

# Gender and Military Sociology

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# INTRODUCTION

Gender refers to the social expectations regarding behaviour seen as appropriate for the members of each sex. Gender does not refer to the physical attributes which differentiate male and female, but to socially formed traits of masculinity and femininity (Giddens 2006: 1017). Since gender and gender roles are shaped by social factors they are related to power and status in societies around the world. People are socialized into gender roles by society's social institutions such as the family, school, the media and even the military. For example, D'Amico and Weinstein (1999: 4) believe that the military "is a fundamental site for the construction of gender, that is, the defining of the boundaries of behaviour – indeed, of life possibilities – for people we call *men* and *women*." The military has been the quintessential masculine institution, where boys become men.

Gender structures relations between men (those gendered masculine) and women (those gendered feminine). From birth we are taught different responses and what is considered appropriate behaviour according to whether we have been categorized male or female. Toys, children's books and TV emphasize differences between male and female and adults react differently depending on the perceived sex of the child. In an experiment, young mothers were asked to interact with a six month old baby named Beth and then with a baby called Adam. The women tended to smile often at Beth and offer her dolls to play with. She was seen as "sweet" and having "a soft cry." The second group offered Adam trains and other "male" toys. However Beth and Adam were actually the same baby, dressed in different clothes (Giddens 2006: 170). This experiment only underlines the fact that gender socialization begins at birth, as children learn and internalize the norms and expectations that are seen to correspond to their biological sex. In this way they adopt "sex roles" and the male and female identities which accompany them (Giddens 2006: 477-478).

We begin this paper with a brief look at how gender is treated in sociological literature. We then examine gender in military sociology, which has, for the most part, confined itself to looking at conditions of women in the military and military families. We conclude with an examination of "gender mainstreaming" as advocated by the UN. This is an international normative framework which affects all areas of the security sector, especially the military, meaning that questions of gender must be taken into account in mainstream institutional activities such as peacekeeping and not marginalized into special women's programs. In the conclusions we will look at what counterinsurgency operations in the present and future hold for the gendered nature of the military. In Afghanistan and Iraq there has been a renaissance of combat and counterinsurgency operational thinking. In parallel to this emergence the issue of gender integration, particularly into the combat arms, has resurfaced.

# GENDER AND SOCIOLOGY

Traditionally, sociology saw the binary division of men and women into distinct social roles but never questioned the ways that patriarchy and heterosexuality exerted social control. This led feminist sociologists to see the profession of sociology as founded “on a universe grounded in men’s experience and still largely appropriated by men as their “territory” (Smith 1990). Since then things have taken a radical turn and it is rare to find a sociology textbook today which does not deal with gender. In the 1970s and early 1980s feminist sociologists were concerned with sexual inequality and the condition of women in society. Now gender relations no longer just refer to heterosexual men and women but include gays, lesbians and trans-gender individuals’ experiences across cultures (see Lewin 2006).

In this way, gender is perceived as a social construction not a biological imperative. In fact contemporary social sciences take it as axiomatic that gender is a cultural construct. Far from being “natural,” the categories of male and female are fundamentally cultural constructions (Moore 1994: 71). Even things that once dominated social life such as childbirth and child rearing practices have changed. Advances in reproductive technology and contraception have allowed women to control reproduction. Fewer women and babies die at child birth. In the West, the entire birthing cycle has been medicalized, with most births occurring in a hospital. Beyond that, the Church now plays a smaller role in sexual behaviour and in countries such as Brazil and Italy more married women use contraception than in Canada or the US (Giddens 2006: 440-441).

Sociologists have now introduced the concept of sexual orientation to refer to the direction of one’s sexual or romantic attraction. It is important to realize that orientation is different from sexual preference, which implies some sort of choice. According to Giddens (2006: 450) sexual orientation in all cultures results from a complex interplay of biological (genetic predisposition) and social factors not yet fully understood. Similarly Goldstein has argued that “real biology is a lot more complicated and less deterministic... [The] relationship between biology and social behaviour... [is] a system of reciprocal causality through multiple ‘feedback loops’ – a complex two-way causality between biology and culture” (Goldstein 2001: 129 -131).

Regardless of the cause, those who step outside of commonly accepted social preference norms, such as homosexuals, have been stigmatized and subject to various prejudices and persecution. Although homosexuality is becoming more accepted in contemporary western societies, homophobia (aversion to or hatred of homosexuals and their lifestyles) is widespread and found in many institutions, particularly the military, where homosexuals are portrayed as deviants from the masculine norm. Homosexual masculinity is seen as the opposite of the “real man.” Coming out of the closet can lead to the end of a military career.

According to Swingewood (2000: 237) the feminist movement can be divided into three periods: liberal feminism (which called for the integration of women on an equal basis with men into the existing social system); radical feminism (based on a critique

of gender inequality centered on the family and its role in socializing women into a male-dominated culture and patriarchal social order); and socialist feminism (based upon a critique of capitalism and its attendant economic and political inequality). Giddens (2006: 469 - 476) recognizes these three divisions and adds Black feminism and post-modern feminism. Feminists from all periods have criticized sociology for not addressing gender issues.

As a result of critique, feminists began to study the ways in which gender influences economic development, migration, nationalisms, media, state policies and priorities and particularly inequality. Gender inequality refers to the differences in status, prestige and power between men and women. There is no denying that gender is a significant form of social stratification and the basis for inequality. Gender structures opportunities and the roles people play in society's institutions, such as the family and the military. A few feminist authors such as Cynthia Enloe, (1993, 2000) elaborate upon the theme of militarization and how governments utilize women's labour in the process of preparing for and fighting wars.

Functionalist sociologists, who see society as a system of balanced and interlinked parts, have argued that gender differences, such as the sexual division of labour in the home, contribute to social harmony and stability. Feminists of course have rejected this and the idea that the social division of labour is somehow natural. They argue that there is nothing "natural" about the allocation of tasks in society – particularly child rearing. Recent research has shown that a child's educational performance and personal development is enhanced when both parents participate (Giddens 2006: 469). Liberal feminists explain gender inequality in terms of social and cultural attitudes such as sexism and discrimination. Radical feminists argue that men are responsible for the exploitation of women through patriarchy (the systematic domination of women by men). Black feminists have added race, class and ethnicity to the mix and say that these factors are essential to understanding the oppression of women of colour in the west and elsewhere. Gender oppression is not experienced equally by all. Postmodern feminists also challenge the idea that all women share a similar identity. For these researchers there is no essential core of womanhood and no essential explanation of oppression such as race, class, patriarchy etc. A broad range of experiences need to be explored.

It is no surprise that because of feminists' concern with women's subordination early gender research was concerned almost exclusively with women and concepts of femininity. Over time more attention was paid to masculine identities and the changes occurring as a result of new family patterns in industrialized societies. Other changes include the legal challenges to men's domination over women; legislation on divorce, domestic violence, etc.; global media attention to sexism, women's and gays' rights; and birth control. In recent years more attention has been paid to processes of masculinity in the literature. Some observers believe that the global technological, economic and social transformations of the (post) modern world are provoking a crisis of masculinity in which men's traditional roles are being eroded (Giddens 2006: 478). Nowhere is this more evident than the entrance of women into the male preserve of the military.

An influential writer on gender theory is Raewyn Connell (1987, 2000, 2001, 2005). Connell emphasizes how social power held by men creates and sustains gender inequalities. In Western capitalist societies, gender relations are still defined by patriarchal power, where various types of masculinities and femininities are arranged around a central premise: the dominance of men over women. He elaborates on aspects of human society which interact to form a society's gender order: labour (the sexual division of labour at home and in the labour market); power (authority, violence and ideology in institutions, the state, the military and domestic life) and personal relations, which he calls "cathexis" (dynamics within intimate, emotional relationships including marriage, sexuality and child rearing). These three areas are distinct yet interact and change in relation to each other. Connell maintains that empirical evidence should not be just a heap of data. It needs to be examined using this theoretical framework of human practice and social relations. To do this he introduces the concept of "gender regime" which refers to gender relations in small social settings such as a specific institution like the military.

# GENDER AND MILITARY SOCIOLOGY

Because armed forces have been predominantly male, early military sociology<sup>1</sup> rarely questioned the way that male social roles were conditioned by the social construct of the male heterosexual warrior. Gender studies are still not taught at military academies such as the ones found in Sweden, where the emphasis is on analyzing and using different perspectives on war and conflict.

