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An introduction to gender and the military

Rachel Woodward and Claire Duncanson

[A] Why a handbook of gender and the military?

This Handbook is rooted in three observations. The first is about the significance of the relationships between gender and the military, about just how fundamental an understanding of gender is to comprehending military forces, institutions, activities and effects, and in turn how important these are to comprehending how gender works as a social construct and a social force. The second is about the complexity of these relationships, for the connections between gender and the military are not necessarily obvious or straightforward (though they might be) but are moulded by a plethora of contexts, activities, people, social processes and practices. The third observation underpinning this Handbook is about the fluidity and dynamism of these relationships, for they are never static or inevitable but rather change over a range of timescales, are prompted by military transformations, are subject to shifts in gender politics, and are influenced by developments from the local to the global in geopolitical and economic events and circumstances. The relationships between gender and the military, then, are never incidental, straightforward or static. The purpose of this Handbook is to capture and explore something of this significance, complexity and dynamism.

If the relationships between gender and the military are significant, what does that actually mean? Significant in what ways? Significant to whom? Why? In this introductory section, we argue that the significance stems from three major sources: the nature of militaries as gendered organisations, the importance of militaries as sources for understanding gender, and

the centrality of militaries as institutions of security. We then go on, in the remainder of this introductory chapter, to explain our insistence on taking a multi-disciplinary approach to understanding gender and the military. We introduce each of the chapters and conclude with a brief assessment of emergent issues and research agendas.

[B] Militaries as gendered institutions

Militaries in terms of their organisation, their personnel, their activities and their effects are gendered institutions.[1] This bears being baldly stated, because the gendering of military institutions is not a peripheral, additional or incidental issue but is foundational to them. Whilst the historical marginalisation of women across modern states has meant that all institutions of the state are masculine to some extent, the degree to which this is the case in military institutions is striking. This is not just because of their numerical domination by men. In terms of their structures and cultures, historically and into the present, state militaries are gendered male and masculine. As Cynthia Cockburn has observed, 'more important than numbers in a gender analysis is uncovering the differentiation and asymmetry of masculine and feminine as governing principles, as idealized qualities, as practices, as symbols. One thing you can say about militaries is: these are not feminine cultures' (Cockburn 2001: 16). Crucially, she goes on to note, what follows is another perception: 'Even in social worlds where one sex prevails, as in most military systems, a gender power system is not lacking. For male dominant systems involve a hierarchy between men, producing different and unequal masculinities, always defined in relation not only to each other but to women' (ibid).

As gendered institutions with their own specific structures and organisational cultures, militaries shape their members' behaviours through the construction and reproduction of norms, and the development of rules and policies governing individual activities. In turn,

people within militaries have to negotiate the gender politics of the institution and in their strategies to do this may contribute to the shaping of the institution. As gendered institutions, militaries shape the daily lives and lived experiences of those working within or alongside them, and of those living with a military presence or military effects. These experiences are felt, imagined and understood in profoundly different ways by different people, thus informing different behaviours and strategies, from resistance to reinforcement and everything in between. In studying these gendered institutions, we would emphasise not only the need to capture and map those differential experiences and responses but also the necessity of thinking through the range of scales of inquiry – from the individual and embodied to the inter-institutional and international – that approaches towards experiences with and of military institutions can take.

Militaries, furthermore, are national institutions; there is geographical specificity to the ways in which they work and take effect as gendered organisations. Although, as we discuss below and elsewhere in this volume, the connection between the military and the nation-state may be dynamic and contingent, it is also obviously visible not least because of the symbolic functions it serves for underscoring state power. Yet how, exactly, that set of connections between gender, military institutions, state power and the identity and imaginary of the nation-state are constructed, articulated and reproduced will vary enormously between nation-states.

Individual negotiations and national imaginations of a gendered military are significant not only in and of themselves but also because they are indicative of capacities and potential for institutional change. Transformations in military institutions have complex origins and effects. In looking at change, militaries provide a particularly interesting case for scholars

interested in how institutional change might further gendered justice, not least because militaries so often present ‘the hard case’. Military institutions are extremely gendered in comparison with institutions such as parliaments, governments, political parties and domestic and international courts, which have long been of substantial interest to feminist political scientists looking for possibilities for change towards greater gender equity (see, for example, Lovenduski 2005; Waylen 2007; Mackay et al. 2010). There is also an established feminist sociology literature (see for example Acker 1992, 2006; Kantor 1993) which has tried to explain existing limits to gender equality in institutions in order to understand the conditions required for progressive change. This scholarship has generated many insights and concepts which can be tested in the military context, as some contributors to this Handbook do (see for example, Carreiras, Chapter 7). In turn, political scientists and sociologists might have things to learn from feminists’ attempts to transform the military, as discussed by Kennedy-Pipe in Chapter 2 and Duncanson in Chapter 3. If change is achievable in military institutions, what might be possible elsewhere?

