

The London School of Economics and Political Science

**Fixing Gender:**  
**The Paradoxical Politics of Peacekeeper Training**

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of the London School of Economics and Political Science  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## ABSTRACT

Over the past two decades, gender training for military and police peacekeepers has become institutionalised in the global governance of peace and security. Such training purports to respond to gendered harms previously ignored in, or actively caused by, peacekeeping operations. This evolving transnational practice involves the introduction of gender knowledge – indebted to feminist theorising and activism – into police and military organisations – commonly characterised as institutions of hegemonic masculinity. This thesis takes the tension between feminism and martial institutions as its point of departure to investigate what meaning the term gender acquires in training for uniformed peacekeepers, asking: What epistemic and political work does gender training do in martial institutions? Investigating the pedagogical practices of gender training through a multi-sited ethnography, I approach this question with the help of feminist, postcolonial, (and) queer epistemic perspectives. I conceptualise gender training as involving the production of knowledges around gender; knowledges which enable ways of being and acting in the world. I suggest that training practices often produce an understanding of gender that serves martial politics and reproduces colonial logics in the peacekeeping enterprise, thereby emptying the term of the transformative political hopes that feminist theorists typically invest in the concept. At the same time, I identify moments of tension, in which gender training appears to be destabilising hierarchical martial logics and engaging in subversive pedagogy. In sum, I argue that ambivalence is an integral feature of gender training, and locate political potential in the cultivation of resistant pedagogies, which exploit the margins of hegemonic discourses to engage in subversive strategies of destabilisation and delinking. This thesis provides an empirical contribution to an under-studied area of global governance, as well as forwarding feminist theorising on political strategies for engaging with and against institutions of state power.

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<sup>1</sup> A term I borrow from Dr Sumi Madhok.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Over the last two decades, gender training has become a requirement for uniformed peacekeepers. Framed as (part of the) response to gendered harms previously ignored in, or actively caused by peacekeeping missions, training represents an attempt to remedy or ‘fix’ gendered problems in peacekeeping, alongside efforts to deploy more female peacekeepers and the establishment of gender advisory positions. Introduced against the backdrop of the adoption and evolution of the international Women, Peace and Security agenda, states in different parts of the world increasingly agree that gender training is a necessary part of the preparation of peacekeepers for deployment, and have developed training curricula and offered courses on gender and related topics. Some states limit such training to specific modules prior to deployment, but others are also integrating gender topics and modules across basic training and professional military education, beyond peacekeeping missions. This practice is being developed across different areas of the world, rendering it a transnational phenomenon. While certainly at present not all military and police personnel who deploy on peacekeeping missions receive such training, and many states in practice deprioritise its delivery, few states have argued – or even seem poised to argue – against the *principle* of training their troops on gender. Gender training can therefore be understood as a significant emergent practice for peacekeepers, and in martial institutions more broadly.

Policymakers and some feminist activists celebrate the nascent institutionalisation of gender training in security institutions as a victory for progressive politics, arguing that the introduction of gender knowledge to state security apparatuses must make them more attuned to the needs of women, better at ensuring their security, and more committed to promoting the participation of women in the governance of peace and security. While these

outcomes appear unobjectionable at first glance, their uncritical acceptance leaves important questions for feminist political strategising uninterrogated: How is gender training made to work in and for military and police organisations? Is it a normative good from the point of view of feminist politics?

An unquestioning conviction that any gender training is better than none fails to take into account that training is a political process, and one that intervenes in particular institutional, cultural, and historical practices. Gender training is not simply about introducing new technical and politically neutral knowledge into an epistemic void. Rather, gender knowledge is a political intervention in an institutional setting with its own set of knowledges and political investments. Viewed in this light, gender training for peacekeepers is exposed as a practice characterised by tensions.

On the one hand, gender training as a practice of global governance emerged in its earlier forms from the field of international development, and was importantly informed by feminist activism and consciousness-raising. Although gender training in this field has often become a technical, depoliticised exercise, many of its practitioners argue that gender training *should* be a transformative practice, rooted in feminist activism and theory (Ferguson 2019a, Sexwale 1996). While gender training for peacekeepers is rarely framed (at least publicly) in such overtly political and feminist terms, this practice also draws on and utilises a conceptual vocabulary that emerges from feminist scholarship and activism, insofar as it uses gender as a key analytical category and communicates a commitment to addressing the oppression of women (Zalewski 2010, 23). Gender training, as a practice, is therefore linked – or perhaps more accurately, indebted – to feminist intellectual and political labour.

In contrast to this feminist genealogy of gender training, a rich body of scholarship in the field of feminist (and) critical military studies has compellingly argued that martial institutions are social sites animated by hegemonic masculinities (Belkin 2012, Higate and Henry 2009,

Kronsell 2006, Barrett 1996). This literature has demonstrated the plethora of ways in which especially the military is an organisation that is both sustained by and (re)produces the logics of misogyny, homophobia, and coloniality. As these are arguably some of the logics that underpin martial institutions, it comes as no surprise that these institutional cultures are often overtly hostile to feminism as a political project.

Gender training for peacekeepers can therefore be understood as a practice that involves the introduction of feminist knowledge and concepts into an institution of hegemonic masculinity. This puzzling situation demands closer examination. What happens when these two sites of knowledge, which hold largely contradictory values and accepted truths, meet? What epistemic and political work is the concept of gender made to do in this context? It is this sense of puzzlement with the introduction of feminist knowledge into martial institutions that drives the inquiry in this thesis.

Even though gender training 'has recently become one of the most widely used tools for supporting the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies in public and private organizations worldwide,' this practice remains severely under-examined in academic work (Bustelo, Ferguson, and Forest 2016b, 1, 6). In the realm of peacekeeping, knowledge about gender training is likewise scarce (for the few examples of such work, see Holohan 2019, Carson 2016, Laplonge 2015). Where training does emerge in feminist analyses of peacekeeping, it is typically mentioned as an example of the ways in which powerful institutions co-opt feminist concepts, and make them serve imperial politics (Razack 2004, 164, Whitworth 2004, 140). While such critical perspectives importantly inform my analysis, they largely deduce that training does the work of the status quo from structural dynamics, rather than an empirical engagement with the practice of training. In other words, scholarship on the topic does not yet address my curiosity about the terms on which gender is taken up and made to work in martial institutions.

The fact that I identified this particular puzzle and was troubled by this gap in the literature was not a chance encounter – my curiosity is as much empirically informed as it is grounded in theory. There is a history to the story I lay out in this thesis; a history that prompted me to pursue certain lines of inquiry at the expense of others; a history that shaped where I looked and how I read; and therefore a history that bears mentioning from the outset. As I have argued elsewhere, accounting for the positionality of the researcher and situating knowledge claims is of crucial import to the credibility of these claims, and a process with which I attempt to engage with throughout the thesis (Holvikivi 2019, 136).

In that interest: from 2011 to 2015, I was employed in the Gender and Security Programme of an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) based in Western Europe. In this role, I was often asked to provide gender training to security sector personnel, especially military and police services with a focus on the NATO region, Eastern Europe, and West and Southern Africa. I initially embarked on this task with little critical reflection, and a basic-at-best grounding in gender concepts and gender analysis. Over the years, I became more confident as a trainer, better educated in feminist analyses, and increasingly curious about the political and epistemic effects of training. The more training sessions I facilitated, the more questions I had on my mind: Do we need to start every workshop with the sex/gender distinction? What effect do we think teaching these police officers about the sex/gender distinction will have? What about Judith Butler's (1986) assertion that sex was always already gender? What exactly do we think gender is and does? What *does* a 'gender-responsive military' look like? Is that not an impossible paradox? How far can we push a feminist analysis before it causes an irreconcilable break with the logic of the military? Who am I to be telling these people about sexual violence? Is this really a responsible use of development assistance funds, to spend thousands of dollars sending me to West Africa to position myself as an 'expert'? These curiosities, emerging from the practice of gender training, inform my sense of puzzlement,

and prompt me to continue to question: What are we/they doing when we/they are ‘training gender’? What are the politics of this practice?

During my time working as a ‘gender expert’<sup>2</sup>, I was mentored by, and developed training practice together with a number of thoughtful colleagues who named their political commitments as feminist, pro-LGBT rights, and anti-racist. This professional community was by no means oblivious, or even unsympathetic, to scholarly feminist critiques that highlight the complicities of global governance feminism with colonial structures, heteronormative thinking, and neoliberal agendas. Nonetheless, many of my colleagues and I felt these academic critiques to be too totalising in their negative assessment; we felt that their critiques often failed to account for the complexity and nuance that emerged in our practice (Holvikivi 2019, 139). Accordingly, a key aim of this study, from its inception, was to provide an empirical account of the practices of gender training that demonstrated this complexity, as well as to create conceptual space to think about how to make sense of the contradictions and tensions that inhere to the politics of gender training.

My desire to account for contradiction and complexity in gender training rests on an understanding of training as a process of knowledge production rather than transfer. It was during my employment at this INGO that I came to reflect on the fact that training cannot simply be understood as a process of knowledge transfer, where the job of the trainer is to know things and to impart that knowledge upon the trainees. I quickly came to realise that training can be a contentious process, and always one that involves the translation of concepts – either literally from one language to another, or epistemically, between different modes of thought. It often involves unsettling how we see and understand the world, and this disruption provokes resistance from both training audiences and instructors themselves. Training results (ideally, when participants are engaged in the process), in the negotiation between the

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<sup>2</sup> On gender ‘experts’ and expertise, see Kunz, Prügl, and Thompson 2019.

content of the curriculum and the trainers and trainees' pre-existing knowledge, political commitments, and epistemic investments. I developed this view in conversation with numerous insightful colleagues, who introduced me both to their knowledge on the process of training, as well as to concepts such as gender dynamics of the classroom, and transformative learning in adult education. Some of this thinking is captured in a publication which I was involved in producing in 2015 (see Balon et al. 2016).

These early reflections were significant in shaping the theoretical framing of the present inquiry. In this thesis, I examine the pedagogical encounters of gender training with the help of insights from Freirean and poststructuralist critical pedagogy, especially in its queer, feminist (and) postcolonial articulations (Freire 2005, hooks 1994). This conceptual frame, in brief (and as explored in more depth in Chapter Four), provides a way of seeing training as *praxis* (Maher 1987, 94); insists upon the historical, political, and cultural situatedness of any educational intervention; and alerts us to its inextricably political nature (Luke and Gore 1992, 4). As such, I find that this conceptualisation allows my analysis to attend to the elements of resistance, translation, and negotiation in the training setting that my professional experience left me determined to capture. While I do not suggest that gender training necessarily involves feminist pedagogical practice, I contend that these theorisations of pedagogy provide conceptual tools that help us analytically see the politics of gender training practices.

The terms on which I attach political significance to gender training are importantly informed by poststructuralist epistemic perspectives, particularly in their feminist and postcolonial articulations. In contrast with earlier forms of critical pedagogical theorising, this means that I attach importance to training not because I expect it to directly produce revolutionary action, but rather because it involves a knowledge production process which shapes a 'grid of intelligibility' (Foucault 1998, 93) and 'makes possible particular identities, fixes categories of things and people, and makes various forms of conduct thinkable' (Prügl 2010, 4-5). Grounded

in this epistemic stance, the overarching question that motivates my inquiry can be expressed as:

*What political and epistemic work does gender training do in martial institutions involved in peacekeeping?*

My understanding of training as situated political praxis, generative of knowledges that determine the horizon of political possibilities, gives rise to a number of more specific questions that this thesis grapples with:

- *How is gender rendered a knowable object?*
- *Who can know gender?*
- *How is gender learned in training?*
- *What processes of translation, negotiation, and resistance are involved in the deployment of gender knowledge in martial institutions?*

Guided by these questions, this thesis seeks to track the meanings that gender acquires in training contexts. It is centrally concerned with knowledge as process – how knowledge about gender is produced, and how training participants come to know gender.

It is worth highlighting that these questions are epistemic questions, constitutive in nature. This is not a causal investigation, and provides no direct answers to the positivist question ‘Does gender training work?’ Responding to such a question would presume that we already know what gender is and what it would mean to successfully train it. My inquiry is instead interested in how the terms of gender training are constituted in the first place and with what effects. This is a project that is interested in questions of how discursive constructions of knowledge condition the limits of possibility for being and acting in the world (Jennings 2019, 31, Butler 2004, 214). There is, in other words, an important epistemic difference between the question of ‘Does it work?’ and ‘What work does it do?’, and this thesis is primarily interested in the latter.

The constitutive nature of my guiding questions does not, of course, suggest that this is a politically disinterested inquiry. To the contrary, I see the overarching question articulated above as implying a normative question:

*What political potential and dangers are involved in the deployment of gender knowledge in martial institutions?*

The standard against which to identify potential and danger is, for my purposes, a feminist one, insofar as '[f]eminism is about the social transformation of gender relations' (Butler 2004, 204). While I expand on my understanding of feminism below, I would like to briefly note here what this means for thinking about what is at stake in gender training. Because I understand knowledge as productive (rather than reflective) of social reality, my approach to reading the politics of training interventions is less interested in its proven (in)capacity to produce revolutionary actions or revolutionary subjects (Hutchings 2013, 20), and more interested in attending to the ways in which training might 'wrench the boundaries of a discourse around in productive ways' (Sedgwick 2003, 34). I see gender training in relation to peacekeeping enterprises as occupying a space at the margins of a hegemonic discourse, and seek to investigate what feminist political potential this space might provide. In other words, by shifting attention away from demonstrable effects produced in a causal chain, I do not mean to signal a disinterest in politics, but rather attempt to change the terms 'of our recognition of the moment of politics' (Bhabha 1994, 37).

This set of research questions necessitated the use of research methods and interpretive strategies that allow access to the situated practices that constitute gender training. Training curricula are never fully predictive of the pedagogical encounters they provoke, and in practice gender trainers exercise a considerable amount of freedom in how they conduct training – sometimes to the extent of fully freewheeling. Accordingly, the ways in which this thesis sets about exploring these questions is through what can be described as a multi-sited ethnography. As I explain in more detail in Chapter Five, I compiled a research archive that



comprises gender training materials; interviews with trainers and training participants; and participant observation of training courses. I undertook a content analysis of training commitments contained in all WPS resolutions and national action plans globally, and reviewed nineteen sets of training materials (discussed in Chapter Two and enumerated in appendices Two and Three). I conducted twenty-three semi-structured interviews, and spent a total of eight weeks conducting participant observation on seven different training courses (described in Appendix Four). I read the material of this research archive through an interpretive lens informed by discourse analytical techniques: I sought to understand what the internal logic of training interventions are, what epistemic traditions they draw from, what logics they deploy, what accepted truths they cite, and what makes them work as true. This analysis lends itself to my reading of the political potential and limitations of these interventions, with the empirical material serving as a catalyst to generate a conceptual vocabulary with which to consider the implications of the practice of gender training for feminist strategising (Higate and Henry 2009, 20).

Overall, I find gender training to produce multiple, contradictory political effects. From the point of view of normative commitments to feminist politics, it is a deeply ambivalent practice. On the one hand, my analysis demonstrates ways by which gender is deployed as a concept that sustains binary, heteronormative thinking, and that reproduces colonial logics of difference. In this sense, my findings are wholly sympathetic to, and build on, critical feminist scholarship that points to how gender becomes depoliticised when it is deployed in training, or more broadly in gender mainstreaming efforts (Whitworth 2004, 140, see also Carson 2016). This strand of analysis furthermore points to the ways in which gender thus understood, emptied of its potential to serve intersectional, queer, and postcolonial feminist projects, becomes a tool which abides by martial logics and proposes the use of force as an appropriate solution to the problems identified. This analysis echoes the findings of feminist scholarship in critical military studies and beyond, pointing to the ways in which feminist

concepts are already or are made amenable to imperial politics; that '[t]he project of gender integration will always be subject to forces intent on removing any commitment to the political goals of feminism' (Otto and Heathcote 2014, 8, see also, Wright 2016, Pratt 2013, Eisenstein 2007, Young 2003). In this sense, my findings lend themselves to the argument that, from the point of view of feminist politics, gender training for peacekeepers is a co-opted practice.

And yet, my analysis points toward an ambivalence that persists within this practice. I identify a contradictory dynamic, whereby some gender training, at times, serves to destabilise these very same structuring logics of heteronormativity and coloniality. As explored particularly in Chapter Nine, gender training demonstrably does open the door to moments of what I understand to be feminist pedagogical practice: denaturalising colonial and heteronormative constructions of gender, and disturbing the logics of martiality. My conceptualisation of feminist pedagogical practice is importantly indebted to broader work, beyond the security sector, on gender training as a transformative feminist strategy (Ferguson 2019b, Mukhopadhyay 2014). However, my findings depart somewhat from this body of scholarship, in that I do not suggest that these disruptive feminist practices, in the context of peacekeeper training, will necessarily produce cumulative causal effects that lead to structural transformation in the long run. I hesitate to make such claims both because my methodology does not lend itself to an assessment of cumulative transformative change, and more importantly, because I suggest that the nature of these subversions does not put forward a coherent demand for an alternative, transformed future. They constitute what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak calls a 'practical politics of the open end'; a form of everyday political labour that sustains resistant politics, rather than a solution for doing away with structural violence (Spivak and Harasym 1990, 105). I call these moments 'small subversions' rather than transformation in an effort to capture their resistant – rather than future-producing – orientation.

The findings of this research, then, point to contradictory political effects of gender training for peacekeepers, echoing the scholarly characterisations of gender mainstreaming work in the security sector and other institutions of global governance (Kunz 2016, 112, Otto and Heathcote 2014, 4). These findings leave me with the question of how to think about such ambivalent dynamics beyond the eminently reasonable but analytically and politically unsatisfying conclusion of 'it is both'. In the conclusion to this thesis, I suggest that this dynamic is most usefully thought of as a paradox; a proposition that is both true and false at the same time (Scott 1996, 4). Thinking of training as a paradoxical practice within a feminist tradition of thought means that rather than trying to resolve an inherently irresolvable tension, this situation necessitates the development of conceptual thinking that engages with the question of how to sit with a tension, how to work with a paradox in a way that is not politically paralysed, but productive (Brown 2000, 239). In this task, I take up Dianne Otto's suggestion that feminist analyses of such engagements abandon progress narratives in favour of an attention to the 'politics of the present', and develop ways of engagement that are more resistive and less amenable to institutional capture (2014, 158).

I suggest that if we put aside for a moment the demand that gender training produces a different, transformed future, and attend to its paradoxical nature in the present, this allows us to both consider the value of small acts of subversion that destabilise hegemonic narratives, as well as to remain vigilant to the dangerous co-optations that are taking place. If we take the stance that the future is by definition unknowable, and disinvest from long-term transformation as *the* criterion for an activity being politically worthwhile, can we think of a feminist investment in gender training that is 'optimistically cruel', as Robyn Wiegman (2016, 91) reworks Lauren Berlant's (2011) famous 'cruel optimism'? Thinking with Wiegman's conceptualisation of being 'optimistically cruel' means accepting that gender training 'will not deliver what we most want from it' (2016, 91). Remaining attached to the practice in view of this admission, I propose, helps avoid the 'nihilism of despair or the utopia of progress'

(Bhabha 1994, 365). In other words, it provides the basis for imagining forms of political engagement that are less amenable to institutional capture. Drawing on these ideas, the conclusion of this thesis develops a conceptual vocabulary aimed at feminist political strategising in an ambivalent historical present. I argue that rather than celebrating gender training as an unambiguous normative good, or consigning it to a scrap heap of lost and misguided feminist causes, there is scope within this practice to develop feminist strategies of resistance. I argue that how we know gender does matter, because it has implications for how it could be known otherwise; how such knowledges could be used to create new ways of being and acting in the world.

Engaging in knowledge building and world building projects in diverse epistemic communities is, I contend, particularly important in the current political climate, in which a hostility to feminist thinking appears resurgent (Graff, Kapur, and Walters 2019). I argue therefore for developing forms of critical engagement that resist the amenability of the concept of gender to serve the purposes of imperial politics. I identify a need for debate and the investment of effort into thinking about what feminist pedagogies might look like and how they might be practised; exploiting the margins of hegemonic discourses to introduce strategies of disruption and subversion. I argue for a continued engagement in struggles over the political meaning of gender, which recognises that such approaches are always imprecise and corruptible.

## KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

The conceptual vocabulary that this thesis utilises, the analyses it engages in, and the arguments it formulates, are all developed from specific epistemic locations and political commitments. While I engage in a more sustained reflection on the theoretical perspectives that animate my analysis in Chapter Four, a brief explication of the key terms and concepts introduced in the title of this thesis is helpful at this juncture. This is both for the sake of

conceptual clarity, and for acknowledging the indebtedness<sup>3</sup> of my analysis to the work of feminist and postcolonial theorists who have developed the conceptual vocabulary that makes it possible for me to pursue these lines of thinking and to formulate these arguments.

### ***Fixing gender***

The phrase ‘fixing gender’ in the title of this thesis involves a calculated ambiguity. It is open to at least three readings, which are important to address for the sake of conceptual clarity. First, this phrase alludes to the problem-solving orientation of gender training that introduced this chapter: the notion that gender training will remedy, or ‘fix’, gendered problems of peacekeeping – a theme I discuss in more detail in Chapter Two. Second, it implies a critique of the ways knowledge production around gender, such as training, typically ‘fixes’ gender as a property of sexed bodies – thereby engaging in a performative repetition of the sexgender conundrum, re-asserting biological dimorphism and heterosexuality (Kunz 2014, 606, Stern and Zalewski 2009, 616, de Lauretis 1989, 2). Third, and of most conceptual significance, this formulation is a play on and challenge to a discourse that insists on the ‘fixity’ of gender as a concept (Bhabha 1994, 94).

My analysis does not directly intervene in the rich feminist debates over the (non)distinction between biological sex and socially constructed gender, nor do I seek to demonstrate, for example, the social construction or the performativity of gender (Repo 2014, Butler 2007a, Friedman 1996). The project of this thesis is not to come up with a more perfect understanding of the term. Rather, what I am interested in is the shape and effects of the process by which gender acquires a certain ‘thingness’; how it is rendered an object to be known (Sedgwick 2003, 6). By drawing attention to the *process* of fixing meaning to the term gender, my aim is to expose how this process produces the social facticity of the term itself (de Lauretis 1989,

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<sup>3</sup> I borrow the concept of ‘feminist debt’ from a talk given by Sumi Madhok on a panel titled ‘The Politics of Struggle: Current Issues in Feminist Knowledge Production’ on 12 February 2019 at the LSE in London.

2). The purpose of this challenge to the 'fixity' of gender is to sharpen analytical attention on the question of what meaning *is* assigned to gender, and what political work the term consequently does (Repo 2014, 309, de Lauretis 1989, 3). In this sense, the understanding of gender that animates this analysis is best captured as 'processes of subjectification' (Bhabha 1994, 95). Gender is understood both as a site of feminist political desires and disavowals, and a logic that determines 'What, given the contemporary order of being, can I be?' (Butler 2004, 58).

In drawing attention to the process of fixing meaning to the term gender, I am indebted to a diverse set of feminist analyses that have exposed how different conceptualisations of gender can be made to do different types of political work. The take up of the term by feminists in the 1960s to insist that gender is socially constructed opened up avenues for feminist argumentation that if gender is constructed, it could be constructed *differently*. It allowed feminists to contest the idea that biology is destiny, breathing new life into Simone de Beauvoir's famous maxim 'One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman' (de Beauvoir 1997, 295, Friedman 1996, 78). The troubling of the sex/gender binary in turn lent itself to queer and feminist arguments that enabled the denaturalisation of heterosexuality and provided a vocabulary for contesting the pathologisation of trans\* and intersex subjects (Butler 2007a, 2004). At the same time, Black feminists in the US and the UK have brought critical attention to bear on the ways in which gender has been racially coded as white in feminist politics and scholarship, erasing from view the intersectional oppression experienced by Black women (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013, Collins 1989, Carby 1982). Post- and decolonial feminists have exposed how gender operates, historically and in the historical present, to construct colonial difference (Lugones 2007, Mohanty 1988). Feminist analyses have examined how the language of gender equality is taken up by institutions of government as a technology of power, to serve neoliberal economic logics (Davids and van Eerdewijk 2016, Prügl 2016, Repo 2014). And of course, at the heart of feminist deployments of gender is a paradox, whereby

feminists use 'woman' – a category of sexual difference – as a basis from which to formulate political demands, while at the same time (often) seeking to do away with sexual difference (Scott 1996, de Lauretis 1989).

Drawing attention to the processes that fix meaning to gender entails that my analysis does not take as its point of departure a definitive understanding of what gender is, that lends itself to use as a yardstick against which to assess whether peacekeeping training is 'getting it right'. My approach insists on seeing the meaning of gender, what it means to teach it, and what the outcomes of gender training are, as open-ended, ongoing *processes* rather than given facts. It could be described as an anti-ontological conceptualisation of gender and a bottom-up, empirically informed understanding of what gender means in any given context. This, in turn, has important implications for the lines of inquiry I pursue in this thesis. Because my approach is agnostic to what gender is, how it should be trained, and what this training should result in, my interrogation of this practice is not a quest to identify moments of misrepresentation or miscognition of an underlying truth of gender. Rather, I seek to trace how gender as a concept is produced, what knowledge about gender circulates, and with what effects, while remaining attentive to how it might be produced otherwise.

This understanding of gender as a process of subjectification of course alerts the reader to the fact that the production of gender as power-knowledge discourse is not confined to the site of gender training; or even that gender training is the only training that produces knowledge about gender. To the contrary, feminist (and) critical military scholars have documented the profoundly gendered dimensions that the socialisation of military personnel into the values and culture of the institution take. Military training often occupies a prominent position in these accounts. Michel Foucault drew our attention to the military drill as a disciplinary technique that produces docile bodies (1991, 153). Military sociologists have for decades examined how military culture and values are created and transmitted through the process of

training, the social pressures involved, and the impact of this experience on personality trait development (Jackson et al. 2012, Caforio 2003, Zurcher Jr 1967, Korpi 1964). Some have paid specific attention to the construction of masculinity in this process, noting how ‘studies of military training reveal that the military persuasively bounds off the recruit from civilian life in an effort to socialize “boys to be men”’ (Barrett 1996, 132) and how, ‘in military training, patriarchal masculinity lends itself to exploitation for war-fighting, and how violence is eroticized in masculine fantasy’ (Cockburn 2010, 150). Cynthia Enloe states in relation to military efforts to ban prostitution that ‘[e]very training session with base commanders and health officers will become a site where the politics (often racialized politics) of sexuality is conducted’ (2000, 107). In other words, as Aaron Belkin explains, ‘alignments of masculine ideals and practices are ubiquitous in the theoretical, historical and anecdotal accounts of military indoctrination, training and socialization’ (2012, 27).

In this light, all socialisation processes can be considered training, and all training can be thought of as ‘gender training’. It follows that my focus on the training that is usually described in policy discourses and by practitioners as gender training (including WPS, conflict-related sexual violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse) does not claim to cover all peacekeeper training that produces knowledge about gender. Rather, my more modest focus is on the types of training that emanate from a policy framework specifically designed to explicitly address gendered aspects of peacekeeping. Such training not only derives from a common policy framework, but is also distinctive in that it makes explicit the usually unarticulated and naturalised assumptions about gender that govern peacekeeping operations.

### ***Paradoxical politics***

The paradox that I identify as a defining feature of gender training is likewise grounded in a specific understanding of what the commitments of feminist politics are.<sup>4</sup> Because ‘*feminism*

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<sup>4</sup> My thanks to Jacob Breslow for pointing this out.



[is] not a uniform referent even for those of us who regularly [deploy] it to name the politics of our intellectual investments’, some clarification is helpful in this regard (Wiegman 2016, 86, emphasis in original). I describe the political work that gender training does to be at odds with feminist politics when gender is made to support the use of martial force, to justify imperial incursions, to bolster heteronormativity, and to re-inscribe racial hierarchies.

However, as has been well documented, there *are* articulations of feminism which are not inherently or necessarily opposed to such politics. Not all feminists oppose militarism, and many have brushed aside concerns over militarism when lobbying for women’s right to serve (Kennedy-Pipe 2017, Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz 2007). Feminist analyses and politics have also importantly contributed to the (re)production of racialised hierarchies and helped justify imperial incursions by portraying non-Western populations as backward and in need of white saviour politics (Farris 2017, Pratt 2013). Some strands of contemporary feminist politics insist on biological dimorphism to exclude trans\* subjects from feminist politics, while forms of liberal feminism emphasise individual betterment, echoing the mantras of neoliberal projects (Hines 2019, Ferguson 2017). Notably, these types of political commitments do not give rise to an understanding of the politics of peacekeeper gender training as *paradoxical*, because they would contest what I understand to be problematic dynamics for feminist politics.

Because divergent forms of politics travel under the name of feminism, my evocation of the term throughout the thesis should not be read as an empirical description of an imagined, unitary feminism; rather, it is a normative statement. I mentioned above that my conceptual understanding of gender aims to pay attention to the mutual implication of gender and racialised colonial difference; an intellectual commitment which is linked to a political commitment to resist colonial thinking and to approach the topic with an intersectional ‘analytic sensibility’ (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013, 795). This understanding of gender is indebted to queer feminist theorising as well as postcolonial and Black feminist thought, and

again, in aiming to expose sites at which heteronormativity is produced, I strive to contest these logics through de-naturalising them.

By describing the politics of peacekeeper gender training as paradoxical, I am not implying that feminism is a monolith, nor that there is an originary, innocent feminism which I seek to recuperate. Rather, my framing of feminism in this way is a consciously political intervention, grounded in 'recognition of the fact that feminism itself also functions as a field of power, as a terrain of struggle in its own right, containing both the possibilities of oppression and liberation' (Raghavan 2018). As so evocatively put by Priya Raghavan (2018), in thinking through what I understand to constitute feminist pedagogies, I am deliberately staking a claim in contestations over 'what can or cannot be done in the name of feminism'.

### ***Peacekeeper training***

Finally, a few words are in order regarding what is encompassed under the term 'peacekeeper training'. Peacekeeping as a term originates from interventions conducted under the auspices of the United Nations. While UN peacekeeping is typically described as being impartial, deploying troops from neutral countries, and involving the consent of countries intervened in; the term has also been used to describe much more interventionist incursions by, for example, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in Afghanistan (Bergman Rosamond and Kronsell 2018, Duncanson 2009). While acknowledging NATO's more expansionist politics, critical analyses of peacekeeping have drawn attention to the fact that '[b]oth the UN and NATO converge in respect of their normative aspiration to facilitate the liberal peace' (Higate and Henry 2009, 21). Accordingly, my analysis in this thesis uses an expansive understanding of peacekeeping, including – in addition to UN peacekeeping – missions undertaken by regional organisations such as NATO or the African Union.

Peacekeeping missions typically involve military, police, and civilian components. My analysis focuses on military and police peacekeepers. I use the term uniformed peacekeepers to refer

to these actors, and characterise the police and military as martial institutions. While I use the terms militarised and martial interchangeably, I foreground my analysis as relating to martial politics rather than militarism. My preference for the term martial emerges from two considerations. First, the term martial institution lends itself more readily to consideration of both the police and the military. Admittedly, much of my conceptual work and empirical material concentrates on military peacekeeping, and military peacekeepers do make up the overwhelming majority of all peacekeeping personnel.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, the term martial allows me to also consider police institutions as enacting martial politics, without necessitating a demonstration that the police have incorporated military modes of acting and values that are otherwise foreign to the police (Howell 2018). Second, and relatedly, the term martial allows me to speak to peacekeeping practices that privilege and valorise the use of force as an appropriate response to any given problem, without implying that ‘militarism’ is an exogenous problem to otherwise peaceful liberal politics of peacekeeping (Millar 2016).

While I expand on the scope of peacekeeper training in the next chapter, a tension in my use of the term training may already be discernible, insofar as I propose to use pedagogical thinking and theories of education to understand training. Indeed, many actors, including those involved in peacekeeper training, are insistent on differentiating between training and education. Training is typically understood to constitute teaching given responses to a predictable situation; in contrast to the higher learning implied by education, which develops a learner’s capacity to formulate a reasonable response to an unknown situation. As one of my interlocutors sought to explain the difference – in terms rife with gendered and sexualised assumptions: ‘Do you want your daughter to receive sex education or sex training?’ In view of such distinctions, gender training is clearly something of a misnomer. While a small part of

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<sup>5</sup> As of February 2019, among the 89,480 personnel serving on 14 UN Peacekeeping Operations, military personnel counted 77,773, while police officers counted 10,347 and civilians 1,360 (United Nations 2019).

gender training could be understood as training on these terms – for example teaching soldiers and police officers that searching women must always be performed by female personnel – the vast majority of gender training is actually education. I fully acknowledge this discrepancy, but I continue to utilise the term training, as this reflects what the practice I am interested in is most often described as in both policy documents, practical guides, and literature on the topic.

## STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Having introduced the guiding questions and argument of this thesis, as well as delineated its key terms and scope, the thesis progresses as follows. As mentioned above, the approach of my research is agnostic as to what exactly gender is, and how it should be trained. Accordingly, my point of departure is an empirical overview of what gender training *is*. In Chapter Two, I account for the emergence and evolution of gender training, and argue that it constitutes a significant transnational practice. I undertake a review of policy and training materials to trace how and where gender training has become institutionalised, but also importantly how gender is understood in this practice. In this chapter, as throughout the thesis, I consider what work gender is made to do against the insights of critical feminist literature, which demonstrate what is closed off or silenced by defining gender in a particular way. This reading practice aims to bring sustained attention to bear on the political effects of producing gender knowledge.

Following from this development of an understanding of what gender training for peacekeepers is and how it is framed, Chapter Three then turns to examine the existing literature on and around the topic. I argue that the existing literature on peacekeeper gender training is severely limited in both empirical coverage and critical depth, suggesting that this literature could be productively extended. I situate my inquiry at the interstices of the literature on peacekeeper training; the critical literature on peacekeeping; and the broader

literature on gender training; arguing that all three bodies of work provide helpful insights to guide an analysis of peacekeeper gender training. Throughout this Chapter, I discuss the ways in which these literatures instruct the formulation of my avenues of inquiry: they constitute the intellectual and empirical backdrop from which my research questions emerge.

The next two chapters then lay down the groundwork for addressing these questions. In Chapter Four, I set out the theoretical framing of my analysis. My research is centrally interested in questions of knowledge production and pedagogical practice around gender, and in this chapter I develop the analytical tools and conceptual vocabulary that allow me to get at the questions of how gender is rendered a knowable object, and what learning gender might entail. In this task, I suggest that the body of scholarship in feminist pedagogies is helpful in understanding how knowledge is created in classroom practice. Acknowledging that any theory of pedagogy implies a theory of knowledge, I discuss the epistemological stance from which I engage in this inquiry. I close the chapter with a reflection on the function and workings of critique, explicating further how I see the political intervention that this thesis stages.

Whereas Chapter Four lays out the conceptual toolkit required to engage with my research questions, Chapter Five focuses on the empirical material that informs this analysis. I describe the research archive that informs my analysis, explain the methods by which this archive was compiled, and discuss the reading strategies I use to interpret this archive. This chapter also reflects on the politics and ethics of this research, and addresses questions of positionality throughout the discussion.

My research findings are organised in four empirical chapters, which roughly correspond to the research questions outlined above, although these questions are best understood as mutually implicated, and thus the analysis weaves across them. Through an investigation into how training curricula are produced, in Chapter Six I flesh out the ways by which gender

becomes fixed as a knowable object, and how the political economy of knowledge production involved in this fixing privileges certain actors and forms of knowledge. More specifically, I argue that the curriculum design process privileges expertise in the Global North, while marginalising other knowers and forms of knowledge. I demonstrate how training curricula omit consideration of race and non-normative sexuality to produce a narrow understanding of gender. I also discuss the ways by which the military setting shapes the epistemic rules governing who is a credible knower, and the demands placed on what gender knowledge should do in and for the institution. Throughout this discussion, I remain attentive to the potential for contention around what counts as gender in training, reading against the grain to suggest how gender could be and sometimes is conceptualised differently in training.

Alive to the consideration that gender knowledge is produced through social interaction, I then turn to the classroom to examine knowledge production processes at work in training. In Chapter Seven, I characterise knowledge as emotional in order to highlight the ways in which training fosters specific types of epistemic and political investments. This mode of analysis speaks to the question of how gender is learned in a training setting. Substantively, through an attentiveness to how conflict-related sexual violence is treated as a training topic, this chapter sketches out the ways in which training fosters investments in martial logics and the use of force; as well as the ways in which training participants' emotional investments may also alert them to the limitations and shortcomings of martial action.

Sitting with the interest in how training participants come to accept, modify or reject knowledge presented to them in the training setting, Chapter Eight focuses specifically on resistance to feminist politics and analyses in gender training. This type of resistance follows, I suggest, patterns or scripts that can be performed by both trainers and training audiences. I chart different scripts through which trainers and trainees alike seek to undermine the radical potential of gender knowledge, suggesting that resistance involves ways of undermining the

training through humour; distancing gender from feminist politics; and projecting the issue of gender onto racialised others. Throughout this analysis, I highlight that resistance is a dynamic process, examining how struggles over meaning are staged in the training context in ways that defy a simple resolution to political contestations.

The analysis in chapters Six through to Eight demonstrate primarily the ways in which gender is rendered a knowable object through an epistemic lens that privileges martial and neo-colonial logics. This finding – that martial institutions militarise gender knowledge and make it serve their own purposes – will likely come as little surprise to critical feminist observers schooled in intersectional analyses. However, this discussion is punctuated throughout with an attentiveness to moments of instability for or rupture from the hegemonic discourses of martial institutions. In Chapter Nine, I shift modes of analysis to pay more systematic attention to these moments, which I describe as subversive. In this chapter, I offer a reading of some training practices as engaging in feminist pedagogical practice. I do not go so far as to call these practices transformative; they do not necessarily provide an alternative future for martial institutions. Rather, I characterise them as ‘small subversions’; moments of delinking, disruption, and instability against hegemonic discourses.

In the concluding chapter, I take stock of the ambivalent findings of my analysis: that gender training works to depoliticise the concept of gender, rendering it safe and ready to serve the interests of martial institutions; and at the same time, that it has the potential to subvert the hegemonic logics of these institutions. Setting up this contradiction as paradox, I ask, finally, what does the nature of this paradox mean for feminist politics? Are we to abandon gender training for peacekeepers as a lost political project? Perhaps not. I suggest that a transformed future is not the only standard that renders feminist political projects viable and desirable. Instead, I argue for a disinvestment from what I understand as liberal progress narratives, and a concomitant embrace of a politics of subversion and ambivalence. Such a shift in modes of

political thought allows for an engagement with the present that is – following Wiegman – ‘optimistically cruel’ (2016, 91). Building on this argument for a recognition of the political worth of subversive gender training practices, I conclude by reflecting on the implications of this argument for feminist political strategising, for further inquiry, and for engagement with practitioners and policymakers.



## CHAPTER TWO

### GENDER TRAINING FOR UNIFORMED PEACEKEEPERS: THE MAKING OF A TRANSNATIONAL PRACTICE

*The question ... of what qualifies as 'gender' is itself already a question that attests to a pervasively normative operation of power, a fugitive operation of 'what will be the case' under the rubric of 'what is the case'.*

- Judith Butler (2007b, xxii)

In the year 2000, amidst a flurry of activity to address the question of gender in peacekeeping operations – producing the Windhoek Declaration and Plan of Action in May, and culminating in the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) in October – the idea of training peacekeepers on gender was introduced into circulation. The governments of Canada and the United Kingdom sponsored the development of a training package for peacekeepers on gender, subsequently adopted by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), and the WPS agenda came to incorporate the provision of such training among its key policy mandates (Mackay 2003, 218, Puechguirbal 2003, 114). Gender training in the field of peacekeeping thus emerged against a political backdrop in which international institutions of global governance began to pay increasing attention to specific, gendered insecurities experienced by women in the context of peace and conflict, and their simultaneous exclusion from decision-making in this field. Stemming from many more decades of sustained advocacy by women's groups, institutions of global governance have constructed a policy architecture on WPS to address gendered roles and needs in the context of international security (Otto 2016, Shepherd 2008b, Rehn and Johnson-Sirleaf 2002). In the development of this policy architecture, advocates and decision-makers alike have consistently evoked training as part of the solution to a whole range of gender problems.