Similar to the phases of the feminist movement mentioned above, Zeigler and Gunderson's (2005: 4) analysis of gender integration into the military divides the research into four subsets: liberal feminism (equality as sameness); cultural feminism (equality as recognition of difference); radical feminism (equality as anti-subordination) and postmodern feminism (rejection of unitary paradigmatic approaches). Liberal feminists argue for equality under the law, equal standards and opportunities for men and women. This is the track that the Canadian military was forced to follow with the passing of the Canadian Human Rights Act (Winslow and Dunn 2002). Physical fitness tests are now gender neutral and all military occupations are open to women. New kit has been developed for the female physique. The Canadians have found that in battle women can be just as tough as men and the public accepts it easily when women soldiers die in Afghanistan. The only real barrier to women's participation in combat has been male attitudes towards women in combat.

Cultural feminism is used as an approach for peace support operations. Here the difference between men and women is emphasized and women are to be valued for the softer style that they bring to such an operation. The military can benefit from the feminization of certain occupations such as policing. Critics of cultural feminism find that it only reinforces gender stereotypes. Both Liberal and Cultural approaches have been criticized by radical feminists who want to free women from all subordinate roles resulting from patriarchy. This group has done most to highlight the impact of sexual harassment of women in the military. The use of sexual intimidation is much more than an awkward moment. It deprives women of jobs, status and self-respect. Its effects are as much psychological as physical (Zeigler and Gunderson 2005: 6). Many militaries have now adopted a zero tolerance policy towards sexual harassment and violence. Paradoxically, Harrison (2002) tells us that zero tolerance has pushed violence against women even further underground for fear that seeking help will adversely affect a member's career and chance of receiving a pension.

The postmodernist feminists see gender not as an "essence" but more as performance, constructed in the moment by the social actors present. It is therefore a more fluid concept. Even the biological determination of male and female has come into question, not only from transsexuals but from sociologists who see both sex and gender as social constructs. In this way even the human body is subject to social forces which shape and alter it. In addition, technology is beginning to blur the boundaries of our physical being (Giddens 2006: 461 - 462). Gender identities in the military would emerge in relation to perceived sex differences and in turn shape those differences. The tough attitude of some military units will encourage their male members to cultivate a certain body image and set of mannerisms.



For the most part military sociology studies, whether the title has gender in it or not, have usually been about women and the military. However, it is important to remember that the word gender is not only associated with women and the integration of women into professional armed forces (e.g. Davis 2007), the lives of wives of military men (e.g. Segal and Segal eds. 1993, Wood et al 1995, Harrell 2000) and the impact of deployments on military families (e.g. Moelker et al. 2008). Studies rarely recognize that gender inequality in the security sector does not just flow from women's experiences; it is based on an ideology which does not see security work as "female" (read soft). As much as men participate in "hard" combat, military men and male civilian leaders make "hard" decisions about warfare. The topic is much larger, for example how the concept of warrior influences heterosexual male identity, particularly since the 1980s in America (see Dunivin 1994, Gibson 1994) and how heterosexual females, gays and lesbians who trespass in that domain often face rejection, harassment and discrimination. It is often feminist authors from disciplines outside of military sociology (e.g. Enloe 1993, 2000; Fayomi 2009) who have tackled the gendered environment of security:

Nevertheless, the focus on women by social researchers has brought attention to the conditions of women, families, homosexuals and wives in the military. Women were (and are) kept out of the armed forces because of the myth of biology, which is not seen as the social construction that it is. In this argument women are supposed to be genetically programmed to nurture life and are physically and emotionally not strong enough for combat. Those who subscribe to this line of thought argue that this division of labour is biologically based. As Carreiras and Kümmel (2008) observe:

The military traditionalists primarily stress what they see as the perennial and genuine physical and psychological qualities of men such as aggressiveness, physical strength, action orientation, boldness, stamina, willingness to endure exposure to extreme physical danger and readiness to taking lives and withstand the bloody requirements of war. These are mirrored in the adherence to the myth of the genuinely peace-loving, passive, gentle and squeamish woman which denies these attributes to women and the female body and psyche. The military traditionalists then go on to say that women are the ones to be protected by men because of their family roles of child birth and child rearing.

Countless historical studies have shown this to be untrue. Whether as camp followers, nurses, revolutionaries, spies, soldiers in disguise or as regular female soldiers and as supreme commanders, women have engaged in countless military tasks.

Skaine (1999) notes that Americans first became aware of women's role in combat during the first Gulf War. During the Persian Gulf War the media paid attention to women in the military and brought it to the public's attention. The US General Accounting Office (GAO) found that:

Overall, the unit commanders and focus group participants gave primarily positive assessments of women's performance in the Persian Gulf War...

women and men endured similar harsh encampment facilities and conditions. Health and hygiene problems during the deployment were considered inconsequential for both men and women. Cohesion in mixed gender units was generally considered to be effective during deployment, and the unit commanders and focus group participants often described cohesion as being best while the units were deployed... Gender homogeneity was not reported by focus group participants as a requirement for effective unit cohesion during the deployment (GAO 1993: 3 -4).

In the US and other NATO countries, women are barred from participating in some ground combat roles. However, the fluid lines of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have put the units in which women serve, such as military police, supply and support, in the line of fire. This challenges traditional ideas about what constitutes a “combat” position just as female helicopter pilots did during the Persian Gulf War. “Women are fighting, they are in the streets and on the patrols,” says Pat Foote, a retired US Army brigadier general (quoted in Carreiras and Kümmel 2008). “They are running the convoys, getting shot at and shooting back.” Manning, a retired Navy captain, concurs: “We now have units under fire with men and women in them. We have experience of women firing weapons. They don’t fall to emotional bits. Nor has the American public fallen to bits” (quoted in Yeager 2007). In other countries such as Canada, women are fully integrated into all areas of the Canadian Forces.

In order to integrate into the military, women have developed various coping mechanisms to deal with the gender stereotypes held by their male colleagues:

For example, when American women enter the United States military institution, they enter hostile territory: it is quite literally *No-Woman’s Land*. To survive in this hostile environment, service women adopt one of a variety of coping strategies for self-protection. These strategies differ in the gendering of the subject. Each day, the servicewoman must (re)construct her gender identity: Should I try to be ‘one of the guys,’ that is, adopt a passing strategy hoping for male bonding to extend to include me? Or should I be ‘one of the girls,’ that is become ultra feminized, hoping for brotherly affection or chivalric protection? Should I try to be a ‘soldier,’ that is, aim for a seemingly gender-neutral professionalism, hoping for mutual respect? Or should I be a crusader, mounting a conscious – and personally and professionally risky – challenge to the structure of gender relations in the institutions? (D’Amico and Weinstein 1999: 5).

Another focus of attention has been the study of military families (see Moelker and van der Kloot 2003, Moelker et al. 2008, Segal and Segal 2003) which took off in the 1980s. Researchers have looked at how different militaries co-opt families, looking to develop their loyalty to the institution. Others look at how families compete with the military for a member’s time and attention. With the increase in operational tempo at the end of the Cold War, research began to focus on the impacts of the stress of (multiple) deployment on families.

Accommodating families and their needs is a double edged-sword since it alleviates stress on the military member but the family also competes for the member's time and commitment. Both institutions are "greedy" (Segal 1986). For example, Moelker and van der Kloet (2003: 203) deal not only with the way military families individually cope with deployments but also with the way the military organization reacts to the needs of the home front. They note that military organizations have been slow to accept responsibility for military families and in helping families cope with the separation of deployments and necessary adjustments once the member comes home. The study of military families and family support developed at the same time as another research focus, which is "wives" and the military (e.g. Harrison and Laliberté 1994).

In her introduction to a volume on military wives, Weinstein (in Weinstein and White eds. 1997: xvii) remarks that:

Wives, like homosexuals, are perceived as costly to the military, for they may also interfere with unit cohesion. Wives face a double jeopardy as well: They must ascribe to the norms of femininity (be passive, submissive and dependent on men), yet when the men go on deployment, these same wives are expected to be leaders and decision makers... The services use wives as volunteers on a base as much as possible. Such volunteerism serves two purposes: It's cheap and it cements the wife's allegiance to the service by incorporating her into its mission... [M]ilitaries rely heavily on officers' wives... to be liaisons between the commands and the families, especially during deployments. These women broker information between the command and the families about missions, homecomings, departures and so on... they also keep the other wives 'in line' and provide emotional support to all other wives during deployments. Despite the great services that wives provide the differing commands, they are nevertheless regarded as 'dependents' who are expected to be subservient not only to their husbands but to the patriarchal institution of the military and to the greater good of the state.

