

Masha Gessen Tells Big Lies About 10/7 Rapes

By Phyllis Chesler

In the [New Yorker](#), [Gessen, a freakish anti-Zionist](#), claims that the #IDF also allegedly rapes Arabs, that all wars involve rapes—there's nothing to see here. Move right on.

Not so fast. Rape has always been a spoil of war, not a strategic weapon of war. One huge difference between the Aktion on 10/7 and the sexual violence in Bangladesh, Congo, Iraq under ISIS, Rwanda, Sudan, and the former Yugoslavia, is that while the entire world did nothing much to help, they did not claim, as Gessen does, that there is really not enough evidence to prove that such violence really happened.

Also, Hamas's Iranian backed "playbook" included filming the carnage. That's a bit new—although videos of rape camps in the former Yugoslavia did circulate as pornography and may have been sold for profit.

Also, after the repeated public gang-rapes in Bangladesh, Sudan, Rwanda, or the former Yugoslavia, neither the world media nor human rights groups unleashed their blood lust against the victims. This is precisely what we have endured post 10/7 globally. Those who responded by demonstrating for Hamas were in actually applauding Iranian-funded Nazis as "freedom fighters."

Why believe a word I write? Here's some reasons why. Gessen is neither a feminist, a scholar, nor a clinician who has studied this phenomenon or worked with victims of rape. I am. I have.

I delivered the keynote speech at the world's first-ever Speakout on Rape in NYC in 1971. I've studied and written about what rape is and what it does both as an academic, an

activist, a therapist, and a victim. I worked behind the scenes with the late great feminist scholar, Diana Russell who, together with Nicole Van Den Ven, organized the first-ever "Tribunal: Crimes Against Women" which took place in Brussels in 1976. I was also supposed to testify about Rape Trauma Syndrome for Judge Richard Goldstone, (yes, him), in the matter of the raped women of Bosnia. That trial never went forward due to lack of funding in order to relocate those who would testify. In 1992, my review of Judith Lewis Herman's ground breaking book "Trauma and Recovery," in the New York Times, saved the book from imminent demise. In 1994, in the feminist magazine, On The Issues, I published one of the first articles about rape in wartime. I wondered what justice might be like for such victims.

The New Yorker must love how Gessen, the rank amateur, in this area, slips the stiletto into Israel's back so smoothly, because they publish her often. She is their Go-To writer on alleging Israeli evil. Gessen peddles all the sad and sorry blood libels: That there actually was a #Nakba; that the IDF rapes Arabs just as Hamas rape-tortured but also murdered women and girls on 10/7; just as Israeli soldiers did in 1948, in #DeirYaseen (the massacre that never took place). Gessen believes that European Jews colonized the Holy Land and, like Judith Butler, prefers Jews helpless in exile than armed in Israel.

Gessen runs with all these lies despite having precious little evidence for such claims.

Nevertheless, based on one example, and taken out of context, she claims that, in the heat of battle, ONE member of ZAKA misreported ONE rape and thus, surely, there must be more such erroneous reports. Based on ONE Christian Arab woman's anti-Zionist opinion, Gessen feels entitled to challenge, minimize, even deny the perceived claims of Israelis who are currently still in the midst of gathering and analyzing an enormous amount of data.

The piece needs to be carefully fished—but not by me, at least not right now. I am on too many deadlines to stop and address what she's writing.



Photographs from the Rape is Not Resistance Rally in Portland Place London, February 2024