Training for gender awareness is a practice which, as I discuss in Chapter Three, can be traced to feminist consciousness-raising activities, and was developed earlier in the field of international development. In the context of international peace and security, training is typically understood to be a remedy or a 'fix' to gendered problems either ignored in or actively caused by peacekeeping operations. On the one hand, gender training efforts seek to provide peacekeepers with the knowledge and skills to address women's security concerns among the 'peace-kept' (Henry 2015, 374) population – especially to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence. On the other hand, (some) gender training aims at preventing peacekeepers *themselves* from committing abuses against the local population, notably through acts of sexual exploitation and abuse (Mackay 2005, 265). Though precise numbers of those trained remain elusive, since the year 2000, an increasing number of policy commitments and training initiatives mean that tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of military and police peacekeepers are receiving gender training, rendering such training a significant emergent practice.

In this chapter, I examine how gender training of uniformed peacekeepers has become established as a predictable response to an array of gendered harms, and chart how it is institutionalised and developed. I ask: What issues does training respond to? Where is this training happening? Who is being trained? And, importantly, What exactly *is* gender training in the context of peacekeeping? As alluded to in the quote from *Gender Trouble* that introduces this chapter, any understanding of what gender is and does is the product of a process of attributing meaning to the concept itself; it 'attests to a pervasively normative operation of power' (Butler 2007b, p.xxii). Accordingly, in this chapter I examine what problems are constructed as especially gendered, how training comes to be part of the response, and how the practice of gender training is thereby constituted. I suggest that an examination of these questions allows us to see how training establishes a specific normative

understanding of what gender is, and in so doing renders the problem of gender as one of skills and competences rather than political investments or moral values.

To that end, the first section of this chapter focuses on the broader historical and political context. It provides an account of the emergence of gender training for military peacekeepers as a response to specific gendered problems that have been the subject of intense media and policy attention. The second section, in turn, charts the building of transnational consensus around the need to provide training as a response to gendered harms of conflict, intervention, and peacekeeping. This section reviews international and national policy frameworks to demonstrate the existence of a wide-reaching and broadly accepted consensus around the need to train peacekeepers on gender. This section also maps available evidence of gender training efforts to demonstrate that policy commitments are implemented on a scale that qualifies gender training as a significant emergent practice. The third section of this chapter then turns to examine what, per Butler, qualifies as gender in the practice of training. This section examines the content of gender training as it is described in training materials and policy documents. The concluding section summarises this discussion, and locates this inquiry within the broader context of this thesis.

## GENDERED PROBLEMS OF CONFLICT, INTERVENTION, AND PEACEKEEPING

The gendered dynamics of conflict, of martial institutions, and of peacekeeping operations have attracted media attention and become a topic of discussion at the highest levels of international policy-making over the past two decades (Otto 2016, Cohn 2008, Shepherd 2008b, Rehn and Johnson-Sirleaf 2002). In transnational public discourse, four sets of issues have emerged as having especially gendered aspects: the linkage of women's rights and conflict; sexual violence committed by warring parties; sexual misconduct by troops deployed abroad; and sexual assault and harassment within the ranks. The public exposure of these issues has informed the emergence of training as a response to the newly (if selectively)

recognised gender dynamics of conflict and peacekeeping. In this section, I provide an overview of the types of phenomena that have been identified in public and policy discourse as gendered dynamics of conflict and military interventions, with a view to provide a contextual understanding of developments that have prompted and continue to shape the practice of gender training.

First is the discursive mobilisation of women's plight in conflict situations as rationale and governing logic for military intervention. The Bush administration in the United States infamously portrayed its invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 as a mission to protect Afghan women from abuses at the hands of the Taliban; mobilising feminist political concepts to justify an imperial military excursion (Cockburn 2010, Shepherd 2006, Young 2003). The foregrounding of women's rights has continued in how NATO frames the rationale of its mission in Afghanistan (Dyvik 2014, McBride and Wibben 2012). A 2013 review of NATO's ISAF mission in the country identifies gender inequality as a driver of conflict: 'Conflicts in Afghanistan are closely linked to gender relations and the position of women in the society' (Lackenbauer and Langlais 2013, 32). In parallel, this review frames the military intervention as addressing both conflict and gender equality: 'Women's rights, and participation in society, have improved since 2001' (Lackenbauer and Langlais 2013, 32). In other words, the war in Afghanistan demonstrates a discursive linkage between gender equality – often defanged as 'gender perspective' – and conflict resolution (Hurley 2018b). This discursive linkage has supported the development of gender capabilities within NATO structures – including policies (discussed further in the next section); planning (the NATO Operational Plan includes a 'Gender Annex'); the institutionalisation of gender advisor positions; as well as the development of training on gender (Lackenbauer and Langlais 2013, Wright 2016). Further, the call for attention to women's rights in Afghanistan established the desirability of deploying female personnel, including dedicated 'Female Engagement Teams' or FETs, as women soldiers are portrayed as being uniquely positioned to communicate with conflict-affected

Afghan women (Robson 2010, Brännström 2007). The recent history of the U.S. and NATO in Afghanistan is one example in a broader constellation of truth claims that establish women's rights (or violations thereof) as – somewhat paradoxically – both a cause of, and justification for, war and military intervention. This framing provides one rationale for providing gender training to military audiences, designed to persuade military personnel that women's rights are inextricably linked to military missions and their objectives.<sup>6</sup>

The second area of discussion around gender and peacekeeping relates to the demands to 'stop rape now,' referring to sexual violence committed by warring factions (see for example UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict). The issue of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) has become publicly visible through the production of numerous documentary films, media reports, and social media campaigns, and through the establishment by the UK of a 'Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative' (Kirby 2015). The insistent attention devoted to the issue of conflict-related sexual violence is also reflected in the UN Security Council's Women, Peace and Security agenda: all nine of the Security Council resolutions on WPS mention CRSV as a key protection need within the agenda, and five of the resolutions are specifically devoted to improving prevention and response efforts (see also Pratt 2013).<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the intensity of the attention devoted to CRSV has been so acute that it has been described as 'policy hype' and a 'media frenzy' (Hilhorst and Douma 2018, 87). Key initiatives to address this phenomenon have focused particularly on 'ending impunity', through the prosecution of sexual violence as a war crime, as well as on the provision of health and other services to survivors (Kirby 2015, Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2013). Peacekeepers are understood in this policy frame to have an important role to play in the prevention of violence and protection of women, as well as in apprehending perpetrators in order to bring them to justice. Training is

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<sup>6</sup> For an example of this line of argumentation, and a reference that is eagerly taken up by many gender trainers, see Hudson et al. 2014.

<sup>7</sup> These are: Resolution 1820 (2008), Resolution 1888 (2009), Resolution 1960 (2010), Resolution 2106 (2013), and Resolution 2467 (2019).

evoked as a mechanism by which peacekeepers are convinced to care about the problem of CRSV, and to equip them with the skills and knowledge to take preventative action (as I discuss further in Chapter Seven). This often rather singular media and policy focus on CRSV is also reflected in training initiatives, with multiple training courses offered particularly on this issue, and its systematic inclusion across more general training curricula.

Whereas the term conflict-related sexual violence is generally reserved to talk about violence committed by local armed actors, peacekeepers themselves – despite being institutionally positioned as protectors of the peace-kept population – have also been indicated in the perpetration of sexual violence in mission areas. This type of violence, commonly referred to as sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), perpetrated by UN personnel, peacekeepers, and humanitarian workers, has been documented in virtually every peacekeeping mission since awareness of the problem was raised in the context of the UN mission in Cambodia in 1993 (Bauer and Molinari 2017, Westendorf 2017, Henry 2013a). The UN has launched multiple inquiries into the phenomenon, and regularly re-iterates its commitment to a zero-tolerance policy for SEA. The organisation's attempts to prevent such abuses from occurring have been described as a 'train and punish' model, which relies on training troops to better uphold codes of conduct, and bringing to justice those who contravene them (Westendorf 2017, 1). However, few such cases have resulted in justice for victims of SEA. Among the most recent instances such efforts, a lengthy French judicial inquiry into abuses committed by French soldiers in the Central African Republic resulted in no prosecutions, demonstrating how the same factors that make victims vulnerable to abuse in the first place disadvantage them in their attempts to obtain justice (Brabant and Miñano 2017, Westendorf 2017). Notably, while training on the topic of SEA is a core component of the UN response, this training is carefully separated from training on CRSV and gender in operations, echoing Jasmine-Kim Westendorf's critique of 'how the divorcing of SEA policy from WPS and CRSV, which represent explicitly feminist and human rights-based approaches, has undermined

implementation in all three policy areas' (2017, 1; on the separation of SEA from gender training, see also Lyytikäinen 2007).

Finally, the high instance of sexual harassment and assault within national militaries has been on prominent display in numerous countries in recent years. In the United States, while the problem of sexual harassment within the ranks has been publicly discussed since at least the 1980s, the problem gained renewed visibility through the release of the documentary film *The Invisible War* in 2012, and subsequent attempts by legislators to remove sexual assault investigations from the military chain of command (Draper 2014, Guenter-Schlesinger 1999, Szitanyi Forthcoming). Sexual violence and harassment within the ranks is by no means a solely U.S. problem – cases have been documented in enough countries to establish a widespread trend, including Australia, Finland, France, South Korea, South Africa and the United Kingdom, to name a few (Defence Abuse Taskforce 2014, Finnish Defence Forces 2012, Le Monde 2014, Kim 2014, Parliamentary Monitoring Group 2011, Bates 2015). The response to such instances of abuse can be described, not unlike the response to SEA, as one of train and punish, with various training courses on sexual harassment and equal opportunities mandated in many countries' defence forces (Guenter-Schlesinger 1999). These training topics are not typically covered in peacekeeper gender training. Instead, sexual harassment and anti-discrimination training are considered the mandate of national authorities.

Recent events can be understood as constituting a series of moments in which the gendered dynamics of and harms caused by conflict and military intervention have become particularly visible, and have occupied space in the media and in policy debates. Policy interventions have systematically prescribed training as part of the solution. It is important to note however, that this framing of gendered problems in conflict and intervention derives from a combination of media attention and policy responses to specific gendered harms; which is not to claim that any of these phenomena are new. Conflict and military intervention have long had gendered

impacts on those affected, whether or not these impacts were recognised by politicians or military planners. Conflict-related sexual violence, and sexual violence committed by military personnel against civilians, has been documented across conflicts spanning a wide geographic and historical range (Goldstein 2003, 332, Enloe 2000, 108). Internal sexual harassment and assault have long been part of military institutions, to the extent that they may even be considered integral to their functioning, as a normalised and tolerated – if not accepted – part of military training (Wadham 2017, 243, Belkin 2012, 99).

Not only do these gendered issues have a longer history than the recent policy response might imply, they are also not exhaustive of the ways in which conflict, military intervention, and martial institutions produce gender and violence. That these four issue areas have been framed as *the* gendered aspects of conflict does not reflect some underlying truth as to where gender operates. Rather, the production of these phenomena as gendered simultaneously implicates the production of a series of omissions and silences around where gender is to be found. For example, domestic abuse committed by military or police personnel, particularly after deployments, rarely receives mention in policy discourses on the gendered aspects of conflict and security (Gray 2016a, Whitworth 2008). The more subtle configurations of power that enlist women's service to the military as cleaners, laundresses, sex workers, and supportive spouses likewise elude public attention in these discourses (Enloe 2000). That gendered insecurities are imagined by European states as occurring exclusively outside of Europe's borders is evident in their resistance to considering issues of violence in the context of forced displacement in Europe through WPS policy frames (Holvikivi and Reeves 2017).

Finally, the military is arguably adept in the production and mobilisation of norms of masculinity and femininity in ways that foster acquiescence to, or even enthusiasm for, the exercise of collective violence (Hurley 2018b, 454, Belkin 2012, 24, Whitworth 2004, 104). Close attention to the ways in which the military makes use of gender norms lends itself to



the suggestion that, in fact, all military training can be thought of as gender training' However, the development of specifically designated gender training in militarised contexts demonstrates that certain phenomena are made to qualify as gender, whereas other gendered aspects of conflict and military intervention are rendered invisible. In other words, the emergent media and policy attention to gender in situations of armed conflict is best understood as a process of making, and giving significance to, gender as an analytic category and political problem, rather than assuming that it is simply a reflection of new problems, or all actually existing ones. Significantly for my purposes, this response consistently identifies training as a response to such problems.

## THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF GENDER TRAINING

That training is systematically identified as a response to the gendered harms of conflict and military intervention is evident in the policy responses both of the international organisations mandating peacekeeping, as well as in states' own policy commitments. In this section, I chart the building of a transnational consensus around the need to train peacekeepers on gender, first examining policy commitments on the topic, and then considering the level of implementation of such policies.

Although I anchor this analysis in the policy framework of the international Women, Peace and Security agenda, it is worth bearing in mind that gender training does not somehow emerge as an automatic or natural response to the particular issues raised by the WPS agenda. The concept of gender training was developed earlier in the field of international development, and the practice itself can be linked to feminist consciousness-raising activities in the 1970s and 1980s (see also discussion in Chapter Three). Developments in the WPS field were likely influenced by the pre-existing availability of a model of gender training circulating in the broader field of global governance. In other words, I do not suggest that gender training for peacekeepers emerges specifically out of WPS, but rather use this policy framework to

concentrate my analysis on how this practice has been taken up and developed in relation to peacekeeping during the past twenty years.

***Policy mandates: An emergent consensus on the need for training***

The heightened visibility of certain gendered harms ignored in or caused by peacekeeping operations, and the demand that ‘something be done’ about these harms, has been met with the proliferation of policies at the international decision-making level on the topic of gender and security. Such policies consistently commit to training peacekeepers on gender-related topics, and therefore evidence a growing transnational consensus on commitments to gender training.<sup>8</sup> Since the year 2000, such policy commitments have been most significantly – though not exclusively – articulated within the framework of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. This agenda was established with the ground-breaking UN Security Council Resolution 1325 passed in the year 2000, and has since been codified in and evolved through a number of further policies. At the time of writing, such further policies count eight subsequent Security Council resolutions<sup>9</sup>, six regional action plans<sup>10</sup>, and eighty-one national action plans<sup>11</sup>. Because the WPS agenda comprises the key policy architecture addressing gender in peacekeeping, it provides a helpful framework to examine how such policy mandates have both reflected and developed a consensus around the need to train peacekeepers on gender. This is not to say that the WPS framework is exhaustive of policy commitments to provide

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<sup>8</sup> Though the high-level policy response is relatively recent, the demands for such action is of much older lineage. Scholarship on the WPS agenda typically identifies women’s peace movements, dating back to the beginning of the twentieth century, as having laid the groundwork for these policies (Otto 2016).

<sup>9</sup> Respectively, Resolution 1820 (2008), Resolution 1888 (2009), Resolution 1889 (2009), Resolution 1960 (2010), Resolution 2106 (2013), Resolution 2122 (2013), Resolution 2242 (2015), and Resolution 2467 (2019). For a regularly updated list of thematic Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, see WILPF’s Peacewomen website: [www.peacewomen.org](http://www.peacewomen.org).

<sup>10</sup> The following regional organisations have instituted Action Plans on the implementation of the Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security: the African Union (2009), the Economic Community of West African States (2010), the European Union (2008), IGAD (2013), NATO (2016), and the Pacific Forum (2012).

<sup>11</sup> For a regularly updated list of NAPs, see the Peacewomen website: [www.peacewomen.org](http://www.peacewomen.org).

gender training for uniformed personnel. Indeed, such mandates may be found outside of the WPS policy framework – for example in national policies such as defence white papers (e.g. Government of South Africa 1996, Para. 37), or in international organisations’ directives (e.g. NATO 2012). However, given the global reach of the WPS agenda, its status as the overarching policy framework on the topic, and the public availability of dozens of countries’ action plans, I contend that the WPS architecture offers a useful framework through which to map current policy commitments on gender training for peacekeepers.

My analysis of policy documents is based on a systematic review of UN Security Council WPS resolutions, regional organisations’ action plans, and national action plans (NAPs). I include in the analysis all Security Council resolutions on WPS; and all of the most recent regional and national action plans publicly available in English or French (for a complete list of documents consulted, see Appendix Two). For each policy document, I conducted a key word search for passages relating to training. In most cases, the search for ‘train/ing/er’ identified the relevant passages. In cases where this yielded no results, I expanded the search to include other related terms: educat/e/ion, aware/ness, capacit/y/ies, curricul/a/um, sensitis/e/ation, workshop, and seminar. I then undertook a qualitative analysis of the policy commitments relating to training, examining what mandate for training the policies establish. This analysis demonstrates that there is a well-established and broadly accepted mandate that peacekeepers must be trained on gender-related questions.

The nine UN Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs) on Women, Peace and Security all refer to training. While some mention training of female UN staff (to ensure availability of qualified candidates for high-level posts); of parties to armed conflict (on the prohibition of sexual and gender-based violence); or of security and justice personnel in conflict-affected countries (in the context of security sector reform); the vast majority of mentions of training relate to the training of peacekeeping personnel. The foundational WPS Resolution 1325 establishes a

broad scope, asking Member States to incorporate training ‘on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures ... as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training’ into their national military and police personnel pre-deployment training (2000, Para.6). This broad commitment is later articulated in the terminology of ‘gender training,’ with Resolution 2106 calling for ‘comprehensive gender training of all relevant peacekeeping and civilian personnel’ (2013, Para.8). Subsequent resolutions also sharpen the focus on two more specific issues, with numerous mentions of training on the prevention of and response to conflict-related sexual violence<sup>12</sup>, and sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by peacekeepers.<sup>13</sup>

The UN is primarily charged with providing training materials and guidance on training for uniformed peacekeepers, while troop contributing countries are implored to implement such training. Although the policy mandates on training at the UN level are fairly broad, it is worth noting that these commitments focus on gender as an operational question – as the needs and protection of women in the area of operations, the importance of female peacekeepers to addressing the concerns of peace-kept women, and the behaviour of peacekeepers towards them. Gender training thus defined elides questions raised in the previous section of internal issues within police and military organisations, such as sexual harassment, other forms of discrimination, or domestic violence. This notion of gender training frames gender as relating primarily to the external dimensions of the peacekeeping endeavour.

These overarching commitments to develop training have been refined and developed in a number of ways. First, and as detailed in the text of the Security Council resolutions, the UN has developed a number of training programmes to guide Member States’ training efforts. I return to this question of training materials in the final section of this chapter. Second, these

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<sup>12</sup> Resolution 1820 (2000), Para.6; Resolution 1888 (2009), Para.9; Resolution 1960 (2010), Para. 11; Resolution 2106 (2013), Para.14; Resolution 2467 (2019), Para.24.

<sup>13</sup> Resolution 1820 (2008), Para.7; Resolution 1888 (2009), Para. 21; Resolution 2242 (2015), Para. 9.

commitments have been taken up and further developed in regional and national action plans for the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. These localised policy documents are significant, as they are a key mechanism for the diffusion of the high-level policy commitments of the Security Council (True 2016, 310, see also Swaine 2009).

A handful of regional organisations have developed policies and implementation plans on Women, Peace and Security. These include: the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS 2010), the European Union (EU 2008), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in East Africa (IGAD 2013), the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO 2016); and the Pacific Region (2012). The African Union Gender Policy (AU 2009) also includes mentions of the WPS resolutions and outlines relevant commitments, and is accordingly included in the analysis.

A review of these regional action plans reveals that all include a commitment to train military and police personnel on gender-related topics. Substantively, the Pacific Region action plan gives the most generic mention of gender training, outlining a commitment to train police and military personnel on the 'implementation of Women, Peace and Security commitments' (Pacific Forum Regional Security Committee 2012, 25). The ECOWAS and IGAD plans are slightly more specific, mentioning commitments to train security personnel on response to and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, as well as integration of gender perspectives in peace building activities (ECOWAS 2010, 4, 9, IGAD 2013, 25-27). The NATO and EU action plans include more extensive descriptions of training commitments, with each plan featuring a separate section on training and education. They focus primarily on who should be trained, by whom, and when. The NATO action plan makes specific mention of gender advisors and headquarters and military staff at all levels (NATO 2016, 3, 5). The EU action plan elaborates on the role of the European Security and Defence College in developing training, and introduces the possibility of e-learning modules (Council of the European Union

2008, Para.26). In terms of the actual content and aims of the training, NATO highlights sexual and gender-based violence, and identifies a number of training areas where a gender perspective is needed (small arms and light weapons, and building integrity) (NATO 2016, 5, 8). NATO also recommends that military education follow a gender-mainstreamed reference curriculum (NATO 2016, 5).

