

THREE CHEERS FOR EVE ENSLER? Propaganda, White Collar Crime and Sexual Atrocities in Eastern Congo

October 21, 2007

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A major propaganda front has swept the Western media decrying the unprecedented sexual violence in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. As this story goes to press the war in Congo—claiming 1000 lives a day in the East and more than 7 million people since 1996—is escalating yet again. More than 1.2 million were reported displaced in June, with at least 8000 additional displaced persons on October 22 after fighting escalated—as Western-backed forces perpetrate genocide and terrorism to depopulate and secure the land for multinational mining interests. Needing to explain away the failure of the 2006 “elections process” and the “peace” that never was, the propaganda system has embraced the theme of femicide. As always, the white champions of human rights and humanitarian concern in the end blame the black victims for their own suffering. While raising much needed awareness, the propaganda front serves a selective and expedient agenda, a tool used to pressure certain political groups and provide cover for the real terrorists.

On a visit to Eastern Congo in May 2007, Eve Ensler—the playwright and producer of the Vagina Monologues—was witness to the profound human suffering and unprecedented sexual violence.

“I have just returned from hell,” Ensler wrote, in Glamour Magazine in August. “I am trying for the life of me to figure out how to communicate what I have seen and heard in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. How do I convey these stories of atrocities without your shutting down, quickly turning the page or feeling too disturbed?”

Ensler came to see what those whose eyes are open cannot deny: the sexual violence and predation in Central Africa is unacceptable, unfathomable, and stoppable. And she has the courage and audacity to write and speak about it.

Three cheers for Eve Ensler!!

Or not?

Through her global campaign to end violence against women, called “V-Day,” and with a nine-page feature article in Glamour magazine in August, Enslers launched a campaign calling for an end to rape and sexual torture against women and girls in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. One of the voices she uses to tell the story is that of Christine Schuler Deschryver, described as a human rights activist in Congo. Enslers, Deschryver and the campaign have received a lot of press, with stories in Glamour, interviews on the BBC, PBS and Al Jazeera. The New York Times picked up the issue of rape in Eastern Congo in early October, and the Times story was followed the next day with a Democracy Now! interview with Christine Schuler Deschryver.

“Stop Raping Our Greatest Resource, Power To The Women And Girls Of The Democratic Republic Of Congo,” Enslers’s web site explains, “is being initiated by the women of Eastern DRC, V-Day and UNICEF on behalf of United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict. The campaign calls for an end to the violence and to impunity for those who commit these atrocities.”¹

An end to impunity for those who commit these atrocities?

Enslers’s Glamour article is an apt documentary of human suffering and courage. The doctors working to save and heal the survivors of sexual brutality are heroes. The women and girls who have survived are themselves portraits of courage and human dignity. The issue demands international condemnation and action. However, in her nine-page portrait of heroism and suffering, there is a single half paragraph that ostensibly addresses the roots of the problem.

“The perpetrators include the *Interahamwe*,” Enslers writes, “the Hutu fighters who fled neighboring Rwanda in 1994 after committing genocide there; the Congolese army; a loose assortment of armed civilians; even U.N. peacekeepers.”²

THE GLAMOUROUS GENOCIDE

Who is responsible for the brutality?

According to Glamour and Vanity Fair, it is always those rag-tag Rwandan *genocidaires* who fled justice in Rwanda, or those ruthless Congolese soldiers from the heart of darkness, and the loose assortments of obviously “loose” civilians, and even the U.N. peacekeepers who, in the United Nations Observers Mission in Congo (MONUC), are men from India, Uruguay, Nepal, Pakistan... and in Darfur, Sudan, it is those damned *Janjaweed*—Arabs on horseback, you know, the usual *dark-skinned* subjects.

And there is no mention whatsoever of the deeper realities and responsibilities of white people and predatory capitalism. Where is the discussion of the backers behind this warfare? Who sells the weaponry? Who produces it? Who photographs the UNICEF poster children and peddles the images of suffering in the Western press for billion dollar profit-driven campaigns that do not in the end uplift the people who they claim to care about?

¹ <<http://www.vday.org/contents/drcongo>>.

² Eve Enslers, “Women Left For Dead—and the Man Who’s Saving Them,” Glamour, August 2007.

Why are there gala UNICEF “fundraising” benefits—the Annual Snowflake Ball—in New York hotels with white-tie U.S. Presidents as honorary ambassadors and state department officials from the National Security Council—and \$10,000 tickets—held by and for officials who remain silent about genocide in Ethiopia or northern Uganda or the U.S.-backed *coup d’etat* that occurred in Rwanda in 1994 or Zaire (Congo) in 1996? ³

What we know to be true is that Eve Ensler was lucky to get this article in Glamour at all. The magazine is a travesty of violence against women—cosmetics, luxury aids, “health” and “beauty” products, liposuction, breast implants and sexually seductive advertising peddling the “perfect” female body and great American culture of sexual violence—and yet Glamour offers a platform for Ensler’s message about sexual brutality of unprecedented human proportions.

What’s going on here? There is a reason these stories proliferate and it is not about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Glamour’s publishers do not care about the suffering of black people. It is pure Western white supremacist propaganda serving to underscore the accepted narratives of Central Africa and assist in the consolidation of power over the region, but this is neither seen nor appreciated by white “news” consumers.

What Eve Ensler and Glamour have not addressed are the warlords behind the warlords, the corporations and white collar crime which is never—or selectively, now and then expeditiously, if ever—reported on the pages of Glamour, Vanity Fair, the New Yorker, or the other promoters of popular propaganda brought to us by the *Conde Naste* corporate empire.