This point about militaries as gendered institutions with potential for change is, in our view, a critical one for this Handbook. As Duncanson shows in Chapter 3, a strong tradition in feminist scholarship views militaries as inherently masculinist and inevitably bound up with the execution of lethal (male) violence. This critique has been useful in expanding understanding of the gendered nature and effects of military power and its connections with other forms of gendered violence. Yet the point of a feminist politics is to inculcate progressive change. Military institutions, however regressive they may be, need to sit firmly within our sights as a locus for engagement and a focus for change, not least because of their significance in efforts to establish security (see also Duncanson and Woodward 2016).

[B] Militaries as sources for understanding gender

Research into gender and the military is significant too because constructions of gender in military contexts have much wider resonance beyond military institutions themselves. The ways that gender is defined, constructed, performed and shapes lives and experiences in military contexts are profoundly influential on wider social understandings of what gender is. Social and academic understandings of what gender means in terms of gendered identities, masculinities and femininities, are centrally informed by military cultures, ideals, practices and histories. Masculinities and militaries have been intertwined in the history of the nation-state – in the history of empire (Enloe 1989; Dawson 1994) and resistance to it (Parpart 2008; 2015). As a result, militaries have influenced our ideas about what it means to be a man, our very definition of masculinity. As Connell puts it, 'No other arena has been more important for the definition of hegemonic masculinity in European and American culture . . .' (Connell 1995: 213). This is interesting to interrogate in and of itself, as the rich literature on military masculinities and their hegemonic and dominant status shows, which looks not only at the role of gender identities (primarily masculinities) within military contexts but also at the wider reach of these archetypes and ideals socially and culturally. These articulations of military masculinities (and indeed femininities) are simultaneously cultural, political and social, with resonance in fields as disparate as analyses of the military-industrial-media-entertainment complex and its political-economic and representational effects (Der Derian 2001), or examinations of the co-construction of military participation and citizenship (see for example Cowen's analysis of military workfare [Cowen 2008; see also Elshtain and Tobias 1990]). Military constructions of gender identities have also informed gender-focused studies of the experiences of work and workplace cultures more generally.

Furthermore, because of the ever-present possibility of military transformations and the inherent instability within militaries' gendered cultures and structures, the implications of change in military contexts are interesting for wider societal definitions of masculinity and femininity. For instance, cultural expectations of appropriate military masculine behaviour in many national and cross-cultural imaginaries are arguably shifting away from a central focus on traits and practices associated with physical resilience, bravery, toughness and aggression, towards traits and practices which include caring and compassion, communication and flexibility, and this in part reflects and perhaps also reinforces military transformations. Change is inevitable, as gender is never stable and always relational – as Butler (1990) reminds us with her insights about gender's continual reproduction in order to establish the effects that it names.

Given that militaries are significant sources for wider social understandings of gender, the question which then follows is about the mechanisms through which that influence works. Influence is not a one-way transfer between two neatly established spheres of 'military' and 'civilian' (although it may be presented as such – see, for example, military complaints about 'civilianisation' following strategies for greater gender inclusivity within military forces, or civilian complaints about militarisation following strategies for the involvement of military personnel and thus values in educational contexts). Rather, the mechanisms of influence are complex, dialectical relationships between relatively porous communities with different but overlapping agendas, priorities, cultures and understandings. Our point is that the mechanisms for the cross-fertilisation between military and civilian constructions of gender need to be mapped in all their complexities as part of a feminist strategy to make gender visible. Furthermore, a gender-focused analysis can provide some powerful tools to cut through the impasse that bedevils many civil–military relations debates, because at the core

of approaches that make gender central are understandings about the significance of relationality (because they foreground relationalities between masculinities and femininities), complexity (because they necessarily take account of the political, the social, the economic and the cultural) and transformability (because, as we have noted, changes to existing gender orders lie at the heart of feminist analyses).

[B Militaries as security institutions

A third reason for the significance of the relationships between gender and the military follows from the centrality of militaries as institutions of security. Military practices for achieving security are necessarily gendered because of the gendered nature of militaries. The ways in which the very concept of security is defined are gendered. In dominant understandings of world politics, security has meant the ability of states to defend themselves from armed attack, its importance underscored by the lack of overarching 'world government' to guarantee law and order. Traditionally, the security that military forces – along with policing and state intelligence services – provide has been such state security. This form of security is generally deemed to be the first and foremost priority of state leaders. Militaries have traditionally been a central part of the idea of the modern state, and nearly all states have a military. For decades in many contexts, militaries have existed to exert state-legitimated armed force and have had the state-sanctioned monopoly to do this.

In recent decades, the militaries of many economically advanced capitalist economies have been seen to have undergone significant transformations. Their role in defending the state and its interests has been complemented, some might say superseded, by a range of other priorities, most notably upholding ceasefires, protecting civilians in peacekeeping operations, preventing mass human rights violations through humanitarian interventions, and supporting

post-conflict reconstruction. In many countries of the global South, state militaries have also begun to focus on operations other than war. The highest contributors to UN peacekeeping missions are Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Pakistan, Rwanda and Nepal. These top-five troop-contributing countries provide approximately 35 per cent of the total of around 105,000 UN uniformed personnel in 2016 (UN 2016). Reflecting the global structural economic inequalities perpetuated by the neoliberal economic imperatives of the dominant global North, peacekeeping activities are important to less developed economies as an income generator, but they also see their contribution as a source of national pride.