Officers' wives also reproduce military culture by being role models for other wives. Their presence at military functions which emphasizes their supportive roles continue to shape gender roles in the military. Harrell (2003: 70) points out that male spouses are not expected to fulfill these supportive roles. There is also a class dimension to the military which affects wives:

In summary, class and status barriers between the enlisted community and the officer community date to the early years of the U.S. Army. These barriers translated into very different experiences for the two communities of women. While the lives of enlisted spouses were consistent with those of working [class] spouses in the civilian community, the upper-class origin of Army officers' wives and the need to maintain the upper-class status of Army officers dictated the behaviours and roles of officers' wives... The expected role for officers' spouses is largely based upon volunteerism...

The activities expected of officers' spouses can be categorized into: institutional activities; morale, public relations and ceremonial duties; mentoring, development, and role preservations; entertaining and socializing; and unit and readiness support (Harrell 2003: 76-77).

Clearly the expectations for officers' wives and for junior enlisted wives reflect social and class barriers in addition to the gendered nature of the military. It is important to note that women who enter the workforce and whose careers equal or surpass those of their military spouses pose a challenge to military culture. But this is a rare occasion and Harrell (2000) paints a distressing view of the plight of junior enlisted wives in the US Army. In addition to extreme financial distress these women are victims of a pejorative stereotype:

Throughout these [over one hundred] interviews, a common stereotype of junior enlisted military spouses emerged, which was shared not only by more-senior military personnel and their spouses but also by other junior enlisted soldiers and spouses, many of whom would discuss their peer group negatively, even when they shared similar attributes. This stereotype characterizes junior enlisted spouses as lower class and thus uneducated and unintelligent, out of control both sexually and reproductively, in unstable relationships and lacking morals, financially irresponsible, poorly groomed, inappropriately dressed, and lacking both proper manners and housekeeping skills. The junior enlisted soldiers and their spouses were also perceived as childlike in many ways, requiring care and attention from the more mature NCOs and officers, especially those in leadership positions (Harrell 2000: 99).

This stereotype, as with other stereotypes about women in the armed forces, also reflects a discourse about self which is unfortunately not explored by military sociologists. In saying junior enlisted military spouses are out of control reproductively, what another wife is actually saying is "I am in control of my reproductive cycle." In expressing views about women in the military being physically weak and therefore unable to do the job, a male soldier is saying "I am physically strong and therefore able to do the job." In a thorough review of the problems female leaders face in the Canadian Forces, particularly the combat arms Febraro (2007: 111) reports that males resist women in leadership roles by commenting on their "feminine" qualities or appearance. This form of stereotype inversion implies "I do not have feminine qualities therefore I am a good leader." Similarly male junior combat arms officers in training expressed the belief that women cannot be effective leaders because they do not possess "command presence" which they of course have, given that they are male. Moreover, as Harrell (2000: 105) points out, the stereotype blames the woman for her problems, thus avoiding a critique of the system which creates many of the circumstances she finds herself in.

Both Davis (2007) and Febraro (2007) describe how women's ability to perform in leadership roles in the combat arms is constantly questioned and compromised. Women may simply not be perceived of as competent leaders by virtue of their gender. In the military, the attributes of a successful leader (decisiveness, confidence and assertiveness)



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are stereotypical of men. This also ties into the idea of homogeneity being emphasized in military contexts. In a 1998 study on gender integration in the Canadian combat arms, Davis and Thomas found that women (leaders) operating in a male-defined and male-dominated environment resulted in ambiguous perceptions and beliefs on the part of their male peers. If they acted like one of the guys, they were suspect, but acting as themselves was also suspect. Lieutenant-Commander Lynn Bradley describes the same Catch 22 in her 2007 article entitled "Leadership and Women: Should We be Leading 'Like a Man' or Adopting Women's Ways?"

One of the end results is that women leaders have a much higher attrition rate (as much as six times higher) than their male counterparts (Febbraro 2007: 93). Davis' in-depth interviews with women in the combat arms showed that they were "confronted by preconceived perceptions of their ability and motivation, informed by masculine cultural assumptions about gender roles and the social and sexual behaviour of women who chose traditional male employment" (Davis 2007: 80).

In recent years the question of gender and the masculine nature of the military have attracted the attention of military sociologists and anthropologists such as for example Ben-Ari, who has looked at the military in Israel as the main agent of society shaping gender roles, constructing masculinity as a military masculinity, and thus the main source of maintaining gender inequality. A pioneer in gender/military studies has been Mady Wechsler Segal and she is credited with developing the first model of the women-military relationship (Segal 1995). In this model she looks at three sets of variables affecting the relationship: Military variables which include the national security situation, the level of military technology, the structure of the forces and policies affecting entry; Social structure variables which include a country's demographic patterns, labour force characteristics (women's participation and gendered niches), the state of the civilian economy, and the structure of the family; and Cultural variables such as notions of male and female, values, public discourse about gender equality. Nuciari (2007: 239) tells us that this model has now been expanded to include Political variables such as the state of civil-military relations, political ideologies, public policy concerning race, ethnicity and gender. Each set of variables affects women's position vis-à-vis the armed forces for better or worse. The strength of the model is that it allows for an analysis of the interaction between variables over time.

Kümmel (2008) in an interesting article relates the concept of chivalry to male behaviour in gender relations. He describes the behaviour of the knight towards the noblewoman, revealing a construction of a gender order in which the male is the strong one, the protector, the active one and also the courting one, while the role of the weak and passive one, those in need of protection and the courteously treated and courted one is attributed towards the female. He then makes a direct link between this ideal and the attitudes of males, particularly officers, in the German Armed Forces. He cites 1989 texts which describe how to take care of women at a ball:

When asking her to dance, bow to her. (...) It is no longer necessary to formally ask the husband or the companion of a lady for his permission

to dance with her. Yet, elderly people sometimes consider such asking as very appropriate. You escort the lady to the dance floor. Following the dance you escort your lady back to her seat and formally thank her for dancing. If a single lady wants to leave, escort her to the exit, take care of her transportation, if necessary, and escort her home (Offizierschule der Luftwaffe 1989: 22f. cited in Kümmel 2000).

Women are portrayed as needing male courtesy and protection and as housewives who should receive flowers when entertaining officers in their homes. This only reinforces male attitudes towards women in combat as Kümmel remarks that these constructs of the female as someone to be courted and to be protected symbolically makes war a man's business. This is reflected in interviews with German servicemen who feel that it would be difficult for them to see a woman buddy dead or suffering and that the idea of a woman inflicting violence is "strange." Of course none of these men would find it strange if the woman was protecting her child. But the line is somehow crossed in protecting the state.

Chivalry is not exclusive to the German armed forces. Moelker (2005: 93) notes that, "General manners and rules of conduct for [Dutch] cadets, as laid down in 'The Blue Book' or the booklet 'White on Black' in particular indicate that courtesy and chivalry are still values that apply to the population of cadets," and he concludes, "that values of chivalry still have their place in the life of a cadet and consequently also in officer socialisation" (Moelker 2005: 104). Chivalry and its attendant stereotypical views of male and female roles are promoted in the military and particularly in officer training. Kümmel concludes that chivalrous behaviour works to maintain existing traditional images of gender roles. As a consequence, it contributes to and nourishes sexist attitudes and behaviour in the military and may complicate the process of integrating women into the armed forces.

# THE INSTITUTIONAL/OCCUPATIONAL DEBATE

The Institutional/Occupational distinction has become one of the most widely referred to models in military sociology and has found its way into public discussions of the military.<sup>2</sup> This model is based upon the work of Morris Janowitz (1970, 1977) who argued that changing technology created new patterns of combat and therefore modified organizational behaviour in the military. In short the more complex the technology of warfare, the narrower the differences between military and non-military establishments (Janowitz 1970: 143). Thus over time and through increased technology there will be more convergence between the military and society. Janowitz (1970: 130) was also concerned that officers were acquiring skills and orientations common to civilian administrators and even political leaders. Thus the increasing “civilianisation” of the military is seen as creating tension and paradox as traditional institutional values (often associated with combat roles and support of traditional values) come into conflict with new individualist and occupational values.<sup>3</sup> Winslow and Dunn (2002) have used the Institutional/Occupational model to examine women’s integration into the Canadian Forces, as well as which institutional trades, such as the combat arms, resist it.

