

Gendering NATO: Analysing the Construction and Implementation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's Gender Perspective

Matthew E Hurley (2014)

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Title of Thesis:

**Gendering NATO: Analysing the Construction and Implementation of the
North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's Gender Perspective**

By

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Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the way in which the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is engaging with and attempting to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), a topic largely absent from international relations literature. Specifically, it offers an interrogation and theorisation of the development and implementation of NATO's '*gender perspective*' from official documentation and from a series of elite interviews with individuals working within the international, military structures of the alliance.

Drawing upon a composite methodology, framed by feminist theory, that centralises narrative and discourse, the thesis explores subjective understandings of gender and security. The research reveals that UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, is (re)interpreted by NATO in very specific ways that both reflect and challenge pre-existing gendered norms and power hierarchies within the Alliance. The experiences of military personnel working for NATO show how these individuals locate themselves within - and negotiate - these gendered norms and structures to develop a relevant, palatable and 'successful' gender perspective. The findings of this thesis therefore expose complex and contradictory constructions of (militarised) femininities and masculinities within NATO and the tensions that emerge when an international military alliance actively engages with the topic of gender.

In doing so this research makes a unique contribution to understandings of gender mainstreaming initiatives within international security organisations; in addition the research makes a novel contribution to the broader literature regarding feminist security studies, gender, war and militarism.

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List of Abbreviations

BI SCD 40-1	BI-Strategic Command Directive 40-1: Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Gender Perspective into the NATO Command Structure
BPA	Beijing Platform for Action (1995)
CEDAW	Convention to Eliminate all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CWINF	Committee for Women in NATO Forces
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
FSS	Feminist Security Studies
GAD	Gender Advisor
GFP	Gender Focal Point
FET	Female Engagement Team
IMS	International Military Staff (NATO)
IS	International Staff (NATO)
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (Afghanistan)
KFOR	NATO Kosovo Force
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCGP	NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives
NOGP	NATO Office on Gender Perspectives
NATO PPD	NATO Public Diplomacy Division
UNSCR 1325	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
WILPF	Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

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Introduction

This thesis examines the way in which the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) is engaging with and attempting to implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), a topic largely absent from international relations and security studies literature. Specifically, it offers an analysis of the development and implementation of NATO's '*gender perspective*' from *within* the international structures of the alliance. Drawing upon a composite methodology framed by feminist international relations literature, the thesis explores subjective understandings of gender and security. Combined with a critical theoretical approach that centralises narrative and discourse, this thesis contributes to both the literature on gender mainstreaming initiatives within international organisations as well as the broader, developing literature, surrounding feminist security studies. It explores, firstly, the (re)interpretation of UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda via official documents, doctrine and policy; secondly, it analyses how military personnel working for NATO locate themselves within, and negotiate, the gendered norms and structures of the organisation to develop a relevant and palatable gender perspective. In doing so, the complex and contradictory tensions that emerge when an international military alliance engages with the topic of gender are exposed. This introduction will set the background and the rationale for the thesis, outlining the aims and objectives of the research undertaken. It will conclude by setting out the thesis structure, giving an overview of the content and main arguments of each chapter.

Background

The unanimous adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in October 2000 was hailed as a significant achievement and advancement in the cause of addressing gender inequalities in the realm of international peace and security. The passage of UNSCR 1325 was symptomatic of the wider proliferation of a variety of gender mainstreaming initiatives both nationally and internationally following the Fourth UN World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. In the following thirteen years, UNSCR 1325 has received sustained critical attention both from the academic and the wider activist and NGO community – groups that were integral to the creation and adoption of the resolution (See Chapter 1, Section 2.1 for a detailed account of the genesis of UNSCR 1325). The initial, somewhat euphoric, notion that UNSCR 1325 (and gender mainstreaming initiatives, more broadly) held enormous transformative potential has been tempered by a sporadic and lacklustre implementation process. The conceptual language of UNSCR 1325 has also been subject to detailed critical revision highlighting how the resolution framed women as essentialised victims but also placed a disproportionate burden for the success of post

conflict reconstruction upon their shoulders (See for example, Shepherd, 2008; 2011). However, despite this UNSCR 1325 has continued to proliferate, providing the basis for a further six Security Council Resolutions (UNSCR 1820; 1888; 1889; 1960; 2106; 2122). To date, forty-three countries have also developed National Action Plans (NAPs) to integrate the provisions of the resolutions into their national military structures (to varying levels of commitment and success) and international organisations such as the European Union are also engaging with UNSCR 1325 on a supranational level (See Chapter 1, Section 1.2; 2.1).

Given this increasing international proliferation, NATO is a relative latecomer to UNSCR 1325. Indeed, NATO's first policy engagement was not until 2007 – a joint initiative with the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) - with an official strategic directive being developed in 2009. However, since that time NATO has engaged in a sustained and increasingly complex engagement with the resolution and (the alliance's interpretation of) its requirements (see Chapter 1, Section 3.2).

NATO is an incredibly complex political-military organisation. Established by the Washington Treaty in 1949 following the end of the Second World War - largely as a response to what was perceived to be an increasingly expansionist Soviet Union - NATO today consists of twenty-eight European and North American countries. These states are committed to collective military defence and the Alliance has been actively engaged in military operations since the end of the Cold War. The most significant role for NATO over the past decade has been the leadership of the International Security Assistance Force (IASF) in Afghanistan since August 2003¹. The sustained presence of NATO within Afghanistan has been subject to intense academic scrutiny, particularly in the context of the 9/11 attacks, the US-led invasion and what many feminist authors have identified as the appropriation of narratives of women's rights and gender equality to justify the continued presence of the Alliance in Afghanistan (for example, Hunt, 2002; Von der Lippe & Väyrynen, 2011; see also Chapter 2, Section 1.1.1 & 1.3). For the purposes of this research I focus on the military apparatus of NATO specifically – the participants are military personnel, working within NATO's International Military Staff (IMS) as well on active operations, as opposed to civilian personnel working within the International Staff (IS) at NATO HQ. Therefore 'NATO' as referred to in this thesis should be read with these caveats in mind (See Chapter 1, Section 3.1).

Rationale

Taking inspiration from Cynthia Enloe (2004), my interest in this area can best be described as an initial 'curiosity' that developed from my 2010 Master's thesis which attempted to identify and track similarities in the way gender was conceptualised, securitised and then

used within the United Nations, the US State Department and NATO. Whilst this research identified a wealth of material and research concerning the United Nations' multiple and complex gender initiatives and an increased focus on gender issues at the State Department under Hillary Clinton, NATO was under researched as a site of gender analysis. Gender mainstreaming policies were beginning to be produced in regards to UNSCR 1325, but little or no accounts of the *process* of their production or a *rationale* behind them was available. Therefore, rather than sate my curiosity, my master's research merely increased my desire to understand how gender mainstreaming initiatives were understood by individuals *within* NATO as well as the external representation of this process in publically available documents: what was the relationship between the two? As identified above, NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 is a relatively recent development, beginning in earnest in 2007. Undertaking this research offered a unique opportunity to trace the developments of this process as they were happening, and an opportunity to capture the views and experiences of individuals involved within that process.

The research therefore centralises the relationship between NATO as an organisation, the individuals that work within it and the policy they produce and enact. The resulting thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge by capturing the accounts of military personnel 'doing gender' within NATO at a particular historical moment, as well as exposing complex constructions of gender, power and identity within the context of an international security organisation as it engages with UNSCR 1325.

Thesis Aims

As noted above (and detailed further in Chapter 1) NATO is a complex political-military structure engaging in a myriad of what can loosely be described as gender mainstreaming initiatives. The aim of this thesis is to analyse the military component of the alliance specifically with a particular focus on a highly targeted group of military personnel. It is not the intention of this research to capture or analyse NATO in its entirety; nor is it to make a proscriptive judgement about whether NATO is 'doing' gender well or not, though it is the intent to explore the limitations and opportunities of this process as they were presented to me.

With this in mind, the research aims of this thesis can broadly be defined as follows:

- Firstly, by centralising the experiences of military individuals working within NATO, and the official documentation produced by the organisation in relation to UNSCR 1325, the thesis aims to critically analyse and theorise NATO as a *gendered* organisation.

- Secondly, the thesis aims to expose in what ways, and on what terms, UNSCR 1325 is *accepted* by NATO and to identify what *disruption* (if any) that engagement brings to the gendered norms and structures of the organisation and the individuals working within it.
- Thirdly, the thesis aims to explore the ways in which UNSCR 1325 is *resisted* and *controlled* by pre-existing (gendered) organisational norms and structures.
- Finally, the thesis seeks to investigate the ways in which NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 promotes and informs particular forms of *gender 'governance'* at an international, organisational and individual level.

These aims set the initial parameters and helped to frame the research undertaken. These aims also inform the analysis and frame the presentation of findings in Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8 and the conclusions in Chapter 9.

Thesis Structure

This thesis is broadly structured around two main parts: Chapters 1 to 4 provide the background to the study, a review of the relevant literature, as well as the theoretical positioning and methodological approaches taken; Chapters 5 to 9 detail the empirical research and analysis and present the key findings of this thesis. The specific content of each chapter is as follows:

Chapter One provides the context and background of this thesis in regards to the proliferation and contestation of gender mainstreaming initiatives - and their associated discourses - within international organisations. In doing so I track the emergence of what became known as the 'Women, Peace and Security' agenda from the passage of UNSCR 1325 in October 2000 to NATO's first official policy position regarding UNSCR 1325 in 2007. This chapter also details NATO's engagement with 'gender issues' more broadly as well as the development of specific institutional structures, such as the Committee on Women in NATO Forces (CWINF) and the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP). I also provide a working definition of how NATO is conceptualised within this thesis and what parts of the organisation are treated as a site of analysis. Rather than present a simple chronological account of these developments I situate them in relation to the key critical literature that draws attention to the tensions emerging from notions of discursive change, conceptual language and the genderedness of organisations – all central concerns of this thesis that inform the theoretical position and analysis in subsequent chapters. This chapter concludes by noting the absence of any academic critique of NATO's engagement

with UNSCR 1325, highlighting the novel, and original contribution to knowledge that this thesis makes.

Chapter Two provides a review of the feminist literature surrounding gender, war and militarism. I draw upon the key tensions identified in Chapter One concerning gender mainstreaming generally and UNSCR 1325 specifically – particularly the ‘persistence of militarism’ – to situate and contextualise these debates and the position of this thesis in relation to the wider existing literature. I begin with a discussion of the key contributions of feminist perspectives and analysis to the academic discipline of IR. This review explores the existing approaches to understanding and ‘giving voice’ to women’s experiences in international relations. In doing so I explore the tensions between anti-militarist feminist approaches and those of the ‘new feminist war studies’ (Sylvester, 2013) who centralise the experiences of women who work *within* the institutions of war therefore providing a rationale for the theoretical and methodological approaches used in this research; as well as its contribution to this existing literature.

Chapter Three sets out the key theoretical concepts utilised. Drawing upon the Feminist IR and Feminist Security Studies research outlined in Chapter Two this chapter provides the rationale for using Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) to situate NATO as an institution of (international) hegemonic masculinity. In this regard specific attention is paid to Raewyn Connell’s (1987; 1995; 2005) theoretical conceptualisation of hegemonic masculinity and gender orders, and its use when analysing military organisations. This chapter also centralises the work of Annica Kronsell (2005; 2006; 2012) to explore the notion that the presence of women (and certain men) within institutions of hegemonic masculinity is ‘*disruptive*’; that when combined with ‘disruptive’ policy processes (such as the development of a gender perspective) serve to expose the gendered nature of NATO as an organisation. In relation to these points, this chapter also explores the notion that gender mainstreaming, as an international norm of ‘good gender governance’, can result in forms of ‘narrative entrapment’ and themselves be a particular method for an organisation to (re)enforce power and control over the gendered individual.

Chapter Four provides the rationale for the methodological approach taken. I outline the justifications for a composite methodology that utilises narrative, documentary analysis and observation, in relation to the theoretical and conceptual framework outlined in Chapter Three. This chapter sets out the practical steps taken in undertaking the research - from research design to data collection - including the limitations and generalisability of such an approach. The relevant ethical considerations that were involved particularly in interviewing a specific, elite group of individuals will also be discussed. The chapter concludes with an

extended reflexive account of my role as researcher and co-constructor of knowledge, specifically in regards to positionality and considerations of gender and identity that informed the subsequent analysis.

Chapter Five provides the first of the empirical analysis chapters. It contextualises the subsequent three chapters by providing a detailed analysis of key documentation produced within NATO relating to UNSCR 1325. These documents include official NATO doctrine and policy as well as education and training material, publicity material and internal newsletters. These documents represent both internal and external publications; however all are authored by NATO as an international institution – not by a specific member state – or have been commissioned on behalf of the organisation and are available publically. Subjecting the documents to a feminist critical discourse analysis, this chapter asks the question ‘what is the problem represented to be’ (Bacchi, 2012)? And what effects does this framing of NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 have? Specific attention is paid to the way in which NATO’s gender perspective is defined and conceptualised. In doing so the analysis exposes the way in which (predominantly) women are positioned within the documentation – drawing upon traditional (essentialised) notions of victimhood and particular understandings of agency – in a way which ultimately promotes NATO’s operational effectiveness and force multiplication.

Chapter Six is the first of three chapters in which the accounts of individuals involved in producing and implementing NATO’s gender perspective provide a central focus. This chapter details how those individuals articulate understandings of gender and security through narratives of personal and professional experiences. It explores how participants spoke about and conceptualised NATO as a ‘male organisation’ as well as their constructions of ‘men’ and ‘women’ – specifically in regards different (essentialised) views of security. I argue that these accounts of ‘self’, of ‘other’, of experience and struggle with dominant masculine norms, are used by the participants to locate themselves and position their work within the gendered structures of NATO. The accounts therefore problematise the category ‘men’ and the position of ‘women’ within the highly masculinised norms and behaviours of the organisation; thereby illustrating the organisational constraints that inform the strategies developed by the participants to make their work relevant. In short, this chapter helps to expose and theorise the *context* within which NATO’s gender perspective is created and implemented.

Chapter Seven details the strategies developed by the participants in order to make gender ‘relevant’ to both the organisational norms of NATO and the male and female military staff that occupy its structures. The accounts show how the participants (re)conceptualise gender

in order to make it palatable in very distinct ways – distancing it from associations with women’s rights and gender equality; the desire for ‘male champions’ to lend the process credibility; and maintaining (male and female) interest by privileging notions of force multiplication and operational effectiveness. These strategies compliment and reinforce the gender perspective’s focus on operational effectiveness identified in the official and internal documents and expose the strict gendered hierarchies that the participants are working within. This chapter also exposes the ways in which strict organisational, military hierarchy affords *individual* – usually male – commanders power to grant or deny the process legitimacy, thus calling into question the viability of any *mainstreaming* initiative in an environment with such centralised control. Finally, I argue that achieving relevancy via practices of (re)framing and (re)signifying, distancing and association, highlight one way in which the process is policed and controlled by pre-existing gendered norms. The chapter concludes by showing how these strategies also make the gender perspective proscriptive and measurable, an activity explored in further detail within Chapter Eight.

Chapter Eight analyses ‘success’; specifically how the official documents present, and the individual participants articulated, measures of success. Demonstrating the value of centralising individual perceptions and experiences, the chapter begins by noting the wider positive meta-narratives and the silence of violent women in discussions around peacekeeping and specifically women’s involvement in those operations. I then identify three ways in which successful implementation of the gender perspective was conceived of: Firstly by detailing the importance of proscriptive, systematic measurability; secondly, by analysing the way particular stories were (re)told to me during the interview process in relation to their official ‘telling’ in NATO documentation – and the complexities and contradictions that emerge from a comparative analysis those accounts; thirdly, by analysing the abstract claim that the gender perspective allowed NATO to access ‘one-hundred per cent’ of the population in operations. Analysing these conceptualisations of success helps to draw out the heavily (re)essentialised understandings of (military) masculinity and femininity created in the production of a palatable gender perspective.

Chapter Nine presents the key findings and conclusions of the thesis. It offers an analysis of the these findings in the whole and in relation to a question posed throughout the research process by peers, colleagues and participants – is NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the development of the gender perspective better than nothing? This question is posed in relation to three key themes that emerge from the research: acceptance (of UNSCR 1325) and the disruption that brings; resistance (to that disruption) and the discursive and structural controls that facilitate it; and the notion of good gender governance, at the macro and individual level. I also provide some final reflections both on the theoretical concepts used

and the methodological approaches of the research. This chapter concludes by detailing the most recent developments at NATO in regards to UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security agenda more broadly, thereby suggesting potential avenues for future work.

Chapter One

From the UN to NATO: Mainstreaming Gender into International Security

Introduction

This chapter tracks the development of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda from the United Nations to NATO by reviewing the literature concerned with both United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) and the genesis of gender mainstreaming as a concept more generally. In doing so it situates the thesis in regards to the contemporary feminist debates surrounding discursive change, conceptual language and the genderedness of organisations. I also detail the absence of NATO as a focus for research within this literature demonstrating the original contribution that this thesis makes to these debates.

The chapter is structured as follows: Section One explores the genesis of gender mainstreaming as a concept – tracking its entry into the international political lexicon in the 1990s to the proliferation of mainstreaming initiatives across diverse range of organisational and governmental bodies. Within this section I discuss the tension between the transformative potential of gender mainstreaming, the discursive change that it can bring about and its lack of conceptual clarity. Section Two discusses the development of UNSCR 1325 specifically and addresses the feminist contributions to that process as well as their critiques in problematising the conceptual language of the resolution. Here I address the literature that focuses on the gendered nature of organisations and the importance of understanding the context within which mainstreaming initiatives are both produced and implemented. Finally, in Section Three I offer a working definition of NATO and detail the key events and developments in NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325. I also expose and address the absence of any academic critique of this process within the existing literature.

1. Gender Mainstreaming

1.1 Defining Gender Mainstreaming

Definitions of gender mainstreaming vary. As the number of organisations and national governments committed to gender mainstreaming initiatives grow, so do the variety of definitions available. Each will produce a working definition of what gender mainstreaming is and what it is intended to do that is both specific to that organisation whilst also drawing upon master narratives of gender equality. For example, Sylvia Walby identifies three definitions of mainstreaming and gender equality from *within* the various institutions of the European Union (2011: 87). The European Commission (2010) defines gender mainstreaming as:

“...the integration of the gender perspective into every stage of policy processes – design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation – with a view to promoting equality between women and men. It means assessing how policies impact on the life and position of both women and men – and taking responsibility to readdress them if necessary” (European Commission 2010 in Walby, 2011: 87)

Whereas in 1998, Mieke Verloo, Chair of the Council of Europe Group of Experts on Gender Mainstreaming defined the initiative as:

“...the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies, at all levels, at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy making” (in Walby, 2011: 87)

In a similar vein the UN (2002) defined mainstreaming as:

“...the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality” (in Detraz, 2012: 77)

Whilst definitions of gender mainstreaming do not tend to vary drastically, that variation exists suggests a level of plasticity in the concept and a required level of *interpretation* when implementing mainstreaming initiatives (See section 1.3, below). For example, the UN definition is much broader than that offered by the European Commission with a definitive goal of gender equality rather than merely its ‘promotion’. The key concept within most definitions of gender mainstreaming is as a ‘strategy’ for (institutional) policy change with increased gender equality as the desired outcome (See also Caglar, 2013: 338; Detraz, 2012: 77-9; Moser & Moser, 2005: 12; Charlesworth 2005: 13; Squires, 2005; Walby, 2005 for further illustrations of the complexities in providing a definition for gender mainstreaming). NATO has produced its own terms of reference where concise definitions of gender mainstreaming and the gender perspective can be found, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

The complexities in defining gender mainstreaming are symptomatic of a wider debate about the purpose, impact and nature of gender mainstreaming within the literature. Broadly this can be seen to fall into two (non-mutually exclusive) camps – those that see gender mainstreaming as a potentially transformative way of furthering gender equality, to effect change within pre-existing institutional structures; and those who view gender mainstreaming as reductive and as a tool for the institutional appropriation of feminist goals to further pre-existing organisational aims. Understanding this debate helps to position and situate the research undertaken within this thesis as well as the key findings.

1.2 The Proliferation of Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming as both a political discourse and policy initiative reached a level of international recognition – and popularity – at the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 (see True 2003; Charlesworth, 2005: 3). However, the genesis of the concept can be traced back further. For example, Hilary Charlesworth states that the first use of the term ‘mainstreaming’ can be linked to educational literature in the 1970s (Charlesworth, 2005: 2). In their study of the processes of gender mainstreaming in the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, Hafner-Burton and Pollack trace the genesis of the term *gender* mainstreaming to developments within the UN system that predated Beijing by at least a decade (2002: 347)². Organised around the 1975 International Women’s Year and the subsequent United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985) a burgeoning transnational women’s network focused their efforts initially on issues of economic development and on the question of Women in Development (WID) specifically (2002: 347-48) (See also, Goetz, 1998; Charlesworth, 2005: 2). However, despite a major advancement in international organisations addressing issues specific to women, by the beginning of the 1990s efforts were being made to widen the scope of reform and to escape the ‘ghettoisation’ of the WID agenda; the result was what Hafner-Burton & Pollack refer to as a conceptual shift from WID to GAD (Gender and Development) (2002: 348). This ‘conceptual broadening’, or what Jacqui True calls a “strategic change in language” (2003: 370) – to address ‘gender issues’, rather than ‘women’s issues’ - was indicative of many subsequent organisational approaches³. Over the following two decades gender mainstreaming - as policy and politics - did not stay confined to economic and development issues.

Hafner-Burton and Pollack’s study is representative of burgeoning academic engagement with mainstreaming initiatives both nationally and internationally in the early 2000s (See True & Mintrom, 2001 for a comprehensive study on the impact of the spread of gender mainstreaming initiatives; also, Moser & Moser, 2005; Squires 2005; Walby 2005). Writing in the same period Jacqui True (2003) tracks the factors that gave rise to this rapid proliferation of gender mainstreaming and their practical effects. True identifies that following Beijing gender mainstreaming achieved “widespread endorsement by individual governments, regional supra state bodies such as the European Union, the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Organisation of American States, and global governance institutions, notably the United Nations...the Council of Europe; and that the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted gender mainstreaming as official policy in 1996” (2003: 369). She suggests that this ‘global diffusion of gender mainstreaming’ (ibid: 371) can be attributed to

certain ‘enabling factors’ including: *discursive changes* and the creation of *gender policy entrepreneurs* (ibid: 374-379)⁴.

For True, discursive change is essential in understanding the proliferation of mainstreaming initiatives, for her “words and concepts literally make it possible to think and to see what was previously unthinkable or hidden” (2003: 374). In this sense, the discursive shift – and acceptance of mainstreaming – at Beijing, made the subordination and disadvantage of women across the spectrum of the institutional ‘mainstream’ visible. For True, new language to talk about and think about gender inequality *internationally* opens up possibilities for women’s organising *locally*. Using the example of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its implementation in India and Croatia, True states that “feminist discursive frameworks constitute an important ground for new collective identities and political action” (Ibid, 376). True notes that feminist language has been ‘legalised’ and institutionalised; whilst this does not automatically translate into gender equality, the acceptance of these terms within international discourse was seen as a triumph. As Robin Morgan stated following the Beijing Conference: “We have a long journey ahead in terms of action, the words and ideas – lovely and seductive, dangerous – have arrived” (Morgan 1996 cited in True 2003: 375).

Secondly, True identifies the establishment of ‘global policy entrepreneurs’ as a further enabling factor. According to True these ‘gender experts’ “...strive to see problems and issues from a range of perspectives of differently situated women and men” (2003: 379). These experts are a dispersed group of individuals, working within varied national and international institutions but contribute to championing and facilitating the discursive changes identified above, internationally: “Gender policy entrepreneurs may make different arguments to different groups while keeping the overall story consistent” (Ibid: 379). In True’s reading these experts are essential in facilitating the mainstreaming process and are a key factor in determining the impact of mainstreaming initiatives. However scholars such as Alison Woodward have noted that gender is understood by these expert actors only ‘gradually’ and that their success is dependent upon a precarious allocation of institutional resources (financial and material) that are subject to intense competition (2008: 294). The individuals, who became participants in my research, can be seen as ‘gender experts’ in this respect. This is because the participants interviewed were either directly or indirectly involved in shaping NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 at an institutional and operational level. In this respect, the participants were responsible for keeping the ‘overall story’ within NATO consistent. However, whilst it can quite legitimately be argued that there is one macro-story in regards to the global subordination and oppression of women, this notion negates complexity, nuance and variation in the way that story manifests locally,

on the micro-level. There is an inherent danger contained within such gender mainstreaming initiatives of imposing uniform, reductive understandings of complex gendered relations. This thesis critically engages with the problematic notion that there can be ‘one story’, demonstrating that whilst certain (discursive and practical elements) of gender mainstreaming initiatives are consistent internationally; the variation and interpretation required to translate those initiatives into practice are conditioned by the pre-existing gendered norms of the organisation producing those initiatives.

1.3 Gender ‘Defanged’: Mainstreaming as ‘all things to all people’

True’s reading of discursive change and global policy entrepreneurs emphasises the transformative *potential* of gender mainstreaming initiatives⁵. However, Morgan’s warning that words and ideas can be both *seductive* and *dangerous* alludes to a more cautious, critical evaluation of the language of gender mainstreaming within feminist literature that focuses on the gendered nature of organisations themselves. Writing in 2005 Hilary Charlesworth questions what she calls the “bland and bureaucratic acceptance of the method of gender mainstreaming” (2005: 2). Like True, Charlesworth notes the proliferation of the discourse of gender mainstreaming – declaring that: “the vocabulary of gender mainstreaming is omnipresent in the international arena” (Ibid: 5). However, Charlesworth exposes the limitations and reductionism in many institutional mainstreaming initiatives; whereby the need for measurability (see Chapter 8) focuses attention on the position of women in statistical terms, but pays little attention to the ways in which “stereotypes about sex and gender” affect and perpetuate gender inequality or “the complex ways in which gender itself is created and sustained by social and power relations” (Ibid: 10-11; 13). The concern within this perspective is that gender mainstreaming initiatives collapse complex understandings of how gender is constructed into reductive notions of the role and place of women (Baden & Goetz, 1997), leaving the position of men untouched and unexamined, a theme critically engaged within this thesis.

Charlesworth links this back to the conceptual definition of gender mainstreaming. Section 1.1 above noted the variation in definition across and even within institutions. Charlesworth argues that this is because: “the notion of gender mainstreaming is both too broad and too narrow to serve as a useful tool in the international arena. In one sense, it has become an almost meaningless term”. Gulay Caglar notes that the lack of conceptual clarity allows gender mainstreaming to mean ‘all things to all people’ (2013: 337) and that the term has been described as “elastic” (Daly, 2005: 439 in Caglar, 2013: 337). The acceptance and the proliferation of the term ‘gender mainstreaming’ has resulted in an abstract interpretation of its meaning and purpose. It is used as a ‘short hand’, a ‘catch all’ term, simultaneously

imbued with both a particular and vague meaning. It is often readily deployed as a signifier that can be drawn upon to symbolise progressive thinking and action within an organisation⁶ (See Chapter 3, Sections 3.2, 3.3; Chapter 8, Section 1).

What these authors are concerned with is the impact this abstraction has upon previously radical feminist language and concepts; that the transformative potential of these concepts becomes neutered, robbed of its critical edge (see Duncanson, 2013 in Section 2.3, below) and ‘defanged’ (Charlesworth, 2005: 16). The ways in which gender can also become subsumed under an ‘other’ inequality or diversity issue have also been explored by authors such as Woodward (2008). In these readings gender becomes something that can be addressed systematically, statistically and bureaucratically, by organisational processes that tend to ‘de-gender and neutralise problematic issues’ (Hearn, 2000, in Benschop & Verloo, 2006: 21).

These engagements focus on the organisational structure within which mainstreaming initiatives are being produced – specifically the ways in which those organisations are gendered (See, Benschop & Verloo, 2006; Prugl & Lustgarten, 2006; Walby 2005; Ely & Meyerson, 2000). In doing so they expose what is referred to as the ‘dual agenda’ of mainstreaming (Hearn, 2000), the tension between the desire for gender equity outcomes and pre-existing ‘mainstream’ organisational goals and commitments. Benschop & Verloo (2006) suggest that:

“the tension between the goal of gender equality and mainstream goals reveals itself – for instance – in the fact that, due to the genderedness of organisations, a deep commitment to gender equality cannot be seen to exist prior to a gender mainstreaming endeavour. This means that gender mainstreaming in practice always has to find a way to deal with exiting gender bias in order to change the gendered systems and cultures” (2006: 22).

In this regard, gender mainstreaming is inherently a retroactive process. These pre-existing, highly gendered ‘terms of entry’ in relation UNSCR 1325 are discussed further in Section 2.3 below.

The debate within the literature detailed above exposes what Caglar (2013) calls the ‘irony’ of gender mainstreaming. On the one hand, the development of ‘new’ conceptual language moved the agenda away from the ‘ghettoization’ of women’s rights and a liberal feminist ‘additive’ approach to addressing inequality. It offered the potential to transform the way organisations were structured in a way that would advance a broad gender equality agenda. The potential of gender mainstreaming to achieve these aims is still advanced by some (Squires 2005; True 2005; Benschop & Verloo 2006). In an answer to their own question of

whether or not gender mainstreaming can escape the genderedness of organisations, Benschop & Verloo state that:

“gender mainstreaming transcends the liberal feminist approaches of equal treatment and equal opportunities for it addresses fossilised norms and complex power relations rather than reproducing simple notions of disadvantage. Although as a project, the gendered discourses changes to ambiguous at best, it does change” (2006: 31)

In contrast, academics such as Charlesworth (2008) have argued that the proliferation of mainstreaming initiatives result from the ambiguity and elasticity of this novel conceptual language. Gender mainstreaming as an ill-defined concept, becomes subsumed by pre-existing organisational practices, de-gendered and de-radicalised thus increasing its international acceptance and furthering its proliferation. In regards to this thesis, such fluidity and abstraction has allowed for the concept of gender mainstreaming to travel internationally, to move from issues of development, to foreign policy, to parliamentary representation and into the arena of international security and to NATO. It is this diffusion, specifically from the UN to NATO (Section 2 and 3, below) which provides the context of this research undertaken within this thesis.

In regards to the preceding discussion of the gender mainstreaming literature, this thesis sits at the intersection of both debates. The findings of this thesis echo some of the literature reviewed above. I agree, *in principle*, that gender mainstreaming initiatives have the *potential* to be transformative. At one level, it is encouraging that NATO is engaging with gender and seeking to integrate a gender perspective into its institutional and operational planning. However, the change in NATO doctrine as a result of this engagement is ambiguous and contradictory. It is conditioned by the pre-existing gender order of the organisation (Chapter 7), producing and in some cases reinforcing gendered stereotypes (Chapter 8) and entrenching particular masculine practices. It is subject to the same tensions between gender equity and organisational goals as those identified above. I am also mindful, indeed uneasy, in regards to the appropriation of feminist concepts by an alliance of western states to advance militarism (Chapter 9). Any yet, in the words of Benschop & Verloo, change (however limited) is taking place. Beier & Crosby (1998) note the difference between the ‘reformative’ and ‘transformative’ nature of change when discussing global policy initiatives⁷:

“The forces of the status quo overlap with the forces of transition, and within the interplay of overlapping forces change takes place, including the determination as to whether it will be of a reformative or transformative nature. If the forces of the status quo emerge with their interest essentially uncompromised, or indeed reinforced, then change is of a reformative kind” (Beier & Crosby, 1998: 273)

It is the aim of this thesis to document, analyse and deconstruct some of these changes, to expose the ways in which the transformative potential of gender mainstreaming initiatives are conditioned and contained by the status-quo of NATO.

This thesis departs from the literature outlined above in a specific way. Whilst I identify the tensions that are produced as NATO engages with a gender mainstreaming initiative and how pre-existing (gendered) power structures impact upon that process, I also place the focus on the power effects of the mainstreaming practice *itself* (Caglar, 2013: 314). I argue that as gender is (re)constructed, militarised masculinities and femininities are (re)produced and hegemonic masculinities are exposed, (re)defined and (re)enforced as a result of NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325. In this sense as well as being subjected to pre-existing power dynamics within the NATO structure, the *process* of gender mainstreaming itself can be seen as a method of power and control; producing particular kinds of gendered subjects (see Bedford 2013, Philips, 2005 and Whol, 2008). This is returned to in Chapter Three.

2. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

2.1 Genesis of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

Whilst the passage of UNSCR 1325 can be seen as a very specific development in addressing gender issues within the context of international security, it can also be read as a part of the wider, more prolific spread of gender mainstreaming initiatives identified above.

Unanimously adopted in October 2000, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security has been lauded by feminist academics, activists, policy makers and politicians as a 'landmark' achievement (Anderlini in Gunda Werber Institute ed. 2010: 13). As such it still dominates the WPS agenda. In some respects UNSCR 1325 – like the term 'gender mainstreaming' - has become a signifier, a number imbued with particular meaning that is held up as a totem of progressive politics in the realm of international security (however problematic this may be). Indeed it is often used as a short hand, catch all term⁸. However, as Susan Willett (2010) reminds us it is important to keep in mind that the UN had indicated its commitment to women's rights and gender equality before UNSCR 1325. In much the same way as the wider genesis of gender mainstreaming as a concept, the pathway to the adoption of UNSCR 1325 built upon pre-existing engagements with gender issues within the UN system – for example in the UN Charter, the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) (Willett, 2010: 147-148).

In one respect the BPA can be seen as providing the impetus for feminist policy makers and transnational networks advocating women's rights, to push for what would eventually become UNSCR 1325. Whilst a major achievement within itself many feminists felt that the Platform did not go far enough, specifically in regards to the security arena. What emerged in the five years following Beijing was a collective effort of a transnational network of NGOs, national organisations and advocacy groups to advance the case for a Security Council resolution. As Anderlini notes:

“The NGOs initially known as the ad hoc Working Group on Women, Peace and Security reached out to their extensive networks of civil society organisations to generate consensus and a constituency for the resolution. Working with the governments of Bangladesh, Jamaica, Namibia, Canada, all of whom had temporary seats on the Security Council, and eventually the United Kingdom, they built a coalition” (2010: 15).

The establishment of this transnational network in achieving the passage of UNSCR 1325 is widely acknowledged to be a key contributory factor in the passage of the resolution (for a detailed analysis of the role played by NGOs in the formation of UNSCR 1325 see Hill et al. 2003). Carol Cohn states that “It's [UNSCR 1325] passage is also a formidable testimony to the efforts and skills of the NGOs responsible for its existence. Indeed it is the only Security Council resolution that has an anniversary celebrated by a growing constituency of practitioners and advocates” (Cohn et al. 2004: 130)

Since 2000, additional resolutions have followed under the 'agenda item' of Women, Peace and Security - UNSCR 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013). These 'related resolutions' as they are often referred to address specific issues such as sexual violence in conflict and the ongoing implementation of UNSCR 1325. The passage of the resolutions represents growing acceptance within the Security Council of the role and place of gender within the realm of international security. They also signify the diversification of the aims and scope of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda. Whilst these are important achievements in their own right, these resolutions do not constitute a major focus of analysis of this thesis as NATO's engagement with the WPS agenda utilises UNSCR 1325 specifically. Therefore it is to the specific aims and objectives of UNSCR 1325 to which I now turn.

2.2 UNSCR 1325: Aims and Objectives

One of the key features of UNSCR 1325 that made it such a 'landmark' document was the recognition that its adoption afforded the issue of gender within international security. As Anderlini states: “UNSCR 1325 provides the legal and political framework under which national governments, regional organisations, the UN system and the bureaucrats that run

these systems, as well as non-state actors are obliged to address the situation of women in war” (2010: 13). UNSCR 1325 became a legal and political obligation for those signatories and increasingly for the wider international community. In this respect the significance of UNSCR 1325 lay as much in the significance of the *Security Council* addressing gender issues, as much as the specific content of the resolution.

Despite its significance - or perhaps because of it - the wording, aims and structure of the resolution have been subject to debate and deconstruction (Section 2.3, below). In short, UNSCR 1325 remains a contested document. Like many Security Council Resolutions, the aims and objectives of UNSCR 1325, whilst enshrined in international law, are subject to interpretation. However, Gibbings identifies that “at a very basic level, Resolution 1325 makes three central arguments” (2011: 528):

“Firstly, for increased participation of women in the various bodies, institutions and processes related to peace and security; secondly, for the incorporation of a gender perspective into all relevant processes and institutions; thirdly, that a mechanism be developed through which the Security Council can take into account gender and the rights of women, achieved through ‘consultation with local and international women’s groups’ (UNSC, 2000 in Gibbings, 2011: 528).

Cohn et al (2004) identify similar aims of the resolution:

“the prosecution of crimes against women, increased protection of women and girls during war, the appointment of more women to UN peacekeeping operations and field missions and an increase in women’s participation in decision-making processes at the regional, national and international level” (2004: 130).

NATO’s interpretation of UNSCR 1325 in its own doctrine - such as BI SCD 40-1 - adheres broadly to these main aims, often referred to by the Alliance as ‘Participation, Protection and Prevention’ (NATO 2010d: 1).

2.3 Providing (and Problematising) the Conceptual Language of UNSCR 1325

The previous section demonstrates how the adoption of UNSCR 1325 can be seen as a triumph for what can be loosely described as liberal feminist and NGO activist goals concerning equity, access to institutions and representation in decision making bodies. The genesis of UNSCR 1325 also shows how these groups navigated particular power structures within the UN system to advance their goals. In addition to this UNSCR 1325 also helped to provide a conceptual language from which to talk about gender issues in international security. In her book ‘Gender, Human Security and the United Nations’ (2010) Natalie Hudson argues that UNSCR 1325 provided a symbolic coupling of ‘gender equality’ to ‘security’ which provided a platform from which the WPS agenda could be taken forward. Sanam Naraghi Anderlini identifies that before UNSCR 1325 “raising the sceptre of women

in discussions at the Security Council was a rarity...talk of gender based violence was at best ad hoc... and the prevailing attitude towards peacekeepers was that ‘boys will be boys’” (Gunda Werner Institute, 2010: 17). In this respect the passage of UNSCR 1325 can be seen as “radical step forward in the *language* of the security council” (Cohn, 2004: 139 – emphasis added). However, I would contest Susan Willett’s assertion that UNSCR 1325 “penetrated through to the very heart of masculine power within the UN” (2010: 149).

It is clear from the review above that complexities abound in both providing a definition of what constitutes gender mainstreaming and the conceptual language of the resulting initiatives. In much the same way, whilst not marginalising or discounting the very real achievement of the adoption of UNSCR 1325, critical feminists have exposed the tension between ‘access and acknowledgement’, within the international security infrastructure of the Security Council and the power dynamics that continue to operate and define that system. In one respect, the Security Council grants authority to the WPS agenda; as Hudson (2010) argues, gender equality was granted a form of ‘executive legitimacy’ by the Security Council. However, the same agenda then becomes bound and constrained by the rules, procedures and language of that institution. Critical feminists have argued that the power structures that they wish to challenge ‘are the very structures that set the terms of women’s entry’ (Cohn, et al. 2004: 138). In relation to the focus of this thesis, these terms manifest in two distinct ways.

Firstly, whilst the Security Council may have acknowledged the importance of gender issues in the realm of peace and security, feminist activists and scholars have noted that gender continues to be placed far down the list of priorities. For example, an activist working for the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security⁹ noted that:

“There is also the political reality of the entity that we are dealing with. When the Working Group approached Security Council members urging implementation of 1325 in the situation in Iraq we were told that the Security Council would not even discuss the gender implications until they determined the Security Council mandate. Simply, the Security Council members will only evaluate ‘other’ issues (gender, children, humanitarian issues) after the fact – once their mandate is already determined” (Cohn et al. 2004: 134)

Likewise, Sandra Whitworth (2004) also draws attention to the problems encountered by feminists in gaining entry to the UN system in trying to find an entry point for gender within an organisation that “privileges the idea of liberal internationalism as an always benign and humanitarian endeavour, while at the same time ascribing the real political principles of state sovereignty and power politics” (2004: 120)¹⁰.

What these authors identify is that despite the existence of UNSCR 1325 there remains a tendency for gender to be relegated to an ‘other’ issue, one that is subordinate to the ‘realpolitik’ of the Security Council, rather than as a (trans)formative tool in the production of new Security Council Resolutions¹¹. Clare Duncanson posits the question: Was UNSCR 1325 ‘robbed of its radicalism’? (2013: 23); in that following its successful adoption and entry into the lexicon of international security politics, gender has become treated as a ‘safe idea’ and as a technocratic instrument for solving problems rather than as a meaningful critical concept (2013: 27). Like the critique of the concept of gender mainstreaming discussed above, these critiques expose the shortcomings of using gender as an ‘addition’ to pre-existing organisational frameworks and priorities – an ‘add women and stir’ approach. Natalie Hudson is also critical of what she identifies as an ‘additive approach’; stating that this only “serves to make the existing structures and system more efficient rather than to really transform the way the UN does security” (Hudson, 2010: 61) – a key theme explored in Chapter 7.

The ‘terms of entry’ are also discursive and derive from the *positioning* of women and assumptions regarding female agency that follow. Laura Shepherd (2008a; 2008b) offers a detailed deconstruction of the ‘narratives of production’ used in creating UNSCR 1325 in her book *Gender, Violence and Security: Discourse as Practice*. Her analysis draws out the way in which the resolutions discursive construction influences the practicalities and problems of its implementation (See Puechguirbal (2010) for a textual analysis of ten UN Secretary General Reports on UNSCR 1325 and peacekeeping operations; also Cohn in Rai & Waylen, 2008; Von Braunmuhl (2013)). One of the initial concerns following the BPA was that women were still presented as victims of conflict, not as agents capable of change (Willett, 2010: 148). Indeed one of the activists involved in the formation of UNSCR 1325 following Beijing stated that: “The strategy was to shift the focus from women as victims (without losing this aspect of the conflict to women as effective actors in peace and peace building” (Cohn et. al, 2004: 132). Whilst this broadening from a simple ‘victimhood’ to more engaged ‘agents’ was achieved by the resolution, UNSCR 1325 is still critiqued for its reductionism in the way it conceptualises female agency. Gibbings (2004) identifies that: “In 1325 women are essentially victims, peace-builders and peace-makers” and poses the question “What does that categorisation mean for women?” (Gibbings, in Cohn et. al 2004: 136). The conceptualisation of the role of women in conflict represented in UNSCR 1325 and the related resolutions is also accused of increasing the expectations of female agency – framing women as *super heroines* (Cohn et al. 2004; Shepherd 2011; Pratt & Richter-Devroe, 2011). By conceptualising women as ‘peace builders’ places the burden of post-conflict resolution and reconstruction onto women, the role of men and masculinity in

warfare is neglected, essentialising an understanding of complex gender roles (men as war fighters, women as peace makers). These critiques draw into focus some of the problematic language that is used within UNSCR 1325 to categorise and position women in relation to peace and security matters.

What this critical literature demonstrates is that the difficulties and complexities inherent within gender mainstreaming initiatives more generally, remain – and in some respects are distilled when discussing war and peace – when these initiatives are applied to the international security infrastructure, typified by the UN Security Council. The work of these critical feminist scholars shows that understanding the discursive positioning of women (and I would argue, men) is central to any meaningful critique of UNSCR 1325. But it is also a requirement when analysing those organisations (and nation states) that choose to engage or implement UNSCR 1325. This thesis addresses this requirement in regards to NATO. It will detail how NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 produces similar tensions to those identified by the authors above (in Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8) and their theoretical work will be explored further within Chapter 3.

2.4 Leaving Militarism Intact

Gibbins (2011) work contributes to the critique of the Security Council as the context within which UNSCR 1325 was produced and remains constrained by¹². However, she takes this analysis further, arguing that in addition to the discourse used within UNSCR 1325 as a document, cultural norms, behaviours specific ways of speaking (and acting) within the Security Council are important contributory factors in the positioning of women. Her argument is that the Security Council (and the UN more generally) is conditioned by positive, uplifting and progressive master narratives that frame women's contributions in a purely positive way, as peacemakers (I will return to this point in Chapter 8, Section 1).

In this conceptualisation of the WPS agenda, critiques of militarism, military budgets and military priorities offered by transnational networks of NGOs in the initial formation of the resolution framework were “curtailed and reformulated into positive calls for women's participation and a gender perspective in peace and security” (Gibbins, 2011: 532). Placing the focus on increasing women's protection during war and involvement in post-conflict resolution war is left ‘in place’ (Cohn, 2008; Shepherd, 2008a). In short the militarised nature of international security provision remained; UNSCR 1325 did not critique or challenge the pre-existing practices of the Security Council in any fundamental way. In failing to challenge militarism and with the absence of ‘men and boys’ (identified above) Olonisakin et al. (2011) argue the resolution fails to tackle the “deep seated issues at the root

of gender inequality: patriarchy, notions of masculinity and militarised power” (in Duncanson, 2013: 27)

Natalie Hudson (2010) broadens Gibbings’ critique of positive institutional narratives and situates the failure of UNSCR 1325 to thoroughly critique militarism as a product of wider gender biases operating in international politics. Drawing upon Tickner’s (1998) critique of the international security arena in which she argues that:

“With its emphasis on war and the use of force, the international security arena has been one of the most thoroughly gender-biased fields of international politics. It has been particularly difficult for women and feminists to break into this masculine and militarised discourse because the voices of women, particularly non-combatants, are perceived as unnatural, even ‘inauthentic’ in this deeply entrenched system surrounding international security” (Tickner, 1998: 4 in Hudson, 2010)

Hudson asserts that given this conventional discourse “it is not surprising that SCR 1325 lacks any critique of the continued militarised approach of the Security Council” (2010: 48).

Throughout this thesis, I will argue that this conceptualisation of UNSCR 1325 - as one bound by gendered institutional narratives and gender biases within the concept of ‘security’ and ‘operations’ more generally - is fundamental to understanding NATO’s subsequent willingness to engage with the WPS agenda. With militarism left intact and unchallenged NATO could engage with UNSCR 1325 without undermining or contradicting the organisation’s role as an international military organisation. In addition NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 has become focused around the two central elements of what Gibbings calls the resolution’s ‘reformulation’ – increased women’s participation and the inclusion of a ‘gender perspective’. This particular conceptualisation of the WPS agenda and UNSCR 1325 allows NATO to address gender issues in a much more unproblematic way than if UNSCR 1325 was more challenging to basic assumptions of the militarised nature of international security. The analytical chapters that follow in this thesis will show how NATO interprets and conditions the gender perspective and women’s participation in ways that conform to the militaristic foundations of the alliance and its goals and aims and in turn how this conditioning affects the (re)construction of gender within the organisation. The following section tracks NATO’s engagement with ‘gender issues’ generally and its formal adoption of UNSCR 1325 specifically.

3. NATO & UNSCR 1325: From CWINF to NCGP

3.1. Defining NATO

Established by the Washington Treaty in 1949, NATO is an alliance of twenty-eight European and North American member countries committed to collective military defence.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War NATO has been involved in a number of military interventions. They include Bosnia and Herzegovina in the early to mid-1990s, Serbia and Kosovo (1999), Afghanistan (2001 – present) and the Operation Unified Protector in Libya (2011).

NATO is a highly complex political-military organisation. The developments outlined below are predominantly from the military arm of the alliance; in that Bi-SCD 40-1 was issued through the Military Committee (NATO's senior military authority) and on behalf of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SHAPE) and Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (SACT) (NATO, 2009: 1). The NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP) is run by an executive committee of military personnel and the NATO Office on Gender Perspectives is also staffed by members of the military. These personnel are drawn from the International Military Staff (IMS). There are also on-going efforts to engage and establish gender mainstreaming policies in the International Staff (IS), these are *civilian* personnel concerned with supporting the national political delegations to NATO. For example, in 2012 the Secretary General appointed a Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security. Whilst this distinction will be returned to in more depth in Chapter 5, it is worth noting here in regards to both the focus of this thesis and in situating NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325.

Whilst the IMS and the IS are distinct entities within the NATO structure it is difficult to fully separate the civilian and military aspects in regards to NATO's gender mainstreaming initiatives; indeed there are on-going efforts to more closely align the IMS and IS work on gender issues. To complicate the picture further there is also cooperation (and tension) between nation state initiatives, directed by member state governments, and more alliance (supra-national) based goals and aims (these tensions were noted by the participants and are addressed in Chapters 5 and 6). It is therefore possible to see multiple engagements with UNSCR 1325 across NATO; both across the IMS, the IS, the nation-states and the Partnership for Peace¹³ countries; as well as the development of both institutional and operational mechanisms concerning 'gender issues'. Gender mainstreaming at NATO should therefore be seen as a series of sometimes complementary, sometimes distinct *processes* rather than on one uniform, coherent agenda.

However for the purposes of this thesis, a level of compartmentalisation is necessary when discussing an organisation on the scale and complexity of NATO. Therefore, the research undertaken in this thesis focuses specifically on the approach taken by the IMS and their specific engagement with UNSCR 1325; and the attempts to 'operationalise' gender, and practically implement UNSCR1325 in through the adoption of a 'gender perspective'.

3.2 NATO & Gender: Incremental Steps

NATO's initial engagement with gender issues can be traced back to 1961 when senior women officers within NATO began organising conferences on an *ad hoc* basis to discuss 'the status, organisation, conditions of employment and career possibilities for women in the military forces of the alliance' (NCGP, 2011: 17). These events were formalised with the establishment of the Committee on Women in NATO Forces (CWINF) in 1976. A permanent office was established in 1997 at NATO HQ, Brussels, Belgium in order to support the work of CWINF (NCGP: 2011). In much the same way as the initial WID programmes identified above, the CWINF focused specifically on the role of women in NATO forces and this specific infrastructure remained in place, largely unchanged until NATO's formal engagement with UNSCR 1325 in 2007.

In 2007 NATO issued a joint policy on implementing UNSCR 1325 with the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)¹⁴. The EAPC is described by NATO as a 'multilateral forum for dialogue and consultation on political and security-related issues among Allies and Partner countries' and consists of the 28 NATO members plus 22 partner countries. This policy sought to provide an 'overall framework' for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 by engaging with what it identified as UNSCR 1325's four pillars: 'prevention, protection, participation and relief and recovery' (NATO/EAPC: Paragraph 2). The NATO/EAPC policy also began to provide the conceptual language that would inform subsequent initiatives noting that: "there is a firm recognition that women have a crucial role to play in dealing successfully with the security challenges of the 21st century" (NATO/EAPC: Paragraph 2).

In 2008 the North Atlantic Council tasked NATO Strategic Command to provide guidance on implementing UNSCR 1325 (Cockburn, 2011: 3). This resulted in the formation of the Bi-Strategic Command Directive 40-1: Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Gender Perspective into the NATO Command Structure (BI SCD 40-1) in September 2009. BI SCD 40-1 represents the official integration of UNSCR 1325 into NATO doctrine. Its passage made UNSCR 1325 (and related resolutions) an obligation for NATO as an organisation. Member states were encouraged to develop National Action Plans (NAPs).

As part of NATO's formal engagement with UNSCR 1325 the names and terms of reference of the CWINF and its office were changed to the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP) and the NATO Office on Gender Perspectives (NOGP) these bodies were tasked specifically with supporting the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and related resolutions (NCGP, 2011: 17). In addition NATO began a process of recruiting Gender Advisors¹⁵ and

Gender Focal Points¹⁶ to be deployed both within the internal structure of NATO and within NATO's theatres of operations.

To date, BI SCD 40-1 remains the central focus of NATO's gender mainstreaming initiative. The document itself, first written in 2009, was reviewed and updated in 2012. NATO's engagement and commitment to UNSCR 1325 is now routinely affirmed at NATO summits and through annual progress reports delivered by both the NATO Secretary General and the Chair of the NCGP. For example in 2010 in Declaration of the Lisbon Summit of November 2010, Heads of State and Government expressed their continued support for the NATO/EAPC Policy and endorsed and NATO Action Plan for mainstreaming UNSCR 1325 in NATO-led missions (NATO, 2010: Paragraph 7). In 2012 a progress report was delivered to the Chicago Summit which espoused generic support for UNSCR 1325 and NATO's implementation to date, but also tasked the NATO Operations Policy Committee to conduct a review of the practical implementation of UNSCR 1325 for the conduct of NATO operations and missions (NATO, 2013: 4)

These developments represent the key initial stages in NATO's formal engagement with UNSCR 1325; the individual policies and documentation produced by NATO to support and facilitate this engagement are the focus of Chapter 5. What these developments show is that from 2007 there has been as sustained and increasingly complex effort by NATO to engage with UNSCR 1325, but what is missing from the academic literature is any substantial critique of this process.

3.3 NATO and UNSCR 1325: The Absence of Academic Critique

As identified above UNSCR 1325 (and gender mainstreaming initiatives more broadly) have been the focus of sustained feminist critique since their inception. NATO's specific engagement with UNSCR 1325 has failed to receive such attention. There have been an increasing number of key internal reports and evaluations produced both by NATO and organisations associated with the Alliance (See Olsson & Tejpar, 2009; NATO, 2011; NATO; 2013). There have been academic engagements with elements associated with NATO's approach to gender mainstreaming – for example McBride's & Wibben's (2012a) discussion on the use of Female Engagement Teams (FETS), a central focus of Chapter 8 of this thesis (see also Von der Lippe & Vayrynen (2011)'s analysis of the co-option of feminist voices, the war on terror and NATO in Chapter 2, Section, 1.1.1). Schjolset (2013) presents detailed statistical data on women's participation in NATO Forces and Operations. Academic engagement of the practical implementation of UNSCR 1325 tends to focus on country-specific initiatives and *UN* peacekeeping operations (See Olonisakin et al. 2011 and

Chapter 2 of this thesis) rather than NATO's engagement in Kosovo or Afghanistan. NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 is beginning to make its way into the academic literature, for example Robert Egnell's (2014) account of gender, military effectiveness and organisational change mentions NATO's approach to UNSCR 1325 briefly, as a way of contextualising the Swedish armed forces development of a gender perspective (2014: 17-18). Likewise, Prescott (2013) uses NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 to provide a feminist critique of the law of armed conflict. However, a detailed account of NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 from within the alliance structures is absent.