This trend is not universal or linear, of course, but in some states, militaries could thus be said to be shifting from a focus on state security to a focus on human security. The concept of human security, championed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the early 1990s, aimed to shift the referent of security from the state downwards to the individual, in recognition of the fact that state security did not guarantee the security of those within the state, and indeed that states were often the chief causes of the insecurity of their own people. Human security aimed to redefine security as encompassing freedom from want as well as freedom from fear. The idea of human security has been of interest to many feminists (Tripp et al. 2011), as it has aligned with long-standing feminist arguments about the need for a reformulation of the concept of security to capture the key threats to women, which are as likely to emanate from intimate partners as the attacks of an aggressor state, or to result from state abuse or neglect and regressive economic systems, a violence which is often termed structural violence (see for example Tickner 1992; Peterson 1992).

Many feminists have taken up positions of anti-militarism, arguing that because traditional military roles have required the wielding of state-sanctioned violence they are fundamentally

aggressive and oppressive institutions. However, an alternative feminist view considers militaries as instruments of security rather than instruments of violence and/or war. Given that security is contested – as above – thinking of militaries as having the goal of security enables us to be open to the idea that militaries could be 'forces for good'. It is not that we are wholly convinced that militaries *are* forces for good, but defining them primarily as instruments of war solely focused on the wielding of violence does not allow for that debate. It is a debate we think is crucially important, especially for feminists. It is important intellectually, because it prompts us to ask what militaries *are,* what they are for, what security might be, what security might mean for women. It is also important practically, because militaries focused on the facilitation of human security can play a positive role in the lives of the many people living in insecurity throughout the world, a disproportionate number of whom are women. We should also note that this debate about the possibility of seeing militaries as instruments of security rather than of violence is not solely the preserve of those starting from or explicitly arguing from a feminist position; it is also played out in discussions about the possibility or otherwise of thinking about military force from a cosmopolitan political position (see for example Elliot and Cheeseman 2004; Woodhouse and Ramsbotham 2005).

Furthermore, within democratic state contexts, armed forces are subordinate to civilian leadership – there is no iron law which states that militaries are fundamentally about the use of violence. For sure, this is how state militaries have originated, but this does not mean that this is how they must continue. For citizens in democracies then, militaries are what we make of them. Both military and security are social constructs, where the possibility of change exists. For feminists, activists and scholars concerned about peace, it seems important not to concede the point that militaries are capable of reform, including quite fundamental reform.

In other words, seeing militaries as *security* (vis-à-vis war) institutions enables us (scholars, activists and/or feminists) to avoid prejudging militaries as *a priori* problematic. Instead, seeing militaries as security institutions enables us to examine when and how different states or groups decide to deploy them as instruments of violence (as has been the dominant choice through history and the prevailing starting point in international relations theorising), or when and how they might deploy them in the interests of human security, including women's security (as arguably some states, such as Sweden, have begun to do). This is a debate which plays out in lively fashion in the pages of this Handbook.

[A] Who is this book for?

As should be clear by now, in producing this Handbook we wanted to focus debate on gender and the military. Our focus, then, goes beyond gender and military violence. We are not just interested in war, violence and conflict but in all facets of militaries and militarism. Some of these of course make violence possible and are in turn part-constituted by violence, but not all our chapters are centrally concerned with military violence. In that sense, our focus is both broader and narrower than other recent handbooks on gender and war (Cohn 2012; Sharoni et al 2016; Lair and Dixon Vuic 2017): it is not confined to conflict, violence and war, but it is tied to the military as institution. The focus is on militaries primarily as state institutions but also including groups which are military in their effects though not in origin, such as private security and dissenting non-state military entities. We are interested in military organisation, in how those military institutions are organised and the ways this shapes and is shaped by gender. We are interested in military activities and personnel, in what is done by people working in those institutions and what happens as a consequence. We are interested in military power and its relationships to gender in how those institutions, their organisation,

their activities and their personnel operate, and we are interested in how that power comes to be valorised, dominant, challenged and changed.

The study of gender and the military is not the preserve of any one discipline. This is evident in how some of the most influential texts about gender and the military (their influence apparent not least in the frequency of their citation in the chapters which follow) originate in academic disciplinary areas as disparate as political science, women's studies and management studies. The multi-disciplinarity of the study of gender and the military is clear in this volume in the range of backgrounds and perspectives brought to bear by our authors. These disciplines include feminist, women's and gender studies; sociology, including military sociology and criminology; political science; international relations; war studies and peace studies; anthropology; human geography; and psychology. Emergent cross-disciplinary approaches are also evident with chapters from authors working within terrorism studies and critical military studies. This Handbook will be of interest not only to those who see themselves sitting firmly within one of these disciplinary approaches but also to those who sit astride many disciplinary homes. Militaries are complex institutions and this complexity necessarily demands that studies of them proceed with a range of points of focus informed by diverse conceptual and methodological tools. An explicit intention in developing this Handbook was to look across the range of (primarily) the social sciences to bring different perspectives into dialogue by showing alternative approaches to specific topics, or by including discussion of topics about which some disciplines are relatively silent.