Only the AU Gender Policy (2009, 35) elaborates further on the substance of training, in a list of definitions which describes gender training as:

The provision of formal learning experiences and skills in order to increase gender analysis and awareness skills, which serve to recognise and address gender issues in the programming process. Training can include the three dimensions of:

- a) political- introducing gender concepts and analysis;
- b) professional- providing staff with “how-to” skills; and
- c) personal- challenging an individual’s gender attitudes and stereotypes.

Particularly interesting (and rare) is that the AU’s definition of gender training also speaks to a personal level, and an aim to change attitudes and stereotypes. This description appears somewhat at odds with a general tendency to frame gender training as a question of knowledge (about women’s differential roles and experiences in conflict) and skills (to address their different needs), as it implies an aim to change something about the peacekeeping mission or the uniformed actors that carry it out themselves. In other words, it speaks to an internal dimension to gender training that I suggested above was removed from the UN training mandate. These different approaches notwithstanding, regional policy mandates are consistent in their commitments to provide gender training for uniformed peacekeepers, but they do not significantly expand on the substance of training as described in the UN Security Council resolutions.

Finally, a growing number of states have formulated national action plans on the implementation of WPS commitments. These NAPs demonstrate that the commitment to train military and police personnel on gender is widely taken up in different geographic

contexts: of the seventy-five NAPs reviewed, the overwhelming majority mention gender training for security and defence personnel (for a full list, see Appendix Two). Only three NAPs – those of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq and Togo – do not mention such training. Further, several NAPs foreground training as an area of particular focus: for example, the Icelandic NAP establishes training and advocacy as its first objective (2013, 5-6). The Norwegian NAP foregrounds the importance of training and education: ‘We believe that knowledge encourages action. We will therefore strengthen expertise as regards women, peace and security in the Foreign Service, the Norwegian police, and the Norwegian Armed Forces through education and training and practical experience’ (2015, 13). These examples are illustrative of the importance placed on training and education within NAPs more broadly. NAPs from different contexts are consistent in highlighting the importance of training, both for security and defence personnel, as well as to a range of audiences from state actors (humanitarian staff, judges, immigration officials), to women’s peace activists, and to public awareness raising. In addition to domestic activities, several NAPs produced in the Global North mention providing gender training to development cooperation and security sector reform partners in the Global South (see for example, Government of the UK 2018, 11, Government of New Zealand 2015, 18, on the tendency of Global North NAPs to frame WPS and gender as external concerns, see also Shepherd 2016, 331-2).

In sum, an overview of mentions of training in NAPs reveals that gender training is a broadly accepted practice that is mandated in policy across a range of geographic contexts. Further, given that not all countries have adopted a WPS NAP, but may nonetheless mandate such training (for example, the South African Defence White Paper contains such a mandate, though South Africa does not have a NAP on WPS, Government of South Africa 1996), this review of the policy commitments of NAPs likely produces a conservative view of the reach of such policy commitments.

### ***Implementation of policy mandates***

The broad reach of policy mandates of course does not necessarily give an accurate picture of who provides this training, or who is actually being trained. There may be, and often are, inconsistencies between policy commitments and their implementation. In this section, I examine first who provides gender training, and then what we know about who is being or has been trained.

The policy commitments mandating gender training have effectively been translated into a division of labour between troop and police contributing countries, and the peacekeeping mission itself, which is summarised in Table 1. In this division, troop and police contributing countries are responsible for providing pre-deployment training on gender, and this training should correspond to a UN-provided core training curriculum (see DPKO & DFS 2017a). Pre-deployment gender training, which is in principle mandatory for all peacekeepers departing on mission, is supplemented by specialised courses provided by national and regional peacekeeping training centres. Such courses often cater to functional specialisations: trainers, gender advisors, and so forth. Peacekeepers receive further training in the mission area itself, in the form of induction and on-going gender training (Curran 2017, 11, Lamptey 2012, 16, Lyytikäinen 2007, 9).

I mentioned above that certain issue areas, especially those to do with sexual harassment and discrimination within the military or police organisation itself, or domestic violence committed by their personnel, are typically excluded from the peacekeeping training scenario, which frames gender as an operational issue relating to the peace-kept population. This is not to say that other forms of gender training do not, in principle and sometimes also in practice, address these issues. Table 1 therefore also takes into account basic training and professional military education as the educational structures in which such questions are addressed. Further, and as I discuss in relation to the training commitments outlined in national action



plans below, many states formulate commitments to train their military and police personnel on gender, not just in relation to peacekeeping deployments, but also incorporating questions of gender into their broader training and education structures. While the scope of this project is limited to peacekeeper-specific training, it is helpful to bear in mind the broader structures within which such training takes place.

Finally, in relation to who provides training and where, it is worth noting that the formal organisational division of labour portrayed in Table 1 to some extent masks the complexity of institutional actors involved. I return to this question in Chapter Six, but it is already worth noting that the institutions that provide training in practice draw upon a range of expertise, beyond military and police trainers and peacekeeping personnel. Some national action plans explicitly mention this practice, such as the Croatian NAP, which specifies that gender training should be provided ‘in cooperation with civil society organisations’ (2011, 7). In practice, the gender training courses that I observed typically invited a range of contributions and also involved civilian experts, academics, NGO staff, and civil society activists as trainers.

TABLE 1: GENDER TRAINING AT NATIONAL AND MULTINATIONAL LEVELS

National Security Forces	Regional Training Centres	Multilateral organisations
Basic training		
Professional military education		
Pre-deployment training	Pre-deployment syllabi, handbooks, e-learning, etc.	
In-mission training		In-mission training
Military exercises		
Specialised courses		

The question of who is trained in gender is in some ways determined by the framing of my research questions; this study examines the provision of gender training for military and police

peacekeepers. While there is clearly a policy mandate for this (though one which does not, as several of my research participants complained, adequately differentiate training objectives for different levels of personnel and functional specialities), this still leaves the question of implementation open: who, in practice, is trained? Although pre-deployment training on gender is in principle mandatory for all peacekeepers, many observers lament that such training is not systematically provided (Carson 2016, 287, Lamptey 2012, 7, Lyytikäinen 2007, 9). However, to note implementation gaps is not the same thing as to conclude that the practice is marginal or insignificant. Though I could not identify any global figure on the number of peacekeepers who have received this training, numerous reports point to the conclusion that significant numbers – in the tens, if not hundreds of thousands – of peacekeepers have received training on gender. In the remainder of this section, I review available evidence to suggest that the policy commitments to provide gender training are implemented to an extent that warrants its characterisation as a significant, emergent transnational practice.

While no global estimate is available on the implementation of gender training in pre-deployment or as part of national defence and police education curricula (Lyytikäinen 2007, 10), the review of national action plans that I undertook suggests that this is an increasingly institutionalised practice. A handful of NAPs helpfully report figures on training. The NAP of Bosnia-Herzegovina mentioned in 2014 that around four thousand members of the Ministry of Defence and armed forces had been trained on UNSCR 1325 (2014, 11). The Georgian NAP reported in 2015 that 80% of Ministry of Defence personnel had been trained on preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) (2016, 8). In a similar vein, state reports on the implementation of policy commitments claim that training has taken place. Guinea, for example, reports in a review of the ECOWAS regional action plan that it has provided training on Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 to one thousand security sector personnel and women activists (UNOWA 2013, 17). NATO's analysis of national reports

to its Committee on Gender Perspectives shows that 92.3% of Allied and Partner countries include gender in pre-deployment training and/or exercises (NATO 2017b, 30). While these disparate examples do not amount to a systematic global mapping of policy implementation, they nonetheless attest to the provision of gender training in various locations around the world.

In addition to national pre-deployment training initiatives, a range of peacekeeping training centres provide specialised courses on gender, many of them open to foreign nationals (Lyytikäinen 2007, 19-23). Course catalogues published by such institutions reveal that training centres in Argentina, Bangladesh, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ghana, India, Mali, Serbia, and Sweden, at least, regularly provide gender courses for multinational audiences (CAECOPAZ 2019, BIPSOT 2016, PSOTC 2016, KAIPTC 2015, UN Women 2013, 2015, EMP 2016, SWEDINT and NCGM 2016, UNDP SEESAC 2016). Again, this constitutes a small snapshot of dozens of peacekeeping training centres across the globe<sup>14</sup>, but nevertheless demonstrates that gender training is also available in regional peacekeeping training centres in Africa, Europe, Latin America and South Asia, thereby qualifying it as a transnational practice.

Finally, most UN-led peacekeeping missions provide in-mission training, the scale of which can be far-reaching. UN and NATO institutional reports testify to the prevalence (though also often to the unsatisfactory scope of) in-mission training on gender (Lackenbauer and Langlais 2013, 36, Lyytikäinen 2007, 23-6, Higate 2004, 18). The on-going nature of such training was also mentioned by my research participants. For example, a military officer I call Fatima related to me in an interview that she had personally trained between 600 and 800 peacekeepers on gender over a 10-month period during her deployment with the MINUSMA mission in Gao, Mali. While these reports fall short of a systematic mapping, I contend that

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<sup>14</sup> For details of peacekeeping training centres across the world, see <https://iaptc.org/membership>.

they do demonstrate that gender training constitutes a transnational practice that implicates significant numbers of peacekeepers and trainers.

## DEFINING GENDER TRAINING

Training peacekeepers on gender, then, can be described as an emergent practice that is implemented across a range of geographic contexts. However, as noted above, the policy mandates established by the UN Security Council resolutions and regional action plans are vague on what exactly training is intended to achieve or cover. The question of what gender training consists of remains an open question. In this section, I turn to ask what exactly gender training *is*. I look to two sources of information on what gender training consists of. First, I examine a selection of training curricula to examine topics covered, and aims and methods suggested for training. Next, I provide an overview as to how states interpret the mandate to train peacekeepers on gender, based on a systematic analysis of national action plans.

### ***Gender training materials***

Gender training materials offer a glimpse into what the training mandated by policies and implemented across the world consists of, and how they frame the problem of gender. In this section, I review a selection of training materials, examining what topics they cover and what they aim to do. For this analysis, I identified a number of training curricula for review, enumerated in Appendix Three. These curricula can be grouped in three different categories, and are selected for analysis for different but complementary reasons.

The first category comprises key institutional curricula, which are particularly influential in shaping gender training practices. These include the UN core pre-deployment training curriculum lessons on gender-related topics; and training packages produced for the AU, EU, and NATO. These are the curricula of institutions which mandate a large part of

peacekeeping/military interventions across the world, and which are in a position to set mandatory training requirements.

The second category, in turn, includes training materials produced by smaller regional organisations as well by non-governmental organisations. These materials are less influential in formal terms, because the organisations that produce them do not command large peacekeeping forces and cannot make these materials mandatory practice for such interventions. Nonetheless, they often influence the training practices of the larger organisations (the NATO curriculum, for example, recommends the DCAF/PfPC Handbook as a further resource); and/or provide a more comprehensive view of training practices in the broader epistemic community.

Finally, I include in this overview of training materials two sets of materials from individual countries: the United Kingdom and Senegal. These countries' materials were chosen opportunistically, that is to say they were among the few that were available to me, and are not necessarily representative of broader practices. Nonetheless, they add insight into some of the different ways in which training is conceptualised at the state level.

In order to provide an overview of what these training materials consist of, I sorted the materials into analytical units. For example, in the UN core pre-deployment training curriculum, I identified four lessons that relate to gender (Women, Peace and Security; conflict-related sexual violence; sexual exploitation and abuse; and respect for diversity); yielding four different analytical units. In total, this sorting process resulted in the training materials being categorised into a total of twenty-seven analytical units. For each of these units, I noted: the type of training they involve (core or specialised training); its duration and intended audience; the stated aim of the training; topics covered; and learning objectives. Summarising the training materials in this way allows me to provide a broad description of gender training, what it covers, and what it intends to achieve.

These training materials include both mandatory pre-deployment training for all troops or police personnel deployed – such as the UN and NATO curricula – as well as specialised modules for more select audiences – such as scenario-based training on conflict-related sexual violence for military peacekeepers. The training materials vary somewhat in form, and include reference curricula, lesson plans including interactive exercises, scripted PowerPoint presentations, and handbooks that offer guidance for trainers on session design and pedagogy. Some training materials are standalone e-learning modules, whereas others are intended for face-to-face delivery. The suggested duration of the training these materials describe ranges from 45 minutes to 2 weeks. The training materials typically contain extensive guidance for instructors – with most numbering hundreds of pages. In many ways, the recent availability of most of the materials reviewed in the public domain attests to the evolving nature and relatively recent lineage of this practice. For example, the UN core modules were not publicly available when I began this research: the pre-deployment modules were published online in 2017, and the UN specialised training materials on conflict-related sexual violence were only published in 2018.

Overall, the training materials reviewed focus largely on three key topics, namely: gender; conflict-related sexual violence; and sexual exploitation and abuse. First, the most common description of training invokes the term gender, with course titles featuring inflections of the term such as: ‘Gender Toolkit’ (UN), ‘Gender and Peacekeeping Operations’ (UN), ‘Gender Mainstreaming’ (AU), ‘Gender Perspective’ (EU, NATO), and ‘Gender Capacities’ (*Capacités en Genre*, Senegal). The training materials of the UN and United Kingdom describe (some) such training as relating to ‘Women, Peace and Security’, though an overview of topics covered suggests that this training topic is largely synonymous with ‘gender’ training.

Second, while gender/WPS training always includes a mention of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV), both the UN and smaller regional centres offer training focused specifically

on the topic. The deployment of the term CRSV typically indicates that the training does not address other forms of gender-based violence such as sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence, etc. In contrast, two of the training materials identified – those produced for the AU and by the independent Peace Operations Training Institute – adopt more expansive titles, using instead the terms ‘sexual and gender-based violence’ or ‘violence against women,’ and address a broader spectrum of gender violences.

Third, a number of training materials produced by the UN are devoted to the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse. SEA is a topic that is included in most gender/WPS training, but not consistently. The EU gender training curriculum notably does not address the question of SEA. Finally, individual training materials prioritise somewhat different training topics: NATO has produced a training curriculum focusing on gender and counter-terrorism, and the UN training materials include a lesson on ‘Respect for Diversity’.

The training materials are remarkably similar in their pedagogic approach. All training materials reviewed suggest a combination of lecture, interactive discussions, and learning activities either through classroom work or in the context of military exercises. Typically, they begin with an introduction and definition of key concepts, such as: sex/gender, gender equality, gender perspective, gender mainstreaming, gender balance, empowerment of women, conflict-related sexual violence, sexual and gender-based violence, and/or sexual exploitation and abuse. Such activities are typically coupled with or followed by an explanation of issues at stake, for example how gender roles affect women’s experiences of conflict, or the causes, prevalence and consequences of conflict-related sexual violence. Other prominent components of these lessons include an introduction to the (international) legal framework relating to the topic of the training, and an overview of organisational structures, roles and responsibilities. Finally, the training materials consistently centre questions of what the individual who is being trained ‘can do’ in relation to the problem. In sum, the training

materials present the topic at hand as a problem to be addressed, and suggest actions to be taken to address the problem.

Consider for example the learning outcomes listed in the UN Core Pre-Deployment Training module on WPS (2017b, 1):

- Explain the different impact that conflict has on women and girls, men and boys
- Explain how women are both victims in conflict and key partners for peace in the activities of UN peacekeeping operations
- Explain “gender equality,” “gender mainstreaming,” and their importance to effective mandate implementation
- List actions to take to protect women and girls, and support gender equality

These learning outcomes are typical in both their formulation and content. The aims of this training can be described as follows: first, to convince trainees that a problem exists, and that they have a duty – imposed either by legal frameworks, operational demands, or moral imperatives – to respond; and second, to provide them with skills and capabilities to do something about the problem.

Within this broad framing, nonetheless, the training materials hint at the varied ways in which the meaning of the term gender can be inflected in the course of training. On the one hand, these materials tend to privilege a technical, problem-solving approach to training (as has been observed in the broader field of gender training, see for example Sexwale 1996, 61, and discussion in Chapter 3). This is literally the case in the UN Police Gender Toolkit, which includes seventeen pages of training guidance in using different problem-solving tools, such as SWOT-analysis, and other acronym-based analytical tools (2015, 310-327). In a similar manner, especially the NATO materials present gender as a tool that supports the pre-existing goals of the mission, as communicated in the title of the organisation’s mandatory pre-deployment training module: ‘Improving Operational Effectiveness by Integrating Gender.’

This problem-solving oriented frame is, however, haunted by statements that gesture towards a more transformative aim of gender training. For example, the UK Training Needs Analysis



argues that, through training, ‘the appropriate mental skills, attitudes and behaviours must be developed to deliver operational effectiveness,’ but also notes that ‘[t]here must also be an underlying shift in culture within the UK Armed Forces’ (2016, 81). The Senegalese Armed Forces training manual goes further, elaborating as its aim the establishment of a culture of gender equality in the institution (*culture de genre*), and listing as its first learning objective a personal rather than professional goal – that of developing among military personnel, a gender-equality-oriented conscience and behaviour (*savoir-être*) (2013, 14). In sum, the training materials reviewed lend themselves to multiple interpretations of the aims of gender training. While the framing of gender as a set of discrete problems that can and should be solved through military and policy action dominates, some of the training materials simultaneously point towards a more diffuse transformative agenda, that involves changing cultures, attitudes and daily behaviours.

### ***Training mandates of national action plans***

The training curricula reviewed above point both to large institutions’ (e.g. UN, AU, EU, NATO) understandings of what gender training should consist of, and to variation in approaches to training between these institutions, and some smaller actors such as regional institutions or individual countries that provide such training (e.g. Peace Operations Training Institutions, UK, Senegal). Given this variation, it is worthwhile to interrogate how states interpret the mandate to provide gender training, and how and in what ways they make use of the training materials provided by international organisations. In order to interrogate these questions, I examined the policy commitments to training articulated in national action plans.

Having identified all passages that relate to the training of police and military personnel (as described the previous section), I undertook a qualitative analysis of the content of these commitments. This analysis is based on an inductive approach, which involves a form of open coding (Benaquisto 2012) . I first read the training commitments and took note of different

topics of training, grouping together similar topics. I refined this list to arrive at a coding system of thirty-five different training topics, the results of which are enumerated in Table 2. I then re-read the passages relating to training, coding each NAP's training commitments to produce a frequency count of training topics mentioned. This categorisation of training topics produces a proximate picture of what training topics are privileged: it reflects what, per Butler, qualifies as gender for the purposes of gender training in martial institutions.

TABLE 2: GENDER TRAINING TOPICS IN NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

<i>Category</i>	<i>Training topic</i>	<i>NAPs mentioning topic (n=72)</i>
<i>Gender/WPS</i> Total NAPs mentioning category: 62	Women, Peace and Security <sup>15</sup>	48
	Gender <sup>16</sup>	35
	Gender equality	18
<i>Violence</i> Total NAPs mentioning category: 48	(Sexual and) gender-based violence	26
	Violence against women (and girls)	15
	Sexual violence	15
	Sexual exploitation and abuse	11
	HIV/AIDS	11
	Trafficking in human beings	11
	Conflict-related sexual violence	6
	Domestic violence	1
<i>Women in conflict</i> Total NAPs mentioning category: 30	Women's rights	15
	Protection of women	14
	Women's participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding	12
	Women's needs in conflict situations	7
	Women in conflict situations	5
<i>Legal frameworks</i> Total NAPs mentioning category: 22	Human rights	15
	International humanitarian law	12
	CEDAW	3

<sup>15</sup> Includes mentions of WPS as an area of training, as well as individual Security Council resolutions and NAPs.