The question of the integration of women comes up when militaries have to ensure that they are responsive to the changing society, which they defend, that pays for them, and without whose support they can do little.<sup>4</sup> In this sense we can see a great deal of congruency is expected between Western militaries and society. Militaries have been forced into adopting certain values and beliefs which reflect those of the wider society,<sup>5</sup> for example the integration of women, ethnic minorities and in the majority of NATO militaries, acceptance of homosexuality. Hicks Stiehm (1996: 68-69) tells us that there are two quite different circumstances which increase the number of women in a military force. One is wartime. The other is in liberal democracies where the military is all-volunteer and where there is an emphasis on providing equal opportunity to all citizens. In the latter circumstance acceptance of women is seen to be congruent with Occupational values.

A challenge to traditional (male) military culture concerns the issue of social representation and diversity. While the wider employment of women is still an ongoing process,<sup>6</sup> focus has shifted to equal opportunities for all (see Pinch et al. 2004). In terms of policy, it is important that the military be integral to the society it serves, not isolated from it. Therefore, the composition of the military must reflect the population it serves. This can lead to what Okros (2009) has termed forced demographic change. He tells us that diversity “has come to be seen as predominantly an exercise to increase internal workforce demographics with the assumption that numerical indicators suggesting greater representation of designated groups prove that the organization is becoming more diverse.” Diverse in this sense means a change in attitudes, values, and behaviour regarding difference rather than a change in numbers.

In Canada the military hopes that promoting diversity will lead to an expanded recruitment base and a “skill enhanced organization more connected to all segments of Canadian society” (Canadian Army 1998: 1). In any case, the legal pressure to conform to this ideal is real enough.<sup>7</sup> For example, in December 2002, the Canadian Army became

officially subject to the *Employment Equity Act* and has undertaken a series of initiatives to promote diversity.<sup>8</sup> This coincides with what Moskos et al (2000) call the move to a postmodern military. “[A] particularly revealing way to understand the trend towards Postmodernism in the armed forces is to look at the role of women in the military... pressures have grown to include women in all assignments including combat” (Moskos et al 2000: 22). Although the postmodern military is an ideal type, the authors maintain that it is a model that Western militaries are moving toward. The title of the Moskos et al book *Postmodern Military* is misleading since it has nothing to do with postmodern sociological theory. It is an essentialist reduction to trends along which militaries move as they modernize. There is no attempt to deconstruct what the view of a modern military is, no analysis of cultural differences in the definition of modern military such as one might find in Saudi Arabia or China for example. And certainly, there is no deconstruction of the concepts of masculine and feminine even in Western militaries.

A key question arising then is whether the goal of “closing the gap” between military and society is achievable? The idea of representativeness can be given at least two interpretations. First, one can refer to a socio-demographic match between military and society. This would involve the military matching the statistical profile in the wider population – a goal achieved through planned targets if not quotas. Second, one might argue that the military should subscribe to core societal values such as equality of opportunity, decency, fairness, and careers open to all. Other commentators have identified a number of reasons why meeting equal opportunity objectives is desirable from the point of view of the operational effectiveness since it can improve access to a wider recruitment pool as the armed services compete with civilian companies for scarce labour, both in terms of quantity and quality. Thus, the argument goes that supportive links between the military and society must be cultivated. Doing so need not weaken but can actually strengthen the military. In a healthy democracy it is vital that the armed forces do not remain too far apart from the society they are charged to defend.<sup>9</sup> After all, it is society that funds them and bestows on them their legitimacy; and it is society from which they recruit their personnel and to which they return to continue their working lives as civilians.

On the other hand, traditionalists feel relatively comfortable explaining the mismatch between their profile and that of society. The gap is explained not by a failure to have an effective equality of opportunity program, but in terms of the propensity of particular groups such as women to select certain kinds of occupations, military or civilian. Among the military traditionalists is the well-known Israeli military historian Martin van Creveld, who maintains that the feminization of the military is equivalent to its weakening and decline, leaving the armed forces in the awkward position of being successively incapable of doing what they have been invented for. He writes that “if only because research shows that going into combat is the last thing most military women want” (Creveld 2001: 442). This point raises difficult and complex issues, especially the extent to which an inclination not to pursue a military career is the result of perceived or real discrimination in the prospective employing organization.

Others see the military as a society within a society and one which should maintain some level of distinctiveness. From this point of view, we can understand the military’s

argument concerning the need to be different.<sup>10</sup> For example, conservatives in the US tend to be suspicious of tempering military culture in order to accommodate changes in wider society. These people believe that the military would lose its “institutional soul” rooted in war fighting. Military culture is seen as a “thing” which sets it apart and makes it unique. Moreover, military culture seems to be under attack, threatened with extinction; something to be preserved, reinforced, saved from the erosion which would occur should women become combat soldiers, pilots and seamen. Mitchell (1998: xvii) tells us that women in the armed forces would lead to “higher rates of attrition, greater need for medical care, higher rates of non-availability, lower rates of deployability, lesser physical ability, aggravated problems of single-parenthood, dual-service marriages, fraternization, sexual harassment, sexual promiscuity, and homosexuality, all of which adversely affect unit cohesion, morale, and the fighting spirit of the armed forces.”

This leads some to ask why the armed services should be devoting so much attention to the issue of equal opportunity, whether in the context of ethnic minorities or the dimension of gender. This reflects a perception of a “zero-sum” conflict between functional and societal imperatives. That is to say, meeting (so called “politically correct”) equal opportunities objectives detracts from operational effectiveness. Such action diverts investment from more worthy objectives such as cultivating a warrior spirit, maintaining platforms or acquiring other equipment. Also, equal opportunities/gender integration could be seen as undermining the traditional cohesion of the military community, which is based on homogeneity. Carreiras and Kümmel (2008) go so far as to call it the “cult of homogeneity.” Yet there is no evidence to support this myth. Cohesion is based on commonality of experience, shared risk, and mutual experiences of hardship, not on gender distinctions. Some traditionalists believe that meeting “politically correct” standards is just another area where the military, rather than being used to defend the country, is being used as a “social experiment” (see Tuten 1982: 261, Marlowe 1983: 195). These beliefs are not supported by the evidence which clearly shows that combat effectiveness is not diminished by the presence of women.

# GENDER MAINSTREAMING<sup>11</sup>

Although women's rights have been on the UN radar screen for quite some time, the translation of calls for gender mainstreaming into comprehensive action has been slow. This is due in part to the institutional culture of the UN itself and the culture of its member states. Moreover, the full implementation of Security Council resolution SCR1325 (see below) will require culture changes not only at the institutional level but also on the part of people in UN structures involved in the security sector and in post conflict reconstruction and in militaries around the world.

The Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW (adopted in 1979) is considered to be one of the most important international human rights instruments for women.<sup>12</sup> Its status as a binding human rights treaty makes it an important tool for fighting gender discrimination. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women<sup>13</sup> is made up of experts who monitor the implementation of the Convention through independent submissions from groups such as NGOs and reports submitted by member nations.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) established the importance of gender as a primary strategy for the promotion of equality around the world and has a special section devoted to women and armed conflict. Both the Declaration and Platform called for the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all policies and programs of UN member states.

Gender mainstreaming began to gain momentum when the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) organized a high level summit on gender mainstreaming which it defined as:

The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes...It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres... The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality (ECOSOC 1997).

ECOSOC identified a series of principles to follow when mainstreaming a gender perspective in the UN system and it set out institutional requirements for doing so such as the use of directives rather than loose guidelines, the creation of monitoring mechanisms, training and gender balance in the UN system itself (Charlesworth 2005: 4-5).

By 2000 the UN Millennium Development Goals were attempting to respond to the world's development challenges. The eight Goals, to be achieved by 2015, were drawn from the actions and targets contained in the Millennium Declaration.<sup>14</sup> Goal three specifically aims to promote gender equality and women's empowerment but one could argue that all eight goals concern gender, whether it is eradicating poverty or combating HIV/AIDS. Unfortunately, progress has been slow.