As an academic text, this Handbook is not targeted directly at a general readership. However, the chapters have been written to be accessible to the curious. We hope that this includes personnel from military forces themselves and the wider defence community, from

individuals involved in policy-making and development in governments and defence departments to those charged with operational practice.

[A] An outline of the *Palgrave International Handbook of Gender and the Military*

The structure and contents of this Handbook reflect an intention towards range and depth, and also the pragmatism inherent in any editorial exercise. The identification of authors and topics for inclusion was guided by three principles. First, we were keen to recognise the significance, complexity and dynamism of debates about gender and the military. This in turn has led to the inclusion of chapters on very established topics within that debate (such as the gendering of organisations, military masculinities, or women's military participation) as well as chapters reflecting emergent areas of concern amongst scholars (such as the experience of transgender military personnel, the experiences of counterinsurgency operations and of deserters). Second, we have been committed to including a range of voices in debates on gender and the military. This in turn prompted our seeking contributions from scholars across the range of academic experience, from those at an earliest career stage (including several whose contributions draw on recently completed PhD research) to very established scholars. We have been particularly interested in showcasing the work of scholars offering new approaches to established concepts and topics, and who have aspired to taking an international approach to the subject. Third, we have been alert to methodological pluralism, a reflection in part of the multi-disciplinary context for the study of gender and the military. This in turn encouraged us to include contributions from authors using a range of research techniques, forms of data, data sources, and techniques of data analysis.

The result is a volume which shows lively engagement from different perspectives about key issues pertaining to the gender–military nexus. The majority of our authors would identify as

feminist in their approach and politics, but what that actually means in terms of academic practice, choice of conceptual framing, underpinning epistemology and personal politics varies greatly across the chapters. This of course is a reflection of a confident and mature understanding across academic disciplines accepting of the diversity and nuance behind the single label of 'feminist' along with the centrality of ideas about justice and progressive change inherent in the idea of feminism.

We also want to make brief points about, respectively, temporal and geographical scope. The emphasis of this Handbook is deliberately contemporary. The choice to focus exclusively on gender and the military in the present is not to deny the significance of events, practices and consequences of issues around gender and military forces in other historical periods, nor to discount the significance of scholarship by historians on this (see contributions to Higate 2003; Noakes 2006). However, chronological and historical approaches are hard to achieve satisfactorily because of the inevitable requirement to make decisions about what to include and exclude, and the differentials in quantities and reliability of evidence from different historical contexts making cross comparisons over time problematic. Furthermore, chronological approaches can risk essentialising through claims that some phenomena – an example would be women's military participation – are universal, and can flatten out the debates and draw comparisons between events and social phenomena which should not really be compared. What this Handbook *does* do, however, is provide in many chapters the historical contexts to the specific phenomenon under investigation. In terms of geographical reach, although international in title and in intent, almost inevitably for a book published in English, there is a strong presence from Anglophone contexts and authors writing in English. Additionally, even in a Handbook of this size, the possibilities for comprehensive global coverage are somewhat limited. That said, and as many chapters make clear, there is a

geographical specificity and scale to discussions about gender and the military which informs and underpins many of the arguments set out in this book (see also Soeters and van der Meulen 2009).

In the remainder of this section, we introduce the chapters in this Handbook with a brief summary. Abstracts for each chapter are also available through the publisher's website.[2]

[B] Part I: Concepts, approaches and methods

This Handbook starts with the six chapters of Part I, which collectively set out to explain and explore the most significant theoretical, conceptual and methodological approaches through which the relationships between gender and the military have been studied. The process of categorisation of ideas and approaches into chapters inevitably implies a separation or distinction between approaches which may be artificial or contrived. However, because feminist approaches have dominated the study of gender and the military, and because feminist approaches are characterised by differences in emphasis and purpose, it is necessary to explore their range. Allocating six chapters enables us to do this, but we acknowledge here that most scholars do not fall neatly into one or other box – the chapters are not meant to convey mutually exclusive perspectives, approaches or methods.

Caroline Kennedy-Pipe in Chapter 2 introduces us to liberal feminist perspectives. Liberal feminists tend to be focused on issues of equality and rights. Their main concern regarding the military, therefore, has been campaigning for women to have equal access to join the military, and equal treatment, including freedom from harassment, as military personnel, and this chapter charts the development of these arguments. Claire Duncanson in Chapter 3 shows how anti-militarist feminists, reflecting a distinction within feminism more broadly between

liberal and radical approaches, take issue with the idea that access and equality in military institutions is possible. Anti-military feminism argues that this hope is misplaced and works against women's interests, and this chapter explores the arguments that feminists should instead focus on challenging militarism because of the devastating effects of physical, structural and ecological violence, and the inherent misogyny of the military as an institution. Chapter 4 takes the debate on the politics of the study of gender and the military forward. Victoria Basham and Sarah Bulmer explore how an emergent critical military studies approach poses a challenge to established feminist concepts because of the inherent instability and potential for contestation of gendered boundaries. They suggest that such an approach opens up a space to think differently about resistance and feminist praxis with regards to questions about gender and the military, both within and beyond the academy.

