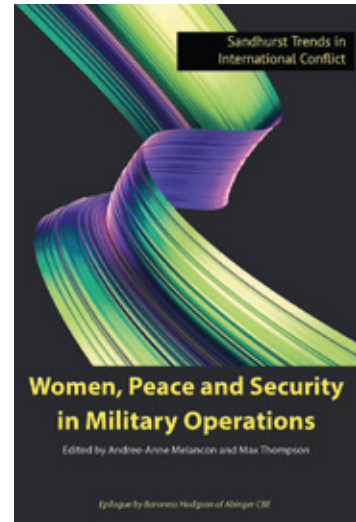


Women, Peace and Security in Military Operations

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The Commandant of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Major General Z.R. Stenning, OBE, in the foreword to *Women, Peace and Security in Military Operations*, writes, this book “should be required reading for security professionals.” When I was the sole female military student in my war college class (2010-2011), I would have appreciated a book like this as required reading. I did have the great fortune to be taught peace operations by Brent Beardsley, General Romeo Dallaire’s personal staff officer in Rwanda during the Rwanda genocide. He told me women are important. It was the first and only time in my military career I heard these words.

In June 2020, the U.S. Department of Defense issued its Women, Peace, and Security Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan (DOD SSFIP) to ensure “principles are appropriately reflected in relevant DOD policies, plans, doctrines, training, education, operations, resource planning, and exercises” (Intermediate Objective 1.2). In 2023, according to Tahina Montoya and

Joan Johnson-Freese, the U.S. Air Force, through its Department of the Air Force Women, Peace, & Security Strategic Action Plan (DAF WPS), “became the military department to establish *how* its services—the Air Force and the Space Force—would implement WPS.”¹ The DAF WPS addresses proposed DAF metrics through DAF WPS Objective 2: “Employ WPS on Operations and Exercises.”² For operations, the DAF WPS has one metric: “breakdown of metrics for operations . . . by rank and gender.”³ The strength of *Women, Peace & Security in Military Operations* is that it goes beyond counting. An edited volume, it addresses military operations, while also exploring needed analysis, education, and training.

Military operations include the withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, as well as actions taken (and not taken) during the twenty years of international military presence in Afghanistan. Evacuating hundreds of Afghan cats and dogs while abandoning Afghans, “especially women,” is an issue Sanam

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Naraghi Anderlini raises in this book's introduction. Anderlini appears to argue that the failure to uphold the WPS agenda enabled the Taliban. For example, she highlights the connection between the arguably "deliberate" failure of Zalmay Khalizad (the U.S. negotiator of the agreement with the Taliban) to include women in the negotiations and the Taliban's increased targeted killings of women during negotiations. Khalizad is married to the author of *Veiled Courage: Inside Afghan Women's Resistance*.⁴ Thus, it is unclear why Khalizad appeared to ignore the U.S. Women Peace and Security Act of 2017 (WPS Act), an Act "[t]o ensure that the United States promotes the meaningful participation of women in mediation and negotiation processes seeking to prevent, mitigate, or resolve violent conflict."⁵ The WPS Act highlights research suggesting "peace negotiations are more likely to succeed and to result in durable peace agreements when women participate in the peace process."⁶ Whether, and to what extent, the failure to include women affected and affects military operations, as well as the lives of U.S. and other military members, is needed research.

Military operations include peace operations. An Jacobs and Katerina Krulisova address failures of gender mainstreaming in peace operations, to include the practices of simply resorting to "box-ticking." Steve Maguire uses Judith Steihn's three "I" framework (inertia as well as the failure to implement and institutionalize) to address absences of operationalized WPS in both UN peace operations and the British Army. Examining the work of Irish Major General Maureen O'Brien, a veteran of numerous peace operations and most recently the Deputy Military Advisor to the UN Secretary-General, opens a treasure chest of solutions. Here are two. In response to the "culture" excuse by a troop contributing country (TCC) for excluding women in military police units, General O'Brien informed the TCC that including women was the UN culture, and if the TCC did not change, the UN would replace

it; the TCC then determined that including women was their culture.⁷ When observing that women were being "corralled" into "engagement" platoons simply because they were women (not because of their particular qualifications), General O'Brien mandated engagement teams were to be composed fifty-fifty of trained men and women.⁸