Gender was soon to become a main issue in peace operations. Based upon analysis of UN missions in South Africa, Namibia, El Salvador and Kosovo, the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on *Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations* called for gender issues to be mainstreamed throughout the UN system.<sup>15</sup> Soon after, the Security Council adopted SCR1325 on women, peace and security. In adopting SCR1325 on October 31st 2000, the UN Security Council, for the first time in its history, formally recognized the distinct roles and experiences of women in the context of armed conflict, peacebuilding, peacekeeping and conflict resolution. Though previous UN mandates have addressed women, peace and security issues SCR1325 is one of the most specific, strongest, and binding women peace and security mandates ever. It calls for:

- Participation of women in decision-making and peace processes;
- Inclusion of gender perspectives and training in peacekeeping;
- The protection of women;
- Gender mainstreaming in UN reporting systems and programmatic implementation;
- Ensuring the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements so that they take into account the particular needs of women and girls;
- Consideration of the different needs of men and women in the disarmament process

The resolution directly addresses numerous actors including the UN system, UN member states and parties to armed conflict. It calls for an increase in the protection of women and girls from violence and the integration of gender perspectives in peace and security work, as well as the participation of women in all decision-making processes. It is a broad resolution that demands changes at all levels of peace and security work.

Since 2000 there have been flurries of activity around gender mainstreaming in the security sector aimed at both institutional and individual change. Unfortunately, SCR1325 does not contain provisions for effective monitoring, reporting and accountability mechanisms. This and the lack of a coordinated strategy for implementation has repeatedly been cited as an impediment to effective realization of the goal of bringing a gender perspective to the centre of UN efforts in the peace and security sector (PeaceWomen Team 2006: 1).

Many of the UN agencies' activities concerning gender mainstreaming fall into the category of capacity-building. According to the UN Secretary General, (2007: 3) the objective has been "to develop the capacity of United Nations peace support, peacebuilding, humanitarian and development operations in order to more effectively support Member states in strengthening women's human rights protection and women's participation in the political, security and social sectors." For example, UNICEF has provided gender training for 500 staff members of the community-based and international organizations in the Sudan. UNICEF also trained 3300 military observers, protection forces and civilian police officers in Darfur on gender-based violence (UN Secretary General 2007: 5), and many other UN agencies have developed policies and strategies on gender mainstreaming

in post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation programs. The UN Secretary General's report (2007) describes many of them from a Gender Equality in Mine Action Workshop held in 2006 to UNDP's (United Nations Development Program) report on Parliament, Gender and Conflict Transformation and DPKO's (the UN Department of Peace Keeping Operations) Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards which addressed gender issues in this area.

Unfortunately success in these areas is only measured in the number of women and girls demobilized or trained, without an analysis of the gendered nature of the conflicts they were involved in, nor what that may mean for demobilization and reintegration. Charlesworth feels that the reduction of gender to women's issues is particularly true for SCR1325:

Resolution SCR1325 presents gender as all about women and unconnected with masculine identities in times of conflict and the violent patterns of conduct that are accepted because they are coded as male. Ideas about gender are central to the way that international conflicts are identified and resolved but these assumptions are left untouched in the resolution... Gender perspectives become in the bureaucratized of the UN 'the need to prioritize the proactive role women can play in peace-building' or 'to take into consideration the special needs of women and girls' or increasing the number of women in national and international military forces (Charlesworth 2005: 15-16).

Another drawback to focussing gender mainstreaming on women and children is that ethnicity or class relations seem to slip off the radar screen. Women are the focus but which women? And how do they relate to the men? (Baines 2005: 236)

UN efforts aimed at a cultural shift among peacekeepers have mainly taken the form of training concerning gender mainstreaming. DPKO has developed an in-mission gender training package. The aim is to strengthen peacekeeping operations by providing training which will enable peacekeepers to integrate gender awareness into all their activities. The package is a reference guide that includes background information and highlights key gender issues in each functional area of peacekeeping operations. It provides guidance on gender issues at the planning stage as well as after the establishment of a peacekeeping operation, and includes a number of practical tools such as a gender assessment checklist for planning and guides to implementation (DPKO 2004).

In addition, there have been serious attempts in DPKO to incorporate gender issues and apply them to create common standards in missions (UN Secretary General 2007: 5). For example, 130 East Timorese military and civilian police participated in the gender awareness training mentioned above. Furthermore, the UN mission in Timor-Leste created a Gender Affairs Unit which provided training to women entering public service and worked to ensure that women have a voice in the new government and civil society structures.

In October 2004 a gender resource package was created for all staff in peace ops – men and women, military and police. Within DPKO a gender adviser<sup>16</sup> was appointed at HQ in 2003 and 11 out of 18 UN peace operations now have full time gender advisors. In December 2006, DPKO launched the Gender Community of Practice, which aims at facilitating the sharing of good practices and lessons learned in peacekeeping (UN Secretary General 2007: 6).

Because of SCR1325, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has led the way in the integration of gender analysis into conflict programming, the use of gender-disaggregated data in UN early warning systems, programs to protect women and children in conflict situations, measures to promote women's participation in peacemaking and peacebuilding, promoting gender equality in justice sector reform, etc. (Baranyi and Powell 2005:7):

Historically, UNIFEM's approach focuses on supporting women in civil society through funding projects and initiatives, assisting the formation of coalitions, and conducting skills and capacity-building. The agency is also advancing women's agenda through advocacy and training on gender equality for other relevant actors in governance, including UN staff, mediators and facilitators, government officials, members of implementation committees, staff of key ministries, political parties, women parliamentarians, representatives of the media and local leaders, among others. UNIFEM and other groups are increasingly reaching out to make decision-makers in mainstream post-conflict institutions to raise awareness of gender issues and strategies to promote gender equality (UNIFEM 2006: 8).

Because of its mission UNIFEM focuses on including women in the peace process. One of the four priorities of UNIFEM's Multi Year Funding Framework for 2004-07 is achieving gender equality in democratic governance in peacetime and in recovery from war (UNIFEM 2006: 17). As a result, many of the agency's programs aim at increasing the numbers of women in post-conflict decision making, building women's political influence and making governance processes more sensitive to gender/women's issues (UNIFEM 2006:5).

Another important UN effort is the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW) which promotes gender equality and women's full and equal participation in peacekeeping, peace processes, post conflict reconstruction and the reform of security institutions. UN-INSTRAW is considered the leading United Nations Institute devoted to research, training and knowledge management in partnership with governments, civil society and academia to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment.

UN-INSTRAW supports capacity building and has published an important guide to policy and planning on women peace and security and sponsors the development of training tools, networks and websites. It is currently engaged in projects to bring gender

awareness into security sector reform.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, UNIFEM works to increase women's impact on post-conflict governance. They have implemented various programs focussed on training capacity-building for women leaders and promote individual growth/change in order to have larger cultural impacts.

Although an important aspect of mainstreaming gender in UN peacekeeping missions is to provide training to the troops, there must be follow up and monitoring of training results. Woroniuk (quoted in UN-INSTRAW 2007: 6) echoes this sentiment:

[Security sector institutions are so] thoroughly masculine in institutionalized militarized masculinity that gender training merely dances on the edges, offering little challenge to the overall ideology, structure and practice of these organizations. Thus gender training can give an illusion of progress, but nothing really changes.

In fact, there seems to be a general gap in the monitoring and reporting of measures taken to ensure implementation in the UN system at all levels (Peace Women Team 2006: 1). Similarly, the Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group (GPWG, 2004: 4) commenting on Canada's implementation of SCR1325, tells us there has been "too much emphasis on activities, limited attention to results." GPWG (2004: 5) goes on to say that it remains unclear whether or not Canada's efforts to actively integrate a gender sensitive approach to peacebuilding has led to a meaningful change in process, delivery, reporting, evaluation, attitudes and habit. According to the Group, the consideration of gender issues continues to be carried out in an ad hoc fashion, in the absence of a national framework and separate from an institution-wide strategy.

UN efforts continue to meet with limited success in part due to local cultures. This problem was acknowledged by the former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan:

The leadership of parties to conflict is male-dominated and men are chosen to participate at the peace table. The desire to bring peace at any cost may result in a failure to involve women and consider their needs and concerns. In addition women's organizations often do not have the resources needed to effectively influence lengthy peace negotiation processes (Annan quoted in NGO Working Group on Women Peace and Security 2006: 38).

For example, in Somalia, UNIFEM facilitated and supported women's role in the peace process. Women were recognized as a "sixth clan" and quotas were established for women's participation in regional assemblies. These quotas were simply ignored by clan leaders. In contrast, Liberia failed to establish quotas for female representation, but UNIFEM supported a voter registration program and it is believed that the large registration of female voters contributed to Liberia electing Africa's first female president (UNIFEM 2006: 6).