Behind the warfare always blamed on Africans, behind the warlords’ deadly battles, are other warlords and corporations from Western countries. The reason people—U.S. and Canadian citizens—are unaware of the issues involved is because of publications like Glamour and the corporations that control them. Ensler’s article begins to look like an advertisement for UNICEF and the so-called “humanitarian” AID industry, which is itself part of the problem, because it remains silent about corporate plunder, “humanitarian” organizations partnering with the corporate exploiters, shared directors hips with mining, defense, petroleum and other multinational interests. UNICEF and “not-for-profit” organizations like it are in the business of perpetuating their own survival, the vanguard of transnational capital.

Asked what to do, Ensler points to UNICEF: “Right now, [the best thing to do is] to give to the V-Day UNICEF campaign at vday.org/congo.”

In the end Ensler’s article—like the few racialized articles about rape in Rwanda, Congo and Darfur that have appeared in Ms. Magazine ⁴—is a compelling portrait that serves a narrow political

³ UNICEF’s Snowflake Ball,

<http://www.unicefusa.org/site/c.duLR18O0H/b.45578/k.EFDA/The_UNICEF_Snowflake_US_Fund_for_UNICEF.htm>.

⁴ See Stephanie Nolan, “‘Not Women Anymore...’: The Congo’s rape survivors face pain, shame and AIDS,” Ms. Magazine, Spring 2005; Femke van Zeijl, “The Agony of Darfur: Again, rape surfaces as an international war crime,” Ms. Magazine, Winter 2006.

agenda of which Enslar appears not to be conscious. Such articles—appearing in gendered white spaces of privilege like Glamour or Ms. or Cosmopolitan—blame the very (African) victims of an international system of oppression that revolves around permanent warfare economies—U.S., Canada, Britain, Belgium, Israel, France, Canada, Australia—and they serve to promote the interests of these by never challenging the perpetrators of chaos and terrorism that are directly aligned with the predominant military-intelligence establishment. When reporting on rape in Central Africa, articles in *Conde Naste* group publications—as with almost all publications—have never challenged the governments of either Rwanda or Uganda, soldiers of which have committed massive sexual atrocities, crimes against humanity and other war crimes.⁵

How does it happen that a notorious “dictator” and “cannibal” like Uganda’s legendary dictator Idi Amin could live out his life in splendor in Saudi Arabia? Far more people have suffered terrorism under President Yoweri Museveni in Uganda, than under Idi Amin, yet Museveni remains the West’s golden boy in the old Pearl of Africa. It was Paul Kagame—“the Butcher of Kigali”—who in the early years—circa 1981 to 1988—wielded the iron fist of terror in Uganda. Kagame was Museveni’s director of Military Intelligence and is now President of Rwanda. Taban Amin, Idi Amin’s eldest son, is today in charge of the Uganda’s dreaded Internal Security Organization, the private terror instrument of President Yoweri Museveni. While Ugandan troops are perpetrating atrocities in Eastern Congo at this writing, no one says anything about them. Uganda remains near the top of the list for AID to ARMS scandals, even as Museveni visits with George W. Bush at the White House (October 30). Similarly, the Kagame government always gets away with murder because Kagame has friends in high places.

An end to impunity for those who commit these atrocities?

Indeed, it turns out that Eve Enslar is collaborating with certain powerful interests whose involvement in Central Africa has never come under scrutiny. In a September 17, 2007 interview with Ms. Magazine journalist Michele Kort, broadcast by PBS, Enslar was joined in a dialog about sexual violence in Eastern Congo by Christine Schuler Deschryver, described by PBS as “from Bukavu in the Congo, who is an activist against the sexual violence.”⁶ This is the same “human rights activist from Congo” interviewed by Amy Goodman on Democracy Now!

Who is Christine Schuler Deschryver?

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF RAPE REPORTING

Jumping on the bandwagon, on October 8, 2007, Democracy Now! ran an interview between Amy Goodman and Christine Schuler Deschryver about sexual violence in Congo.⁷ Deschryver claimed that studies were done that show that sixty percent of the sexual violence in Eastern Congo is

⁵ keith harmon snow worked for UNICEF in Ethiopia in 2006. See addendum pages in Livelihoods and Vulnerabilities Study, Gambella Region Ethiopia, UNICEF Report, December 13, 2006, <<http://www.allthingspass.com/journalism.php?catid=13>>.

⁶ “A Conversation with Eve Enslar: Femicide in Congo,” PBS, <http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2007/lumo/special_enslar.html>.

⁷ The Deschryver family name is of Belgian descent and multiple spellings can be found for the same people: Adrien Deschryver, Adrien De Schryver and Adrien de Schryver.

committed by “these people who did the genocide in Rwanda, by Hutu’s who made the genocide in their country.”

Christine Schuler Deschryver describes the process where militias enter a village, kill all the men, and sexually assault and brutalize the women.⁸

This is “*femicide*” says Deschryver, a charge repeated by Eve Ensler and echoed by Amy Goodman. “People can help me first of all being an Ambassador and talking about the problem going on in Congo because it’s a silent war. They are killing, they are raping babies... It’s like Darfur: Darfur started four years ago. But Congo started almost eleven years ago and nobody’s talking about this *femicide*, this holocaust. It’s a femicide because they are just destroying the female species...”

Femicide? Congolese women sexually traumatized, Congolese men killed? It is a process of depopulation and ethnic cleansing.

Speaking from the Democracy Now! studios in New York City, Christine Schuler Deschryver describes a war involving African countries outside Congo, but she does not name Western interests involved.

Christine Schuler Deschryver describes her personal sacrifice to help the victims of Congo’s wars. She states that she works in “administration, in her office...” Until 2002, at least, Christine Schuler Deschryver was known for gorilla conservation, not human rights, in Congo.