One feminist critic who does engage specifically with NATO and UNSCR 1325 is Cynthia Cockburn in her role as an activist with the 'No to War - No to NATO' campaign. Taking an antimilitarist perspective Cockburn produced a scathing account of NATO's UNSCR 1325 initiatives, declaring it an 'enraging example of how good feminist work can be manipulated by a patriarchal and militarist institution' (2011: 1). Cockburn's remarks were delivered as a contribution to the working group on 'Feminist Critiques of Militarisation' at the 2011 Annual Meeting of 'No to War-No to NATO' in Dublin¹⁷. Cockburn sets out NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 as a worrying co-option of the feminist ideals that brought about UNSCR 1325, highlighting two specific areas of 'NATO activity in which the response to 1325 should be examined more closely' (2011: 4); these being the desire for an increase in the number of women in NATO militaries and in 'operations' (ibid). She declares a contradiction between what she sees as the 'anti militarist' intentions of UNSCR 1325 and the use of that resolution by a militarist organisation. She notes that UNSCR 1325 does not call specifically for an increase in female soldiers, urging 'in rather more careful terms an expansion of the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel' (Ibid: 6). The utilisation of UNSCR 1325 by NATO for an expansion of militarism is, for Cockburn, made possible by the ambiguous language of UNSCR 1325 itself. Echoing the feminist critiques of mainstreaming and UNSCR 1325 identified above, Cockburn declares that the 'wording and provisions [of UNSCR 1325] leave it co-optable by militarism (Ibid); that UNSCR 1325 failed to critique men, masculinity and patriarchy and left militarisation and war itself in place.

Cockburn's critique of NATO so far remains unique within the literature. It is unclear as to why there is no sustained academic engagement with NATO's UNSCR 1325 agenda to date. One possible explanation is that NATO's formal engagement with UNSCR 1325 is a relatively recent development and until relatively recently somewhat ad-hoc. By subjecting NATO documentation to a detailed and in-depth analysis and by interviewing and capturing

the views of the individuals within NATO, the aims of this thesis are to contribute to this emerging area of study and to begin address this absence.

4. Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the key developments and stages in the formation and implementation of gender mainstreaming as a 'global initiative'. By placing the focus on the genesis and development of UNSCR 1325 specifically (and the proliferation of gender mainstreaming more generally) a time line can be drawn between the passage of UNSCR 1325 in 2000 to NATO's adoption of BI SCD 40-1 and the establishment of the NCGP in 2009. This development of gender mainstreaming and its diffusion across international institutions has been illuminated by a critical review of key feminist and organisational literature. The debate between acknowledging the transformative potential of mainstreaming (True, 2003; Squires 2005) and UNSCR 1325 and those who address the gendered organisational and discursive constraints acting upon that process (Duncanson 2013; Benschop & Verloo, 2006; Charlesworth; 2005) demonstrate the importance of understanding the production of international and institutional discourse and its affects upon understandings of gender. This will form a key focus in this thesis. The absence of any major academic analysis and critique of NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 provides an entry point for this thesis within this wider literature.

Chapter Two Gender, War and Militarism – Feminist Perspectives

Introduction

The previous chapter demonstrated how war and militarism was left intact by the passage of UNSCR 1325. Despite sustained critiques of the use and implementation of the resolution the fundamental international security infrastructure remains in place. The specific focus of this thesis in regards to NATO's *military* engagements within UNSCR 1325 through the IMS and the operational focus of NATO's gender perspective were also set out. With this in mind this chapter reviews feminist contributions to understandings of gender, war and militarism. This literature is rich, detailed and expanding; a comprehensive analysis of all of its forms and facets would fall beyond the scope of this thesis. Instead I offer a review of the key developments in feminist International Relations literature, specifically regarding gender, war and militarism; in doing so I situate the broader place of this thesis within this context whilst also detailing the parameters and rationale for the use of key theoretical concepts that will be set out in the following chapter. This chapter is structured as follows:

Section One outlines feminist perspectives on war, peace and security; here the focus falls upon the initial feminist critiques of International Relations drawing upon some of the seminal work in the discipline (Tickner, 1992; Steans, 1998; Enloe 2000) as well as addressing contemporary variations which fall specifically on the study of war. Section Two distils these wider debates in order to focus on the literature specifically regarding the way masculinities and femininities are *militarised* by organisations such as national armed forces as well by organisations such as NATO. This section will begin to discuss some of the key theoretical concepts (militarised masculinity/femininity and 'ideal-types') introduced by feminist analysis; the discussion of these will inform the following theoretical chapter (Chapter 3). Finally, Section Three details how militarism, wars and the organisations that fight them can be seen as sites of gendered negotiation and that this negotiation is fluid, dynamic and contradictory in places. This will contextualise the theoretical conceptualisation of NATO as an institution of (international) hegemonic masculinity in the following chapter.

1. Feminist Perspectives on War, Peace and Security

1.1 Feminist International Relations

The emergence of Feminist International Relations scholarship in the late 1980s, posed a fundamental challenge to the way in which the discipline was conceived and the ways in

which knowledge was produced. In the intervening years this feminist work has developed in complexity and scope. As Annick Wibben notes:

“Feminist scholars, developing research agendas in IR theory, international political economy, security studies and other sub fields, have asked tough questions about the delineation of subject matter in mainstream IR, the prioritisation of research questions and methodologies and the ranking of categories of analysis. (Wibben, 2014: 743)

Early work by academics such as Cynthia Enloe (1989), J. Ann Tickner (1992), V. Spike Peterson (1992) and Judith Squires (1998) engaged directly with the traditional parameters of International Relations, subjecting the theoretical orthodoxies of the discipline to a sustained feminist theoretical critique – in particular the dominance of realism (Sisson Runyan & Peterson, 1991; Squires, 1998: 38; Tickner, 1992: 12). This work challenged the positivist, ‘objective’ assumptions of the discipline; exposing the invisibility of women within and the importance of gender relations to the working of international relations. These accounts challenged the reification of ‘relevant’ and important ‘actors’, including that of the state¹⁸. As Squires noted:

“In the realist/neo-realist orthodoxy the state is frequently taken to be the main actor in International Relations. Furthermore, knowledge about the world is constructed from the ‘point of view’ of the state as actor; to challenge the orthodoxy in International Relations is, therefore, to challenge the notion that the state is the subject of knowledge” (1998: 3).

Feminist engagements with IR therefore identify the gender blindness of orthodox approaches as well as exposing the gendered essentialism that lay at the heart of positivism and objectivism (Peterson, 1992b: 197). They challenge and trouble the discipline as it was (and arguably still is) conceived; key to this ‘troubling’ was a shift in focus to what counted as relevant sites and locations of ‘knowledge’ production in IR (See also Grant & Newland, 1991; Peterson, 1992a, 1992b). In this regard, Christine Sylvester (2013) identifies Jean Elshtain and Cynthia Enloe as ‘original feminists of IR’¹⁹ (2013: 39). Specifically, she cites Elshtain’s ‘Women and War’ (1987) as the ‘first book’ within IR to “confront the gender shibboleth that put men at the centre of the social institution of war and put women in various places of support, or protest, off stage and ontologically ‘outside’ war” (2013: 41-42). For Sylvester, Enloe revealed the international as multi-spatial and full of IR relevant people (2013: 42). Enloe (1989) reconceptualised international politics as an arena in which “relations between governments depend not only on capital and weaponry, but also on the control of women as symbols, consumers, workers and emotional comforters” (2000: xvii); one where Carmen Miranda²⁰ and Pocahontas were international actors (Ibid); where knowledge and experience from the margins was as important – perhaps even more so - as that from the metropole. What this work did was to ask the questions: where are the women?

(Enloe, 2000: 7); whose experiences, what experiences are represented (Sylvester, 2013:45)? Gillian Youngs (2004) notes that one of the major contributions of Feminist IR has been the identification of discourses that operate within ‘malestream IR’ that help to “perpetuate a distorted and partial world view that reflects the disproportionate power of control and influence that men hold, rather than the full social reality of the lives of women” (2004: 76). In doing so, feminist scholars asserted that ‘what counts as knowledge must be grounded on experience’ (Harding & Hintikka, 1983: x), insisting that women’s lives be included in the ‘construction of knowledge claims about social reality’ (Peterson, 1992b: 200).

Yet, this engagement was not merely an attempt to include gender (as a neglected variable) into existing IR theoretical paradigms – by simply ‘adding’ women in. Indeed such understandings of the contributions of feminist perspectives to IR were actively challenged (see for example, Jones, 1996 and Carver, Cochran & Squires critical response; likewise Keohane, 1991 and Weber’s 1994 equally critical reply). In this sense, feminist perspectives were/are not about ‘grafting’ gender onto pre-existing theoretical approaches that were profoundly, inherently masculine (Hooper, 1999: 475). Indeed, one of the key contributions of feminist IR scholarship has been to focus on the relationality of gender, of the mutually constituted nature of men and women, masculine and feminine within the international realm; in doing so assumptions regarding masculinity have been problematised. For example, Jane Parpart & Marysia Zalewski’s (1998; 2008) volumes on the ‘man’ question in IR provide rich accounts of the various and often violent work of masculinity in international relations. Charlotte Hooper’s *Manly States*’ (2001) exposes the different manifestations of masculinity within in the construction of the nation state and the discourses that support its continued dominance. Hooper’s work exposes how ‘the history of state formation and identity is therefore one of gendered (and other forms) of oppression’ (Youngs, 2004: 81) and that knowledge produced from, and concerning these sites, is not ‘neutral’ or objective.

With its concerns of challenging the traditional frameworks within which knowledge is produced, placing an analytical focus on experience, Feminist IR falls broadly (though not exclusively) under the umbrella of ‘postpositivism’ (Booth et al, 1996; Tickner & Sjoberg, 2011). Feminist IR can be said - like feminism generally - to have an emancipatory agenda, a desire to engage with and understand the perspectives of those marginalised and the power relations that reinforce and perpetuate global as well as local inequalities (Enloe, 1996). Whilst sharing this agenda feminist theoretical and empirical approaches to the study of IR vary. Sjoberg & Tickner (2011) outline five broad strands of feminist IR: Liberal feminists, as those concerned with the equality of access to pre-existing international (and national) institutions (for example, Prugl, 2006). In many ways international projects such as gender

mainstreaming initiatives and UNSCR 1325 can be seen to be influenced by liberal feminism – improving and increasing women’s access to the architecture of international peace and security provision. Constructivist feminist, Poststructural feminists, Postmodern and Postcolonial feminists draw attention to the fundamentally gendered nature of those pre-existing institutions and norms (in various ways), built by and for (predominantly, white, western) men; in doing so they question the utility of attempts to simply open these institutions to women. Constructivists centralise the importance of norm (re)creation as a vehicle for the advancement of feminist aims (see True and Jaquette, 2011 in the following chapter). Poststructuralists (such as Hooper’s (2001) work identified above) draw attention to the role of discourse and language in the perpetuation of gendered dichotomies and inequality. Postcolonial feminists expose the impact of imperialism and constructions of the ‘other’ in sustaining notions of superiority and inferiority globally as well as problematising the general exclusion of non-western women (for example, Mohanty, 2003) (Tickner & Sjoberg, 2011: 5-6). In addition feminist scholars such as Jasbir Puar (2007) have incorporated queer theory into feminist analyses of areas such as nationalism and counterterrorism to expose the heteronormative assumptions of international relations.

Again, I address these strands as a way of identifying variation and complexity within feminist IR, not to oversimplify or generalise them. These approaches are not mutually exclusive; indeed Sjoberg and Tickner (2011) conceive of them as in conversation with one another – inclusive yet critical (2011: 7). These critical engagements between feminist approaches to the study of IR are evident when considering war and the institutions that wage them. Whilst the centrality of war has always been a concern for feminist IR, it is not uncontested. Christine Sylvester (2013) and Claire Duncanson (2013) have acknowledged a tension between what can be broadly described as an ‘anti-militarist’ feminism (see for example Cynthia Cockburn in the previous chapter) and what Sylvester calls ‘new’ feminist war studies that seek to centralise the accounts of women as agents *within* institutions of war (2013: 49) (see also Lobasz & Sjoberg, 2011: 574). Sylvester notes unease between women who self-identify as feminists but depart from common advocacy of peaceful conflict resolution, or a strident anti-militarism. Similarly, Duncanson (2013) identifies a tension between feminists who view militaries as useful in the pursuit of peace (Stehm, 1999; Olsson & Tryggstad, 2001; Kaldor 2012; Kronsell, 2012) and those who are much more sceptical about the role and place of militaries and militarism (Enloe, 2000; Whitworth, 2004); between those whom she calls ‘feminist sceptics of military intervention’ and ‘feminist sceptics’ (Duncanson, 2013: 2). This tension becomes acute when considering sites of feminist research and the role of feminist researcher: “Gender and war is a very fraught coupling and the men and women who join the institution of war or work within it can put

observers in a conundrum: to support them, take no position, look the other way?" (Sylvester, 2013: 39). What Sylvester is commenting on is the notion that by centralising institutions of war and the individuals that choose to work within them as a site of feminist analysis that this somehow promotes, reinforces and legitimates those structures. This is highly contested. Annica Kronsell (2005; 2006; 2012) highlights how in focusing on women at the 'margins' of international relations, on those 'outside of hegemonic institutions' such as the military, tends to underestimate the significance of the transformative work of those women who work 'inside' such organisations (Kronsell, 2005: 289). In advancing a 'revitalised' standpoint theory, Kronsell (2005) also identifies that a reluctance to engage with women within hegemonic institutions reinforces and perpetuates certain assumptions about those women:

Women within such institutions have been perceived as either co-opted or too few to be representative of women's knowledge or standpoint. Standpoint theory's tendency to emphasis knowledge generated by women only in particular 'women's spaces' has led to the implication that an occasional women with power is either a male in disguise or a mere token (Kronsell, 2005: 289)

I mention these claims and counter-claims as the focus on this study is very much on one of those 'hegemonic institutions' of IR. It is most certainly not my intention to promote, reinforce or legitimate NATO as an international actor. But it is my intent to offer a feminist critique of its gendered organisational norms and structures by centralising the experience of those women (and men) who work within it (a point returned to in more detail within Chapter Three).

1.2 Gender, 9/11 and the War on Terror

The 9/11 attacks and subsequent 'War on Terror' saw sustained, complex and nuanced feminist engagement with the ways in which that 'war' was conceptualised and pursued. The invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003 saw what many feminists described as an 'appropriation' of discourses on women's rights and gender equality (Hunt, 2002; 2006; Cooke, 2002; Shepherd, 2006; Von der Lippe & Vayrynen, 2011); others noted the sustained 'othering' of Afghan men and women via media and visual representations, particularly the use of the veil (Cloud, 2004; Ayotte & Husain, 2005) in order to legitimise and execute those military adventures.

These feminist critiques of the War on Terror therefore exposed the construction and the use of 'other' (i.e. non-western) women within the narratives of this reinvigorated atmosphere of war and militarism. As Krista Hunt (2002) notes the gendered natures of narratives such as: "look at what they do to their women", have 'political currency' (2002: 116); furthering a

contrast between the ‘civilised west’ and the ‘uncivilised Afghan society’ in need of saving (Ibid). Hunt identified ‘two-distinct but complementary images of Afghan women’ portrayed in the media and political discourse: Afghan women were portrayed as passive victims of the Taliban and on the other as vocal opponents of that regime (2002: 117), thus serving to legitimise and ‘moralise’ the forceful overthrow of the regime and the subsequent occupation (Ibid). The war on terror was then framed in large part by a notion of what Miriam Cooke termed ‘saving brown women’ (2002: 468)²¹. Upon taking command of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, NATO took up this mantle. Indeed, Von der Lippe & Väyrynen (2011) suggest that the “saving brown women from brown men” narrative combined with UNSCR 1325 to ‘facilitate a metamorphosis of the militaristic and masculine-led NATO into a collective peacekeeper’ (2011:26) and champion of women’s rights - See Figure 1. This notion of NATO as a paternal peacekeeper will be returned to in Chapter 3, in a discussion of Iris Young’s (2003) notion of the ‘logic of masculinist protection’.



Figure 1: “NATO: Keep the Progress Going!” – An Amnesty International Poster²²

The ‘gendering’ of the war on terror was not simply limited to an ‘othering’ of Afghan women and men and the ‘terrorist enemy’. Hunt (2002) notes that:

“the media coverage and political discourse following the attacks on the USA exemplify the way that images of women...are being used to define the conflict; for the most part women have been depicted as silent victims of the attacks...women are cast as passive” (2002: 117).

In this sense the feminist literature dealing specifically with 9/11 and its aftermath detailed the gendered processes, and the reassertion of specific gendered orthodoxies (women as

passive victims in need of saving) necessary in the production of war narratives. In this respect their work draws interesting parallels with that of Susan Jeffords (1989) account of the ‘re-masculinisation’ of American culture following the Vietnam war (Section 3, below). In one respect the aims and findings of this thesis sit within this ‘historical-social-political’ context. It can be argued that the effects of 9/11 are still being felt within the international political system and especially in the western security infrastructure – at the time of writing this thesis, NATO, is managing a ‘transition’ from Afghanistan.

Detailed, experience-focused feminist analyses of the war on terror and its associated conflicts (see also Enloe, 2010) built upon early feminist IR scholarship and helped to re-interrogate the gendered processes and sites of war and militarism in the first decade of the twenty-first century. As Ayotte & Husain argue: “In the wake of the ‘war on terrorism’ feminist analysis of international relations must broaden the concept of security to consider forms of violence beyond the statist security framework of *realpolitik*” (Ayotte & Husain, 2005: 112); whilst I feel that Ayotte & Husain’s assertion somewhat neglects the important contributions of early feminist writing, that began to do exactly that (Tickner, 1992; Enloe 1989; Squires 1998) it represents a continuation of that work as well as a shift in certain areas of feminist research towards centralising the study of war and security within a FSS agenda, and Christine Sylvester’s ‘*new feminist war studies*’ (2013: 49 – emphasis added).

The research outlined above has detailed how Feminist International Relations research has developed. In troubling the existing boundaries of IR and Security Studies as an academic discipline the place and purpose of a distinctly Feminist IR is problematised. Should Feminist IR remain embedded within the disciplinary boundaries, concepts and language of IR, seeking to carve out a distinctly feminist space? Some have argued that in doing so, Feminist IR would become defined by and produce work that was simply intelligible to, rather than challenging to IR’s mainstream (Lobasz & Sjoberg, 2011:574; Youngs, 2004; Squires & Welds, 2007; Zalewski, 2007). This debate is ongoing, yet what the research outlined above (and below) demonstrate is the value of feminist research both within and without IR in exposing the gendered nature of the international; in exposing the incompleteness of accounts that fail to address gender and experience, and that in the words of Cynthia Enloe (1989) it is gender that makes the world go round.

2. Militarising Gender

As the focus of this thesis is on NATO’s military structures and the individuals that work within them, the remainder of this chapter will address the literature and theoretical contributions concerning the *militarisation* of gender as a distinctly Feminist IR concern. It

should be noted that within this section I use the term *militarised* rather than *military* masculinity/femininity, as it is sometimes presented in the literature. Here I take Cynthia Enloe's (2007) and Sandra Via's (2010) understanding of militarisation to 'denote when "militaristic values (e.g. a belief in hierarchy, obedience, and the use of force) are adopted by states, organisations, individuals, corporations and so on"' (Enloe, 2007: 4; Via, 2010: 44). The reasoning for this is two-fold. Firstly it is to address the contestation that there is one particular form of 'military masculinity' (or indeed one 'military femininity' – see Section, 2.1.2). Secondly, the term *militarised* implies a process, that masculinities and femininities are constructed and produced through particular institutional processes and narratives. I use this conceptualisation to counter the notion that there is a 'natural' or pre-existing form of military masculinity/femininity that occurs independently of the extraordinary resources military organisations employ to create them.

2.1 Militarised Masculinity

The intricate manifestations of masculinity within militaries and its relation to power, violence and warfare has garnered much (and increasing) critical attention (for example, the various works of Cynthia Enloe; Connell in Kimmel & Messner, 1989; Morgan in Brod & Kaufman, 1994; Zalewski & Parpart; Higate, 2003; 2007; Sasson-Levy, 2003; Whitworth, 2004; Parpart & Zalewski, 2008; Duncanson, 2009; 2013; Kirkby & Henry, 2012 - to name a select few). Sylvester (2013) attributes this continued emphasis on the relationship between masculinity and warfare to "part of a lingering sense that men are either hardwired for war or, as is more likely the case socialised to it" declaring that "feminist analysts have shown considerable interest in understanding celebrations of warrior men and masculinity" (2013: 39). Without wanting to overgeneralise the literature surrounding military masculinity, I focus here on two broad groupings: Firstly, initial work detailing how an idealised military masculinity (the 'warrior ideal') is formed, shaped and used by military institutions to create conformity and uniformity within the ranks (a construction that links to Connell's (1995) work on hegemonic masculinity addressed in the following chapter). This work also focuses on the way in which femininity is positioned by and used in relation to this ideal type (Whitworth, 2004; Enloe 2000; Parpart & Zalewski, 2008). Secondly, on studies which further this construction by exposing the presence of multiple, competing and shifting constructions of military masculinities, focusing specifically on the work of Paul Higate (2003) and Claire Duncanson (2009; 2013).

2.1.1 The Warrior Ideal

Building upon Enloe's (1989; 1993) deconstruction and analysis of the genderedness of military organisations, feminist analysis identified an ideal-type of military masculinity that was seen to dominate (specifically western) armed forces. This particular construction of masculinity was conceptualised as a 'warrior-ideal' or 'warrior-ethic' (Cohn & Enloe, 2003) one based around notions of violence, aggression, heterosexuality and individual conformity to military discipline (Whitworth 2004:16). In most of the literature this ideal-type is presented as an *aspirational* ideal rather than an inherent or natural masculine reality – although its use and application does have very real effects patterned through and on the male body (see for example, Hooper, 1999; Morgan in Brod & Kaufman, 1994; Bourke, 1996) and consequential effects upon those who do not conform. Ultimately, what this feminist analysis identified was that 'warrior-ideal' is produced, systematically by military organisations for a specific purpose; to create conformity and uniformity within the organisation writ large and to simplify complex, fluid and uncertain understandings of 'male identity' within recruits (Whitworth, 2005: 125). In doing so - Sandra Whitworth argues - the military replaces these uncertain understandings with a "hegemonic representation of idealized norms of masculinity which privilege the tough, stoic emotionless warrior, capable and willing to employ violence" (2005: 125).

These ideals – the requirements of the Warrior – are not produced in isolation. They are constructed in relation and in opposition to (what is perceived to be) the feminine, the 'other': "Soldiers in most national militaries are constituted through often violently misogynist, racist and homophobic messages delivered through basic training, initiation and indoctrination exercises" (Whitworth, 2005: 125). This process, that often starts with the basic training of troops, seeks to expel non-conforming men (Kovitz 2003) and to exorcise the 'feminine other' from those that remain (Whitworth in Parpart & Zalewski 2008:121; See also Goldstein, 2001; Duncanson, 2009: 64-66).

What this literature shows is that the military is a site of gendered production (see Section 3, below) and that it also represents a very specific gender order (Connell, 2005a; 2009 – a concept returned to in detail in Chapter 3); militarised masculinity is a product. The hegemonic representation of idealised norms, as identified by Whitworth (2005), sits at the apex, ordering behaviour and expectations as well as setting the parameters for both masculinity and femininity throughout the organisation. Uncertainty and variation, therefore, is policed by this hegemony. However, this seemingly static (and reified) understanding of the 'ideal-type' and its role within the military has been subjected to critiques within the more recent literature.

2.1.2 Multiple Militarised Masculinities

One of the major critiques of the concept of military masculinity is that it is often assumed to be inherently uniform; that variation within and similarities between ‘categories’ of masculinity (Connell 2005) are often overlooked²³. The work of Paul Higate (2003; 2004; 2007; 2012) amongst others (Whitworth, 2004; Duncanson 2009; 2013) addresses these concerns and serves to pluralise understandings of military masculinity. In doing so he illustrates some of the problems and dangers of reifying military masculinity as that embodied solely by the ‘warrior ideal’.

Writing in the same volume Maria Kovitz, in reviewing the debates around women’s inclusion in the armed forces, notes ‘internally contradictory features’ that conspire to paint a picture of essential difference between men and women, and of essential similarity between men themselves (2003: 2). She states:

“Moreover, men are treated as an internally undifferentiated group rather than as a socially constructed category incorporating disparate individuals exhibiting a spectrum of physical, psychosocial characteristics, interests and inclinations” (Ibid).

In this sense the work by Higate and others challenges the universalism of the concept of ‘the warrior ideal’, exposing multiple and shifting forms of militarised masculinity. This work does not dismiss the notion of an ideal-type – detailed in the preceding section – but explored its construction in relation to a range of ‘other’ masculinities that manifest within military organisations via unequal ranks and across multiple military occupations (Higate 2003; Kovitz 2000; 2003; Hinojosa; 2010). This is an important conceptualisation to note, especially when considering the responses of the two male participants within this research – particularly Ben’s comments in Chapter 6, Section 3.

In addition, there has also been notable feminist work conducted on the impact of the changing role and expectations of the military more generally. The proliferation of UN ‘peacekeeping’ missions throughout the 1990s and the complex, protracted, operational environments of Iraq and Afghanistan in the 2000s has complicated the construction of the ‘ideal-type’ of militarised masculinity and problematised its usefulness. Citing work by Shareen Razack (2004) and Sandra Whitworth (2004), Claire Duncanson (2009) notes that:

“evidence of military involvement in sexual exploitation and unchecked aggression against civilians on peacekeeping operations has led many feminist activists and scholars to question the appropriateness of using soldiers to create peace” (2009: 64).

These studies question the utility of soldiers in ‘peacekeeping’ (see Section 1.1. above); Asserting that these (usually) men have been indoctrinated by hegemonic ideals of

masculinity, constructed in opposition to gendered and raced ‘others’ which impedes their ability to make or sustain peace. Where the boundaries between soldiering, peacekeeping and the use of violence are complicated, shifting and oblique, this can become problematic.

Duncanson (2009; 2013) like Higate, suggests that “masculinities are multiple, dynamic and contradictory” (2009: 63) and that ‘new’ or ‘different’ forms of *military* masculinity are possible. For Duncanson this is evident in a discourse of a “Peacekeeper Masculinity” drawn from interviews with military personnel and found within their own accounts of self in published autobiographies. However, Duncanson concedes that the ability of Peacekeeper Masculinity ‘to challenge the hegemony of the warrior model’ is questionable (Ibid) as:

“Peacekeeper masculinity remains a militarised masculinity, constructed through feminised others, it reinforces hierarchical gender relations, which ensure that power, wealth and respect are only available for certain groups of elite men” (Ibid: 74).

What these works show is that the production of gender within military organisations is fluid and can be subject to (however limited) change that can both challenge and reinforce hegemonic ideals, which themselves are also subject to change²⁴ (Steve Niva’s (1998) notion of ‘tough and tender’ masculinities produced during the first Gulf War can be viewed as an example of this). What the work by Higate, Duncanson et al. shows is the benefit of centralising the experiences and the perspectives of those individuals from *within* military organisations in order to expose these fluid gendered constructions. Understanding the construction of both this ideal-type of militarised masculinity as well as a plurality of militarised masculinities (and femininities, Section 2.2 below) is important when situating the participants – as military men and women – within this research. In addition to the critiques laid out above, the construction of both the Warrior Ideal and the plurality of military masculinities, have been problematised further by the inclusion of women into many national armed forces and the increasing role these women have in combat operations²⁵. Femininities cannot straightforwardly be utilised as ‘other’ and as ‘non-military’ as they were when the armed forces were solely the domain of men – though this is not to suggest that ‘othering’ and the subordination of women do not exist. What it does indicate is that femininities have become formally militarised also.

2.2 Militarised Femininity

2.2.1 Idealised Militarised Femininity & ‘Women Soldiers’

The inclusion of women into the formal structures of the military has, like Sylvester (2013) points out above, implications for feminist study. Whilst there are feminists that actively

engage with these women (Kronsell, 2006; 2012), there are those whose anti-militarist sympathies complicate their approach to women (and men) who actively join the institutions of war, or work within them (Sylvester, 2013: 39). These women, move beyond the discourse of the 'Beautiful Souls' (Elshtain, 1992) in need of protection, not involved in war making but reliant on wars to survive, to protect their inherent vulnerability (Sjoberg, 2007: 84), to one of active participation.

In this section I focus on Laura Sjoberg's definition of 'idealised militarised femininity' (Sjoberg & Gentry, 2007: 83) in order to highlight one of the ways in which female participation within military structures is framed. This ideal-type is constructed in relation to the dominance of masculinity in all its manifestations. Focusing specifically on the US, Sjoberg (and Enloe, 1993) argues that the inclusion of women into the military, at once complicated the definition of 'soldier': "the 'woman-soldier' introduced a new gender-role expectation to the United States military; she was not just a gender neutral 'soldier' but a special kind of soldier a 'woman soldier'" (2007: 85). The (continued) use of the gendered prefix 'woman' or 'female' symbolises that women were being added to a pre-existing system that viewed them as different, as something other than simply 'soldier' and by extension that the term 'soldier' is inherently masculine. One of the earliest feminist engagements in this regard was, again, by Enloe (1993; 2000); who noted that: 'women soldiers are depicted not as the trench-based, gun-shooting, fighters that men are, but as soldiers in lipstick and high heels – feminine, but militarised (Enloe, 2000 in Sjoberg, 1997: 84). What Enloe is suggesting is that the initial inclusion of women into this man's world was an addition, it left many of the pre-existing gendered discourses about what soldiering and war fighting was, and should be, intact. 'Women soldiers' needed to find a delicate balance between retaining what were perceived as 'feminine traits' whilst adapting and conforming to masculine norms (a point vividly reinforced by the account of the participants in Chapter 6).

Sjoberg (2007; & Gentry 2007) use the capture and subsequent rescue of US Private Jessica Lynch in Iraq in 2003 to illustrate how this gendered otherness is conceptualised and how the idealised form of militarised femininity shifts from Enloe's initial proposition (see also Kumar, 2004; Brittain, 2006: 81). Sjoberg states that the example of the participation of Private Lynch in warfare shows how the requirements of masculinity in soldiering remain in place for women. These requirements maintain the standards of the military as a 'male institution' or a 'male space' (See Chapter 6). Carol Cohn's (2000) study on male opposition to women's equality in the military makes many of the same points, particularly in relation to physical strength and endurance. However, the way in which Lynch's capture and need

for rescue were framed and utilised by the US military, show that in order to be allowed to be part of fighting a war, a ‘woman soldier’ must retain her femininity (or what femininity is perceived to be) (Sjoberg, 2007: 85). Turenne Sjolander & Trevenen (2010) also use the representation of Lynch’s capture and rescue as a case study in militarised femininity. They assert that representations of Lynch “serve to discipline and re-order the disrupted gender norms that are one result of women serving in military combat roles” (2010: 159) (See the discussion of ‘disruptive bodies’ in Chapter 3, Section 4.1).

The construction of idealised militarised femininity (and masculinity) as outlined by Sjoberg and Enloe is also intimately related to race and class. There is an implicit ‘whiteness’ within constructions of idealised militarised femininity as embodied by Lynch and that of the warrior ideal – of the white western soldier saving brown women. Khalili (2011) notes that:

“Here, she [Lynch] was at once the heroic white woman rising well above the savage men who captured her...and a damsel in distress whose rescue by even more heroic Special Forces men again instantiated the virtuous superiority of the invaders over the depraved occupied men” (2011: 1483)

Khalili argues that Lynch’s whiteness allowed her to embody an ‘iconic representation of American virtue’ (2011: 1483) in a way that her fellow soldiers who were captured at the same time – particularly, Shoshana Johnson a Panamanian born, African-American - could not. As a black single mother, Johnson represented a ‘body already marked as illegitimate within the USA’s racialised politics, and indeed a body marked as not even worth saving in the recasting of the story’ (Masters, 2009: 36-37. See also, Khalili, 2011: 1483; Kumar, 2004; Feitz & Nagel, 2008). Lynch’s whiteness is therefore used to construct a racialised ‘enemy other’ (Sjoberg, 2007), an ideal representation of the heroic American (male) soldier, *and* reinforce a particular culturally resonant ideal representation of militarised femininity in the United States.

What the literature concerning the place and position of men and women within the military exposes is the disruption that the ‘difference’ of women to the hegemonic and ubiquitous masculinities of military organisations brings. Despite the fact that “women soldiers are often ‘de-gendered and masculinised in the theatre (of war)’” (Karpinski & Strasser, 2005: 17 in Sjoberg & Gentry 2007: 85) difference between those women and their male colleagues persists. Turenne Sjolander & Trevenen (2010) argue that women in the military ‘pose a direct challenge to entrenched gendered norms and structures of power’ (2010: 159). They assert that “their very presence as soldiers calls into question the most basic essentialist assumptions about women as passive, sensitive, emotional, peaceful and weak” (Ibid). They also note that their inclusion disrupts a carefully created public/private division of labour –

by transgressing these boundaries and taking a violent, aggressive role in a public institution (the military) women soldiers become subversive; not 'feminine' not quite 'masculine'. The liberal feminist advance of equality of opportunity in armed forces recruitment (and increasingly into combat roles) complicates the essentialist, gendered structures characterise the military; those that conceptualise women as peaceful and therefore as inherently 'different' to men (See Charlesworth, 2008 and Petteman (1996) for a discussion of the 'woman & peace orthodoxy' in regards to peacekeeping and peace making; also the discussion of Valenius (2007) work in Chapter 8 of this thesis; See also Fukuyama (1998) for a reductive – highly controversial - conceptualisation of this association in regards to world politics and Tickner's (1999) critical response).

I include the above here as a way of illustrating the context within which NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the gender perspective are developed and situating this as a distinctly feminist concern. Male norms and behaviours continue to dominate military structures and NATO is not exempt (Chapter 6). Understanding how *women* soldiers are constructed/positioned within this heavily masculinised environment therefore becomes important (again, I return to this point in detail when discussing NATO as an organisation of hegemonic masculinity, Chapter 3 Section 3) Are they positioned as equal, but different? How does this difference manifest itself (Chapter 8)? How does a specific institutional focus on gender alter or reinforce the perception of femininity (and masculinity) within NATO? These are all questions that are addressed within the analytical chapters of this thesis.

What the discussion of militarised masculinities and femininities above does show is the relationality in their construction. The 'ideal-type' of both, dependent upon the (shifting) positionality of the other; and yet both ideals being largely unattainable in their 'truest' forms. They serve instead primarily to police and control other subordinate manifestations of masculinity and femininity within military organisations. Therefore a very specific gender order (Connell, 2009) can be seen to exist within the military, one in which essentialised gendered characteristics are reified, yet also in a state of constant negotiation. It is to this negotiation I now turn.

3. War (and Militarism) as a Site of Gendered Negotiation

What a review of the literature and the concepts identified above illustrate is that war and the organisations that fight them, such as NATO are sites of gendered negotiation (Cooke & Woollcott, 1993). They are locations where masculinities and femininities are (re)produced and (re)constructed - where great energy is expended on framing ideal-types and policing boundaries and transgressions of acceptable gendered norms.

In her discussion of international organisations and gender mainstreaming initiatives (noted in Chapter 1), Sandra Whitworth (2005) argues that unlike the ‘de-politicised’ use of the term gender within the UN (2005: 119), the military is one of the organisations that actually ‘gets’ gender. It understands the power that manipulating and controlling gender norms can have, both upon soldiers within those organisations and the enemy with which it is engaged. Whitworth’s argument is that:

“Militaries have long been in the business of manipulating gender. The construction of soldiers has always involved rituals and myths that focus on messages about masculinity, about manliness about race and belonging” (Whitworth, 2005: 125).

For Cooke and Wollacott (1993) the inclusion of women within military structures complicated the ‘terrain’ of war, declaring that war itself is a site of gender negotiation:

“War is beginning to undo the binary structures that it originally put in place: peace and war; home (female space) and front (male space); combatant and civilian. Women’s inclusion as participants in wars of this century has blurred distinctions between gender roles in peace and war. War has become a terrain in which gender is negotiated” (Cooke & Woollcott, 1993: xi)

Susan Jeffords (1989) qualifies this conceptualisation of gendered negotiation somewhat, declaring that: “It is not so much that war ‘creates’ identities as it provides a forum for the articulation of identities already implicit within the systems of dominance and power within patriarchy” (1989: 182 in Niva, 1998: 114). In Jeffords account war distils and gives prominence to pre-existing identities that are compatible with male dominance. Gender ‘negotiation’ may take place but it is always within the context of a gender regime that privileges the masculine (See Chapter 6, 7, 8). Specifically Jeffords notes that:

“It is not so much that war ‘creates’ identities as it provides a forum for the articulation of identities already implicit within the systems of dominance and power within patriarchy. To see war as ‘producing’ power is still to perceive it as something in some ways separate from other kinds of social and power relations. But war is not separate from society and cannot therefore ‘produce’ something that is not already inherent within it” (1989: 182)

Jeffords therefore offers a note of caution. War (and its gendered ‘productions’) must be placed within a wider social context. Therefore NATO should be seen as a forum, as a site where gender is negotiated and (re)produced. For example, NATO troops include women as active combatants in theatres of operations – blurring the ‘traditional’ distinction between private and public (Chapter 6, Section 2). Also, by actively engaging with UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda, and by paying specific attention to the role and place of women within the organisation, NATO can be seen to be disrupting (in a limited way) ‘traditional’ militarised gendered assumptions upon which it is based (See Chapter 3, Section 3.2). However, whilst

I agree, in principle, with Cooke and Woolcott's assertion that gender is negotiated within warfare and the organisations that fight them, I would, like Jeffords (1989) offer a note of caution of how far, in what contexts and by whom this negotiation takes place. Gender may indeed be negotiated in the context of militarism, but are orthodoxies actually challenged? How much does this negotiation result in transformation in those specific gender orders? Or are pre-existing gendered orthodoxies – patriarchal systems of dominance and power (Jeffords, 1989: 182) - simply repackaged and reinforced? Returning to the notion that UNSCR 1325 left militarism intact (Chapter 1, Section 2.4.), Hudson poses the question: "If 1325 is not challenging some of the fundamentals of the international security apparatus, then is it not reinforcing it?" (2010: 49). In this respect, this thesis will argue that whilst gendered negotiations are taking place within NATO they are conditioned by the pre-existing structure of the organisation as well as pre-existing notions of masculinity and femininity in the context of war and militarism.

Conclusion

In this chapter developments within feminist international relations have been addressed in order to situate this thesis and its concern with gendered inequalities and the processes of power that perpetuate them; specifically in regards to narrative and experience (Enloe, 2010; Sylvester, 2013). Whilst I take NATO as an 'actor' within international relations, this thesis theorises and exposes the genderedness of that organisation. In this respect I shift the focus from a traditional, realist understanding of 'NATO' as an unproblematic international 'actor' to the voices, concerns, experiences of those individuals that work within its structures; tracing out the links between these individuals and NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325. These are distinctly feminist concerns. Therefore whilst NATO remains highly visible in the discipline of International Relations, it is not the intention to make this thesis 'intelligible to' or situate it within the boundaries of the discipline as traditionally conceived. It is fundamentally a feminist analysis of NATO and NATO's 'gender perspective'. The theoretical and empirical approaches used within this thesis are contextualised by the body of Feminist IR literature identified above; given the careful construction of gendered identities, of militarised masculinities and femininities, within military organisations, NATO's willingness – its 'enthusiasm' (Cockburn, 2011: 3) – to engage with UNSCR 1325 and 'gender issues' would seem to be destabilising. Why would the organisation invite disruption to these carefully created constructions of appropriate gender norms? The following chapter expands upon these questions and parameters, setting out the key theoretical concepts used within this thesis to explore these questions, specifically in

relation to viewing NATO as an institution of (international) hegemonic masculinity and the 'disruption' that certain bodies and particular policies bring to that institution.

Chapter Three

Institutions of Hegemonic Masculinity: Masculinist Protection, Disruption & Narrative Entrapment

Introduction

This chapter provides the key theoretical concepts used within the thesis. The broad theoretical approach (like the methodological choices that follow) is eclectic and composite. I draw upon key concepts from social constructivism, that see gender as a social practice conditioned by (but not limited to) social structures; this is combined with a methodological approach that utilises Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) to centralise the importance of narrative and discourse in knowledge production. This approach is important in capturing the complex interactions between NATO's structural, organisational processes and the discursive (re)constructions of masculinities and femininities - present in the documents and articulated by the participants - that sustain and reproduce them.

Building upon the theorisation of gender, war and militarism advanced by both Feminist International Relations and Feminist Security Studies literature this chapter begins with an introduction to the methodology of Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA). This specific approach informs and provides a rationale for the key concepts which are used to analyse the accounts of the participants and NATO documentation. Secondly, Raewyn Connell's concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' and Iris Young's (2003) 'logic of masculinist protection' are explored in relation to *theorising* the genderedness of organisations (Acker, 1990; 1998; 2006; Benschop & Verloo, 2006). These concepts are used to conceptualise and frame NATO as an international *institution of hegemonic masculinity*. Thirdly, the work of Annica Kronsell (2005; 2006; 2012) is used to introduce the notion of '*disruptive bodies*' and '*disruptive policy*' within NATO. Thirdly, gender mainstreaming initiatives (such as UNSCR 1325) are considered as specific forms of '*gender governance*'. This concept is explored specifically in relation to the concepts of 'narrative entrapment' (Mittleman, 2004) (highlighted by 'storytelling' (Cohn, 2000)) and 'norms/normalisation' (True, 2011; Jaquette, 2011). These concepts are drawn upon to expose the hegemonic norms, gendered structures and discourses present within NATO.

1. Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis

The relevance of analysing documents and individual experiences will be explored in more detail in Chapter 4, Section 1, however the *methods* for analysing that material and those accounts are multiple and contested. Kronsell (2006) identifies that gender dynamics of

institutions can be studied through analysis of documents, places and narratives and that one way is through the deconstruction of the texts and discourses emerging from these institutions, sometimes ‘reading’ what is not written or what is ‘between the lines’ or what is expressed in symbols and in procedures (in Ackerly, Stern & True, 2006: 109). However, how this deconstruction is achieved – what silences are observed or interpreted for example – is often guided by the theoretical (and sometimes political) motivations of the researcher. As such definitions of what constitutes discourse analysis as an analytical method remain elusive.

As has already been discussed, this thesis is motivated and informed by a critical feminism framed specifically within Feminist International Relations that seeks to centralise gendered experiences and marginalised voices. Therefore the analytical method used within this thesis can be best described as a Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) approach (Lazar, 2005; 2007). Van Dijk (1993; 2008) identifies Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as: “a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context” (in Shrifffen et al. 2008: 352). Researchers employing CDA therefore take ‘explicit positions and thus want to understand expose and ultimately resist social inequality’ (Ibid) (See for example Van Dijk, 1993; Wodak, 2009; Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). In this way CDA is not so much a direction, school or specialisation but it does aim to offer a different mode or perspective of theorising, analysis and application in comparison to other ‘approaches’ in discourse studies (Van Dijk, in Schiffen et al. 2008: 352). What unifies CDA analysts is not so much a *specific method* but the mode or perspective of diverse researchers motivated by a desire to expose social inequality perpetuated and (re)enforced through text and talk. In short CDA is concerned with the social power of groups or institutions (Van Dijk, in Schiffen et al. 2008: 354)

The case for a specifically *feminist* CDA is made by Michelle Lazar (2005). Lazar asserts that FCDA as a method concerned with demystifying the interrelationships of gender, power and ideology in discourse, is equally applicable to the study of texts as well as talk (Lazar, 2005: 5, see also Hooper, 2000; Sylvester in Ackerly, Stern & True, 2006). Firstly, she acknowledges that studies in CDA with a gender focus mostly adopt a critical feminist view of gender relations (as this thesis does), one motivated by the need to change the existing conditions of these relations. However Lazar asserts that these individual authors may not use the term ‘feminist’ overtly, yet their motivations remain feminist and that these motivations and that this shared perspective should be acknowledged and made explicit (Lazar, 2005: 3). Secondly, she expresses concern that CDA, despite its progressive

intention has ‘been historically dominated by straight, white men’ (concerns expressed by Wilkinson and Kitzinger, 1995). Indeed Van Dijk writing in 2008 declared that: “one vast field of critical research on discourse and language that this far has not been carried out within a CDA perspective is that of gender (in Schiffren et al. 2008: 358). These points are contested by Ruth Wodak (2008: 194) who points to the increasing amount of research in gender and language studies and the diversification of its authors, (See for example Harrington, et al. 2008). Indeed Lazar herself admits that the ‘social identities’ of the researchers are not overly concerning to her as most have ‘feminist sympathies’ and more recent work has drawn upon and includes feminist work. What Lazar is asserting in raising these points is that feminist CDA can become marginalised within wider approaches, thus necessitating a need to be explicitly feminist and calling for a more explicitly gender focus in CDA. These points are useful in positioning FCDA as an approach through which to expose the gendered norms, structures and discourses of NATO. They also serve to remind me of my (western, white, homosexual, male) identity, and draw into focus some of the issues that may surround describing myself as a feminist critical discourse analyst. In this sense, I would argue that ‘social identity’, regardless of feminist sympathies, should be a central concern for the researcher throughout the research process. Lazar’s points reinforce the need to continually reflect on how we, as researchers, undertake analysis, to be continually questioning and reflexive throughout the process – a key consideration that is addressed further in Chapter 4, Section 5.

Finally, Lazar asserts that FCDA establishes a distinctly ‘feminist politics of articulation’ within the wider CDA school in order to theorise and analyse from a critical feminist perspective the particularly insidious and oppressive nature of gender as an omni-relevant category in most social practices (Lazar, 2005: 3). FCDA therefore specifically foregrounds gender a concept through which to analyse social and political inequalities that – within the context of this thesis - are reproduced by the discursive social, political and military practices of an international organisation. I will return to the limitations of a specifically FCDA approach in Chapter 4, Section 4.1.

Therefore as a feminist critical discourse analyst the “central concern is with critiquing discourses which sustain a patriarchal social order: that is, relations of power that systematically privilege men as a social group and disadvantage, exclude and disempower women as a social group” (Lazar, 2005: 5). In relation to this thesis, FCDA provides an approach to critique the organisational discourses that sustain the hegemonic masculine norms of NATO as expressed in both the accounts of the participants and NATO documentation, despite the introduction of a gender mainstreaming process premised upon

UNSCR 1325. This is achieved by utilising the concepts of *hegemonic masculinity* (Connell, 1995; 2005), *masculinist protection* (Young, 2003), *disruptive bodies and policies* (Kronsell, 2005) and *narrative entrapment* (Mittleman, 2004). The following sections of this chapter will address each of these concepts in turn.

2. Hegemonic Masculinity and the Gender Order

Raewyn Connell's social theory of gender was developed in part to challenge the ubiquity of sex role theory and biological determinism, particularly in western contexts. The deficiency of sex role theory to account for power and change, between and within genders and in the relationship between structure and agency, was central to Connell's critique (Connell, 1987; 1995; 2005; Demetriou, 2001: 338). Demetriou (2001) suggests that Connell's critique of sex role theory does more than outline the theoretical problems. He suggests that, in conceptualising plurality *within* categorisations of masculinity (and femininity) Connell offers a 'transcendence' of the deficiencies associated with sex role theory (2001: 339) in that her 'originality lies in the formulation of a single theoretical principle that states that the relationships within genders are centred on, and can be explained by, the relationships *between* genders' (Ibid: 343 – emphasis added).

Central to this formulation is the notion differentiation within masculinities, bound up with varying levels of power and privilege. Connell defines these as 'hegemonic', 'subordinate', 'complicit' and 'marginalised' masculinities. The concept of hegemonic masculinity refers to a configuration or pattern of 'idealised' masculine characteristics that occupy a position of power and privilege within particular a social, cultural and temporal context (Connell, 2005a:78; also see Section 3.1, below). Subordinate masculinities therefore are those which do not conform (or are not seen to conform) to hegemonic ideals. For Connell, (assumed) characteristics and practices of subordinated masculinities are often 'blurred' with femininity (Ibid: 79) – 'effeminate', homosexual men for example - thereby allowing for them to be 'symbolically expelled' from the hegemonic representation of 'masculinity'. Complicit masculinity encompasses Connell's notion of the 'patriarchal dividend' (a key theoretical concept returned to within the following analytical chapters, specifically within Chapter 6, Section 4). In short, Connell asserts that whilst not all men represent the hegemonic ideal, the majority of men gain advantage from the overall subordination of women (2005: 79) – that there is an inherent dividend attached to simply being born male, into the one half of a socially constructed binary that is culturally more valued, as Sandra Via states:

“A man’s (or anyone’s) claim to masculinity...is a positional claim in opposition to a feminine other that society has constructed to be the lesser of the two binaries. Without the existence of an individual or group that can be labelled as the weaker party, masculine social norms would be without content” (Via, 2010: 43)

Finally, Connell uses ‘marginalisation’ to “refer to the relations between the masculinities in dominant and subordinated classes or ethnic groups” (Ibid: 80). In this sense, Connell envisages a relationship between the ‘authorisation’ of the hegemonic masculinity of the dominant groups and those marginalised (Ibid). Therefore exemplars of hegemonic masculinity within particular marginalised communities (Connell uses the example of black athletes in the United States (Ibid: 81)) do not increase social authority to the wider group.

What this conceptualisation of plurality and variability allows for is a centralisation of *relationality* in gender relations (both within and between masculinities and femininities); an understanding that no masculinity (or femininity) arises except in a complex system of gender relations (Ibid: 71) that are fluid and contextually specific:

“Any one masculinity, as a configuration of practice, is simultaneously positioned in a number of different structures of relationship, which may be following different historical trajectories. Accordingly, masculinity, like femininity, is always liable to internal contradiction and historical disruption” (Connell, 2005a: 73)

This ‘system of gender relations’ is often referred to as a ‘gender order’ or ‘gender regime’; identified – amongst others - by Sylvia Walby (2011) as a ‘set of interconnected gender relations and gendered institutions that constitute a system’ (2011: 104; 2009: 301). Gender regimes therefore operate in myriad ways and at different intersecting levels, from cultural to institutional and organisational. Connell and Messerschmidt identify the gender regime of an institution as: “the *patterning* of gender relations in that institution and especially the continuing pattern which provides the structural context of particular relationships and individual practices. (2005: 6 – emphasis added).

In regards to this thesis, NATO as an international military institution is conceptualised as constituting a particular *gender regime*. In regards to Connell’s *dimensions* of gender relations (Connell, 2002; 2006: 7) NATO is characterised by a particular gendered division of labour (both in regards to particular jobs that men and women ‘traditionally’ occupy, and in regards to particular jobs that women are still excluded from). NATO is also characterised by gendered relations of power expressed via particular gendered institutional practices, symbolism and discourse (explored in Chapters, 6, 7 & 8). Connell and Messerschmidt also identify the concept of a gender regime can be applied to organisational *processes* such as policy formation, as well as to an organisational structure (2005:6). Using this definition, the

process of developing a gender perspective, within the constraints of the structural gender order, can be seen as a particular manifestation of a gendered regime (see Section 3, below).

2.1. Hegemonic Masculinity as a Powerful ‘Façade’

As Demetriou notes the concept of ‘hegemonic masculinity’ represents the most influential and popular part of Connell’s work (2001: 337) and as a theoretical concept has been used extensively across academic disciplines (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 834). As outlined above, to say that particular manifestations of masculinity are hegemonic is not to suggest that all, or even most men, enact or embody hegemonic masculinity; indeed, it can be argued that most men do not (see Demetriou, 2001:342). Hegemonic masculinity can therefore be seen to represent normative *ideals* about the conduct, embodiment and enactment of masculinity in any culturally specific context. However, Connell posits the question: “What is ‘normative’ about a norm hardly anyone meets?” (Connell, 2005a: 70). It is normative then, not in the numerical sense, but in that it is culturally accepted and legitimised via particular cultural practices and through *institutions*. Hegemonic ideals are therefore conditional and intrinsically linked to institutional power; they are constructed via process rather than existing as a fixed or static ‘type’ and intimately linked to context:

“Hegemony is likely to be established only if there is some correspondence between cultural ideal and institutional power, collective if not individual. So the top levels of business, the military and government provide a fairly convincing *corporate* display of masculinity, still very little shaken by feminist women or dissenting men. It is the successful claim to authority, more than direct violence that is the mark of hegemony (though violence often underpins or supports authority)” (2005a: 77)

In this conceptualisation, hegemonic masculinity is bound up with the legitimisation of authority and claims to power and privilege in a particular gender order or gender regime. This legitimisation and claims to authority within institutions and cultural practices produce a façade of unitary masculinity which determine the standards against which other masculinities (and femininities) are then defined (Cornwall & Lindisfarne, 1994: 20). In the example of the military (stated by Connell above and returned to below) constructions of hegemonic masculinity are drawn upon drawn upon to construct uniformity within the soldiers and conformity to particular organisational priorities. That the unitary nature of hegemonic masculinity may be ‘illusionary’ does not negate the powerful, dominant effects it has upon ‘other’ masculinities and femininity, more broadly defined. As Sandra Via notes:

“The dominance of hegemonic masculinity relies on its opposition to and competition with subordinated masculinities and femininities. Hegemonic masculinities at once promote a particular organisation of the political order and reinforces unequal relationships between men and women in order to promote the legitimisation of masculine authority” (Via, 2010: 43; Tickner, 1992: 6).

