women. I believe she is right. In redeploying this phrase, which was uncritically adopted from several research participants, I inadvertently reproduced “anti-base feminists” as a monolithic entity, a straw man against whom some Okinawan military wives define themselves. Consequently, the category “Okinawan military wives” may also have appeared more unitary than intended. Clearly, the ability to control the discursive field, including the language people use to name their reality, is a key aspect of power and governmentality, in this case

⁵⁸ Mitzi Uehara Carter, “Mixed Race Okinawans and Their Obscure In-Betweenness,” *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 35:6 (2014): 646-661; Carter, “Nappy Routes and Tangled Tales: Critical Ethnography in a Militarised Okinawa,” in Daniel Broudy, Peter Simpson, and Makoto Arakaki, *Under Occupation: Resistance and Struggle in a Militarised Asia-Pacific* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013).

⁵⁹ See, for example, Kozue Akibayashi, “Cold War Shadows of Japan's Imperial Legacies for Women in East Asia,” *positions* 28:3 (2020): 559-675; Akibayashi and Suzuyo Takazato, “Okinawa: women's struggle for demilitarization,” in *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts*, ed. Catherine Lutz (New York: New York University Press, 2009).

⁶⁰ My statement regarding the cooptation of rape by politicians and activists (167), quoted by Koikari without the adjacent in-text citation, draws on Linda Angst's critical analysis of public discourses on the 1995 rape of an Okinawan schoolgirl by three U.S. servicemen. Angst notes that while Okinawan feminists called public attention to the rape, the media and political leaders quickly reframed the incident, turning it into a crisis of sovereignty rather than a crisis for women and a particular girl. She argues that the trope of Okinawa as the sacrificed/prostituted daughter and allegorical references to the rape of Okinawa actually reinscribe Okinawan and women's marginality and subordination, even while they continue to be strategically important for the anti-base movement. See Linda Isako Angst, “The Sacrifice of a Schoolgirl: The 1995 Rape Case, Discourses of Power, and Women's Lives in Okinawa,” *Critical Asian Studies* 33:2 (2001): 243-266.

normalizing the U.S. military presence. Who are “anti-base feminists,” if not people who can be readily dismissed for not sufficiently understanding or appreciating the value of the military and/or men? I regret that I did not recognize and analyze these effects. Reproducing the binary of anti-base feminists/military wives may also have hindered my analysis of participants’ contradictory views and experiences. My fieldnotes describe numerous encounters with women who worked on-base, experienced intimate relationships with military men, supported women’s equality, *and* believed the United States should downsize its military presence in Okinawa.

Anthropology of/for the Military?

Finally, the reviewers reflect on my positioning and the positioning of the ethnography with respect to power and the U.S. military. Carter ponders the interplay of empathy and seduction within the space of the ethnographic interview, echoing a critique within anthropology concerning how power and privilege structure interactions between ethnographers and research participants, shaping the data that is collected and how conclusions are presented. I have alluded to these dynamics above in relation to participant stories I chose not to include in the book and borrowing language from participants without examining embedded typologies. Here, I would like to provide some clarity regarding my self-presentation during fieldwork and my intentions with *Intimacy Across the Fencelines*.

When I first arrived in Okinawa as a graduate student, I was in my early 20s, unmarried, and childless. This undoubtedly affected the questions I thought to ask and my relationship with participants who were parents. Furthermore, I had no prior military experience and had not secured official permission to conduct research inside U.S. military installations.⁶¹ I spent months reaching out to scholars and professionals in the Okinawan community before contacting staff members at military family services. Before conducting research, I had lived for several years in mainland Japan, working and studying Japanese. My language skills set me apart from the vast majority of U.S. military personnel and their families. Finally, I was affiliated with a university in northern Okinawa, at a distance from mid-island region where U.S. bases and military base culture are pervasive.⁶² In short, I felt like a social and cultural outsider in nearly every situation I encountered, although some may have assumed otherwise. Over the past twenty years, I have studied, matured, and developed meaningful long-term friendships and professional relationships in Okinawa. I am circumspect about my positioning, recognizing my own embeddedness in relations of power and responsibility to those whose voices would otherwise go unheard. I also recognize the waters are ever muddy.

In her closing remarks, Koikari draws from the work of anthropologist Catherine Lutz to distinguish between “anthropology of the military” and “anthropology for the military.”⁶³ While Lutz’s argument primarily concerns funding for ethnographic research, Koikari asks more broadly, “Why do we study military, and how?” Anthropologists have conducted research for the occupation-era civil administration of Okinawa and for the U.S. military following reversion.⁶⁴ I have not,

⁶¹ I carried a letter of introduction from my senator, but U.S. military facilities were placed on lockdown following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, delaying my ability to meet and interview service members and staff.

⁶² The reviewers did not comment on my inclusion of perspectives from the marginalized northern region. My base in northern Okinawa influenced how I conceptualize fencelines. In the north, military fencelines are not as strikingly visible as the barbed wire enclosures surrounding mid-island bases. Rather, they are imprinted directly on the bodies of military international couples and their families, highly conspicuous due to their smaller numbers. For a compelling discussion of the community-political effects of military fencelines in this part of Okinawa, see Masamichi S. Inoue, *Okinawa and the U.S. Military: Identity Making in the Age of Globalization* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

⁶³ Lutz, “Anthropology in an Era of Permanent War,” 374.

⁶⁴ For a review of English-language ethnographies published during the postwar period, see James Roberson, “Portraying Okinawa in Postwar Ethnographic Writing: A Critical Review of the English-Language Literature,” *Asian Anthropology* 14:2 (2015), 182-200.

and my work has few direct applications to military operations. It does contribute to our understanding of how militaries and militarization pervade the intimate everyday beliefs and feelings, experiences and behaviors of U.S. service personnel, their families, and people living in the vicinity of U.S. bases. Outlining a program for future study, Lutz argues that an anthropology of the military would focus on “the complex mix of desire, politics, friendship, money, career advancement and idealisms that make up the motivational context of military action.”⁶⁵ It would contribute to a broader sketch of the “topography of U.S. power – its exercise, effects, negotiation of protest, and limits” and “speak to a U.S. public that knows little of what the purposes, effects and vulnerabilities of its U.S. military are.”⁶⁶ I hope with *Intimacy Across the Fencelines* to contribute to this all-important project.

⁶⁵ Lutz, “Anthropology in an Era of Permanent War,” 375.

⁶⁶ Catherine E. Lutz, “Empire is in the Details,” *American Ethnologist* 33:4 (2006), 593; Lutz, “Anthropology in an Era of Permanent War,” 376.