<sup>16</sup> Includes mentions such as 'gender issues', 'applying a gender perspective', 'gender awareness', as well as introducing 'gender concepts'.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Training topic</b>	<b>NAPs mentioning topic (n=72)</b>
<i>Internal security sector issues</i> Total NAPs mentioning category: 10	Sexual harassment	7
	Women's participation as peacekeepers	3
	Non-discrimination	3
	Equal opportunities	2
	Fraternisation	1
<i>Dealing with 'others'</i> Total NAPs mentioning category: 15	Supporting training in other countries	9
	Mission-specific gender training	7
	Cultural awareness training	5
<i>Other issue areas</i> Total NAPs mentioning category: 14	DDR	5
	Protection of civilians	3
	SSR	3
	Protection and rights of children	3
	Forced displacement	2
	Transitional justice	2
	Engaging men	1
	Addressing hate crimes based on sexual orientation	1
	Civil-military cooperation	1
	Menstrual hygiene	1

The training topics enumerated in Table 2 can be roughly grouped into seven different categories. The first category contains training topics that are generic in terms. The vast majority of NAPs reviewed make reference to the general topics of WPS, gender, or gender equality, with ten NAPs limiting their description of the scope of training to only such general references. Many NAPs make general reference to training on WPS, such as the Australian NAP, which contains a commitment to develop 'training programs for Australian defence, police and civilian personnel to enhance staff competence and understanding of Women, Peace and Security' (2012, 23). More than half of NAPs surveyed make such mention to either WPS, specific WPS resolutions, and/or training on the content of the country's NAP itself. In a related manner, 35 NAPs reference training related to 'gender', 'gender issues' or training for 'gender awareness'. Many also mention the integration of gender into other training; for

example, the Nigerian NAP reports that an activity conducted under the previous iteration of its NAP involved ‘gender review of the curriculum for the Nigerian Army Peace-Keeping centre’ (2017, 8), and the Belgian NAP includes a commitment to ‘integrate the gender perspective in a substantial manner into basic training’ (2013, 13).

Noticeably fewer – 18 out of 72 – NAPs mention ‘gender equality’ or ‘equality between men and women’. These mentions include two different orientations towards gender equality. In the NAP of Cameroon, the training envisioned appears to be geared towards the Cameroonian forces themselves respecting this principle: ‘Organize systematic and obligatory training sessions on issues around the rights of women, women-men equality and sensitization against gender related violence for Cameroonian staff going on external operations’ (2017, Output 3.1). In contrast, the Swiss NAP identifies gender equality as a Swiss output in operations, noting that the Swiss contribution has extended the reach of family response units in police stations in Kabul, and that: ‘Training and awareness programmes on the subject of equality and violence against women have been extended to cover all [Afghan] police personnel’ (2013, 24). This framing subtly suggests that Swiss personnel deploying overseas are already aware of and committed to principles of gender equality, and that their contribution is to export gender equality, presented as an area of competence.

While the broad category of gender and WPS may include any number of more specific training topics on gender, most NAPs go further to identify what they deem to be relevant topics for gender training. Of these, what is notable is the prevalence of questions of violence – often framed as either (sexual and) gender-based violence, or violence against women (and girls). In total, 48 of the 72 NAPs surveyed include training commitments around various forms of gender violence. Some training commitments around gender violence refer explicitly to violence committed by peacekeepers themselves, either through references to codes of conduct on sexual exploitation and abuse, or explicitly, such as the Ugandan NAP, which

states: 'The military and police trained on the categorical prohibition of all forms of sexual violence against civilians' (2008, 33). Other training commitments highlight the role of security forces in protecting women from violence emanating from other actors, such as Afghanistan's NAP, which includes a mandate to: 'Brief all personnel on how to protect women from sexual violence and all commanders of their responsibility to protect women' (2015, 31). In many cases, it is unclear who the perpetrator of this violence is, such as in Kyrgyzstan's NAP, which includes the provision to conduct 'educational seminars in force and law enforcement bodies for forensic experts on development of zero tolerance toward violence against women and girls in conflict situations' (2013, 2). However, what is clear from this category is that the training topics identified very much mirror the evolution of the WPS agenda to focus largely on gender violence (Shepherd 2016). This trend is reflected in NAPs such as that of Georgia, where training for security sector staff is described as training on 'UN SCR Resolutions *with focus on* preventing and responding to SGBV in conflict and post-conflict situations' (2016, objective 3.2, unnumbered page, emphasis added).

The prevalence of various forms of gender violence as topics of training is notable when compared to other aspects of the WPS agenda related to women in conflict – namely the protection of women, their rights and needs, and the importance of their participation in conflict resolution, which is mentioned by fewer (30) NAPs. Further, the mandate to protect conflict-affected women is generally framed in terms of SGBV; few NAPs make reference to protection without mentioning SGBV. 15 out of 72 NAPs that mention training mention women's rights, and 12 mention the importance of women's participation as training topics. However, the rationales for women's inclusion in conflict resolution vary. On the one hand, countries such as the Philippines introduce the language of 'economic and political empowerment of women in post-conflict resolution' (2017, 17), suggesting that the inclusion of women is fundamental to the realisation of their rights. On the other hand, NAPs such as Austria's frame the question of participation in terms of the priorities of the mission, citing:

‘Benefits of the participation of women in the deployment country *in terms of fostering the mission’s efficiency and access to civilians*’ (2012, 9, emphasis added). In other words, the protection of women’s human rights – beyond protection from sexual and gender-based violence – is relatively less emphasised among training topics. Of course, this is not to suggest that NAPs may not pay serious attention to questions of women’s participation and rights in other areas of policy implementation; but their scarce mention among training topics suggests that this is not an area of knowledge which is prioritised for uniformed peacekeepers.

The predominant training topics therefore revolve around mentions of WPS and gender in general terms; sexual and gender-based violence; and to a lesser extent, women’s rights, needs, and protection in conflict situations. In contrast to many of the training materials and reference curricula discussed above, legal frameworks are not consistently mentioned among training topics, as only 22 out of the 72 NAPs that mention training make specific mention of legal frameworks as training topics. However, what is interesting to note is that the legal frameworks that are prioritised arguably relate to the broader humanitarian aspects of peacekeeping: human rights and international humanitarian law (Curran 2017, Fetherston and Nordstrom 1995). The gender aspect of training is relatively less prominent in relation to legal frameworks, as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979), is only mentioned in relation to training in 3 NAPs.

A number of other topics receive marginal mention as topics for training. First, the internal gender dynamics of security institutions receive a fleeting mention in relation to training in the NAPs reviewed: only 10 of the 72 NAPs mention some aspect of internal dynamics. This scarcity of mention is somewhat surprising, considering the broad consensus among the WPS policy community that the presence of female peacekeepers is integral to addressing SEA and other local women’s security concerns (Karim 2017, Simić 2010). The Moldovan NAP provides a rare example, outlining that there is a pressing need to address sexual harassment and other

forms of discrimination through training, in order to increase women's participation in the security sector: 'The persistence of gender stereotypes and the specificity of Armed Forces structures that are more or less closed, determine the need for men's psychological training in accepting women in the sector, which will reduce the risk of discrimination and sexual harassment' (2018, 5). In other words, the Moldovan NAP appears to be drawing linkages between internal harassment and discrimination; the participation of women in security services; and the dearth of female peacekeepers to deliver on WPS goals in peacekeeping.

In contrast to an apparent reticence to address internal organisational dynamics in gender training, a larger number of NAPs (15) highlight that gender training is something that is required by – or facilitates dealing with – other actors outside of the country itself. 9 NAPs make specific mention of supporting gender training in other countries, such as the UK NAP, which reports that the UK provides training to Nigerian security forces on gender issues and the prohibition of SEA, noting that: 'Such training contributes to increased acceptance of international norms and to improved behaviour by Nigerian soldiers while in field operations' (2018, 11). Similarly to the Swiss NAP discussed above, the UK is self-presenting as an actor that exports gender equality (see also Shepherd 2016). Further, 5 NAPs specifically mention the need for mission-specific and/or cultural awareness training in relation to gender. While in principle the notion that gender training should be context-specific and culturally aware is important, in practice this commitment to, as the South Korean NAP (2014, 1) articulates it, 'deepen understanding of local culture and religions' is often framed in terms that suggest a degree of 'cultural essentialism' and a 'radical othering' of peace-kept populations (Duncanson 2013, 121). Read together, these two categories of training topics – internal security sector issues, and dealing with 'others', suggest that gender training, especially in the Global North, is constructed following a mandate that locates the need for intervention elsewhere, either outside of the security institution itself, or literally in another country.

Finally, it is worth noting that some NAPs expand the scope of gender training provided by the WPS agenda and international organisations' training materials. While I noted earlier in this chapter that the question of domestic violence is typically not discussed in relation to gender in peace and security, it bears mentioning that Luxembourg's recent NAP outlines a commitment to including questions of preventing and addressing domestic violence in pre-deployment training for military and civilian peacekeepers (2018, 32). In contrast to persisting silences over questions of sexual orientation and gender identity in the WPS agenda (Hagen 2016), it is encouraging to note that Albania's recent NAP lists as a training commitment the intention to: 'Strengthen professional capacities of state police officers to investigate crimes on grounds of sexual orientation (hate crimes)' (2018, 24). Also in contrast to a notable absence in the WPS resolutions and training curricula of mentions of men and masculinities (Laplonge 2015), the Solomon Islands' recent NAP includes as training outcomes for police officers 'knowledge and skills on gender equality [and] male advocacy for women's rights' (2017, 27). What these few examples demonstrate, I suggest, is that mandates for gender training articulated in NAPs demonstrate that what gender training is, or is expected to do, is a matter of some interpretation. States do not simply implement an originary WPS mandate, but rather engage in their own interpretations of what qualifies as gender, and what the aims of training should be, contributing to an on-going evolution of the realm of gender training for peacekeepers.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to lay the groundwork for understanding the emergence, institutionalisation, and substance of what I call gender training for uniformed peacekeepers in this thesis. The intellectual point of departure for this exercise has been the analytical stance that what exactly gender training is – or even what gender itself is – is not obvious. Rather, the production of knowledge about gender is a historically contingent political process



(Butler 2007b, xxii). Accordingly, what gender training *is*, in the context of uniformed peacekeeping, is an empirical question. Guided by this stance, what I have sought to do in this chapter is first, to provide an overview of key concerns in the field of peace and security that have been portrayed as especially gendered, and that have informed the development of a policy architecture that responds to these concerns, including by the provision of training. As outlined in the first section, I identified as key concerns driving the policy response: (a) the discursive linkage between gender and conflict, (b) sexual violence in war, (c) sexual misconduct by peacekeepers, and (d) sexual harassment and assault within security institutions. I insisted that this is not a definitive or exhaustive list of gendered issues in international peace and security, but rather that these are the thematic areas that have been identified as gender issues in public and policy debate (see also Goldstein 2003, Enloe 2000). These debates form the historical and political backdrop against what, per Butler, qualifies as gender for the purposes of training.

The second section of this chapter then set out to examine how much training is really taking place, who is providing training, and who is being trained. In the absence of a reliable global statistic on gender training, I examined a number of proxy indicators to suggest that gender training for uniformed peacekeepers is a significant emergent transnational practice. First, I examined policy commitments on training specifically, using the global WPS agenda as a framework to guide the inquiry. I suggested that WPS policies attest to the fact that there is a far-reaching consensus on the need to train military and police peacekeepers on gender. In the second part of this section, I described the actors involved in the provision of such training, and considered the available evidence to conclude that such training is widely implemented across a range of geographic contexts.

Not satisfied that policy commitments in and of themselves provide an adequate understanding of what exactly gender training is or aims to do, in the third section of this

chapter I focused attention on what training materials and policy commitments tell us about the substance and aims of such training. This overview has highlighted both the privileging of sexual and gender-based violence (especially conflict-related) in the production of knowledge about gender, as well as the tendency to frame gender training as a technical problem-solving exercise. At the core of framing gender as a discrete operational problem to be solved is a tendency to locate gender somewhere other than within the context of the peacekeeping enterprise itself. This tendency is particularly marked in Global North countries, where NAPs often describe gender equality as something they export to beneficiary countries located in the Global South (see also Shepherd 2016, Pratt 2013). At the same time, this analysis has pointed to a number of contradictions in how gender training is conceptualised, noting that while some training mandates involve a focus on discrete problems to be solved, others include more diffuse transformative aims of changing institutional cultures.

In sum, this chapter has sought to provide an account of the conditions of emergence of gender training for uniformed peacekeepers; demonstrate that it is a significant transnational practice; and describe what this gender training consists of. In the next chapter, I turn to examine the state of knowledge on this practice. I argue that, considering the breadth and scope of gender training as transnational practice, relatively little knowledge is produced about it, and elucidate how the literature on or around this topic suggests avenues for further inquiry.

## CHAPTER THREE

### LITERATURE REVIEW: PEACEKEEPING, GENDER TRAINING - DRAWING THE CONNECTIONS

*How do ordinary, caring, thinking people, come to believe in a world of “dark threats” and white knights, how do we come to support the knight as he sallies forth, even while believing that we are anti-war and come from a deeply peace-loving people?*

- Sherene Razack (2004, 155)

The previous chapter of this thesis surveyed the historical background and policy context of the development of gender training for uniformed peacekeepers, and mapped the incidence, scope and nature of such training globally. Gender training for peacekeepers can be understood as a relatively novel and constantly evolving practice in the global governance of peace and security. I suggested that the transnational nature and expanding reach of this practice renders its interrogation a worthwhile pursuit. This argument implies that the transnational practice of training the troops on gender is under-examined in the scholarly literature; a contention which I now turn to substantiate. In this chapter, I review the existing literature on and around the practice of training peacekeepers on gender. The purpose of this literature review is three-fold. This chapter aims first, to take stock of the existing state of knowledge on gender training for uniformed peacekeepers. Second, it locates my inquiry at the interstices of three bodies of literature, all of which are relevant to studying gender training for uniformed peacekeepers, but connections among which stand to be strengthened. Third, and finally, this review demonstrates how thinking with these bodies of literature informs the research questions of this study.

To that end, I first review the literature that is concerned with the training of uniformed peacekeepers. I begin with the literature on gender training specifically, suggesting that this

nascent body of work is limited in both its empirical scope and critical coverage. I locate these existing inquiries within a literature on peacekeeper training in general. The literature on peacekeeper training draws attention to the novel and differentiated skills that peacekeeping demands of soldiers, highlighting the contradiction between established modes of behaviour in martial institutions, and the normative aspirations of peacekeeping; the difference between war fighting and peacekeeping. Accordingly, I suggest that this literature alerts us to the fact that the politics of peacekeeper gender training should be read with a contextual awareness of martial institutions, and the politics of peacekeeping interventions more broadly.

Whereas the literature on peacekeeper training typically does not question the purportedly altruistic nature of peacekeeping, I suggest that the insights of critical (and) feminist work on peacekeeping demonstrate that peacekeeper training cannot be understood only as a question of equipping peacekeepers with conflict resolution skills, or even of socialising soldiers into unproblematic cosmopolitan values. As Sherene Razack and other critical feminist scholars highlight, peacekeeping is an endeavour that is *itself* structured by militarism, colonial thinking, and neoliberal logics. Such critical attention draws attention to the contradictions of peacekeeping, and cautions us against assuming that this is a reliably benign exercise of power. This does not, however, amount to an automatic and categorical rejection of peacekeeping overall (see also Whitworth 2004, 3). Rather, recognition of these contradictions urges us to think about the complex politics of such endeavours. In sum, I suggest that this body of literature inspires intersectional feminist questions about the political potential and dangers of intervening in the peacekeeping enterprise through gender training; questions that must be attentive to not only the role of gender, but also its intersections with race and sexuality.

Indeed, the literature on gender training more broadly suggests that gender training has dual potential, and that it can work to sustain and reproduce relations of domination as well as

dismantling them. Although the literature on gender training – in institutions of governance ranging from national governments to various UN bodies, and the field of international development – so far lacks sustained engagement with peacekeeping and militarised institutions, this body of work has developed political insights, and conceptual and methodological tools that are helpful in interrogating the practice and politics of gender training. I suggest that this literature further indicates a line of inquiry that is attentive to *how* gender training is practised within the broader context of peacekeeping interventions.

Together, these three bodies of literature give rise to questions about how gender is rendered a knowable object in training; who is authorised to know gender; how gender is learned; how this knowledge is contested and negotiated within classroom settings; and, crucially, what political and epistemic work gender training subsequently comes to do. In the conclusion to this chapter, I summarise how these three bodies of literature inform these questions, and suggest that these bodies of work gesture towards feminist pedagogies and epistemologies as a theoretical framing for exploring them.

## (GENDER) TRAINING FOR UNIFORMED PEACEKEEPERS

Only a handful of studies to date have paid specific attention to gender training of uniformed peacekeepers, rendering the empirical scope and critical reach of this literature narrow. In this section, I review first the literature that pertains directly to gender training, and then expand the field of inquiry to examine literature on peacekeeper training more broadly. I suggest that the field of scholarly inquiry focused on gender training for uniformed peacekeepers highlights the importance of considering the location of such training specifically in martial institutions, and suggests the need to consider the following questions: *How is gender rendered a knowable object in training? How is gender learned in training?* and *What processes of translation, negotiation, and resistance are involved in the deployment of gender knowledge in martial institutions?*

### ***Gender training for uniformed peacekeepers***

A few scholarly works have begun the task of examining gender training for uniformed peacekeepers. Lisa Carson and Dean Laplonge have both examined on what terms gender is taken up by those who design and deliver training. Carson (2016) examines pre-deployment training for Australian armed forces, and applies a critical feminist lens to expose the ways trainers depoliticise gender by evacuating the term of questions of power and patriarchy. Pursuing a complementary line of inquiry, Laplonge (2015) critiques UN training materials for their failure to include questions of masculinities in discussions about gender. Anne Holohan (2019, 16), in turn, examines European peacekeepers' own reflections on the training they received and, based on their reports, notes a tendency of training to equate gender with women, in agreement with Carson and Laplonge's critiques. Holohan further notes, in continuity with the analysis of training commitments outlined in Chapter Two, that peacekeeper training typically treats gender as the differences in gender norms between peacekeepers' home contexts and the deployment area, eliding any questions of internal institutional dynamics (2019, 16). Together, these studies demonstrate that the terms on which gender is addressed – how the object to be known is framed – has important implications for what political possibilities knowing gender opens up or forecloses. In other words, it highlights the analytical and political value of directing attention to the question: *How is gender rendered a knowable object in training?* However, as the previous chapter of this thesis outlines, the practice of gender training on a transnational scale is wider than the scope of these inquiries, suggesting that this analytical insight would benefit from further exploration.

Georgina Holmes' (2019) study of pre-deployment training in the Rwandan military not only provides a much needed extension to the geographic scope of such inquiries through its foregrounding of Global South peacekeepers; her research also productively draws attention to the ways in which knowledge is a process of intersubjective negotiation. Holmes points to

the limitations of focusing solely on official curricula to understand how knowledge is conceptualised and negotiated, describing the field of training as ‘a hybrid space in which TCC [troop contributing countries’] military actors and external actors from training institutes, other militaries and UN subsidiary bodies engage in curriculum design and delivery and contribute to operationalising UN norms’ (2019, 67). Guided by the insight that the knowledge produced in training is in a constant state of translation and re-presentation, Holmes foregrounds the embodied subject of the peacekeeper in her examination of training as a site of norm contestation and negotiation. While Holmes uses this insight to explore how women soldiers’ performance of their role as ‘female peacekeeper’ produces both professional constraints and opportunities, her work also highlights the broader importance of attentiveness to the training setting as an intersubjective space, prompting the question *How is gender learned in training?*

The importance of paying analytical attention to what happens in the classroom is also emphasised in the scholarly reflections on gender training provided by two then UN gender advisers, Angela Mackay (2003, 2005) and Nadine Puechguirbal (2003). Both Mackay and Puechguirbal were involved in the development and piloting of the first gender training modules for uniformed peacekeepers around the year 2000, and offer insightful reflections on the aims and methods of this training, drawing from their experience of training in Democratic Republic of Congo, East Timor, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. Puechguirbal argues that gender training is not simply about the transfer of technical knowledge: ‘Integrating a gender perspective ... requires asking new questions, behaving with new sensitivities, and learning new skills’ (2003, 114). In contrast to such transformative aspirations, both Puechguirbal and Mackay describe encounters with training audiences who are sceptical of or even hostile to the idea of receiving gender training, and suggest strategies to win over trainees (on hostility to gender training, see also Higate 2004, 18). While I return to their understandings of resistance and strategies to overcome it in later chapters (Six and Eight), what is notable for

my purposes here is the way in which the reflections of these gender trainers alert us to the fact that a top-down structural analysis centring on the UN normative framework is insufficient to understanding how knowledge is produced in training, as this knowledge is actively inflected and/or resisted by training audiences. Their analyses, in other words, beg continued attention the question: *What processes of translation, negotiation, and resistance are involved in the deployment of gender knowledge in martial institutions?*

The academic literature on gender training for peacekeepers is supplemented by a number of evaluation reports produced by institutions mandating such training. While the orientation of these reports is understandably problem-solving in nature, they provide useful information about how those who mandate and practise gender training view the aims and current state of this practice (on problem-solving vs critical approaches, see Cox 1981, 128-9). One key concern of these reports is the implementation of gender training mandates, and these reports typically examine how many people are trained, where, how often, and for how long (see for example, Lamptey 2012, Lyytikäinen 2007). Another question these reports are interested in is evaluating whether the aims of the training are accurate, and whether the content and methods of training speak to these aims (see for example, Razakamaharavo, Ryan, and Sherwood 2018, Axmacher 2013). Interestingly, however, to my knowledge no report directly addresses the question ‘Does it work?’<sup>17</sup> Some reports, notably those published by the UN, examine course feedback from participants to evaluate the training (see for example, Axmacher 2013). However, course feedback speaks to the question ‘Did they like it?’ rather than ‘(What) did they learn?’ Neither of these questions lends itself to an assessment of the effect of training on the subsequent behaviour of individuals trained, or to change in institutional cultures. Although, as outlined in Chapter One, ‘Does it work?’ is not the animating question of this thesis, and is a question that is epistemically unfriendly to my

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<sup>17</sup> A similar observation pertaining to peacekeeper training in general is made by David Curran (2017, 140-1).



inquiry, it is nonetheless important to note that this question remains unexplored even in a problem-solving frame.