In this sense hegemonic masculinity has powerful ‘organisational’ effects (and indeed, can be drawn upon as a particular organisational resource) through which unequal patterns of gender relations can be ordered and maintained.

2.2 Hegemonic Masculinity Contested: Hybridisation, Transformation, Progress?

Whilst credited for a profound contribution to gender theory Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity has been subject to both critique (Demetriou, 2001; Beasley, 2012) and reformulation (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). One of the main critiques of the concept of hegemonic masculinity – indeed of a hierarchical gender order, more generally – is that it can imply a rigidity or a static representation, a ‘type’ or ‘essence’ of masculinity; further that this was a negative type or a toxic assemblage of traits (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 840). Ultimately, that there was an inherent ‘descriptive tendency’ within the concept of hegemonic masculinity that resulted in essentialised characteristics being applied to particular groups of men. Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) rejected this critique and re-emphasised the importance placed on social context (Ibid: 832-833) asserting that just as “masculinity and femininity is not a fixed entity in the body or personality traits of individuals – masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and therefore can differ according to the gender relations in a particular social setting” (Ibid: 836).

That Connell and Messerschmidt felt the need to reassert the anti-essentialism of hegemonic masculinity is telling and indicates an application of the concept that is not entirely in keeping with its formulation. Indeed, it can be argued that the various usages and application of the term across a wide variety of empirical and theoretical research (including Feminist International Relations – see Kronsell, 2005 below) necessitate periodic critical evaluation as the concept ‘must mutate’ as it ‘finds applications in other settings and by other hands’ (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 854; Messerschmidt, 2012; see also Tickner & Sjoberg, 2011: 227-229).

In countering the critique of fixity, Connell and Messerschmidt acknowledge that a level of appropriation or co-optation - of elements from subordinate or marginalised masculinities and indeed of femininities - is necessary for hegemonic masculinities to remain hegemonic in changing social or cultural settings:

“Hegemony may be accomplished by the incorporation of such masculinities into a functioning gender order rather than by active oppression in the form of discredit or violence. In practice, incorporation and oppression can occur together” (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 848).

This notion of ‘hybridisation’ – via appropriation, rather than overt violence - is a key theme in critical masculinities studies that sought to theorise the contested, contradictory, yet ultimately variable relationships between the masculinities of Connell’s gender order (for example: Messner, 1992; 1993; 2007; Demetriou, 2001; Anderson, 2010; Bridges, 2014). Messner (2007) puts forward a notion of a culturally ascendant hybrid masculinity that combines toughness and tenderness, but in specific ways which obscure (and perpetuate) power and inequality (Bridges, 2014: 61). Anderson (2010) has formulated a theory of ‘Inclusive Masculinity’ to explain what he sees as a (western) cultural shift in declining homophobia and greater sexual and gender equality – though the extent of Anderson’s ‘inclusivity’ within contemporary western masculinity in regards to homosexuality are highly contestable (O’Neill, 2014). Demetriou (2001) critiques an inherent elitism within Connell’s conceptualisation of hegemonic masculinity, in that it downplays – or neglects entirely – the agency of individuals within subordinated masculinities and women generally (2001: 345), something Connell & Messerschmidt acknowledge (2005: 847). Demetriou’s work focuses on the appropriation of elements of gay culture into a ‘contemporary hegemonic bloc’ that reproduces rather than challenges patriarchy. What these studies (Anderson’s excluded) note is that the malleability of hegemonic forms or manifestations of masculinity does not suggest that patriarchal power is undermined. Indeed, it is suggested that transformation, appropriation and hybridisation of particular hegemonic forms of masculinity are essential for them to remain hegemonic and therefore do nothing to advance the gender equality.

In relation to the military, Duncanson (2013) notes that there has been a ‘softening’ of dominant forms of masculinity (See also, Niva, 1998; Whitworth, 2004; and the discussion of military masculinities in Chapter 2, Section 2.1, this thesis); as the hegemonic ideal appropriates certain characteristics from both subordinate masculinities and femininity in order to ‘refashion’ the ideal and respond to shifting cultural expectations (Duncanson, 2013: 61-62). Like Demetriou (2001) and Messner (2007), the sceptical view is that this appropriation, whilst refashioning expectations and masculine ideals within the military, reinforces difference and inequality. For example Duncanson suggests that: “the new man of the military often depends on the construction of those in areas of conflict as primitive, inherently and excessively violent and barbaric, or as helpless victims” (2013: 61; 2009).

The assertion here is that even ‘ostensibly progressive masculinities can have a deeply regressive effect’ and ‘often further disempowers those already lacking power, security and wealth’ (Duncanson, 2013: 61). Therefore, hegemonic masculinities, as an assemblage of

appropriated traits that continue to be premised on reformulated patterns of exclusion and subordination inhibit, rather than indicate a potential for *transformative* change:

“The concept of hegemonic masculinity has been used to explain why it is that the ‘New Man’ in military contexts, the heroic peacekeeper, the humanitarian soldier scholar, for example has not resulted in gender equality or for that matter, genuine peace and security on many military interventions. Yet, perhaps the utility of the concept leads to too hasty conclusions in feminist scholarship; to the automatic assumption that change in masculinities is little more than the ‘flexibility of the machinery of rule’ (Ibid: 71).

Here, Duncanson offers a note of caution on the negative connotations of appropriation, change and transformation of hegemonic masculinity, stating that it is too deterministic. She notes that “there is nothing in the concept itself which necessitates an interpretation that it always inevitably shifts in order that men retain power; that it can never be transformed, dismantled” (2013: 63).

Inherent in their ‘reformulation’ of the concept of hegemonic masculinity Connell & Messerschmidt argue that “hegemonic masculinities are...to a significant degree constituted in men’s interaction with women; therefore the commonalities in women’s gender practices also produce convergence” (2005: 850). Furthering this point they note: “we consider that research on hegemonic masculinity now needs to give much closer attention to the practices of women and to the historical interplay of femininities and masculinities” (Ibid: 848). In centralising the interaction of women and men, of masculinities and femininities in and through specific organisational practices this thesis provides examples of understanding the construction of particular hegemonic and subordinate masculinities and femininities within NATO. I believe that, with the above caveats in mind – an avoidance of essentialism, and assumed (negative) types and the acknowledgement of fluidity and hybridity between masculinities and femininities – hegemonic masculinity remains a valuable theoretical and analytical tool, particularly when applied to an organisational setting such as NATO.

3. The Genderedness of Organisations & Institutions of Hegemonic Masculinity

One of the central concerns of this thesis is to explore the ways in which NATO as an organisation is gendered. The focus lays in understanding and analysing both the organisational structures, policies and doctrine in this regard, but also the experience of gendered individuals working within and through those structures. Implicit in this focus is the notion that organisations are not gender neutral. Organisations such as NATO are inherently, often intimately, gendered; as Connell notes: “social science has come to recognise a third site of gender configuration, institutions such as the state, the workplace and the school. Many find it difficult to accept that institutions are substantively, not just

metaphorically, gendered. This is, nevertheless, a key point” (Connell, 2005a: 73). The gendering of institutions manifests in fluid, intersecting and contradictory ways, but largely in a manner that privileges those individuals or groups in positions of power within organisations – these are usually (though not exclusively) men. Consequently, patterns of inequality, disadvantage and subordination result from this gendered privileging. As Joan Acker asserts:

“to say that an organisation...is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine” (1990: 146).

Empirical work conducted within organisations throughout the 1980s and early 1990s began to see their structures as inherently gendered (see for example Acker, 1990; Cockburn, 1985; Game & Pringle, 1984; Knights & Wilmott 1985). Acker’s (1990) work examined organisations as sites of gendered processes in which both gender and sexuality were obscured through gender-neutral and asexual discourses and highlights the ways in which gender, the body and sexuality are part of the processes of control in work (1990: 140). Acker’s early work centred on the persistence of gender inequality within work and employment, despite a proliferation of anti-discrimination laws and policy. This work addressed the intersection of class, race and gender (Acker, 1998) and conceptualised ‘inequality regimes’ operating within organisations – a series of interlocking ‘processes and practices that result in continuing inequalities in all work organisations’ (Acker, 2006: 441). These regimes were the product of what Acker describes as a ‘gendered substructure’ (1990; 1998: 197) that included amongst other things that the demands of many jobs are premised on the assumption that the person occupying that position is male (Ibid).

So, if we accept that institutions are gendered, what counts as an *institution* or an organisation of hegemonic masculinity? In the broadest sense such institutions can be defined as ones “largely governed by men” (Kronsell, 2005: 281) that have produced and recreated norms and practices associated with masculinity and heterosexuality (Ibid). However - in much the same way that hegemonic masculinity is not ‘numerically’ dominant - the conceptualisation of institutions of hegemonic masculinity incorporates more than the mere physical presence (or dominance) of men’s bodies. Institutions of hegemonic masculinity serve a particular (common) purpose: they are institutions or organisations where male power and dominance is reified and reinforced through organisational practices and discourses (see for example, Cohn, 1987). They are spaces within which particular masculine behaviours and practices are normalised, where particular understandings of masculinities (and femininities) are (re)produced and formalised. As Charlotte Hooper notes:

“Masculinity appears to have no stable ingredients and therefore its power depends entirely on certain qualities constantly being associated with men...masculine spaces are precisely the places where such associations are cemented and naturalised” (Hooper, 2001: 230 in Parpart & Zalewski, 2008: 29). In this sense institutions of hegemonic masculinity, provide such a space; where cultural norms that privilege men, and values associated with masculinity, intersect with institutional power structures and the physical presence of male bodies, to cement male dominance. The organisational space provides the link between cultural ideals and institutional power that Connell (2005a: 77) argues is required for the establishment of hegemony (See, Section 2.1, above). As Kronsell notes:

“Hegemonic masculinity refers to a particular set of masculine norms and practices that have become dominant in specific institutions of social control, to be hegemonic, cultural norms must be supported by institutional power” (Kronsell, 2005: 281).

Though not exclusively ‘male spaces’, institutions of hegemonic masculinity are also traditionally patterned through a high level of segregation between the sexes and particular gendered divisions of labour. Hirdman (1998, 2001) suggests that institutions have traditionally constructed different spheres of activity for men and women to occupy – and that this historically constructed division (and the norms it creates around male behaviour) helps to secure the continuity of institutions of hegemonic masculinity (Kronsell, 2005: 285). Institutions of hegemonic masculinity therefore provide the structural space for the (re)production of particular cultural understandings of gender, power and inequality.

3.1. The Military as an Institution of Hegemonic Masculinity

As has already been indicated above, the military can be seen as a particular example of an institution of hegemonic masculinity. Connell argues that it can be seen as an exemplar of such an institution, particularly in a European and a North American context (1995: 213). Traditionally, it is men and men’s bodies that have (almost exclusively) occupied the structures of military institutions, at every level in varying positions of power and subordination (Higate, 2003).

Militaries have, traditionally, constructed a very narrowly defined, hegemonic ideal of militarised masculinity – detailed in Chapter 2, Section 2.1. In this sense the (re)production and promotion of hegemonic masculinity in a military context, is devised in relation to the primary aim of the organisation, of war fighting and the deployment of violence; as Connell identifies: “studies of state military forces show an organisational effort to produce and make hegemonic a narrowly defined masculinity which will make its bearers efficient in producing the organisation’s effects of violence” (Connell, 2005a: 259). The military is

therefore a space where qualities associated with war fighting, security and defence are 'constantly associated with men' (Hooper, 2001:230) and men's bodies, where soldiering is intimately fused with masculinity. As an institution of hegemonic masculinity the military also promotes the association of men, masculinity and soldiering via physicality and sexuality, largely in opposition/relation to the feminine other (Morgan in Brod & Kaufamn, 1994; Bourke, 1996; Hooper, 2001; Cohn, 2000; Via, 2010). The promotion – and often aggressive reinforcement - of heterosexuality has been seen as an essential tool for promoting social cohesion and comradery between men within the military (Kronsell, 2012: 44).

Traditionally, this fusion of men, masculinity and soldiering within militaries has been facilitated by a literal exclusion of the feminine and homosexual other. Where women have been included in military forces, their inclusion was initially premised on exclusion from particular roles and occupations – particularly those defined as 'direct combat' roles (see for example, Kornblum, 1984; Horrigan, 1992) and homosexual men and women have traditionally served without disclosure of their sexual orientation. In this regard, Hinojosa (2010) identifies that hegemonic masculinity in the military manifests in both 'internal' and 'external' forms. External in the sense that: "masculine power is embedded in the structure of the institution" (2010: 180). Examples of this can include the banning of women from particular combat roles and the military rank system – which 'ensures that some men maintain dominance over other men and women' (2010: 180-181) and represent the gendered division of labour that characterises Connell's (2002; 2006) conceptualisation of institutional gender regimes. Internal hegemony in Hinojosa's conceptualisation is "the hierarchical structuring of masculinities such that some constructs are dominant and privileged over other masculinities and femininities (2010: 181). For example, subordinate masculinities in a military context are often pattered on a civilian/military divide, the variation of occupational roles and across the various branches of the armed forces (Higate, 2003; 2009; Barrett 2004; Duncanson; 2009). Hinojosa's study of the construction of particular hegemonic masculine ideals in the American military found that non-military personnel, service members of different branches, ranks and occupational specialities were cast as less physical able, less self-disciplined, less willing to take risks by pre-active duty servicemen, thereby creating patterns of 'discursive domination' (2010: 179). In this sense hegemonic masculinities within a military context are both (organisationally) structural and - drawing upon Connell's (2005a) conception outline above - a configuration of everyday gendered social practice whereby individuals construct gender identities in relation and opposition to other men and women (Hinojosa, 2010: 181).

However, as noted in Chapter 2, the heterosexual male exclusivity of militaries is increasingly being challenged, particularly in the national military forces of NATO (in terms of both women's entry into the armed forces, the roles available to them and the repeal of bans on gay service men and women). Engagement with international gender norms such as UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security agenda can be seen to challenge this exclusivity further. Kronsell uses Hirdman's assertion of a strict gendered division of labour within institutions (outlined above) to argue that the most interesting institutions to study gender relations are those where the segregation of distinct (or exclusive) spheres (of male and female activity) have become blurred (2005: 285). Using this logic, NATO is an ideal case study.

3.2. NATO as an Institution of (International) Hegemonic Masculinity

Although a complex institution, NATO is primarily a military organisation comprised of the representatives of national military armed forces of member states and the political support structures they require. The national armed forces of NATO member states are still overwhelmingly male-dominated (Schjolset, 2013) and NATO draws upon these collective military resources of its member states in times of conflict. NATO's international military command structures (NATO HQ, SHAPE, ACT) are overwhelmingly occupied by men (NATO, 2012b). As has already been noted, the NCGP is the only NATO committee to be headed by a woman. Men, therefore, dominate both the national and international infrastructure of the Alliance.

In addition to this dominance of male bodies, the norms, behaviours and discourses of NATO – transferred up and through national military structures - are also heavily masculinised. 'Internal' hegemonic masculinity (in Hinjosa's, (2010) conceptualisation) is also produced as a configuration of everyday social practice, as expressed by the accounts of the participants in this research (as will be detailed throughout Chapters 6, 7 & 8). In this sense NATO is taken as a site of hegemonic masculinity wherein particular processes and relationships are located, through which individual and collective groups of men and women conduct gendered lives (Connell, 2005a: 71). NATO also occupies a position within the international security infrastructure and in this sense its actions (as a collective organisation) are situated, and saturated in international security discourses that value and privilege the masculine – 'strength', 'rationality' – over the feminine – 'weakness, emotion' (Via, 2010: 43; Tickner, 1992; Hooper, 2001) and are imbued with narratives of masculinist protection (Young, 2003) – outlined below.

It is worth offering a note of caution when extrapolating from the ‘national’ to the ‘international’. As Connell & Messerschmitt note when discussing a ‘global gender order’: “it is tempting to assume a simple hierarchy of power and authority, running from global to regional to local” (2005b: 850) – or indeed from the national to the international. Power, authority and gender are constructed and contested at multiple, multifaceted levels. NATO is an organisation made up of the military forces of multiple and varied national armed forces with particular cultural practices and variation and in this sense there is a danger of oversimplifying the concept of ‘the military’. However, as Goldstein (2001) has identified, militaries are ‘institutions that have largely been governed by men and have produced and recreated norms and practices associated with particular forms and ideals of masculinity that are surprisingly consistent across cultures and time’ (in Kronsell, 2012:44). It can be legitimately argued that one of the reasons why NATO works effectively as a collective military alliance is the similarity in the military norms and practices across its twenty-eight member states. Similarly, the Alliance’s supranational organisational structures have been developing and integrating for sixty-five years, and have proved adept at accommodating various phases of expansion and the incorporation of new member states’ military organisations.

3.3 The Logic of Masculinist Protection

Entwined with understanding NATO as an institution of hegemonic masculinity is what Iris Young (2003) defines as a logic of masculinist protection. Moving away from using gender in an explanatory manner – i.e. attempts to connect the violence of states and institutions to particular behavioural propensities of men and women - Young takes gender as an element of interpretation. By this she means that:

“viewing issues of war and security through a gendered lens...means seeing how a certain logic of gendered meanings and images helps organise the way people interpret events and circumstances, along with the positions and possibilities for action within them” (2003: 2).

Drawing upon the work of Judith Stiehm (1982) Young associates the logic of masculinist protection with the position of the male head of household as a protector of the family, expanding this to encompass male leaders more generally as protectors of a given population (Ibid). There are two particular elements of Young’s logic that have resonance with this thesis. Firstly, the logic of masculinist protection is premised on an understanding of variation and plurality in masculinities; specifically, the relationship between what Young calls ‘dominative masculinity’ and that of the ‘protector masculinity’ (2003: 4). Young’s conception of masculinist protection recalls a ‘rather more benign image of masculinity’:

“the role of this courageous, responsible and virtuous man is that of protector” (2003: 4). This is constructed in opposition to an ‘other’ masculinity embodied by ‘bad’ men who exploit, harm and abuse the vulnerable for the pleasures of domination (Ibid).

The second element is one of subordination. Young states that: “Feminine subordination, in this logic, does not constitute submission to a violent and overbearing bully” (2003:5), it is not submission to a ‘dominative masculinity’ or the ‘bad men’. Subordination in this sense forms part of an exchange between the protector and the protected: “In return for male protection, the woman concedes critical distance from decision-making autonomy” (2003: 4). As a consequence of this exchange the protected woman defers to the protectors judgement, looks up to him with gratitude for his manliness and admiration for his willingness to face the dangers of the world (2003: 5), this gratitude in turn reinforces his perception of his own masculinity and worth.

In this sense a logic of masculinist protection can be seen to be embedded within the hegemonic norms of NATO. At the more abstract level, NATO can be seen as a collectivisation of the security state, protecting its citizens from an ‘other’ and external threat, beyond the imagined borders of the alliance. The citizen, in this reading, as ‘protected’, defers decision making autonomy to the nation state as protector and by extension the NATO alliance. In this sense NATO itself can be viewed as a masculinist protector a role that reinforces the hegemonic militaristic ideals and norms that were identified above. This gendered logic helps NATO to define and locate itself and frame the gender perspective in a broader sense (see Chapter 5, Section 2; Chapter 8, Section 1). The logic of masculinist protection is also drawn upon within the empirical chapters of this thesis (Chapters 6-8) in order to analyse the ways in which participants, both male and female, positioned themselves and their work in relation to both each other and the wider institution. For example, one of the participants, Ben, draws explicitly on narratives of paternalistic protection when providing a counter challenge to a perceived feminisation of his masculinity resulting from his work on gender issues (see Chapter 6, Section 5). There was also a widely acknowledged view that male involvement lent gender mainstreaming credibility, expressed via the desire for men to ‘champion’ the process (Chapter, 7, Section 2) and to distance women from the process more generally (Chapter 7, Section 1).

On the surface, the manifestation of masculinist protection within the accounts of the participants is expressed in rather benign terms (in the same way in which Young identifies). And yet, power inequalities, domination and subordination persist within this logic: “the role of the masculine protector puts those protected, paradigmatically women and children, in a subordinate position of dependence and obedience” (Young, 2003: 2). Drawing upon

Foucault's notion of pastoral power, Young's suggests that masculinist protection is a power marked out by virtue and love (2003: 6), appearing "gentle and benevolent both to its wielders and to those under its sway" (Ibid). This understanding has parallels with Kronsell's understanding of the presence and persistence of gendered norms in institutions expressed above. Here, gendered norms have been built into the 'walls' of institutions, whose structure appears so natural and 'supportive' that it becomes difficult to see them also as exclusionary barriers (Kronsell, 2005: 291). Couching gender mainstreaming initiatives and framing the gender perspective in a 'supportive' logic of masculine protection reinforces particular inequalities and barriers whilst projecting an image of care and consideration for women working both inside and outside of NATO. It is these structural and discursive barriers that constitute the focus of Chapters 6, 7 and 8. The logic of masculinist protection provides one particular way in which the hegemonic masculine norms of the organisation imprint on, condition, and *control* understandings of the gender perspective.

4. Making Masculinity Visible: From a Universal Nothing to a Particular Something

In conceptualising NATO as an institution of hegemonic masculinity characterised by a pervasive logic of masculinist protection, the question becomes how can those dominant masculine norms and the genderedness of NATO be exposed and subsequently challenged? The following section will consider two ways of exposing the genderedness of NATO as an institution of hegemonic masculinity, as well as identifying the masculine norms and behaviours that are interwoven with its institutional practices. The 'disruptive presence' of military women (and men) and the effects of 'disruptive' policy – explored via FCDA - both offer theoretical tools to problematise and expose the 'silent' and 'natural' omnipresence of masculinities within NATO.

4.1. 'Disruptive' Bodies

Kronsell (2005) argues that within institutions of hegemonic masculinity, masculinity itself is usually silent, or 'unseen' due to its ubiquity. The process of normalisation, of making masculine practices and behaviours the 'norm for appropriate conduct', makes masculinity appear 'natural' and therefore difficult to critique (2005: 282-284). Masculinity is 'not named' because it omnipresent, all-encompassing within these particular institutions. Indeed, as Joan Acker argues "as a relational phenomenon, gender is difficult to see when only the masculine is present" (1990: 142). Kronsell's work, specifically focused on the Swedish Armed Forces (SAF), seeks to "make visible' norms of hegemonic masculinity embedded in the military institutions" through studying organisational and institutional practices (Kronsell, 2012: 43; Kronsell, 2005).

For Kronsell, knowledge is produced through exploring struggle within these institutions, primarily women's struggles: "Gendered norms become apparent when women engage with the military. This occurs as the female soldiers subjectivity is formed against the norms of masculinity embedded in the organisation" (Kronsell, 2012: 43). The increasing presence of women in the military is therefore 'disruptive' (See, Tureenne Sjolander & Trevenen (2010); Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1; 2.2.2). Women are disruptive in the sense that the institution is no longer exclusively occupied by men's bodies; and also in the sense that the perspective and presence of these women disrupt the masculine norms that pervade the institutions. Kronsell argues that the inclusion of these women, their presence and struggles challenge the naturalness and invisibility of masculine norms; the *relational* nature of gender and the dominance of masculinity are therefore exposed. In this regard, men as a 'category' are transferred from a 'universal nothing to a specific something' (Kronsell in Ackerly et al. 2006: 109).

In stressing the importance of listening to and analysing the experiences of women within institutions of hegemonic masculinity, Kronsell states that:

"In general then, women are situated in ways that enable them to perceive gendered practices within institutions of hegemonic masculinity, while male elites' perceived fit with dominant conceptual schemes and institutional patterns of hegemonic masculinity situate them in ways that disable their 'seeing and knowing' these same schemes and patterns because they do not struggle with them" (Kronsell, 2005: 290).

I agree with Kronsell but would add an additional caveat. In regards to this thesis, speaking to women within NATO, listening to their struggles within the organisation structure, exploring how they conceptualised 'men' and their general resistance towards gender issues offered a unique opportunity to expose how the gendered norms of NATO are created and reproduced. Like in Kronsell's work, the particular experiences of the women that I interviewed enabled a particular understanding of the gendered practices within NATO to be exposed. There was also evidence of male elites not 'seeing or knowing' these gendered schemes and patterns (expressed in a memorable account offered by Celine regarding a general's ability to 'experience gender' – See Chapter 7, Section 6). However, what this thesis shows is that particular elite men do struggle with institutional patterns and schemes of hegemonic masculinity – in similar and different ways to those of their female colleagues. By choosing to transgress gendered job roles and to work on gender issues (a perceived female role), these men also embody a form of disruption. It is their work on gender issues within NATO (and the resistance to that work they experienced), that enables, as well as conditions their 'seeing and knowing' (See Chapter 6, Section 5). The experiences of Ben and Mike provide an insight into the relationality between and within masculinities at

NATO, as Cornwall and Lindisfarne identify: “the shifting and contingent relation between ‘masculinity’ and ‘men’ and power becomes clear when we examine the enactment of hegemonic and subordinate masculinities in a single setting” (1994: 10).

Therefore the experiences of the ‘disruptive’ individuals whose accounts are presented in this thesis allow for the gendered nature of NATO to be explored by focusing on the experiences of women *and* men, not simply as representatives of their respective sexes, but on their engagement and struggle in developing and institutionalising NATO’s gender perspective, as *gendered individuals* in relation (and opposition) to gendered institutional norms and structures. This furthers a nuanced understanding of the construction (and persistence) of particular manifestations of hegemonic masculinity within NATO.

4.2 ‘Disruptive’ Policy

Kronsell (2012) also notes the utility in analysing the effects of particular ‘disruptive’ policy initiatives within institutions of hegemonic masculinity. Kronsell’s (2012) study assesses the impact of anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policy in the SAF; policies primarily concerned with increasing gender equity and tolerance for difference (2012: 44). Kronsell notes that such policies seem to clash with the hegemonic masculinity – and the conformity and uniformity - embedded within military institutions (Ibid).

In a sense, gender mainstreaming initiatives, more broadly, are inherently ‘disruptive’ as they were designed to address the persistence of gender inequality within organisations and they ask ‘new’ things of the organisation. Indeed Benschop & Verloo (2006) describe mainstreaming as having the potential to address ‘the genderedness of organisations: the material and discursive constructions of masculinity and femininity that shape and are shaped by organisations’ (2006: 19). Despite being presented as ‘a new élan to the stale domain of gender equality processes’ as a complementary strategy to overcome the shortcoming of such policies (Ibid: 20), mainstreaming initiatives are inherently *retroactive*, and in this sense can be conceptualised as ‘disruptive’. Mainstreaming initiatives are retroactive in the sense that the organisational structure as well as the practices, norms and behaviours of individuals within that structure pre-date gender mainstreaming as a policy initiative. There is therefore inherent tension and competition between a new focus on ‘gender’ and the organisational ‘mainstream’. Sylvia Walby (2005) identifies that established mainstream goals (in the case of NATO, those of operational effectiveness and force multiplication) “compete with goals of gender equality for prioritisation, which makes gender mainstreaming and inherently contested process that is never simply about adopting new policy” (in Benschop & Verloo, 2006: 22). Instead, the process involves a ‘negotiation’

between the ‘dual agenda’ of the mainstream and gender equality (Walby, 2005: 322 see also, Hearn, 2000). Here it is ‘new’ policy that is struggling with the existing organisational norms; disrupting them and rendering them visible. In this sense the increased presence of women within military forces and a proliferation of policies resulting from both women’s inclusion and the proliferation of international policy - in the form of UNSCR 1325 - offer a ‘double disruption’ (of bodies and of policy) to hegemonic norms and practices at NATO; that by ‘talking about’ and ‘doing’ gender - NATO has opened itself up to a disruptive ‘other’. This theorisation of ‘disruption’ is used analytically throughout the empirical chapters to ‘investigate how gender and sex are promoted, understood and resisted’ (Kronsell, 2012: 44) within NATO.

5. Gender Mainstreaming as Gender Governance

Whilst it is a central claim of this thesis that ‘disruptive policies’ such as UNSCR 1325 and do indeed render exiting, gendered organisational norms visible the following section considers the notion that gender mainstreaming initiatives can be viewed as a form of governance; that the specific discourses and narratives produced within and by gender mainstreaming (re)construct gendered identities at the both the macro and individual level. This is connected with the *ways* in which gender is mainstreamed into organisations – the rules and norms that are established – as well as the ways in which gender is conceptualised, what it comes to signify and narratives constructed to support those conceptualisations.

At one level, mainstreaming initiatives attempt to (with varying degrees of success) change the rules and behaviours of organisations and the individuals that work within those structures. The concern therefore becomes what new rules are being produced? How do they conceive of ‘women’, of ‘men’? Ultimately, how are gender relations ordered by these ‘new’ frameworks and initiatives? These are important questions, as Nancy Hirschmann identifies, specifically in relation to women as once constructed rules and behaviours take on a life of their own and consequently ‘become constitutive not only of what women are allowed to do, but to be as well: how women are able to think and conceive of themselves, what they can and should desire, what their preferences are’ (1996: 57 in Wibben, 2011: 65).

In this regard, there have been a number of studies that draw upon Foucault’s concept of ‘governmentality’ to analyse gender mainstreaming as a ‘technology of government’ that produces certain kinds of gendered subjects (Bedford, 2008; 2013; Phillips, 2005; Woehl, 2008). Gulay Calgar notes that these studies make an important contribution to understanding gender mainstreaming within international organisations as they:

“shift the focus from the effects of power asymmetries within organisations on the implementation of gender mainstreaming to the power effects of mainstreaming practices themselves. This gender mainstreaming is not just subject to power struggles, but also a technique of power” (Calgar, 2013: 341)

Whilst this thesis provides an exploration of the ways in which NATO’s gender perspective is conditioned by the existing power dynamics within the organisation it also considers how NATO’s gender perspective conditions, polices and controls understandings of gender, of (militarised) masculinities and femininities and how these manifest at both the international and individual level. As Bedford (2008) notes: ‘governance [...] involves multiple sites and actors employing heterogeneous strategies orientated to numerous – sometimes conflicting ends’ (2008: 84). It is the aim of this thesis to explore and analyse these multiple strategies and their effects, by focusing specifically on the processes of normalisation and narrative entrapment.

5.1. International Gender Norms & Normalisation

Central to the above account of gender governance within international organisations is the development of international norms. Jacqui True (2011) argues that there is an assumption, generally (and within constructivist IR, specifically) that ‘international norms are ‘good things’; they are what bring states together to cooperate’ (True, 2011: 73), that they spread ‘cooperative, liberal values throughout the international system, thereby socialising its actors into ‘better’ behaviour (Ibid). True identifies ‘gender’ norms as those that are thought to lead to better behaviour (Ibid):

“For instance, gender balance in state decision-making and women’s presence as UN peacekeepers are emerging regulatory norms – justified on the basis of an embodied norm of gender difference – that are expected to promote more democratic, transparent, and less corrupt government and to civilise international peacekeeping thus bring about greater peace and security” (Ibid)

From a constructivist point of view ideational factors in the sense of international norms, become entrenched overtime, forming ‘structures which shape interactions among states and non-state actors’ (Ibid). In this sense international gender norms, diffused internationally and accepted as legitimate practice for states and international organisations, over time form a system of governance. True argues that rather than just accepting norm construction as inherently positive (See section 3.3, below) and like the studies identified previously (Phillips 2005, Bedford, 2008; 2013; Whoel, 2008; Rai & Waylen, 2008) “critical feminists seek to trouble old and new norms and uncover their possible biases, exclusion or silencing” (True, 2011: 74). True (2011) provides a critique of gender norm development that purports a ‘normalised’ way of ‘doing gender’ internationally stating that:

“Having observed how norms of hegemonic masculinity and femininity have harmed so many women and men and have been so difficult to struggle against, feminists are hesitant to recommend the normalisation of appropriate gender-specific behaviour (2011: 74; also Sylvester, 1994; Enloe, 2004).

True also draws upon what she describes as a paradox and a tension between norms and normalisation. In that “even seemingly progressive international normative change involves a process of normalisation wherein certain ideas and practices are taken for granted and thereby depoliticised (this is addressed in Chapter 1, Section 1.2; and again in Chapter 8). It is what she calls the tensions between regulatory norms (such as gender mainstreaming) and the pre-existing ‘embodied norms’ (the conventional gender binaries) of international organisations (this is similar to what Hearn (2000) refers to as the ‘dual agenda’).

Writing in the same volume, Jane Jaquette provides a counter argument to True’s critique of norms and normalisation (2011: 89-97). She argues that norm change is unquestionably women’s most effective weapon and is of critical importance as a feminist strategy (Ibid: 90). Kronsell (2005) would seem to agree with this potential of both norms and normalisation, as she states: every day routines and practices reproduce certain norms, these same routines can become the site for challenging hegemonic masculinity and encouraging transformation” (Kronsell, 2005: 286). Therefore Jaquette (and Kronsell, 2005) trouble True’s distinction between norms and normalisation. For Jaquette, ‘normalisation can be defined as the unquestioned acceptance of rules that are internalised via habit or fear and norms, in the constructivist and feminist mode, which involve the conscious process of rule creation precisely to challenge ‘normalised’ behaviour’ (2011: 90). She states that: “In general, efforts to construct, disseminate and teach (new) international norms can be defended as counter-hegemonic” (Ibid).

The conversation between True and Jaquette (2011) highlights the need for critical feminist analysis concerning both ‘old’ and ‘new’ norm creation and diffusion. The interaction between embodied and regulatory norms, in True’s conception, is of paramount importance. Whilst I agree with Jaquette on the theoretical importance of norm creation for advancing feminist change, I remain wary of the assertion that this is always ‘challenging’ and counter-hegemonic, as this seems to downplay the powerful affects pre-existing institutional norms, especially in institutions of hegemonic masculinity, have upon that process.

True (2011) then, provides a feminist critique of the international norms of gender governance. The embodied norms of organisations, that are often repressive to women, interact with regulatory norms to ‘subvert’ often good intentions – ‘normal’ gender relations are therefore reinforced, despite transformative intent (2011: 75). True is also critical of

international norm formation that position international organisations as suppliers, teachers and enforcers of norms that instrumentally advance a neoliberal forms of globalisation and state security (Ibid). In this sense, this thesis traces the processes – and provides a critique - of the *normalisation* of a gender perspective and the Women, Peace and Security agenda, into NATO; detailing the ways in which gender is conceptualised within that process and the ways in which that conceptualisation becomes embodied and reinforced by the participants.

5.2. Narrative Entrapment

Integral to notions of gender governance and norm formation, as expressed above, is the development of ‘acceptable’ narratives around gender mainstreaming initiatives. As Annick Wibben (2011) argues: “narratives are essential because they are the primary way by which we make sense of the world around us, produce meaning, articulate intentions and legitimise action” (2011: 2) Narratives in this sense are important, and necessary, to afford gender mainstreaming authority and/or legitimacy when in competition with pre-existing organisational priorities. As has already been noted, gender mainstreaming initiatives are inherently retroactive. They compete with ‘traditional’ organisational norms and behaviours (and in this sense are ‘disruptive’). Ely & Meyerson (2000) note the importance of maintaining a ‘gender narrative’ when looking to affect organisational change. They state that ‘gender’ can get lost or subsumed by pre-existing organisational priorities or narratives (see Ely & Meyerson, 2000). In this regard, ‘palatable’ gender narratives are needed to communicate the relevancy and/or importance of gender to an (often sceptical) organisational audience (See Chapter, 7). This is expressed by Hearn (2000) as the ‘dual agenda’ of pre-existing organisational structures and priorities (the ‘mainstream’) and gender equality initiatives.

According to Hearn (2000), this ‘dual agenda’ produces inherent paradoxes within gender mainstreaming initiatives. The pursuit of acceptable gender language and policies requires a level of accommodation and compromise with the language and practices of the ‘mainstream’ (See Chapter 5 & 7). Gender is therefore often framed as an ‘organisational’ issue, enacted in systematic, instrumental and measurable ways (See Chapter, 8 Section 2). According to Hearn, the conceptualisation of gender as an organisational issue evokes tendencies towards de-gendering and neutralising and that resistance to gender and to gender equality language is itself a gendered process” (Benschop & Verloo, 2006: 21). True (2011) identifies that this is what makes change so difficult from a feminist perspective, in that efforts to bring about a ‘new consciousness’ of gender equality which challenge traditional gender hierarchies – particularly in institutions of hegemonic masculinity – constantly run up against counter norms and ambivalences (2011: 74).

‘Knowledge’ about gender and the language used to communicate those ideas and policies are also produced in an increasingly globalised world, as Mittleman notes:

“Today, knowledge is not primarily the work of lone thinkers, but conditioned by powerful material infrastructures – travelling paradigms, funding agencies, think tanks, publishers and journals, professional associations, technologies and networks...in addition, there are mechanisms for policing knowledge production, such as intellectual property rights, as well as efforts to subvert discursive power” (2004: 223)

Gender mainstreaming initiatives can be seen as such; as a ‘transnational’ production of knowledge (See Chapter 1, Section 1.2) diffused internationally (True & Mintrom, 2001) and conditioned by particular infrastructures (Gibbins, 2011). One of the ways in which mechanisms of policing or control work, Mittleman argues is through ‘narrative entrapments’ (2004: 223). Drawing on the work of Shotter (1993: 26-31) Mittleman argues:

“There is a danger of entrapping ourselves in worlds of our own making, Where worlds can be constructed as language, as mental pictures that represent social phenomena, and paradigms that filter ideas inside and keep others outside a knowledge structure” (2004: 223)

The use of particular words and broader narratives are essential here as they convey particular meanings. Mittleman notes that particular terms and phrases have ‘currency’ in knowledge production and exchange (see also Cohn, 2000 discussed below). The phrase ‘gender mainstreaming’ can be viewed in this way. Viewed uncritically, ‘gender mainstreaming’ can be said to imply ‘progression’, ‘emancipation’, ‘equality’, ‘transformation’ or ‘good governance’. These terms are not ahistorical or asocial, as Connell (2005) notes when discussing the implications of ‘speaking about’ masculinity: “In speaking of masculinity at all we are ‘doing gender’ in a culturally specific way. This should be borne in mind with any claim to have discovered transhistorical truths about manhood and the masculine” (2005: 68). Therefore the words and narratives used to ‘speak about gender mainstreaming’ convey culturally specific meanings within themselves and are representative of the time and place of their production - how is equality defined for example, from what cultural perspective, transformation from what, to what?

It can be argued that the specific term ‘gender’ has increasing ‘currency’ within the international system and its usage has proliferated. ‘Gender’ has become common prefix - ‘gender mainstreaming’, ‘gender expert’, ‘gender analysis’, ‘gender perspective’, ‘gender competence’, ‘gender sensitive’ – that results in particular ways of producing knowledge about gender, particularly within an organisational context, that can depoliticise and de-radicalise. The term ‘gender’ or ‘1325’ or ‘Women, Peace and Security’ becomes a signifier, for progressive institutional change - reinforced by words and imagery (Chapter 5, Chapter

8, Section 1) - that keep positive ideas 'in' and filter out more problematic, or critical perspectives. For example in speaking about the importance of UNSCR 1325, Nora, one of the participants in this study stated that:

"1325 was the main document that started it all...I would say, if you build a house, it [1325] is the foundations, or maybe you can compare it with a tree, it is the main tree and then you have all the other resolutions as branches. Everything is linked to 1325...when you talk about gender awareness, you say 'gender' [and it's like], 'oh yeah, 1325'. If you say [Resolution] 1960, people say: 'what was that again?'"

'1325' or 'gender' therefore signifies as much a statement of intent or image, as the intricacies of actual transformative change. To be seen to be 'doing gender' is to be seen as progressive and therefore an end within itself. There is a danger of 'fixing' the term gender, simplifying its meaning through the development of gender policies that are conditioned by competition with the pre-existing agenda of the organisation (Chapter 7).

The appropriation of particular vocabulary is intimately related to power and the standpoints of those that use them (Mittleman, 2004: 223). As Wibben (2011) notes: "narratives [...] are sites of the exercise of power; through narratives we not only investigate but also invent order for the world" (2011: 2) So when NATO, a powerful international organisation, engages with and uses the terms '1325' and 'Women, Peace and Security' it is drawing upon terms and language that has been pre-produced and disseminated internationally, by other powerful international organisational bodies, the UN Security Council for example. Arguably, these institutions provide these terms with particular currency and legitimacy (Chapter 1, Section 1). NATO also produces a narrative that 'fits' with its own organisational priorities and values (Chapter 5). Therefore, NATO's production of its own, particular narratives of 'gender' and 'women, peace and security' is an exercise of its organisational power. Narrative entrapments are therefore not only a product of our own making, as Mittleman states, but of an organisation's making too.

5.2.1 Storytelling & Simplification

One specific way in which narratives can be seen to entrap or condition knowledge production is through simplification in the form of 'story telling'. This is particularly relevant when analysing both official accounts and those of the participant throughout the thesis, but specifically in Chapter 8. Storytelling as simplification also has a broader resonance with narratives of war and security. For example, Susan Jeffords (1989) argues that:

"War is a crucible for the distillation of social and cultural relations, so that within its frame modes of discourse become more prominent, to the point of appearing

almost simplistic...this simplicity itself functioned as a part of the mystification of warfare and its power structures” (1989: 182)

In this sense particular war narratives, or war stories emerge that convey meaning in particularly gendered ways. Masculinity becomes fused with heroism, self-sacrifice and courage-under-fire; femininity with the need for protection or rescue – the separation of stories from the ‘front’ and the ‘home front’ (Cooke & Woollacott, 1993: ix). Indeed Cooke & Woollacott argue that experiences of wars are either consciously or unconsciously articulated in particular founding myths of male bonding, heroism and glorious victories (1993: xi). Further, that these stories have broader cultural significance when seeking to ‘make sense’ of the experience (and particular failures) of war (see Rosenberg, 1993; Boose, 1993; Jeffords, 1989). We therefore read, interpret and make sense of war and security issues via particular narratives that are based upon pre-existing cultural understanding of the role and nature of war and expectations around masculinity and femininity are conditioned accordingly.

In regards to the notion of narrative entrapment, the process of storytelling or constructing particular narratives around gender allow for particular information to be both culturally understandable and communicated ‘efficiently’. As Deetz notes:

“The story develops a string of signifiers that are more real than any people or events that are discussed. Storytelling...makes choices [...] and some stories are more tellable than others. Like the construction of any news, complex events with multiple perspectives are not as tellable as those with clear polar conflicts” (Deetz, 1992: 310)

Carol Cohn (2000) notes the way that stories about preferential treatment of female soldiers within the US military, told to her by aggrieved male officers circulated like ‘paper currency’ (2000: 146), in that they “passed from hand to hand, without anyone seeing or even asking to see the gold that backed it up” (Ibid). In their repetition therefore, stories become ‘accepted truths’ within organisations:

“The power of...stories comes not from their evidentiary value (even though they are often offered as evidence), but from their ability to condense and symbolise something that people believe and think important. Even granting that some of the stories maybe based on events that really happened, they function as myth, constructing foundational meanings and suffusing the discourse” (Ibid).

In this sense, stories developed around gender mainstreaming initiatives within organisations need to be ‘tellable’. They need to resonate with an intended audience and with the pre-existing priorities of the organisation, where they do not they cause disruption (Gibbins, 2011).

The casualty here is complexity and ‘dissenting voices’. Complexity is often stripped away and replaced by ‘signifiers’ that replace the complexity and lived experience of the individuals upon which the story is premised (See Chapter 8, Section 3.1 for an example of this). Terms such as ‘1325’, ‘Women, Peace and Security’, ‘Gender Perspective’ become signifiers of positive, progressive change (Chapter 8, Section 1) contained within institutional stories of ‘success’ retold by individuals within the organisation. This particular framing of gender mainstreaming initiatives is also found within the literature produced by organisations, as Benschop & Verloo identify:

“Most manuals depict gender mainstreaming as a harmonious process, and any tension between the mainstream and gender equality is usually dealt with by advocating education, training and the involvement of gender experts. This can be an attempt to de-politicise the process of gender mainstreaming” (Benschop & Verloo, 2006: 22)

This has particular resonance with Jacqui True’s (2003) conceptualisation of ‘gender policy entrepreneurs’ or ‘gender experts’ keeping the overall story of gender mainstreaming consistent across varied and complex contexts (2003: 379), explored in Chapter 1. Walby (2011: 91) also explores the role of gender experts and the tension between their production of ‘gender knowledge’ versus notions of democratisation (see also, Rai, 2008; Bedford; 2008; 2013). For Benschop & Verloo, as expressed above, it falls to ‘gender experts’ to police and control any tension that emerges within the positive, harmonious institutional narrative that has been constructed.

In this sense, *stories of gender mainstreaming* serve to both communicate and police a particular message, and are also policed themselves by the architecture of gender governance – such as gender experts - within a particular institution. The simplification function of storytelling then, in relation to Mittleman’s conception of narrative entrapment, serves to filter certain ideas inside and keep other problematic, disruptive ones out (2004: 223). In regards to this thesis, the concept of narrative entrapment and gender governance are drawn upon when analysing the empirical material. These particular theoretical concepts are used to explore the ways in which NATO’s institutional norms interact with, police and control the institutional ‘disruption’ that ‘talking about’ and ‘doing’ gender involves.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the key theoretical concepts that inform both the methodological choices and analytical approach of this research. Whilst mindful of its critiques, Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity will be taken as a central analytical tool through which to frame NATO. Here the participants’ subjective understandings of gender and security and

the strategies they develop to integrate a gender perspective in this context will be analysed. Within this wider structural frame the tension between international gender norms and the normalisation process occurring within NATO will be explored. Particular attention will be paid to the discursive (re)constructions of masculinities and femininities that are produced as 'disruptive' policy interacts with and is embodied by 'disruptive individuals'. The use of these key concepts analysed and framed by a Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, are designed to unpack the interaction between the structural and discursive elements of NATO's development of a 'gender perspective' and their effects on the (re)construction of gendered identities within the organisation. The following chapter sets out the methodological applications of such an approach.

Chapter Four Methodology

Introduction

This chapter will detail the methodological approach taken in this research and how this relates to the theoretical positioning outlined in the previous chapters. Section one focuses on the justification for the methods and data samples used in relation to the key aims of this research. Section two addresses the data collection procedure, detailing the sample (of both documents and interviews) as well as the practicalities such as interview and observation settings. This section will also set out the ethical considerations taken. Section three outlines the analytical methods used; how precisely the data was analysed in relation to the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of that approach. Section four discusses the limitations of the methods used. The final section consists of an extended reflexive account on the positionality of the researcher, placing reflexivity as an integral part of the analytical methods used.

1. The Value of Interviewing and Documentary Analysis

As noted earlier, traditionally, within the discipline of International Relations, the personal accounts of individuals are often neglected. Women's voices and experiences in particular are often overlooked. As Christine Sylvester argues 'IR does not conceptualise international relations as encompassing ordinary people and their experiences with the actors and processes it takes as canonical – states, markets, militaries, international organisations, security, development and so on' (2013:61). Feminist researchers have challenged this imbalance; they draw attention to women's experiences, using gender to critique IR by placing the focus on the individual and their accounts of war, peace (Ticker 1992 2001; Enloe 2001, 2010) and militarism (Sjoberg & Via 2010). This thesis further challenges these canonical understandings, conceptualising NATO as an organisation made up of individuals, drawing attention to personal accounts of gender and security issues. It also examines how these accounts are constructed within the highly gendered organisational hierarchies that structure NATO as political-military international alliance. These accounts are analysed in relation to the official documentation and policy that is produced and disseminated via the organisation.

Feminists have described knowledge-building as emerging through conversation with texts, research subjects or data (Reinharz, 1992: 230 in Tickner, 2005: 4). This study situates itself within this tradition of feminist knowledge-building, therefore the research design was a qualitative discursive analysis utilising documents, observations and in-depth interviews.

The selected documents (detailed within Appendix II) provided data on how NATO was integrating gender as a concept via ‘disruptive policy’ (Chapter 3, Section 2.4.2) - doctrine, education and training and publicity material. This material provided a useful and accessible entry point into the research. The documents were selected for the following reasons: Firstly, all of the documents were produced or authored internationally – i.e. they are not the positions of one or two NATO member states, they are products of the institutional (and therefore multinational) bodies that make up the organisation, though not necessarily the organisation as a whole. In this way they can be seen to represent elements of the *international* organisation rather than a particular member state, as the following disclaimers contained on some of the documents make clear:

“Documents are published under the authority of the Secretary General and do not necessarily reflect official opinion or policy of member governments or of NATO” (NATO (2010), Briefing: Women, Peace & Security)

“Published under the authority of the Committee on Women in the NATO Forces (CWINF); This CWINF Guidance for NATO Gender Mainstreaming is intended to contribute to a constructive discussion on gender issues. These Recommendations therefore do not necessarily represent the official opinion or policy of member governments or NATO”. (NATO, 2007)

Secondly, documents such as Bi-SC 40-1 (2009; 2012) represent official doctrine and policies produced by the organisation; they can therefore be seen as NATO’s statement of intent to engage with UN Resolution 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The Guidance, Training and Education documents are produced and disseminated by the NCGP and the NOGP, internal bodies tasked specifically with facilitating NATO’s gender perspective throughout the organisation. The documents that they produce and choose to disseminate publically via their website and the annual conferences are a highly valuable resource as they indicate how NATO’s internal bodies and structures are interpreting 1325, Bi-SC 40-1 and ‘gender issues’ more generally. These are supplemented by documents that promote NATO’s work on gender and UNSCR 1325 both internally within the organisation (via internal newsletters) or externally (via glossy ‘briefing’ material and reports from the Secretary General).

I add to this analysis by drawing on the experiences of elite individuals working within the organisation and tasked specifically with developing NATO’s approach to issues of gender (See Chapter 3, Section 2.4.1). Annica Kronsell asserts that: ‘Interviews are an important source of information because they can provide an in-depth, detailed account of how gendered practices are actually carried out within institutions as well as of how gendered identities are constructed and contested’ (Kronsell in Ackerly, Stern & True, 2006: 121). Indeed, interviewing as a methodology has become commonplace within critical feminist

scholarship, precisely because it is one way to place the focus of research on the lived experiences of individuals. The interviews conducted for this research and presented within this thesis provided just such rich, detailed accounts of the gendering that occurs within and through NATO in ways that would have been unobtainable from a documentary analysis alone.

Interviews vary in type and focus, and can be a complex and complicated process (See Oakley in Roberts ed. 1986; Kronsell & Svedberg, 2001a; 2001b; Jacoby and Kronsell in Ackerly, Stern & True, 2006; Miller et al, 2012). For example, after encountering difficulties interviewing Swedish military women – who were reluctant to draw attention to their femininity - Kronsell & Svedberg (2001a; 2001b) used internal reports from the armed forces, internal interviews conducted by the armed forces, newsletters and webpages to supplement this complicated interview process. The interview process and access to participants for this study was less problematic than Kronsell & Svedberg's experience (see Section 2.3.1 below), and although small in number the interviews provide a rich and in-depth resource that is unique to this thesis as well as adding an experiential layer to the documents analysed as part of the research process.

Taken together then, the interviews and documentary analysis allow me to analyse some of the myriad ways in which an international military organisation is engaging with, interpreting and (re)producing gender; as well as the ways in which individuals within NATO are navigating and responding to these institutional changes. I argue that it is the accounts of these individuals, expressed through narratives of personal and professional experiences that draw attention to the gendered nature of NATO as an organisation. By women's (and men's) very interaction with the institutional practices, the gendered norms of such institutions become visible, and in this sense hegemonic masculinity becomes 'real' (Kronsell in Ackerly, stern & True, 2006: 121). Importantly, this thesis takes this argument further, arguing that it is the active introduction of a gender mainstreaming process within NATO – and the responses of individuals within the organisation to the introduction of that process - that draw attention to, and make visible, NATO's gender order and organisational behaviours and norms. Therefore capturing and analysing the experiences of the women and men involved in integrating gender as a concept and a practice into the NATO structure justifies the use of interviews as a method within this study.

2. Data Collection

2.1 Documentary Data Collection

The documents analysed within this thesis can be grouped into three interlinked categories which relate to their general purpose and their intended audience: doctrine; education, training & guidance; publicity (both internal and external). All of the documents were publically available and de-classified and were in written (text) format. One source was a DVD produced by NATO's Public Diplomacy Division which comprised a series of short films. Most were authored and published by NATO; some were produced by organisations acting on behalf or with NATO. All documents were sourced via the NATO website, through requests to NATO's Public Diplomacy Division or through dissemination at the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP) 2012 and 2013 annual meetings.

2.2 Fieldwork Observations – NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP) Annual Meetings

In addition to the interviews conducted and documentary analysis, I attended the 2012 and 2013 meeting of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP) as an observer. These meetings are held annually for a five day period. The first day of these meetings is declassified and held in a conference format. Each year a specific topic is discussed by delegates with the aim of providing recommendations for action that can be presented to the Military Committee. In 2012 the theme of the meeting was: *'The Effects of Armed Conflict on a Society'* and in 2013: *'How NATO can Prevent and Respond to Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Conflict'*. The meeting is organised by the Executive Committee of the NCGP with support from the NATO Office for Gender Perspectives (NOGP) and held at NATO HQ in Brussels, Belgium. Delegates are invited from across the national militaries of NATO member countries. Conference speakers included Gender Advisors, Military Commanders, Journalists, Lawyers and in 2013, Mari Skaare, the then newly appointed Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security.

These meetings are a key annual event for the NCGP and NOGP. Attending them, observing how they were structured and how (and what) topics were discussed allowed me to experience one of the institutional processes that NATO has set up to address 'gender issues' first hand. Attending these events did not amount to 'participant observation' in the strictest sense. I was able to attend the conferences as an observer following an invitation by one of my participants; I did not ask specific questions to the presenters and only engaged in informal introductions and discussions with other delegates during coffee-breaks. Attending these events helped to contextualise the interviews as well as providing informal networking opportunities and the opportunity to engage in informal discussions with other delegates (these discussions were not formally recorded although they do feature in my reflections on the research process – see section 5 of this chapter). I found it helpful to experience how the

process was presented to a large and receptive audience rather than to me as an individual in the context of a one-to-one interview.

