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# **War, Patriarchy and Gender with Betty Reardon's Lens**

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# War as a stupidity



- As a 10 year old girl Betty thought that the war was a **stupidity**, when World War II began. There must be other ways to organize the world.
- As a professional teacher and deeply involved with the **PEC at IPRA**, she influenced worldwide peace education, peace-building and conflict resolution from a **gender perspective**.
- In Education for a **culture of peace** with a gender perspective she developed a manual on the rights to Freedom of Religion and Belief. She was interested in different beliefs and peace experiences from **various cultures**.
- She was convinced that **women** must play an active role in peace-building, but also in future studies, where an **authentic globalism** may overcome war, arms, militarism, violence and build a different world based on cooperation and solidarity.

# Betty's wide approach to peace, security, war and feminism

- Betty Reardon was a teacher of peace research, an activist, a creative researcher, an innovative author, a critical consultant, an organizer or participant of international meetings, workshops, and conferences including the **roster of professional women** in both Americas for professional services to UN, governments, universities and business communities & the **International Institutes for Peace**.
- Her publications explored arms, disarmament, mankind, obstacles to disarmament, militarism and sexism, nuclear weapons, gender analysis of militarism, food, feminist concepts of peace and security, a feminist perspective on **World Constitution Order**, learning to abolish war, feminist and authentic globalism, sustainable peace, women and human security, women, peace and development, and the book that inspired my own career as feminist was "**Sexism and the War System**".

# Gender identity, militarism, arms & war

- Betty understood that gender identity refers to the process of consciousness raising to be a human being: a **men or a women**, depending on the position of the social structure.
- She insisted that gender security is normally **taken for granted** and that the social relations are linked to the **status as gender** including other social groups such as indigenous, poor, minority, women. **Equity and identity are values at risk**. The **source of threat** comes in first instance from the **patriarchal hierarchical and violent order**, characterized by exclusive and totalitarian institutions such as non-democratic governments, churches and élites, which creates war, violence, discrimination, and exclusion.
- The distribution of power acquires during thousand of years generic forms. Men exercise a hierarchical and vertical power of domination and superiority. Women get excluded by different social, political, ideological and cultural reasons.

# Betty a convinced peace-feminist

- Betty Reardon understood the difference between **negative peace** “as the absence of war, achieved by the prevention and/or the general reduction and eventual elimination of armed conflicts”. She understood an “**authentic peace**” as the abolition of the war system and the establishment of global justice and a global civic community. For her the **ethical imperative of peace** is a fundamental right, with duties to *avoid depriving* another right; to *protect* the other from deprivation of the right, and to *aid* the deprived.
- Betty understood that **structural violence** and **violence against women** are crucial issues for peace education that must be trained from kindergarten on to high school.

# **An international feminist scholar activist**

- After her activities with Teachers College, she build up an international network in peace education, demilitarization and women's movement for human rights and peace: **FeDem** and the **International Institute on Peace (IIPE)**. She got the UNESCO Price for Peace Education in 2001.
- In recognition of her international achievements and contributions she was nominated by the International Peace Bureau in Geneva for the **Nobel Peace Prize in 2013**.





**Betty Reardon  
is an  
ecofeminist,  
pioneer on  
global  
cooperation  
and a struggler  
for a healthy  
planet  
and a healthy  
society,  
oriented to a  
future that is  
worth hoping  
for.**