Military operations, under WPS, should prevent rape and other forms of sexual violence, to include in civil conflicts. Korean Marine Corps veteran Changwook Ju, using a data set of the years 1980-2009, finds that in civil conflicts "women's combat participation in state forces leads to the groups' higher level of wartime rape" and the "presence of women combatants decreases the prevalence of wartime rape by rebel forces." Curious about which state forces did not exclude women as combatants in the 1980s, 1990s, and the 2000s, I obtained the data set from its creator, Meredith Loken. The data set reveals only four state forces not excluding women as combatants: Israel, Liberia, Rwanda, and Democratic Republic of Congo/Zaire; less than 10 percent of the total number of state forces included in the data set. The value of the data set is that it makes visible state forces not committing rape in civil conflicts during this time period: Azerbaijan, China, Croatia, Georgia, Indonesia (OPM), Lebanon, Liberia, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, South Africa, and the UK. I recommend investigating why these state forces did not rape. Factors might include leadership, discipline, professionalism, morality, and/or fear of punishment. Such research might also help to end rape by state forces outside of civil conflicts—for example, the UK in Kenya.⁹ At minimum, preventing rape, to include by state forces in civil conflicts, is a subject that should be taught in professional military education (PME). Yet regarding a paper of mine about creating counter-strategies to prevent rape as a weapon of war, one U.S. PME peer reviewer admitted: "If the problem resides among the militaries of

other nations and the policies they pursue toward legitimizing rape, what is it that the U.S. PME institutions and leadership are expected to do to counter such matters? Those listed in the examples . . . are rarely, if ever, trained in U.S. PME schools, and there is no indication given that this is a similarly systematic problem within the U.S. military or its policies.”

Military operations include military and governance missions. Given his personal involvement as a governance advisor and course curriculum developer, Spencer Meredith addresses the long history of the United States using military forces to govern and states the U.S. Army Special Warfare Center and School “revised its governance curriculum in 2019, focusing on governance as a battlefield for influence” and legitimacy. I urge military schools to include General Douglas MacArthur’s first demand for reform to the Government of Japan in post-World War II Occupied Japan; that is, the “emancipation of women.”¹⁰ Preceding UNSCR 1325 by over a half-century, General MacArthur’s women’s emancipation policy provides a blueprint for implementing WPS. However, to the best of my knowledge, paid PME educators fail to teach it, to include in U.S. Army PME. Yet General MacArthur’s women’s emancipation policy is part of U.S. Army heritage. The failure to teach it harms military operations. One only needs to read, for example, Nadjie al-Ali and Nicola Pratt’s *What Kind of Liberation: Women and the Occupation of Iraq* to understand how.¹¹

Military operations include countering insurgencies and terrorism. U.S. Air Force Major Kelly Atkinson argues the U.S. “hearts and minds” approach is transactional, whereas WPS is transformational. If we examine the 2006 U.S. Counterinsurgency manual (FM 3-24/MCWP 3-33.5), we find a section titled “Engage the Women, Beware the Children,” with the arguably transactional language of “co-opting . . . women.”¹² In contrast, the drafters of the 2021 validated U.S.

Counterinsurgency manual (JP 3-24) have excised the “co-opting women” language. Instead, JP 3-24 has a section titled “Females as Insurgents,”¹³ as well as sprinkled language regarding the reintegration of women¹⁴ and political reform.¹⁵ To get to transformational, I recommend the U.S. military include Major Atkinson as a drafter of the next iterations of the U.S. Counterinsurgency manual.