Attending and observing these meetings also helped me to re-focus and further the documentary analysis. Certain documents were handed to delegates upon arrival at both the 2012 and 2013 conferences. Specifically a document entitled: *'How can Gender Make a Difference to Security in Operations'* (NATO, 2011b). This document represented the recommendations of the 2011 NCGP annual meeting. Whilst all documents analysed within this thesis were available for public consumption either through NATO's online presence or via NATO's Public Diplomacy Division, this document was *actively* disseminated by the NCGP to delegates and, importantly, held up as an example of good practice and what the Committee could achieve. Its contents therefore reflected what the NCGP specifically wanted to promote to those attending. Analysing this document became a central focus of this thesis (See Chapter 8).

Observations from these events as well as reflections from before, during and after the interview process were captured within a fieldwork diary that served to both aid memory and helped me to contextualise and situate the accounts of the participants during the transcription and analysis stages of the study.

2.3 The Interview Process

2.3.1 Changes to Research Design

As stated above, in addition to the documentary data collection and analysis, it was my aim to collect the views of those working within NATO about what a gender perspective was and how they were planning to integrate it into the NATO organisational structure. At the outset of the research process I assumed that gaining access to military personnel within NATO HQ would be difficult. This was based on an assumption that an international military organisation would be somewhat secretive and impenetrable. I held this assumption despite NATO's engagement with gender issues being disseminated publically (through a significant web presence, for example); I assumed it was one thing to release documentation and make carefully worded public statements about the process but quite another to speak individually to those involved on a one-to-one basis, particularly to a research student. I was also concerned that, if access was granted that it would be limited and those agreeing to be interviewed would simply give me the 'company line', a reiteration of the publically available documents.

With this in mind and as potential alternative data source, the ethics application sent to Oxford Brookes University Research Ethics Council had a provision to contact and interview members of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) based in the UK working in women's advocacy and gender equality within Afghanistan who would have interaction with, or opinions on, NATO's role in the country. This broad group of NGOs was chosen as presenting an alternative viewpoint to the 'official' one detailed in NATO's policy documents. It was anticipated that access to these groups would be easier given their location and prevalence, than those individuals working within NATO.

What transpired was in fact the opposite of my assumptions. In practice, access to NATO personnel proved much more straightforward (though not entirely unproblematic) than I had anticipated (See Section 5.1); of the ten NGOs I contacted, I received one reply (From Amnesty International UK) declining my request on the grounds that the organisation did not have the time or the personnel to respond to individual requests from research students. The other nine NGOs did not respond to my initial request or follow up email requests. I can only assume that the same pressure on time and resources applied at these organisations. I discontinued attempts to contact more NGOs once I had secured access to NATO personnel²⁶.

I acknowledge these changes in order to be as reflexive and transparent about the research process as possible. What my experience in negotiating access to these different organisations highlights is that it is not uncommon for research designs to be altered, to change as they are operationalised (Miller et al., 2012) and for the assumptions (and biases) of the researcher to be questioned. Despite the best intentions of the researcher at the design stage, implementation can be problematic – especially when that research involves human participants and the organisations they work for. Reflecting on these alterations, and my own assumptions is an attempt to build into the research a level of 'practical reflection' (Ackerly & True, 2006: 253) that contributes to the validity of my findings.

2.3.2 Pilot Interview

In anticipation of my first research interview at NATO I conducted a pilot interview with a former colleague who works for US Intelligence and who has links to NATO through her work. As will be detailed below, the sample from which to draw interviewees was specific (and limited). The questions I wanted to ask were also specific to the job roles, and personal experiences of that particular population. Therefore conducting the pilot interview was aimed at refining my interview technique and general style rather than developing the specific questions that I would ask in the other interviews. I therefore focused my questioning in the pilot interview around general issues of security and gender and her

personal experiences of the US military and her deployment to Iraq. Although the interview was audio-recorded and transcribed its content does not feature within this thesis.

2.3.3 The Interview Sample, Setting and Procedure

The target population from which to draw my sample was limited. As stated above, I wanted to capture the views and opinions of those military personnel working to integrate a gender perspective *within* the NATO structure. Whilst this group of people is continually expanding as the process becomes more institutionalised and formalised, these numbers remain limited.

Participants were recruited using a mixed method of limited snowballing and by direct contact with participants through publically available email addresses. In total I conducted six in-depth interviews between May 2012 and November 2012 with Celine, Grace, Anna, Nora, Ben and Mike²⁷. Celine, Nora, Grace and Ben were working in a non-operational (institutional) context; Anna and Mike were deployed within a NATO area of operations. The participants were European and North American military personnel. As has been stated earlier, the positions and job roles with responsibility for gender issues within NATO are largely occupied by women. However there are a small number of men working within this field. My sample consists of four women and two men. I have mentioned within the introduction to this chapter that my intention was not to create a 'representative' sample (in a positivistic understanding of the term), but it is purposive. Capturing the views of both men and women provided extremely rich insights into the ways in which masculinities and femininities are constructed and reproduced within the organisation and in relation to one another. In this respect having participants of both sexes offered valuable contributions to the findings of this research.

Each interview lasted, on average between sixty to ninety minutes and was audio recorded (see section 3.1, this chapter). Three of the 'institutional' interviews were conducted at NATO HQ which is based in Brussels, Belgium; one at a mutually convenient location with the United Kingdom. Due to the impracticability of visiting the country and region where Anna and Mike were deployed, these interviews were conducted via Skype.

2.3.4 Interviewing at NATO HQ

My first interview, with Celine, was conducted at NATO HQ, a setting I found much more intimidating than I had imagined it would be. The high levels of security – handing over my mobile phone, full body scan, search of bags, as well as the general questioning I encountered about my visit at the entrance gate whilst not unexpected, combined with the grandiose NATO symbols and member state national flags and barbed-wire trimmed

perimeter fences, to create a somewhat intimidating atmosphere (this is most probably the point of such architecture of security institutions!). These feelings played to my assumptions about austere military formality, which I was expecting Celine to embody.

This turned out to be a misconception. Celine greeted me wearing civilian clothing (only one of the participants was in military attire), in a relaxed, polite, but largely informal manner, suggesting coffee and chocolates in the staff canteen before the interview proper. She also looked to me for prompts, asked how I would like to proceed and where I would like the interview to take place (the canteen, or her office). As we were in an environment that was familiar to her and unfamiliar to me I had expected her to be in control of these aspects of the interview – in short I had expected Celine to be a practiced interviewee.

The interviews with Celine, Nora, Grace, Ben and Mike were all much more informal than I had expected although, there were variations between each interview – Nora for example referred to a copy of NATO's terms of reference throughout the interview. Only Anna provided more of the practised, concise answers that I was expecting. Having my assumptions challenged in this way led to a sense of 'awkwardness' at the outset of the interview, as Celine was uncertain of me and I uncertain of her, however acknowledging and reflecting on this through the use of a fieldwork diary, allowed me to better prepare for the following interviews (see Koning & Ooi (2013) for a reflection on the importance of acknowledging awkward encounters in fieldwork).

2.3.5 Interviewing by Skype

I interviewed Anna and Mike via Skype. This decision was taken due to the relative difficulty of traveling to, and conducting face to face interviews in the location where they were deployed. Anna's interview, the first to be conducted in this format proved to be the most problematic. I was generally unfamiliar with Skype and this problem was compounded by an intermittent internet signal that allowed Anna to see me, however I could not see her. The interview proceeded as more of a telephone interview and I became very aware of how much I use body language and non-audible cues to establish rapport with the people that I talk to. The interview was disjointed as we were unable to act on these cues and frequently spoke over each other. The video function was working when I interviewed Mike and the ability to speak face to face aided immensely in establishing rapport and a much more fluid interview (Duncombe & Jessop in Miller et al, 2012: 108).

I also became aware that using this format (including a two-way web cam) allowed Anna and Mike a 'window' into my personal space as I was conducting the interview from home – something that was not the case when interviewing Celine, Grace, Nora and Ben. Therefore,

although technology facilitated the interview it also served to highlight the dislocation between the participants and myself. We were visibly connected whilst not occupying the same physical space. The Skype interviews therefore lacked an intimacy that helped to contextualise the interviews conducted at NATO HQ.

I detail these observations here as they show how power in the interview setting - between researcher and participant - is deployed, shifts and changes throughout the interview, challenging perceptions of both researcher and interviewee; and the importance of considering space and setting in the interview process.

2.4 Ethical Considerations

The project was given approval by Oxford Brookes University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) on 8th March 2012 (UREC Application Number 120611 – See Appendix I). All participants were given an information sheet which set out the themes and aims of the research in as much detail as possible for them to make an informed decision. This information sheet was sent out with the initial contact email allowing each participant time to read and consider the research project before consenting to be interviewed. The information sheet also made it clear that the participant was free to withdraw from the interview at any point and that in such an event the information given up to that point would not be included in the research. I also made this point clear to interviewees verbally at the beginning of each interview, also informing them that they could decline to answer any question during the interview process without giving a reason.

A consent form was given to all of the participants at the beginning of each interview. Their signature on this form was taken as consent to proceed. I have retained a hard and digital copy of these forms. Celine, Nora, Grace and Ben signed their consent forms in person; Anna and Mike requested the consent forms to be sent ahead of the interview for their ‘legal teams’ to review. No objections were raised and their signed consent forms were returned electronically.

2.4.1 Confidentiality, Managing Expectations & Anonymity

One of the main ethical concerns was that of confidentiality. As stated above the sample size for these elite interviews was small and therefore there was a distinct possibility that participants could be identified through the use of quotations within this research. Whilst military elites can be seen as less ‘vulnerable’ than other marginalised or disadvantaged groups, protecting their anonymity was still an important consideration in presenting the analysis (Blakely, 2013: 165). The participants were commenting on the institution that they

work for, as well as their colleagues (not naming other individuals but speaking about homogenised groups of ‘other men’ and ‘other women’ within their national armed forces as well as NATO). Sometimes these comments were critical, at other times the open nature of the interview process allowed for very personal accounts of bullying and harassment to be offered. As will be shown in the analysis chapters, speaking about gender, even for professionals, inevitably draws upon personal experience, especially when the female interviewees represented a minority group within a highly masculine organisation. Indeed it was these experiences that I wanted to capture within this research. In this sense participants had both a professional and personal vulnerability that was exposed by taking part in the research. I therefore have a responsibility to protect these individuals despite their (relatively privileged) positions.

This responsibility also manifested itself in managing the expectations of certain participants. Grace in particular was concerned as to what my overall findings would be. I was asked directly by her: ‘What do you think you will say?’ and ‘Is it all a waste of time?’ This question was difficult to answer for two reasons. Firstly this was my second interview and I was in no position to offer any sort of conclusions. Secondly, whilst my research analyses the process from a critical perspective, I am uncomfortable with ‘judging’ it in an arbitrary way – good/bad, right/wrong. However, what Grace’s concerns highlighted to me was a level of vulnerability. This thesis *does* analyse a process with which she is professionally (and personally) involved in. I therefore have a responsibility to protect her anonymity in the way that I present my findings.

Again, as the participants were drawn from a small target population there was a possibility that they would know each other. I never indicated to the participants whom I had interviewed previously or intended to interview subsequently – although the UREC recommendation was to inform participants that ‘other colleagues’ were likely to be contacted.

Therefore, in order to protect their anonymity each participant is referred to by pseudonym. I have also omitted any reference to their age or nationality. Their specific job roles are also not included, other than to indicate that each participant works on ‘gender issues’ at either an ‘institutional’ or ‘operational’ level within the NATO structure. Any information that could serve to identify the participants within the quotations used was removed or altered. Whilst I understand this impacts on the information presented within this thesis and has an implication for generalisability and validity (discussed further below), my main priority is to protect the identities of the participants to the best of my ability. However, even with these omissions complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed. Each participant was therefore made

aware of this condition via a section on the consent form, as well as verbally, at the beginning of each interview.

3. Analysis

3.1 Audio-Recording and Transcription

The interviews were all audio-recorded, with permission, and transcribed verbatim. I also noted significant pauses, laughter, changes in tone or emphasis and the interruptions to the interviews. This was to aid in my interpretation of the participants accounts. This focus on emphasis, and change in tone proved to be extremely useful during the analysis stage, for example in Celine's account of the 'watermelons' story (see Chapter 8 Section 3.1) and for gauging the tone and meaning of the narratives produced by the participants (see for example Ben's discussion of the 'harmlessness' of female soldiers, Chapter 8 Section 3.2). Including the interruptions in my transcription also proved a useful way of prompting my own memory as well as providing context in the form of small insights into organisational behaviour. One example of this is when interviewing Celine a male colleague interrupted the interview to help himself to a bowl of sweets that Celine had placed in her office, near the door. A short conversation ensued between Celine and her colleague (that I did not transcribe). Following the interruption Celine noted that the sweets were a strategic decision on her part to encourage more people to "stop by the office, take a sweet and maybe talk about gender". She concluded smiling, saying "what man would think of that?"

Similarly, during her interview Grace was talking about how gender was seen to be a 'dirty word' to some male members of the military and generally how men in the military found it difficult to discuss gender or to conceptualise precisely what gender was. At this point we were interrupted by one of Grace's male colleagues. I was introduced to him and he made conversation about my research, but became noticeably awkward (in his body language and his questioning) when I told him that my research concerned gender – a point which seemed to amuse Grace.

These interruptions allowed me to contextualise some of the various difficulties the participants had in raising the awareness of their job roles within the organisation (Chapter 7) as well as giving a practical example of Celine's and Grace's views of the distinct differences between men and women in the organisation, a point they both elaborated on as the interviews continued (Chapter 6).

3.2 Defining 'Data'

Defining what constitutes data collection in qualitative research is a contested issue. 'Start' and 'end' dates are rarely distinct events – despite the formal requirement of the University Ethics Committee for their specification. However, there were two identifiable data collection 'periods' during my research. As outlined above the collection of the documentary data ran continuously from the start of the project until September 2013; and the interview process from May to November 2012. These were supplemented by attendance at the NCGP annual meetings in May 2012 and May 2013. I highlight this time period to indicate when the majority of the primary information analysed within this thesis was collected. However, what this does not take into consideration is the general interaction I had with my participants before the more formal interview setting. This mainly included two or three emails following the initial contact. Whilst these emails were mainly logistical and formal in nature – arranging a date, time and place for the interview – these exchanges began to shape my impressions of the participant as well as the expectation of the interview. Some email exchanges became informal and almost conversational – particularly with Ben, who felt he was not 'expert' enough to contribute; and Nora who light heartedly addressed a typing error in the information sheet I sent, as well as peppering her emails with emoticons (smiley or winking faces). This was something that, for me, was rather unexpected given her position and my assumptions regarding military formality.

Other than noting them here, I do not include these email exchanges in my analysis; they did however contribute to building a relationship as well as initial rapport between me and the participants. The same is true of the way in which the informal discussions, impressions of NATO HQ, general observations captured in my fieldwork diary all helped to contextualise and situate the more formal interview and documentary data and their analysis. What this example, as well as my reflections on utilising Skype as an interview tool, demonstrates are some of the ways in which 'virtual interactions' facilitated by new technologies are changing research practices and encounters (Miller, 2012: 30 in Miller et al, 2012).

The second definition is of the term 'data' itself. Whilst I have used the term above, using the term uncritically can be problematic as – in some disciplines - it can be taken to imply positivism. Reading data in this way implies universalising facts, statistics or 'truths' that this research generated. To present the information offered by my participants and that contained in the documentation in this way is certainly not my intention. From a critical feminist perspective the question to be asked is what constitutes data? Linguistic scholars such as Michelle Lazar (2005; 2007) and Ruth Wodak (2005; 2008) continue to use the term data to describe the texts and talk that they analyse. However, as Annick Wibben points out

‘the link between experience, meaning and knowledge as it has been imagined in a modern (positivist) science can no longer be sustained’ (2011b: 44), for me the use of the term data implies a continuation of this reductive linkage. Therefore in presenting the findings of this thesis, the question becomes: how do I name the information provided to me by participants and in doing so represent my participants? Does using the term ‘data’ contribute to a dominant positivistic discourse so prevalent in IR, one rightly challenged by feminist IR scholars? Or should the word be reclaimed and deployed critically (as it is in much sociological research)? My encounters were certainly more than ‘conversations’ and ‘information’ implies a disassociation from the individuals that provide it. ‘Narratives’ perhaps encapsulates a sense of the data collected best (indeed Wodak uses narratives to describe a form of data, in that they ‘are a tool for instantiating social and personal identities’ (2008: 100)). The accounts offered by the participants were stories of personal and professional experiences, a collection of impressions and interpretations of gender, security, NATO and the military offered by individuals in a particular, though not static context. Wibben (2011) also states that as it is impossible to reproduce lived experience, a characterisation that includes the interpretive aspect is necessary (2011: 44). The interpretive aspect within this thesis is two-fold: firstly, there is the interpretation of their lived experiences by the participants themselves and secondly, my interpretation and re-telling of those narratives within the analysis of this thesis. Conceptualising the ‘data’ collected, particularly from the interviews in this way is crucial as the insights of this thesis are derived from these women’s and men’s everyday experiences (Wibben, 2011b: 44). With this in mind, throughout this thesis, I use the terms accounts and narratives to refer to the knowledge and experiences expressed to me during the interview process.

3.3 Conducting the Analysis

Guided by a Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) (See Chapter 3, Section 1) the first stage in the analysis process consisted of coding both the documents and interview transcripts, identifying common themes, expressions or phrases within each document and within each interview – phrases such as ‘operational effectiveness’; ‘force multiplication’; ‘gender perspective’; ‘relevant’; ‘victim’; ‘agent’. These themes were then compared across documents and transcripts, drawing out similarities and differences in the way each theme or expression was used by the participant or within the document.

The second stage was premised on a motivation to “to make explicit the operations that produce a particular kind of meaning and to draw out the implications this meaning has” (Polkinghorne, 1998: 6 in Wibben, 2011b: 44). What gave phrases such as ‘operational effectiveness’ meaning? How was the term used by the participants, what was the context

and how did it relate to gender? Fairclough states that the discursive constitution of the social may be analysed broadly in terms of representations, relationships and identities (Fairclough, 1992). The second stage of the analysis was therefore guided by questions such as how was gender represented by the documents/participants; what were the relationships that produced those representations; and how did participants identify or position themselves within those relationships and within the structure of NATO?

To address these questions at this stage of analysis was guided by the concept of gender relationality (Lazar, 2005: 11). The documents and transcripts were coded around three interlinked themes: Firstly, identifying the discursive co-constructions that detailed the ways of doing and being a woman and a man within a military context generally, and NATO specifically; the concern being not with women (or men) in isolation but vis-à-vis the opposite sex. Gender relationality in this sense also renders analysable how men and women talk (Lazar, 2005: 11) helping to expose the 'silent' hegemonic norms of the institution (Kronsell, 2006). The transcripts were therefore analysed for how the female participants spoke about and conceptualised 'men' and how the male participants spoke about and conceptualised 'women'.

Secondly the dynamic between forms of masculinity (Connell, 1987; 1995; 2005) and between femininities were analysed. Analysing variation within, as well as between, categories of masculinity and femininity highlighted how NATO's particular (militaristic) gender order is based around hegemonic masculine ideals. The transcripts were therefore analysed for how the male participants spoke about, conceptualised and positioned themselves in relation to 'other men' and how the female participants positioned themselves in relation to 'other women' within NATO.

Analysing gender relationality, although not straightforward, was easier within the interview transcripts and observations from the NCGP meetings. Participants often spoke of 'men' or 'women' as homogenised, essentialised collectives which they placed themselves in relation or opposition to using professional or personal experiences to illustrate this relationality. It was more difficult to take this approach with the documents as these, more nuanced illustrations were lacking. However, the same tendencies towards collectivisation and universalism – 'men' and 'women' as distinctly and essentially different from one another – remained a current (though not entirely consistent) theme throughout the documentation. Therefore, the documents were also analysed using Carol Bacchi's (2012) concept of asking: 'what is the problem represented to be' (WPR)? Bacchi notes that the WPR approach is a resource or a tool intended specifically to facilitate a critical interrogation of public policies (2012: 21). She states that policies and policy proposals often contain implicit

representations of what is considered to be the problem. A WPR analysis of NATO's documents therefore places focus on both how UNSCR 1325 is presented and how 'gender' and the 'gender perspective' are framed within that context. Of particular interest are the supplementary questions that Bacchi poses: what effects are produced by this representation of the problem and how/where has this representation of the problem (and its resolutions) been produced, disseminated and defended? Has it been (or could it be) questioned, disrupted or replaced (Ibid.)? Supplementing the FCDA of NATO documents with these critical questions helps to expose NATO's specific approach to engaging with UNSCR 1325 and the rationale produced for doing so and the ways in which that is communicated through the organisation.

Analysing the documents and transcripts in this way shows how gender ideology and gendered relations of power are (re)produced, negotiated and contested within and through the NATO structure. It exposes the context within which a form of gender mainstreaming is being introduced and how NATO becomes a site of a (re)production and (re)definition of what gender is and what it can do. It explains how gender as a concept can become coupled to notions of force multiplication and operational effectiveness and distanced from women's rights and equality (Chapter 5 & 7) and how women can be useful in certain contexts and problematic in others (Chapter, 8, Section 4).

4. Limitations

4.1 Critique of FCDA

Ruth Wodak (2008) provides a critique of a specifically feminist critical discourse analytic approach which is largely based around concerns of its privileging of gender as *the* category of analysis (Harrington et al ed. 2008: 193-198). In response to these concerns she posits particular questions for researchers utilising a FCDA approach to be mindful of. I will respond to Wodak's questions as a way of engaging with the critique of my chosen analytic approach.

Firstly, Wodak asks the researcher to be mindful of the context – when does it make sense to foreground gender and why? In regards to this thesis the primary motivation for its undertaking was to understand how an international military organisation such as NATO was implementing a gender mainstreaming process, and engaging with issues of gender more generally. NATO was foregrounding gender by engaging with UN Resolution 1325 and designing its own institutional and operational processes in response to it. This thesis analyses particular parts of that process.

Secondly, in ‘isolating’ gender what of the many other variables are backgrounded or neglected? Here Wodak is stressing the importance of intersectionality. Whilst acknowledging the importance of class and race and other variables is extremely important, gender is the primary category of analysis within this thesis; however it is not the only one. Within Chapter 8, Section 3.2, I analyse the way in which western (military) women are placed in relation to non-western (civilian) women; highlighting the ways the socio-cultural religious differences between these individuals is constructed and then utilised by NATO in various ways. Sexuality and dominant notions of heteronormativity are also analysed in relation to NATO’s gender order. However, a specific discussion of the ethnicity and class of the participants is not included due to the constraints imposed by protecting anonymity.

Finally, Wodak asks when reducing complexity through focusing on gender, how restricted is the explanatory power of the analyst (in Harrington et al ed. 2008: 197)? I address this more fully below; however, decisions of inclusion and exclusion have to be made within the confines of the research process. What this research does do in taking gender as a category of analysis is *expose* rather than reduce the complexity of gender relations within NATO. Foregrounding gender exposes some, although not all, of the myriad ways within which gender, men and women, masculinities and femininities are (re)produced within and by NATO’s organisational structure and via institutional discourse.

4.2 Reliability

As I have stated within the introduction to this thesis the ‘gender mainstreaming process’ within NATO is changing rapidly. Whilst the documents analysed are publically available records they are being constantly revised, edited and re-published as the institutional structure and mechanisms change. Therefore the documents analysed and presented within this thesis are reliable inasmuch as they offer NATO’s official position at the time of publication.

In regards to the reliability of the interviews, accounts offered by the participants relied on their memory, experiences and interpretations of events, policies and the re-telling of particular stories. It is possible that participants may have overstated, exaggerated or omitted details when recounting experiences or re-telling particular stories (See Grace and Celine’s different re-telling of the same story in Chapter 8 for an example of this). If these exaggerations or omissions did occur it does not, however, impact on the ‘quality’ of those accounts as they represent experience and not truth or fact per se. As Jacoby (2006) suggests experience should be understood, not as truth, but simply as a telling of one’s story, a narrative that represents the choices and priorities of the particular individual or group (Ackerly, Stern & True, 2006: 162) . The aim of using interviews within this research was to

analyse the perceptions, the experiences of those individuals involved within the institutional processes in relation to each other's accounts as they told them and in relation to the official documentation produced by NATO; not to make an overarching claim to truth or to present the participants' representations of themselves or of NATO as definitive accounts. Discrepancies, contradictions and silences within these narratives constitute the individual accounts that I wanted to capture and are presented within this thesis as such.

The participants offered narratives of success and failure and provided the information on institutional constraints, challenges and process that they deemed appropriate – and that were important to them (or which they deemed important to the institution). Therefore, the accounts produced by the participants were highly pertinent to them as both individuals and as representatives of NATO within their job roles.

4.3 Generalisability & Replicability

There is no claim to wider generalisability of the findings of this thesis. Whilst participants were offering their professional opinions on institutional mechanisms and processes they did so in a way that was personal to them. This coupled with the small sample size, makes the knowledge produced relevant to those individuals specifically, and contingent on the time, place and context of the interviews. As Holstein & Gubrium identify “One cannot expect answers on one occasion to necessarily replicate those on another, because they may emerge from different circumstances of production” (in Silverman (ed.) 2011: 154). Therefore the findings produced by this research cannot be generalised to represent the NATO organisation in its entirety.

However, whilst the participants were free to answer the questions in whatever ways they liked, there was certain consistency across the interview process. For example all participants were asked similar questions (See Interview Schedule in Appendix III): what success looked like for example, or how and why they took up the job roles that they currently occupied. Nora, Grace, Celine and Ben occupied relatively similar job roles; as did Anna and Mike. Indeed, what became apparent in analysing the interviews was just how similar the participant's experiences were. This therefore allowed for comparisons to be drawn across the interviews and combined with the documentary analysis. This offers highly relevant, if specific, findings that capture some of the myriad ways in which gender is ‘produced’ within an international security institution and the impact this can have when these institutions seek to develop a ‘gender perspective’.

With this in mind, it would be difficult to wholly replicate this study. Whilst the methodology used to analyse the interviews and documentation can be replicated the nature

of the accounts themselves was dependent on numerous factors. Whilst the documents collected are publically available, access to the same group of participants, under the same circumstances would be difficult. Job roles within the military are transitory – often lasting no longer than three years - and three of the participants have already left their positions. The quality of the accounts that the interviews produced was also dependent on the rapport I established with each participant and the complex co-constructed nature of knowledge production that was produced by my interaction with the participants. The following section details my reflections on this gendered process of knowledge production within the interview setting.

5. “Men Like You” – Reflecting on the Gendered Positionality of the Researcher

Whilst I have reflected on the various stages, challenges and assumptions made in the research process in the preceding sections, particular attention needs to be paid to my own gender, particularly my role as a male researcher interviewing women and men within an international military organisation. This required a level of ‘practical reflection’ (Ackerly & True, 2006) that went beyond merely acknowledging my own gender as different from and similar to the gender of the participants at the outset of the work – asking a simple ‘who is asking whom?’ (Schwalbe & Wolkomir, 2001: 91 in Pini, 2005: 204) was insufficient. The interviews conducted represent ‘social events’ between gendered individuals in a specifically gendered context - NATO. The reflexive question needed to be asked was ‘Who is asking whom about *what* and *where*?’ (Pini, 2005: 204) and how did this manifest within the interview setting and the participants accounts that were produced subsequently? With the female participants, I (as a man) was interviewing them as women about their understandings of gender, working in a highly-masculine military institution. With the male participants, they as men were working in a female dominated sector of that predominantly male organisation.

What became apparent during the research process was that perceptions of me as a (white, British, perceived-to-be heterosexual) *male* researcher influenced the way that the women and the men interacted with me. Participants used my gendered identity (or their perception of it) to construct and articulate their understandings of gender, ‘bringing me in’ to the conversations. They primarily made reference to my sex and specifically and my interest in gender (as a man) in order to construct, compare and contrast, institutional masculinities and femininities within the NATO structure, as they saw them.

Erika Svedberg’s (2000) work on Cold War era East-West negotiations, highlights this ‘gendered role’ of the researcher. Within her research male interviewees automatically brought up the importance of future diplomats being male even though gender was not

mentioned by Svedberg in her questioning. Annica Kronsell (2005) argues that the presence of Svedberg as a *female* researcher, interviewing men in a male dominated profession (international diplomacy) made gender visible. Svedberg herself named this the ‘young-Swedish-woman-factor’ (2000: 11) and explained that “although we call ourselves by the same title, ‘researcher’ how others identify us will vary and not always be consistent, in turn depending on the identities of others” (Kronsell, 2005: 287).

The participants in my research told me certain things, framed their work, their understandings of ‘gender’ and experiences of NATO in certain ways because I was an audience for their stories. As Hertz (1997) identifies the researcher is always positioned in a ‘constellation of gender, race, class, sexuality and power’ (1997: vii). Had they been representing themselves to someone else (a female researcher for example) they may have represented other aspects of their identity (Ackerly & True, 2008: 703), told other stories about their experiences, spoke about ‘men’, ‘women’, ‘sexuality’, ‘gender’ and ‘security’ in different ways. Drawing upon perceptions of my identity was not limited to my sex. My nationality and my role as a civilian academic, someone who was non-military was also drawn upon by the participants. Within some of the interviews there was also an implicit perception that I was heterosexual. In this sense, the constructions and understandings of gender were relational – co-constructed between me and the participant - formed in part by their perception of me as a ‘young(ish)-white-straight-*male*-researcher’²⁸.

This co-construction occurred in particular ways. In the following extract from Celine she was struggling to articulate her views on how men and women ‘thought differently’. She uses my presence (as a man) to provide a point of difference:

“...our [women’s] views have a different quality, or a different, how should I say...I would do things in a different way than you do, my way is different but it is not worse than your way”

She uses my presence as a man to anchor the abstract notion of a ‘different quality’ of women’s views through her perception of the way that I would ‘do things differently’ Within this specific interaction, I represent the homogenised category ‘men’ and she represents the collective ‘women’. She places us in opposition to one another, as representatives of our respective sexes.

This way of using me as a male (and their perceptions of my masculinity) to frame responses to questions was not limited to the formal interview settings. The following is from an exchange that occurred at the end of the first day of the 2012 annual meeting of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives (NCGP) as I was standing with a group of female

military officers who were delegates to the conference. The discussion was about the classified nature of the concluding days of the conference:

“you know that us women secretly run the world, that’s why you can’t come tomorrow, we have to keep our secrets from men like you”

The conversation was humorous and light-hearted, however it is interesting the conversation itself was not specifically about gender, only about the organisation of the conference and its classified nature. However, gendered differences between me and the all-female group were drawn upon. My masculinity marked me out as different from the immediate group, my presence as a man was used to construct a homogenised female collective (‘us women’) that I was separate from.

In these two extracts I was placed in opposition to the individual female participant, and the female group. At one level I represented an ‘other’ and my ‘otherness’ served to construct a commonality between the women I was speaking to in the organisation (women’s experiences, women’s ways of thinking, women’s secrets).

Some participants also identified me as different from that of other men within the organisation. Grace in particular consistently qualified her remarks when talking about her professional experiences with men. Throughout her accounts Grace homogenised men into a collective (defined by the military men that she worked with), however she identified me as different from these men and occasionally apologised to me, qualifying her remarks with comments such as: “*I don’t mean to be sexist but...; it makes me sound horribly essentialist but...*” She identified the resistance of (military) men specifically to talk about gender issues as it was so conflated in their minds with being a ‘woman’s issue’:

“When we finish this [the interview] I want to know how you got into it because I’m more fascinated by a bloke, I mean that’s, I wrote a report after I got back from this thing and I sent it to about twenty people and only about three people have written back, have replied to my report but I said, what I’m looking for is a male champion to talk about this because I’m not going to get anywhere”

MH: So do you think there is a resistance there for men to talk about gender?

“Yeah, definitely, and from a military perspective, you have to be incredibly happy in your own skin to stand in front of say a load of army officers that are half way through their careers and say right I want you to be aware of 1325 and I want you to think about how you use your female soldiers and the female population because that takes quite a lot of balls from a male perspective. I’ll do it, and people will just fall asleep and think, oh she’s going to talk about how it’s OK to be a lesbian in the army or something. But it is, so you are quite fascinating to me”

Within this extract, Grace’s perception of my civilian identity also interacts with a particular perception of masculinity – that of a ‘bloke’ – and the particular constructions of manliness

and masculinity that term signifies. As a civilian ‘bloke’, I was not subjected to the same perceived institutional restraints that military men were. However, for Grace I still represented an anomaly, as someone different from the men she interacted with on a daily basis, whilst also being part of the wider collective ‘men’. In this respect I became both ‘part of’ and ‘separate from’ men at NATO.

The co-constructions of gender between the participants and me were not limited to ‘*differences*’ between us. Ben, one of two male interviewees used a similar strategy to that of Celine and Grace of ‘bringing me in’ to frame his responses to questions. However, for Ben it was our commonality as men generally, and our commonality as men interested in gender specifically that was highlighted.

In the following extract I had asked Ben what he understood by the term ‘gender perspective’:

“it is a matter of we are different but we have these similar rights, these rights, equal rights, and then I tend to think that they are better than us, women are cleverer, they are more disciplined, ah, they are more complicated, and that is why we love them...so, we need them and they need us”

Ben frames his response by homogenising ‘us/we’ (men) and ‘them’ (women) – setting up a notion of complementarity based in part upon a perception of a shared heterosexuality. Conway (2008) identifies this strategizing by participants as ‘bonding ploys’ which are premised on ‘unspoken norms of masculinity, sometimes verbally expressed by saying ‘you know what I mean’’ (2008: 348-349). Within this exchange our *commonality* as two men framed Ben’s response.

Such reflections on the co-constructions of masculinities, femininities and gender that occurred during the interview process aided my analysis. At one level the perception of my sex, and the gendered associations attached to it by my participants, associated me as a member of a collective group ‘men’ that was problematised by the participants when discussing their work on ‘gender issues’. Using me, in various exchanges to frame their responses showed how participants constructed highly essentialised ‘male’ and ‘female’ categories (complete with essentialised characteristics and ‘views of security’) even when acknowledging difference and variation within each group.

5.1 Gendering Access

It is also worth noting that considering how the female participants in particular, viewed me as a ‘man interested in gender’ allowed to me to reflect on the level of access I obtained. Issues surrounding access have been noted earlier in this chapter. However, it is worth

considering if the relative ease with which the participants were willing to take part in the research and the relative ease with which they spoke about their experiences and job roles (often in very personal terms) was related to the ‘fascination’ of a ‘bloke’ being interested in gender issues. Did the novelty of me as a man interested in gender within NATO, a military institution typified by a traditional (male) resistance to discuss or even acknowledge gender issues increase this level of access? Alternatively, did my physical appearance, my whiteness, my nationality and perceived heterosexuality – my non-exoticism - portray a ‘masculinity’ that was closely aligned to the hegemonic ideals at NATO, one that was familiar (non-transgressive) to the participants? How far did perceptions of my identity facilitate access and generate rapport?

Reflecting on these interactions highlights the complexity of category construction and the role of identity and positionality when talking about gender issues. Reflexivity in this sense increased my self-awareness (Cook & Fonow 1991: 3). I became aware of how my gender was interpreted by the participants (both male and female), allowing me to reflect on my own position within the particular gender order within which my research was conducted in a way that was not possible at the outset of the research. Paying attention to the relationships that developed the gendered interactions that occurred between the participants and me and the way these co-constructed understandings of ‘gender’ within NATO, is something that developed *during* the empirical stage of the research process. In this sense reflexivity on the relationship between the researcher and those researched derived not from a pre-requisite of using feminist *theory* per se, but from feminist research *practice* (Ackerly & True, 2008: 704). In this sense as Cook & Fonow (1991: 5) identify, paying attention to the ways in which gender and sexual asymmetry between the researcher and those researched, transform the initial topic formulation, the data collection (Stern, 2006: 108-181 in Ackerly & True, 2008: 703) and its analysis, is an important way in which feminist research seeks a better understanding of the political and social contexts of the production of knowledge. The following analytical chapters are presented with these reflections in mind.

Chapter Five

Producing Policy, (Re)producing Gender

Introduction

Implementation of UNSCR 1325 should be seen in the context of NATO's wider policy objectives of enhancing security and stability. In order to achieve this goal, it should become an integral part of NATO's corporate identity, in the way it plans and conducts its everyday business and organises its civilian and military structures. Moreover as a recognised element for the success of missions and operations, it should be fully integrated into all aspects of NATO-led operations

(NATO, 2010c: 3.1)

Military operations in today's world require a diversity of qualifications and resources to ensure that peace and security are achieved and maintained. The complementary skills of both male and female personnel are essential for the operational effectiveness of NATO operations

(NATO, 2007: 11)

This chapter presents an analysis of official NATO documents concerning the Alliance's engagement with UNSCR 1325. All of the documents analysed are listed in Appendix II; not every aspect of their content is covered within the chapter, instead the focus of this analysis falls specifically on the construction and presentation of NATO's 'gender perspective' as a response to the alliance's engagement with UNSCR 1325. The chapter is structured as follows. Section one analyses the documents in relation to Carol Bacchi's (2012) key conceptual question, 'What is the Problem Represented to be'? Posing this question allows for the rationale behind NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 presented within the documents to be problematised. This section identifies how the problem of women's exclusion and victimisation - premised upon simultaneous representations of women as victims and agents within international security provision - is promoted and used to frame NATO's response under the banner of 'Protection, Participation and Prevention'. This analysis exposes how although not explicitly presented as such, UNSCR 1325 and the Women Peace and Security agenda can be viewed as disruptive policies to NATO's organisational norms, problematising pre-existing structures and exposing particular 'deficiencies'. Section Two contains the main argument advanced within this chapter; that the documentation seek to re-frame these 'problems' into opportunities for the alliance via particular narrative constructions. These constructions begin by situating NATO within an international regime of good gender governance; align UNSCR 1325 with NATO 'values' and 'principles' and serve to present NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 as a way of improving NATO's operational effectiveness – primarily via the development and

implementation of a gender perspective that draws upon essentialised conceptions of female agency.

1. Engaging with UNSCR 1325 - What is the Problem Represented to Be?

As outlined within Chapter Four, Section 3.4 the documents were analysed in relation to Carol Bacchi's (2012) conceptual question: 'What is the problem represented to be?' Specifically, the documents were analysed for the representation of what problem UNSCR 1325 was seen to be addressing. Therefore a critical feminist discourse analysis was conducted using this question as a frame to problematise how 'UNSCR 1325' and the 'gender perspective' are presented and how NATO produced a rationale for engagement with the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Additionally, attention was paid to Bacchi's supplementary questions of what effects are produced by this representation of the problem and how/where has this representation of the problem (and its resolutions) been produced, disseminated and defended (Ibid)? These secondary questions are addressed within section two and section three of this chapter.

In regards to NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 as presented within the texts, broadly – and most consistently – the 'problem' was represented to be both the victimisation of women (and girls) and their exclusion from conflict resolution and peacebuilding as well as the underrepresentation of women within the military forces of the alliance. This victimisation/exclusion representation is not unique to NATO's representation of UNSCR 1325 or of women's involvement in war and conflict more generally (See Moser & Clark, 2005; Gibbings, 2004; Cohn et al. 2004; Chapter 1 Section 2.4 this thesis). Laura Shepherd in particular (2008a; 2008b) identified this particular framing within the text of UNSCR 1325, wherein women (and girls) were framed as the disproportionate victims of armed conflict, whilst highlighting the complete absence of men (and boys) within the text of the resolution (Ibid). The following sections identify how these victimhood/exclusion representations manifest within NATO documentation and how NATO responds to this problem primarily via a framework of '*Protection, Participation and Prevention*' that draws upon and reinforces essentialised constructions of female victimhood and agency.

1.1 Victims and Agents: Participation, Protection, Prevention

Chapter One, Section 2.2 and 2.3 set out the aims and objectives (and the contested, interpretable nature) of UNSCR 1325. Taking into account the caveats identified in Chapter One, the aims of UNSCR 1325 – broadly conceived – can be said to include the protection and participation of women in international security considerations. NATO documents concerning alliance engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security

agenda offer the same dual positioning. For example, the NATO documents situate women as victims of armed conflict in the following ways:

“Finally, this directive recognises both male and females (women and girls) are impacted negatively during conflict. However, to integrate UNSCR 1325, this directive addresses measure NATO forces will undertake in the planning and conduct of NATO-led operations and missions to protect women and girls” (NATO: Bi-SC 40-1, 2009: 1.7)

“The Alliance recognises that women and girls are potentially more vulnerable than males to certain risks that occur in conflict situations and/or in the temporary presence of military forces (whether hostile, neutral or friendly) in their environment” (NATO: Bi-SC 40-1: 1.7)

“Sexual violence against women is not cultural it is criminal, and it’s not a women’s issue it is a human rights issue. This affects how we look at security. Women define security often very differently from men and this has to be acknowledged” (NATO, 2010d: 7)

An interesting difference between the text of UNSCR 1325 and the NATO documentation, specifically Bi-SCD 40-1 (2009; 2012) is that the reiteration within the NATO texts of ‘men’ and ‘men and boys’ in addition to ‘women’ and ‘women and girls’. The absence of ‘men’, the role, position and power that they occupy within armed conflict within UNSCR 1325 has been a key feminist critique of the document. It is linked to the ways in which militarism – and the causes of armed conflict – more generally are left unanalysed and intact by UNSCR 1325 (Cohn, 2008; Shepherd, 2008a; Chapter One, Section 2.4). On the surface, the NATO documents would seem to go some way to redress this imbalance; indeed the vulnerable position of men and boys was mentioned within the interviews, particularly by Ben when producing a rationale for his interest in working on ‘gender issues’ (See Chapter 6, Section 4). However, whilst the vulnerable positions of some men and boys are acknowledged by NATO, there is no mention about the powerful positions of authority that men largely occupy, or their role in the perpetration of violence more generally. Indeed, whilst NATO identifies that the security considerations of ‘men, women, boys and girls’ are to be taken into consideration within a ‘gender perspective’ (a point returned to below), in practice the ‘analysis’ undertaken and presented within the documentation falls squarely on the role and place of women (See also Chapter 8). This is encapsulated within the quotes from Bi-SCD 40-1 (2010d: 1.7) outlined above. The directive recognises that both men and women (and girls) – note the inclusion of ‘girls’ and the exclusion of (and boys) - are affected ‘negatively’ but assert that in order to integrate UNSCR 1325 specifically, the directive must focus solely on the *protection* of women and girls (Ibid). One theme that also emerged within some of the texts was to locate this vulnerability (and subsequent need for protection) specifically to women’s susceptibility to sexual violence (see the 2010d: 7 quote

above). This was also the theme for the 2013 NATO Committee for Gender Perspectives (NCGP) annual conference. The vulnerability of men was not conceptualised in such terms within the texts analysed. There is an indication here of a correlation/conflation between sexual violence, women's vulnerability, biological difference and female 'perspectives' of security that is explored further in Chapter 6, Section 1.1.

I do not want to suggest here that women are not vulnerable within armed conflict, or do not suffer sexual violence, but to indicate how the problem is presented within the documents. Framing women as universally vulnerable neglects the nuance of experiences and continues to reinforce a dichotomy of women's and men's experiences of violence. That, whilst acknowledges some male vulnerability, nevertheless reinforces the particular victimhood of women within official NATO documentation and leaves the position of men and masculinity under analysed. Aside from making particular essentialised assumptions of the agency of (individual) women (a point returned to below), these totalising (and absent) narratives affect how the response to the problem is framed by NATO. I have already suggested within Chapter 3, Section 3.2 that UNSCR 1325 can be viewed as a 'disruptive' policy in that it problematises NATO's pre-existing organisational structures and operational practices. By engaging with UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security agenda - as a 'new' global norm - NATO is implicitly indicating its pre-existing practices were deficient in particular ways; NATO does not acknowledge this explicitly. What framing the problem as one of vulnerability and exclusion (see below) does is it allows NATO to align its response (its engagement with UNSCR 1325) as a natural extension of its wider aims, objectives and values (see Section 2.1 below). With women (and girls) framed as collectively vulnerable, NATO can position itself as (masculinist) protector (Young, 2003) and a defender of 'human rights' more generally (NATO, 2010d: 7). It also allows for a framing of the second representation of the problem that of 'exclusion' to be addressed.

Following from vulnerability/victimhood representation the documents also present the problem as one of women's exclusion, both from post-conflict negotiations and reconstruction and formal involvement in national military forces (and by extension the under representation of women in NATO forces and institutional structures). For example:

"Women have a significant role to play in conflict prevention, management and resolution by being actively involved as decision-makers at all levels. UNSCR 1325 urged all member states to improve these mechanisms to reflect and represent women's concerns" (NATO, 2010d: 9)

"UNSCR 1325 calls for full and equal participation of women at all levels in the issues ranging from early conflict prevention to post-conflict reconstruction, peace

and security. Their input is vital in reconstructing the social fabric of conflict-torn societies” (NATO, 2007: 11)

In establishing ‘exclusion’ as a problem NATO is positioned within the documents as a provider or a facilitator of this inclusion. However, like the homogenised framing of women as ‘victim’, women as ‘participant’ or ‘agent’ is premised upon particular universalised conceptions and assumptions (a point returned to in Section 2.3 below). Throughout the documents the victim/agent framing is often presented simultaneously. For example:

“Increasing the numbers of women participating in peace-building, the military and decision making bodies, is necessary to build peace. Women are both actors in and victims of armed conflict, and gender equality at NATO is an important part of security work” (NATO, 2010d: 3)

“Implementing the rights of women and children, protecting them from gender-based violence is vital to building a peaceful and secure environment in unstable areas” (NATO, 2010d: 7)

“Increasing the participation of women in the armed forces is one part of the solution, but it is not the only one. Protecting women and children from the day-to-day challenges of conflict zones and giving them a voice at the highest levels of decision-making bodies in order to prevent future instability, are also part of NATO’s UNSCR 1325 commitment” (NATO, 2010d: 1.2)

To take each of these quotes in turn. Firstly, women’s inclusion at all levels is presented as a pre-requisite, as necessary to build peace. This establishes a relatively straightforward and unproblematic association between participation and peace. Contained within the association is an implicit assumption that increasing the number of women in the military will build peace, rather than advance militarism (and violence) (See Section 2.3 below) or that militarism by extension can provide peace. In addition, it allows ‘gender equality’ in the broadest possible terms to be linked to ‘security work’, again, in the broadest possible terms. As the accounts of the participants (in Chapters 6 and 7 specifically) identify, the notion of ‘gender equality’ and ‘women’s rights’ within NATO remain highly problematic. The second quote (2010d: 7) simultaneously positions NATO as both a provider of ‘rights’ (thereby facilitating participation) and a protector of the vulnerable. The third quote is symptomatic of a wider ‘slippage’ within the documents between who is being protected and who is participating. The first part of the quote identifies a need to increase women’s participation in the military. Throughout the documents this conception is based primarily upon increasing the participation of Western women within NATO armed forces; whilst the ‘protection’ is exclusively aimed at civilian women. The phrasing of the second sentence is also telling (and incredibly problematic). Here, NATO is again positioned as a facilitator of women’s participation, this time as able to ‘give voice to’ ‘silent’ or marginalised civilian

women. Yet, by giving ‘them’ (women) as voice, NATO is positioned as inherently masculine (acknowledging that ‘they’ do not have a voice within pre-existing structures) There is also an implicit assumption that these women do not have a voice or that NATO can simply ‘give’ voice to women. The simultaneous framing of victimhood/exclusion and the protection/participation response is evidence of Young’s masculinist protection; NATO is positioned within the documents as a benign protector, ‘courageous, responsible and virtuous’ (2003: 4) as a conferrer of rights and provider of protection from ‘other bad men’ that would do them harm (Ibid). There is also a level of ‘subordination’ in this conceptualisation. In this sense, the vulnerable women that are protected by NATO are not submitting to a ‘dominative (violent) masculinity’, but an exchange is set up between protector and protected (2003:5); NATO offers to provide protection and to facilitate rights, yet NATO must be *present* in order to do so, thereby producing a rationale for NATO’s continued involvement within these areas of conflict, reinforcing the organisation’s perception of its own worth.

In this sense, the victimhood/exclusion/protection/participation representation help to stabilise the ‘disruption’ that engaging with UNSCR 1325 brings. Militarism is left intact (and advanced in the desire for increased participation of women in armed forces) and the position, power and privilege (as well as the vulnerability) of men is left largely unproblematised and unanalysed (See also, Chapter 8). This presents the foundation from which NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 can proceed. The following sections demonstrate how this engagement is further aligned to NATO ‘values’ and organisation aims via a conceptualisation and development of the gender perspective as a way to promote NATO’s operational effectiveness. In short, how the ‘problem’ of disruption is translated into an ‘opportunity’.

2. From ‘Problem’ to Opportunity

As the above section make clear, NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda is premised upon the dual problem of victimhood and exclusion. The documents seek to frame a ‘broad’ engagement with UNSCR 1325 as a redress to these issues specifically under the framework of ‘Protection, Participation and Prevention’ (NATO, 2010d; 2009; 2011a; 2012). Whilst this is effective in establishing an initial rationale for NATO’s engagement – establishing NATO as both protector and facilitator of rights - it still implicitly recognises that NATO’s approach pre-engagement with UNSCR 1325 was deficient in particular ways. This can be seen to be a problem within itself; engagement with UNSCR 1325 in this sense is ‘disruptive’, identifying a deficiency within pre-existing practices and asking something ‘new’ of the alliance. Therefore, in addition, a wider

narrative is established throughout the documents that builds upon this initial framing and seeks to reorient this ‘problem’ into an ‘opportunity’; an opportunity primarily for the alliance. This wider ‘narrative arc’ has four interlinked stages: one, to situate NATO in the broadest possible terms as a key (‘responsible’) international actor concerned with the promotion of international peace and security; two, to establish that the ‘victimhood and exclusion’ problem is linked to *international* peace and security provision; three, that NATO’s approach to UNSCR 1325 will benefit the Alliance goal of ‘operational effectiveness’; and four, present the gender perspective - as a provision of UNSCR 1325 - as a key means of achieving operational effectiveness and therefore the promotion of international peace and security. This is done primarily by drawing upon essentialised notions of female agency. In some cases these stages were distinct and successive, in others they were concurrent. Whilst there was evidence of these stages within most of the documents, the following sections use the ‘*Comprehensive Report on the NATO/EAPC policy on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and Related Resolutions*’ (NATO, 2010c), the 2011 and 2014 Revised Editions of the NATO/EAPC policy (2011a, 2014); the ‘*CWINF Guidance for Gender Mainstreaming*’ (2007); and the ‘*Briefing on Women, Peace and Security*’ (NATO, 2010d) to illustrate how this narrative arc is established.

2.1 International Peace and Security & NATO’s Operational Effectiveness

The first stage in this narrative arc takes the form of an introductory or ‘background’ paragraph within the documents (see for example NATO, 2007; 2010a; 2010c; 2010d, 2011a; 2011b). The purpose of this introductory information is to reiterate the victimhood/exclusion problem identified above and to outline a very general history of the genesis of UNSCR 1325 to address these problems. These paragraphs also serve to situate NATO as an actor in the realm of international peace and security provision centralising UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda as a mechanism through which this security provision can be established. For example, the Comprehensive Report states that the ‘NATO/EAPC (2007) is a true partnership policy for an issue of global interest’ (NATO, 2010c: 4.1); the introduction to the 2011 NATO/EAPC policy identifies the complex nature of the ‘security challenges of the 21st century’ (NATO/EAPC, 2011: introduction). The NATO ‘briefing’ document on Women, Peace and Security (NATO, 2010d) opens with the following:

“War and conflict often affects women and children more than men. As part of wider international efforts to break this historic inequality, NATO has been working to protect women and children in its area of operations and increase the participation of women at every level to help prevent future conflicts” (2010d: 1).