UNIFEM notes that gender considerations are often an afterthought in peace negotiations and post conflict governance. Klot (2006) wrote an assessment of the United Nations

Development Program's (UNDP) work in crisis prevention and recovery where she exposed an exhaustive failure to integrate a gender perspective into the UN systems approach to early recovery, transition and reintegration. In 2007 she wrote that "Justice and security sector reform is the arena in which women's needs are the greatest and gaps in response most glaring" (Klot 2007: 1). For example, in Kosovo, the UN and other international actors were criticized for not systematically seeking out and reporting on information about violence against women. The focus of reports was on other types of violence, such as inter-ethnic violence, despite the fact that police reports revealed a very high rate of violence against women (Spees 2004: 16).

In spite of UN efforts, the ability to influence peacekeepers' attitudes towards gender and gender based violence has remained limited. In a detailed report for Refugees International, Martin (2005) notes that the "masculine culture" of international militaries and police in peace operations contributes to several attitudes such as the code of silence concerning sexual misconduct, the view that "boys will be boys" and the fear of recrimination for being a whistle blower, which all make it difficult to introduce gender sensitive policies:

[SCR1325] provides a potential basis for combating the masculine culture within peacekeeping missions. However, the process of mainstreaming gender into peacekeeping missions, or incorporating gender perspectives into all areas of work, has yet to truly take hold within the UN missions... The policies and guidelines set by DPKO about sexual exploitation and abuse in missions are not always followed in the field (Martin 2005: ii).

The problems associated with a hyper masculine culture in peace operations culminated in a number of scandals concerning sexual exploitation of local women by UN peacekeepers.<sup>18</sup> An investigation of allegations in the Congo was led by Jordan's UN ambassador, Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid al-Hussein. His 2005 Report showed that peacekeepers provided to the UN failed to protect civilians, instead engaging in sexual misconduct and illegal activities while deployed. The UN had never before witnessed such a magnitude of alleged sexual exploitation and abuse as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

The Report spelled out for the first time ways to combat the problem of sexual abuse in peacekeeping missions. The recommendations included:

- Setting uniform standards of conduct for all national contingents;
- Publishing peacekeeping rules in the languages of the troops;
- Investigating allegations by professionals using modern forensic methods such as fingerprinting, blood testing and DNA testing;
- Establishing a permanent professional investigative capacity, including professionals with experience in investigating sex crimes, "especially those involving children," and
- Ensuring courts-martial are conducted in the countries where the crimes are alleged to have occurred (Zeid 2005).

Unfortunately, it is still up to the troop contributing nations to prosecute offenders and local communities and victims never know if there was a prosecution and conviction.

Although the UN has a clear policy of zero tolerance, a culture of impunity in certain peacekeeping operations has allowed abuses to take place (Lyytikäinen 2007:5). Many UN agencies such as UNIFEM now target sexual and gender-based violence<sup>19</sup> and the accountability of all actors involved in peace building activities.<sup>20</sup>

The Zeid Report also notes the masculine culture of UN peace operations and recommends more gender balancing in missions. “The presence of more women in a mission, especially at senior levels, will help to promote an environment that discourages sexual exploitation and abuse, particularly of the local population” (Zeid al-Hussein 2005: 19). This point of view is reinforced by several studies. Millar and Moskos (1995) found that American peacekeepers in mixed gender and mixed race units in Somalia adopted a more humanitarian approach to the local population than homogenous male units. Similarly, a 1995 study for the UN Division for the Advancement of Women found that the incidence of rape and prostitution falls significantly with just a token female presence. “Stated simply, men behave better when in the presence of women from their own culture” (DeGroot 2002: 7).

Of course one of the problems is the under representation of women in military forces that contribute to UN operations. For example, as of March 2008, women comprised less than two per cent of all military personnel in UN peace operations.<sup>21</sup> Until women can make a positive contribution to peacekeeping operations their presence has limited impact. This said, there have been targeted efforts and in February 2007 an all-female police contingent from India was deployed to Liberia (UN Secretary General 2007: 6). It was felt that victims of sexual abuse<sup>22</sup> would feel more comfortable and willing to come forward when faced with a woman police officer. Unfortunately, both quantitative and qualitative analyses of women’s role and impact in peacekeeping operations are severely underdeveloped and thus under reported.

The importance of gender mainstreaming seems to be more recognized, yet the “how” of it remains elusive. Commitment does not necessarily turn into action – even in the UN. One can see this simply in the under employment of women in senior professional and managerial UN positions even though they are the majority in junior posts. According to the UN Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women,<sup>23</sup> women comprised 30 percent of all professional staff as of 30 June 2006 assigned to peace keeping operations. This represents an increase of 2.5 percent since June 2004. However, if you look at the director level and above, the representation was only 1.9 percent, which represents a decrease of 2 per cent. Conaway (2006: 10) tells us that member states continue to recommend men for vacancies in the UN. “There is generally little accountability within the United Nations for senior managers to recruit and hire women, and resistance to even discussing this issue still exists in some departments.”

There has been little increase in the number of women participating in UN peace missions since the passing of SCR1325. There are no female heads of mission; one percent of military personnel are female and four percent of police forces. Although 30% of international civilian staff is female, only 10% are in management positions in peace operations. Women also make up 22% of nationally recruited staff but again



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they are relegated to clerical and service jobs (Conaway 2006: 3). This is because the most important troop contributing nations (Pakistan, India and Bangladesh) are ones where women rarely participate in the security sector. It is important to note that even in developed countries such as Canada, legislation was required to address institutional and cultural barriers and open up the armed forces to women.<sup>24</sup>

The lack of female representation in senior ranks is also in part due to the culture of the UN hiring process which is opaque. There are no formal job descriptions for senior posts. The lack of support for qualified female candidates by member states can also be explained by the need for them in national positions. There is a danger of gender mainstreaming fatigue or a sustainment of the view that it is simply a “women’s issue” which only women can deal with. There can also be a backlash from male colleagues who feel they are being passed over in favour of women. In UN circles the words “Gender Gestapo” can be heard (Raven-Roberts 2005: 540). Conaway (2006: 10) tells us that when positions are “held” for women, men become infuriated. The danger of reserved posts for women as well as ethnic minorities is that they can appear as tokens and face additional layers of scrutiny that the dominant group does not face.

Moreover the concept of “gender mainstreaming” is a difficult one. It is not easily translated into other languages nor is it an easily transmissible concept to non Western cultures. Because it is not easily translated, the English term is often used. This can lead to knee jerk resistance since it is seen as imposing Western values on non Western countries without considering the value of the concept. Charlesworth (2005: 12) remarks that, “In the context of the United Nations, opposition includes resentment of the domination of the institutional agenda by English-speaking nations such as the United States.” Because gender mainstreaming is not an easily transmissible concept, different stakeholders in a project may hold different views of what it means and how it should be actualized.

Many writers have commented on the unevenness and general lack of conceptual consistency across the UN system concerning gender mainstreaming. For example, in November 2006, over 75 experts gathered in New York and Washington, DC to discuss UN reform and, in particular, improving peace operations by advancing the role of women (see Conaway 2006). They observed that the understanding of the added value of women’s knowledge and experience is growing within the UN system and beyond, yet implementation of existing mandates is sporadic. Furthermore, the pockets of activity and momentum are rarely connected, as UN agencies, member states and civil society operate mostly in parallel structures and forums.

Raven-Roberts (2005) points out the unevenness in the humanitarian, human rights, political and development approaches to gender mainstreaming in the UN system. The humanitarian agencies of the UN include the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN International Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Program (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the UN Development Program (UNDP). Each of these agencies had its own mandate and administrative structure as well as its own policies for dealing with vulnerable groups. In the 1990s a new Department of Humanitarian Affairs was

created to coordinate interagency strategies, to gather and disseminate information and to prioritize funding. By the late 1990s this department was reorganized and became the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). However, it did not seem to be too concerned with gender:

In the absence of a commitment from senior management at OCHA, providing a 'gender perspective' became nothing more than someone (usually a junior program officer) combing through any OCHA document and inserting the words 'women,' 'girls,' and 'gender' in as many places as possible so that the end product would read a gender sensitive. This practice was not limited to OCHA; other focal points in the main UN agencies were also alert to ensuring that all documents mentioned whether there were any specific programs for women or children that their organization was implementing (Raven-Roberts 2005: 50).

Even though there may be guidelines, check lists, manuals etc., what is in place to ensure that they are used effectively? Are managers held accountable for the implementation of gender sensitive policy? We think not.