Christine Schuler Deschryver is married to Carlos Schuler, a Swiss German working for decades in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park in South Kivu. Carlos Schuler and Christine Schuler Deschryver both work for GTZ—*Deutsche Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit*—a “German technological cooperation agency.” Carlos negotiates with warlords for “conservation.” Because of his gorilla conservation interests, Schuler has been described as “Dian Fossey’s successor.” Schuler has maintained very private relations with *all* military forces in the region, and there are questions about mineral plunder and military collaboration and GTZ’s role in structural violence and warfare in Congo.

GTZ is a German government institution with a corporate structure. The GTZ Supervisory Board has representatives of four Federal [German] Ministries: the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Federal Foreign Office, Federal Ministry of Finance, and Federal Ministry of Economics and Labour. Since 1998 the Supervisory Board Chairman has been State Secretary Erich Stather from the BMZ.

GTZ’s involvement in Eastern Congo is notable, given the German links to the Lueshe mine in North Kivu, and the German embassy’s role in exploitation, depopulation and genocide in Congo. One top GTZ executive appears to be linked to German corporate interests seeking to control the Lueshe mine, now controlled by their U.S./German competitors (see below). The German government has been understandably mute about plunder in Congo, and the presentation of

⁸ “‘They Are Destroying the Female Species in Congo:’ Congolese Human Rights Activist Christine Schuler Deschryver on Sexual Terrorism and Africa’s Forgotten War,” Democracy Now!, October 8, 2007, <<http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=07/10/08/1340255>>.

Christine Schuler Deschryver's—a GTZ agent in Bukavu—as a champion of human rights is a perfect example of the twisted “charity” and “philanthropy” dumped on the Congolese people.

Like the rest of Congo, Kahuzi-Biega is rich in minerals coveted by corporations and governments that include German multinationals like Bayer—subsidiary H.C. Starck—involved in coltan in Congo.

But the interests of Carlos Schuler and Christine Deschryver run much deeper than “gorilla conservation” and “human rights” activism in Eastern Congo. The Deschryver family is one of the elite families in Belgium. Christine's father, Adrian Deschryver, was one of the first “rangers” of the Kahuzi-Biega National Park.⁹ The Deschryver family worked with the Mobutu dictatorship. The great patriarch was August Deschryver, Belgium's Minister to the Congo at transition, in 1960, a likely candidate involved in undermining and destroying the Patrice Lumumba government, and assassinating the man, in the twilight of Congo's Independence.

The Kahuzi-Biega National Park began as a Zoological and Forest Reserve gazetted in 1937 after over-hunting threatened to wipe Congo's big game off the map. Adrien Deschryver helped found the Kahuzi-Biega Park in 1970.¹⁰ One of the first actions was to forcibly displace the huge pygmy population from the park. The pygmies were consulted only to find locations of elephants and gorillas, and then they were removed: they were lured, tricked, forcibly driven out, and some died refusing to leave. This is exactly what is happening in other parts of Congo today, involving USAID, GTZ, and big “conservation” and “humanitarian” interests like CARE International.¹¹ Five pygmy *groupements*—groups of villages spread over large geographical areas—were destroyed. GTZ and UNESCO, the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization, got involved in the 1980s, after UNESCO designated Kahuzi-Biega a “World Heritage Site”—clearly another mechanism designed by Western interests to establish cultural and geographic control over people and landscapes. When the GTZ sought to implement “community development” they did not consult with the pygmies to determine their true needs, or wants. The result was armed violence and death. There was no compensation, and the pygmies—forced out of their universe of knowing, the forest—were left homeless and destitute in a world they did not understand. In 2000 era discussions involving some “440 stakeholders” under the new mantra of participatory involvement, there were only two people of pygmy origin, but these were lauded as representation of all the pygmy peoples.

As one Congolese consultant wrote, “Over the two-month period of research into the situation of the Bambuti Pygmies and the protected areas in North and South Kivu—the Kahuzi-Biega National Park—none of the indigenous Bambuti, Barwa, Batwa and Babuluko [people] displayed any enthusiasm for or awareness of the Kahuzi-Biega National Park conservation project. This project has left them worse off than before it was introduced and implemented. The Pygmies have been expelled and driven out with neither indemnity nor other compensation. They have been cast aside.

⁹ UNESCO is today deeply connected to “conservation” in Eastern Congo; from 1982-1985, at least, one Hubert Deschryver sat on the executive board. See:

<<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0005/000518/051897E.pdf>>.

¹⁰ Kapupu Diwa Mutimanwa, The Bambuti-Batwa and the Kahuzi-Biega National Park: the case of the Barhwa and Babuluko people, May 2001.

¹¹ See the series KING KONG: Scoping in on the Curious Activities of the International Money Business in Central Africa, by keith harmon snow and Georgianne Nienaber published in its entirety at <<http://www.allthingspass.com/journalism.php?catid=45>>.

They belong nowhere.”¹²

This is genocide.

Genocide is the congregation of *femicide* and *homocide*, the destruction of an entire people, and that is what is happening to people in Central Africa, regardless of their ethnicity.

The human rights of the pygmies in Eastern Congo are the most violated of the most violated on earth, thanks to the Belgian family Deschryver, UNESCO and the GTZ.

The Amy Goodman report ends with a plea by Christine Schuler Deschryver for funds to put a roof on a house for survivors of sexual violence. How to help? Give to UNICEF, she says, or to Eve Enslar’s international organization “V-Day”.