This broader introductory positioning has two effects. Firstly it centralises NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 within broader international efforts to promote 'good gender governance' (True 2011, Chapter Three, Section 4.1 and 4.2). NATO aligns itself with other international actors such as the EU, UN and OSCE, whereby its engagement with UNSCR 1325 becomes an extension and a promotion of NATO 'values' (see also, Chapter Eight, Section 1). For example both the 2011 and 2014 revised versions of the NATO/EAPC policy state that:

"NATO's partnerships make a clear and valued contribution to Allied security, to international security more broadly and to defending and advancing the values of individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law upon which the alliance is based" (NATO, 2011: 2.1)

"Our work on Women, Peace and Security is fundamental to the realization of our common values of individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and our obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and other sources of international law. These common values and legal obligations cannot be fulfilled if women cannot participate fully and freely, or if their rights are not respected". (NATO, 2014: Introduction, 3)

"At a multilateral level, NATO and its Partners have joined a number of International Organisations, such as the EU and the OSCE, in contributing to the international community's efforts in support of the principles of UNSCR 1325 and its related resolutions, and have advocated a broad approach to this global issue in the security field. There is increasing recognition that women have a crucial role to play and special skills to contribute to dealing successfully with the security challenges of the 21st century" (NATO, 2010b: 2.2)

Coupling engagement with UNSCR 1325 with wider NATO 'values' in this way situates NATO as a 'responsible' and engaged member of an international community that shares these 'common values'. This begins to help limit the disruption of engagement identified above; framed in such a way NATO is simply complying with its obligations under international law. Interestingly, there is no mention of the seven year period between the adoption of UNSCR 1325 by the Security Council in 2000 and NATO's first policy engagement with the resolution in 2007, when presumably NATO was not fulfilling its obligation under the UN Charter. Secondly, it frames the problem of victimhood/exclusion as a detriment to international peace and security. Women's agency and inclusion as a redress to victimhood and exclusion become intimately tied to international security provision that is in turn framed by liberal democratic ideals of individual liberty, democracy and human rights. For example:

"From a NATO perspective, and bearing in mind that women represent half the world's population, women remain nonetheless too often excluded from taking part

in maintaining, restoring and defending stability. Their victimisation in conflict situations and marginalisation in peace building efforts continue to have a profound impact on global security” (NATO, 2010c: 2.3)

Situating NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 in this broad, ‘global’ security context reinforces the positioning of NATO as a guarantor of increased protection and participation of women (outlined above). In turn, this produces a rationale for NATO to link engagement with UNSCR 1325 with its own operational effectiveness and mission success. This third stage serves to present the ‘disruptive’ engagement with UNSCR 1325 as an opportunity for NATO as an organisation. For example, the Comprehensive Report (NATO, 2010c) goes on to state:

“Furthermore, the inclusion of the principles of UNSCR 1325 and its related resolutions is essential to the success of the mission, as clearly demonstrated in NATO’s experience to date in Afghanistan” (NATO, 2010c: 2.4)

And the Briefing on Women, Peace and Security (2010d) states that: “The inclusion of the principles of UNSCR 1325 and its related resolutions is one of the keys to mission success” (NATO, 2010d: 3). Clause 3.1 of the Comprehensive Report (NATO, 2010c) encapsulates this (re)framing from disruptive problem to opportunity:

“Implementation of UNSCR 1325 should be seen in the context of NATO’s wider policy objectives of enhancing security and stability. In order to achieve this goal, it should become an integral part of NATO’s corporate identity, in the way it plans and conducts its everyday business and organises its civilian and military structures. Moreover as a recognised element for the success of missions and operations, it should be fully integrated into all aspects of NATO-led operations” (Ibid: 3.1).

I will take each of the points raised within the clause in turn: To begin with NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 is coupled to NATO’s role as a provider of security and stability. Here UNSCR 1325 implementation is aligned to ‘fit’ with NATO’s principle understanding of itself. Secondly, UNSCR 1325 is to be mainstreamed throughout military and civilian structures to become an integral part of NATO’s ‘corporate identity’. This further aligns UNSCR 1325 to NATO values identified above to the point that it becomes part of NATO’s ‘identity’. Thirdly, UNSCR 1325 is then framed as a ‘recognised element’ for the mission success and operational effectiveness of the alliance. In this conceptualisation, UNSCR 1325 is moved from a disruptive policy, one that exposes deficiencies within pre-existing practices and asks new things of the alliance, to a natural extension of NATO’s values, identities and purpose and a tool to enhance alliance success. In this sense, UNSCR 1325 becomes a supplement – not a disruption to – NATO’s pre-existing organisational aims and objectives.

The mechanism by which operational effectiveness is seen to be improved is primarily through the development of a ‘gender perspective’ enshrined within NATO’s Bi-Strategic Command Directive (Bi-SCD) 40-1: Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Gender Perspective into the NATO Command Structure (2012; 2009):

“Beyond the general principle to protect women, effective integration of gender perspectives in operations has demanded a comprehensive and robust policy... While UNSCR 1325 was the binding legal authority for signatories, the Directive (BI SCD 40-1) is core for gender perspectives in NATO military organisations and operations” (NATO, 2010c: 5.2.4.1)

The following section outlines how the ‘gender perspective’ is conceptualised both within UNSCR 1325 and NATO detailing how its conceptualisation furthers an association of UNSCR 1325 with NATO’s own operational effectiveness.

2.2 The Gender Perspective

Like the malleable definition of ‘gender mainstreaming’ outlined in Chapter One, the precise definition of a ‘gender perspective’ is contestable. In some instances the definition is specific, in others broad, in most cases a combination of the two. In regards to UNSCR 1325, the term ‘gender perspective’ is used three times within the text of the resolution. One in the preamble and twice in specific clauses:

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a **gender perspective** into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard noting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693) (UN, 2000: Preamble)

Expresses its willingness to incorporate a **gender perspective** into peacekeeping operations, and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component (UN, 2000: Clause 5)

Calls on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a **gender perspective**, including, inter alia:

(a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;

(b) Measures that support local women’s peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;

(c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary (UN, 2000: Clause 8)

Within UNSCR 1325 then a 'gender perspective' is linked to the specific activity of 'peacekeeping operations' twice and post conflict resolution once. In regards to Clause 5 - aside from stating that the need is 'urgent' - the definition of what constitutes a gender perspective is particularly vague, noting only that field operations should include a 'gender component' – what this 'component' consists of is not defined. In regards to post-conflict peace process and reconstruction, the gender perspective is more specific in detailing largely a consideration of protective measures for civilian women and girls that are '*in need*' (Shepherd, 2008a:87-88), of 'special' considerations as victims. UNSCR 1325's conceptualisation of a gender perspective is therefore broad enough to allow for interpretation of its purpose. However, Gibbings (2011) asserts that the term 'gender perspective' within the context of UNSCR 1325 has a very specific meaning:

“central to this gender perspective is to also take 'special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict and to consider their 'special needs' as women” (Gibbings, 2011: 528).

Yet, Nicole Detraz (2012) calls the definition of a gender perspective within UNSCR 1325 'limited'; stating that “the resolution calls on actors involved in peacekeeping to 'adopt a gender perspective', but it is not made clear how broad this gender perspective should be” (2012: 75). The definition and purpose of NATO's gender perspective is officially contained within Bi-SCD 40-1 (NATO, 2009; 2012) and reiterated throughout NATO documents and promotional material. The specific wording and purpose of NATO's gender perspective has been subject to revision. For example, in 2009 Bi-Strategic Command (BI-SCD) 40-1 defined a gender perspective as:

“Examining each issue from the point of view of men and women to identify any differences in their needs and priorities, as well as in their abilities or potential to promote peace and reconstruction” (NATO, 2009: A-1).

In the revised edition of this strategic command issued in 2012, the definition was broadened considerably:

“Integration of a gender perspective is a way of assessing gender-based differences of women and men reflected in their social roles and interactions, in the distribution of power and the access to resources. In ACO and ACT activities it is used synonymously within implementing the requests of UNSCR 1325, related resolutions as well as directives emanating from NATO. The aim of which is to take into consideration the particular situation and needs for men and women, as well as how the activities of NATO have different effects on them. More fundamentally, implementing a gender perspective is done by adapting action following a 'gender analysis' (Bi-SCD 40-1, 2012: 5).

In addition the 2012 revision of Bi-SCD 40-1 contained ‘Annex D’ which suggested a list of questions that should be considered when reporting the gender perspective and conducting a gender analysis in operations²⁹. Inherent in the 2009 versions is the homogenisation of men and women as distinct (and oppositional) categorisations; that men and women have distinct ‘points of view’ (a theme returned to in the following chapter). The 2012 revision is more nuanced stressing the ‘gender-based differences’ of women and men that are aligned to their social context. Yet, the 2012 revision also increasingly centralises the gender perspective as the key mechanism for NATO’s (military) engagement with UNSCR 1325 – its use becomes *synonymous* with wider UNSCR 1325 engagement. Whilst the definition of the gender perspective is broadened it also becomes highly specific in regards to its relationship with increased operational effectiveness. Bi-SCD 40-1 (2012) states simply within its introduction that the: “Gender perspective is a tool to increase operational effectiveness” (Bi-SCD 40-1, 2012: 3).

Presenting a gender perspective as a way to improve NATO’s own operational effectiveness was a central theme within the documents analysed. For example:

“United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) recognises the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations since it will contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security” (NATO, 2007: 7)

“In recognising the important and distinctive role that women can play in conflict resolution and peace settlement, NATO seeks to improve its effectiveness to contribute to its overall mission success” (NATO, 2010a: 9)

“Realising that gender dimensions are an important component of such efforts, this directive seeks to mainstream gender issues in all phases of NATO’s military activities, ensuring gender awareness throughout the chain of command; integrating gender dimensions in an operational context will be seen as a force multiplier” (NATO, 2009: 1.1)

“The integration of the gender perspective to all aspects of NATO operations therefore can provide a key element to operational effectiveness” (NATO, 2007: 11)

What becomes clear from the above accounts is that NATO’s development of a gender perspective is premised firstly upon the clause within UNSCR 1325 that promotes the gender perspective in an operational, peacekeeping context. It is also premised as a response to the Preamble and Clause 1 of UNSCR 1325 that states:

“Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace building, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion

of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution” (UN, 2000: Preamble)

“Urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict” (UN, 2000: Clause 1)

In this sense NATO’s gender perspective is framed as a response to the victimhood/exclusion problem identified above and within UNSCR 1325. As a mechanism to address these problems, the gender perspective can be posited as a way of both affording protection and increasing participation via a consideration of the different concerns and contributions of women and men within any given context. However, NATO’s conceptualisation of the gender perspectives as a tool for advancing operational effectiveness and as a force multiplier represents an approach that is distinct to the alliance. The gender perspective and (by synonymous association) UNSCR 1325, becomes a device through which NATO can advance its own organisational priorities and goals. By situating this ‘increased operational effectiveness’ in the narratives of NATO values, as a commitment to global peace and security and as a responsible member of the international community involved in ‘good gender governance’, this (re)orientation of the gender perspective becomes unproblematic and uncontroversial. Here UNSCR 1325 (and the gender perspective) it made to ‘fit’ with the pre-existing norms of the organisation, which in turn promotes a dual-agenda (Hearn, 2000; Benschop & Verdoo, 2006) of the mainstreaming process; thereby limiting the disruption that engaging with UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda bring.

In returning to the supplementary question posed by Carol Bacchi (2012): what effects are produced by this representation of the problem? The above has shown how NATO utilises the framing of the problem of victimhood and exclusion to (re)orientate and situate its engagement with UNSCR 1325 as a way of improving its own operational effectiveness. Yet, the effectiveness and the utility of the gender perspective was largely premised upon an essentialised understanding of women’s inclusion. It is to these essentialised conceptions of female agency that I now turn.

2.3 Essentialised Agency: Complementary, Holistic, Distinct

What the above details is that under the framework of Protection, Participation and Prevention and the narrative arc that establishes a rationale for the gender perspective as a way to increase operational effectiveness, NATO is positioned as both a protector of women and an organisation that can promote and facilitate women’s inclusion. Yet this inclusion is premised upon a particular understanding of essentialised female agency. Whilst I return to

the notion of the ‘silence of violent women’ in Chapter Eight (See also Sjoberg & Gentry, 2007), the inclusion of women into peace building, international security provision and as a way of advancing NATO’s operational effectiveness is based largely around an essentialised understanding of female agency as being peaceable. Specifically, female characteristics, skills and competencies are conceived of within the documents as complementary (to that of men), holistic and distinct. For example:

“Military operations in today’s world require a diversity of qualifications and resources to ensure that peace and security are achieved and maintained. The complementary skills of both male and female personnel are essential for the operational effectiveness of NATO operations, especially in light of the increasing complexity of civil-military interaction, public relations and intelligence gathering” (NATO, 2007: 11).

“In recognising the important and distinctive role that women play in conflict resolution and peace settlement, NATO seeks to improve its effectiveness to contribute to its overall mission success” (NCGP, 2010c: 9)

“Because of the importance of women in the military forces of the Alliance and the influence they can have in all stages of conflict or crisis, this directive seeks to more fully incorporate their perspectives to enhance the effectiveness of NATO-led operations and missions in order to ensure Alliance Success” (NATO, Bi-SCD 40-1, 2009: 1-1)

“The complementary skills of both male and female personnel are essential to the effectiveness of NATO operations, especially in light of the increasing complexity of civil-military interaction, public relations and intelligence gathering” (NATO: Bi-SCD 40-1 2009: 1-2)

Within the documents both civilian and military women are presented as having a distinctive roles and perspectives that are complementary to those of men, more attuned to listening and intelligence gathering (a theme returned to in Chapter 8). Nora, one of the participants describes these as ‘soft competencies’ (again, this is returned to in the following chapter). These specific skill sets become framed within the changing nature of armed conflict; as the security situation becomes more complex and diverse, so too should the pool of skills and resources that NATO should be able to draw upon to meet these challenges. The CWINF Guidance for NATO Gender Mainstreaming (NATO, 2007) and the Briefing on Women, Peace and Security (NATO, 2010d) situate these specific skills and competencies in the broadest possible terms. In its introduction, the CWINF Guidance states that:

“Since the end of the Cold War, the international security environment has become more complex, and modern armed forces are now required to perform diverse tasks. The focus has shifted from fighting high-intensity wars of national territorial defence to a wider spectrum of lower-intensity operations such as crisis

management, peace support and humanitarian operations abroad. Such diverse tasks demand diverse skills” (NATO, 2007: 7)

The Briefing contains an opening quote on its front page from NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen asking:

“Would a world in which women enjoyed rights equal to those of men be safer and stable? It is difficult to say, but ultimately a lasting peace in many of the world’s troubled areas may depend on the answer” (NATO, 2010d: 1)

This same question is posed in the opening of a series of online video clips and a DVD released by NATO to celebrate the tenth anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in October 2010 (See for example, NATO, 2010f) Within the same DVD a series of NATO defence ministers are interviewed, they too reiterate a notion of complementarity and distinct skill sets of men and women. The Spanish Defence Minister states that:

“In general, statistics say that women, we have a greater sensibility in peace building, peace maintaining, peace promoting – one of our best skills is our capacity of dialogue and consensus. There is no country that can waste fifty percent of intelligence and knowledge which is women” (NATO, 2010e: Time index 2:47)

Documentation and interviews such as this serve to communicate NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 within the alliance. In the same interview the Danish Defence Minister states that the ‘female approach to things’ is ‘holistic’ and conciliatory rather than confrontational (NATO, 2010e: Time Index 0:40). These statements reiterate an essentialised construction of female agency, offering a universalisation of particular ‘sensibilities’ that are unique to women. Whilst the Spanish minister does not state that men lack these ‘sensibilities’ she implies through her use of the term ‘greater’ that women, as a collective share a better understanding of these sensibilities towards peace building/maintaining/promoting than men. This construction epitomises the ‘women and peace orthodoxy’ – the belief in a universal characteristic that all women share (or are at least more attuned to), it is often implied that this essence is drawn from experience – a shared women’s experience – and that this experience makes them more peaceful than men.

Hilary Charlesworth (2008) identifies that although the idea that women are somehow ‘naturally peaceful’ has been strongly contested – feminist theorists have pointed out that it fixes sex with gender and presents a deterministic account of nature that does not fit with evidence that women can be at the frontline of conflict and violence (Sylvester 1987; Moser & Clark, 2005; Sjoberg & Gentry, 2007) – the linkage between women and peace is becoming ‘orthodoxy in international relations’ (Charlesworth, 2008: 349). This universalised understanding of female agency has long been critiqued within feminism. (Riley, 1998; Mohanty, 2003) The fact that a totalising narrative of female skills and

competencies is being advanced by a (predominantly white), western European and North American security alliance, to improve its operational effectiveness and provide a rationale for engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda is inherently problematic.

The documents situate NATO as wanting to facilitate only one, limited type of female agency, one that reinforces the ‘women and peace’ orthodoxy (Charlesworth, 2008). This is a highly problematic conceptualisation of both what women can bring to security provision and post conflict reconstruction, but also what their role and purpose is once inclusion has been established. A conceptualisation of women’s agency in these terms promotes unrealistic assumptions of what ‘women’ can achieve (leaving the role of men largely unexamined), or should be expected to achieve; they are transferred from simply victims to super-heroines (Cohn et al, 2004; Shepherd, 2011; Pratt & Richter-Devroe, 2011; see also Chapter 2.3) upon whose shoulders the ‘social fabric of conflict-torn societies can be reconstructed’ (NATO, 2007: 11). This reinforces a dichotomous conceptualisation of male and female roles in both war fighting and security provision and places a limit on both the perceptions of what women (and men) are ‘allowed’ to do. As Diane Otto states:

“If women are admitted on the understanding that their special contribution arises from their womanly instincts, it follows that their political agency will be limited to what is made possible by that representation and restricted to ‘feminised tasks’”(Otto, 2006: 139 in Charlesworth, 2008: 350)

These essentialised conceptions of male and female agency, skills, competencies and ‘views’ of security were reiterated within the accounts of the participants and are addressed within the following chapter. What the above shows is one way in which the ‘new’ norm of UNSCR 1325, of increased protection and participation is normalised by NATO (True, 2011). Specifically, how the representation of the gender perspective and NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 within the documents are (re)orientated to facilitate pre-existing organisational norms of operational effectiveness and force multiplication. This can be seen as a form of narrative entrapment. Situating UNSCR 1325, the gender perspective and by extension NATO’s operational effectiveness in a continuous repetition of NATO values that are aligned with international efforts at promoting ‘good gender governance’ - and framed within a broader context of a shifting, changing and complex post-Cold War security environment - these narratives frame NATO in such a way that its involvement with UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda is seen as an almost foregone conclusion; why wouldn’t NATO as a defender of liberty, human rights and democracy be involved in a process to protect and promote the place of women? The narratives that saturate NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 therefore promote a ‘naturalness’ and inevitability, a continuation of

‘business-as-usual’ rather than a fundamental or transformative change to organisational practices.

Conclusion

In returning to Carol Bacchi’s (2012) conceptual questions; NATO’s representation of the problem is framed around the conceptualisation of women’s victimhood and exclusion and the representation of the problem in this way has specific effects. Framing a response to this simultaneous problem based around protection and participation allows for NATO to orient itself as a provider of international security provision, as a good, responsible participant of an international regime of gender governance. It aligns acceptance and engagement with UNSCR 1325 with a perception of its own values in order to limit the disruption of these new policy considerations and to (re)orient the gender perspective as a tool to advance pre-existing goals and aims of operational effectiveness and force multiplication. NATO utilises the malleable definitions of the gender perspective outlined within UNSCR 1325, as well as the association of the gender perspective with peacekeeping operations within the text of UNSCR 1325 to centralise the gender perspective as a primary mechanism through which NATO engages with the Women, Peace and Security agenda. In turn the gender perspective becomes premised upon particular essentialised understandings of female agency that draw upon elements of the women and peace orthodoxy. Engagement and *acceptance* of UNSCR 1325 by NATO is therefore conditional and alignment with pre-existing organisational norms and aims serves to *limit and control* the disruption that such acceptance brings (a point returned to in Chapter 9, Section 1)

This presentation of NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the development of a gender perspective aligned within organisational goals of operational effectiveness and force multiplication serve to contextualise the following chapters. The participants’ accounts of their work on gender issues within NATO reiterate these understandings of both UNSCR 1325 broadly conceived and the role and purpose of the gender perspective. The chapters that follow detail their strategies to make this gender perspective relevant interesting and palatable to NATO’s organisational norms and structures; in doing so, the genderedness of NATO’s military structures is exposed.

Chapter Six

Making Masculinity Visible: Personal Experiences, Military Contexts

My personal view is that there are too many men here, they don't see the problem

(Celine, NATO HQ, 2012)

You need to see life with your gender glasses and once you believe and you see things through your gender glasses you don't even need to think, it is just something that you have in your brain and you behave in this way, it is really very easy...it is difficult for men, for my colleagues, it is very difficult, they don't believe this...I don't know why men don't believe in this, because like I told you it is very rewarding

(Ben, NATO HQ, 2012)

Introduction

The following three chapters provide an analysis of the six in-depth interviews I conducted with NATO personnel from May to November 2012. The previous chapter demonstrated the way in which gender as a concept was linked to notions of operational effectiveness and force multiplication, how gendered assumptions and expectations were (re)constructed within the various documents produced and disseminated by NATO. What these empirical chapters show is how this process occurs at the individual, every-day level as participants work to develop effective strategies to make gender relevant to the organisation from *within* the strict gender order in which they find themselves.

In this chapter I analyse the ways in which individuals involved in developing a gender perspective at NATO articulated understandings of gender and security through narratives of personal and professional experiences. Within the interviews participants described often highly essentialised categories of 'men' and 'women' when providing vivid examples of highly gendered micro-organisational practices as a way of locating themselves and their work. The key argument advanced in this chapter is that as the detailed, personal accounts of the participants were often constructed in relation/opposition to a perceived (homogenised) 'maleness' of NATO, they expose the hegemonic masculine norms of the organisation, as experienced by the participants; thereby highlighting the context within which the gender perspective is formed. In addition, this chapter addresses the ways in which subjective understandings of 'gender', 'gender mainstreaming' and 'UNSCR 1325' are formed/positioned within this context.

The chapter will be organised as follows. Firstly, section one details how the 'maleness' of NATO (and national military institutions) is conceived of and articulated by the participants. The construction of particular 'male norms of behaviour' within a military context and how

these are ‘lived’ by the participants are explored. Section two addresses the gendered ways in which the participants articulate ‘security’. Particular attention is placed on how the participants establish (highly essentialised) ‘male’ and ‘female’ ways of viewing security – reinforcing the notion of difference and complementarity between the sexes that was evident in the documents. Section three explores the ways these essentialised ‘ways of seeing’ security serve to reinforce a link between a ‘female perspective’, operational effectiveness and force multiplication. Section four, addresses the variation within masculinities by focusing on the two male participants encounters with hegemonic masculine norms within NATO. Finally, section five analyses how militarised masculinities, the male norms of the organisation and the dominance of men within the NATO structure more generally, are represented by the participants as a problem or a challenge for the participant’s work. This framing of hegemonic masculinity as ‘resistance/reluctance’ to be overcome or accommodated, informs the strategies developed by the participants to make gender relevant to the NATO structure. This point will be further developed in the following chapter.

1. “There Are Too Many Men Here”: Framing NATO as a ‘Male Space’

One of the dominant themes that emerged across the interviews was how the participants spoke of, and conceptualised, NATO as a ‘male organisation’. This was articulated in various ways; however all reinforced the notion that the organisational structure of NATO was dominated by men, men’s bodies and male perspectives. The accounts of the participants of both their personal and professional experiences were framed by this context. They located and spoke about themselves as ‘women’ or as ‘men’ within and in relation/opposition to this ‘male space’. The analysis contained within the following sections centres on what Lazar (2005) calls ‘gender relationality’. I focus on how the participants describe ‘ways of doing and being’ a man or woman in this particular ‘community of practice’ (Ibid: 11) – in this case the military generally, and NATO specifically. The concern therefore is not with these women or men in isolation, but the way in which they talk about and construct their own and others masculinity and femininity in relation to this perception of male dominance.

The following sections show how the ways in which the participants conceptualise NATO as a male dominated space, provides the context within which strategies to develop a relevant and palatable gender perspective are devised and implemented by the participants (Chapter 7).

1.1 “Assimilate, Adapt or Quit”: Articulating Male Norms

The understanding of NATO as an organisation dominated by men and ‘male views’ was discussed in varying, yet quite explicit statements by the participants. For the female participants, this was largely based around the *number* of men in the organisation and their own numerical minority in relation to this. One of the first questions I asked the participants about UNSCR 1325 was why it had taken NATO seven years to engage with and begin to formulate policy that incorporated the resolution. Celine replied:

“My personal view is that there are too many men here, they don’t see the problem”

In her answer to the same question Grace stated that:

“Because, without wishing to sound sexist, most of the men in the military will not think about it, they won’t think of 1325”

For Nora:

“It was because they [men] didn’t find it relevant, it was female stuff”

Grace and Celine’s responses are interesting in that they both articulate the numerical dominance of men within the organisation – ‘too many’ and ‘most men’ – yet this is linked to a particular way of ‘seeing’ and ‘thinking’ about UNSCR 1325, it was not ‘relevant’ to them. Grace, Celine’s and Nora’s accounts therefore not only perceive NATO as dominated by men, but that ‘men’ (and men in large numbers) did not conceptualise UNSCR 1325 (and by extension ‘gender issues’) as a serious concern. For Grace and Celine, it was not that this was a conscious decision to actively dismiss UNSCR 1325, it was that it didn’t register as something that was important (hence the seven year gap between UNSCR 1325’s passage in 2000 and the NATO/EPAC engagement in 2007). A particular male way of ‘viewing and ‘seeing’ security is returned to in Section 2, below. I mention it here as it shows how conceptualisation of NATO as a ‘male organisation’ is not limited to the physical occupation of the structure by men and male bodies, this dominance has - in the view of the participants – very real effects on perceptions of security and implications for policy.

One of the opening, more generic, questions that I asked participants was how and why they had come to work in their current position, and if they had an interest in ‘gender issues’ before taking on their current role. In response to this question the participants drew largely upon their own experiences within national armed forces. For Celine, Grace and Nora in particular these experiences were framed specifically in regards to them being women, occupying a minority role within their respective militaries. They used these national military experiences to articulate to me the challenges of working on gender issues within

NATO more broadly. Central to these experiences was the understanding that women generally had to adapt to male norms and behaviours in order to succeed.

For example, Celine spoke about suffering harassment and bullying within her national armed forces in the early years of her career and articulated a process of adaptation that women had to go through:

“I’m convinced [the harassment] is not always intentional. Something like, OK, you are not like we are so you are not part of the group, but as I said, that is mostly at the beginning because to be accepted in the group you adapt yourself and then in the years that follow, the men get used to you, to the way you work and the way you think. So its leverage from both parts, the woman adapts herself and the man gets used to it.”

Here Celine draws out an interesting distinction, by stating that that the harassment is not always intentional she alludes to organisational, collective behaviours and norms by ‘the group’, rather than individual behaviour. It is women collectively that are set apart from the dominant group, although this exclusion is experienced by individual women. Celine states that women adapt themselves to the dominant group behaviour and consequently, the men get used to them. Interestingly, Celine sees this process of acceptance (or accommodation) taking ‘years’. For Celine, this process was articulated as leverage from both parts. However, it is unclear where the leverage comes from the men, they simply ‘get used’ to a more masculinised female presence, it is the women that do the work of adaption. Celine also contextualised this adaption as part of the wider societal experience of women:

“It is not just in the armed forces, it is the same thing in politics, in economics, female CEOs in the beginning she has the same problems and there are two ways, you quit or you progress and you adapt”

Here, Celine is careful to make the point that the armed forces are not unique in this respect. Thereby, whilst not excusing the armed forces, and the harassment that experienced, she renders it relatable to a wider pattern of the experiences of women.

In the face of this male dominance, Celine identifies only two legitimate courses of action – adaptation or resignation. Interestingly, adaption is framed as progress – for women to move forward, to succeed they must adapt. Celine is identifying the highly restrictive options available for women within the armed forces, and implies reluctance (or perhaps an inability) to challenge the existing organisational structures within which men dominate. This is an important point when considering the way in which participants approach integrating a gender perspective into the organisation (as will be shown in Chapter 7). Participants often acknowledged the difficulties and resistance of elements of the organisation, but looked to develop strategies that accommodate rather than challenge them.

The pervasiveness of male norms and behaviour and the need for women to adapt to them was expressed in detail by Grace, in a very personal response to her interest in gender issues:

“I look back at when I joined the military and I am slightly ashamed of myself, because when I joined I did just want to be one of the boys and I was a tom-boy before I joined the military...But as the years have gone on, I’ve started to, probably from about thirty, when you are in a regiment you are responsible for soldiers and I was frequently the only female in charge of men. I was really lucky that I could run faster than most of these boys and so I had a lot of respect from the men because I was fit. And I think that, I hope that they respected me because I had leadership and I looked after them, but now I sit behind a computer and I have no way of proving my...I can’t demonstrate my ability to match them in physical tests and I probably couldn’t. And also, sorry, so I was very much an assimilator, I wanted to be, and I would look at girls and I thought, if they were unfit or you know, I just used to think, oh yeah, you know she’s a girl in the army, why on earth did she join?

But I did also think that about male soldiers as well. But unfortunately I think I did, I sort of abused my physical condition and said to soldiers, you know, you’d better keep up with me, because it just looks bad that you are letting a female beat you, but it wasn’t at all. And that is a really, I’m ashamed that I have used that and I know that other men have used me to get more out of their men and looking back I just think that was completely wrong. It was as if she should be weaker than you, you have to be stronger than her... but then as I got older and started to witness a bit of sexism, either people coming to me with sexist, you know, this has happened to me, or indeed things actually happened to me which weren’t very professional, I just started to think, you know this is ridiculous”.

In describing herself as an ‘assimilator’ Grace details the desire to fit into and adapt to the dominant organisational and cultural norms that pervade the military – expressed by her physical strengths and abilities. Her account shows how women and perceptions of femininity are used within a military context to construct and position dominant forms of masculinity. The gendered role of physical fitness and its fusion with soldiering has been outlined in Chapter 3, Section 2.2.1 (and is addressed in relation to gender equality policies in the US armed forces by Cohn, 2000).

Interestingly, Grace doesn’t categorise the manipulation of her femininity (by herself and by others) to get more out of the male soldiers as explicitly sexist – ‘sexism’ is bracketed off as separate events - and yet twice acknowledges shame that she participated in such behaviour herself, particularly (but not exclusively) in relation to female colleagues. Grace acknowledges that she drew upon and framed ‘weaker’ women negatively. In her account, her physical fitness allowed her to adapt to masculine expectations around performance and gain respect within the armed forces. However, her physical superiority to ‘many of the boys’ was framed and enacted in relation to the perceived weakness of femininity generally. This perception was actively and strategically used by Grace and her male colleagues in order to shame less physically able men; resulting, upon reflection, in feelings of shame in

Grace herself. The desire to adapt, assimilate and to excel in spite of being a woman, particularly early on in her career was paramount.

The importance of adapting and not appearing weak in front of the men was reiterated by Anna. In discussing why some women were reluctant to embrace the concept of a gender perspective (a notion returned to in Chapter 7) she declared that:

“We are still in a male environment and we don’t want to be seen as kind of weak, you want to be seen as being equal as the male comrades”

Anna identifies that despite the presence of women within the armed forces, at many levels and over an extended period of years the military and its structures remain a male environment where equality with men is precarious and dependent upon a show (of particular understandings) of strength and the adaption and assimilation that Grace and Celine identify above. This point was furthered by Mike when discussing the position of women within the military more generally:

“Uh, I well, actually the military is a little bit backwards in this. And the reason it is, is because even where you have women in the military, uh, they tend to have, to use a metaphor, they’ve put on pants and feel they’re in a man’s world, then they have to take on the mind set of men and how they do things. And so because of their role and how they view themselves in that role and how they want to be viewed in that role they have to take on the same priorities”

Mike identifies that successful assimilation is dependent upon perceptions, the women ‘feel’ that they are in a man’s world and view acceptable conduct accordingly (this is an interesting conceptualisation, the women *feel* rather than actually *are* in a man’s world). Of importance here is how the women perceive themselves and how they are perceived by their male colleagues. In order to assimilate they adopt a male mind-set and a masculine way of doing things, they ‘put on pants’ and think like a man rather than wear a dress and continue to think like a woman.

What these accounts demonstrate is the need for women to assimilate into pre-existing structures; however they nevertheless remain different from the overwhelmingly male bodies that occupy military organisations. Their physiology - and physicality - continues to set them apart even when parity is achieved in areas such as physical fitness, or a male mind-set is adopted. In this sense assimilation or adaption can only go so far.

This notion of the physical presence and physical difference of women was drawn upon by Nora. In her view the physiological difference of women underscores women’s difference from men, and amplifies the minority position that they occupy within the armed forces:

“In general if they hear someone talk about sexual violence, they say ‘oh scary, we don’t know what to do with that’. Not because they don’t want to deal with it, but because they haven’t done it before, it is quite new, and still this female thing is a little scary because they are after all men, you know what I mean? Let me take an example I was on military exercises a colleague and I were talking about things like this and she said: ‘men have a problem handling things like this, everything that has to do with females, sexual things’. And you can make a very easy comparison, if you are on the exercises and if the female officer says: ‘oh I have my period, I have to go behind the trees’ the men are like: ‘oh just stay away from me’. I mean they have a problem with that, so how difficult is it to talk about sexual violence in war? Do you see the problem? It is something that they are not used to dealing with, you know its female stuff – not because they don’t want to deal with it, but because they don’t fully understand it and they don’t know what to do”

For Nora the fact these men have difficulty in dealing with the menstruation of their female colleagues highlights the difficulty in their addressing sexual violence in war, as this is also something that happens (predominantly) to females, to women’s bodies. Here the difference between men and women, physically, becomes a way in which Nora attempts to understand and articulate the difficulty these men have in understanding and conceptualising security in terms of sexual violence, a point returned to below. It also draws into sharp focus the minority position that these women (and their bodies) occupy within the military, however much they have adopted male norms and assimilated into the organisation they remain different; their bodies set them apart.

The accounts of the participants constructed a distinct binary – both gendered and biological - between men and women within the armed forces, with men and masculinity occupying the dominant position. The participants placed ‘women’ (and in the case of the female participants located themselves) collectively, as different from and in opposition to the dominant male norms that pervade military culture and organisational structures, in spite of conscious efforts to assimilate and adapt themselves. The participants understanding of masculinity and femininity - and of being a man or a woman within the armed forces - is also bound up with notions of respect, strength, performance and harassment, shame, and sexism.

The construction and acknowledgement of these differences are important as they informed and contextualised the way in which the participants went on to talk about male and female perceptions of security and the role that a gender perspective could play in addressing this difference. It is to the different ways of viewing and doing security described by the participants that I now turn.

2. Viewing War & Security ‘Differently’

One of the recurring themes when talking to Nora, Grace, Celine and Anna, was that men, more specifically military men, viewed security ‘differently’ from women. As in the above accounts ‘men’ were often homogenised as a collective, their associated characteristics and qualities essentialised and conditioned by a position of dominance within the armed forces and within NATO.

For these women, the dominance of men and ‘male views’ resulted in NATO understanding security in a specific way. In relation to this the women often spoke of a female view point; one that was in turn homogenised, presented as a collective understanding and constructed in opposition to the dominant understanding of ‘how men viewed security’. The following accounts highlight how the female participants articulated the ‘male’ and ‘female’ view of security by drawing upon their personal experiences of working within both their national armed forces and within the NATO.

For Celine despite the presence of women, NATO remained a “male organisation” and as a result there was a distinct “male point of view” that influenced understandings of war and security. In her conceptualisation the male understanding of war and security had traditionally neglected women’s views and experiences. This was based around a separation of war and security into different public and private spheres:

“There is a saying, men die on the street and women die inside their houses. Now if you as a security force, if you as a man, want to work on security you make sure the street is safe, meaning that the men are safe. But women still die inside their houses”

Here, Celine draws attention to the spaces in which violence (and security) is experienced. For her, military men are concerned with making the street safe, making the men (of the armed forces) safe. The security of the private space, of the home is not considered. It is a conceptualisation that privileges a traditional understanding of where violence takes place – the street, the public realm – and what violence is (enacted by and on other, men). Violence within the home, a location – in Celine’s understanding - as occupied by women, remains unacknowledged. Within the wider context of this quote Celine was making the point that warfare affects an entire community and that in her view male understandings of war and security fail to take these considerations into account. For Celine the inclusion of women and ‘women’s understandings’ of security (generally, and via engagement with UNSCR 1325 and a gender perspective) challenges this traditional understanding:

“I’ve been working for thirty years in the armed forces and I have experienced that women and men are not the same, our views have a different quality...it’s not just skills, it is also insights and ideas, the way of looking at things...If nobody tells

them [military men] that women die inside the house, they will never see it as a problem”

Within this account women’s inclusion in the armed forces, bring not only different skills to men, but also different insights, women will look at the security situation and define other women dying inside their houses as a problem; women, understand security differently. This point of view was also expressed by Grace. When asked if she thought men and women viewed security differently she replied without hesitation, “absolutely”:

“I think that females are much better at understanding what the UN has called human security, we, I think are more likely to think when we go into a village within the military, to think, who are the people who aren’t holding the rifle towards us, let’s think about the people on the other side of the compound that we can’t meet, because they are going to be affected by what we do”

“We just think of things differently, not all of us obviously, just some, and some men are able to get it, but in the military the men are more focused on security, they view the security as the enemy side of it. Who is laying the IEDs? Who is it that is making it? What is the network? They are not that bothered about females and children because they don’t think that they can influence the people that are attacking you”

Like Celine, Grace expresses a notion of difference. She alludes to a more holistic approach, talking to non-combatants, acknowledging the impact of war on those outside of the military compound defined loosely as ‘human security’. For Grace, men define security in relation to the enemy. In some ways this is similar to Celine’s public/private division of understandings of security. For the military men in the above account, securing (the street, the public space) from the enemy’s Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) is prioritised. Women and non-combatants occupy a (private) sphere, where they have no influence, therefore they are not considered by military men to be of importance. However, Grace argues that women will consider this space and these individuals as women inherently ‘think differently’.

Grace also draws attention to a difference in the way power is understood in areas of conflict. For military men, power is understood in relation to the enemy, warfare is centred on engaging the ‘enemy’, their use of IEDs and the ‘networks’ that supply them. Power is defined within the context of men fighting other men. Civilian women are not understood to have power in this scenario – they cannot influence the security environment because they cannot influence the enemy. For Grace, this was problematic and women’s presence within the armed forces highlighted the need to engage with civilian women and reconceptualise where power lay within particular communities. For Grace, women’s understandings of security, and their difference from those of men, made this visible.

Nora also spoke about this traditional conception of security and understandings of power. She suggests that for the military, civilian women can be seen as a cultural and not a security issue:

“I think military operations are a male focus, for them females are a cultural focus, something to do with the population, oh we have women there you know, so yeah [for them] it’s cultural”

Here, associating women with culture, with ‘something to do with the population’ places them in a sphere of reduced influence and importance, as somehow removed from the male focus on ‘operations’, furthering Celine’s public/private division in the understandings of war and security.

Understanding war and security from different male/female perspectives was a central theme in the way Anna spoke about her experiences too. Whilst overall she was more cautious in expressing ‘differences in thinking’ between military men and women – in a way that, for example, Celine and Grace were not – she identifies that civilian men and women do have differences in their experiences of conflict:

“Overall I think there is a difference [between men and women]...like for instance if you talk about conflict, then for men safety after the conflict means no more fighting, but for women it can mean more freedom of movement or better access to resources...things like that”

Anna acknowledges the different impact that war has upon men and women. Like Grace and Celine, she also identifies that there is a ‘male perspective’ that dominates within the armed forces, and that this perspective may not automatically take into account the different needs of men and women within areas of conflict:

“I think that it is not necessarily that they [military commanders] see security from a different perspective, but I think I help them to make sure that they see the different security needs that the people have out there...like for instance, we have a road block issue a couple of months ago and I made sure that they see how their plans affect the women...there are mainly men at the road blocks and so soldiers mainly talk to men, which means that they only get the male perspective, they don’t see the female perspective”

Anna identifies the tendency for a ‘male perspective’ – in this case male soldiers speaking to male civilians – to exclude or neglect women. Whilst Anna was keen to point out that she did not necessarily see this as the male commanders having a different perspective on security from her in general terms (i.e. the overall security goals of NATO as an organisation) – she does highlight that there is a need to draw attention to the ‘female perspective’. She implies within her account that one particular view dominates – the male view and male security needs are privileged. Again like Grace and Celine, Anna’s female perspective, her presence draws attention to these women – Anna helps the (male) military

commanders ‘see security differently’; to address concerns of civilian women that would otherwise be neglected.

What these accounts highlight is that in the views of Nora, Grace, Celine and Anna, the ‘male view’ of security within the armed forces, and within NATO has traditionally ignored or misunderstood the role of civilian women in conflict. Celine, Grace and Anna imply that women’s presence within the military highlights these neglected areas within male understandings of security. In this sense there are particular (essentialised) conceptions of ‘female’ and ‘male’ perspectives that are being constructed.

It is also important to note here that these (white, western) military women are also providing a commentary on how (predominantly white, western) military men view (or do not view), non-western civilian women. Whilst their accounts homogenises a ‘male perspective of security’ they also reinforce a ‘female collectivity’ between themselves and civilian women. What is implicit is that the incorporation of a (western, military) female perspective will improve, or render visible a (non-western, civilian) female experience of war and security. This constructs a particularly reductive understanding of the complexity of women (and men’s) experience of warfare, whilst reinforcing a power asymmetry between western military women and non-western civilian women.

The views of the participants, expressed above, reveal how undoubtedly complex gender relationships between men and women within NATO and between civilian men and women became reduced and highly essentialised. A binary was established that placed the ‘male’ view of security and ‘female’ view in opposition to one another, with an implicit complementarity between the two perspectives.

This essentialism was qualified by two of the participants. Anna for example was reluctant to draw out specific differences in the way the military command viewed security in general terms – implying similarities in terms of a *security* perspective, but difference in where that should be focused. The implication in Anna’s accounts (as are addressed further in Chapter 7) is that NATO’s organisational aims and objectives constitute the ‘view of security’ – the gender (or female) perspective compliments and contributes to this overall view.

Grace explicitly qualified her accounts on several occasions stating that she did not want to seem ‘sexist’ or ‘essentialist’ when talking about men. For example, when describing the difference between the way men and women viewed security she stated:

“This makes me sound horribly essentialist, but I just think that we think of things differently”

Here, Grace acknowledges that she is essentialising ‘women’ (we) and the ‘female perspective’ (think of things differently), but what it reveals is a construction of femininity in relation to the dominance of men and masculinity within the system within which she works. She furthers this conceptualisation by describing what she sees as a specific type of military man:

“men that join the military are not the same sort of men that would join the peace corp. or would be involved in humanitarian operations...it is very sexist of me to say this but I think there is a specific type of man that is drawn to the armed forces”

So, for Grace it is not just that women within the military think of things differently to men in general terms, it is that they think of things differently to a specific type of *military* men. Grace does not state what characteristics the men drawn to the military have, but she does construct a particular type of masculinity in relation to other men. The implication is that men involved in the peace corps of humanitarian operations have a view of security more closely aligned with the feminine (less aggressive, peaceful and conciliatory). This is interesting as in her essentialising and homogenising of a female perspective, she acknowledges variation and heterogeneity within the category men broadly. The same qualification is not made of ‘women’; she does not imply that a ‘particular type’ of woman is drawn to the military.

Whilst highly essentialised views of men and women were offered within these accounts and throughout the interviews, Celine, Nora, Grace and Anna’s understandings have been shaped in relation to the dominance of particular forms of military masculinity that their national armed forces and NATO continue to produce, reinforce and privilege. As a minority group within an institution of hegemonic militarised masculinity, it is perhaps not surprising that women’s experiences and accounts become essentialised as the ‘female perspective’. At one level they simply do not reflect or fit within, the dominant masculine norms of the institution.

What the above accounts provide is the broader context within which the participants view and engage with UNSCR 1325 and within which the gender perspective is developed. For the female participants this process is therefore conditioned and influenced by these explicit understandings of difference with and a deficiency within the ‘male perspective’ of security that pervades NATO. The following section explores this articulation of deficiency and the complementarity of the ‘female perspective’ to NATO operations.

3. Linking the ‘Female Perspective’ to ‘Female Competencies’

What the accounts above expose is that masculinity and male perspectives – as viewed by the participants – set the ‘norm for appropriate conduct’ (Kronsell, 2005: 282-284) and

condition the context within which the participants work. The personal and professional experiences of the participants - offered in relation to questions about their general interest in gender issues - serve to 'make visible' certain 'norms of hegemonic masculinity embedded within military institutions' (Kronsell: 2012: 43). For all of the participants interviewed (both male and female), women's participation, and particularly women's views of security were necessary to highlight perceived deficiencies in traditional, masculine understandings of and approaches to security. This was perhaps most apparent when discussing the war in Afghanistan. Throughout her interview Nora talked of Afghanistan as a particular challenge to NATO:

"NATO didn't plan for ten years, so that means that they didn't succeed as expected in the beginning"

"I think that's the big lesson in Afghanistan, you can't do it all alone, you need to be innovative...we [NATO] never had a war like that"

"I think they [the men, military planners], NATO have struggled in Afghanistan...they saw that weapons were not enough"

However, she framed this challenge as a particular opportunity for 'gender issues' and for NATO to utilise female skills. In articulating how the Military Committee of NATO was becoming more 'gender aware' Nora stated that:

"I think it is because they have struggled in Afghanistan, they see they need something more and then this word gender it is flowing around, you know, gender here and gender there"

The female competencies that Nora identified included what she described as 'soft and hard-to-define things'. Interestingly, she seemed to find it hard to articulate what exactly these 'soft' competencies were, only that they were something other than brute physical force, which was, for Nora a male domain:

"Well, we want to take the challenge to find out what NATO can do, actually do, how are they going to meet sexual violence in war and in conflict when they are there? What is the plan? They would say: 'oh, that's a good idea we didn't think of that, we don't, we get a little helpless'. You know everybody has let's say a level of incompetence, everywhere this is female competence, you know what I mean? These are our things. Men go and build a bridge and carry heavy things, you know [Grrr] especially if they can carry very heavy things, you know. These soft and not defined things it is difficult for them. But as I say it is not because they don't want, I think many want to but they get this feeling of ah (!) [gasps] 'I don't know what to do'"

For Nora, the collective 'they' (military men) struggled to engage with these softer competencies, not for want of trying, but for lack of experience. Traditional understandings of war fighting and security provision did not privilege these skills and so therefore men did not develop them. What the 'struggle' in Afghanistan did, in the accounts of these women

was to highlight the need for these soft, female, competencies – the need for a ‘female perspective’ - as Grace articulates:

“I think that it was because NATO was involved in Afghanistan [for so long], I think that being involved in counter insurgency has made them see the value of their females”

“I’ve noticed that these female engagement teams that the American’s use, the men would go up and talk to women and tell them things...I think that the intelligence corp. have realised that there is this difference between men and women and that women in some sort of intelligence role, might have more to gain, in Afghanistan they can talk to women and men”

As has been shown in Chapter 5, prioritising particular aspects of (essentialised) femininity and a reductive understanding of what the ‘female perspective’ can bring to NATO operations is beginning to be taken up by NATO at a policy and doctrine level as well as in the training and education received by NATO soldiers. For example in a position paper outlining why it makes ‘sense’ for NATO to adopt a ‘gender perspective’, the Civil-Military Co-operation Centre for Excellence states that:

For centuries, the army has been a male dominated organisation with a male culture. Competences such as being physically strong, mentally tough and decisive are selection criteria that are highly appreciated. Yet, the role of the armed forces has changed and other essential, more feminine, competences, such as close listening, mental endurance and empathising are now required (2008: 5)

The understanding of specific skills associated with men and women is enshrined in NATO doctrine:

The experiences and skills of both men and women are essential to the success of NATO operations. Today's conflicts often require a Comprehensive Approach in terms of more tactful public relations, better and more extensive situational awareness, information operations, information gathering and intelligence production. Women in NATO-led forces can be an asset and an enabler, especially in activities of engagement with the local population (NATO, Bi-SC Directive 40-1, 2012: 11)

Within these accounts and policy documents specific skills, traits and characteristics become associated with the ‘female perspective’ – these were usually listening skills, communication, compromise – in Nora’s words the ‘soft, hard to define things’ – that the ‘male perspective’ lacked. What was suggested by the participants was that the changing nature of warfare – exemplified by the extended, protracted conflict in Afghanistan - highlighted to the military command that traditional understandings of war fighting and security provision were insufficient. The ‘value’ of the ‘female perspective’ (again as something distinct and ‘other’) was therefore seen by NATO.

What these accounts show is that perceptions of male and female understandings of security were collectivised and highly essentialised by the participants. Specific characteristics and

skills became attached to these perspectives. Listening, compromise, *soft* competencies were constructed in relation to the ‘hard’ competencies including the physical strength of men. When understood relationally, this perception of binary skills and perspectives, articulated by the participants, furthers an understanding of NATO (and NATO strategy) as a predominantly ‘male space’. The ‘female skills and competencies’ are framed by the participants as additions to a dominant approach that is not working or deficient in particular ways.

4. Men ‘Doing Gender’ at NATO

The accounts above highlight how the female participants positioned themselves and their views of security in relation to the physical dominance of men at NATO and the dominant male norms of the institution, more generally. They demonstrate how masculinity and femininity within the organisation becomes essentialised. Whilst overall ‘men’ and ‘masculinity’ were homogenised by the participants, differences within the categorisation ‘men’ were acknowledged to varying degrees. This was usually framed by describing the minority of men who understood or ‘got’ the importance of a gender perspective in relation to the vast majority who did not. In the following account Grace describes encountering a man ‘doing something’ on gender:

“I had to write a paper and I sent it to a guy who is doing peace support operations doctrine and I said look, you’ve got to include this in it. But credit to this man, he’s already done something on 1325, I was amazed, he was ahead of the game”

For Grace, this man represented enough of an exception to the rule that she describes ‘amazement’. However, it is interesting to note that this man was working in ‘peace support operations’, so in relation to Grace’s conception of ‘particular types’ of men being drawn to the military, expressed above, perhaps it was not so much of a surprise.

Described as ‘some men’ or ‘one guy’, these men, who were interested in gender issues did not represent the norm. Within this section I outline some of experiences, predominantly of Ben, and to a lesser extent of Mike - the two male participants in the study. The presence of these men working on gender issues challenges the notion of a *unified* resistance or reluctance to engage with UNSCR 1325 within NATO. However, as has already been identified work on gender issues within NATO is predominantly, though not exclusively, done by women. The executive committee of the NCGP is made up of female officers, indeed it is the only committee within NATO to be chaired by a woman. Many of the gender advisors and gender focal points are women, though not exclusively so. In this respect Ben and Mike occupy a distinct position within NATO. They are men, working in predominantly female occupied job roles in an organisation dominated by men. What the following accounts show is that by choosing to occupy this position, to work within this area, Ben and

Mike have exposed themselves and their masculinity to challenges from ‘other men’ (and women) within the organisation.

4.1. ‘Genderman’: Trivialisation & Feminisation

In discussing the challenges that he faced in his job role, Ben described how his involvement with ‘gender issues’ and his job in promoting the merits of gender mainstreaming met with resistance from male colleagues within the organisation:

“...but other people are not convinced [of the merits of gender mainstreaming] even my colleagues make a lot of jokes about me, you are ‘genderman’, have you shaved your legs? These are jokes but sometimes, inside their brains, inside them there is some kind of truth. They don’t believe in this. Now seeing a man in this office, I think they will open their eyes a little bit more”

Here Ben’s colleagues seek to feminise him individually and by extension identify gender mainstreaming as a feminine practice. They use humour to both link gender mainstreaming with (a culturally specific) feminine practice – the shaving of legs – reinforcing an implicit and persistent conflation of gender with women, whilst simultaneously separating Ben out as something other than truly masculine. Women shave their legs, men do not; gender is a woman’s concern, not a man’s. In this example, through working on gender issues, by addressing and highlighting the merits of gender mainstreaming to other men within the organisation, Ben’s masculinity is called into question. He is seen to be deviating from an appropriately masculine job role - and therefore occupies a subordinate position - within NATO’s highly masculinised gender order.

Jeff Hearn has argued that this ‘trivialisation through humour’ is one of myriad social and psychological resources that military organisations provide for the reproduction and changing of individual psychologies (in Higate, 2003: xiii) in order to construct an idealised, militarised masculinity. This is an example of the ‘social practice’ of producing conformity and uniformity within military men (Chapter 2, Section 2.1 and Chapter 3, Section 2.2.1). These process begin in basic training and seeks to create what Cynthia Enloe has deemed an ‘ideology of manliness’ (Enloe 2000 in Whitworth 2007:16) that privileges amongst other things, toughness, aggression and heterosexuality. This process also seeks to expel non-conforming men (Kovitz 2003) and to exorcise the ‘feminine other’ (Whitworth in Parpart & Zalewski 2008:121) from those that remain. Trivialisation such as this also serves to fuse particular constructions of (heterosexual) masculinity with soldiering, warfighting and violence (Duncanson, 2013). Ben’s experience, detailed above, can be seen as a very particular manifestation of this process.

In one respect, by actively choosing to work in a role deemed ‘feminine’ by his male colleagues Ben has ‘feminised his masculinity’ relegating it to a subordinate position

(Connell, 1995). Lazar (2005) suggests that these sort of 'gender crossings' – the transgression of expected gender norms - in this case a military man working on gender issues, emphasises the underlying dualism of the gender structure. Deviations from these gender-appropriate norms are often policed through criticism and containment (Lazar, 2005: 8-9). Ben's experience can be viewed as a micro-level example of how NATO's gender order is policed and controlled in the face of the transgression that Ben embodies. It is an extension of organisational practise which seeks to expel, or to police the 'other' which is something all soldiers are expected to do in order to replace uncertainty with a hegemonic representation of idealised norms of masculinity (Whitworth in Parpart & Zalewski 2008: 121). It can be seen as a continuation of what Marcia Kovitz (2003) describes as the painstaking efforts expended by militaries to construct uniformity through social practice.

This trivialisation was not only directed at non-conforming men. I have already indicated earlier in this chapter, when discussing the assimilation of women into the military, Anna identified the reluctance for female soldiers to become involved in gender issues for fear of appearing weak and emphasising difference within their male colleagues. It is worth reiterating Anna's response to my questioning here:

MH: OK, so in terms of female soldiers being resistant to getting involved – why do you think that is?

Anna: "I would say not all of them, not all of them are like that but I have seen some of them who are quite reluctant. I think it is because basically, we are still in a male environment and we don't want to be seen as kind of weak, you want to be seen as being equal as the male comrades. And if they would deal with women's issues then some people might make fun of them"

Like Ben's experience Anna expresses the threat of being trivialised as motivation for not becoming involved. The female soldiers have worked hard to assimilate and adapt themselves to the male norms of the organisation and are reluctant to become associated with a concept that would associate themselves with weakness or position themselves as different from their male colleagues.

