

military remains instrumentalised, in the service of liberal equality rather than martial violence.

Second, the book considers quite briefly how gender operates within the alliance. Von Hlatky importantly notes that not all member states hold the same position on gender equality (p. 166). The framing of member-states as the principal of WPS norms, however, reinforces a presumption that NATO countries are gender equal. This assumption is also reflected in the book's empirical material with, for instance, an interlocutor noting that their WPS training was more difficult to translate to Latvia than to Iraq or Afghanistan, as "female-male dynamics are very similar to back home in Canada" (p. 120), rendering the training less applicable. I was left wondering whether there are instances in which the principal-agent relationship operates internally, with NATO using WPS policies to socialise potentially-reluctant militaries (or even states) into a particular liberal version of gender equality. Hints of this dynamic are seen in von Hlatky's documentation of subtle resistance to women's participation in the military as potential "positive discrimination" (p 64).


Third, the principal-agent frame also limits the book's ability to engage with the racialised and colonial dynamics of WPS (see Nicola Pratt, "Reconceptualizing Gender, Reinscribing Racial-Sexual Boundaries in International Security: The Case of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on 'Women, Peace and Security,'" *International Studies Quarterly*, 57[4], 2013; Marsha Henry, "On the Necessity of Critical Race Feminism for Women, Peace and Security," *Critical Studies on Security*, 9[1], 2021). Many of von Hlatky's interlocutors frame gender equality policy or the presence of women as necessitated by the "culture" of host states. One notes, for instance, that "in this part of the world, it's not like in the United States or other countries ... We were told Albanians are Muslim, they have more rigid gender roles" (p. 87), an invocation of essentialised cultural difference that mirrors racialised tropes of Global North states (and women) "saving" women of the Global South (see Lila Abu-Lughod, *Remaking Women: Feminism and Modernity in the Middle East*, 1998). This is not, importantly, the perspective put forward by von Hlatky. The uniform treatment of gender equality, however, limits the text's ability to consider that NATO might, indeed, be deploying a particular form feminism—one not unlike the imperial, civilisationalist version of feminism upon which the invasion of Afghanistan was justified (Ann Russo, "The Feminist Majority Foundation's Campaign to Stop Gender Apartheid: The Intersections of Feminism and Imperialism in the United States," *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 8[4], 2006).

I learned an immense amount from *Deploying Feminism* and am compelled to hear more. It's essential reading for not only civil-military policymakers, but also the

pragmatics of on-going debates about feminism, militarisation, and co-optation.

Response to Katharine M. Millar's Review of *Deploying Feminism: The Role of Gender in NATO Military Operations*

doi:10.1017/S1537592723001743

— Stéfanie von Hlatky 

Long before writing *Deploying Feminism*, I was studying NATO deterrence and military cooperation. And then in 2007, something new came along with the first NATO Policy on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS). I found this particularly intriguing because it seemed at odds with how I understood NATO to be working. The WPS agenda was inspired by feminist principles of gender equality; NATO was a predominantly male and militaristic organization. To investigate this normative shift, I thought, one would need a deep dive into NATO's inner workings. Indeed, introducing new ideas can be more complex than introducing new weapons, especially when those ideas run against the grain of a deeply entrenched military organizational culture. And so, tasking NATO militaries to take gender considerations into account when they plan operations was never going to be easy.

In reading Katharine Millar's review, I see that the most important contributions she identifies were at the heart of my project: writing an accessible text for academics, policymakers, and servicemembers alike that would still offer analytical and empirical depth for those familiar with the topic. She is right that I have opted for a "light touch" when introducing the concepts, theories, and literature that anchor my argument on norm distortion; it was not only my preferred writing style but it was also compatible with my objective of reaching a broader audience, with clear takeaways for civilian and military practitioners. I acknowledge that there are trade-offs and limitations to doing that and I'll focus on three in particular.

First, choosing a principal-agent framework takes some attention away from the subtle and subversive actions of military actors, as documented in the work of Aiko Holvikivi and Matthew Hurley. Instead, I propose a detailed record of processes, procedures, and military practices that accompany the implementation of WPS policies and directives, from the strategic to the tactical level. Then, while I draw from feminist contributions, I adopt an institutionalist lens which means that I, myself, remain quite agnostic about the project of closing the gender gap in military operations. Instead, the book points out that the representation and participation of women is explicitly articulated as a NATO objective, that the Alliance is not really interested in pressing its own member states to achieve it, and this

despite having established mechanisms in place to do so. And finally, when I note that NATO is *deploying* a particular kind of feminism—liberal feminism—I'm setting the analytical baseline early in the book. Millar notes that this construct has contributed to increased insecurity along gender and racial lines in Afghanistan and elsewhere, another topic that is documented in the literature,

but is not systematically embedded in my analysis. Relatedly, what seems most urgent to address this, but perhaps comes too late as part of my concluding recommendations, is to shift the conversation from one that focuses on WPS as an instrument of operational effectiveness, to one where gender equality is recognized as essential to improving security outcomes.