The Democracy Now! report about rape in Congo followed in rather interesting coincidence with a New York Times feature. Goodman opens her report noting that she interviewed Deschryver “last month” [September] in New York. But the Democracy Now! report appeared on October 8, 2007.

On October 7, 2007, in “Rape Epidemic Raises Trauma of Congo War,” Jeffrey Gettleman reported on rape in Congo for the New York Times.

If Amy Goodman was shocked and horrified about Christine Schuler Deschryver’s descriptions of the scale and nature of sexual violence in Congo, why did she wait so long to run the interview? Why did the Democracy Now! report follow one day after the New York Times feature? Coincidence? Or is the Democracy Now! report just another expedient piece of a coordinated propaganda strategy?

The Gettleman report was a travesty of deception in classic New York Times form. “Eastern Congo is going through another one of its convulsions of violence,” Gettleman writes, “and this time it seems that women are being systematically attacked on a scale never before seen here.”

In fact, the situation in Central Africa has been one steady “convulsion of violence” since, at least, the Rwandan Patriotic Front invasion of Rwanda from Uganda in 1990. Zaire exploded in 1996, and the killing and raping has never stopped. This author has consistently and repeatedly reported on massive rape, sexual mutilation, and slavery as weapons of war and depopulation in Central Africa since at least 2001, and these were widely reported by others before that. Now, barely a year after the “historic national elections” that brought President Joseph Kabila to power in October 2006, The New York Times is doing damage control.

“The days of chaos in Congo were supposed to be over,” wrote Gettleman. “Last year, this country of 66 million people held a historic election that cost \$500 million and was intended to end Congo’s various wars and rebellions and its tradition of epically bad government.”

¹² Kapupu Diwa Mutimanwa, The Bambuti-Batwa and the Kahuzi-Biega National Park: the case of the Barhwa and Babuluko people, May 2001.

Things don't just fall apart in Congo. "Epically bad government" and "chaos" are typically manufactured to serve powerful interests—the "shock doctrine" defined by Naomi Klein¹³—and are the result of epically bad reporting and the impunity that is insured by Western disinformation and propaganda campaigns. Hundreds of millions of dollars pumped into the 2006 electoral process, and much was stolen. But the elections exercise was not even a band-aid on the festering war in Congo. To describe the ongoing warfare in Eastern DRC as the most recent convulsion of violence is to feed the Western stereotype of the hopeless African condition and run cover for multinational plunder and depopulation, backing warlords, on and on.

Gettleman's choice of sources and experts is very interesting. One of these, also referenced by Amy Goodman, is Sir John Holmes, a British diplomat with a long history of support for predatory imperialism.

"The sexual violence in Congo is the worst in the world," said John Holmes, the United Nations under secretary general for humanitarian affairs, to the New York Times.

Holmes provides a tidy commentary about African savagery. What we don't learn from the New York Times is that Holmes previously worked for the British security firm Thomas De La Rue, one of the top companies in the world that prints money, security documents (e.g. passports) and postage stamps for 150 countries; currency instruments are used to entrench and maintain structural violence. Thomas De La Rue prints money for the Isle of Man, an offshore tax haven connected to money laundering and mercenaries Tony Buckingham and Simon Mann, and they have printed special currency notes for war-torn Sierra Leone. More significantly perhaps, Holmes was the British Ambassador in Lisbon, Portugal from 1999 to 2001, the period of war in Congo where Congolese warlord Jean-Pierre Bemba, partnered with Uganda, a close British ally, launched the Movement for the Liberation of Congo (MLC) rebellion. Bemba has a villa in Portugal, and his criminal syndicate involves his brother-in-law, blood diamonds and mercenary partner Antony Teixeira, a Portuguese tycoon living in South Africa. Bemba's troops committed massive rape and sexual violence in DRC, and the Effacer Le Tableau campaign was a genocide campaign against pygmies, but Bemba has never been held to account.¹⁴ U.N. Under Secretary General John Holmes is selectively used by the New York Times to legitimize their propaganda, but Holmes himself should be deposed about his role as an economic hit-man supporting plunder and money laundering.

"The sheer numbers, the wholesale brutality, the culture of impunity — it's appalling," says John Holmes, in empty platitudes.

A PORNOGRAPHY OF VIOLENCE

Jeffrey Gettleman goes on to attribute violence to "one of the newest groups to emerge" called "the Rastas, a mysterious gang of dreadlocked fugitives who live deep in the forest, wear shiny tracksuits and Los Angeles Lakers jerseys and are notorious for burning babies, kidnapping women and literally chopping up anybody who gets in their way." In fact, the Rastas have been operating in Eastern Congo for at least three years, have previously committed atrocities, and are not a "new group to emerge." Gettleman has to explain away the violence in African terms, never the white

¹³ Naomi Klein, "The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism," 2007.

¹⁴ See: keith harmon snow, "A People's History of Congo's Jean-Pierre Bemba," Toward Freedom, September 18, 2007, <<http://towardfreedom.com/home/content/view/1123/1/>>.

multinational corporations, arms dealers, criminal Western syndicates or “conservation” organizations (they fund) occupying the soils of North or South Kivu provinces on vast tracts of land.

These feature articles express some very white supremacist thinking about rape in Congo. “Because there has been no justice,” Eve Enslar states, “because so few perpetrators have been held accountable for the crimes that they’re committing, it’s becoming as Christine [Schuler Deschryver] said to me when we were there, like a country sport: rape.”

So, according to this description, Congolese men are universally castigated for “rape as sport,” no matter that this is committed by armed forces backed, armed, and licensed by the West to commit massive sexual atrocities, or that Congolese men are killed outright when militias enter villages. As shown below, the Congolese militias and National Army serve a deeper, hidden, Western corporate agenda: organized white-collar crime. They are paid in kind for services provided to maintain and insure natural resource plunder and the acquisition and control of vast tracts of Congolese territory.