Finally, a few practice-oriented reports examine gender training within the context of peacekeeping training more broadly. Paul Higate (2004, 19), in a study for the International Security Studies Institute Africa, notes that other areas of peacekeeper training – for example awareness of minefields, weapons handling, and so forth – were considered by peacekeepers as more relevant to their day-to-day tasks. This raises legitimate questions of where and when gender training might be most productively offered – immediately prior to deployment, in-mission, or in earlier training and education. Pursuing a related line of inquiry, Ecoma Alaga and Emma Birikorang (2012) examine how and to what extent gender topics are mainstreamed across peacekeeper training at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre. Alaga and Birikorang note that while efforts are made to introduce gender questions across peacekeeper training, there is a need for stronger integration of gender throughout other substantive topics, to avoid the impression that it is a standalone subject. Following their reflections, it is appropriate to consider the limited literature on gender training of peacekeepers against the backdrop of the literature on peacekeeper training overall.

### ***Peacekeeper training***

When, in the early 1990s, international peacekeeping operations proliferated and became increasingly multi-dimensional, several peacekeeping practitioners and observers noted with alarm the lack of harmonised training for soldiers deploying in peacekeeping (Fetherston 1994, 179). Some of the concerns raised were to do with ‘interoperability’ – the barriers posed by differences among national contingents in their peacekeeping approach, operational doctrine, command structures, language, and level of training (Leeds 2001, 95, Duffey 2000, 154). Beyond such problem-solving considerations, the critical literature on peacekeeper

training has drawn sustained attention to the fact that the tasks given to, and behaviours expected of, military peacekeepers stand in contradiction with traditional military modes of operating. A. Betts Fetherston first called for training in cross-cultural interaction to support the conflict mediation roles peacekeepers play, famously noting (1998, 167):

There is no switch inside a blue helmet that automatically turns a soldier trained for war-fighting into an individual prepared to work non-violently and with cultural sensitivity in a highly militarized environment.

Fetherston's work notes the then lack of specialised training for peacekeepers and insists on the primacy of training peacekeepers in non-violent conflict management, with a view to supporting conflict resolution (Fetherston and Nordstrom 1995, Fetherston 1994). In the years following her observations, the UN has developed more systematic guidance and training schemes for deploying troops. Her observations have prompted a continued academic interest into whether and how this training incorporates discussion of negotiation, cultural awareness, and civil-military interaction with a view to socialising soldiers into 'cosmopolitan peacekeeping commitments' (Curran 2017, 12, see also Holohan 2019, Leeds 2001, Duffey 2000).

While much of the work that advocates for the use of peacekeeper training as a technology to cultivate new values and modes of behaviour in peacekeeping troops brackets the question of the ability of training to produce these outcomes, an emergent strand of literature examines how these norms travel in practice (Flaspöler 2019, Holmes 2019). Foregrounding an analysis of troop contributing countries located in the Global South, these studies draw attention to the fact that the design, delivery, and reception of training does not follow a linear, top-down process, but rather is a process of translation, contestation, and negotiation. Indeed, Anne Flaspöler's study of African peacekeeping training centres 'highlights the discrepancy between training realities and the high expectations of peacekeepers' capacities and performances' and 'reveals that socialisation in terms of attitudinal and behavioural change is not realised' (2019, 28). This literature, again, points to the limitations of examining

official curricula as a basis for understanding what work training does, and highlights the importance of empirically informed accounts that see training as a process rather than an act of knowledge transfer.

Finally, a handful of further empirical studies demonstrate that training is not simply an exercise – whether successful or unrealised – in operationalising explicitly stated norms. Instead, these studies demonstrate that the training process introduces other forms of knowledge not captured in official curricula – constituting a type of ‘hidden curriculum’ (Cotton, Winter, and Bailey 2012, Skelton 2006, White 2006). In an unusual example of a study that follows military units from training to deployment, Liora Sion (2006) examines the experiences of two Dutch peacekeeping units deployed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. She notes that, despite the acknowledgment that peacekeeping missions require a different set of skills than war fighting, the pre-deployment training of these units consisted primarily of combat exercises. Juxtaposed against the actual experience of peacekeeping where soldiers were not involved in combat, Sion draws attention to the ‘contradictory and paradoxical nature of the training’ (2006, 462). Her observations, in other words, point to the tendency in peacekeeper training, also observed by Fetherston (1998, 172), to primarily focus on preparing soldiers for war. Sion suggests that one reason for this mismatch between training needs and training provided is ‘the reluctance of the army to accept its new role’, where peacekeeping is thought to involve ‘soft skills’ and understood as a feminised activity (2006, 464). In other words, Sion’s analysis of Dutch peacekeeper training suggests not only that this training instils false expectations about the actual nature of peacekeeping work, but could also be understood as containing a hidden curriculum which works to valorise war fighting, and establish humanitarian and peacekeeping work as activities of lesser value.

Maya Mynster Christensen’s work, in turn, examines a different but related field: the recruitment, training, and deployment of ex-fighters from Sierra Leone to provide base

security to US forces in Iraq as employees of a private military company. Her analysis exposes how the training of these military contractors in a 'global security assemblage' both reveals and re-inscribes racialised hierarchies (2016, 26). Christensen recounts a Ugandan trainer instructing the Sierra Leonean recruits that they are to learn 'white man rules', including differential understandings of time, and what constitutes sexual harassment (2016, 35). The hidden curriculum, in her account, amounts to an aim of the training that is not explicitly articulated in official curricula: to provide 'a space for learning about racialised hierarchies' (2016, 35). Her account, along with those of Sion, Flaspöler, Fetherston, McKay and Puechguirbal, alerts us to consider the context within which gender training for uniformed peacekeepers takes place – particularly as relates to the *martiality* of martial institutions, and the context of racialised global hierarchies. In other words, this literature underscores the importance of paying attention to what work gender training does *in martial institutions* and *in the peacekeeping endeavour*. These are questions that need to be considered in relation to the insights of the broader literature on peacekeeping, which I turn to next.

## THE POLITICS OF PEACEKEEPING

The literature on (gender) training for uniformed peacekeepers alerts us of the need to consider training within the context of peacekeeping interventions more broadly, in order to appreciate the political work that training does. In this section, I locate the literature focusing specifically on training in relation to the broader literature on peacekeeping. The critical literature in this field prompts a consideration of the problematic politics of peacekeeping by exposing the ways in which it sustains militarism, reinscribes a global colour line, and reproduces the logics of neoliberalism. While this literature has been largely critical of gender mainstreaming efforts in peacekeeping and dismissive of gender training, I also discuss the ways in which this literature may lend itself to considering political potential therein. Overall, this discussion points to the ways in which the critical literature on peacekeeping gives rise to

the question: *What political potential and dangers are involved in the deployment of gender knowledge in martial institutions?*

### ***Soldiers waging peace?***

As discussed above, the literature on (gender) training for peacekeepers highlights the reliance of peacekeeping on military troops, and points to a tension between the aims of peacekeeping – aspirationally gender-responsive, non-violent conflict management – and the practices of soldiering – understood as war fighting. The broader literature on peacekeeping has similarly drawn attention to this contradiction. Sandra Whitworth, in her influential book *Men, Militarism and UN Peacekeeping*, asserts (2004, 3):

Lying at the very core of peacekeeping is a contradiction: on the one hand, it depends on the individuals (mostly men) who have been constructed as soldiers, and on the other hand, it demands that they deny many of the traits they have come to understand being a soldier entails.

This sense of unease stemming from soldiers being charged with waging peace is common across critical scholarship, with Paul Higate and Marsha Henry noting that ‘the warrior-humanitarian ... evokes deep-seated and contradictory feelings of fear and risk, safety and security’ (2009, 1, see also Kronsell and Svedberg 2012).

This contradiction between soldiering and peacekeeping is not only a question of soldiers lacking specific technical skills or even that their attitudes are unsuited to peacekeeping. Rather, critical feminist scholarship points to a deeper contradiction, stemming from the ‘ways that race, gender, and sexuality are privileged sites in the creation of a soldier’ (Whitworth 2004, 104). Scholarship in this area has examined the military as an institution that is dominated by men and that valorises and rewards a martial conception of masculinity (Hearn 2012). It has traced the complex hierarchies of multiple masculinities within militaries, explored the social mechanisms of homosocial bonding in these environments, and demonstrated how femininity and marginalised masculinities are subordinated to the military

ideal (Mäki-Rahkola and Myrntinen 2014, Tallberg 2007, Higate 2003, Connell 2002, Barrett 1996). Aaron Belkin's work in particular engages in a careful unpicking of the contradictory ways in which masculinity, femininity, and queerness are mobilised in military settings – the military has not simply erased femininity and queerness, but rather it 'has tried to convince service members that they could be queer, feminine, and so on in order to necessitate the intensity of ... disavowal' (2012, 41). Notably, critical work on military masculinities consistently points to military training as a site at which these masculine ideals are inculcated (Duncanson and Woodward 2016, 5, Cockburn 2010, 150). The insights of this literature point to the importance of considering the particular nature of martial institutions, and the investments of these institutions in certain performances of racialised masculinity when considering the institutional context in which gender training for peacekeepers intervenes. While much of this literature has focused on military masculinity, this does not necessarily preclude police, including police peacekeepers, from performing militarised masculinity (see for example, Fassin 2013, Bevan and MacKenzie 2012). It suggests that there is something particular about the martial institutions involved in peacekeeping that must be accounted for when examining this practice.

The literature on masculinities and peacekeeping points to the ways in which gendered constructions of soldiering are associated not only with poor peacekeeping skills (like negotiation or mediation), but also with the abusive behaviour displayed by peacekeepers across multiple contexts. Violent acts committed by peacekeepers, whether in the form of sexual exploitation and abuse; other forms of violence and torture inflicted on local populations; or domestic assault upon their return home are often described as linked to hypermasculinity (Gray 2016a, Whitworth 2004, 2008). This understanding of the agents of peacekeeping has important implications for training, suggesting that what would be needed is not simply the conveyance of factual information about prohibited acts, but a shift in mind-sets and institutional cultures.

Feminist scholarship remains divided on the potential of reforming military cultures and modes of behaviour; with some insisting on the potential of martial institutions to be gendered differently (Bergman Rosamond and Kronsell 2018, Duncanson and Woodward 2016); and others urging scholars and policy makers to re-think the reliance of peacekeeping on military contingents (Whitworth 2004, Fetherston and Nordstrom 1995). Whitworth provocatively challenges her readers to think more creatively, to imagine peacekeeping operations that are less reliant on soldiers, but rather comprised of 'contingents of doctors, feminists, linguists and engineers; regiments of construction workers and carpenters; armies of midwives, cultural critics, anthropologists, and social workers; battalions of artists, musicians, poets, writers, and social critics' (2004, 186). While differing on their assessment as to whether soldiers could perform gender differently, both strands of this literature converge in pointing to (contemporary) forms of military masculinity as being at odds with the stated norms of peacekeeping endeavours.

### ***Peacekeeping and global power structures***

Not only has the scholarship on peacekeeping placed under scrutiny the problem of military actors carrying out peacekeeping tasks, it has also brought critical attention to bear on the ways that peacekeeping relates to global power structures. Wariness of militarisation extends beyond the geographic site of the peacekeeping intervention. Peacekeeping operations are militarised environments, but they also contribute to the militarisation of troop contributing countries themselves. Peacekeeping provides national militaries with opportunities to acquire new and updated material; training and combat experience; diplomatic prestige; and even a *raison d'être*, justifying the maintenance of a military institution in countries not otherwise involved in conflict (Henry 2012, 19-20, Whitworth 2004, 183). This analytical perspective lends itself to the conclusion, not only that peacekeeping is militarised, but that peacekeeping itself sustains militarisation.

Further, postcolonial scholarship on peacekeeping has drawn attention to the ways in which peacekeeping reinscribes a global colour line. First, contemporary peacekeeping operations are largely reliant on the labour of Global South peacekeepers, whose voices are underrepresented in decision-making positions in the structures of global governance, but who constitute a cheap source of surplus labour, readily available for what Henry (2012) dubs 'peaceexploitation'. Second, postcolonial scholarship has exposed the ways in which the violent and exploitative behaviour of peacekeepers can be understood 'as colonial or racial violence rather than simply violence typical of the hypermasculine world of militaries' (Razack 2004, 86). That peacekeeping operations are imbued with the logics of racial difference becomes evident not only through examination of such extreme acts of violence as the murder of a Somali teenager by Canadian troops, or the involvement of UN peacekeepers in sex trafficking in Bosnia-Herzegovina; but also in how the everyday logics of interaction between national contingents and with peace-kept populations are racialised (Jennings 2019, Henry 2015, Higate and Henry 2004, Ben-Ari and Elron 2001). Third, critical and postcolonial interventions have drawn attention to the ways in which peacekeeping as a practice produces the imaginary of 'conflict prone Third World countries', portraying populations in the Global South as disorderly and chaotic, and opening up spaces for intervention by force (Whitworth 2004, 38, see also Pratt 2013, Razack 2004, Paris 2002). Postcolonial critiques of peacekeeping alert us to important considerations relating to how peacekeeping practices and discourses – including training – construct different subject positions along a racialised hierarchy. They insist on an attentiveness to the production of colonial difference in and through the peacekeeping endeavour.

The critique of the ways in which peacekeeping constitutes states in the Global South as a legitimate field of paternalistic intervention is closely related to critiques of peacekeeping as exporting modes of (neo)liberal governance (Richmond 2011, Zanotti 2008, Duffield 2001). Peacekeeping often involves the deployment of force to end violence, while at the same time



obfuscating the role of the neoliberal global economy and modern state system in producing that violence in the first place (Väyrynen 2004, 129). Not only is the imposition of a (neo)liberal global order enacted through the deployment of peace operations, these logics also permeate the ways in which peacekeeping operations are practised and the discourses that shape these practices. Feminist scholars have, for example, drawn attention to the ways in which the neoliberal economic logics of peacekeeping facilitate violence against women, including through a political economy of peacekeeping and post-war reconstruction processes that render them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse (Duncanson 2018, True 2014).

In sum, feminist (and) postcolonial critiques trouble the notion that peacekeeping can be considered a reliably benevolent or altruistic exercise of power on behalf of vulnerable populations. Rather, these critiques expose problematic features that cannot be assumed to be exogenous problems to peacekeeping, but point to its implication in militarism, its enactment of colonial scripts, and the ways in which these missions are animated by neoliberal logics. They reveal, as alluded to in the quote from Razack that opened this chapter, the problematic politics behind a story of peacekeepers as white knights protecting the world from dark threats. These dynamics are pertinent to bear in mind when examining the political and epistemic work that training does, and in thinking about what the political potential and dangers of such engagements may be.

### ***Gender mainstreaming of peacekeeping***

The implication of peacekeeping in unequal global power structures has importantly informed critical feminist analyses of efforts at gender mainstreaming peacekeeping operations. Gender training can be understood as one of the tools used to mainstream gender in peacekeeping, along with attempts to increase the numbers of women deployed on peacekeeping and the establishment of gender advisory positions. Together, mainstreaming efforts constitute 'moments in which formal institutions *have* attempted to acknowledge the

importance of gender and other kinds of issues that arise when soldiers are deployed on peacekeeping missions' (Whitworth 2004, 17, emphasis in original).

One strand of literature examining gender mainstreaming of peacekeeping is characterised by an optimism regarding its transformative potential. Authors writing in this tradition 'argue against deterministic approaches toward the gender-military nexus that deny possibilities for change within military institutions' (Duncanson and Woodward 2016, 4). They insist that if feminist scholarship views gender as a social construction and hence changeable, surely this same analytical persuasion should apply to military institutions, and that feminist analyses should be open to the notion that militaries could be gendered differently. Indeed, some writing in this tradition place their hopes in peacekeeping, as a different type of cosmopolitan-minded military activity, to serve as a catalyst for change within national militaries (Bergman Rosamond and Kronsell 2018, Carreiras 2010). Further, some accounts characterise gender mainstreaming efforts as a way for feminists to get a foot in the door and work to reshape global security structures (Otto and Heathcote 2014, 10).

However, optimism about regendering militaries is temperate as best. There is little evidence to suggest that a significant transformation is underway (Kronsell 2012, 146). On the one hand, analyses of gender mainstreaming of peacekeeping have pointed to an implementation gap in commitments: marginalisation of gender work through under-funding and understaffing, non-implementation of training commitments, and a persistent failure to deploy more female peacekeepers (Whitworth 2004, 120, see also Bastick and Duncanson 2018, Pruitt 2016, Higate 2004). Further, a number of critical accounts suggest that what change does take place is more likely to be assimilated into existing power structures rather than to meaningfully challenge them. For example, while the presence of female soldiers is often considered a potential disruption to norms of hegemonic masculinity, critical feminist accounts have demonstrated the ways in which traditional gender norms are re-asserted, and

individual women are assimilated into norms of masculinity (Simić 2010, Sasson-Levy and Amram-Katz 2007). In other words, many critical accounts insist on seeing hegemonic discourses and institutions of governance as dexterous, capable of folding in calls for transformation while maintaining existing configurations of power (Väyrynen 2004).

Critical feminist engagement has further problematized the terms on which gender mainstreaming is done in the first place. Here some of the critiques of gender training as a depoliticised exercise – as described by Carson (2016) and Laplonge (2015) – resonate closely. Feminist analyses have drawn attention to the ways in which gender mainstreaming empties ‘gender concerns of their critical content’ and how gender, as a result, ‘does the work of the status quo’ (Whitworth 2004, 17, 140, see also Herbert 2012). These analyses point to the ways in which gender, in mainstreaming discourse, becomes equated with ‘other’ women and their vulnerability; and how discussions of men, masculinities, and power are thereby silenced (Kronsell 2012, 111, Higate and Henry 2009, 154, Whitworth 2004, 136). In the related field of humanitarian aid, scholars have also critiqued the ways in which pervasively heteronormative assumptions underpin international interventions (Jauhola 2010). Further, these analyses have drawn attention to how gender mainstreaming re-asserts global inequalities by demonstrating, for example, how institutions of global governance assume that gender mainstreaming efforts of the Global North are superior to and take precedence over practices emanating from the Global South (Pruitt 2018).