4.1.1. Visibility and Isolation

Ben was also acutely aware that he is working in a field dominated by women and identified a feeling of visibility and isolation:

"We try to find believers [in gender mainstreaming] and you find believers everywhere, they don't need to be women, most of them are women. I can tell you, unfortunately, because I feel really alone in this world. I feel the same as when women joined the armed forces and they were just one or two and it is really hard, I can tell you, it is really hard you have to behave because they are watching you...they are watching you, they are paying attention to what you do because you

are, let's say an alien in their world. But they tend to think and it's true, you find women [alone] they will never succeed, they need more men to get involved and spread the message”

Ben's work therefore positions him in relation to these women as well as the 'other men' that seek to trivialise his work. In finding himself in a minority position, in relation to both groups, he expresses a form of empathy with women in the military. Also, in acknowledging that the women who dominate work on gender issues are aware of him and are watching how he works and operates, he highlights a mutual suspicion based upon strong feelings of being out of place and visible. Rather than view himself as a colleague to these women he frames himself as an alien in their world – one where it is implied he comes under scrutiny because of his difference to them. In this sense, Ben becomes an embodiment of moving from a 'universal nothing' – where his heterosexual masculinity aligned him with dominant male norms – to a 'particular something' (Kronsell, 2006: 109).

His account also implies the increased scrutiny that women in the military are placed under. Ben's account of feeling alien bears a striking resemblance to that of Navy officer Helena Almqvist when talking about women's inclusion into the Swedish armed forces: “When we joined they made a big deal about us being different; Sometimes you felt like a UFO that happened to land on the wrong planet” (Forsvarsdepartementet, 1995: 12 in Kronsell 2006, in Ackerly, Stern & True: 118). In Ben's account, the common endeavour of him and his female colleagues is framed within (and becomes subordinate to) a gendered binary that reinforces a notion of essentialised difference rather than one of commonality.

Therefore, as he actively transgresses the strictly segregated gender order at NATO, Ben embodies disruption (Chapter 3, Section 2.4.1) – he does not 'fit' in either group. However, as Michelle Lazar identifies 'although, as individuals, people may deviate from the archetypes of masculinity and femininity pertinent to a community (the organisation that they work in for example), this nonetheless occurs against the ideological structure of gender that privileges men as a social group' (Lazar, 2005: 7). As an institution of hegemonic masculinity, NATO, continues to privilege men, both in their physical dominance of the Alliance structures and positions of power, but also in the masculine norms that permeate the organisation.

Ben finds himself in a minority position vis-à-vis women in his immediate job role, and, as an individual man, has deviated from alignment with 'other men' within NATO, yet he still retains access to symbolic, social and political capital (Lazar, 2005: 7) within the organisation. He remains (by circumstance of being a man and a man within NATO) imbued

with what Connell (1995: 79-80) refers to as a 'patriarchal dividend'. It is this patriarchal dividend that enables him to counter these challenges and to (re)negotiate and reassert particular elements of his masculinity (albeit within a limited range of options) in a response to these challenges. Therefore, to counter his minority position and difference from these women he frames his difference, his symbolic capital as a man, as a benefit to the process. In stating that a female-only process will not succeed without male involvement, and that a man occupying his office will help 'open the eyes of other men', he is justifying his involvement by reasserting the privileged position his masculinity occupies within the NATO structure. This theme of 'male credibility' is returned to in Chapter 7, Section 2.

4.2. (Re)Asserting Heterosexuality & Paternalistic Protection

In an extension of this (re)negotiation in response to challenge, Ben asserted his heterosexuality and framed his job role in narratives of paternalistic protection (Young, 2003). When asked what challenges he encountered within his job Ben described the need to constantly correct 'misunderstandings', of what his job role entailed:

"I speak with my friends, and I say I work in gender and they start shouting about the gays and the lesbians and you have to say I don't have anything to do with gays and lesbians, it is gender. You can't choose your gender, you can be male, female or messy. I don't give a...I don't care...but the thing is, what I do mainly is to work to protect men and women, boys and girls who suffer the effects of operations, missions and worse; and in that moment people change their perspective and say "oh my god"; I say, but you can literally help them".

Ben highlights a conflation between gender and sexuality and counters his friends misunderstanding in ways which (re)define 'gender', assert heterosexuality and promote paternalistic protection.

Firstly, Ben brackets gender as something different and something separate from sexuality. He then furthers this by declaring that 'you can't choose your gender'. It is not clear from Ben's response that he believed that sexuality was a choice, but his phrasing regarding what gender 'is' is interesting. In his account, gender is something fixed, and implicitly, heteronormative. In seeking to challenge the misperception of 'gender as sexuality' he fixes the meaning of gender to biological sex; you can be 'male' or 'female' or 'messy' – a (non-conforming) category that does suggest variation, but between fixed, oppositional poles.

In addition to this specific example, Ben began the interview by talking about his family, particularly about his wife and children. Mike did the same, giving unprompted information about speaking to his wife via Skype at the outset of his interview. By acknowledging their family and in Ben using the gender/sexuality 'challenge' at the beginning of the interview, I would argue that these men were asserting their heterosexuality, setting the parameters of

the interview and pre-empting any challenge or misperception that I might have of them or their sexuality. This is a common concern identified by men involved or interested in gender equality initiatives. In their study of gender mainstreaming within EU member states Ruxton & Van der Gaag (2013) identified the denigration of men due to a conflation with issues of sexuality. They note that there was “absolute terror in individual men coming across as gay, as female and so on” (2013: 169). Men ‘doing gender’ therefore run the risk of a double (though interlinked) transgression in this context. They transgress the strict division of gendered labour and job roles; and they are also perceived to transgress the heteronormative ideal that continues to characterise organisations such as NATO.

For Ben, homosexuality and femininity become the ‘other’ in need of expelling from the perception of what he does. By choosing to recount these particular examples in order to describe to me what his job role is, Ben positions himself as protector, re-orientating ‘gender issues’ away from notions of non-heteronormative sexuality and femininity. He therefore privileges an interpretation of gender that is more closely aligned with the dominant masculine, and binary gender norms, of the organisation. Throughout his interview, he becomes the masculine protector of the vulnerable, of victims:

“But the thing is, what I do mainly is to work to protect men and women, boys and girls who suffer the effects of the operations, missions and worse”

“I tend to think that we work for men and women, boys and girls. Then you focus on the weakest part, the people that are suffering the most. So maybe men don’t suffer, but then I think that is happening more and more. In that way our objective is much more interesting and your work is much more rewarding let’s say”

“And I was amazed, and then I learnt about this, about the dancing boys in Afghanistan, so men are also raped maybe not as many as women, but it is still sexual violence, so, so we have to pay attention to all of them and especially children”

Ben positions himself as both a protector of women and children, but also of other men – acknowledging that men suffer, that they are vulnerable too. In this way Ben can be seen to be reasserting his authority and power, deploying his paternal masculinity over, and in support of other, weaker (civilian) men; he reinforces a process of categorisation of ‘other’ (weaker/feminised) men that he himself had been subject to. Therefore, the logic of masculinist protection, reinforced by patriarchal privilege allows Ben to construct a ‘way out’ of his marginalised position; to supplement his newly ‘subordinated’ masculinity with accessible elements of the hegemonic ideal (Connell, 1995), thereby reinforcing NATO’s particular gender order.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the various articulations of the ‘maleness’ of NATO, as expressed by the participants. Both in terms of the numerical dominance of men within the organisation (and within national militaries) and in regards to the ways in which male norms, expectations and behaviours manifest and are (re)enforced through micro-organisational practices. The experiences of these ‘disruptive’ individuals, articulated through very personal accounts of their struggles with these dominant norms and conceptual schemes makes the ubiquity and hegemony of masculinity within NATO visible (Kronsell, 2005: 282; Acker, 1990: 142). This chapter has shown how the experiences of the participants within NATO are inherently relational and intimately gendered. The subjectivities of the female and male participants are formed against the norms of masculinity embedded in the organisation (Kronsell, 2012: 43). For example, the ‘transgressions’ that Ben and Mike embody, the challenges they face, their responses and rationales created for working on gender issues allow for norms around masculinity, femininity and sexuality with NATO to be exposed. Their experiences illuminate a context wherein gender issues are deemed ‘feminine’ and male (and to a lesser extent female) engagement with these issues is deemed trivial. The adaption and assimilation to male norms (both widely and specifically conceived) articulated by Nora, Grace, Anna and Celine highlight how - despite the inclusion of women into national armed forces and international security institutions such as NATO – characteristics associated with masculinity continues to be valorised. Within these accounts masculinity was constructed in opposition to a distinct feminine other, read through the female body (for example in Grace’s account of physicality and Nora’s account of physiology). In relation to this, the participants also constructed a distinctly homogenised femininity, bound up and enacted through particular (essentialised) skills and competencies. Therefore, within these accounts subjective understandings of security, the gender perspective and UNSCR 1325 were formulated within a highly essentialised dichotomy (even when variation within masculinity and femininity was acknowledged). The analysis presented within this chapter exposes the *context* within which the participants formulate an understanding of the role and purpose of the gender perspective and UNSCR 1325. This context sets the parameters within which NATO’s *engagement* and *acceptance* of UNSCR 1325 is framed and understood by the participants. These parameters also serve to limit and control any potential disruption to the masculine norms of the organisation as the participants struggle to design strategies to make their work palatable and relevant to an organisational structure saturated by these masculine norms (a point returned to in Chapter 9, Section 1 & 2). The following chapter will explore how participants make their work relevant in such a context.

Chapter Seven

Making Gender ‘Relevant’: Strategies for Success

To say that an organisation is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine

(Joan Acker, 1990: 146)

So I think that is a weapon, to be relevant for them, because we need to convince them that gender is important. Because they are not used to it, they are not used to thinking gender, they think operations. So, I spent a lot of time to find the right words to make it interesting for them, because if I mention women, women, women, women, women, they fall asleep. So, we have to connect it all the time to operational stuff. Then they will keep awake

(Nora, NATO HQ,
2012)

Introduction

Studies of gender mainstreaming initiatives have identified that for gender to be taken seriously, for an ‘institutional commitment’ to develop in a sustainable way, an organisation must acknowledge the relevance of gender to its work (Bacchi & Eveline, 2010: 288). This chapter details the ways in which the participants developed strategies to make gender ‘relevant’ to NATO, its organisational structures and resistant individuals. Central to this process was an understanding that ‘gender’ was (mis)understood within NATO - most notably as a conflation with ‘women’ or *‘female stuff’* - and just how problematic this was to achieving relevancy. The key finding put forward within this chapter is that this conflation/association influences and severely restricts, the ways in which the participants can talk about and ‘do’ gender. This leads to a ‘re-signification’ and ‘re-framing’ of ‘gender’ and the ‘gender perspective’ to align with more familiar (and more masculine) discourses of ‘operations’ or ‘operational effectiveness’. This strategising was justified by the participants as a way of making the concept *relevant, palatable* and *interesting*, predominantly - but not exclusively - for men and to the male norms of the organisation outlined in the previous chapter. I use the term ‘palatable’ in combination with ‘relevancy’ throughout this chapter in order to capture the implicit distaste and visceral disinterest of these resistant elements when gender was deemed to signify ‘women’ or ‘female stuff’. This chapter therefore demonstrates and reinforces the problematic place of femininity and women’s bodies within NATO in very distinct ways (and in particular contexts). The accounts of the participants highlight some of the ways in which the ‘disruptive’ gender perspective – enacted by and

read through the ‘disruptive bodies’ of men and women working on gender issues – is made not only *institutionally* relevant to the ‘mainstream’ of the organisation but also how the position of women within NATO is conditioned and controlled by the ‘re-signification’ and ‘re-framing of gender.

This chapter is organised as follows. Section one outlines the ways in which ‘gender’ is typically understood to signify ‘women’ and ‘female stuff’ – a categorisation that is taken largely to imply women’s rights and equal opportunities – by the military personnel working at NATO; and how the predominance of women working on ‘gender issues’ within NATO compounds this view. This section also outlines why the participants view this conflation as inherently problematic and the need to distance ‘gender’ from ‘female stuff’ and link it to ‘operations’ and ‘operational effectiveness’. Section two, outlines the strategy of increasing the number of men working on gender issues within NATO as one way of achieving this distancing. Here male involvement is framed as lending the process credibility and a legitimacy that is deemed to be unachievable by women alone. Section three sets out the ways in which gender is re-signified to relate to operational effectiveness by disseminating and controlling a particular message in briefings that bracket gender into ‘internal’ and ‘external’ concerns. Section four frames these specific strategies as a way of maintaining both male and female interest in gender issues, the implication here is that ‘gender as female stuff’ is disinteresting, unpalatable and actively dismissed by men and women within NATO, whereas ‘gender as operational effectiveness’ is legitimate, relevant and therefore interesting. Section five outlines the ways in which relevancy and palatability are necessary to convince a reluctant command level who have the power to grant or deny the process overall legitimacy within NATO’s strict hierarchical structures. This chapter concludes by addressing the implications of achieving the ‘relevancy of gender’ via re-signification and distancing.

1. Distancing ‘Gender’ from ‘Women’ and ‘Female Stuff’

One of the challenges that were identified by all of the participants was that the term ‘gender’ was ‘misunderstood’ by personnel within the organisation. The participants articulated various ways in which gender was ‘misunderstood’. Ben’s experience outlined in the previous chapter (Section 4.2.) shows how in his experience gender could be conflated with sexuality. However, the most common ‘misunderstanding’ that the participants identified was the conflation between ‘gender’ and ‘women’. Anna expressed this problem very specifically:

“...the major challenge is the term gender itself, it makes it really difficult. Because people hear gender and they automatically think it's about women, equal opportunities, stuff like that”

Within the participants account 'gender' had come to signify issues related to and dealing with 'women'. Within the context in which they were working, 'gender' had therefore become imbued with a particular meaning pertaining to women and perceived women's concerns. The conflation of 'gender' with 'women' is not unique to NATO; however, as this chapter will highlight, the conflation of gender with women and 'female stuff' within NATO has particular consequences for the work of the participants.

Celine identified how this conflation can translate to practical issues about the 'place' of a gender perspective - where and how it fits – within the military structure. Using the example of the newly created role of gender advisors in NATO's deployment in Afghanistan, Celine stated that:

“The very first gender advisors in ISAF were located in the human resources branch, which is not really; there is nothing to say why you should put her there. But the ones who had to decide on the position of gender advisor thought it was about women, so women are human resources, so that is why it went to human resources”

Within this extract Celine reveals the way in which the role of gender advisor was conceived by the organisation. As a new position within the military structure its place, position and role was unclear and so the 'ones who had to decide' drew upon the 'gender as women' conceptualisation to situate the role in a particular organisational position - Gender signifies women, women signify human resources – an organisational space usually associated with personnel and equality issues.

Therefore, within the accounts of the participants it wasn't simply that gender was conflated to women, it was that women were associated with and signified particular 'things' – particularly women's rights and equal opportunities – what Nora described throughout her interview as 'female stuff':

“Yeah, because they [the military men] are not used to it either, they still think that this [gender] is female stuff, we are working with operational stuff, not this female stuff”

This implication of the association of gender with 'female stuff' is significant. There was a general feeling expressed by the participants that men (and to a lesser extent women) at all levels of NATO would not be interested in talking about 'female stuff'. One of Nora's roles was to promote awareness about gender and UNSCR 1325 within the organisation. Here she describes having to develop a strategy to counter the conflation:

“Here [at NATO] we are also about gender awareness, why is it important for operations and not only female stuff, because female stuff they are not interested in, they are interested in operational issues – so you make the link”

Nora frames this particular strategy using the same logic she expressed in articulating the seven-year gap between UNSCR 1325 (2000) and the NATO/EPAC policy (2007) – “men didn’t find it relevant, it was female stuff” (Chapter 6, Section 1.1.). Here she seeks to couple gender to something that is interesting – ‘you make the link’ between ‘gender and operations’. Within Nora’s account, the link between gender and operational effectiveness detailed in the official policy documents is expressed as a specific strategy developed to make gender interesting and relevant to military men:

“I think it is important that we deliver something that is of interest to them...how to implement it [gender] in the operational planning process that is something that is sexy for them, the operational thing”

Gender therefore needs to be framed as interesting – as *sexy* – in order to be taken seriously. The implication here is that ‘gender as female stuff’ is not interesting and not relevant to the largely male audience with whom she is seeking to raise awareness; operations are.

The accounts that follow are of strategies developed by the participants, primarily to reframe ‘gender = women/female stuff’ as ‘gender = operations/operational effectiveness’. In this sense they are strategies to (re)condition the message around what gender is and what its purpose is within NATO to accommodate a largely sceptical audience. As will become clear, this process is complicated and contradictory. Despite wanting to distance the association of ‘gender’ with ‘women’, NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 is primarily about engaging with and understanding the place of women (as well as men) both internally and within military operations. This complication is summed up in an exchange with Grace:

MH: Do you think that gender is still seen as a female thing to talk about, that essentially gender is about women?

Grace: Yeah definitely, when you say gender, and again in this report I wrote ‘just to remind you gender is not just about females’, but I sort of had to counter that by saying, however ‘this week we talked about the use of females on operations or integrating aspects of female, things to consider with females’. But yeah you are right, it is a dirty word

Grace articulates the contortions and qualifications she needed to make when talking about gender. It was ‘not just about women’ whilst simultaneously being all about women. In Grace’s conceptualisation this association with women, renders the term gender a ‘dirty word’ – a term she associates with my initial questioning about gender being about women. What the accounts detailed below show is a fundamentally unequal relationship between the

perception of women and ‘female stuff’ and the importance afforded to the more masculine sphere of ‘operations’ within the NATO structure.

2. Male Champions and Male Credibility

The desire for more men to become involved in the process was a recurring theme in the accounts of the participants. The justification for the inclusion of men was framed as adding a ‘male perspective’ but also by recognising the importance of bringing men physically into the process to actively deliver and disseminate information. At one level, the inclusion of more men was seen by the participants as making the gender mainstreaming process more inclusive. However, male involvement was primarily conceptualised by the participants as giving the process *credibility* and as a way to counter the resistance that the female participants experienced when speaking about gender issues to male colleagues, as Grace details:

“When we finish this [interview] I want to know how you got into it because I’m more fascinated by a bloke, I mean that’s, I wrote a report after I got back from this thing and I sent it to about twenty people and only about three people have written back, have replied to my report but I said, what I’m looking for is a male champion to talk about this, because I’m not going to get anywhere”

Grace articulates frustration at her position as a woman trying to get male colleagues to respond to requests regarding gender issues. The physical presence of ‘men doing gender’ was seen to be one way in which the ‘gender as women’ and ‘gender by women’ conflation could be countered, and countered in a visible, visceral way. It was argued that men within the organisation related to and listened to other men. For Anna having a man on the team offered the dual benefits of providing a ‘male perspective’ and also lending credibility to the process:

“Yeah, and concerning the male perspective I think it is very, very important and right now I am in the process, as I mentioned during the conference it is a long process, to really establish a gender advisor office with a woman as well as a man. Because having a man in the team really adds to credibility and most of the people in the military are men and having a man working on that what is often perceived as simply women’s issues gives a great deal of credibility”.

Here, the physical presence of a man directly countered the perception of gender being about ‘women’s issues’. Noting the numerical dominance of men within NATO, Anna asserts that military men would respond better to other men delivering information about gender. Anna also frames the ‘male perspective’ as a benefit to the process. She builds upon the notion of complementarity in male/female perspectives that was identified in the previous chapter, wherein the male perspective is embodied and placed quite distinctly as something distinct from the female perspective and as a benefit to the process. Anna also identifies that the

involvement of men in the process adds credibility in the perception of the female soldiers as well:

“And also a man can provide the male perspective, for instance my [male] colleague is quite helpful during the training. And also women soldiers can also be quite reluctant sometimes because they think, oh well we don’t want to have to do anything; we don’t want to deal with that because it is just a women’s thing. But if you have a man as trainer talking about these issues they say, ok it’s not only about women”

Anna reiterates a point that Mike made in the previous chapter. Women assimilate or adapt to the male norms of behaviour – they ‘*put on pants*’ (Chapter 6, Section 1.1) – and work hard to associate themselves with acceptable modes of behaviour that downplay their difference to male norms. The ‘gender as women’ conceptualisation makes these female soldiers reluctant to engage. A man talking about gender makes this OK; it becomes acceptable for these female soldiers to express an interest, as they won’t be seen as concerned with (problematic) women’s issues. In this scenario, the presence of ‘men doing gender’ allows male and female soldiers to transgress the strict gendered norms without fear of persecution.

Mike also expressed the notion of male credibility when discussing the presentations he gives with his Anna:

“Having a man do it, first time, it is a little bit of a surprise. You know my colleague surprises them by telling them what it [gender] isn’t, and what it is and then they are a little bit, well what’s this guy going to talk about? How is a guy going to talk about that? And then, when you talk about that it is operational things like this, it’s like, ah, so it lends a certain amount of credibility”

Mike’s credibility is established by him linking ‘gender to operations’ not merely by presenting the audience information – indeed this is the same information that Anna is delivering - but by that information being presented by a man. Gender is symbolically linked to operations and operations are symbolically linked to men. By delivering the second half of the presentation Mike reinforces (and lends credibility) to Anna’s initial framing of ‘gender as operations’, but also reinforces the ‘gender-operations-men’ link by symbolically replacing her.

As has already been outlined in Chapter 3 and Chapter 7 (Section 4), there is a difficulty in men engaging with and ‘doing gender’ within NATO. There is a perceived danger, as the experiences of Ben highlight, of being deemed feminine or ‘less’ masculine than their male colleagues. Indeed, Mike expressed a feeling of general apprehension about speaking about gender as a man in a large conference format. However, here the ‘transgression’ rather than being actively policed or controlled is being actively encouraged. Yet, the transgression is

only acceptable on particular terms. These men are not being asked to talk about ‘female stuff’; they embody and represent ‘male stuff’ and symbolically link ‘gender’ to ‘operations’ and to the wider male norms of the organisation through their physical presence. In short, the male champion only champions a particular, palatable understanding of gender. So, whilst the ‘transgression’ is not actively policed, it is contained. What these accounts show is the overall privileging of men over women within the NATO system. Being men, even men that work in a presumed to be subordinated role, they can draw down on what Connell identified as the ‘patriarchal dividend’ that gives them access to symbolic social and political capital (Connell, 1995: 79-80; Lazar, 2005: 7) and disseminate information in a way that is deemed credible and legitimate to their intended audience in a way that most women cannot.

The increased involvement of men within the process is not entirely uncontroversial. Ben acknowledged certain tensions arising from male participation:

“I even heard that if you allow more men to be part of the issue, they will take all of the positions, I heard this last week. They will take all of the positions, and, oh my God. But I understand this, men may think the same about women in the armed forces, they may take all the positions, but we need some room in this issue and they need us also. To be credible, men have to be part of the issue, it is a gender thing not a woman’s thing, it is men and women, men and women”

He articulates a sense of worry that men would come to dominate the process. That they would encroach on what is still seen as one area within the organisation where women are accumulating power and control over a particular agenda. Interestingly, this concern was not evident in the responses of the female participants.

The benefits of involving men on gender equality issues have been acknowledged in a broad range of policy areas (Hearn, 2001; Connell, 2003; 2005c; Kaufmann, 2003). However, what the accounts around male credibility show is one way the participants are seeking to make gender relevant in a very visible way. The association of women with gender issues via their physiology complicates the strategy of separating gender from ‘female stuff’. The physical presence of ‘men doing gender’ makes the delivery of the concept more palatable to the organisation. Here, men and the ‘male view of security’ are more closely associated with operational effectiveness and therefore a man linking gender to this concept makes it credible in a way that apparently could not be achieved solely by the female participants. There are also elements of the logic of masculinist protection (Young, 2003) bound up within the accounts of the participants. Rather than outright ‘protection’ from a threat or enemy, here masculinity is framed as offering a seemingly benign, supportive element to the process but it is one that ultimately subordinates the female participants; subordination, in the sense that there is an exchange taking place between the women working on gender issues (and meeting resistance) and the ‘male champions’. In return for the support and

credibility of the ‘male perspective’ and the male body, women concede a key role and distance themselves physically from the process (Young, 2003: 4). In this sense, the male champions provide *the process* protection from the lack of credibility embodied by women. The ‘protected’ women then view these men with gratitude and this gratitude in turn reinforces the ‘value’ (or credibility) and power of masculinity within NATO more generally.

3. “What we don’t do”: (Re)Framing ‘Gender’ in an Operational Context

The following section focuses specifically on the accounts of Anna and Mike. As noted previously Anna and Mike were on active deployment within a NATO theatre of operations both were working on gender issues within that setting. The following accounts detail how Anna and Mike seek to (re)frame gender away from ‘gender as women/female stuff’ to ‘gender as operations’ particularly through control of the information they present to newly deployed troops. This (re)framing was achieved by setting up clearly delineated ‘internal/external’ parameters within which gender could be spoken about. Anna and Mike spoke very explicitly about what they ‘did not do’ in their job roles. The ‘external’ consisted mainly of improved operational effectiveness, force protection and multiplication. The ‘internal’ was associated with women’s rights and equality. It is important to note here that Anna and Mike’s role was externally focused, they were on active deployment and therefore a focus on ‘external’ elements is not surprising. However, what their accounts show is the way in which Anna and Mike conceptualised and produced a rationale for focusing on the ‘external’ over the ‘internal’ and the parallels it had with the accounts of Nora, Grace, Celine and Ben from within the institutional setting of NATO HQ.

I began the interview with Anna by asking what the primary purpose of her job role was. As I have already addressed - within Chapter 4, Section 2.3 - Anna was the most ‘practiced’ participant and was extremely cautious and careful in the answers that she gave. Her response to my opening question was particularly interesting as rather than identify what she did, she answered by outlining what she did not do:

“Well, I don’t know if you remember but I think I mention it during the conference as well, um, the most important thing is that it is not to be confused with equal opportunities, women’s rights and stuff like that. So basically the main purpose is an operational role that is externally focused meaning to identify the different security needs of men, women, boys and girls. So that our operations are able to respond properly to these security needs. Also, to help our mission to help to understand the different security concerns and so to contribute to operational readiness and operational effectiveness”.

Whilst Anna’s description of the ‘main purpose’ of her job is consistent with its description in the NATO policy documents and aligns with one of the aims of UNSCR 1325 (in

responding to the varying security needs of men, women, boys and girls), it is her packaging of ‘equal opportunities and women’s rights’ as other ‘stuff’ that is interesting. The need for Anna to begin by countering misperceptions (much like Ben in his interview) indicates that these misperceptions are widespread and encountered often.

One of Anna and Mike’s key responsibilities was to deliver briefings to newly deployed troops. Anna’s desire to counter misperceptions and confusion stems in part from this. She identified that these soldiers had specific assumptions about what her role entailed:

“Let’s say ninety-five per cent of the people think that it is about equal opportunities, that I am here to tell them how to behave, how to act in front of women and stuff like that. That I’m responsible here to teach the women within our military structures – but once I explain to them that it an external role, they are quite happy to hear that [laughs] and then it becomes a lot easier to approach these people”.

What is important in this account is the response of the soldiers once Anna has corrected the confusion and distanced herself and her job role from difficult notions of equal opportunities and acceptable male behaviour towards women. The audience becomes *happy*, they are *easier to approach* because externally focused operations are more palatable. In stating that the troops are happy to engage with this, she implies that they would be unhappy (or uncomfortable) in discussing equality and women’s rights. In this respects Anna’s experience aligns with the accounts of Nora and Celine expressed above. Anna has to counter the notion that she is responsible for human resources but she also has to talk about and discuss gender in a way that is relevant for the troops.

This (re)framing of gender was also integral to the presentations that Mike and Anna developed to communicate the importance of their jobs to these soldiers

“The term gender can make it difficult. Most everyone has a misperception of what gender is. That is why one of my first slides in my briefings is what I do not do. I found I had to be very explicit in saying that I am not responsible for equal opportunity and many other things. Then I quickly go into what I am responsible for and relate that directly to military functions”. (Anna, ACT Interview)

Within her presentations, just as in her interview with me, Anna begins by addressing a ‘misperception’ of what gender is (See Figure Two, below). Here she is explicit; in her conceptualisation and in the message she conveys that ‘gender’ be made relevant to the ‘military functions’ of NATO.

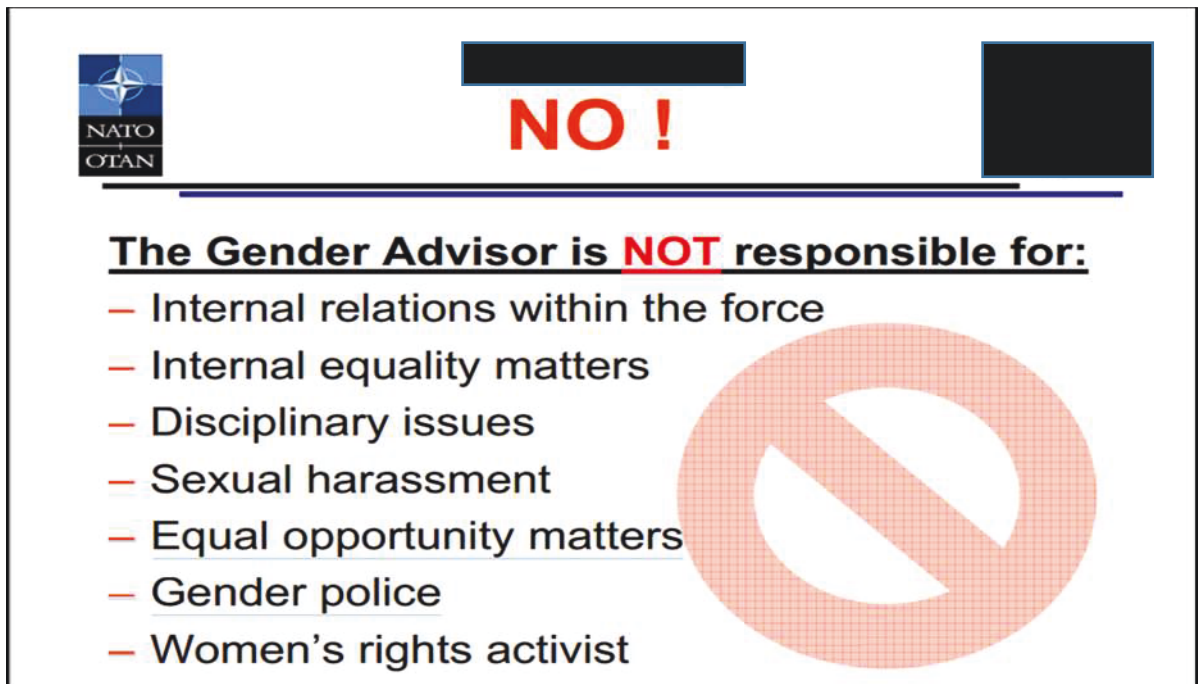


Figure 2: NATO Briefing Slide ©NATO

The importance of making gender interesting and palatable in their presentations to soldiers was also identified by Mike:

“At our first briefing we had with the multinational battle group, boy it was just going over heads [laughs], half way through it got to this point where my colleague said, you know it’s, she started to talk about the operational impact and stuff like that and then the guy that had been sitting like this [gestures boredom], the whole time, goes oh, and then he starts asking questions and stuff [laughs], ah ha, so that is where we turned around and gave the briefing and she changed these slides that, you know, the first slide is what she doesn’t do.

It’s specifically stated so that if you came in here thinking that this is what I do, so you set the table up like that. Here’s what I do and here is what I don’t do, here is what I do and why is it important to you? Then they open up right away, they go, oh OK, this is about getting the mission done and things like that so it is very well received”

Here, gender is presented in a way that is important to the intended audience, it becomes another way of getting the mission done. The response from the male audience member changed the way that Anna and Mike approached their job role. They responded to his boredom and perceived interests made the concept relevant to him by focusing on the external. Their message was then altered in response, as Mike says:

“For us then, it is just initially, that was the broader thing, for us here it was really just developing the message and then once we developed the message and I mentioned that first briefing where things were just, they went so bad for half the meeting and we changed it, packaged it, hit them up front, this is what it is, this is what it’s not, here’s the operational benefit, here is how it is going to help, once we

changed that the biggest problem has been just that there is an awful lot to do [laughs]”

The importance of maintaining this explicit distinction between what they did and did not do was addressed by Mike when I asked him what he thought were the challenges that he faced within his job role, he responded:

“I think that the biggest challenge was just initially, uh, developing the message, you know. And making sure, that, and I think it’s good here that we are really the central and really the only people that are in charge of this concept because I’ll say this – in a broader context this concept could easily be, what I would term...[pauses]...ah actually I don’t want to use that term. It can be overtaken by somebody who is interested in equal opportunity and women’s rights and these types of things; as a venue for pushing that agenda and that is the biggest danger [...] There are people in the organisation, we’ve gone to conferences and there are people here... I would say in this field there is forty percent who have this as a way of pushing that agenda. Fortunately, I think that number is going down and the younger people that are starting to adopt the issue see it as a, as an operational tool”.

Mike was anxious in expressing this view and it is represented in the rather cautious and self-censoring way he spoke, struggling over what terms to use. However, he was explicit about the need to counter the ‘danger’ of the message being overtaken by equal opportunities and women’s rights.

In articulating this struggle between his (and Anna’s) definition he expresses the importance of having ownership over the message and the understanding of the term, declaring it a ‘good thing’. Mike articulates the (re)framing of gender as a competition within inherent dangers from others within the organisation. Mike also hints at a generational divide – with the younger people seeing it as an operational tool rather than a women’s rights agenda. In producing and enforcing the ‘gender as operations’ message, Mike and Anna therefore become protectors of the external, palatable definition of what gender is within the context that they operate. What these accounts show is that there are competing interpretations within the organisation of what ‘gender’ and the ‘gender perspective’ should be about. The definition of gender itself and the role that particular individuals have in defining and communicating those terms throughout the organisation is therefore inherently contested.

Mike’s expression of control over the message of what gender is also shows how power over institutional narratives can become concentrated within a small group of individuals. This has particular resonance with Jacqui True’s (2003) assertion that these ‘gender experts’ keep an overall story consistent in any particular context. In Mike’s account it falls to him and Anna to both define ‘gender as operations’ and then to defend that (re)framing from ‘gender as women/female stuff’. In this sense Anna, Mike, Celine, Nora, Ben and Grace are producing forms of ‘gender knowledge’ within NATO. Thereby formulating and

disseminating a particular palatable understanding what the term ‘gender’ should signify. This exposes a tension between what Walby (2011: 9) identifies as the centralisation of the production of ‘gender knowledge’ by gender ‘experts’ and the desire for a wider democratisation or mainstreaming of such knowledge throughout an organisation. What does it say about a ‘mainstreaming’ process that the power to define what gender is and what it should be used for is concentrated and owned by a small number of individuals (this point is returned to in Section 6, below)?

It is worth noting that this – ‘gender as operations’ - is a particular definition being put forward, but it is also a negotiated definition. It is produced via the struggles that the participants have had and the resistance that they have experienced, within an organisational context. It is not simply the product of these individuals asserting a priori interests.

4. Maintaining (Male) Interest

As the accounts of Anna and Mike above show, the notion that gender had to be relevant was coupled with a need to be interesting. One of the main justifications put forward by the participants for the privileging of ‘gender as operations’ over ‘gender as women/female stuff’ was that the intended audience at NATO had to be kept *interested*. If the concept was not seen as relevant, the audience (men in particular) at all hierarchical levels would lose interest. Husdon (2010) identified similar challenges at the UN. In discussing capturing male interest in gender mainstreaming initiatives a UN official noted that: “Most men will listen if you frame the issue in their terms, which means reinforcing their cultural values” (UN Official, 2006 quoted in Hudson, 2010: 47). As expressed by the participants, in the context of NATO, the ‘cultural value’ and ‘terms’ of the men within NATO were deemed to be operations. Gender is therefore framed within these terms.

Loss or lack of interest was commonly expressed by the participants as men ‘*falling asleep*’ when issues regarded as ‘women’s issues’ were foregrounded. In her discussions around delivering briefings on gender, discussed above, Anna identified that “*most of the people are tired when you are talking about equal opportunities and things like that*”. Nora made a similar point when discussing her interaction with the military command level:

“So I think that is a weapon, to be relevant for them, because we need to convince them that gender is important. Because they are not used to it, they are not used to thinking gender, they think operations. So, I spent a lot of time to find the right words to make it interesting for them, because if I mention women, women, women, women, women, they fall asleep. So, we have to connect it all the time to operational stuff. Then they will keep awake”

For Nora, ‘relevancy’ frame as ‘gender as operations’ is conceived of as a weapon to combat male disinterest, to convince them that gender is important. In her discussions of male involvement in the process (expressed above), Grace uses a similar logic to Nora:

“From an army perspective you have to be incredibly happy in your own skin to stand in front of say a load of army officers who are halfway through their careers and say, right I want you to be aware of 1325 and I want you to think about how you use your female soldiers and the female population because that takes quite a lot of balls from a male perspective. I’ll do it and people will just fall asleep and think, oh she’s going to talk about how it’s OK to be a lesbian in the army or something”

Grace’s account of appealing to and convincing military officers highlights three intersecting issues. Again, (like in Ben’s account in Chapter 6) Grace highlights a conflation between homosexuality and gender. Here it is conceived of as part of the ‘feminine other’ that Grace represents. A woman giving a presentation on gender does not, in Grace’s view appeal to male interests and they ‘fall asleep’. Combined with this was a perception of a strong, confident masculinity – one with a ‘lot of balls’ – needed to talk successfully about gender to a sceptical and reluctant group of middle aged army officers. There is also a level of objectification that occurs within Grace’s account. Grace talks about men using ‘*their* females’ and the ‘female population’ – this is a point that will be returned to in the following chapter. What is interesting in comparing Nora and Grace’s accounts is that while Nora seeks to distance her work from talking about women, Grace specifically draws upon the role that women can play, how female soldiers can be *used*, operationally, to convince a sceptical male audience. What this indicates is that ‘gender as women’ is acceptable, within a particular framing; if their role is made relevant by connecting women to improving operational effectiveness. This point is returned to in Chapter 8.

5. Maintaining (Female) Interest

It is important here to reiterate the point that it is not only ‘male’ interest that needed to be maintained. As has already been discussed, women within NATO, generally remained as sceptical about the term ‘gender’ as their male colleagues. In the participants’ views, ‘gender as women’ was just as problematic for the ‘other’ women at NATO. Not in that it was necessarily uninteresting, but that showing an interest in gender exposed and reinforced their difference to the male norms, and their male colleagues, as Anna states:

“Women soldiers can be quite reluctant sometimes, because they think: oh well, we don’t want to have to do anything...we don’t want to have to deal with that, because it’s just a woman’s thing”

In her work interviewing female members of the Swedish armed forces Annica Kronsell identified that most females were reluctant to be interviewed, she states that they ‘either

flatly refused to participate or showed signs of being uncomfortable with the situation' (Kronsell, in Ackerly, Stern & True, 2006: 122). She concluded that in being singled out by the researchers, the difference between the female soldiers and their male colleagues was accentuated. This becomes problematic for the female soldiers as she has spent time working at not being different but to be a soldier or an officer, just like everyone else (Kronsell in Ackerly, Stern & True, 2006: 122):

“a woman may go to great lengths to be perceived as ‘one of the guys’...in the military she may even deny any commonality with other women, she may avoid, strategically, the topic of gender or chose not to speak at all” (Kronsell, 2005: 291).

Therefore, ‘Gender as women/female stuff’ is problematic as it promotes a particular commonality based around being a woman in the military, it is therefore strategically avoided. Re-signifying ‘gender as operations’, is far less problematic for military women as it promotes a commonality and a uniformity with their male colleagues around shared organisational concerns. Therefore ‘gender as operations’ is palatable to both men and women.

6. Hierarchy, Power and Legitimacy

What becomes apparent when considering these re-signifying strategies of the participants, outlined above, is that the work of the participants is restricted by a strict gendered hierarchy, with masculinity, male norms and male interests conditioning how gender can be framed and spoken about within NATO. This gendered hierarchy also intersects with an organisational hierarchy, one where the power to grant the process legitimacy resides with a few senior (male) individuals at command level. NATO is a military organisation structured around a central chain of command and the ability of those at lower ranks to follow the orders of those in authority. What the following section shows is how the participants acknowledge and accommodate these structural constraints and by doing so demonstrate that the success of integrating a gender perspective within NATO is dependent upon the acceptance of those in command.

Celine expressed the importance of this organisational hierarchy that operates throughout the organisation:

“The general has the authority regardless if he has experienced gender or not. For people here to listen, military people, generals to listen, you have to have at least the same rank. It is a very traditional culture let’s say. So, it is not because you are clever, that what you say is interesting, no, what you say is interesting because you have the rank, the position”

Celine identifies the pre-existing organisational hierarchy influences how information is communicated throughout the organisational structure via rank and positions of authority

and power. What Celine suggests is that the information is secondary to the rank and position of the person communicating it within the institutional setting of NATO HQ. The rank affords the information legitimacy regardless of an objective assessment of its use or interest. This is a similar point to that expressed in the participants desire for a male champion expressed above – the information delivered via a female body is problematic in a way that the same information delivered by a man is not. Here the male body is afforded more power and legitimacy in the same way that rank affords the information legitimacy in Celine’s account above. Celine also presents an interesting construction of the general ‘experiencing gender’ – it is as if gender is something that one can suddenly experience, or can be made aware of. The general may not have ‘experienced’ gender because he is situated in a position of power and authority in an organisation that privileges the masculine, the male norms that he is exposed to are hegemonic, they pervade the institution and are naturalised, and in this regard he does not experience them in a conscious way, as Joan Acker “as a relational phenomenon, gender is difficult to see when only the masculine is present” (1990: 142).

Ben expressed a similar concern to Celine, but framed obtaining ‘access to the system’ as a particular challenge:

“Operations that is a big challenge; especially during the planning process and also for the gender advisors to get to their commanders, to have the possibility to provide advice to have the possibility to get into the system”

Ben identified that the command level act as gatekeeper to the process. The gender advisors need to be able to have the support of the command level to get their message into the system. What Ben implies is that without the legitimacy afforded by the commanders’ consent, the gender advisors’ access would be curtailed.

This point was expressed in detail by Anna and Mike when discussing their strategy of (re)framing ‘gender as operations’. In discussing how she overcame the challenge of people ‘misunderstanding’ gender – conflating it with women and equal opportunities – Anna declared that one way to avoid this was to maintain a focus on what the command level wanted:

MH: So, that kind of leads onto my next question, but in terms of the challenges you’ve encountered in your role – can you think of any examples of the major challenges you’ve faced?

Anna: Well, I think the major challenge is the term gender advisor itself, it makes it really difficult. Because people hear gender advisor and they automatically think it’s about women, equal opportunity and stuff like that. But when people understand the concept they realise what potential it has as well.

MH: So how do you overcome that challenge?

Anna: Well, basically I explain to them very explicitly that these are the things I'm responsible for, I keep my office operational. I focus on the commander's guidance and priorities of efforts. I also emphasise that gender is a force multiplier and it is also very, very important to have the commanders backing and support; this is very crucial, and to dispel any misperceptions I find. And by doing that I haven't actually found any leader that would disagree with this concept.

Like Ben's assertion above, Anna identifies that the commanders backing and support is crucial to both providing her job role legitimacy and gaining access to the system, but also to help overcome the misperceptions of what her role is for or what a gender perspective is. A focus on the operational benefit therefore convinces the leadership of the validity of the concept. She continues:

MH: OK, so how do you secure the support of the commanders? How do you ensure that they take gender seriously?

Anna: Basically, because I highlight the benefits for our missions. I make sure that when a new commander comes in that I brief him at the very beginning. Yeah, that I help him and that it is not an additional task that it is basically what I do.

In expressing the need to brief the new commander at the beginning of his deployment Anna implies that the commander would have little pre-existing understanding of her job role. For that commander to then grant the process legitimacy, gender must be defined as something that benefits the mission and does not produce any additional work or tasks. In short it must fit with the pre-existing organisational structures and the pre-existing guidance and priorities of the command level. This point is reiterated within NATO's 'Recommendations on Implementation of UNSC 1325 (2010a), which state that:

"To have a gender approach to military operations, it is essential and of the utmost importance that senior leaders are committed. Good will and support are not enough, active involvement is needed...In order to increase commitment from senior leaders and commanders they should be held accountable for progress. They should also be conscious that gender is a force multiplier for operational success" (NATO, 2010a: 17-18)

Here the tension between the gender perspective and the organisational 'mainstream' is exposed. The gender perspective is competing with the pre-existing concerns of the commander for prioritisation (Walby 2005; Benschop & Verloo, 2006; 22). In this sense 'gender' as policy or organisational consideration is disruptive and requires 'negotiation' (Walby, 2005: 322) to acquire the support of the command level.

This reliance and dependence on command support was also reiterated by Mike:

"We're very, very fortunate here, a commander could easily ...you know they don't understand the concept they say oh, I need to put an officer into this gender role, and oh, this person here has got fifteen years as an equal opportunity representative, let's

put her in there. And that is all that person knows how to do and so they go in and start doing what they know...I'd rather have that seat be empty than put the wrong person in there, so that's the first thing".

Mike identifies the power that an individual commander has over the process. He has the ability to recruit and fill positions and that this can be 'badly' done, if it is based upon a conceptualisation of 'gender as woman/female stuff'. Like the point made above concerning Anna and Mike's centralised power defining what 'gender' should signify, the commander here has the power to undermine that (re)framing with one misplaced recruit. This re-signifying is therefore precarious, subject to competing interpretations and definitions of what gender means within NATO. As Mike identifies how the notion of a gender perspective is received is highly dependent upon high-ranking individuals:

MH: So, how well is it [the gender perspective] received at the various levels?

Mike: Yeah, yeah well the command level it is dependent upon individual personalities and such and their background. When you're dealing with you know a professional officer, who looks, and then you sell this and say hey it's not women's rights, this that or the other, it is an operational asset, it is a way of doing our business that will help with our mission, that will help us achieve our mandate, then they get that.

It therefore becomes essential to define what the gender perspective is in terms that are both accessible and palatable to the command levels regardless of individual personalities – the operational asset, the way of doing business that is of benefit to the mission that will help NATO achieve its mandate – these are terms that are relatable for the commanders because they are the pre-existing priorities of the organisation,. Gender becomes representative of something that fits into the priorities of these individuals. In Anna's words it is not something additional to do. Defining gender in these terms provides a consistency to the message that can be communicated both up to the command level and down to the soldiers via the presentations and briefings discussed above.

In discussing the level of contact between the various bodies of NATO I asked Anna about the role that operational experiences had in influencing the development of doctrine and policy throughout the organisation:

MH: So, in terms of that level of contact [meeting with the gender committee] do you think the operational experiences, your experiences, do you think that they influence policy or doctrine at that level?

Anna: Yeah, I think so. But I think a lot still needs to be done. And as I said before they really need to divide the tasks to one who works on internal issues and the ones that work on external issues. Because right now as it is, it is kind of a mix. And you need to be more stronger focused on the external, because as long as they confuse it, or let's say, as long as they mix it up with internal issues it will be harder to

convince high ranking officers and commanders with that topic. Because most of the people are tired when you are talking about equal opportunities and things like that.

MH: So do you think that the higher levels of command are not receptive enough if gender is pitched as an equality narrative, there needs to be some benefit to the organisation?

Anna: Yeah, because if you are able to highlight the benefit to the commanders then everybody is willing to cooperate

Anna again highlights the confused nature of the process – a mix of the internal and external – with competing definitions of gender being put forward, a point made in the above analysis. She is explicit in her desire that gender should be externally focused. Here the internal/external definitions of what gender is becomes an integral strategy of convincing the command – the internal, equality and woman's issues will not convince the commanders. She expresses a similar concern to that of Mike in the previous section when he outlined the threat of the process being undermined by someone with a 'women's rights agenda'.

What these accounts demonstrate is that the definition of what gender is becomes highly dependent upon what is palatable and relevant to those in command. They grant or deny the work of the participants' legitimacy and can ensure the cooperation of everyone else at a lower or equal rank; they remain the gatekeepers to success in the process. Bacchi and Eveline (2010) identify that organisational hierarchies of decision making use dominant systems of thought which make established or normal ways of seeing and doing seem the correct or 'only' way, therefore favouring entrenched groups (Bacchi & Eveline, 2010: 284). The ability of the command level to grant or deny the process legitimacy works to severely limit the options that the participants have available to them, understood by Bacchi and Eveline's conceptualisation, 'gender as operations' frames operations as the 'correct' or 'only' way of seeing gender. This small group of individuals must be convinced of the relevance and this can only be achieved by distancing the concept from a preconceived connection to equality and women's rights.

What is exposed here is one way in which systemic power is constructed and reinforced in interactions between the participants and their respective commanders; they show how the dominant group determines meaning and how a small group of powerful people typically get to define the purpose and significance of the process and exert influence over the direction in which it can develop (Holmes in Lazar, 2005: 32). The participants work within strict hierarchical structures and for pre-determined organisational aims. Gender is made relevant to these organisational constraints through adherence to pre-existing behavioural norms, expectations and behaviours.

Conclusion: Relevancy via (Re)Framing and (Re)Signifying

What this chapter has demonstrated is that notions of equality and women's rights remain incredibly problematic *within* NATO. The participants' experiences expose a complex but fundamentally unequal relationship between femininity and masculinity, between women and men. A misperception of 'gender as women' was identified by the participants as a primary challenge that was in need of countering. The framing of 'gender as women' included particular, problematic 'things' such as equal opportunities and women's rights. These were seen to be both irrelevant and uninteresting; to borrow Nora's words, these issues were not deemed to be 'sexy' to the men who occupy positions of organisational power and to those that numerically dominate.

Strategies were therefore developed by the participants to re-frame 'gender' to signify operational effectiveness. Operations were defined as something relevant, interesting and aligned to the dominant masculine norms of the organisation. 'Gender as operations' therefore serves to discursively distance the concept of gender from women. The need for this distancing to be physically reinforced was expressed in the desire for male champions to articulate and promote the credibility of the re-signified 'gender as operations' via the male body. Here, female bodies themselves were cast as problematic and as disruptive. Participants deemed that a man delivering the same information gave the process credibility in a way that a woman could not. The involvement of men was infused with a logic of masculinist protection (Young, 2003), whereby the participants were willing to distance themselves from their work and promote a supportive, 'credible', male presence. What these strategies of (re)framing and (re)signifying do is to channel and contain the disruption that 'talking about' and 'doing gender' within an institution of hegemonic masculinity bring (a point returned to in Chapter 9, Section 2).

Bacchi & Eveline (2010) note that one way in which power works is through leadership decisions about the relevance of gender to policy (2010: 303). They assert that power often circulates within an organisation through 'a no talk rule' about gender (Ibid). In this sense gender is silenced through what Connell (2005b: 17) identifies as 'distancing strategies'. NATO's engagement with 'gender' would seem to contradict this 'no-talk rule'. NATO is explicitly talking about gender and publicising the fact that it is doing so – as shown in the documentary analysis and by its very visible online and social media presence. However, as has been highlighted in this chapter, NATO is talking about and doing gender only in a way that is acceptable and relevant to the organisation, distancing the concept from more problematic and unpalatable elements. Operations are placed 'out there' whereas women's rights and equal opportunities are an issue for 'inside' the NATO structure. This distancing

is one way in which Connell argues that gender is made to vanish (2005b: 17). In this way gender at NATO vanishes at the same time as it is promoted.

From an organisational perspective, what these strategies demonstrate are the problems involved in the retroactive nature of gender mainstreaming more generally. Many of the problems concerning relevancy, maintaining interest and overcoming entrenched, resistant groups and organisational behaviour are common in studies of gender mainstreaming within international organisations (Rees, 1998; Bacchi & Eveline, 2010; True & Mintrom, 2001, Verloo, 2001). Bacchi & Eveline (2010) argue that mainstreaming and gender analysis often remain subservient to wider policy and organisational objectives and that this can seriously compromise the process. They suggest that one reason that mainstreaming has become so popular and spread so quickly is that dominant models pose no real threat to neoliberal projects (2010: 44). In many ways the same can be said of the process at NATO. The Alliance's policy goals of increased operational effectiveness and force multiplication, assert themselves via the demands and expectations of the men and male norms that the participants have to make their work relevant to. Therefore rather than becoming a challenge to institutional norms and processes, gender is framed as merely another way of achieving the pre-existing goals with more efficiency.

To revisit Joan Acker's (1990) quote used to open this chapter, this analysis has shown how NATO is gendered: advantage, disadvantage, meanings and identities are constructed and exposed via the struggles the participants have in making gender relevant to the hegemonic norms of the organisation. These struggles were patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. A distinction is drawn between what is 'male' (operations) and what is 'female' (equality, women's rights). The concept is distanced from women and linked to men re-framing gender away from 'female stuff' to signify 'operations' thereby privileging pre-existing concepts that are palatable and understandable to the men that dominate the organisations hierarchical structures. However, this process is far from straightforward and uncomplicated. As has been mentioned above, 'gender as women/female stuff' is an acceptable framing in particular operational circumstances. What the following chapter demonstrates is how the gender perspective is re-linked to women, women's bodies and their perspectives when discussing operational benefits and successes; thereby making women externally valuable to NATO's goals and objectives in contrast to their internally problematic position shown above.

Chapter Eight

Indicators and Stories of Success

Significant information about local security threats was collected as a result of a FET member engaging directly with men. Female personnel can work within stereotypes to exploit gender norms towards achieving a desired end. The FET Commander in Sangin perceived that female military personnel changed the dynamic when in dialogue with men.

(NATO, 2011b: 29)

The power of...stories comes not from their evidentiary value (even though they are often offered as evidence), but from their ability to condense and symbolise something that people believe and think important. Even granting that some of the stories may be based on events that really happened, they function as myth, constructing foundational meanings and suffusing the discourse.