Eve Enslar’s privilege and white supremacy here is illuminated by her *feminist* perspective, her feminist *crusade*, and it becomes acceptable for Eve Enslar—and Ms., Glamour, PBS, The Washington Post, Newsweek, etc.—to label all Congolese men as sexual predators. This, of course, is the chorus of the Western media to begin with—Africans are sexually licentious, they copulate like monkeys—only it transcends boundaries and becomes an *African* condition. Isn’t that why they [those savages] are all HIV/AIDS positive?

Jeffrey Gentleman took it a step further with a direct quote by a Congolese doctor that describes men in Congo as primates. “There used to be a lot of gorillas in there,” he said. “But now they’ve been replaced by much more savage beasts.” Such language would not be *tolerated* by the New York Times to describe rape elsewhere. Rape as a weapon of war is happening in Afghanistan and Iraq, committed by US soldiers, but the depiction of savagery would never be *applied*. But here the propaganda system knowingly reduces the issue to sub-human animal behavior by black savages.

There are extensive case studies analyzing and exploring the systematization of sexual violence and the wounds it inflicts in warfare in Eastern Congo.¹⁵ Institutions like Columbia and University of Denver have studied rape and war in eastern Congo for years—funded by private foundations and the euphemistically named United States Institute for Peace.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNIFEM and other UN agencies have huge budgets dedicated to “humanitarian” reporting and research. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), alone, has a 2007 budget of \$US 686,591,107, “roughly the same level as in 2006,” with an additional \$40,000,000 infusion announced by MONUC on October 22, 2007. OCHA merely *coordinates* 126 organizations, including 10 United Nations agencies and 50 international agencies.

¹⁵ See, for example, Sara Gieseke, Rape as a Tool of War in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, Graduate School of International Studies, University of Denver, April 13, 2007.

The “humanitarian” misery industry is part of a system perpetuating, supporting, and facilitating a permanent state of emergency in Eastern Congo.

People know about sexual atrocities in Congo and they have known about it at the highest levels for years.

WHERE IS ANDERSON COOPER (360)?

It is well known that orders come from military officers. The orders given call for mass rape and sexual violence. The chain of command determines what soldiers do and don't do. There are hierarchies, and soldiers include young boys and men conscripted into terror networks. To disobey orders is certain death in these militias, and escape is a deadly proposition. For thousands of men and boys in Central Africa the “least dangerous place to be” is in the military—be it a militia or national army. For thousands of women and girls in Central Africa the “least dangerous place to be” is wedded to a soldier or taken “captive” by a soldier. Becoming a soldier, or “marrying” one, is a necessary and positive choice for people.¹⁶ The agency of Congolese men and boys and women and girls is therefore rendered invisible and neutralized by such generalizations and stereotypes pronounced by western elites both in and out of the “humanitarian” business sector. Further, by castigating all Congolese men, or all soldiers, the blame and responsibility are shifted away from officers and civil authorities who run these criminal networks, and who give orders to rape and plunder as policy. All of the rape stories in the recent propaganda front characterize rape as wanton sexual chaos, rather than weapons and instruments of warfare and social disintegration.

It is the standard message: African chaos, savagery, sexual licentiousness, and primitive, sub-human brutalization. This is the heart of darkness, after all, a place in the “middle of nowhere, a primeval jungle landscape where it is every man for himself, every woman for any man.

Eve Ensler further demonstrates the arrogance of whiteness and ignorance of events by effectively stating that the United States has said nothing about rape in Congo, because we are allies with Rwanda and Uganda, who suffered genocide and saw the so-called *genocidaires* flood into Congo, who graciously accepted them. In fact, the U.S. overthrew the government of Rwanda in 1994, and when Rwandan and Ugandan forces shelled refugee camps in Eastern Congo (1996) they followed this with a campaign of extermination where hundreds of thousands of women and children were hunted, raped, and massacred. This genocide has not been named. Howard French, New York Times bureau chief in Nairobi in the 1990's, tried to name it, and he comes close in his treatise on Western plunder—A Continent for the Taking—but his efforts were too little. French moved on to become bureau chief in China, leaving Africa behind, with no commitment to act on what he learned. Everyone has tried to bury the truth with the skeletons. The recent thrusts by the Clinton Foundation in Rwanda—dumping millions of dollars into “humanitarian” programs—are a perfect example.

The U.S. factions—the Rwanda Patriotic Front and Uganda People's Defense Forces that backed their invasion of Rwanda—committed massive rapes in Rwanda as well. From 1990 to 1994 the Ugandan/RPF invaders in Rwanda raped as policy, and Human Rights Watch covered it with their

¹⁶ See: Carolyn Nordstrom, “Backyard Front,” *In The Paths to Domination, Resistance and Terror*, Carolyn Nordstrom and JoAnn Martin, eds., 1992: p.271.

reports of mass rape attributed, universally and solely, to the Hutu *genocidaires*. This is the political economy of rape and genocide.

Eve Ensler and Christine Schuler Deschryver regurgitate the accepted narratives and blame the victims of corporate and military plunder aligned with Anglo-American-Israeli interests. To her credit, Eve Ensler mentions SONY Playstation and cellphones as culprits, and she suggests action should be taken against corporations, but she blames the illegal mineral trade on the genocidal murderers from Rwanda, the *Interahamwe* (just as all violence in Darfur is blamed on *Janjaweed*, and all violence in Afghanistan is blamed on *Taliban*). But she states that “we don’t know who” is involved behind or beside these. This cultural reductionism feeds the mainstream media discourses that perpetuate oppressions and consolidate Western power.