Military operations include the cyber domain. Alexis Henshaw, whose work on Colombia has influenced me, addresses the cyber domain through the WPS pillars of participation, protection, prevention, relief and recovery, and institutionalization. Henshaw raises numerous concerns. They include the biometric data the U.S. military collected on millions of Afghan citizens falling into the hands of the Taliban, online radicalization and armed attacks, and the harassment and discrimination by men against women working in cybersecurity and the resulting attrition of women. The cyber domain also offers positive possibilities. Sola Mahfouz (now a quantum computing researcher at Tufts University Quantum Information Group), when prevented from attending school in-person in Afghanistan, completed her education without a bricks-and-mortar school; she learned online through the Khan Academy.¹⁶ Mahouz also enhanced her English through “an online language-learning platform that matches language learners with native speakers.”¹⁷ She needed to learn English for an exam to prove English proficiency to attend a U.S. university. The stumbling block to her education was a male interviewer at the U.S. embassy in Kabul. He rejected her application for a visa to study in the United States because “he didn’t believe I was really going to America to study.”¹⁸ Through the online tools of email and Skype, a reporter from *The New York Times* was able to interview her and then publish a story about Mahfouz’s plight. Eventually the U.S. embassy did issue her a visa. The experiences

of individuals like Mahfouz are a first step in demonstrating how the cyber domain can also help actualize the WPS pillars.

The book also provides frameworks for enhancing operational effectiveness through WPS analysis. Whitney Grespin uses the PMEII-PT (Political, Military, Economic, Social, Information, Infrastructure, Physical Environment, and Time) tool as a gender analysis for Djibouti, while also examining Cori Flesher's gender analysis for Ukrainian security assistance. Colonel (ret.) Jody Prescott and Robin Lovell urge using a socio-ecological system (SES) approach "to better identify geographical areas at the highest risk of any compounding effects of armed conflict, climate change, and gender inequality." Prescott and Lovell compare the SES approach with NATO's military gender analysis method and argue that the "standard NATO gender analysis is not well-suited to analyzing the complex relationships between social and environmental factors that characterize the intersections between armed conflict, gender inequality, and climate change and environmental degradation."

The book further explores WPS in PME and training. In their chapter on education, Max Thompson and Andree-Ann Melancon address their experiences in integrating WPS in PME at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. As part of their approach, they utilize an academic exercise they call "Ex Complex Terrain" to assess conflicts. It involves a group Conflict Analysis Report (CAR) and a timed, open book individual Human Security Individual Assessment (HSIA). According to them, the best CARs also "consider CRSV, child soldiers,

disruptions to health and education services," and human trafficking. The HSIA list of ten metrics includes "women and children." To avoid appearing to fall into the "womenandchildren" nomenclature, it might be an interesting experiment to instead permit students to choose one of the following categories: women, men, girls, boys, non-binary, trans, and intersex. The chapter's authors also use an exercise they call "Ex TEMPLER'S TRIUMPH" in which they insert the WPS agenda. My favorite part of the chapter is their caution to "don't get too academic about it – WPS education does not require a comprehensive course on feminist and critical approaches to IR." I agree. Using terms that belong in the glossary of a WPS book creates cognitive overload, to include the words "gender mainstreaming" and "hegemonic masculinities." Given that one misconception about WPS is that WPS imposes "Western beliefs on another country,"¹⁹ WPS educators must know, and be able to explain, the history of the creation of UNSCR 1325. Namibia, not "Western" states, used its position on the UN Security Council to create UNSCR 1325.²⁰

This fourth book in the Sandhurst Trends in International Conflict series concludes with an Epilogue by Baroness (Fiona) Hodgson of Abinger CBE, Co-chair of All Party Parliamentary Group on Women, Peace & Security and Hon Col 77th Brigade Outreach Group. In 2022, the Baroness introduced the Women, Peace and Security Bill in the House of the Lords.²¹ As of 6 September 2023, it still is not law.²² This book, as the Baroness writes, "serves as a reminder of how far we have come, but also how much work is still to be done."