(Cohn, 2000: 146)

Introduction

The previous two chapters have set out how gender is understood and ‘experienced’ by the participants. Firstly, by highlighting the ways the participants understood NATO as a ‘male space’, wherein essentialised categories of masculinity and femininity, ‘male’ and ‘female’ were (re)constructed; and secondly, by analysing the strategies developed in order to ‘re-signify’ and ‘re-frame’ what ‘gender’ and the gender perspective could (and could not mean) in order to make it relevant, palatable and interesting.

This chapter details how the official documents present and the participants articulate and understand *success* within this wider context. It sets out how particular constructions of masculinity and femininity and the need for relevancy - identified in the preceding chapters - affect how success is defined both at an organisational and individual level. Two key questions will guide this analysis: how is success understood and how is it measured? In their evaluation of gender mainstreaming processes across fourteen international development institutions, including the United Nations, Moser & Moser have argued the need to link gender ‘strategies with concrete outcomes’ (2005: 18). A similar desire for measurability was expressed by both the participants and within the official documents analysed for this thesis. Participants spoke of the need for successful and good practice to be identified and communicated throughout the organisation. This chapter therefore focuses on how these ‘concrete’ outcomes are inherently gendered.

The chapter will be structured as follows. Section one addresses the notion of positivity and the ‘silence of failure’ within both the interview data and the official documents. These two concepts serve to contextualise the following analysis whereby success is framed by wider

positive and progressive institutional narratives. In section two, the importance of measurability will be analysed. Proscriptive, systematic processes developed and institutionalised by the participants were held up as a successful way of changing organisational behaviour, to *oblige* resistant elements within NATO to adopt a gender perspective within their work. These processes are analysed in relation to fostering an institutional *commitment*, something that required participants to re-focus on highlighting the relevancy of gender to the work of NATO. Section three identifies specific ‘stories’ of success. These were detailed in the official documentation produced and disseminated by the NCGP – ‘*How Can Gender Make a Difference to Security in Operations: Indicators*’ (2011b) – and were interpreted and re-told by the participants to me during the interview process. A comparison of these accounts is presented as a way of demonstrating how a ‘successful’ gender analysis presented by the organisation by (re)producing essentialised reductive understandings of women as peaceful information gatherers. This section concludes by exposing a contradiction within NATO’s gender perspective whereby femininity is understood as both internally problematic and yet externally valuable. Finally, the problematic nature of ‘grand narratives’ of success are outlined and analysed in relation to the repeated claim that the gender perspective allowed NATO to ‘talk to’ one-hundred percent of the population.

1. Positivity in Peacebuilding & the Silence of Failure

The ‘stories of success’ presented within this chapter were not produced and retold in isolation, they are a product of complex, competing understandings of both gender and security in both the official accounts and their re-telling by individuals within NATO. They serve to highlight the conflicting and competing ‘claims’ to what ‘gender’ and the gender perspective should signify that were outlined in Chapter 7. The stories are interpreted and understood via myriad individual experiences both personal and professional, not necessarily directly related to the specific accounts presented here and difficult, if not impossible to capture in their entirety. In this respect the stories can be seen to represent highly individualised interpretations of NATO’s gender perspective. However, NATO provides the context within which they are created and re-told and this context is characterised by noticeable organisational narratives defined by specific speech acts and silences. Therefore, before analysing the way in which the organisation and the participants present success it is useful to consider what was absent from both the official documents and what remained silent in the interviews, as well as the wider ‘themes’ that saturate that material.

For an organisation that draws so readily upon binary notions – war/peace, ally/enemy, men/women, and masculine/feminine – it was noticeable that in discussing success, failure,

or even a lack of success, was not readily expressed by the participants; indeed it was only Nora who addressed NATO's struggle in Afghanistan. The notion that (both civilian and military) women could enact violence, not merely be subject to it, was also absent from the participants accounts and the documents. Participants often articulated the 'challenges' of the process, but never explicit *failures* – even these challenges were presented as obstacles that could be overcome with hard work and determination. 'Good practice' was championed, documented and shared via the NCGP meetings; 'bad practice' was not. This 'silence of failure' and the absence of violent women can be seen as a product of the powerful speech norms that pervade organisations such as NATO, norms that demarcate acceptable discourse and narratives.

Female soldiers are trained, like their male colleagues to use deadly force, to deploy (state or alliance-sanctioned) violence to achieve desired aims. Yet in the accounts offered to me, female soldiers were framed as information gatherers and (relatively benign) interlocutors between the military and local population – as a 'few kind women' (Valenius, 2007). In regards to the civilian women, violence was something that was done to them (for example, in the form of sexualised violence); they were not conceived of as violent actors or to even have the potential for violent behaviour. That violence enacted by women or the failure of the gender perspective to contribute positively to alliance success was unspoken during the interviews furthers a conceptualisation of women's skills and competencies as 'soft', peaceable and complementary to those of their male colleagues, a sentiment expressed readily by participants (Chapter 6, Section 3). These discursive silences therefore help to position female soldiers as *peacekeepers* (Charlesworth 2008) or as civilian victims (Moser & Clark 2005); furthering the difference between women in the military and their war fighting (violent) male colleagues. This point also correlates with the difficulty (and contradiction) of conceptualising violent women in the construction of militarised femininity detailed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1 & 2.2.2. (See also, Sjoberg & Gentry's (2007) critique of 'women's violence' in global politics)

The broad narratives and supporting documentation produced within and by NATO concerning UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda portray, almost exclusively, these positive (non-violent) contributions of women to both the establishment of the gender perspective and alliance success more generally. This discourse is often reinforced and illustrated by pictures of smiling female soldiers holding children and integrating peacefully with the civilian population³⁰. Indeed, NATO's official '1325 logo' (Figure Three) - used in social media presence addressing UNSCR 1325 and increasingly on official documentation (NATO, 2013a: 26; NATO 2013b: 1) - portrays the silhouette of a young woman, arms outstretched, reaching skyward³¹. In one respect this is not surprising. NATO, like many

organisations, promotes a (sanitised) image of itself for public consumption that draw upon and reinforce specific representations of masculinity and femininity.



Figure 3: NATO's 1325 'logo' used on the Facebook page of NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security and on official NATO documentation from 2013 ©NATO

The institutional framing of 'gender issues' and military women more generally in a positive, progressive light is not unique to NATO; Gibbins (2011) identified similar norms operating within the context of the UN, particularly in relation to UNSCR 1325. She asserts that UN language is based around utopian visions generating hope of radical change and that UNSCR 1325 is situated (and saturated) in an institutional discourse that places the contribution of women to peace making as inherently positive. She argues that the Women, Peace and Security agenda within the UN is therefore shaped by the pre-existing practices and expectations within the Security Council whereby positive and uplifting speech is valued (2011: 532). These master narratives (of positive progression) become naturalised thorough a process of repetition and interpretation. Anyone who challenges these institutional ways of speaking is either silenced or marginalised³² (Gibbins, 2011 – See also Chapter 1, Section 2.4).

Speaking at the NCGP 2013 Annual Meeting, Sir Richard Shirreff (Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe) described NATO as a 'values-based organisation' and situated the work of the Committee in 'words and values' of the North Atlantic Treaty. Whilst not distinctly 'utopian' in orientation, NATO espouses notions of collective security, 'democratic ideals' and the 'rule of law' (Chapter 5, Section 2.1):

“NATO's partnerships make a clear and valued contribution to Allied security, to international security more broadly and to defencing and advancing the values of individual liberty, democracy, human rights and the rule of law upon which the alliance is based” (NATO, 2011a: 2.1)

UNSCR 1325 becomes framed in these wider liberal democratic, progressive ideals. To speak of failure does not fit comfortably with these ideals and with this message. Violence

and death therefore do not feature prominently in NATO's account of itself despite the organisation being involved in active combat operations in which NATO soldiers enact and are subject to extreme violence. Peace building and security provision are therefore promoted over violence and war fighting in NATO's representation of itself and its activities and provide the context within which the gender perspective is produced.

The accounts that follow can be viewed as evidence of gendered institutional narratives operating within NATO, intersecting with the NATO's interpretation of UNSCR 1325, becoming naturalised via processes of repetition and interpretation. In this sense they represent a particular way in which the 'new' *norms* of the gender perspective are *normalised* (True, 2011). The perception of the 'successes' of female soldiers within operations as positive, progressive, non-violent and relatively unproblematic, sit comfortably with, and contribute to a (re)production of wider 'NATO values'. The watermelon and wedding stories detailed below, are situated within (and saturated by) this wider institutional discourse whereby successes are seen as inspiring, as motivational and importantly as something that can be replicated and institutionalised as organisational 'indicators'.

2. Systematic Success: Making Gender Measurable

Building upon the 'strategies' developed by the participants outlined and analysed in the previous chapter, the remainder of this chapter will show how success in the process is made measurable in a systematic way. This section focuses on how participants described the proscriptive, systematic, process of integrating gender into NATO's everyday business – the process of standardising the gender perspective in order for it to become an institutional obligation (Benschop & Verloo, 2006; Eveline & Bacchi, 2009).

Ben was explicit in his desire to make certain elements of the process obligatory, particularly in the field of training and education:

“This is something that I got from a lady from the European Union, we need to oblige people to follow a couple of hours of lectures here in NATO...for example the soldiers who deploy to ISAF or KFOR they have to follow this course. We still need to know if they learn or not, if they are convinced or not, but they get education. Here in the NATO HQ people don't follow this kind of training and this should be compulsory”

There are two interesting elements contained within Ben's desire to make gender training and education compulsory within NATO HQ. Firstly, there is an indication of cross-organisational exchange of information on good practice. Ben identifies that a policy used in the European Union may be beneficial to NATO. Secondly the internal/external dynamic identified particularly by Anna and Mike in the previous chapter is again highlighted. 'Externally', (i.e. in an operational context) soldiers receive gender education as part of

compulsory training before deployment; however, there is no similar internal obligation for members of NATO personnel working within the institutional structure (i.e. NATO HQ). This also relates to Nora and Celine's concerns in regards to raising the profile of their work within NATO HQ. Perhaps most interestingly, Ben implies that whilst gender education/training can be made compulsory it is not clear whether these soldiers are 'convinced or not'. By indicating that standardised and compulsory gender education/training does not necessarily change the mind set of those receiving that training, he acknowledges that an obligation to do the training does not necessarily translate into change or a commitment to the process (see below). However, in his desire for this compulsory education to become institutionalised within NATO HQ Ben espouses a common, recurrent theme expressed by all participants that there should be a measurable, systematic process by which progress in integrating a gender perspective into NATO could be measured.

Participants described the benefits of consistent reporting as a way of obliging resistant sections of the organisation to take gender seriously. For Celine regular reporting was one way of ensuring progress:

“Once you have the task to report on a six month basis, you cannot tell the same things every six months, you have to see progress, so there was progress”

The logic in Celine's argument is that having nothing new to report to superiors after six months would indicate a lack of work and as within any institutional setting would indicate a failure on behalf of the individual or department concerned. Although Celine did not specify what exactly progress should look like - only that there should be progress - an example of this consistent reporting is the requirement of 'a paragraph addressing gender to be included in each NATO Comprehensive Operational Planning Directive, including a report on the number and percent Concepts of Operations (CONOPS), Operational Orders, Fragmentary Orders (FRAGOs), and Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP) documents that incorporate an approach for engaging women' (NATO, 2011b: 47). By standardising regular reporting in this way *progress becomes an obligation* – the process has to move forward and forward momentum is framed as an inherently a good thing. This progressive narrative continues to orient the process positively; and in regards to the analysis above the threat of failure is implied (as stagnation or non-progress) but not explicitly stated.

This theme was also expressed by Nora. Tasking departments to report on gender issues was seen as one way to make *individuals* responsible for progress and to highlight the consequences of inaction; as Nora states: “If it is not something that you have to report on, well there are no consequences”. In her view, for a gender perspective to be successfully integrated into NATO it had to become part of the institutional processes – if nobody asks

for it to be done, makes it a requirement, then inaction follows and the progressive momentum identified by Celine above stalls:

“If there is no report then nothing happens, if they don’t do it and if they haven’t understood why they need to do it, why should they? Nobody asked for it”

MH: So it’s about making it a part of a process?

Celine: “Yeah, making it part of a process, but also in that way make it relevant, make it something that they have to put on their priority list”

The desire for participants to incorporate a systematic process of reporting and training, one where inaction would result in (undefined) consequences highlights the tension between what Benschop and Verloo (2009) define as institutional obligation and commitment regarding gender issues. Benschop and Verloo’s research details how systematic reporting such as that identified by the participants is a way of obliging reluctant individuals and organisational departments to undertake a gender perspective/analysis of their work. An individual or department need not necessarily be committed to the process in order to be obliged to participate in it. This obligation becomes a method deployed in order to overcome institutional resistance, a way of engaging with the existing, reluctant attitudes to gender. However, Benschop and Verloo assert that obligation on its own is not enough to ensure the successful mainstreaming of a gender perspective (Benschop & Verloo, 2006: 30). Bacchi and Eveline (2009) agree with this position arguing that a level of commitment to the process must develop in tandem with these systematic obligations and that commitment can follow from obligation (2009: 579). However they argue that “commitment to gender analysis can only be sustained if people can see the relevance of gender to the work they do, and that this acknowledgement of relevance must become an organisational rather than individual one” (2009: 567-568) a point Nora identifies.

The focus on success as an institutionalised, largely bureaucratic process of reporting obligations is certainly not unique to NATO. True (2011) argues that gender mainstreaming has been readily assimilated in these peacebuilding policy processes because it is presented as an organising principle and guiding policy, that can be carried out with technical tools (2011: 87). Natalie Hudson identified similar constraints operating on gender mainstreaming initiatives at the UN; a point summarised by a UNIFEM Official expressing frustration at the primacy that instrumental arguments often take:

“Instrumental arguments are the only arguments that work with policy makers. Nobody is interested in women because it is the right thing to do or because it is about human rights – nobody. And that’s the best reason for working on gender in any area – just because it is right. We shouldn’t have to make everything contingent upon positive social development or democratic or peace consequences. It’s just right, but that just so doesn’t wash. So yes, instrumental arguments are very important” (UNIFEM Official, 2006 quoted in Hudson, 2010: 46)

Focusing on the importance of these instrumental measures of success is important for two related reasons. Firstly, it identifies the constraints operating on the participants' work. There is a need for the gender perspective to be measurable in ways that are replicable across the organisation. This frames the gender perspective as something formulaic rather than as a reflexive perspective informed by (unique and often highly variable) context. This formulaic approach also has an impact upon the ways in which complex stories and experiences of the gender perspective from an operational context become simplified and reduced to a set of measurable indicators (see Section 3, below). Secondly, this generic institutionalisation exposes a tension between norms and normalisation (True, 2011: 73-88) of 'good gender governance'.

As was noted in Chapter 3, Jacqui True (2011) identifies that 'seemingly progressive international normative change involves a process of normalisation wherein certain ideas and practices are taken for granted and thereby depoliticised' (2011: 74) a point reinforced by Charlesworth (2005). The bureaucratic, obligatory reporting identified above can be seen as one part of the process in which the 'gender' is normalised within NATO. True argues that this process of normalisation renders certain ideas, even that of gender equality, static (Ibid) and that making the gender perspective 'routine' and therefore normalised 'as opposed to reflective practice seems to run contrary to the very practices of gender analysis and feminist struggle in perennially making visible taken for granted power relations' (2011: 80). To return to Annica Kronsell's understanding of institutional norms explored in Chapter 3, the normalisation, the repetition of specific behaviours and practices (in this case obligatory reporting) by individuals within their daily (or, in this case six monthly) routines verify and reproduce the institution (Kronsell, 2005: 284).

These examples show how the bureaucratic processes of the alliance assert themselves. It is one way in which the 'disruption' of 'doing' gender is contained and controlled; dovetailing with the notion of relevancy outlined in the previous chapter. Defining success on these terms - by focusing on routine, instrumental processes - the normalisation of the gender perspective at NATO threatens to make *invisible* particular power relations rather than posing a challenge to them; the gender perspective is depoliticised via routine obligation. For example, Nora suggests that systematic reporting on gender issues is necessary to change institutional behaviour but that the reporting also had to be *relevant*. Again, relevancy and palatability become strategies of the participants, entwined within the 'normalisation-via-routine' process. As Anna identified (Chapter 7, Section 6), for gender to be placed on the priority list of those in command it has to be made palatable for the intended audience, for it to 'wash' (in the words of the UNIFEM official) therefore the arguments need to remain instrumental and measurable within pre-existing organisational

parameters. What Nora implies is that obligation (to report) on its own is no guarantee of success – this reinforces Ben’s point regarding not knowing if the soldiers are ‘convinced’ in spite of receiving the compulsory training. Obligation, therefore, can change the organisational *requirements* of (resistant or reluctant) individuals; but for those individuals to invest in the process – to become committed - the obligations must be made relevant to them, thereby centralising their concerns and re-legitimising their power and priorities.

3. Watermelons & Weddings: *Stories of Success*

In addition to the proscriptive measurability identified above, NATO has also measured the successful development and *use* of the gender perspective by drawing upon certain case studies and reports gathered from the field, where NATO was engaged in active operations. These reports are made publically available via the NCGP and NOGP website and are available in hard copy within NATO HQ³³. The production and dissemination of these documents can be seen as a way NATO communicates success to both an external audience and internally, within the organisation. One document in particular was actively disseminated to delegates upon arrival at both the 2012 and 2013 NCGP conferences: ‘*How Can Gender Make a Difference to Security in Operations*’ (NATO, 2011b). Held up as an example of good practice, and of what the NCGP could achieve, the document represents the recommendations of the 2011 NCGP annual meeting. Therefore, its contents represent what the NCGP specifically wanted to promote to those attending.

This booklet contains five case studies³⁴, concluding with the formation of generic ‘*indicators of success*’, which include: indicators related to procedures and directives; indicators related to operational impact; indicators related to training and indicators related to human resources (NATO, 2011b: 47-48). Moser & Moser identify one of the challenges of developing indicators on gender concerns as being the need for ‘uniform criteria, determined by consensus’ (2005: 18). This document produced and disseminated within the organisation via the consensus of the NCGP (and the approval of the Military Committee) can be seen as an example of NATO’s attempt to provide proscriptive measurability to the gender perspective in addition to the obligatory reporting identified above; illustrated in this instance by the provision of ‘successful’ case studies with which the intended audience can associate.

Some of the case studies contained within the document were also re-told during the interviews, demonstrating how certain stories and particular narratives of success were institutionalised via processes of repetition and (re)interpretation. In this sense these particular stories had ‘currency’ within NATO (Cohn, 2000; Mittleman, 2004) that developed a particular string of signifiers (Deetz, 1992: 310) around ‘gender’, ‘women’ and

‘security’ which were familiar and relatable to their intended audience. This booklet therefore represents both the work of the NCGP and also the way in which the gender perspective was presented to the organisation, the wider public and to me, in a *palatable, measurable* way. It shows how gender becomes coupled to notions such as operational effectiveness and force multiplication in practice, calling into being particular notions of militarised femininity and masculinity and then coding these into replicable behaviours.

The following section analyses one of the case studies detailed within the booklet: *‘United States Female Engagement Teams in Sangin’*. Female Engagement Teams have been operational within Afghanistan since 2009-10, used by national militaries as part of counter-insurgency (COIN) operations. The use and framing of FETs has been subject to feminist critique. McBride and Wibben (2012) for example see the deployment of FETs as an attempt by the US military to reframe its presence in Afghanistan as a humanitarian and even progressive mission, wherein FETs signify ‘US civilisational authority’ over the (uncivilised) enemy other (2012a; See also Khalili, 2011; McBride & Wibben 2012b; Dyvik, 2013; Pratt, 2013). Here, I present NATO’s official account as detailed in the ‘Indicators’ document, detailing the Alliance’s framing of the utility of FETs in Afghanistan. This is then analysed in relation to one of my participant’s - Celine’s - interpretation and re-telling of this story. The story of the wedding follows. What these case studies and their retelling show is that the official gender analysis presented in the booklet is largely limited and reductive whilst the interpretations offered by the participants are much more detailed and yet reinforce many of the same essentialist assumptions. When these accounts are compared, the analysis shows that the use of gender to increase operational effectiveness and force multiplication effectively essentialises and reduces the gender perspective into roles for female soldiers. The gender perspective becomes embodied by the female soldier in a process that reinforces orthodox gendered stereotypes.

3.1 Watermelons: The ‘Gender Perspective’ in Action

Below I provide the full text of *‘Case Study 3: United States Female Engagement Teams in Sangin’* as it is presented in the ‘How can Gender Make a Difference to Security in Operations’ document (NATO: 2011b: 28). I provide the text in full in order to draw out as full a comparison as possible with Celine’s account, which follows:

United States Female Engagement Teams in Sangin: Female military personnel serve as successful interlocutors with local men

Female military personnel are not only effective interlocutors with local women but also with local men. The use of Female Engagement Teams (FETs) in Afghanistan increases the number of trained female military on patrol who engage directly with local communities. Near Sangin district in Helmand

province, Afghanistan in August 2010, a FET member with the Marine Expeditionary Force I (MEF) was the only interlocutor accepted by a male informant who shared lifesaving information about the location of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and the identities of Taliban supporters

Specific summary of Intervention

In mid-2010, Sangin district was heavy with insurgent activity and called one of the most dangerous areas of Afghanistan. Working alongside an infantry unit, a US Corporal was one of two members of a FET visiting a village in Sangin that had not yet been patrolled. The Corporal approached a male farmer and they began a lengthy conversation about his crops. The FET established excellent rapport with the male farmer, who was thrilled to be talking with someone who shared his enthusiasm for his favourite crop: watermelon. The farmer walked the Corporal to his field and gave her two watermelons as a gift. She accepted the gift and as they continued talking, the man revealed that he had information about the Taliban and security threats in the area. The Corporal told the man that she would alert her colleagues and that they would return to speak with him.

Upon returning to the Forward Operating Base (FOB) and sharing information about the situation, the unit Commander, intelligence staff, and others returned to speak with the farmer. The farmer received them and they sat in his field for some time exchanging pleasantries until the farmer revealed that he would not share the information unless the female Marine returned. While FETs are not designed to have a direct intelligence gathering purpose, the Corporal was sent for and asked to participate. She joined the conversation with the farmer who revealed the location of several IED belts laid in the area, as well as key Taliban conspirators in the area. The information was verified as correct.

What difference did it make to incorporate a gender perspective?

Significant information about local security threats was collected as a result of a FET member engaging directly with men. Female personnel can work within stereotypes to exploit gender norms towards achieving a desired end. The FET Commander in Sangin perceived that female military personnel changed the dynamic when in dialogue with men.

What impact did the intervention have on operational security and effectiveness?

The information provided by the male farmer to female military personnel had direct implications on force protection. The safe removal of several IED belts saved the lives of military personnel and created a safer environment for the local population. Beyond situational awareness, details about the identities of Taliban supporters helped to advance intelligence gathering to inform operations.

(NATO, 2011b: 28-29)

Upon first reading this case study, my initial question was: *what precisely constitutes the gender perspective in this interaction?* Aside from the female soldier engaging with a male

civilian farmer it was unclear as to how a 'gender perspective' specifically contributed to the success of the mission, or indeed, how the gender perspective was being viewed in relation to the official definition provided in Bi-SC 40-1. It would seem from reading the 'specific summary of intervention' that the development of rapport over a common interest and receipt of gifts was the most important factor that led to intelligence gathering. The gendered dimensions of this interaction are largely left unexamined or assumed by the official account which draws simply on the role and positionality of the female soldier.

There have been numerous studies on female peacekeepers - including FET members - that support the idea that women are generally more approachable than their male colleagues. As Valenius (2007) states, according to these studies female peacekeepers can approach local women better than their male colleagues and in some cases the male population perceive the female peacekeepers as more approachable (See Olsson, L. Skjelsbaek, I. Barth, E. Hostens, K. (eds.) 2004; Olsson, L. Tryggestad, T. (eds.) 2001). Pottinger et. al. (2010) assert that the approachability of FET members centres on their perception by Afghan men as a 'third gender' – accorded the respect shown to men, but also granted the access to home and family reserved for women. McBride & Wibben contend that this access is premised on an understanding of women as not 'real' (i.e. male) soldiers and therefore unthreatening (2012: 210). The case study presented by NATO can be seen to correlate with these studies, primarily acknowledging the *approachability* of the female soldier. However, unlike those studies above, what NATO's official account fails to do is to ask *why*.

Whilst it is made clear within this case study that the farmer would only reveal information to the female soldier, a meaningful analysis of the gendered interactions taking place is missing. Why was the female soldier able to interact more successfully than her male colleagues? Again, it is made clear that the farmer does not want to divulge information to the male soldiers, but again it is unclear why? These questions are left unanswered. The report concludes from this male/female interaction that: "*Female personnel can work within stereotypes to exploit gender norms towards achieving a desired end*" (Paragraph 4). The 'success', from NATO's perspective contained within the case study is obvious – information about the enemy was obtained and force protection increased. But what was it about the interaction between the female soldier and male farmer that led to the conclusion that female personnel can work within stereotypes and exploit gender norms in order to further NATO's goals?

The interesting question therefore becomes: how was this conclusion reached and what precisely does it mean? The specific summary of the case study does not make it clear what stereotypes the FET member was working within and what gender norms she was exploiting

in order to gain information from the farmer, other than being a woman developing a rapport with a man.

From an institutional perspective, the case study is clear and concise. Success (in the form of information gathering and force protection) is measurable in a way that facilitates a common understanding and the possibility of replication (Moser & Moser, 2005). However, the lack of detail speaks volumes; gendered norms and female stereotypes are *assumed*. In spite of the clarity of ‘success’, the case study is open to interpretation. The reader is left to draw upon their own assumptions in order to define what is meant by the exploitation of gender norms and what female stereotypes are. Success of the ‘gender perspective’ in military terms is definite; the *gendering* of the interaction is left to individual interpretation but premised upon assumed (essentialised) understandings of femininity and masculinity that are constructed within a military context, as Celine’s account below demonstrates.

As I outlined above the (re)telling and repetition of certain institutional stories during the interviews demonstrates one way in which understandings of the gender perspective, masculinities and femininities are (re)produced within NATO in relation to official documented accounts. This particular case study was re-told to me in depth by Celine, after I asked what success looked like to her, and what opportunities she foresaw in NATO’s gender mainstreaming process.

Below I present Celine’s account of the ‘watermelon story’ in full, along with my questioning. Again, I do this to provide the full context of what was said and in order to draw out a fuller comparison with the official account provided above. Celine identified this as a ‘*fine, fine*’ story. Again, contributing to the positive reinforcement of progressive stories about NATO’s pursuit of the gender perspective contained within the official documents – in the official account above, the farmer was said to be ‘*thrilled*’ at the interaction with the FET member. Celine’s (re)telling of this story shows how understandings of success are disseminated and (re)interpreted between particular sections of NATO’s organisational structure:

MH: So in terms of that example, having that gender perspective, does that help with intelligence gathering?

Celine: Oh yes. Its intelligence gathering, it is even force protection. There is another fine, fine story of a female engagement team, a US female engagement team. So, I don’t know if you know how they work?

MH: Hmmm, I have heard of them, but not really (pauses)

Celine: So you have regular patrol, and sometimes they take a female, corporal, sergeant, officer with them to talk to local women. It is not a structured patrol, it is occasionally and randomly. So one of these female corporals went with these patrols and she saw a farmer on the field and he was growing watermelons and she went up to him and said...oh, watermelons, I love watermelons, they are so huge and they are so big, I have watermelons in my home country – you know, so the farmer, his ego was stroked, he felt important for this female. So the patrol went and sometime later, that farmer went to the patrol leader and said, I have something to say. I have news about, exploding devices along the street, IEDs. OK so tell us what you know. No, no, no, I want to tell it but this female corporal has to be there so as I said she was not part of the regular patrol, so they got her to the place where the man was and there he explained that on a certain road, on that place, there were that many IEDs and when the engineers went there to de-mine them it was absolutely correct, the number, the place, the type of IED was absolutely correct.

So, if that female corporal had not discussed stupid watermelons, they would never have known. It's actually a bit like, growing some kind of relationship, in a kind of way that people get worried for your security. If that farmer hadn't known this, if he did not connect to this female, he would never have feared for her security, feared for her life.

MH: So, why did he not want to talk to the male soldiers?

Celine: Because the male soldiers are not interested in growing watermelons

The gender norms and stereotypes alluded to in the official document are much more explicit in Celine's account: the male's ego was stroked by the female who complimented him on the size of his watermelons. Although it does not come across in the quotation reproduced above, it is important to note that Celine altered her tone and manner when she stated that they were 'so huge and so big' alluding to a flirtatious interaction between the farmer and the FET member. In Celine's account it was not just the rapport that was key, it was that the man was made to feel important in a specific, gendered and sexualised way, by the FET member; in short, she flattered him. The development of a rapport between the two, based upon this sexualised interaction, had - in Celine's view - the consequence of the farmer becoming concerned for the FET member's safety; it invoked a form of masculinist protection that could be exploited. The farmer began to fear for her safety, in a way that he did not with the male soldiers.

This highlights an interesting portrayal and understanding of power within the story. The female was perceived to be vulnerable despite her being a fully armed, western military woman in a way that her male colleagues, were not. One of the 'gender norms' (alluded to in

the official account) here is the desire of the Afghan farmer to ‘protect’ the female soldier – it is therefore her *difference*, her perceived vulnerability coupled with the sexualised nature of the interaction, that was exploited in order to obtain information about IEDs and the enemy (See Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1 & 2.2.2)

The conflation between a gendered and a sexualised interaction is important. It raises significant questions about how the gender perspective is understood and deployed. Is the implication that information is returned simply in exchange for flattery from a female? Is it the role of the FET member to deploy her femininity in this way in order to ‘stroke the farmer’s ego’? And would this be an expectation in other encounters? Ultimately, if this is presented as a ‘success’ story producing indicators and an example for other female soldiers to replicate, what does it say about the perception of the role of female soldiers in NATO forces more generally? Is the gender perspective merely premised upon a reductive understanding of sex and (hetero)sexuality?

3.1.1 Men Have Gender Too

The interaction between the men in the story is also highly gendered and yet it is absent from the official account. When I asked Celine why the farmer did not want to talk to the male soldiers, she relates it back to the initial interaction, between the farmer and the female soldier and the rapport they established. The male soldiers in Celine’s understanding were not interested in watermelons, were not interested in the farmer and therefore failed to establish the rapport. A deeper gendered analysis of this particular interaction would suggest a more complex answer. Whilst it may be true that the male soldiers failed to establish rapport, the farmer is predominantly exerting control of the situation vis-à-vis the male soldiers in regards to the release of the information. The farmer is dictating the terms upon which the information is released. In his refusal to divulge the information to the male soldiers, the farmer controls the situation despite the power asymmetries between the men. The female soldier therefore becomes objectified in this exchange between men, a token to be presented to the Afghan farmer, by the male soldiers in exchange for information. This level of analysis is missing from both Celine’s account and the official account. The ‘positive’ focus of the story rests on essentialised and sexualised assumptions of the role of the female soldier in the solicitation of information from the farmer. The focus falls upon the FET member because she is the anomaly, the disruptive (and here, desirable) female body, surrounded by men and the competing, yet ubiquitous masculinity of both the US soldiers and the Afghan farmer. In this exchange she is the ‘particular something’ (Kronsell in Ackerly et. al, 2006) to their ‘universal nothing’. The interaction between the men is not analysed due to the ubiquity of masculinity and the ‘failure’ of the male soldiers to gain this

information is therefore not addressed. This furthers an understanding of the gender perspective, in an operational context, as primarily about women, demonstrating how their contributions are framed in an uncritical, 'positive' way.

The agency of the female soldier as it is presented in both the official account and Celine's interpretation becomes heavily essentialised (and sexualised). She is perceived as being vulnerable, is able to interact with the male farmer in a way that emphasises a specific understanding of her femininity in order to develop a rapport in a (flirtatious) way that the male soldiers could not. In this respect her femininity is *strategically deployed* in order to illicit information. A discussion about crops therefore becomes a highly gendered interaction intersecting with (perceived) disparities of power, militarism and heterosexuality all operating within a specific cultural context of rural Afghanistan. The (mis)perception of vulnerability/sexuality is manipulated to achieve a desired end. The female soldier in this respect is treated as an object, something to be used to further the operational effectiveness and force multiplication aims of the alliance. In codifying and understanding gender in this way, the femininity of the female soldier becomes 'strategically' deployed by NATO.

3.2 Success through (Mis)Perception & Objectification

Using this example as a case study of success, NATO reproduces traditional gendered stereotypes. Even if it does not explicitly define these stereotypes, the assumed (or perceived) vulnerability and need for protection is manipulated by NATO. I would argue that in one respect the agency of the female soldier is bounded in particular ways, as orthodox gender norms and a focus on sexuality still provide the context within which this 'successful' encounter takes place. And rather than challenge these (limited) interpretations, the Alliance is accepting and encouraging them.

It is worth noting that this offers a particular view of the expression (or lack thereof) of the agency of the female soldiers. It could also be argued that the female soldier is expressing power and agency through consciously deploying her femininity to manipulate a situation and gather information. Whilst still reductive it is important not to assume a lack of awareness of these gendered boundaries on behalf of the female soldier. It could quite legitimately be argued that the male farmer is being used and manipulated by the FET member. However, again this level of analysis of a nuanced understanding of the gender perspective is missing from the official accounts, as are first-hand accounts of the individuals involved.

This (mis)perception of western female soldiers as being vulnerable or harmless was also expressed by Ben. Although he did not re-tell the watermelons story specifically, he drew

upon some of the same narratives and offered similar interpretations to those of Celine in regards to female soldiers operating in Afghanistan. For example:

“In Afghanistan, women don’t have the same rights as men, they are suffering a lot and they need to be heard. Maybe in front of their husbands, their men, they don’t want to speak, but in front of female foreign soldiers they are like, they want to speak, you know you have heard this many times, many in Afghanistan think that female soldiers are harmless, that they are so nice, that they pick up flowers [laughs], this is good for us. They facilitate our approach, so it is a two way thing and I think it is very productive”.

Within this account Ben draws out the links between the female civilians and the female soldiers. In the specific cultural-social-religious context of Afghanistan it is easier for civilian women to talk to female soldiers. This is presented as a relatively straightforward assertion, however it is the way Ben links this to the perception of western female soldiers in Afghanistan that is interesting. Ben asserts that many (it is not clear if this many is men, women or both) believe that female soldiers are harmless, placid, flower pickers. Johanna Valenius’ work on Finnish peacekeepers in Kosovo identified a similar understanding – that female peacekeepers were seen as ‘kind women’ and that gendered stereotypes of women’s gentle nature, conciliatory attitudes work in women’s favour in peacekeeping missions (Valenius, 2007: 514). Here Ben details how these essentialised understandings of femininity are of benefit to NATO. It is another stereotype of femininity that women can ‘work within’ and ‘exploit’.

However, Ben also conflates the essentialised femininity of the female soldiers with the (assumed) position of Afghan women, homogenising women as a collective. Both groups of women are perceived as relatively powerless and harmless, in regards to men. Again, this perception of femininity is strategically deployed, allowing female soldiers to solicit information, in this instance from other women. Here it is a collective femininity (between civilian and military woman) combined with a cultural context that views women as less powerful than men, that is manipulated. Within these accounts skills, values and competencies are attached and defined by sex not as qualities in and of themselves – the sexed body becomes ‘thing’, a commodity to be deployed (Cornwall & Lindisfarne, 1994: 36) militarily. The context and complexity of these encounters becomes redundant as highly specific and variable case studies are filtered and reduced to those replicable behaviours and specific skills seen as strategically desirable; they are then deployed accordingly. In this sense a level of objectification is taking place (Moser & Clark, 2001: Sjoberg & Gentry, 2007); using the above examples to demonstrate ‘success’ to others within the NATO organisation furthers the objectification of gender, it turns gender into ‘something’ that can be used as a deployable resource. In this respect NATO is claiming the gender of the female

soldier as an organisational resource and by codifying it in such a way, (re)claims the power to deploy it.

3.3 The Wedding: Complexities and Contradictions

As identified above, one of the perceived successes of having a ‘gender perspective’ was that it facilitated access to civilian women, often described as the ‘silent fifty percent’ of the population (See Section 5, below). In one respect this is what UNSCR 1325 calls for, the increased participation of women at all levels. However, the way in which this interaction is framed produces a reductive gender perspective expressed simply as women talking to other women; specifically, military women gaining information from civilian women that further NATO’s objectives and goals. Yet, the role of civilian men and their interaction with the female soldiers was drawn upon throughout the interviews. Like Celine, Grace drew upon the role of the FETs and the civilian men to talk about what success looked like:

“I’ve noticed that these female engagement teams that the American’s use, we’ve got statistical data to prove this, the men would go up and talk to the women and tell them things, sometimes it was just idle chit-chat, like there is going to be a wedding here this weekend, so if you hear any celebratory fire don’t worry”.

MH: Sorry, do you mean that the Afghan men would go up to the female soldiers?

“Yeah, and so I think that the intelligence corp. have realised that there is this difference between men and women and that women in some sort of espionage or intelligence role, might have more to gain. And in a way, in Afghanistan they can talk to men and women”.

Again, Grace asserts the ‘information gathering’ role that female soldiers can bring to NATO missions. Female soldiers are able occupy a double-positionality, facilitating interaction (and therefore information gathering) with both men and women. The example of the wedding that Grace draws upon was also mentioned by Celine:

“It was a Swedish gender advisor working in a PRT in ISAF, and she tasked the patrol leader to talk to women. It was a bit difficult but in the end the patrol succeeded in talking to women and, you know, started a conversation; sometimes, not so easy and took some time. One of the questions they asked were: ‘what are you looking forward to?’ ‘What is going to happen in your life in the coming days and weeks?’ And the women said that they were looking forward to a big, big wedding. So there was a big wedding and that they expected like six hundred guests. Now these six hundred guests if they had come from different villages around, it’s like a mass of people moving on the roads and blocking the roads, making the fact the military convoys couldn’t pass any more or had difficulties to pass. They also, when there is a big party like that, they used to fire in the air and if the patrol leader did not mention that to his commander, it would have been like: ‘what’s happening?’ All those people on the streets, is there a riot coming up? And then when you hear shooting this could be a security incident”

Interestingly there is a discrepancy in Grace and Celine's telling of this particular story. In Grace's account it was female soldiers who approached civilian men, for Celine it was male soldiers (instructed by a female gender advisor) who gained the information from civilian women. I asked Celine to clarify whether it was male or female soldiers who gathered the information, she replied:

“It was a male patrol talking to local women, but when you as a patrol leader talk to the elder of the city or village or talk to other men, they will never mention a wedding. A wedding for men is not important, but for women it is important, but for security it is also important to know that something is going to happen and that it is just only a wedding”

At one level this could be read as Grace and Celine offering slight variations of the same story. However, whilst the discrepancy may seem minor – whether the female soldier elicited the information directly from the civilian men or whether the male soldiers approached civilian women on the advice of a female gender advisor – the way in which the female soldier is positioned is symptomatic of how Celine and Grace viewed both the role of women as well as gendered perceptions of security. For Celine, the male soldiers needed to be ‘tasked’ to talk to women by a female gender advisor. Their ‘male perspective’ (Chapter 6) impedes their interaction with local women and therefore negatively impacts upon security – adding the female perspective (executed via the male soldiers) aided in the successful information exchange. Grace's account builds upon her earlier, more explicit comments about NATO seeing the use and value of ‘their female soldiers’. Interestingly, she tells of the civilian men actively approaching the female soldiers, again implying a more accessible quality of the FET members – NATO then capitalises on this quality in order to gain information. In Grace's account it is not the female perspective that is successful it is the *physical presence* of the female soldiers in attracting the attention of the civilian men (in a similar way to the watermelons encounter above). Both accounts position the women as ‘information gatherers’ however, Celine reinforces her earlier views on the essential difference in the male/female perspectives whilst Grace draws out the way in which a ‘successful gender perspective’ is still read and facilitated through the presence of a female body.

4. Grand Narratives of Success: The Fifty/One Hundred Per Cent Claim:

Building on the notion of women as either effective information gatherers (FET members) or an untapped information resource (civilian women), one of the most repeated assertions when talking about ‘success’ was that mainstreaming a gender perspective into operational planning allows NATO to talk to ‘*one-hundred per cent of the population*’. This claim was repeated during the interviews and multiple times at the 2012 and 2013 NCGP annual meetings and within official documentation:

“The PRT (Provincial Reconstruction Team) Commander and Chief of Staff had been vocal about their interest in engaging “the other half of the population” (NATO, 2011b: 29)

“Gender Perspective is a tool used to better understand society as a whole” (NATO, Bi-SCD 40-1, 2012: 11)

“NATO-led operations will deploy the capacity and capability to engage with the entire population, men and women, girls and boys” (Ibid)

The justification for the claim rests on two (highly problematic) assumptions. Firstly, without a ‘gender perspective’ fifty per cent of the population (women) are not engaged with and remain silent. This draws upon the ‘different (male/female) views of security’ identified in Chapter 6, totalising the ‘powerlessness’ of women more generally. Following this logic, the claim implies that if a gender perspective is absent, the male view of security will dominate and therefore women – in this case civilian women and their perspectives – will not be deemed relevant. The second assumption is that a ‘gender perspective’ opens up access to and provides a voice to the ‘silent’ fifty per cent. This is based upon the notion – demonstrated by the case studies above – that women (soldiers) are better able to talk to and engage with (civilian) women.

The desirability of engaging with the ‘whole of society’ was framed in distinct ways by the participants. For Ben, a gender perspective allowed for protection of the weakest fifty per cent:

“I don’t know why men don’t believe in this, because like I told you it is very rewarding, it is very useful and you always get something good back and it is just basically you are paying attention to fifty per cent of the population who deserve it, who are worth paying attention to”

“Nobody cares about boys and girls, or women and they are fifty per cent of the population, they are the weakest part”

Here Ben’s essentialising is again wrapped up in narratives of masculinist protection, here as a way to convince reluctant male colleagues of the utility of the gender perspective (See also, Chapter 6, Section 5.2.). Again, the implication that ‘something good’ always comes back from the use of the gender perspective - as well as it being personally rewarding - further reinforces the generic positive framing identified above.

For Anna there was a direct benefit to engaging with this ‘silent’ fifty per cent – it improved operational effectiveness:

“Also, to help our mission to help to understand the different security concerns and so to contribute to operational readiness and operational effectiveness – and also that the main purpose is to engage with one hundred per cent of the population as I always say at the conferences, not only with fifty per cent of the population”

“Well, basically that is the same thing I mentioned before; if we only look at, if we only take into account the situation of fifty per cent of the population then we miss fifty per cent – so we run a big risk here”

Anna begins by framing her argument in one of the key aims of UNSCR 1325 – namely to understand the different security concerns (of women and children). She then homogenises these security concerns into distinct male/female spheres, in much the same way that was outlined in Chapter 6. For Anna, one of the main benefits of NATO mainstreaming a gender perspectives into its operational planning and views of security was it enabled NATO to engage with one hundred per cent of the population – to ignoring women is consequently framed as a strategic risk. Interestingly, Anna was cautious about portraying her work solely as gathering information *from* this fifty per cent; this group also represented a previously neglected audience for information dissemination:

“I just wanted to highlight that it is not only for information gathering it is also about information dissemination to the population; meaning that we are disseminating our messages not only to fifty per cent of the population but to men as well as women in order to inform everybody about what we are doing”

Here a gender perspective helps to inform the civilian women about NATO operations, which in turn increases operational effectiveness and improves contact with the ‘whole’ of the civilian population.

There are a number of issues that arise when framing the success or benefit of the gender perspective in this way. To begin with the obvious – NATO cannot realistically claim to be engaging with one hundred per cent of the population. In Afghanistan this would mean contact with over 31 million men, women and children, in Kosovo over 1.8 million. Even if what is meant by ‘one hundred per cent’ of the population is taken to be some abstract notion of ‘target population’ or the population with a specifically designated theatre of operations (neither of which is clear from the use of the ‘fifty/one hundred per cent’ claim) this still seems incredibly optimistic. Another key problematic assumption in this claim is that all men constitute the ‘vocal’ fifty-percent. It assumes an equality of power relations between men as well as a ‘shared silence’ of women as a collective, thereby reinforcing a perception of male dominance and female subordination. In the same way as the analysis of the interaction between the FET member and the farmer failed to take into account the gendered power relationships *between* men, this grand narrative fails to address or to analyse men in any meaningful way.

One reading of this claim is in the frame of a grandiose statement or grand narrative, exaggerating the benefits of mainstreaming a gender perspective to a sceptical audience – as highlighted in the previous chapter. Increased access to a target population (regardless of gender) can be sold to command level as an operational asset, both for information gathering

and information dissemination. In this respect the claim can be seen as furthering or complementing the strategies to make gender relevant to NATO. However, I believe that the repeated use of the claim, both from my participants, at the NCGP Annual Meetings and within the official documentation also draws upon the way in which gender, is framed throughout the mainstreaming process and within the organisation. The claim is consistent with the essentialising tendencies that have been shown throughout this thesis. Here ‘Men’ and ‘Women’ are homogenised into distinct, separate groups; complementary fifty per cents of a societal ‘whole’ – in Ben’s account women (and children) are reinforced as the vulnerable, victimised fifty per cent. Men and women occupy distinct spheres characterised by differences in understandings of security – this further reduces understandings of who occupies positions of power (and indeed what constitutes ‘power’) within a particular group population, to one based solely on sex. These statements are also symptomatic of the narrative entrapment identified in Chapter 3 and shown above. In one way it doesn’t matter that the claim is demonstrably false. The fifty/one hundred percent claim is a signifier, used as a short hand and imbued with particular meanings. It presents an image of NATO as inclusive, progressive and as listening to the marginalised and silent. In this understanding NATO again, is portrayed as benevolent protector of the vulnerable (Young, 2003), with its progressive gender perspective framed as a tool to give women a voice. In this regard, the oversimplification of the claim renders the utility of the gender perspective ‘tellable’ (Deetz, 1992). Much like in the watermelons and wedding stories, the success of the gender perspective is retold as an asset that furthers an ideal, symbolising something that the intended audience deems important, rather than representing a much more complex reality (Cohn, 2000).

The ‘fifty/one hundred per cent’ claim – used as a signifier - negates the need to ask more nuanced questions of whom precisely NATO is ‘talking’ to – *what* women and men are they talking to? *Who* are they (Sylvester, 2013)? And do the relatively small amount of both women and men that NATO interacts with speak for their respective sexes? There is also an implicit assumption, within the claim, that NATO is engaged in a *conversation*. However, the complex power relations – this time between NATO conceived as a powerful organisation that can make audible the silent voices of the civilian women – are completely neglected. There is no indication when using the claim that intersections of power, ethnicity, class and status of the men and women have been taken into account, though in regards to power and position within communities, this must be a primary consideration for NATO. Again, the gender perspective is reduced and oversimplified in its normalisation and ‘re-telling’. Whilst these concerns may be addressed at a micro-operational level (and it is not clear, from the interviews, that they are), the repetitive use of the ‘fifty/one hundred per cent’

claim as a benefit or success of the process totalises and oversimplifies complex intersecting gendered power relations that exist both within civilian populations as well as within NATO military forces.

It further conflates the gender perspective in an operational context with women (in this case *access* to women) and neglects the gendered interactions *between* men and women and *within* each 'category'; reinforcing a perception of fundamental difference that sustains rather than challenges orthodox stereotypes.

5. Women's Presence: Internally Problematic, Externally Valuable

The above accounts situate the female soldier as a valuable resource for NATO. In framing her as an information gatherer - navigating and manipulating cultural perceptions of her vulnerability, sexuality and harmlessness - she becomes highly effective, she becomes *relevant*. Her gender is deployed and utilised by the organisation in these specific ways. These understandings are captured, re-produced and institutionalised via official documentation and institutional narratives. The complexity of the experience of both the men and women involved in these stories is stripped away; they become representatives of their respective sexes. The FET member does not have an ethnicity, a nationality, a social class or an identity other than that of 'woman' (soldier) in these accounts. As Deetz (1992) argues, stories develop strings of signifiers that 'are more real than any people or events that are discussed...like the construction of any news, complex events with multiple perspectives are not as tellable as those with clear polar conflicts' (1992: 310). Likewise Cohn (2000) asserts that the power of stories lies not in their evidentiary value but in their ability to 'condense and symbolise something people believe and think is important, even granting that some of the stories may be based on events that really happened (as the stories above were), they function as myth, constructing foundational meaning and sufficing the discourse' (2000: 146). Within these stories then, the gender perspective – reinforced and enacted through the female body - is framed to reinforce something that people in the military believe and think is important, 'operational effectiveness'. Here (contradictorily and ironically) the distancing of gender from the problematic 'women/female stuff' (outlined in Chapter 7) to signify 'operations' is facilitated by the presence of the female body and her *information gathering* potential (a point returned to in Chapter 9).

This is in direct contrast to the problematic nature of women as *information disseminators* *within* the organisation, as demonstrated in Chapter 7. Here the female body is associated with problematic notions of equality, women's rights and 'female stuff' – 'gender as women'. The value of the information delivered is pre-judged by the same perceptions of femininity that facilitate such external successes. The case studies allow for these

perceptions to become codified and reinterpreted. Both internally and externally then, 'gender' is read through and imprinted on the female body by the intended audience. This correlates with the internal/external binary and distancing strategies that Anna and Mike articulated (Chapter 7, Section 3). Gender as something 'out there' as something happening externally was unproblematic as it could be easily associated with relevant concepts of force multiplication and operational effectiveness ('gender as operations'). Discussing gender as a concept internal to the Alliance becomes much more problematic as the relevancy is less immediately apparent. The above accounts draw into sharp focus the contradictory positions that women within NATO occupy, they are simultaneously, internally problematic and externally valuable.

Analysing the seemingly contradictory position (and value) of women internally and externally exposes a tension between what Jacqui True (2011) identifies as embodied and regulatory norms. Women, women's agency, women's bodies – the embodied gender norms (and in regards to the Executive Summary, their *exploitation*) is strategically valuable only in particular contexts. Here the regulatory norm of the gender perspective utilises and accommodates (rather than challenges) the pre-existing embodied gendered norms within NATO. This reinforces the problematic internal position occupied by women whilst at the same time amplifying the use and strategic deployment of particular essentialised understandings of female agency externally. As True states:

“Mainstreaming often strategically deploys and reinforces traditional embodied gender norms at the same time as it has made it easier to use women's rights, participation and productivity as a means to achieving...security goals that are often not directly connected to women's rights and empowerment” (2011: 87).

It is difficult to see who or what, other than NATO's goals and objectives, is being empowered within the above stories.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the concept of success, how it was articulated by the participants and how it was represented in some of the key documentation. Three interrelated representations of success were identified: the systematic, formulaic success of obliged reporting; the distilling – and (re)telling - of stories of success into a set of replicable indicators; and grand narratives of success that serve to both homogenise and essentialise. All of these representations/articulations of a successful gender perspective are framed by a wider narrative of positivity; one that draws upon and facilitates a particular understanding of NATO specifically and of women's involvement in peacekeeping more generally. What this chapter has shown is the attempts to *normalise* the gender perspective into NATO's

institutional and operational structures through obligation and the (re)telling of particular events, reinforce a framing of 'gender' and the gender perspective to signify operations. The fact that particular stories were re-told throughout the organisation is evidence of at least a partial success of this approach. It has exposed the tension between identifies as regulatory and embodied norms (True, 2011). This chapter has also highlighted the role of those embodied gendered norms, wherein the female body is both externally valuable (in certain limited circumstances, such as the interaction with the farmer or as an interlocutor) whilst remaining problematic, internally, within NATO (where women are seen to lack credibility). By focusing on how success is understood this chapter has further exposed the ways in which potentially dynamic understandings of gender can become entrapped in reductive, essentialised narratives (Mittleman, 2004; Shotter: 1993). These narratives signify particular understandings about 'gender', 'women' and 'security' that reinforce what the organisation already deems to be important. There is a danger that if the gender perspective is understood in such a way that it will become static, not just as a monotonous reporting obligation, but in that context, variation, nuance and reflexive practice will be stripped away in favour of replicable indicators and grand narratives that essentialise women and femininity whilst leaving men and masculinity unacknowledged and therefore unanalysed.

Chapter Nine

Better Than Nothing? Key Findings & Conclusions

Introduction

This thesis has presented a critical, feminist analysis of NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325, the Women, Peace and Security agenda and development of a gender perspective. Utilising the concept of 'disruptive' policies and bodies within institutions of hegemonic masculinity – centralising the interaction between the documents produced by, and the accounts of individuals within, NATO - this research has provided a unique account of how gender mainstreaming initiatives disrupt, but are also conditioned by, international organisations in highly gendered ways. In addition it has exposed how those policies and their normalisation disrupt, condition and produce gendered individuals within NATO. The key findings of this thesis can therefore be broadly grouped under three themes: 'Acceptance and Disruption'; 'Resistance and Control'; and 'Gender Governance'; these themes form the structure of this concluding chapter. In addition, this chapter situates these findings in relation to a question I have been asked repeatedly - by participants, colleagues and peers – in the process of researching and writing this thesis: Is NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda better than nothing?

I acknowledge that posing this question comes close to offering a reductive 'good/bad' judgement, the type of which I was – and am – keen to avoid. However, the purpose of using it within this chapter is threefold: to offer an evaluation of the *specific* findings of this thesis in relation to the *broader* (theoretical and empirical) context; to address a personal unease with some of the findings; and to suggest areas for further research.