A significant aspect of critiques of gender mainstreaming practices in peacekeeping has been their intense focus on conflict-related sexual violence. While feminist academic interest on wartime rape importantly predates the current interest in the phenomenon; the ‘policy hype’ around the topic has contributed to a proliferation of scholarship on conflict-related sexual violence (Hilhorst and Douma 2018; for earlier work on wartime rape, see for example, Kaplan 1994, Brownmiller 1977). In recent years, researchers have sought to create typologies of

wartime sexual violence; to understand when and under what conditions such violence occurs; and have documented experiences of violence (Mertens 2019, see for example Cohen 2016, Hoover Green 2016, Meger 2016, Wood 2009). Simultaneously, this policy and research interest has drawn critical attention to bear on the ways in which this policy attention constructs the phenomenon in the first place. Critical scholars have highlighted how a singular, at times voyeuristic, focus on the phenomenon has exceptionalised wartime rape in ways that contribute to the banalization of other forms of conflict-related violence, and other forms of gender-based violence (Mertens and Myrntinen 2019, Boesten 2017, Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2013). This latter strand of literature has also drawn attention to the ways in which a focus on sexual violence, in policy and some research, has facilitated a colonial gaze productive of racialised understandings of sexual violence, its perpetrators, its victims, and protectors from it (Mertens 2019, Henry 2013b). Such understandings of wartime rape as something that is committed by 'barbaric' or 'wrongly gendered' racialised others has been widely critiqued for the ways in which they sustain a hierarchical approach to global governance, and facilitate a denial of more widespread and pervasive forms of gender inequality and sexual violence (Eriksson Baaz and Verweijen 2018, Motlafi 2018). In other words, critical feminist literature on wartime sexual violence points to the ways in which gender mainstreaming of peacekeeping, for example through a focus on sexual violence, is susceptible to the familiar ways in which Western feminist agendas often sustain colonial imaginaries and support interventionist politics (Pratt 2013, Spivak 2010).

In sum, feminist scholarship has persuasively critiqued the ways in which '[t]he tools of mainstreaming gender call forth instrumentalist solutions to the gender question' (Väyrynen 2004, 138). In this literature, gender training has typically been viewed as an instrumentalist solution, an easy fix that does little to challenge the structural problems associated with peacekeeping and martial institutions (Razack 2004, 164, Whitworth 2004, 140). The critical feminist literature on gender mainstreaming initiatives provides valuable insights into the

politics of gender training for peacekeepers, and the feminist political failures that attend the deployment of the term gender in martial institutions and structures of global governance. My inquiry is deeply sympathetic to critical accounts of peacekeeping that caution us against taking for granted the notion that peacekeeping is a wholly benign, altruistic, and substantive solution to gendered violence and insecurity. Indeed, it is my contention, in agreement with critical scholarship, that the peacekeeping enterprise cannot be understood without examining the preponderance of martial logics and military masculinities; the mobilisation of racialised hierarchies; and the pervasiveness of neoliberal logics that underpin it. Mainstreaming gender in the peacekeeping endeavour may therefore not only rob gender of its critical potential, but can in fact serve to re-assert relations of domination.

However, and as many critical scholars note, to cultivate a critical view, one that is attentive to the contradictions of peacekeeping, is not the same as to write off the entire endeavour as singularly colonial or violent. As Razack reflects on the implications of her scathing critique of Canadian peacekeeping: 'This does not mean that we should stay at home when genocides are in progress ... We must go, but *how* we go is critical' (2004, 150, 164, emphasis in original, see also Whitworth 2004, 3). How, then, to cultivate a critical engagement with peacekeeping and gender?

My intention in this inquiry is to use critique as a productive tool; to both expose oppressive structures and identify ways of resisting oppression (Mahmood 2005, 36-7, see also discussion in Chapter Four). Accordingly, I conclude this review of the critical literature on peacekeeping and gender mainstreaming thereof by seeking to identify ways of critical engagement. First, I suggest that the critical literature has so far tended to assume the futility and co-opted nature of gender training without careful empirical engagement with this practice. In this sense, my inquiry follows authors in this tradition who have carefully picked apart tensions and contradictions in existing discourses and practices – ranging from Higate and Henry's (2009,

8) call to expand on a 'narrow awareness of the everyday' to Razack's (2004, 57) interrogation of 'how people are educated to participate in the social, how they are interpellated into practices that leave the trails of violence in their wake'. Such an empirically grounded analysis is important, I argue, in order to investigate tensions and contradictions within the everyday practices of training.

Which brings me to my second observation about forms of critical engagement present within the literature: these accounts locate, in my interpretation, a potential for critical engagement within or at the margins of hegemonic discourses. Critical accounts identify the possibility of engaging with ambivalence in these dynamics. Tarja Väyrynen advocates for '[a]llowing dissident ... voices to be heard' as a means of offering 'an element that celebrates uncertainty and multiplicity' and bringing 'in an alternative thinking on peace, war and gender' (2004, 140). In a related move, Marjaana Jauhola draws upon Butler's theorising in reading gender mainstreaming discourses against the grain, looking for disjunctures within hegemonic narratives, and providing alternative readings of 'subversion from within' (2010, 45). Read together, these accounts suggest political potential in critical engagement, not grounded in an expectation that gender mainstreaming will radically transform existing structures, but rather in an understanding that hegemonic discourses are marked by contradiction and instability. I return to this question of the function of critique in the conceptual framework laid out in Chapter Four.

## GENDER TRAINING

If the critical literature on peacekeeping provides one vantage point from which to interpret the epistemic and political work that gender training does; the literature on gender training outside the field of peacekeeping provides another. As noted in Chapter Two, gender training is not unique to peacekeeping enterprises, but is prevalent in other structures of global governance, notably in international development; as well as in multinational and national

structures such as the UN, the European Union and its member states; in the private sector; and in civil society (Bustelo, Ferguson, and Forest 2016b, Kabeer 1991). Like the literature on peacekeeper training, the broader literature on gender training is largely practice-oriented, with a handful of academic engagements (Bustelo, Ferguson, and Forest 2016b, 1). Although the broader field of gender training predates peacekeeper gender training, the body of work in this field has not yet systematically examined gender training practices in the peace and security sector. The field of gender training instead cultivates linkages with gender studies in higher education, as well as anti-racist education in communities (Ferguson 2019b, 71, 74). In this section, I provide an overview of the broader field of gender training; discuss its political commitments; and examine how work in this field proposes to reclaim the feminist politics of gender training. I argue that this body of work provides valuable insights from which to build an understanding of the politics of gender training for peacekeepers, and that it suggests the importance of examining the questions: *Who can know gender? How is gender learned in training?* and *What political potential and dangers are involved in the deployment of gender knowledge through training?*

### ***Recovering the feminist genealogy of gender training***

While gender training for peacekeepers is often framed in official documentation and by practitioners as a response to newly recognised gendered harms of conflict and of peacekeeping – that is, a rational solution to an objective problem – this practice is not simply an inevitable or natural response. Rather, the availability of gender training as a response in the first place stems from the availability of this practice as already established in other realms, most notably and closely related in international development.

Indeed, Naila Kabeer's (1991) description of gender training approaches in international development reveals remarkable similarities to gender training of peacekeepers. Training in both fields typically departs from the sex-gender distinction and analyses relations and

processes that socially construct gender. While the training Kabeer describes then moves to examine the gendered division of labour and rethink the meaning of production; a parallel is clear in that peacekeeper training often examines gendered security needs and prompts a rethinking of what counts as security. Like Kabeer's training, this is premised on centring people (men, women, boys and girls, as peacekeeper training materials typically suggest) in analyses rather than abstractions such as 'the economy' or 'the conflict zone'. Similarly to peacekeeper gender training described above, gender training for development experts often prompts forms of resistance (a topic to which I return in Chapter Eight) that centre on cultural essentialism, and that evoke both trivialisation of the matter at hand through humour or outright hostility (Kabeer 1991, 192, see also Lombardo and Mergaert 2016). Finally, both types of training often aim to 'shift the focus from what *is* to what *could be*' (Kabeer 1991, 194, emphasis in original).

While these parallels are often omitted from both official gender training mandates for peacekeepers and from scholarly accounts, the similarities between the two reveal linkages. In a handful of my interviews, military gender trainers did mention drawing upon resources from the development sector such as a training manual produced by Oxfam (see Williams, Seed, and Mwau 1994). These linkages suggest that there are indeed commonalities between the principles and practice of gender training across fields of application (Bustelo, Ferguson, and Forest 2016b, 9).

That the connection between gender training for peacekeepers and longer standing gender training practices in the field of international development is rarely made, either by practitioners or academics studying them, is in many ways a reflection of knowledge production practices in this field. Trainers typically accumulate material from a range of sources in what Kabeer refers to as 'the true "hunter-gatherer" manner of trainers' (1991, 186). In a more critical tone, Bunie M. Matlanyane Sexwale (1996, 59) observes that such



recycling of materials without acknowledgment of their provenance often involves the appropriation of knowledge from 'Black and LACAAP<sup>18</sup> women [who] share ideas and methods created from their experience and knowledge' – leading her to question 'Are Western institutions regressing to slavery or have I just simply been blind, naïve and too trusting of humanity!?' Sexwale's critique of the coloniality of the political economy of knowledge production within the gender training enterprise itself alerts any analysis of gender training for peacekeepers to be attentive to similar dynamics. Further, it provides an explanation as to the erasure of linkages between studies of gender training for peacekeepers and its more established practice in the realm of international development. I suggest that this omission is worth revisiting, as the lineage of gender training in other fields provides insight into the contradictory political effects of gender training for peacekeepers.

Accounts of gender training for development diverge on the dates as to when gender training became an established practice in global governance, but converge on their accounts of its lineage. Some scholars posit that gender training became an institutionalised practice as a result of the establishment of gender mainstreaming as global practice in the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Ferguson 2019a, 114, Mukhopadhyay 2014, 356). However, accounts of gender training that predate the Beijing conference suggest that this practice was already established in the early 1990s (see Kabeer 1991, Sexwale 1996).

What these accounts do agree on, is the lineage of gender training as a practice derived from feminist activism, and inspired by feminist consciousness-raising activities in the 1970s and 1980s (Sexwale 1996, 53, Ferguson 2019a, 114). Sexwale draws parallels between the institutionalisation of feminist politics in the academy and through training practices, describing gender training as 'a branch of Women's Studies' (1996, 54). Scholars and practitioners of gender training therefore trace the lineage of the practice to origins in

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<sup>18</sup> Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Pacific.

feminist political activism, and continue to affirm it as ‘interventions aimed at changing the gender order’ (Cornwall 2016, 75) and to ‘combat patriarchy’ (Sexwale 1996, 53) through ‘an approach that aspires towards social justice by seeking to transform systems of power and privilege in ways that are participatory, reflexive, inclusive and non-hierarchical’ (Ferguson 2019a, 116, see also Mukhopadhyay 2014, Plantenga 2004). In other words, scholarship on gender training in the field of international development locates this practice as emerging from feminist political activism, rather than understanding it as a problem-solving tool.

***What happened to the feminist politics of gender training?***<sup>19</sup>

If the above description of gender training as an explicitly feminist, political enterprise seems at odds with how I described the aims and practices of gender training for peacekeepers in Chapter Two, it is worth noting that many of these tensions with feminist politics also characterise the broader field. Training practitioners in the field of development lament the ways in which the focus of gender training has shifted from political consciousness-raising to the framing of gender as a question of skills and checklists (Mukhopadhyay and Wong 2007, 114). Their accounts expose the many ways in which the transformative feminist politics of gender training become ‘depoliticized’ through ‘technicist’ solutions ‘geared ... to reform rather than to transformation’ (Sexwale 1996, 53). Indeed, many of the challenges and failures of gender training, from the point of view of feminist politics, are instructive to the present inquiry.

First, Sexwale’s critique detailed above regarding the extraction of knowledge and expertise from Global South women by Global North gender trainers speaks to a broader dynamic of inequitable global power structures at play in gender training enterprises. These dynamics are alternately framed in critiques as ‘Western dominance’ of gender training (Ferguson 2019b, 18), or its ‘colonial power relations’ (Kunz 2016, 113). In agreement with Sexwale’s complaint,

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<sup>19</sup> This sub-title is paraphrased from Sexwale’s (1996) provocative and insightful article.

Rahel Kunz argues that gender expertise is typically identified as residing in the Global North and in institutions of global governance, thereby erasing alternative forms of local feminisms and local expertise (2016, 107). Accordingly, the gender training enterprise can be understood as a colonial one, insofar as it affords both epistemic authority as well as material remuneration to Global North gender experts. This dynamic is further sustained through the often-observed unwillingness by white trainers to confront their own internalised racism, or through their failure to insist on attending to the historical present by building in race and histories of colonialism into discussions of oppression (Sexwale 1996, 58, Enderstein 2018, 48).<sup>20</sup>

Second and relatedly, analyses that contest the politics of gender training draw attention to the ways in which it is made to serve neoliberal logics and agendas (Davids and van Eerdewijk 2016, 80). Neoliberalism and coloniality often collude: witness the reduction of racism to the problem of deviant individuals over an attention to structures of oppression in the historical present (Enderstein 2018, 48). Other aspects of a neoliberal logic at work in the gender training enterprise are likewise critiqued by observers. Sexwale notes that ‘critically conscious trainers who facilitate an holistic and challenging approach to the understanding of patriarchal relations and the social, economic, political and cultural contexts of development *face increasing time pressure as we compete against gender technicians*’ (1996, 61, emphasis added, see also Mukhopadhyay 2014). While this neoliberal temporality is linked to demands to deliver gender training in less time, the market logics of effectiveness also permeate its messaging. Athena-Maria Enderstein notes of gender training in Europe: ‘gender experts are expected to deploy ... discourses of economic efficiency’ (2018, 47, see also Ferguson 2015). This demand for effectiveness and productivity is similarly observable in how, as discussed in

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<sup>20</sup> Sexuality appears to be likewise marginalised – it is often mentioned in relation to intersectional approaches to gender training though not discussed in detail, apart from mentions such as: ‘sexuality continues to be uncomfortable terrain, even as international development’s heteronormativity has come into question’ (Cornwall 2016, 86).

Chapter Two, peacekeeper gender training frames gender as something that contributes to ‘operational effectiveness’. In other words, closely related to the ways in which gender training more broadly comes to serve neo-colonial ideas, it is also imbued with neoliberal logics of individualism, temporality, and efficiency (Brown 2015, 22, 183). Together, these features of gender training bring critical attention to bear on the ways in which it is rendered a technical exercise, depoliticised in service of neoliberal governing rationalities.

So what did happen to the feminist politics of gender training? The accounts mentioned above point to enduring coloniality, competitive pressures, and the dexterity of institutional power in folding in calls for transformation by defanging them, and making them serve the status quo. Their understanding of feminist failure is, of course, premised on a very specific assumed originary ‘feminism’. As discussed in Chapter One, there are many variants of (neo)liberal feminism – or liberal statist feminism, in Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay’s words (2014, 363) – that dovetail neatly with such politics. However, there is clearly an appetite for a more radical feminist form of gender training by practitioners and students of gender training. In light of this desire, several observers lament the fact that many gender trainers are ‘nonfeminist or even antifeminist’ (Ferguson 2015, 386, see also Kunz, Prügl, and Thompson 2019).

This lack that critical feminist scholars and practitioners identify in the field is not exclusively one of political commitment, but also one of knowledge. Sexwale is indignant, observing that this is the only field ‘I know where many people become experts and/or “gender trainers” only by having the title bestowed upon them by their employers or by themselves, without necessarily undergoing any relevant (formal or informal) extensive studies and/or research’ (1996, 60). Accordingly, she cautions us to be suspicious of gender expertise, offering an African proverb: ‘be suspicious of a naked man who offers a shirt’ (Sexwale 1996, 60). This attention to who is authorised to train on gender, and what attributes are considered

desirable in gender trainers, prompts one of the questions that drives the analysis of this thesis: '*Who can know gender?*'.

### ***Reclaiming feminism***

While the scholarship on gender training is critically attentive to the many failures of the field to enact feminist politics, most authors writing in this field are invested in reclaiming its feminist politics. Sexwale's (1996, 61) conclusions are instructive in this regard:

Situated within the relations of the development industry, relations within "gender training" tend to reproduce rather than challenge domination. This is despite the fact that Women's Studies, the general category under which [Women, Gender and Development] training should fall, purportedly emanates from the feminist movement. Yet this should not come as a surprise since the women's movement cannot claim homogeneity ... But it is a big failure on the part of feminist activists ... that the field is dominated by mainstream *status quo* adherents.

I read in Sexwale's conclusions the desire to reclaim the feminist politics of gender training; a sentiment that is shared by many scholars working in this field, committed to the transformative potential of this practice. In their proposals to reclaim the feminist politics of gender training, accounts in this body of work are highly attuned to the institutional context within which gender training takes place. On the one hand, this means that the accounts note that what training alone can achieve is limited; and that it should form one part of broader structural change efforts (Ferguson 2019b, 50, 66-7). On the other hand, this attentiveness to institutional context comes with a recognition that feminist gender trainers often have to act strategically in order to maintain their access to the institution – they may not declare their feminist politics outright, but rather work with a 'calculated ambiguity' regarding the politics of their interventions (Ferguson 2019b, 30-3).

At the same time as proponents of gender training insist on the need for broader institutional change, the accounts of gender training reviewed here remain remarkably open as to what feminist gender training is intended to achieve. Kunz borrows Jauhola's conceptualisation of the 'queered gender advisor', suggesting a need to move 'away from an understanding of

feminist knowledge as expertise towards gender as a critical analytical category for disruption and contestation' (2016, 110). Rather than imparting knowledge, a gender trainer thus understood primarily disrupts established ways of knowing things. This understanding of the role of gender training concurs with Kabeer's explanation as to why her training does not offer 'blueprints for action': 'Empowering women must ... begin with the individual consciousness and with the imaginative construction of alternative ways of being, living, and relating' (1991, 194). Yet other gender trainers describe their aims, not as producing certain readily measurable learning outcomes, but rather as creating 'transformative encounters/moments' productive of 'transformative courage' (Ferguson 2019b, 91). Accordingly, what is needed to reclaim the feminist politics of gender training is the development of a practice of 'ethical encounters', and one that privileges quality of process over quality of outcomes (Ferguson 2019b, 16, Kunz 2016, 100, Prügl 2016, 26).

These understandings of a specifically feminist politics of gender training point towards the importance of classroom encounters, and the skill of the trainer in creating moments that allow for the development of critical consciousness, subverting established knowledges, and producing transformative moments through ethical encounters. In other words, they call for a renewed attention to and deliberation over what constitutes feminist praxis in gender training. This requires specific pedagogical skills on the part of the trainer because – as Enderstein highlights – what exactly will happen in each classroom or training session is unknowable in advance (2018, 49). If a feminist pedagogical praxis involves creating the space to theorise from personal experience, and to put one's own beliefs and values up for critical scrutiny; then the dynamics of such encounters will be unpredictable (Enderstein 2018, 51, Cornwall 2016, 78). Accordingly, what makes for a good gender trainer, argues Lucy Ferguson, is not only a question of subject matter knowledge, but of facilitation skills grounded in feminist pedagogical theory (2019b, 71, 85). This understanding of gender training contests

institutional understandings of what knowledge about gender is, how it can or should be taught, and how it might be learned.

In sum, an understanding of feminist praxis in gender training is instructive for the present inquiry for three key reasons. First, it highlights the significance of political economies of knowledge production in training, prompting the question: *Who can know gender?* Second, it draws analytical attention to classroom praxis as a determinant of what epistemic and political work gender training comes to do. It highlights the importance of considering the questions: *How is gender learned in training?* and *What political potential and dangers are involved in gender training?* Finally, this literature helpfully underscores the importance of reading the political work that training interventions do through the conceptual vocabulary developed in feminist pedagogical theorising and the feminist epistemologies these theories build in. Accordingly, in the next chapter, I develop the theoretical framework with which I examine gender training in conversation with feminist pedagogical and epistemological theorising.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I set out to review the literature on and around gender training for uniformed peacekeepers. This review serves three main purposes in this thesis: it takes stock of the existing state of knowledge; it locates my inquiry at the interstice of three key bodies of literature; and it discusses how these literatures inform the lines of inquiry I pursue. My point of departure has been that the academic literature on gender training for peacekeepers is scarce, rendering it limited in empirical coverage and critical depth. Accordingly, I have put the literature devoted specifically to this topic in conversation with literature on peacekeeper training, critical literature on peacekeeping, and literature on gender training. While existing linkages between these bodies of literature are weak, they complement one another in suggesting lines of inquiry.