Notes

¹ Tahina Montoya and Joan Johnson-Freese, “From Exception to Norm: Closing the Women, Peace and Security Implementation Gap Through Joint Professional Military Education,” Modern War Institute, 12 July 2023, <https://mwi.westpoint.edu/from-exception-to-norm-closing-the-women-peace-and-security-implementation-gap-through-joint-professional-military-education/>.

² Department of the Air Force (DAF) Women, Peace, & Security (WPS) Strategic Action Plan (CAO: April 2023), https://www.af.mil/Portals/documents/2023SAF/DAF_WPS_Strategic_Action_Plan.pdf [hereinafter DAF WPS]: 15-16.

³ DAF WPS, 15.

⁴ Cheryl Bernard (in cooperation with Edith Schaffer), *Veiled Courage: Inside Afghan Women’s Resistance* (New York: Broadway Books, 2002). Cheryl Bernard, “Afghan Women are in charge of their own fate,” *National Interest*, February 27, 2017, <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/afghan-women-are-charge-their-own-fate-45777>.

⁵ Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017, Pub. L. No. 115-68 (2017), <https://www.gov/app/details/PLAW-115pub168> [hereinafter WPS Act].

⁶ WPS Act, Sec 2(3).

⁷ “Advancing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda,” IIEA, June 16, 2023, at 26:50 – 27:07, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTOPdAU42NE> [hereinafter “Advancing WPS”].

⁸ “Advancing WPS,” at 13:00 – 14:06.

⁹ Rebecca Cook and Cornelia Weiss, “Gender Stereotyping in the Military. Insights from Court Cases,” in Eva Brems and Alexandra Timmer (eds.), *Stereotypes and Human Rights Law* (Cambridge: Intersentia, 2016): 194.

¹⁰ Cornelia Weiss, “The Nineteenth Amendment and the U.S. ‘Women’s Emancipation Policy’ in Post-World War II Occupied Japan: Going Beyond Suffrage,” *Akron Law Review*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (2019), <https://ideaexchange.uakron.edu/akronlawreview/vol53/iss2/4/>.

¹¹ Nadjé al-Ali and Nicola Pratt, *What Kind of Liberation: Women and the Occupation of Iraq* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).

¹² Headquarters Department of the Army, FM 3-24, MCWP 3-33.5, Counterinsurgency, December 2006, 192.

¹³ Joint Chiefs of Staff, JP 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 25 April 2018, Validated 30 April 2021 [hereinafter JP 3-24], II-9, <https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp3-24.pdf>.

¹⁴ JP 3-24, III-34.

¹⁵ JP 3-24, V-12.

¹⁶ Sola Mahfouz and Malaina Kapoor, *Defiant dreams: the journey of an Afghan girl who risked everything for education* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2023).

¹⁷ Mahfouz, *Defiant dreams*, 197.

¹⁸ Mahfouz, *Defiant dreams*, 221.

¹⁹ Barbara Salera Lopez, “An Ancillary Duty? The Department of Defense Approach to Women, Peace, and Security in Security Cooperation Programs,” forthcoming in *Prism*.

²⁰ Cornelia Weiss, “Creating UNSCR 1325: Women who served as initiators, drafters, and strategists,” in Rebecca Adami and Dan Plesch (eds.), *Women and the UN: A New History of Women’s International Human Rights* (New York: Routledge, 2022).

²¹ UK Parliament, House of Lords Business, “Women, Peace and Security Bill [HL] Baroness Hodgson of Abinger presented a bill to support women in UK sponsored and supported conflict prevention, peace processes, mediation and diplomatic delegations; to ensure systematic gender consideration and responsiveness in UK foreign and defence policy; and for connected purposes,” 8 June 2020 at 15:50, <https://lordsbusiness.parliament.uk/>

²² Women, Peace and Security Bill [HL], last updated 6 September 2023, <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3178>.