Klot (2007: 2) is also critical of the UN system. She writes, "In the context of peace processes there is a systematic absence of gender expertise, conflicting UN positions on women's human rights issues such as quotas and emergency reproductive health care, and an under-representation of women in decision making." Speaking of the UN Peacebuilding Commission<sup>25</sup>, she goes on to write that, "Although women's participation and gender equality is a "predictable" peacebuilding gap, it is striking how far this core issue is lacking in institutional capacity, policy and operational guidance, program implementation, data monitoring and evaluation, knowledge and resources" (Klot 2007: 9). The UN Secretary General reinforces this latter point:

Adequate and predictable funding is crucial for efficient and sustainable implementation of the resolution. However, many United Nations entities do not have adequate core funding earmarked for women, peace and security. Extra budgetary resources, which remain the main source of funding for gender-related projects, are neither sufficient nor predictable (UN Secretary General 2007: 12).

Gender issues can quickly become marginalized and under resourced. Charlesworth (2005: 12) describes the situation in East Timor where the UN called for the inclusion of gender specialists on staff who became quickly marginalized due to budget priorities. This is particularly true for peace operations where there is "no time" to do gender work. Saving lives and reconstruction of the country take priority.

It is also common for the UN to leave the responsibility for gender mainstreaming to national governments and civil society. The UN Secretary General's Report (2007:12) offers an example of this, "Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the resolution. In many conflict and post-conflict countries, national mechanisms

and machineries for the advancement of women have been established but need to be strengthened to ensure women's active participation in public policy formulation on matters of war and peace." At times the cultural sensitivities of the host nation's government are invoked to leave gender aside. Moreover, when the responsibility for enforcing gender training lies with the troop contributing nations it can lead to considerable gaps and variation between national contingents (Lyytikainen2007: 4). Militaries from developing nations may not have the resources or the capacity to provide pre-deployment raining on gender issues.

However, the problem cannot be blamed solely on troop contributing nations. For example, Klot (2007: 10) attributes the failing of the Peacebuilding Commission concerning gender mainstreaming on the inadequacies of the UN's own gender architecture. Some of these impediments are cited by the UN Secretary General (2007: 12) himself. They include "incoherence, inadequate funding of gender related projects, fragmentation and insufficient institutional capacity for oversight and accountability for system performance as well as low capacity for gender mainstreaming." This, in turn, contributes to the gap between implementation of SCR1325 at the country level and the global, regional and national commitments on gender equality in peace processes and post conflict reconstruction (UN Secretary General 2007: 12).

The United Nations has thus far failed to lead by example, in part because of a gender architecture that identifies no lead agency, mandates no clear division of responsibilities and holds no one accountable. This situation thwarts the efforts of many dedicated and talented professionals working in such entities as the UNIFEM, the Office of the Special Adviser for Gender Issues, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, the Peacebuilding Commission, and others. Their work is currently under-funded and poorly coordinated. So far we have been discussing the institutional impediments to gender mainstreaming but we cannot overlook the culture of the individuals involved. There can be a gender bias on the part of UN personnel based upon interpretations of rules regulations and policies as staffs reconcile their own cultural values with the official ethos of the UN. Policies are interpreted through a personal and an institutional lens.

One of the major critiques of SCR1325 is that it has remained at the policy level without operational impact and it is this last critique that the UN is addressing when it calls for the formulation of national action plans. A plan of action is a written document that describes the efforts and resources required in order to implement a goal, law, mandate or policy within a specific period of time. Essentially, it is the translation of policies and strategies into executable, measurable and accountable actions.

Some of the advantages of an action plan are that it allows you to coordinate and prioritize actions so that they are not ad hoc; it prevents duplication in the various ministries and can ensure the effective use of scarce resources. It usually entails a participatory process which ensures dialogue, understanding and when it comes to finally taking action, people already feel responsible. Action plans can bring an official stamp to things and delineate

who is responsible for what. They should produce benchmarks so that monitoring and evaluation can take place. Simply put, a successful action plan must include specific objectives, results, outputs, strategies, responsibilities and timelines (what, what for, how, who and when).

There is also the UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict which is bringing together the work of a dozen separate agencies to stop rape. Security Council Resolution 1820, spearheaded by former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and a new resolution passed under the stewardship of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009 have created a special representative for eliminating violence against women, mandated new measures of accountability for action, created structures to name and shame parties not protecting women against sexual violence, authorized the use of UN sanctions in such cases, and defined sexual violence itself as a threat to international peace and security. The creation of a new UN Under-Secretary-General for women's affairs has the potential to end the disarray that has bedevilled the efforts of UNIFEM and its sister agencies, if key steps are taken to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.

## CONCLUSIONS

Nowadays the vocabulary of gender mainstreaming has become omnipresent in the international arena. However it is important to remember that gender is not just about women and girls. One of the problems with the concept of gender is that it (like ethnicity) is all too frequently identified as biology. This misses out on the social construction of identity. Like ethnic identities, gender identities are constructed in a dynamic social environment. Women and men's socially constructed identities, roles, behaviours, social positions, access to power and resources create gender specific vulnerabilities – gendered insecurity if you will (UNIFEM 2007: 30).

Although it has been relatively easy to adopt the vocabulary of gender mainstreaming and to set up a number of initiatives, there have been important challenges and a general lack of coordination, monitoring or follow-up. This problem has also been noted by the GPWG (2004: 6) which tells us that there is “little consensus among government departments regarding how efforts could and should be synchronized to facilitate more effective implementation [of Resolution 1325]... [I]f an effort is not made to develop a plan of action, with established goals and timelines, and mechanisms for measuring progress,... efforts to fully implement the resolution are significantly compromised.” We have also seen that although not perfect, SCR1535 has led to an explosion of programs, policies, networks, reforms, new training tools etc. aimed at change in the way we carry out the security business. It calls for awareness and integration of gender at all levels of security, even if it is not clear as to *how* this is to be accomplished.

Fortunately, there is increased awareness of the mandates for gender balance in UN, NATO and EU staffing. There is also growing recognition of the operational effectiveness of women, particularly in military and police roles in peace operations. Bridges and Horsfall (2009: 120) state that an increased percentage of female military personnel on UN operations are beneficial to operational effectiveness. Olsson and Tryggstad, (2001: 2) point out that increased numbers of female peacekeepers mitigates such security procedures as body searches of women. This can prevent the smuggling of explosives and weapons. They also believe that a more balanced sex ratio among peacekeepers would reduce the sexual harassment of local women. Bridges and Horsfall agree. They maintain that a greater proportion of female military personnel engenders trust and improves the reputation of peacekeepers among local populations. They may even set an example to their male colleagues about the inappropriateness of sexually exploiting women in host nations (Bridges and Horsfall 2009: 120, 122). It is also felt that women survivors of sexual assault would be more willing to confide in female police officers than males. More interesting is when Bridges and Horsfall (2009: 122) tell us that: “[W]hen at least 30 percent of peacekeepers are female, local women become more involved in the peace process.”

So if women are an asset on new missions, how are they recruited? How does the military attempt to appeal to women and motivate them to enlist, while keeping intact the ties between military service and masculinity that help to bring in the young men who are still the main focus of recruiting efforts? Brown (2008) has examined how the US armed

forces have been trying to sell military service in wartime. She found that Iraq War recruiting has downplayed the war itself, occasionally making oblique reference to it in order to create the image of a protector and defender:

The military, or at least the Army, implies that military service is about many things – war-fighting being only one among them – and that it can provide various types of tangible and intangible benefits. Ideas about gender still underpin military recruiting appeals, perhaps not always as overtly as in the past. Military ads rarely reach out to women as women, but masculinity still plays a key role in recruitment. Combat imagery is used to denote a masculine realm of challenge, excitement, and brotherhood, and some ads suggest that the military is a place where young men can grow fully into manhood (Brown 2008).

She sadly concludes that women remain a peripheral presence rather than an integral part of the military's image. The Iraq War has expanded women's military roles, but in the recruitment materials, their position has actually retracted. While women are performing combat-like roles in the field, military recruiting helps to keep the combat male in the public imagination.

This leads us to the dangerous emphasis the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have put on counterinsurgency combat. In these wars, military women are considered burdensome when dealing with locals, since local power resides in men. Even the presence of women on patrols may cause difficulties for the troops. Moreover, risk averse countries do not want to see their female soldiers on the front lines. While some leaders such as General Petraeus see counterinsurgency as the future of warfare, others believe that defining these conflicts as counterinsurgency is counterproductive. For example Okros (2009) talks of "integrated security solutions" where the need is for concurrent, complementary and coordinated actions to restore the essential state and community functions that are needed, at a minimum, to establish a degree of calm and normalcy (as defined by the local population) and, ideally, to set the conditions for long term recovery.

