



Öcalan's Angels pages 18-25 in the set edition of *Huck*.



Analyse the full article, focusing on the following questions:

- **How are representations of the young Kurdish women constructed?**
- **How do these representations reflect the industry context/ ideology of *Huck*?**
- **How is the audience positioned in relation to these representations?**
- **How can bell hooks' ideas be applied to the issues that are being discussed in this article?**
 - » the idea that feminism is a struggle to end sexist/patriarchal oppression and the ideology of domination.
 - » the idea that race and class as well as sex determine the extent to which individuals are exploited, discriminated against or oppressed.

Suggestions

'Öcalan's Angels' – male in charge of the organisation (Öcalan is head of the PKK, currently in prison in Turkey) but has a vision to empower women.

Cultural reference to 'Charlie's Angels' – TV programme/ film – connotations of 'angels' – purity, goodness etc.

The article points out that the PKK is considered to be a terrorist organisation by some people, but not the United Nations – balanced viewpoint.

Use of language to construct representation: 'Feminist Army', 'female martyrs' connotes a sense of ideological purpose.

'Colourful scarf' – belonging to a 17 year old girl, Cicek Derek, who died fighting ISIS- juxtaposes stereotypical features of a young girl ('colourful scarf', 'braided hair') with attributes more typically attributed to a male ('fighter..military fatigues... militants... heroes') constructing a contemporary, non-stereotypical representation of the young Kurdish female.

Article argues that women make the decision to fight, partly to try to defeat ISIS, partly to escape a future in poverty where they are expected to get married and be subject to 'masculine



dominance' – promised 'gender equality and an end to the oppression of women' – highlighting the complexity of the social situation, and avoiding oversimplification. Links to hooks' ideas relating to oppression due to race, class and gender.

First person accounts from the young women of their experiences:

- 'the thought of all the cruelty and injustice against women enrages me so much that I become extra powerful in combat'
- the description of the woman cheering after killing an ISIS fighter 'I wanted to let them know... their friend had been killed by a woman'
- 'We lined all of them against a wall and shot them all one by one' - subverting traditional notions of femininity and reflecting the counter-cultural nature of *Huck* magazine. These points may be interpreted differently by different audiences.

Some more traditional gender norms represented e.g. communal spirit, desire to protect – woman wanting to avenge the death of another woman, wanting to protect others, wanting to 'fight for all the mothers of the world'.

The article presents the stories with limited comment/ editorial, however it ends with the sister of Cicek, the girl who died, 'lost in deep thought' – an emotional ending that implies a point of view.

Images show women in military fatigues, posing with guns/ training and chatting, as well as at an army checkpoint – although no visible signs of fighting/ aggression.

Images show the 'colourful scarf' belonging to Cicek, a grave, the wall in Cicek's mother's house with the broken clock – more emotive images showing the impact of the fighting.