We then turn to methodological approaches, structuring the discussion through chapters on, respectively, quantitative and qualitative approaches, echoing the foundational epistemological distinction within the social sciences between deductive and inductive approaches to the generation of knowledge. This distinction is, of course, a heuristic; research on gender and the military draws on both approaches, to different degrees and for different reasons. The distinction between methodologies here has been made in order to explore the range of questions, debates and functions that different methodologies and research methods enable when it comes to talking about gender and the military, and the authors of both chapters make their cases for the approaches they espouse with passion and a hint of provocation. In Chapter 5, Lana Obradovic defends the use of quantitative studies into gender and the military. As she points out, feminist scepticism about positivist approaches with their suggestion of researcher externality and objectivity towards the social world and their (necessary) reduction of the complexities of gender to numeric indicators and variables has

rendered quantitative studies rare within feminism. She argues for the important role that quantitative methods have to play in understanding gender–military relationships, not least because of their utility in debates and engagements with military institutions and policy-makers. Lauren Greenwood in Chapter 6 provides an overview of the opportunities and challenges posed by different qualitative methodologies and research techniques, including textual analysis, interactive encounters and ethnographic engagements. She also explores how and why researcher reflexivity, a concern for scholars working within critical military studies and within some feminist traditions, is so important. Both Obradovic and Greenwood provide some pointers for aspiring researchers.

Part 1 concludes with Helena Carreiras in Chapter 7 providing a guide to approaches to gender and the military which have focused on the organisational dynamics in military contexts that are so central to the gendering of military institutions. She reviews the key concepts and debates in the study of gender and organisations which have been influential in studies of militaries as gendered, examining their theoretical insights for issues such as the integration of women, masculinities in military cultures and sexual orientation, concluding with an evaluation of recent theoretical shifts and their impact on the sociological study of gender dynamics in militaries. This chapter provides the link between the broad theoretical and conceptual issues outlined across feminist studies of gender and the military to the more specific issues dealt with in Part II.

[B] Part II: Exploring state militaries

Part II, exploring state militaries, looks to set out in detail how a range of social constructs shape the experience of participating in state militaries, and influence state militaries' responses to the challenges they pose. Chapters in Part II examine how social constructions

of identity, ethnicity, sexuality and (dis)ability help theorise and understand gender and military connections, and are also issues of practical importance for state militaries and those who participate in them. Central to all the chapters is an insistence on the visibility of gender to fully comprehend the factors and forces which shape people's experiences in and of state military institutions and modes of organisation. These chapters tie discussion of conceptual approaches to illustrative empirical examples.

Orna Sasson-Levy in Chapter 8 makes the case for an intersectional approach to studying the social architecture of militaries, drawing on examples from the USA and Israel. For men, the intersection between ethnicity and gender positions them within a military hierarchy, whereas conversely for women this intersection determines their position inside or outside the military itself. Sasson-Levy concludes that not only are the intersections of gender with ethnicity significant but so too are those with class, nationality and religiosity. Nina Rones and Kari Fasting in Chapter 9 introduce military masculinities, a key focus for many interested in the connections between gender and the military. Taking the idea of complicit masculinities and the role of complicity in maintaining social orders, they look at the Norwegian experience. In this context, an intersection between ideas and ideals of Norwegian national identity and national constructs of the role of national military forces were significant in a national conversation about the global roles of the Norwegian armed forces, and Rones and Fasting explore how ideas of military masculinity were influential to discourse and practice. Both chapters demonstrate the extent to which the nexus between gender and the military extends far beyond the narrow focus of much contemporary policy and media discourse on women's military participation to include asymmetries of power along the lines of gendered identities and the troubling of the seemingly unified categories of 'men' and 'women' within military institutions which these gendered identities presuppose.

Part II then turns to questions of sexuality and sexual identity. In Chapter 10, Sarah Bulmer examines sexuality and its regulation by state militaries. She shows how the opening of militaries to gay and lesbian personnel, seen as a victory for sexual minorities, masks a more complex story around the move from heterosexual discrimination to sexual tolerance. Bulmer argues that gender scholars need to direct their attention to the complexity and co-constitution of gender and sexuality in military contexts, and look beyond the debate over subversion by and co-option of sexual minorities. M Sheridan Embser-Herbert in Chapter 11 considers the position of transgender personnel within state militaries. Focusing on the USA, the chapter considers the issues framing the US military's exclusionary position with regard to transgender personnel and provides points of comparison with other state militaries. Assessing the bases of exclusion as largely antiquated or without merit, through an examination of the detail of transgender lives and experiences, Embser-Herbert advocates the repeal of prohibitions on transgender military service. This chapter illustrates perfectly the dynamism inherent to gender issues in military contexts. In the USA, policy and practice and indeed a broader politics around transgender people in the military shifted dramatically between her starting to write the chapter and the submission of the manuscript of this Handbook to the publishers, which came concurrently with the repeal of prohibitions on transgender service in June 2016 in the USA.