In these missions gender mainstreaming should become the norm. In order to do this, resources need to be made available. UNIFEM (2007: 7) reports that the Women and Child Protection Unit of the Liberian National Police acquired the prestige of an elite task force because donor support ensured that these police units were better equipped than other areas of police work. Thus police officers wanted to be assigned to the unit and gender-related work. Unfortunately UNIFEM itself suffers from resource constraints, which results in only a modest presence in countries emerging from conflict (Klot 2007:10).

In terms of these new types of mission, training must be reinforced by changes in operation protocols and procedures, concrete incentives to motivate and reward changed practices and a sanction system to prevent or punish failure to comply with the gender mandate. Performance evaluations should be tied to staff commitment to new policies. However, gender training must consider cultural and linguistic norms. This is a daunting task since concepts of gender mainstreaming may be foreign to peace keepers' experience in their

native culture. Moreover, peace keepers arrive in theatre with different levels of readiness. Training on policies such as gender mainstreaming should be mandatory and approached with the same seriousness of other training. It should not be a simple “add-on” when time and resources are available. Commanders therefore need to be clear on the goals of gender training and they need to make it relevant. Given the cultural diversity of the troop contributing nations to current missions, gender awareness training needs to be tailored to cultural differences without diminishing the message. Gender training also needs to take local cultures into consideration and it is here that working with local women’s groups can be an advantage. Finally, training cannot be a one-shot deal – it needs to be constantly reinforced while in theatre.

Effective leadership that conveys a serious commitment to gender policy influences the culture of the organization and the ability of the organization to address problems. Refugees International noticed a marked difference between the attitudes of UN personnel serving in Haiti and in Liberia<sup>26</sup> towards sexual exploitation and abuse, largely due to the attitudes of senior management in UN peacekeeping missions. Their behaviour and activities often influence the culture of the organization and the ability of the organization to effectively address problems.<sup>27</sup> Measures to ensure gender neutral policies in missions and gender mainstreaming should be made part of the performance goals for civilian managers of missions and military commanders and managerial performance should be rated in accordance with these goals.

Davis (2007: 84) notes that women who enter the military are dependent upon leaders who can effectively lead a mixed gender team. Febbraro (2007: 120-123) suggests a number of positive leadership behaviours necessary to encourage female integration into the combat arms, although they could apply to any military occupation: a positive attitude towards women in the combat arms; not singling women out; accepting alternative styles of leadership; refraining from gender stereotyping and from using sexist humour and sexist language; gender-free performance standards; not defining gender integration issues as simply a woman’s problem; acknowledging and dealing with gender differences; understanding family issues. There certainly needs to be more research conducted concerning how all these factors affect gender in the military. A gender perspective would also improve peacekeeping research.

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## ENDNOTES

1. It is important to note that military sociology is a relatively new field. Boene (2000) tells us that only 5 per cent of publications on the military appeared before 1942.
2. This theme has been picked up in many studies. For example, McCormick (1998) refers to it as “corporate” vs. the “muddy boots” army in the US. The US Army is seen as divided into subgroups: “In one army, scrupulously groomed generals in pressed uniforms and spit-shined shoes ready themselves for battles over budgets and end strength on Capitol Hill. In the other, captains in wrinkled fatigues and dusty combat boots prepare their overworked units for uncertain mission in unknown places” (McCormick 1998: 21).
3. For a detailed description of the Institutional/Occupational model as applied to the CF see Winslow (1997).
4. For a review of these traditions see Boëne (1990).
5. There are also greater demands for transparency and public accountability. For details see Kasurak (2003).
6. For details on the integration of women in the Canadian Forces see Winslow and Dunn (2002).
7. Among the important pieces of legislation affecting the Canadian Forces are: *The Canadian Human Rights Act* (1978); the equality section (Section 15) of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* which came into effect on April 17, 1985; and the *Employment Equity Act, 1996* which determined that every Canadian citizen has the right to discrimination-free employment and promotion and that public institutions will strive to be representative of the public they serve.
8. For example, as part of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Army organized an event in the lobby of its headquarters, with the participation of the Chief of the Defence Staff and the Army Commander. In addition to listening to speeches and touring information booths, participants could listen to ethnic music and taste a variety of international cuisines. The event also included a continuous showing of “Honour Before Glory” – a documentary film about Canada’s all Black military battalion which fought in WW I. In addition, Army corridors are plastered with various posters celebrating events such as “Black History Week.”
9. In a recent article in *Foreign Affairs* (10 November 2009) Richard Kohn argues that Senior military officers who resign over policy disagreements with civilian leaders undermine the principle of civilian control over the military and damage the professionalism of the U.S. armed forces.
10. For details on this argument in the UK and Canada see Winslow and Dandeker (2000).
11. This section is largely based upon my 2009a article: “Gender Mainstreaming: Lessons for Diversity.” *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*.

12. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. CEDAW came into effect in 1981 and is one of the most ratified treaties in the UN system with 185 State signatories.
13. The Committee is part of the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, which is in the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.
14. See <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.htm> for details.
15. See [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/windhoek\\_declaration.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/windhoek_declaration.pdf) for details.
16. The Gender Advisor's role is to promote, facilitate, and monitor the incorporation of gender perspectives into peacekeeping operations.
17. See Gender and Security Sector Reform Toolkit recently published by UN-INSTRAW and DCAF – the Geneva Center for Democratic Control of the Armed Forces available at <http://www.dcaf.ch/publications/kms/index.cfm>.
18. The military's patriarchal attitudes are reflected in attitudes towards prostitution which is often considered a necessary evil. Prostitution is associated with military bases around the world and the increase in the number of people selling sexual favors for monetary gain increases during deployments. This has been a major complaint of locals concerning UN missions – young girls leaving school to earn money selling sexual favours.
19. See <http://www.womenwarpeace.org/unifem/framework> for details.
20. UNIFEM's program supports women's groups in Afghanistan, Haiti, Liberia, Rwanda, Timore-Leste and Uganda.
21. Women number 1534 out of a total of 79,269 military personnel. See <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/contributors/gender/2008gender/feb08.pdf>
22. Refugees International (2004) estimates that up to 40 per cent of Liberian women were raped during the fourteen year civil war that ended in 2003.
23. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fp.htm>
24. In 1989 a Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ordered the Canadian Forces to fully integrate women into all occupations, including the combat arms.
25. The Peacebuilding Commission was established in 2006. It requires a high level of international cooperation, and includes an Organizational Committee (made up of 31 member countries) and country-specific committees (this includes country representatives as well as all the relevant contributors such as regional organizations, regional banks and international financial institutions). The Commission's mission statement is described on its website as follows: "The Peacebuilding Commission will marshal resources at the disposal of the international community to advise

and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict recovery, focusing attention on reconstruction, institution-building and sustainable development, in countries emerging from conflict” (See United Nations, 2006, *United Nations Peacebuilding Commission*, available at <http://www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding/> for details) By improving coordination and reducing duplication of efforts among the many actors who become involved in a country experiencing or coming out of conflict, it is believed that the Peacebuilding Commission will improve overall efficiency and reduce the likelihood of a costly relapse into conflict. The primary aim of the Commission is to strengthen a country’s own capacity to recover after conflict and reduce the long-term necessity for recurring peacekeeping operations.

26. The UN has expectations that are spelled out in a code of conduct. However, when Refugees International asked military and civilian leaders about troop conduct, they all pointed out that troops were issued cards printed with the UN Code of Conduct, which they carried with them at all times. But when refugees International asked those leaders and troops to see their cards, not a single person could produce one. (Martin 2005: 20) And even if they had one these cards, there was no guarantee that they would understand what conduct was expected.
27. According to Martin (2005: 13-16) senior management in the Liberian mission were slow to act on gender issues and in particular sexual exploitation. With this attitude by mission leadership employees were reluctant or unable to report sexual exploitation incidents. Whereas in Haiti senior management actively used the gender advisor and took the issue of sexual exploitation seriously, reinforcing the zero tolerance policy.

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the Canadian Department of National Defence on army culture and the role of that culture in the breakdown of discipline. When she held the Chair of Social Anthropology (development and social transformation processes) at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam, she worked on human security. She has conducted field research in theatre with Canadian units in the former Yugoslavia, the Golan Heights and Afghanistan, has deployed on NATO exercises on land and on a submarine. She is currently working as a cultural anthropologist at the US Army Logistics University in Virginia.

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