1. Acceptance & Disruption

To begin with the obvious: at perhaps the most general level what this thesis has shown is a willingness by NATO to engage with UNSCR 1325. More specifically, this willingness to engage is, at an organisational level, enthusiastic, well publicised and increasingly complex. Chapter 1 (Section 3) and Chapter 5 set out the key developments within NATO doctrine designed to facilitate an institutional engagement with the UNSCR 1325 and the Women Peace and Security Agenda and the development of a gender perspective. There are two questions that emerge from this generic finding, the first is *why?* Why has NATO engaged with this agenda, what are the organisational motivations and what rationale was produced? Secondly, what are the *effects* of that engagement – both at an organisational and individual level? The question of organisational motivations is addressed under the section on 'good' gender governance below (Section 4). The answers to the second question - as expressed via

the findings of this thesis - are a good deal more complex, but can be summarised as follows: NATO's acceptance of and engagement with UNSCR 1325 has been inherently *disruptive*.

To begin with – as Chapter 5 outlines – by engaging with UNSCR 1325 NATO has implicitly acknowledged that something was lacking, both in its organisational structures and operational planning. This 'lack' is implicit in the sense that an organisational deficiency or failing is not explicitly voiced – at least not in the official documentation or policy. However, UNSCR 1325 was established to correct a problem, to address an imbalance – the underrepresentation of women in international peace and security considerations. By explicitly engaging with this agenda NATO implicitly recognises the deficiency of its own organisational structures – a lack of a gender perspective and the underrepresentation of women within NATO more generally. This is important as it both provides the context and sets the framework for subsequent organisational and institutional responses to UNSCR 1325 and the development of a 'gender perspective'.

Using this logic, I have argued that UNSCR 1325 (and NATO's policy responses) can be viewed as a 'disruptive' policy, in the sense that it problematises pre-existing organisational norms and structures within NATO. Engaging with UNSCR 1325 asks 'new' things of the organisation and individuals that go against established practice and behaviour. That UNSCR 1325 specifically focuses on the role and place of women compounds the disruption further. If the norms and structures are deemed to be lacking a gender perspective or a consideration of the role and place of women, then the implication is they are by default masculine perspectives and considerations. Engagement with UNSCR 1325 in this sense disrupts the *gendered* nature of pre-existing organisational norms and structures. The 'masculine space' of NATO, so vividly expressed by the participants, becomes exposed.

Further to this, the findings have shown how this disruptive policy both intersects with, and creates, 'disruptive bodies'. Kronsell (2005; 2012) has argued that the presence of women within institutions of hegemonic masculinity is inherently disruptive as it challenges the 'ubiquity' of masculinity within organisations such as the military (Chapter 3 Section 2.4). In this sense, the women I interviewed were already 'disruptive' to the masculine norms and practices of NATO – a point reinforced by their accounts of assimilation and adaption detailed in Chapter 6. By choosing to work on and develop gender policy within NATO the disruption presented by these individuals was furthered. Likewise, in the case of Ben – and to a lesser degree, Mike – it was shown how 'doing gender' for men creates disruption, as they actively transgress acceptable gendered labour roles (a point returned to below), thus presenting a further challenge to the pre-existing gender order within NATO.

So, is the acceptance and disruption outlined here better than nothing, better than a rejection of UNSCR 1325 and a continuation of the *status-quo*? Theoretically, yes. If gender mainstreaming initiatives are desired (rather than designed) to be transformative – and this is a highly contested if – then acceptance of policy initiatives and disruption to pre-existing norms are essential requirements; exposing the ubiquity, power and privilege of masculinity, problematising NATO as a ‘male space’ - one that is deficient in particular regards – must be a pre-requisite for transformative change. A problem first has to be acknowledged before it can be addressed. In this regard, acceptance of UNSCR 1325 has prompted ‘new’ conceptual language and new job roles. To return to Jacqui True’s (2003) notion of the importance of conceptual language discussed in Chapter 1, an argument can be made that these ‘new’ words and concepts – the gender perspective, gender advisors, the NATO Committee for Gender Perspectives - have “literally made it possible to think and see what was previously unthinkable or hidden” (2003: 374). Acceptance in this regard has made it possible to *think*, *see* and *speak* about gender at NATO. Arguably, this may not have occurred without an engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the subsequent involvement of individuals such as Anna, Celine, Nora, Mike, Grace and Ben.

However - *and it is a significant however* - the terms of this acceptance are limited and the extent of disruption is significantly curtailed. To paraphrase Robin Morgan (1996), the ‘lovely, seductive, dangerous’ words and ideas have arrived at NATO. What results from their arrival is a competition over their meaning and function; and it is in this tension over meaning – the way in which *particular* meanings are resisted, controlled and conditioned - that the pre-existing *gendered* nature of NATO reasserts itself.

2. Resistance & Control

The term resistance, used here, should not be taken to mean the development of an overt, ‘anti-UNSCR 1325’ agenda within NATO, there was no explicit ‘back-lash’ of this sort evident. Yet resistance does not have to be overt to be effective, indeed the resistance documented within this thesis was highly effective in conditioning and controlling the work of the participants. Broadly, this resistance and control took two interdependent forms: structural and discursive.

The disruptive policies resulting from NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 are conditioned by structural constraints. This took a number of forms, for example Chapter 8 detailed how disruption was conditioned and controlled via processes of institutional ‘systematic’ normalisation (Section 2) as well as the development of a set of replicable ‘indicators’ (Section 3). This systematic approach serves to enshrine an institutional *obligation* – but not necessarily a *commitment* to the gender perspective – by using pre-

existing structures and (in this case reporting) behaviours of the Alliance (Benschop & Verdoo, 2006). These procedural approaches are familiar even if the content or the consideration is 'new'. Reinforced by policy, consideration of the gender perspective becomes a requirement, *a task* that must be completed; in this way the 'strange' (gender considerations) is made familiar. This is evidence of a process of normalisation of which both True (2011) and Charlesworth (2005) are wary and yet is a feature of mainstreaming initiatives as varied (or perhaps as similar) as those in the Belgian government (Woodward, 2008), Australian public sector organisations (Eveline & Bacchi, 2009) the European Commission (Woodward, 2003) and the UN (Shepherd, 2008; 2011; Hudson, 2010; Gibbings, 2011). Here, gender is a retroactive consideration, in being made to 'fit' via 'bland and bureaucratic' mechanisms of routine obligation (Charlesworth, 2005: 2); gender is depoliticised, de-radicalised, and disruption is stabilised via this structural normalisation. Whilst these are legitimate concerns of systematic approaches to gender mainstreaming initiatives, in the case of NATO they are reinforced by a discursive normalisation predicated on conditioning the *meaning* of gender.

The key contribution of this thesis has been to expose the processes through which the meaning of the term 'gender' within NATO is (re)negotiated and (re)produced. This was negotiated at an organisational (Chapter 5, 8) and individual level (Chapter 6, 7 & 8). Primarily, this took the form of linking the gender perspective to increasing 'operational effectiveness'. This was evident within the various levels of analysis, from the doctrinal to micro-organisational processes and strategies developed and deployed by the participants to make gender relevant to the organisation. For example, in regards to the initial disruption of implicitly acknowledging a 'lack' or a 'deficiency' within pre-existing organisational practices and structures identified above, the documents produced by NATO serve to reframe this 'problem' as an 'opportunity'. The development of alliance doctrine and policy, such as Bi SC 40-1 advance the gender perspective and engagement with UNSCR 1325 on these terms: operational efficiency and force multiplication achieved via notions of complementarity in skills and perspectives that were in turn saturated, indeed trapped, in narratives of positive progression (Chapter 8, Section 1).

In this sense, the findings of this thesis confirm the problems identified by Hearn (2000) and Benschop and Verdoo (2006) regarding the dual-agenda of the organisation and the retroactive nature of gender mainstreaming initiatives being used to advance 'other' institutional goals (Moser & Moser, 2005). NATO's gender perspective has to compete, align and accentuate NATO's operational effectiveness if it is to be accepted and its utility deemed relevant. However, this represents only one element of the findings, it was not

simply enough that gender was taken to mean operational effectiveness, it also had to be actively distanced from an association with a particular framing of ‘women’.

In this respect, what this thesis has shown is the notion of women rights, gender equality and the role and place of women more generally remain extremely problematic *within* NATO. If gender was assumed to signify women’s rights, gender equality or ‘female stuff’ it was not only deemed irrelevant but inherently uninteresting to resistant men (and women) within NATO at varying occupational levels. *Perception* - of what gender was, or what it should be about – therefore had a profound impact on the work of the participants, prompting sustained efforts to distance their work from ‘women’ – as Nora stated: “I mention women, women, women, women, women, they fall asleep. So, we have to connect it all the time to operational stuff. Then they will keep awake”.

Efforts were also made to associate the process with masculinity. Male ‘champions’ were sought whose inherent ‘credibility’ was intrinsically tied to their masculinity which was in turn linked to the ‘operational’ sphere, thereby reinforcing the ‘gender as operational effectiveness’ message. Therefore whilst not actually side-lining women doing gender work, narratives of credibility (who has it, and in what context) serve to undermine female credibility in relation to their male colleagues. Framing gender as operations has the effect of reinforcing the positions of power and authority that men traditionally occupy within the organisation. The ‘*male-operations-credibility*’ association is evidence of how the power of masculinity is normalised within NATO via discourse and practice. It offers a mechanism – in the words of Charlotte Hooper – to both ‘stabilise the ingredients’ associated with masculinity in this context (2001: 230) and thereby limit the disruption ‘doing gender’ within NATO brings.

These findings have therefore exposed an inherent irony in NATO’s approach to developing a gender perspective: a process set up in UNSCR 1325 to advance the role, visibility and influence of women – to promote gender equality - is being actively distanced from association with these very concepts and reinforcing an association with masculine credibility and power. However, these processes of distancing and association are not linear, nor are they straightforward and can be seen to involve somewhat of a *double irony*. As Chapter 8 went on to detail, when conceptualised and framed in an operational context the gender perspective became fundamentally and exclusively about the role, place and position of women (both NATO personnel and civilian women). To borrow Nora’s words it was all about ‘women, women, women, women’. The gender perspective was defined by ‘female skills’ and ‘competencies’, reinforcing notions of complementarity. The ‘success’ of the gender perspective was highly dependent on the *female perspective* and in the watermelon

and wedding stories, almost entirely dependent on the positioning of the *female body*, wherein the FET member became reduced to her sex and her ability to ‘exploit existing gender norms’ (NATO, 2011: 28-29).

What these findings show is that the ‘disruption’ women embody - within institutions of hegemonic masculinity, such as the military – is highly conditional and contextual. Framing female skills and competencies as ‘soft’, ‘benign’, ‘friendly’, ‘approachable’ are less destabilising and more palatable to pre-existing gendered orthodoxy, when they are embodied by women in an operational, external context. This finding allows for a more nuanced understanding than that of women and femininity as ‘simply’ disruptive in a military/operational context. When framed as supplementary and complementary women’s perspectives and bodies can be packaged and deployed by NATO in a largely unproblematic way, indeed it can even be promoted by NATO as a ‘progressive’ measure.

However, women’s rights and gender equality as ‘internal’ concepts are inherently more disruptive as they pose a challenge to the entrenched positions of power and privilege that men and masculinity occupy within NATO. Therefore one association of ‘women’ with the gender perspective is actively encouraged, whilst the other is actively rejected. In this sense, the findings highlight a complex discursive and material struggle over the meaning of gender, which serves as a proxy struggle for the role and place of women within institutions of hegemonic masculinity more generally.

So, in returning to the question is this better than nothing? The theoretical yes offered when considering NATO’s acceptance of UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda becomes dependent on processes of discursive normalisation and the struggle over meaning identified above. In this sense, the experiences of the participants and the positioning of women (and men) within the documents presented within this thesis, expose the tension between what True (2011) calls ‘embodied’ and ‘regulatory’ norms (Chapter 3, Section 3.2). The ‘embodied’ gendered expectations and assumptions within NATO regarding masculinity and femininity, control and subvert the potentially transformative potential of ‘regulatory norms’, such as the gender perspective (True, 2011: 75). For example, the participants pursued strategies of accommodation rather than challenge to make gender relevant and palatable on the terms presented to them; the ‘new’ regulatory norms are readily accepted but only on the terms and conditions set by the embodied norms, which are in turn structurally and discursively reinforced.

Taking this into account the theoretical yes *remains* theoretical. Practically, the gender perspective cannot ‘escape’ the genderedness of the organisation (Benschop & Verdooy, 2006) at least not in the ways in which it is currently conceptualised and pursued. The

‘forces of the status quo’ have emerged with their interests essentially uncompromised, indeed reinforced – a reification of operations as a masculine sphere (complemented, but unchallenged by female presence); a promotion of inherent and unquestioned male credibility and male interests; a promotion of operational effectiveness and strategic benefits to the alliance. The ‘change’ that is being observed at NATO in regards to UNSCR 1325 is therefore reformative (Beier & Crosby, 1998: 273). Whilst this is not discernibly ‘worse’ than that which went before, it is difficult to conclude that it is in any way ‘better’.

3. ‘Good’ Gender Governance?

With the above in mind, this section addresses the findings in relation to the notion of gender governance. Within this thesis gender governance has been evident at both a general and an individual level. I will address both in turn.

At the macro-level, NATO’s enthusiastic engagement with UNSCR 1325 – as outlined above - can be seen to be symptomatic of wider, international efforts to produce and promote ‘good gender governance’. In one way this represents a ‘success’ of UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security agenda at forming structures and setting expectations of actors within the international system that have become entrenched over time (True, 2011: 73). UN resolutions continue to proliferate under the framework of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and NATO has become an active participant in their promotion:

“At a multilateral level, NATO and its Partners have joined a number of International Organisations, such as the EU and the OSCE, in contributing to the international community’s efforts in support of the principles of UNSCR 1325 and its related resolutions, and have advocated a broad approach to this global issue in the security field. There is increasing recognition that women have a crucial role to play and special skills to contribute to dealing successfully with the security challenges of the 21st century” (NATO, 20th November 2010: 2.2)

In this regard NATO’s behaviour has been governed by this emerging gender regime and international norm creation, that seeks to promote ‘more democratic, transparent and less corrupt government and to civilise international peacekeeping and thus bring about greater peace and security’ (Ibid). Here then, at a rather abstract level, NATO itself can be viewed as being whilst not quite a subject of, at least subject to, norms of international gender governance.

However, as has been identified, NATO’s willingness to engage with this agenda can be traced to both the elasticity in the interpretation of those norms and the unchallenged context of militarism more generally (Chapter 1, Section 2.4). Herein lays a tension that contributes to a personal unease with the findings. The (re)framing and (re)signification of what gender can and cannot mean in the context of NATO have been outlined above, but I want to pose

the following question in regards to the context of the relationship between UNSCR 1325 and militarism: does 'good' gender governance mask 'bad' military and strategic planning? By this I mean does NATO's involvement with norms of good gender governance both provide cover for and facilitate militarism more generally? This was not something I was able to fully explore within the findings that were generated, however it aligns with the concerns outlined in Chapter 2 regarding the co-option of a feminist agenda to advance and provide cover for the war on terror and the Afghanistan and Iraq invasions. At a general level linking the gender perspective primarily to operational effectiveness would seem to suggest so – alliance goals and aims are prioritised both discursively and structurally, and these goals and aims are inherently militaristic. But there was also more direct, if subtle, indications of this too: the delay of seven years between passage of UNSCR 1325 in 2000 and NATO's initial engagement in 2007; when Nora outlined the 'need for something more' in Afghanistan, coinciding with the word 'gender' 'being here and there'(Chapter 6: 113); and the way in which the development and 'success' of the Female Engagement Teams were drawn upon so readily by the participants and by the NCGP to promote 'progress'. Were organisational and planning deficiencies in Afghanistan therefore responsible for NATO's enthusiastic (at least at the organisational level) engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda?

Good gender governance – formalised in a readily deployable gender perspective and an array of gender advisors, but conceptualised as signifying an additive, complementary female perspective –used to shield or to compensate for (masculine) deficiencies in such a way, reinforces the concerns of Carol Cohn et al. (2004), Laura Shepherd (2011) and Pratt & Richter-Devroe, (2011) discussed within Chapter 1, Section 2.3. The burden of responsibility for success is passed onto women, resting on the *utility* of female perspectives and female 'competencies' in any given context. What then if the gender perspective does not remedy these deficiencies, does not advance operational effectiveness or force multiplication? The fate of gender initiatives that have their foundations conceptualised in such a manner is indeed precarious.

At the individual level NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda has called into being and legitimated an array of gender experts, gender focal points and gender advisors; 'new' ways of being a military woman or man within NATO have therefore emerged whilst 'old' ways have been simultaneously reinforced. This is facilitated by developments within NATO's institutional architecture – the NCGP, the NOGP for example - providing spaces within which NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the development of the gender perspective can be enacted. These spaces are conditioned by 'rules' that in turn govern these 'new' ways of being; where 'legitimate' ways of being a

man or woman, masculine or feminine, in this new ‘gender-aware’ context, are (re)produced. For example, the FET member (a ‘new’ way of being a military woman championed by NATO) was conditioned by pre-existing ‘legitimate’ and ‘palatable’ notions of complementarity; she was framed as a benign information gatherer who could manipulate and exploit her femininity (and sexuality) for a desired goal, whereby the ubiquity of masculinity, its power, privilege and prevalence in shaping an understanding of the ‘operational context’ is left not only unanalysed but fundamentally unacknowledged. Again, the status-quo remains largely intact and unchallenged. This is hardly a progressive or transformative understanding of the role and place of women or men within NATO forces.

What was perhaps most unsettling about this example in regards to gender governance at the individual level, is the way it was used within NATO as a *replicable* indicator of success. In this sense, the re-telling of this particular story reinforced a particular, highly essentialised, way of being a military woman in an operational context. It produces a framework for and reinforces limits on acceptable behaviour for her within a predominantly masculine space – in a sense it was a continuation of the assimilation, adapt or quit strategies identified by the female participants in Chapter 6. Using examples such as these to both *formalise* and *promote* the gender perspective sets rules that are not only constitutive of what women are allowed to do but also what they are allowed to be (Hirschmann, 1996: 57). This is fundamentally problematic; limited, essentialised, replicable ways of being (a woman within NATO forces) premised on these conceptions of femininity are certainly not better than nothing.

This thesis has also exposed gender governance operating within ‘micro-operational’ practices and performances at NATO. The macro, international gender norms of UNSCR 1325 are being institutionalised, (re)interpreted, made sense of and ‘lived’ by individuals within the organisation in myriad ways from the mundane to the intimate. From Celine’s bowl of sweets, to Grace’s shame at manipulating her physicality, to Nora’s need to make the gender perspective ‘sexy’, to Anna and Mike’s presentation skills, to Ben being the butt of his colleagues jokes. Engagement with UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda in this regard is affecting and conditioning these individuals in highly subjective ways – gender *mainstreaming* at NATO is producing a multiplicity of highly *individualised* responses that nevertheless draw upon and are framed by dominant (pre-existing) narratives of gender, masculinities, femininities and security.

These findings have exposed the power effects of the mainstreaming practice itself (Caglar, 2013: 314). It is not just that UNSCR 1325 is subject to pre-existing gendered power dynamics (both structural and discursive) within NATO; it is that the process of developing

the gender perspective, the 'new' institutional architecture, the 'new' (and old) ways of being a military man or woman, the impact upon and through micro-organisational practices are methods of power and control in and of themselves, producing and reproducing particular kinds of gendered subjects. These 'new' gendered subjects are produced by the gender perspective, which itself is conditioned by the pre-existing organisational practices, norms and discourses that have influenced its development. This production of gendered subjects enables NATO to actively engage with UNSCR 1325 and promote 'good gender governance' on a micro-individual level, an organisational level, and macro-international level, but fundamentally on its own terms, allowing the disruption that engaging with this agenda brings with it to be minimised.

4. Theoretical Reflections & Contributions

4.1. Feminism(s) and IR

Christine Sylvester asserts that IR does not conceptualise international relations as encompassing ordinary people (2013: 61), a common feminist critique of the discipline (Tickner, 1992, Enloe, 2001; 2010; Sjoberg & Via, 2010). Further she asserts that those individuals' experiences and interactions with actors that IR takes as canonical - the military or international organisations for example – are further neglected (2013: 61). Whilst I would contest the conception of 'ordinary' people, theoretically and empirically, this thesis has placed its focus upon that very interaction. It has shown not just the utility (again, a further contested concept bearing in mind the above discussion) but the opportunities that placing a focus upon such interactions can bring to advancing and deepening understandings of an organisation such as NATO, so often reified within IR. In this regard it has contributed to an existing and growing body of literature that centralises the experience of individuals within military organisations (Kronsell, 2005; 2012; Higate 2003; 2004; Duncanson, 2009; 2013). Here, the thesis has highlighted the utility of a critical feminist theoretical perspective, complemented by a composite methodology that centralises text, narrative and most importantly the perspective and experiences of individuals. Throughout, this thesis has been informed not only by a critical feminism – exploring the ideational and material manifestation of gendered identities within NATO – but also by a poststructuralist feminism that addresses *performative* and *linguistic* constructions of gender that have served to empower masculinities and devalue femininities (Tickner & Sjoberg, 2011: 6) in the process of NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325.

The voices, experiences and storytelling of individuals within the NATO system have been listened to; not the spokespeople or public diplomacy representatives of the organisation, but the 'ordinary' military men and women who have been tasked with this 'new' gender work.

In doing so, this thesis has generated new insights and knowledge by focusing on the struggle of gendered individuals with the structures and norms of institutions of hegemonic masculinity. This theoretical approach has highlighted how the *personal* and *professional*, the *individual* and the *international* are inextricably linked. It is hoped that the findings of this thesis will join growing and diverse feminist critiques of the absence of such links within the discipline International Relations.

Further, this thesis has furthered True's (2011) cautious theoretical critique of constructivism within IR, particularly around the construction and proliferation of 'good' gender norms. Constructivist IR has largely been uncritical about the process of norm creation and the power dynamics contained within that process (Ibid: 73). Viewed from this perspective international gender norms theoretically promote cooperation and consensus, facilitating liberal ideas (concerning gender equality) throughout the international system. In this sense international norms can become entrapped in narratives of their own making (Mittleman, 2004: 223); imbued with such positivity and 'progressive' politics (Chapter 5, 8) it becomes hard to see how these norms can be anything but a good thing. This thesis has problematised this construction. Indeed, as the empirical chapters – and the conclusions above – show the processes by which those international gender norms are interpreted and made relevant – *the way in which norms are normalised* – at the micro-level is inherently problematic and far from power or gender-neutral. For example, accounts of relevancy, operations, sexiness, humour, 'female stuff', credibility, maintaining interest, falling asleep, as well as the repetition of particular stories of success – the watermelons and the wedding – expose the discursive mechanisms through which gendered meanings and values are ordered (Cohn, 2000); as well as how these meanings become assigned to specific gendered practices and gendered individuals. They also vividly highlight what gets left out, from the ethnicity and wider identity of the FET member, to the unanalysed and therefore unchallenged role of masculinity more generally.

By utilising a critical feminist perspective this thesis has '*troubled* old and new norms, uncovering the biases, exclusions and silences' (True, 2011: 74) inherent in NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325. Remaining vigilantly critical of the ways in which these international gender norms are formed, deployed and utilised is not the same as disregarding them completely. I agree with Jaquette (2011) that norm change can be an effective feminist strategy, however, this should not be assumed to be unproblematic. As this thesis has shown, efforts by NATO to construct, disseminate and teach (new) gender norms are anything but counter-hegemonic (Jaquette, 2011: 90).

4.2. Militarised Gendering - Contradictions and Continuation

By placing a theoretical and empirical focus on the linguistic and performative constructions of gender as articulated both within the documents and the accounts of the individuals; this thesis has contributed to an understanding of the construction of militarised masculinities and militarised femininities as nuanced and ongoing processes. This process of *militarised gendering* contains both contradictions and continuation. The ‘warrior-ideal’ of militarised masculinity – outlined in Chapter Two - as a hegemonic representation of ideal masculine norms privileging a tough, stoic emotionless warrior, capable and willing to employ violence’ (Whitworth, 2005: 125), was not explicitly evident in the accounts of masculinity offered by the participants; whereas variation within masculinities and between ‘military men’ was articulated by some of the participants. For example, Grace acknowledged that not all men were resistant to the idea of a gender perspective or consideration of UNSCR 1325, that not all men were sexist. In addition, Ben and Mike embodied a different form of militarised masculinity both in their (‘transgressive’) job roles and in their interest in gender issues (as they conceived of them). Theoretically then, these findings correlate with others such as Higate (2003), Kovitz (2003) and Duncanson (2013) in asserting that a static, reified notion of a singular military masculinity is insufficient and problematic; and that ‘new’ and ‘different’ forms of military masculinity are possible. However, as Duncanson (2009; 2013) identifies the ability of these ‘alternate’ masculinities to challenge persistent embedded elements of the ‘warrior-model’ is questionable (2009: 63) as they remain *militarised* and in this sense are constructed in relation and opposition to a feminised other. This thesis has identified particular ways in which this feminised other persists at NATO and within the gender mainstreaming process. This was not an explicit othering via the violent misogynist, racist or homophobic messages that Whitworth (2005:125) argues are often delivered to new recruits through basic training and indoctrination exercises. Here it was a subtle manifestation of these themes infused and reinforced in places by a logic of masculinist protection (Young, 2003); for example Ben’s (re)assertion of his heterosexuality in the face of both a feminisation and a conflation of gender/sexuality by his peers; the male-operations-credibility nexus that was established to create and reinforce a male space; the (re)signification and distancing of the concept of gender with women’s rights and ‘female stuff’; and the ongoing and persistent essentialising of ‘men’ and ‘women’, ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ and ‘different’ views of security by (both the male and female) participants. These processes demonstrate how militarised masculinities, in all of their nuanced and plural manifestations are intimately bound to how ‘security’ is conceived of and the myriad ways in which they remain hegemonic (Connell, 1995).

The findings also allow for a more nuanced theorisation of the construction of particular types of militarised femininities. In one respect the military women interviewed and represented in the documents have moved beyond Elshtain's (1992) notion of the 'beautiful soul'. They have moved into roles of active participation in the formal structures of militarism, complicating understandings of 'soldering' as they do so (Sjoberg, 2007: 85; Enloe, 1993). Further, they are more than 'soldiers in high heels and lipstick' (Enloe, 2000 in Sjoberg 2007: 84) or representations of an 'idealised' militarised femininity in the Jessica Lynch mode (Sjoberg & Gentry, 2007; Turenne, Sjolander & Trevenen, 2010). And yet, persistent representations of a 'palatable' form of militarised femininity, constructed in relation and opposition to militarised masculinity, persist: as bearers of 'soft' skills and competencies, different yet complementary to those of men; reduced to a crude understanding of the role and value of her body and (heterosexuality) in the case of the FET member; and whilst not in need of immediate 'rescue' from her male colleagues in need of male credibility nonetheless.

What this thesis highlights is that varying constructions of militarised femininities and masculinities within NATO are therefore possible, they are multiple, dynamic and yet contradictory (Duncanson, 2009: 63); simultaneously challenging and reinforcing hegemonic ideals regarding the role and place of women and men within the organisation.

4.3. Institutions of Hegemonic Masculinity & Gender Mainstreaming

Building on the above, this thesis has contributed to a more general theorisation of NATO as a *gendered organisation*. This is unique within the existing literature. Within International Relations and Security Studies literature, NATO is often presented as a canonical international actor. Even within the more critical literature, little or no attention has been paid to the gendered nature of NATO's organisational structures or the gendered individuals that work within them. NATO has also not been a focus within critical organisational literature or studies of gender mainstreaming in the way that the UN, the EU or national governments have for example. This thesis goes some way to address this absence. In doing so, it has demonstrated the continued relevance of Connell's (1995, 2005) conception of hegemonic masculinities and its applicability to institutions such as the military (Kronsell, 2005; 2006; 2012). Primarily, the findings of this thesis expose how institutions of hegemonic masculinity (ibid) *remain* institutions of hegemonic masculinity despite challenge and change; that despite the presence of disruptive bodies, engagement with disruptive (global, gender) norms and the adoption of disruptive policy, a particular gender regime (Connell, 1995, 2005, 2009) that privileges the masculine persists within NATO.

The findings counter the critique levelled at Connell (1995) that the theoretical concept of hegemonic masculinity implies a fixed or static arrangement within a gender regime (Demetriou, 2001; Beasley, 2012) that is enforced by ‘active repression’ (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005: 848). Indeed, as is outlined above, there has been an active engagement with policy and global gender norms that would (on the surface) seem to challenge hegemonic masculinity within NATO and the strict gendered division of labour that has traditionally characterised military organisations such as NATO have become blurred (Kronsell, 2005; Chapter 3, Section 2.2.1), new and varied ways of ‘being’ a military man or woman have been created. Yet what this thesis has shown is that these blurred boundaries also provide an opportunity for hegemonic norms to reassert themselves not through active repression but via a conditioning and control of the ways in which those new norms (and gendered labour) are normalised; through the (re)signification of what ‘gender’ can and cannot mean and the incorporation of those (re)signified characteristics. For example, the skills and perspectives of the feminine other allow for a (complementary) hybridisation of masculine and feminine ideals in an operational context that facilitates the organisational aim of operational effectiveness. Hegemonic norms have incorporated (palatable and relevant) elements of the ‘other’ to maintain and reproduce their own relevance (Messner, 1993; 2007). This thesis has also highlighted particular ways in which women and ‘subordinated’ men actively reinforce hegemonic norms in their quest for relevancy. That hegemonic norms have to ‘work’ at remaining hegemonic in such a way - whilst implying a certain fragility and fluidity in their construction - should not obscure the very real power that they have: “gender subordination is often partial, subtle, and hybrid, both in its performance and in its results” (Tickner & Sjoberg, 2011: 229). Indeed, as this thesis has shown it is in this process of *reformative* change that gendered inequalities are reinforced.

Tickner & Sjoberg (2011) argue that there are a number of barriers to integrating gender emancipation into the existing structures of power in global politics (2011: 232). One of these being convincing the policy world that gender issues are important, this they describe as a ‘painstaking process that often must be done by arguing that gender analysis will make policy makers and bureaucrats better able to perform a wide range of policy tasks rather than arguing that gender analysis is valuable independently’ (Ibid). This is most certainly the case at NATO. If neo-liberal equality agendas enacted through gender mainstreaming initiatives are to continue to proliferate in such a way, then exposing the ways in which hegemonic masculine norms reassert themselves and condition the structural and discursive spaces within international organisations, such as that offered within this thesis, is essential work. Indeed, Tickner & Sjoberg (2011) go on to state that “feminists need to understand more

about how the policy world (both its formal and informal structures) work in order to communicate with and transform that world” (Ibid). It is hoped that the findings presented within this thesis will begin that work in regards to NATO.

5. Reflections on Areas for Further Study

5.1. NATO’s Ongoing Engagement with UNSCR 1325

I identified at the outset of this thesis that NATO was a relative latecomer to UNSCR 1325 and the wider Women, Peace and Security agenda. Given this, there has been a considerable growth in both the number of gender mainstreaming initiatives and their complexity within the organisation – some of which have been detailed within this research. However, since 2012, this process has intensified leading to several new developments that offer the potential for further study and analysis: the relationship between the International Staff and the International Military Staff and the development of new institutional architecture within NATO; and the role of the gender perspective in ‘new’ operational contexts.

5.1.1. The Development of New Institutional Architecture

This thesis has focused primarily on the developments within and the policy and doctrine produced by the military side of the Alliance (predominantly the IMS) as opposed to the political support structures and national government initiatives of alliance member states. As I stated in the introduction to this thesis and in Chapter One, this is a somewhat artificial separation undertaken here for analytical and methodological purposes. The relationship between the IMS, the IS, the Military Committee, national defence ministers and bodies such as the Public Diplomacy Division for example, is interconnected and complex. In relation to NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 the interconnectedness between the IMS and IS is one area which has undergone a number of developments. One of the participants in this research described to me the ‘stove piping’ within the organisational structure of NATO that served, in her opinion to keep developments within and communication between the IS and the IMS concerning UNSCR 1325, separate. In this sense, communication ran up and down the chain of command in the IS or IMS, not horizontally between the two.

Perhaps the biggest development in this respect has been the appointment of the Secretary General’s Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security. This position has, since being established in 2012 been occupied by Mari Skåre, a Norwegian diplomat. At the NATO Summit in Wales in September 2014 it was announced that Dutch diplomat, Marriet Schuurman, would succeed Skåre as the new Special Representative (NATO, 2012). The mandate of the Special Representative is primarily one of awareness raising and

coordination and cooperation with other international bodies such as the UN (NATO, Press Release (2012) 102). The creation of the Special Representation position has also increased cooperation and communication between the IMS and IS elements of NATO and gone some way to overcome the ‘stove piping’ of communication. For example Mari Skåre attended and spoke at the 2013 Annual Meeting of NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives.

In addition to this, in February 2014, the NATO Office on Gender Perspectives – a key focus of this research - was renamed the IMS Office of the Gender Advisor (NATO, NCGP Terms of Reference, February 2014). The developments in the institutional architecture of NATO concerning UNSCR 1325 are interesting on a number of fronts.

Firstly, I would suggest that the creation of a Special Representative represents a further level of ‘centralisation’ and ‘control’ over how NATO’s engagement with UNSCR 1325 is portrayed internationally. Over the past two years, Mari Skåre has very much become the public face of NATO’s ‘commitment’ to the Women, Peace and Security agenda. In this way the creation of the position is a manifestation of the increasing role and visibility (and proliferation) of ‘gender experts’ within international organisations and the importance attached to such positions. The developing relationship between this very public face of the Alliance and the members of, say, the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives is certainly worthy of further research.

Likewise, the name change of the NATO Office on Gender Perspectives is interesting. The NOGP implies a collective office, in support of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives. Renaming the NOGP, the IMS Office of the Gender Advisor has two effects. Firstly, it centralises the military component, foregrounding that this is an International Military Staff position. Secondly, it reframes the ‘collectivity’ implied in the name ‘NOGP’, centralising the importance of an individual – a singular gender advisor. Again, this is symptomatic of both a proliferation of acceptable terminology - ‘gender advisor’ - and the increasing importance attached to ‘gender experts’ within the organisational structure.

5.1.2. The Inclusion of the Gender Perspective in ‘New’ Operational Contexts

In addition to the changing nature of institutional architecture concerning UNSCR 1325, the focus of NATO externally is shifting as it withdraws from active operations in Afghanistan. Will the gender perspective still be seen as an operational asset in these circumstances? For example, NATO conducted air operations in Libya in 2011. What was the utility of Bi-SC 40-1, or the ‘Indicators’ document, in this context? Were any gender advisors consulted when planning these missions? Does/can an airstrike have a gender perspective? As NATO moves away from primarily having ‘boots on the ground’ in Afghanistan it is worth asking

the question: does the 'gender perspective' only work when it is a viable information gathering tool for the alliance?

UNSCR 1325 made the agenda of the NATO Wales Summit in September 2014 and a limited number of announcements were made in regards to NATO's continuing commitment to UNSCR 1325. However, the conference was dominated by the actions of Russia in Ukraine³⁵. The Afghan Women's network, Amnesty International and lobby group No Women, No Peace, criticised the summit for a lack of representation of women generally, but primarily the lack of representation of Afghan women. Considering NATO's past pronouncements regarding the role and importance of Afghan women, this was a glaring omission.

One of the major announcements from the summit was the creation of a new 'Rapid Response Force' of 4,000 NATO troops, conceived primarily as a way of bolstering NATO's commitment to the security of the Baltic States to counter the Russian 'threat' (NATO, Press Release 05/09/2014). Was the gender perspective considered when devising this new force? Will the perspectives of the men and women where this force is deployed be considered, before, during or after deployment? As the focus of the Alliance shifts from the 'old new' context of Afghanistan to 'new old' concerns about Russia and the territorial integrity of the Alliance, what are the prospects for a continued commitment to UNSCR 1325 and the Women, Peace and Security agenda? The ways in which this commitment is conceived of and manifests in such contexts is best served by a vigilant critical feminist perspective.

5.2. Men, Peace and Security/Gender, Peace and Security?

One area that is due further consideration is the increasing role of men within the Women, Peace and Security agenda. This thesis has identified the complex relationship between various forms of masculinity and UNSCR 1325 that impact upon both understandings of policy generated and the lived experiences of individual men working on UNSCR 1325 within NATO, such as Ben and Mike. I see the future developments in this area taking two, interlinked, forms. Firstly, there have been active efforts to devise a 'Men, Peace and Security' (MPS) agenda that seeks to engage more men with the work of UNSCR 1325. Examples of this include the Peace Women Project event held at the UN in July 2013 entitled '*Men, Peace and Security: Engaging Men and Boys to Promote Gender Equality and Eliminate Gender-Based Violence*'; and in October 2013 The U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), The World Bank, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Women in International Security (WIIS), Promundo – US, and Sonke Gender Justice, co-hosted a symposium titled '*Men, Peace & Security: Agents of Change*'. The aim of this

symposium was to better understand how the ascribed norms of men and masculine identities contribute to, and may even help mitigate, violent conflict and post-conflict. The developing relationship between these ‘Men, Peace and Security’ events and the wider WPS agenda provides an interesting area for further research especially considering the findings relating to the importance attached to the ‘credibility’ of masculinity exposed within this thesis. Will this MPS agenda provide a level of critical reflection on the role and work of masculinity within international peace and security that was so evidently lacking within NATO’s attempts outlined in this thesis? How responsive will organisations, such as NATO, be to such a challenge? Or will the evolution of these developments result in a combination with WPS under a more generic ‘Gender, Peace and Security’ banner in much the same way that ‘Women and Development’ became ‘Gender and Development’? What impact would this have considering the ‘emptying out’ and ‘defanging’ of gender as a critical concept - meaning all things to all people – in these initiatives? These are crucial questions to be addressed if this process continues.

Secondly, and perhaps more interestingly, is the impact that involvement with UNSCR 1325 and the WPS agenda has upon individual men’s own understandings of their masculinity. This thesis has shown that men involved with ‘gender work’ within institutions of hegemonic masculinity actively transgress gendered norms and expectations. Their involvement exposes them (and their masculinity) to challenge. This thesis began to address this in relation to Ben’s response to the feminisation and trivialisation he faced, and the strategies he deployed to counter these challenges (Chapter 6). An interesting question for further consideration is: does being transferred from a ‘universal nothing’ to a ‘particular something’ by involving themselves in ‘gender work’ result in any kind of reflection on behalf of these men in relation to their privileged positions (as Ben begins to do by empathising with women in armed forces) or on the work masculinity is doing within these organisations more generally? Or are these ‘moments of reflexivity’ shut down and conditioned by the lack of alternative discourses surrounding masculine ideals that simply promote a reassertion of masculinist protection (and heterosexuality, as in the case of Ben)? If gender mainstreaming is still hoped to be transformative, perhaps these moments offer the greatest opportunity to challenge the entrenched positions of power and privilege that masculinity occupies. It is certainly an area of considerable potential and one I am keen to explore further³⁶.

END NOTES:

¹ Many of the case studies and examples used in the documentation and in the accounts offered by the participants were drawn from experiences in Afghanistan

² Hafner-Burton & Pollack trace 'early gender mainstreaming language' to the creation of UNIFEM in 1984. The organisation was given an explicit mandate to 'promote the mainstreaming of gender issue across the full range of UN activities'. See also: Anderson, 1993 and Razavi & Miller, 1995 for analysis of early gender mainstreaming initiatives.

³ The Committee for Women in NATO forces underwent a similar 'conceptual shift' in 2009 with the creation of the NATO Committee for Gender Perspectives, see Chapter 1, Section 3.2 and 3.3.

⁴ This thesis centralises both the conceptual and discursive changes that occur when NATO engages with UNSCR 1325 and the experiences the participants - NATO's own gender entrepreneurs.

⁵ True does note some of the potential limitations and scepticism about the role of 'professional feminists' in the process of global social change. She also identifies constraining factors operating on gender mainstreaming's 'transformative potential' – the hegemony of market ideology and the 'theory-practice' gap (2003 pp. 383-385)

⁶ See the use of the term '1325' by my participants; See also Whitworth's (2005) critique & Mittleman's (2004) notion of 'narrative entrapment'.

⁷ Beier & Crosby's (1998) work focused on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, signed by 122 countries in Ottawa in December 1997. For a comprehensive account of this process see Cameron et al. (1998).

⁸ The participants in this research often described UNSCR 1325 in rather grandiose terms such as a 'bible', the 'foundation' and 'framework' upon which all else was built.

⁹ The Working Group on Women, Peace and Security is a New York based NGO consisting of: Amnesty International; Consortium on Gender, Security and Human Rights; Femmes Africa Solidarité; Global Action to Prevent War; Global Justice Centre; Human Rights Watch; International Action Network on Small Arms; International Alert; International Rescue Committee; Open Society Foundations; Refugees International; Social Science Research Council; The Institute for Inclusive Security; Women's Action for New Directions; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; Women's Refugee Commission.

¹⁰ Sandra Whitworth discusses the gender mainstreaming process at the UN in her (2004) book 'Men, Militarism and UN Peacekeeping'. Her discussion of the problematic nature of that process in relation to military masculinities will be addressed in Chapter 3.

¹¹ The analytical chapters of this thesis demonstrate how despite NATO's engagement with UNSCR 1325, gender equality remains subordinate to realpolitik notions of operational effectiveness and force multiplication.

¹² This article is part of a special edition of International Feminist Journal of Politics (2011, Vol. 13 Issue. 4) dedicated to 'critically examining UNSCR 1325'. The journal offers a range of diverse critiques and perspectives upon the structure, implementation and success of UNSCR 1325 in the ten years following its adoption. These articles range from placing UNSCR 1325 in the context of 'Post Cold War Feminist Politics' (Harrington, pp. 557-575) to issues of Sexual Violence and UNSCR 1325 (Aroussi, pp. 576-593) to notions of 'Widowhood' (Owen, pp. 616-622). This issue also includes Laura Shepherd's article 'Sex, Security and Superhero(in)s: From 1325 to 1820 and Beyond' (pp. 504-521) discussed in Section 1.2 of this chapter.

¹³ The 'Partnership for Peace' was established in 1994 to promote bi-lateral engagement between NATO and non-member countries. Currently 22 countries are signatories to the Partnership for Peace.

¹⁴ The seven year gap between the passage of UNSCR 1325 and NATO's formal engagement with the resolution is analysed in Chapter 6 through the responses of the participants.

¹⁵ NATO defines a Gender Advisor (GENAD) as a role that serves in peacetime HQ and at strategic/operational level. A Gender Field Advisor (GFA) is deployed at operational and tactical levels. The GENAD role is to ensure that gender is an integrated part of planning operations, given that "NATO Commanders and their staffs are not yet trained and skilled in planning and execution of operations with an integrated gender perspective" (NATO Bi-SCD 40-1 REV 1, 2012, ANNEX A: A-1)

¹⁶ NATO defines a Gender Focal Point (GFP) as a: "position that that supports the Commander in implementing directives and procedures with a gender perspective. The GFP maintains functional dialogue with the GENAD, but reports within the chain of command. The GFP as the tactical level ensures that the gender perspective is fully integrated into the daily tasks of the operation" (NATO, Bi-SCD 40-1 REV 1, 2012, ANNEX A: A-2)

¹⁷ No to War – No to NATO defines itself as an international network of more than 650 organisations from 30 countries opposed to militarism: <http://www.no-to-nato.org/en/about-us/> (Accessed October 2014)

¹⁸ These critical engagements were situated in the context of the 'third debate' within the discipline of IR. Defined by Yosef Lapid as a 'clear end to the positivist epistemological consensus' within International Relations (1989: 5), the third debate was conceived as a re-evaluation and critique of the 'objective' assumptions and production of knowledge that had characterised IR up to that point.

¹⁹ Jill Steans traces the origin of feminist literature within IR in the UK to a 1988 special issue of the journal *Millennium* entitled: 'Women and International Relations' (2003: 428); Laura Sjoberg makes the same assertion (2007: 183).

²⁰ Carmen Miranda was a Brazilian singer and actress from 1930s to 1950s. Enloe (1989; 2000) offers a highly compelling critique of the appropriation of Miranda's (exotic and flamboyant) image by the United Fruit Company. In doing so she exposes the role of this imagery (and the place of women) in the international banana trade (See Enloe, 1989: pp. 124-150).

²¹ This special edition of *Signs* provides a comprehensive example of an early (2002) feminist analysis and reflections of gendered narratives in the aftermath of September 11th 2001; entitled 'Gender and September 11: A Roundtable on Saving Brown Women'

²² This poster was produced by Amnesty International USA to promote the 'Shadow Summit for Afghan Women' on May 23rd 2012 in Chicago. See: <http://www.amnestyusa.org/events/shadow-summit-for-afghan-women-s-rights> (Accessed December 2014).

²³ There are interesting correlations here between the critiques of Connell's concept of the gender order and the reification of the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' in particular.

²⁴ In her 2013 work Duncanson situates this possibility for change in the notion of '*Regendered Soldiers*' (2013: 134)

²⁵ There are national variations that determine the role of women in direct combat roles. For example the United States lifted the ban on women to serving in 'front-line' combat roles in January 2013. In the United Kingdom, women have been serving members of the armed forces since the 1990s; however they remain barred from active combat roles.

²⁶ It remains my desire to conduct comparative research on NATO's official statements regarding progress on gender issues in Afghanistan and the experiences of individuals working in a non-military context within the country.

²⁷ The names given are pseudonyms; this is discussed further in Chapter 4, Section 2.4.1

²⁸ McDowell (1998) also acknowledges the negotiation of ‘double positionalities’ within the interview process. Suggesting that the subject of the research, not just the identities of the researcher and the researched that will shape an interview (in Pini, 2005: 204). See also Conway (2008) for a reflexive account of the role of perceptions of sexuality in the interview process.

²⁹ These questions included: How does the security situation affect women, men, girls and boys? What risks, similar and/or different do men, women, girls and boys face? What are the different vulnerabilities between these groups (women, men, girls and boys)? Are women’s and men’s security issues known and are their concerns being met? Assess security issues also for different women; for example women as politicians, activists or Human Rights Defenders, including Women’s Human Rights Defenders. What role do women play in the military, armed groups, police or any other security institutions such as intelligence services, border policy, customs, immigration or other law enforcement services (per cent of forces/groups, by grade and category)? What role do women play in the different parts of and social groups in the society? Does the selection and interaction between local power holders and the operation affect women’s ability to participate in society – such as legal, political or economic spheres? (NATO, Bi-SCD 40-1, 2012: Annex D)

³⁰ For an example of this see NATO’s briefing pamphlet entitled ‘Women, Peace and Security’. This can be accessed online at the following address:
www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_publications/20120116_UNSCR_EN.pdf (Last Accessed December 2014)

³¹ A picture taken at the NCGP 2013 Annual meeting also reinforces this message, with key delegates symbolically crossing their arms to ‘take a stand against the use of sexual violence as a tactic of war’:
http://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2013_10/20131021_131023-UNSCR1325_Practical_Implications_EN.pdf (Page 8: Last Accessed December 2014)

³² Gibbins details the (highly gendered) experience of two Iraqi women who were dismissed as ‘angry women’ when they failed to adhere to conventional UN speech norms and observe ‘proper’ diplomatic behaviour.

³³ For a full list of these documents see Appendix II

³⁴ The case studies revolve concerned: outreach activities with women to create a ‘foundation of confidence in Kabul’; Sustained engagement with women fostering relationships and information exchange with military personnel in Kandahar; The role of local women’s perspectives in strengthening situational awareness in Mazar-e-Sharif; Increased female military personnel in Congo; and the visible presence of women in the military producing dialogue with local women in Chad (NATO, 2011: pp. 25-34). Importantly, all six case studies used in the Indicators document centre around women, either civilian women or female soldiers; the role and positionality of male soldiers and male civilians is rarely mentioned.

³⁵ A point reinforced to me when attending the conference ‘NATO after the Wales Summit’ held at Cardiff University and sponsored by NATO’s Public Diplomacy Division, two days before the Summit in September 2014. The focus of the selected speakers was on a range of subject areas including cyber and maritime security. However, the ‘threat’ of Russian expansionism dominated many of the talks. There was a notable absence of any meaningful discussion surrounding UNSCR 1325.

³⁶ I have begun to explore this area of research with involvement in the Dislocating Masculinity Revisited project established by Andrea Cornwall, Nancy Lindisfarne and Frank Karioris following a conference at the University of Sussex held in July 2014 to mark the 20th anniversary of the publication of *Dislocating Masculinity: Comparative Ethnographies* (1994, London: Routledge)

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APPENDIX I

Oxford Brookes University Research Ethics Committee Approval (No. 120611)

Professor Tina Miller, Director of Studies,
Dr Tina Managhan, Secondary Supervisor,
Dr Abigail Halcli, Secondary Supervisor
Department of Social Sciences
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Oxford Brookes University
Gipsy Lane

8 March 2012

Dear Professor Miller, Dr Managhan and Dr Halcli

UREC Registration No: 120611

Gendering International Security: a study of the institutional and operational gender mainstreaming policies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)

Thank you for your email of 8 March 2012 outlining your response to the points raised in my previous letter about the PhD study of your research student Matthew Hurley, and attaching the revised documents. I am pleased to inform you that, on this basis, I have given Chair's Approval for the study to begin.

The UREC approval period for this study is two years from the date of this letter, so 8 March 2014. If you need the approval to be extended please do contact me nearer the time of expiry.

In order to monitor studies approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, we will ask you to provide a (very brief) report on the conduct and conclusions of the study in a year's time. If the study is completed in less than a year, could you please contact me and I will send you the appropriate guidelines for the report.

Yours sincerely

Professor Alistair Fitt
Acting Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee

cc Matthew Hurley, Research Student
Maggie Wilson, Research Ethics Officer
Jill Organ, Graduate Office
Louise Wood, UREC Administrator

**APPENDIX II
LIST OF NATO DOCUMENTATION ANALYSED**

Title	Year	Author/Organisation
CWINF Guidance for NATO Gender Mainstreaming	2007	Committee for Women in NATO Forces
Bi-SC Directive 40-1: Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Gender Perspectives in the NATO Command Structure Including Measures for Protection in Armed Conflict	2009	NATO Military Committee
Comprehensive Report on the NATO/EAPC Policy on the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and Related Resolutions	2010	NATO Military Committee
Recommendations on Implementation of UNSCR 1325	2010	NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives
Women, Peace & Security (DVD)	2010	NATO Public Diplomacy Division
NATO Briefing: Women, Peace and Security	2010	NATO Public Diplomacy Division
Lisbon Summit Declaration	2010	North Atlantic Council
NATO/EAPC Policy for Implementing UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and Related Resolutions	2011	NATO Military Committee
How Gender Can Make a Difference to Security in Operations: Indicators	2011	NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives/ Institute for Inclusive Security
NOGP Monthly Newsletters (x12)	January – December 2011	NATO Office on Gender Perspectives
NOGP Monthly Newsletters (x4)	January – April 2012	NATO Office on Gender Perspectives
NCGP Handbook for Delegates	2012	NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives

Bi-SC Directive 40-1: Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Gender Perspectives in the NATO Command Structure	2012	NATO Military Committee
Chicago Summit Declaration	May 2012	North Atlantic Council
Review of Practical Implications of UNSCR 1325 for the Conduct of NATO-led Operations and Missions – Executive Summary	2013	NATO Committee for Gender Perspectives
Gender Makes Sense: A Way to Improve Your Mission	2013	Civil-Military Co-operation Centre of Excellence
NATO Secretary General's report on implementing United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and related resolutions (x3)	2011, 2013, 2014	NATO Secretary General

**APPENDIX III
SAMPLE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

SECTION 1 – Introduction/Opening

Question	Follow-up
Can we start you're your career background? How long have you worked in the NOGP/What did you do before that?	
Have you always had an interest in gender issues?	Level of expertise / Recruitment
What interested you in becoming involved with the gender mainstreaming process at NATO?	Justification narratives Importance of 'gender work' - views
What do you see as the key role of your office/role?	Hierarchy of importance - Why?
What does that look like on a day-to-day basis?	- Normalization processes - What does participant view as important - Institutionalization of GP - Lived experience
In what ways does your role fit with the wider mainstreaming process at NATO?	- How is it different/in any respect - Different/competing processes?
What is your specific approach to gender mainstreaming – what initiatives does your office/position take?	- Specialisms - Compartmentalization

SECTION 2 – 1325 & UN/NATO/NGO Links

Question	Follow-up
How important do you think UNSCR 1325 is to the gender mainstreaming process?	How important was it in the mainstreaming process at NATO? Centrality or not of UNSCR 1325 Knowledge of UNSCR 1325
Do you have any links with counterparts/colleagues at the UN?	Level/Types of Contact
In what ways do you think the process at NATO differs from that in other bodies?	
Do you have links to the NGO community?	Level/Types of Contact - Afghanistan - Civil Society
What level of input do these NGOs other IOs have in the gender mainstreaming policies created at NATO?	Level/Types of Contact Types of Organizations

Do you think contact between NATO, the UN and NGOs is important? Why? How is this best achieved in your view?	
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SECTION 3 – Institutional/Operational Context

Question	Follow-up
How, in your view does the mainstreaming process differ when discussing gender here in Brussels, at HQ and in operations, in Afghanistan for example?	Quotas National Action Plans
Do you see any similarities or differences in these approaches?	How do you create a comprehensive gender mainstreaming process that encompasses all these elements?
What is your role in coordinating these different approaches? How is this done? Is it effective in your view?	

Section 4 – Conclusion/Importance of GM revisit

Question	Follow-up
Why do you think gender mainstreaming important? Generally and specifically at NATO	Perceived benefits
What do you see as the challenges/obstacles to the process?	Prioritization of opportunities/challenges (what deemed to be important) Examples of this
Overall, how do you think NATO has changed in how it approaches gender issues? What opportunities do you see in the future?	Logistical/Bureaucratic Systematic Motivational
In your view, what would a ‘mainstreamed’ NATO look like?	Big picture thinking – abstract vs. day-to-day Aspirations for work