The next two chapters both explore the experiences of spouses of military personnel – primarily female partners – in two different contexts and from two contrasting perspectives. In Chapter 12, Alexandra Hyde considers the socio-spatial dynamics of a military base overseas from the perspective of British Army wives, focusing on the micro-politics of military power and how these are understood and experienced in everyday lives by those

subject to this dynamic. She considers what this indicates about women's agency as both subjects and agents of militarisation, sometimes complicit in its articulation and sometimes active in its contestation. In Chapter 13, Cristina Rodrigues da Silva considers the dynamics of life for military wives living in border regions of the northern Amazon in Brazil. Comparing and contrasting experiences between two different locations, a regional municipality and a more remote border platoon, her chapter takes an anthropological approach to exploring the relationships between the military and the family, and the dynamics which establish and complicate these relationships, including the construction of the military as itself 'family'. The comparisons and contrasts between the experiences of wives in Brazil and the UK is a reminder of the importance of geographical context to considerations of gender and the military.

A pair of chapters then follow which consider violence within militaries. Violence has long been the core business of militaries, yet, as our two chapters on violence within the military show, such violence has specific, pernicious manifestations in terms of gender relations. In Chapter 14, Harriet Gray argues that domestic abuse within military families needs to be understood as one of the many sites in which military gender identities are constructed. The chapter examines how women experiencing abuse in their relationships with UK personnel are disciplined around ideals of military wifehood, how domestic abuse is a form of military violence which contributes towards the reproduction of militarism. Ben Wadham in Chapter 15 shows how particularly violent rituals and practices – hazing, bastardisation, sexual assault, rape – sit entangled within military traditions. Using concepts of male fraternity and military masculinities to make sense of this violence, Wadham argues that military responses to violence within militaries are indicative of the liberal potential (or otherwise) of authoritarian institutions.

Two more chapters then consider the lived experiences of the consequences of gendered military violence. The two chapters together demonstrate the complementarity between different approaches to similar issues. In Chapter 16, Rachel Dekel and Miriam Goldberg use the social model of disability to understand the experiences of women military veterans with disabilities, contextualising this experience within an approach which foregrounds the psychological and sociological construction of (dis)ability. They explore the rates and causes of disabilities, both physical and mental, amongst female military veterans, and examine the effects of these on female military veterans' families, identifying gaps in knowledge about this under-researched issue. In Chapter 17, Hilary Cornish focuses on gender and mental health in military contexts, and in her analysis explores the links between military culture, emotional control and the social construction of masculinity. Through assessment of issues such as pre-existing vulnerabilities, stigma around mental health problems and responses to the traumas of combat and military sexual assault, she argues that a gender focus makes visible the complexities and politics of mental health problems in military contexts.

Concluding Part II, in Chapter 18 Godfrey Maringira addresses an under-explored aspect of military masculinities by looking at the identities of personnel who desert from the military. Drawing on the case of former Zimbabwean soldiers, he explores how the dynamics of gender and nation play out in the post-military identities of deserters living in exile. These individuals maintain a military identity rooted in the masculinities of soldiering into which they have been socialised through training, and Maringira explains how this is manifest in a specific exiled post-military identity.

[B] Part III: State militaries in action

In Part III, we turn to consider state militaries in action. Our chapters in this section draw on many of the concepts introduced in Parts I and II to consider how gender intersects with different operational contexts and transformations. These range from direct combat, counterinsurgency and peacekeeping to humanitarianism, state political transformations and desertion. Anthony King in Chapter 19 discusses the issue of women in direct combat roles. He looks at the extent to which women have been accepted – or not – in combat posts because of their professional ability and the valorisation of that, and notes also the compromises and challenges which women in these posts have to navigate. In Chapter 20, Synne Lastaad Dyvik considers counterinsurgency (COIN) operations, focusing on the way in which COIN operations seem to require military masculinities at variance with the traditional combat model. Although such operations are presented within military doctrine as potentially less overtly aggressive, competitive and violent than the masculinities associated with combat roles, Dyvik urges feminist caution, with reference to mixed responses to the use of gender-specific roles in COIN such as Female Engagement Teams.

Analysis of the gendered nature and politics of changing military roles and organisation are taken further in the next two chapters. Ryerson Christie in Chapter 21 discusses gender and humanitarianism, looking at the conceptualisation of this activity as gendered and the manifestations of this in militarised contexts. He notes in particular the situating within humanitarian narratives of white western men and occasionally women as protectors, which in turn provides a space for the justification of humanitarian interventions, which in turn renders some forms of militarisation acceptable. The gendered nature and politics of military organisational changes at a state level are further explored in Chapter 22, where Lindy Heinecken considers how gender dynamics shape militaries in states undergoing transitions to democracy, a change which can produce substantial shifts in the functions and use of

military forces. Focusing on the South African context and drawing on narratives from women peacekeepers, she looks at the promises and actualities around the integration of women within the post-Apartheid South African National Defence Forces, including the potential and limits of gender mainstreaming policies designed to enhance the inclusion of women personnel.