Many of the criminals involved were named in the United Nations Panel of Experts reports on illegal extraction of natural resources from Congo. Countless others have been named by numerous independent journalists, including this author, over, and over and over.

John Bredekamp. Billy Rautenbach. George Forrest. Louis Michel. Paul Kagame. Yoweri Museveni. Salim Saleh. James Kabarebe. Walter Kansteiner. Maurice Tempelman. Philippe de Moerloose. Dan Gertler. Étienne Viscount Davignon. Bill Clinton. Simon Village. Ramnik Kotecha. Jean-Pierre Bemba. Romeo Dallaire.

Nothing is ever done. After the production of the United Nations Panel of Experts reports on the plunder of Congo’s natural resources, nothing was done. Criminal syndicates lobbied to have their names cleared and the United Nations buckled under. Emboldened by toothless international legal instruments and spineless international leaders, the corporations and their criminal syndicates stepped up their operations. Plunder, depopulation, rape, sexual slavery—anything goes.

And the media provided its smokescreens: Anderson Cooper “360”.

Eve Ensler has no idea what she is talking about and, on a certain level, like all the rest of us, Eve Ensler is another Mazungu whitey who has no business being in Central Africa at all, because she has no idea what has happened, or is happening, or why. Her white skin and feminist crusade act as a badge of credibility and insures her privileged access to Western media corporations that benefit from “chaos” and depopulation. When “peace” is discussed it revolves around Western “charity” and “goodwill,” yet more than 100 years of Western involvement in Africa have culminated in permanent slaughter and depopulation across the continent. The raw materials continue to leave.

Christine Schuler Deschryver represents another face of privilege. When times got hard in 1996 she packed her suitcase and left with her two children for Belgium. She flies to New York and is interviewed on Democracy Now! Listeners in the U.S. believe she is a Congolese native, but she is a Belgian expatriate whose family is a mainstay of colonialism and neocolonialism in Congo. And the Congolese women are never allowed to fly to New York or to tell the deeper story of deracination in “the middle of nowhere,” in Congo. What is the Deschryver family relationship to Philippe De Moerloose or Louis Michel or Étienne Viscount Davignon or the other principal interlocutors in the Belgian money and power syndicates involved behind the scenes in Congo today?

To get a sense of what Glamour does not report—what the New York Times, Ms., Harper's, Atlantic Monthly, Newsweek, The Nation, BBC, National Public Radio and CNN's Anderson Cooper "360" will not tell us—take a look behind the scenes in eastern Congo and juxtapose the unreported realities with the personal stories of trauma and recovery told by Eve Ensler in Glamour magazine. While the mainstream corporate media always reduces these stories to a few simple facts, and a panoply of supposedly unfathomable black-on-black violence, there are always some skeletons to be found lurking in the shadows of white society.

THERE'S GOLD IN THEM (BLOODY) HILLS

The North and South Kivu provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo remain awash in blood. Over the past decade hundreds of thousands of women have suffered sexual violence in these provinces as a weapon of war meant to terrorize local populations and gain control of natural resources. Sexual violence includes mutilations, rape and other forms of torture.

Rwandan-backed General Laurent Nkunda has occupied eastern DRC for several years, and was involved in atrocities, war crimes and crimes against humanity in Congo during the first (1996-1997) and second (1998-2004) Congo occupations by Uganda and Rwanda.

The United Nations Observers Mission in DRC (MONUC) makes possible the occupation of Congo by General Laurent Nkunda today. Nkunda is backed by the military regime of President Paul Kagame in Rwanda and by the baby-faced Jean-Pierre Bemba, the rebel warlord from DRC's Equateur province whose interests and ties in DRC go back to his dark alliance with the dictator Joseph Mobutu and *his* Western backers.

The U.S. and European interests backing General Laurent Nkunda run deeper than the blood in the fields and rivers of eastern Congo. The German Embassy in the Democratic Republic of Congo is involved in shady business deals, backing militias and plundering raw materials from Congo, and behind them is U.S. involvement. This has partially occurred through the military control of a mine called Lueshe, located in a village called Lueshe, in North Kivu, some 170 kilometers northwest of Goma. But it also involves coltan, cassiterite, diamonds and gold, and the economic benefits that accrue to those who control land and taxes.

One gold mining firm with vast landholdings in South Kivu province is Canada's Banro Corporation. Banro has control of four major properties, 27 exploration permits and 5730 square kilometers of gold mining concessions.¹⁷ Banro operates only in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the blood-drenched South Kivu province. Look at the size of their landholdings: <<http://www.banro.com/s/Properties.asp>>. When we talk about International Criminal Tribunals, who are the real war criminals? What about Simon Village, Peter Cowley, Arnold Kondrat, John Clarke, Bernard van Rooyen, Piers Cumberlege and Richard Lachcik—the directors of Banro Corporation?¹⁸ What is the definition of "white collar" crime? How does a company of white executives like Banro from Canada gain control of such vast concessions? Through bloodshed and depopulation with black people pulling the triggers.

What has changed since King Leopold's era?

¹⁷ Banro Corporation, <<http://www.banro.com/s/Properties.asp>>.

¹⁸ Banro Corporation, <<http://www.banro.com/s/Directors.asp>>.

NIOBIUM & THE POLITICS OF SCARCITY

In North Kivu province the Lueshe mine provides a well-documented example of the kinds of nefarious activities that all Western governments are involved with in Congo, and in Africa more generally, and these activities certainly apply to Banro and other corporations—this is how the system works, and who works it. The Lueshe Niobium mining scandal merely provides an excellent case study where the thief has been caught red-handed with his hands in the illegal minerals pot.