[B] Part IV: Military actors beyond the state

Part IV draws together contributors who engage with ideas about gender and military activities pertaining to actors working in non-state military contexts. In Chapter 23, Amanda Chisholm and Saskia Stachowitsch look at private military and security companies from a feminist political economy approach to military outsourcing, which sees it as a gendered and racialised process. They theorise private military security as an issue of labour and discuss how the gendered and racialised processes which shape this labour market play out across the everyday lives of men and women in the private security industry's recruitment sites in the global South.

The next three chapters look at supra-national contexts and innovations. In Chapter 24, Megan Bastick examines gender and security-sector reforms as they shape militaries in transitions to democracy and/or out of conflict. The chapter uses the example of NATO efforts in Afghanistan to reform the governance and culture of the security sector in gender-sensitive ways, and to recruit women into the Afghan security forces, to illustrate the challenges and tensions inherent in security-sector reform. Matthew Hurley in Chapter 25 looks at the complexities and challenges of the inclusion of gender issues within NATO. Drawing on the example of NATO's engagement with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and the associated women, peace and security agenda, Hurley examines the

attempts to reframe the construction of gender within the institution in a way that aligns with its existing values and goals.

The final three chapters in Part IV look at non-state military actors engaged in belligerent activity against states and state militaries. In Chapter 26, Katherine E. Brown examines gender and terrorist movements. She shows how gender configures the ideology and operations of terrorist organisations, with the result that for some groups women's empowerment becomes central, whilst for others it is denied. Brown goes on to look at both individuals, particularly the debates about female suicide bombers, and at state-level responses to terrorism, unpacking the gendered dynamics of both. In Chapter 27, Zoe Marks discusses the gendered dynamics of rebel groups and insurgent organisations, looking at the gendering of roles, responsibilities and social relations. Cross-national comparisons are considered as a means of understanding participation patterns in rebellions, coupled with examination of the individual experiences of violence and vulnerability within rebellion movements. The complexities of including gender policies within programmes of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, are then explored in Chapter 28 by Christopher Hills and Megan MacKenzie. Focusing on Liberia and Sierra Leone, they argue that such programmes continue to be biased against women and girls, despite significant developments towards gender sensitivity and gender inclusivity in post-conflict policy-making.

[B] Part V: Representations of gender and the military

The final section of this Handbook examines a range of ways in which the gender of military personnel is represented in different cultural forms. The focus of these contributors on the matter of cultural representation is a reminder that the relationships between gender and the

military are played out not only within military institutions and through the bodies and experiences of military personnel but also as a matter for culture and consumption. Our contributors in this section engage with variety of forms of representation, including the visual, the cinematic and the textual.

In Chapter 29, Chava Brownfield-Stein examines the visual representations of women combatants in popular news and social media. Developing her argument about the reinforcing effects of visual representations in the relationship between modes of thinking about gender and the military, she examines three images of women personnel from Israeli and Kurdish military contexts. Brownfield-Stein urges us to consider how images of women personnel can articulate arguments both about modern, professional, liberal military values, and about visual pleasure and fantasy around the image of the woman soldier.

Yvonne Tasker in Chapter 30 uses the example of US and UK film to explore the cinematic construction of military women. Taking a long overview of twentieth- and twenty-first-century cinema, she explores how Second World War films sought to reassure audiences about the containment of women's military service such that it did not challenge military and broader gender norms. Looking at more recent films, she argues that those engaging with questions of combat exclusion or with fantasies about war in science fiction worlds find a place for military women in ways that seek to make sense of present-day geopolitical tensions. Film is again a focus in Chapter 31, where Joanna Tidy looks at the role of popular culture in the production of gendered understandings of anti-war veterans and their politics. She uses the story of Ron Kovic and the literary, cinematic, musical and media re-articulations of his life story as a casualty of the Vietnam War to explore how this figure is

reproduced with reference to ideas of military masculinity, and how a broader politics of anti-militarism becomes possible through popular culture.

In Chapter 32, Rachel Woodward, Claire Duncanson and Neil Jenkings look at the genre of the military memoir to assess how this non-fictional, experientially based literary form engages with ideas of gender. They explore how the genre is gendered and how it portrays particular ideas about the constitution and expression of gender identities within military forces, including questions of women's military participation and of the roles and functions of armed forces within liberal democracies. They argue that memoirs have a utility in helping develop an informed understanding of the relationships between gender and military phenomena.

In the final chapter of Part V, and indeed the volume, Katharine Millar in Chapter 33 examines gendered representations of military deaths. She argues that what is commemorated and what is left unsaid around such deaths reflect normative understandings of gender, nationalism and the use of force, which constitute the social order through which such deaths are framed. Millar examines military deaths as social deaths, positioned at the intersection between private grief and collective mourning, and she examines how the state management of affect around military deaths produces and reproduces a gendered division of violent labour.