The Lueshe Niobium mine has been under the control of pro-Rwandan forces for the past eight to ten years, first under the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD) rebels allied with Rwanda and Uganda and Jean-Pierre Bemba, and now under the “protection” of General Laurent Nkunda. But Lueshe’s history is deeply rooted in the controlling interests of the German government and its U.S. and European partners.

The rare earth metal, niobium or “niob” for short, formerly also known as Columbium, is found there, together with tantalum, in the mineral Pyrochlore. Niobium became extremely important within the last twenty years because of its enlarged range of application for aerospace and defense purposes. Niobium is mainly used as an alloying addition in the production of high quality steel used in the aircraft and space industries, as well as in medicine. It is also widely used in basic applications of machinery and construction and in quite large quantities in the production of stainless steel. Niob, like tantalum and columbium-tantalite or “coltan,” is also coveted for the emerging and secretive “nanotechnology” sector—also pivotal to state-of-the-art and futuristic aerospace, defense, communications and biotechnology applications.

There are three principal niobium deposits in the world, all controlled by a company named Arraxa: one in Brazil, one in Canada and the Lueshe mine in DRC. The owner of Arraxa is the U.S. based company Metallurg Inc., N.Y. Metallurg Inc. is itself a subsidiary of Metallurg Holdings of Wayne, Pennsylvania, and Metallurg Holdings is one of many companies in the investment portfolio of Safeguard International Investment Fund of (Philadelphia) Pennsylvania, Frankfurt and Paris.¹⁹

In 1982 Metallurg signed a mining convention with the Republic of Zaire, enabling them to exclusively extract all Pyrochlore at the Lueshe niobium deposit for the next twenty years. A company named SOMIKIVU (Societè Miniere du Kivu) was established. Metallurg’s 100% subsidiary, the German company GfE Nuremberg (Gesellschaft fuer Elektrometallurgie GmbH), became a 70 % shareholder.

By 1990, SOMIKIVU stopped all production, which was never much at all, because it was apparently insured by HERMES AG, backed by the German Government, to prevent production from the Lueshe mine in order to drive up and control the price of niobium mined and processed at the other sites outside of Congo/Zaire. It was also important to prevent any competitive venture from acquiring the mining rights and subsequently from actually *operating* the Lueshe mine.

According to available documents, employees of the German Embassy have personally benefiting from, and are involved in, the business of GfE/Metallurg. This involvement has included complicity

¹⁹ See: <<http://www.metttalurg.com>> & <<http://www.safeguardintl.com/portfolio.html>>.

in extortion, assault, murder, war crimes and crimes against humanity. This involvement includes complicity in sexual atrocities committed by the paid agents of white, Western corporations.

In 1999, after years of inactivity and lost incomes to the Congolese state—a very *minority* partner manipulated into a position of exploitation as usual—the Lueshe niobium mine was expropriated from its owners by Congo’s new president Laurent Kabila and turned over to the firm E. Krall Investment Uganda (Edith Krall), under a Congolese subsidiary company E. Krall Metal Congo. Nonetheless, with the military backing of Rwanda, RCD rebels operated the mine from 1999-2005 with the help of German Embassy (Kinshasa) affiliate Karl Heinz Albers, also a close business partner of the Rwandan Patriotic Front Government of Paul Kagame. It is also alleged that mercenaries have been involved in securing the mine.

The new owners of E. Krall Metal Congo reportedly tried to visit their new mine in 2000, amidst some of the most serious and brutal fighting in the entire war. The officials were arrested by RCD military who immediately called Karl Heinz Albers, then a permanent resident in Kigali, Rwanda. According to documents provided by Krall, Albers explained that the RCD should not ask questions but “eliminate” the Krall group—kill them on the spot. The RCD Goma secret service chief apparently refused to execute this order and released the people of the Krall group. This action helped the Krall delegation to escape to Uganda but made the RCD secret service chief in Congo subject to assassination attempts by killers from Kigali. The RCD chief only saved his life by immediate emigration to Uganda, where he was nonetheless also subject to several assassination attempts reportedly ordered by Karl Heinz Albers.

Albers was reportedly selling coltan from the Krall concessions to the German firm H.G. Starck. From August 2000 to October 2001 Somikivu shipped some 669 tons of Pyrochlore concentrate to Rotterdam harbor in Amsterdam. After October 2001 shipments went to A&M Minerals in London, a company on the U.N. Panel of Experts blacklist who are alleged to have purchased illegally some 2,246 tons of Pyrochlore concentrate before 2004.

Dr. Johannes Wontka, German citizen and technical director of SOMIKIVU, informed the members of Krall Métal that while Krall may have the legal titles from Kinshasa to operate Lueshe, the SOMIKIVU (Karl Heintz Albers) gang had the *power* to do so, therefore they should in their own physical interest “disappear”. Dr. Wontka reportedly requested a Major of the RCD army to kill the chief of the “*Syndicate Global*” the labor union leader of the workers in Lueshe who were on strike due to months of non-payment of salaries. Dr. Wontka reportedly requested that the RCD Major shoot the “whites” that would come soon to Lueshe—the technical delegation of Krall Métal who were on their way—and promised money for the job. By chance the RCD Major was the brother-in-law of the trade union leader whom he was tasked to shoot and therefore he neither shot him nor the “whites” he was meant to kill, but reported the case to the police.