[A] Looking forward: emergent issues and future research agendas

In the final section of this Introduction, we take the opportunity to look forward beyond the contents and arguments of the Handbook to consider emergent issues and future research agendas that the process of editing this collection on gender and the military has identified.

The first such research agenda follows on from Orna Sasson-Levy's arguments in Chapter 8 that only intersectional approaches grasp the extent and complexity of how social difference structures inclusion and participation in military forces. This is a process that starts with recruitment. Both voluntary and conscripted participation in military forces are structured by differential access to resources and opportunities, as are the experiences of part-time or reservist participation, and participation in militarised and securitised jobs in the private security industry. Access can be a source of opportunity or a continuity of existing inequalities. It is a process that continues beyond recruitment and shapes the structuring of opportunity and experience throughout military careers, including retention patterns, career pathways and progression (or otherwise) through the rank structure, and experiences of demobilisation and release.

That military recruitment is unequally targeted at different socio-economic groups is not of course a novel issue within military sociology or for feminist scholarship of the military. As Claire Duncanson notes in Chapter 3, anti-militarist feminists (and indeed others) have long argued that recruitment to military forces has a gendered political economy which plays out in different ways in different national contexts. We arguably still do not know in enough detail, however, how this process has shifted over the last decade or so, over the course of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, how it plays out in non-western militaries, and how an intersectional analysis which moves beyond race and class might illuminate injustices. And we arguably still do not have enough intersectional analyses of the structuring of opportunity and experience throughout military careers: retention, promotion, demobilisation and release (although see Lutz 2008 and Moore 2013 for important contributions).

Second, we see opportunities for more in-depth study of familial experiences of military association as gendered. As Alex Hyde in Chapter 12 and Cristina Rodrigues da Silva in Chapter 13 both illustrate, the work of spouses in maintaining military capabilities is clear. What is less obvious, not least because of the paucity of research in this area, are the wider effects of military participation on other familial dynamics including parenting. As Rachel Dekel and Miriam Goldberg (Chapter 16) show, veterans with disabilities show different responses in their relationships with their children. The question which then follows is what the range of experience might be for parenting and the experience of childhood in military families in a range of different contexts, including those which involve family separation as a consequence of military mobilities. Similarly, we can ask about inter-generationality as a context where the gendering of military participation and experience is shaped by successive generational experiences.

Third, the gendering of the military veteran experience over different timescales and in different national contexts, although in many ways a long-standing issue, is emergent as an area of scholarly interest and concern across nation-states, not least as a consequence of the twenty-first century wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Furthermore, as the chapters by Godfrey Maringira (Chapter 18), Katherine E. Brown (Chapter 26), Zoe Marks (Chapter 27 Christopher Hills and Megan MacKenzie (Chapter 28), demonstrate, models of military veterancy which assume unproblematic demobilisation from state military forces are inappropriate in a range of different national contexts. The research agenda here is solidly empirical, focusing on how post-military lives play out differently for men and for women, and how their identification (or otherwise) as veterans and their agency (or otherwise) shapes post-military experience. It is a policy issue too, but also one which speaks to more abstract ideas around militarisation and civil-military relationships.

Fourth, we should note the changing nature of (in)security and of war beyond the shift to 'peace', 'humanitarian' and 'stabilisation' operations explored in this book. Given the way different security issues are gendered in their effects, we should be alert to the consequences of ongoing and emergent security issues for men and women, including forced mass migrations as a consequence of war and regional instability, and the security implications of the effects of global climate and environmental change, as well as the implications of these insecurities for militaries. There is also the question about the changing nature of military activities, including technological developments such as the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs or drones) and their potential gendered effects (see Masters 2005; Manjikian 2014), and the gendered political economies and divisions of labour which follow the outsourcing of military labour and labour in military contexts (Eichler 2015).

Finally, we want to conclude this Introduction with an observation about the politics of scholarship and activism on gender and military issues. We see in the chapters of this book a continuation of debates about the place, utility and contribution of feminist scholarship pertaining to gender and the military, and to military-related issues more broadly. The chapters present in some ways a broadly progressive narrative over time in terms of expanding possibilities for women, changing demands on men, and developing awareness of the centrality of gender within military institutions which reflect the substantial contributions of feminist scholarship and activism. However, as many of our chapters also show, this narrative of progress is not absolute and also has to be seen in the context of ongoing violence and insecurity in many areas of the world. Militaries may be changing in their steady inclusion of women, shifting masculinities, and changing gendered cultures, but security for many seems as remote a reality and problematic a concept as ever. Furthermore,

we are not complacent about the power of regressive politics to roll back the positive changes that have made around gender issues in, and pertaining to, military forces. In countering a regressive politics, we must remember that relationships between gender and the military are an issue for everyone interested in both gender and in military institutions, activities, personnel and effects. These relationships, then, are the responsibility of us all.

[A] Notes

[1]We use both the terms 'institution' and 'organisation' when referring to militaries, whilst recognizing that institution often has a broader range.

[2] See the Palgrave Connect website at: [publisher to insert correct web link here to abstracts].

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