The general prosecutor of North Kivu eventually confiscated the passport of Dr. Wontka, and Wontka, who tried to flee Congo with his family, was arrested at the border and brought to Goma, DRC. And then the German Embassy in Kinshasa cranked into gear.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF AMBASSADORSHIPS

The German Ambassador to Kinshasa, Mrs. Doretta Loschelder, informed the public by giving press statements that German investors will not invest in Congo projects and that economic support

by Germany will not be transferred to Congo if the authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo are going to treat investors in the way authorities in Goma were treating the SOMIKIVU agent Dr. Wontka. Under this pressure, Dr. Wontka was released from prison and within 30 minutes fled Congo against orders of the police and immigration officials.

Mrs. Johanna König, employed at the ministry of foreign affairs of Germany until 2001, and serving at the German embassy in Kigali as Ambassador of Germany in Kigali, was until February 2004 a member of the board of KHA International AG, the holding parent company of the Karl Heinz Albers companies. König apparently visited the Lueshe mine with Rwandan military protection. The RCD were also operating the Lueshe mine under forced labor conditions, at one time reportedly involving prisoners from Rwanda accused of genocide by the Kagame regime.

The Krall complaints—well documented—have been brought to officials in Holland, Germany, Switzerland, England and the U.S., all of which have some financial interest or some link in the chain of exploitation. No action has been taken anywhere, and officials of the German Embassy in Kinshasa reportedly continue to benefit from the illegal exploitation of the Lueshe mine. The multinational firm PricewaterhouseCoopers is also invested in the companies exploiting Lueshe and profiting from war, slavery and depopulation in Congo.

At this time, the Karl Heinz Albers may have transferred his “rights” to Lueshe to one Julien Boilloit, a businessman in Kigali who has a big office in Goma and operates behind militias in the Kivu. Julien Boilloit’s partners reportedly include Mode Makabuza—a Congolese businessman with multiple interests in Goma. The governor of North Kivu has certainly been paid off.

The recent spate of “news” reports and broadcasts on sexual violence in Eastern Congo are part of a coordinated campaign. It is interesting that sexual violence became an issue when it did. Sexual violence is off the charts, but the appearance, slant, framing and timing of reportage suggests is being used to manipulate public sentiment to serve the interests of certain powerful actors at the expense of others. It is certainly a lever used against the Congolese government of President Joseph Kabila, and it may be that it is coordinated in response to Kabila’s recent deals with China. After all, it has now been reported by the BBC that the Kabila government is working with the Hutu *genocidaires*, the FDLR—Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda—the ultimate evildoers. It doesn’t matter that the Paul Kagame government’s military and corporate machine has dealt with FDLR all along, when it serves their interests, to import terror and export raw materials. This is all very well-documented.

The Western public is unaware of these greater readings, and merely gobble up the news reports as examples of an equitable and humane Western media system that is attuned to tragedies, even if they were late to decry and report them. Western feminists are all over the rape story, but where should the outrage be directed?

Rape was off the agenda at the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda (ICTR) until Hillary Clinton showed up in Arusha, Tanzania—the city that became the economic beneficiary of the lucrative ICTR boondoggle—and pledged \$600,000 to be paid after the first ICTR rape conviction. It was Bill and Hillary’s blood money, and another financial incentive used to whitewash the Clinton’s role in genocide and covert operations in Central Africa. The Rwandan Patriotic Front led by Paul Kagame committed massive sexual atrocities from 1990 to 1994 in Rwanda, and throughout the RPF campaign in Congo, but these were covered up by Western reporters at the time and later

blamed, universally, on the Hutus.²⁰ The establishment narrative on rape in Rwanda was dictated from the start by Human Rights Watch with their pro-RPF treatise Shattered Lives: Sexual Violence During the Rwanda Genocide, published in 1996.²¹

Who should help the victims of sexual violence in Congo? How about the German multinational corporation Bayer AG—whose subsidiary H.C. Starck was directly involved in the coltan plunder by the RPF. How about GTZ, involved in Congo (Zaire) since 1980 and the expropriation and exclusion of the pygmy's way of life. How about Nokia. Intel. Sony. Barrick Gold Corporation. Anglo-American Corp. Banro. Moto Gold. Belgian Philippe de Moerloose and his Damavia Airlines. Bill and Hillary Clinton and their diamond buddy, Maurice Tempelman, and De Beers. Tempelman and DeBeers have plundered Congo for more than fifty years. And how about Royal/Dutch Shell, another backer of the Kagame regime.

Add sexual violence to the list, sure, but Eve Enslar and the Western media propaganda campaign for “an end to sexual violence in Congo” must be placed in its proper context: white supremacy and the shock doctrine of global corporate plunder. In this context rape and depopulation are permanent conditions, the real killers get away with murder, and there is endless, brutal revenge by the victors. The victims get all the blame, and their suffering never ends. ~

²⁰ See: Donatella Lorch, “Rwanda Rebels: Army of Exiles Fights for a Home,” New York Times, June 9, 1994: 10; “Rwanda Rebels' Victory Attributed To Discipline,” New York Times, July 19, 1994: 6; Raymond Bonner, “How Minority Tutsi Won the War,” New York Times, September 6, 1994: 6; Bonner, “Rwandan Refugees Flood Zaire as Rebel Forces Gain,” New York Times, July 15, 1994: 1; Judith Matloff, “Rwanda Copes With Babies of Mass Rape,” Christian Science Monitor, March 27, 1995: 1; Donatella Lorch, “Wave of Rape Adds New Horror to Rwanda's Trail of Brutality,” New York Times, May 15, 1995; James C. McKinley Jr., “Legacy of Rwanda Violence: The Thousands Born of Rape,” New York Times, September 23, 1996: 1.

²¹ See Shattered Lives: Sexual Violence During the Rwandan Genocide, Human Rights Watch, 1996.