Most significantly, the critical literature on peacekeeping exposes contradictory political cultures and ambitions in peacekeeping. Examining the reliance of peacekeeping on military personnel, acts of peacekeeper violence, colonial dynamics, and neoliberal logics, this literature alerts the reader to the fact that peacekeeping cannot be considered a reliably benevolent exercise of power (Razack 2004, Whitworth 2004). Rather, it is imbricated with racialised and gendered structures of inequality, inflected through the specific frame of martial institutions and neoliberal governing rationalities. Deeply sympathetic to the insights of this literature, recognising the complex and sometimes violent politics of peacekeeping persuades me to forsake more problem solving-oriented approaches that would seek to interrogate whether gender training works to fix problematic aspects of an otherwise benevolent exercise in favour of the more constitutive question: *What political and epistemic work does gender training do in martial institutions involved in peacekeeping?*

The cautionary note that peacekeeping is not necessarily or inherently a benevolent exercise finds a parallel in the literature on gender training. Critical accounts in this body of work have drawn attention to the different types of political and epistemic work gender training does across a variety of contexts (Ferguson 2019b, Kunz 2016, Sexwale 1996). Similarly to the literature on peacekeeping, this work suggests that gender training can be devised in ways that serve the politics of the status quo, that present the ‘problem’ of gender as one amenable to skills-building and checklists, while reinforcing heteronormative, colonial and neoliberal logics. However, critical practitioners and scholars of gender training nonetheless typically remain invested in the potential to provide transformative, *feminist* gender training that cultivates critical consciousness rather than providing individual, technical solutions. This idea of feminist gender training suspends the notion that gender training can be assumed to be, always and everywhere, a technocratic exercise in the service of problematic politics – in this case of peacekeeping. Rather, it suggests that there is political potential as well as danger in



introducing gender knowledge to peacekeeping, prompting the question: *What political potential and dangers are involved in the deployment of gender knowledge through training?*

My inquiry therefore takes as its point of departure a literature that suggests dual and contradictory political possibilities for the practice of gender training. Both the literature on gender training for peacekeepers as well as the broader literature on gender training have critiqued these practices for the ways in which the understanding of gender that is presented in training frames gender as women and women as victims, while disappearing from view questions of masculinities, race, and sexuality – questions of power and hierarchy. Accordingly, and as suggested by the literature that exists in the field – both generally and for peacekeepers specifically – an attentiveness to the terms on which gender is framed is required in order to interrogate the political potential of training interventions: *How is gender rendered a knowable object?* The previous chapter of this thesis began this inquiry, and it is explored in more depth in Chapter Six.

In investigating these questions, I take from the critical literature on peacekeeping the need to be attentive to tensions and contradictions in everyday practices (Higate and Henry 2009, 8). This insight is supported by the literature on gender training (for peacekeepers), which describes the classroom as an unpredictable space, where outcomes are not predetermined by the content of curricula (Holmes 2019, 67, Enderstein 2018, 49). Rather, trainers interpret the curriculum and translate gender concepts based on their own knowledges and political and epistemic investments, exercising a considerable degree of freedom, sometimes to the extent of fully freewheeling. Training audiences in turn actively re-interpret, contest and negotiate this knowledge. In light of these insights, my inquiry is attentive to the questions: *How does gender become known through training? What processes of translation, negotiation, and resistance are involved in the deployment of gender knowledge in martial institutions?* The literature on gender training further draws attention to the operations of

power in such processes – such as the political economy of knowledge production – which gives rise to a further question: *Who can know gender?*

I argue therefore that the related literatures on peacekeeper (gender) training, peacekeeping, and gender training suggest a need to read the politics of gender training within the context of global power structures, and point to the need for a closer examination of the knowledge production processes at work. An examination of these questions necessitates a conceptual vocabulary that addresses the political work that training might do, beyond the expectation that such training produces knowable and predictable causal effects. It requires examining what political work gender knowledge might do (the epistemological status of gender knowledge); how gender becomes known (how it is taught and learned, its pedagogy), and how to interpret what happens in gender training (the uses of critique). The next chapter lays out the theoretical framework through which I approach these questions.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THEORETICAL FRAMING: LEARNING, KNOWING, DOING POLITICS

*When Elizabeth Palmer Peabody one day walked right smack into a tree, she was naturally asked whether she had not seen it in her path. "I saw it," she became famous for replying, "but I did not realize it."*<sup>21</sup>

- Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (2003, 167, emphasis in original)

The literature on and around gender training for uniformed peacekeepers suggests a number of questions for further exploration. As discussed in Chapter Three, the critical literature on peacekeeping in particular points to tensions between soldiering, peacekeeping, and gender equality, prompting the question: *What political and epistemic work does gender training do in martial institutions?* Literature on training, in turn, reveals that, because training is an intersubjective process, the political work that it does is determined by pedagogical practices. In other words, how curricula are devised and delivered, and how they are made meaningful in the classroom, are significant in shaping what the politics of the training are. These insights give rise to more specific questions about the training process itself – how gender is made a knowable object; who is authorised to know it; how it is learned; and what processes of translation and contestation are involved in this learning. Feminist literature on gender training cautions that gender training has a double-edged potential: training can be feminist and transformative, or it may be emptied of feminist politics and work to maintain the status quo. This caution prompts me to extend the overarching framing question of this inquiry: *What are the political possibilities and dangers of training the troops on gender?*

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<sup>21</sup> Peabody (1804-1894) was an American educator.

In navigating this double-edged potential, some scholars of gender training call for a closer alignment of practices of gender training with feminist pedagogical theorising in order to ensure that training serves transformative purposes (Ferguson 2019b, 71, Enderstein 2018, 52). In this chapter, I examine what these theories tell us about how we might assess the politics of pedagogical encounters. I unpack the theoretical assumptions that lead me to ask the questions that animate the inquiry of this thesis, and expand on the types of interpretive strategies this theoretical framing suggests. I discuss assumptions about the nature of learning and its politics (pedagogy); the significance of gender knowledge (its epistemological standing); and the ways in which the political possibilities and dangers of training can be identified and evaluated (the workings of critique).

In many ways, my approach to this task is intensely (perhaps wildly) interdisciplinary. I draw from work across a range of disciplines from critical cultural studies to international relations; and from diverse but complementary theoretical perspectives, including feminism, poststructuralism, psychoanalysis, queer theory, and postcolonial thought. I maintain that there is a certain commensurability to these perspectives, as all have importantly informed the development of both gender studies and pedagogical thought. While imposing a strict typology differentiating between traditions of thought is not my aim here, this does seem a good moment to name and acknowledge some important contextual differences.

There are certainly political dangers to my theoretical framing strategy, as some understandable objections may be raised to taking analytical techniques devoted to understanding (and improving!) the conditions of liveability for marginalised subjects, and using these to study gender training conducted by typically relatively privileged gender experts in powerful (murderous) institutions. Though gender and feminist knowledge occupies a marginal position of relatively weak power in martial institutions, in recruiting the help of these theories to think through the politics of gender training, I do not mean to imply

that gender trainers occupy a comparable material or historical position to colonised and/or queer subjects seeking out ways of living and thriving in a world that is not invested in their survival (and is often invested in their exploitation). I acknowledge the very different conditions of life and survival of those who seek, voluntarily and from a position of relative power and privilege, to practise feminist politics in military institutions from those subjects about and for whom postcolonial and queer theory was written. Reading dominant texts 'against the author's intention and ideology' is a well-established method of critique in postcolonial and queer theory (Bhabha 1994, xii). It must be admitted, however, that my evoking of their theoretical insights carries a concomitant risk of doing exactly the same to liberatory theories. This is by no means my intention.

As detailed in Chapter One, my intellectual commitments include striving (though undoubtedly often also failing) to resist martiality, colonial thinking, and heteronormativity as logics of meaning making. I want to nonetheless underscore that there are contextual limits as to how far and in what ways the insights of these theories can be applied to gender training interventions in peacekeeping enterprises. Rather than attempting a mechanistic application or transposition of these theories to the context I examine (a context which is not the primary originator of these theoretical insights), my approach is more accurately described as a *thinking through* and *reading with* the help of these theories. Such 'reading with' is not a question of inserting objects of analysis into a pre-given theoretical framework, but rather examining how exposure to these theoretical insights rearranges the landscape of what we can 'see' analytically (Sedgwick 2003, 178). This theoretical framing can be described in Spivak's terms as analogy rather than transference of theory; as a 'productive catachresis' (2010, 49). This analogical thought generates the conceptual vocabulary with which I examine gender training.

To that end, this chapter progresses as follows. The first section centres on the concept of pedagogy – what it means to teach and learn. I suggest that *learning* is something other than the transfer of information – the difference between, in Peabody’s words that open this chapter – seeing and *realising*. In this section, I conceptualise my understanding of pedagogy as intersubjective, affective, and political. Any theory of learning implies a theory of knowledge: the second section of this chapter turns to questions of epistemology and discusses the understanding of knowledge that animates my inquiry. This section also speaks to the question of why study gender training in the first place – why, and on what terms, does it matter? This question moves the discussion into the terrain of reflecting on the nature and purpose of the theoretical, conceptual, and empirical interventions this thesis makes. In that interest, the third and final section of this chapter is a mediation on the workings and political function of critique.

## PEDAGOGY: TEACHING AND LEARNING

An analysis of the practice of training requires an account of how we teach and learn, an account, in other words, of pedagogy. I understand pedagogy to encompass both teaching and learning, while being centrally interested in the relationship between the two, locating the site of pedagogy in the *encounters* between subjects and knowledges (Britzman 1998, 19). I foreground theorisations of pedagogy emerging from the educational literature, which is interested in formal, institutionalised pedagogical practices, similar to the training scenario in its ‘wish to be deliberate’ (Britzman 1998, 2). It is worth noting, however, that the term pedagogy is regularly deployed to understand encounters beyond the structures of formal education, especially in the realm of critical theory. For example, Sara Ahmed evocatively describes how being received with the response of rolling eyes is feminist pedagogy, in that the gesture teaches us how feminism is trivialised: ‘We can now see how feminism is refuted or dismissed as simply a personal tendency, as if she disagrees with something because she is

being disagreeable’ (2017, 38). Neither is teaching confined to human subjects: Sedgwick opens her essay on Buddhist pedagogy by explaining that a cat who brings small injured animals to its owners is trying to teach its humans how to hunt, noting that the cat’s owners typically fail to recognise the event as ‘a scene of pedagogy’ (2003, 153). I bring up these examples to recognise that teaching and learning are not confined to formal educational encounters, nor are they confined to moments in which we are aware that we are teaching or being taught. While official curricula, classroom interactions, and evaluation modalities – the traditional areas interest of in educational studies (Crabtree, Sapp, and Licona 2009, 1) – remain the focus of my inquiry, my conceptualisation of pedagogy also draws upon the insights of these more expansive theorisations of the topic.

### ***Pedagogy as politics and ethical(?) praxis***

At the core of my inquiry is the assumption that pedagogy is an inherently political exercise imbued with power relations. Foucault (1991) described educational institutions as apparatuses of power, and contemporary observers continue to posit that ‘it is almost impossible to separate the arguments over social engineering, nation building, and economics from the wishes and institutions of education’ (Britzman 1998, 2). Education is seen in critical scholarship as a traditionally repressive enterprise, geared towards the production of docile bodies and obedient subjects. Such forms of education have been described as practising ‘poisonous pedagogy’ (Miller 1998, 4, see also Ahmed 2017, 67, Boler 1999, 193). Against the observation that there is in education ‘a will to power’ (Britzman 1998, 3), critical thinkers of various lineages have sought to envision a different kind of education: a transgressive education that works for social justice rather than for systems of domination (hooks 1994). It is this vision of education as liberatory practice that underwrites the argument put forward by scholars of gender training, who advocate for closer alignment of training with feminist pedagogical praxis (Ferguson 2019b, 71, Enderstein 2018, 52).

Visions of transgressive education have been informed by distinct yet often complementary political and epistemological perspectives. A common point of departure for many such theorisations is Paulo Freire's groundbreaking work in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), and *Education, The Practice of Freedom* (1976). Freire's work belongs to a Marxist postcolonial tradition, but it has importantly informed theoretical work in the fields of critical pedagogies (Giroux et al. 1996)<sup>22</sup> and – the key object of my interest – feminist pedagogies (hooks 1994).

Feminist pedagogies have been developed within both women's/gender studies, and within the educational literature (Luke and Gore 1992, 8). Feminist theorising on pedagogy draws on and reflects the many political and epistemological commitments of feminist theories more broadly, including Marxist feminism (Maher 1987); Black feminism (Smele et al. 2017, hooks 1994, 2003, 2009); postcolonial feminism (Mehta 2019, Oikarinen-Jabai 2014, Dunlop 1999); and queer feminism (Quilty 2017, Allen 2015, Britzman 1995). Feminist pedagogical theorising has drawn insights from care ethics and Womanism (Beauboeuf-Lafontant 2002, Noddings 1988); postmodernism (Lather 1991); the study of emotion (Boler 1999); and psychoanalysis (Britzman 2013). My intention here is not to engage in a thorough unpacking of these different strands of pedagogical thought, nor to singularly affiliate myself with one. I designate these theories as representing distinct strands of thought in order to illustrate the rich intellectual history of feminist (and) pedagogical thought. In practice, however, they overlap and draw from one another. For my purposes, I use the term feminist pedagogies, insisting that 'feminism' should include intersectional commitments to decolonial and queer political projects (as discussed in Chapter One). I ground my conceptualisation of pedagogy in these theories, not because I assume that gender trainers in martial settings hold feminist pedagogical visions or practise feminist pedagogy (most do not), but because these theories

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<sup>22</sup> These types of pedagogical practices are also described in the literature as 'engaged pedagogy' (hooks 1994, 13), 'liberatory pedagogies' (Bell, Morrow, and Tastsoglou 1999, 24), 'pedagogy of critique and possibility', 'pedagogy of student voice', 'pedagogy of empowerment', 'radical pedagogy', 'pedagogy for radical democracy', and 'pedagogy of possibility' (Ellsworth 1989, 286).



provide conceptual tools with which to gauge what is happening in this training, and with which to arbitrate what its political effect may be.

My understanding of pedagogy is importantly informed by these theories' demand that 'attention be drawn to the politics of [pedagogical] processes and to the broader political contexts in which they are situated' (Gore 1993, 5). Not only do these theories suggest that education is political, they also advocate for a politics of education geared at social transformation. For Freire, a liberatory pedagogy enables people to 'develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but a reality in process, in transformation' (2005, 83, emphasis in original). Critical consciousness-raising is a typical ambition of liberatory pedagogical approaches, similar to feminist gender training approaches examined in Chapter Three. The terms in which such consciousness is addressed, however, differ somewhat according to the intellectual lineage of the pedagogy. Freire's work, for example, has been critiqued for its lack of attention to gender as a structure of oppression, and feminist pedagogies are typically articulated in terms of 'developing a collective, integrative analysis of oppression(s) to explore the interlocking, oppressive structures of race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality' (Bell, Morrow, and Tastsoglou 1999, 24). Nonetheless, feminist pedagogies, especially in their early articulations, typically draw on Freirean thought and similarly view critical consciousness-raising as a requisite step in the educational process, which is aimed at encouraging students to take transformative action (Boler 1999, 179, Ellsworth 1989, 301).

The limitations of liberatory pedagogical projects, however, are not fully resolved by attending to different structures of oppression, such as the inclusion of gender in analyses of class oppression, or race in analyses of gender oppression. Freirean understandings of liberation have been the subject of not only adulation, but also a sense of unease for the ways in which

they position critical educators as an enlightened vanguard in the Marxist sense (Lather 1991, 134). Poststructuralist feminist analyses in particular emphasise that even liberatory educational paradigms are susceptible to a will to power, both in terms of the prescriptiveness of their vision for social justice and their inevitable involvement with ‘the essentially paternalistic project of education’ (Ellsworth 1989, 306). Liberatory pedagogical projects are characterised by a tension between the ‘difference between the pedagogy of the argument and the pedagogy argued for’ (Gore 1993, 6). No discourse, however emancipatory, is innocent; education must be understood as an ‘interference’ with its subjects’ sense of self and psychic lives (Britzman 1998, 5).

This attention to tension within liberatory pedagogical discourses has produced a call for constant reflection on the *ethics* of pedagogical interventions (Gore 1993, Ellsworth 1989). Such an ethics should not be premised on an assumption of the innocence of liberatory politics, but rather grounded in a recognition of their inevitable failures – ‘an ethics of failure’ (Britzman 1998, 9). This insight complicates the call for a feminist practice of gender training, insofar as it demonstrates that feminism is not an inherently innocent politics, as its ethical practice also requires theorising (Prügl 2016). Overall, the discomfort with a desire for mastery prompts many theorists of feminist pedagogy to refuse to articulate their pedagogical goals in terms of fixed knowledge, characterised by ‘rationality, certainty, measurement, and control’, and rather to locate ethical feminist pedagogical praxis in encounters that seek to undo relations of oppression (Britzman 1998, 2). How these politics are translated into praxis is, in turn, informed by specific theorisations of learning, and they produce certain types of teaching practices, questions to which I turn to next.

### ***Learning, unlearning, relearning***

One of the most influential ideas of Freire’s thought is his description of the traditional (repressive) educational model as a ‘banking system’, premised on the notion that the student

is an empty vessel into whom the teacher transfers knowledge (Freire 2005, 73). This conceptualisation of learning as the result of knowledge transfer – besides being a hierarchical, patriarchal model – fails to get at the distinction between seeing and *realising* described by Peabody after her collision with the tree. Rather, getting at *realisation* suggests an active role for the learner that goes beyond receiving knowledge. In contrast to this ‘banking system’, Freire advocates for a model of education that views knowledge as intersubjectively negotiated: a *praxis* (Freire 2005, 73, Maher 1987, 94). In other words, Freire’s work has been influential in shaping an understanding of pedagogy as knowledge *production* rather than knowledge *transfer*.

Understanding pedagogy as a process of knowledge production involves a recognition that learners come to the educational encounter with existing knowledges, as subjects with prior ‘histories, dreams, and experiences’ (Giroux 1986, 64). This attention to the learner’s subjectivity brings the importance of social and political context into sharp relief. On the one hand, liberatory pedagogical projects often involve processes of *unlearning*. Because we (students and teachers alike) live in worlds shaped by patriarchy, coloniality, and cis- and hetero-sexism, critiquing such structures of oppression involves *unlearning* what we have learned to think and how we have learned to relate to others (Mehta 2019, 24, Ellsworth 1989, 303). On the other hand, in the spirit of feminist consciousness-raising, this process may also involve the affirmation and naming of experiences of sexism or racism that we have had, thereby constituting ‘learning what you already know’ (Sedgwick 2003, 167), or *relearning* (Britzman 1998, 5). In both cases, learning involves making sense of things through existing knowledge – though perhaps reorienting relationships with this knowledge.

The process of reorienting relationships with existing knowledge(s) reveals that knowledge is affective as well as cognitive, or rather, that the two are not easily separable. Feminist pedagogies have critiqued the ways in which early formulations of liberatory pedagogies were

grounded in rationalist thought, animated by an assumption that if rational individuals were presented with knowledge of oppression, they would be enticed to work against it (Britzman 1998, 4, Lather 1991, 137, Ellsworth 1989, 301). In contrast to such cognitivist understandings, and in continuity with feminist critiques of Western/liberal epistemologies that insist on binary separations such as reason/emotion, mind/body, and public/private, feminist pedagogical approaches have drawn attention to the affective dimensions of learning, describing it as 'a psychic event' (Britzman 1998, 3, see also Boler 1999, Jaggar 1997, Scheman 1997). Megan Boler describes emotions as 'inscribed habits of inattention' and notes that they '*define how and what one chooses to see, and, conversely, not to see*' (1999, 172, 177, emphasis added).

While an attentiveness to emotion in pedagogical encounters is traditionally associated with feminist consciousness-raising and feminist pedagogical encounters that centre 'women's experience and emotions as a source of knowledge', this is not to suggest that the affective dimension of knowledge is only about politically transgressive or progressive emotions (Boler 1999, 116). Rather, the suggestion here is that *all* knowledge has an affective dimension to it. Emotion is not simply about being 'touchy-feely', but is a pervasive feature of being and knowing: '*Hardness is not the absence of emotion, but a different emotional orientation toward others*' (Ahmed 2014, 4, emphasis in original). Emotional orientations are therefore not inherently progressive or oppressive. As Boler argues, emotion can function as either 'a site of social control' or 'a site of political resistance' (1999, 108). What is central is attending to the notion that learning and knowing have an affective life, and that emotions play a role in what we choose to see and to realise – an issue I return to in Chapter Seven.

An attentiveness to emotion further highlights the intersubjective, relational nature of learning. Feminist pedagogies have critiqued approaches that fail 'to make problematic either the learner, teacher or knowledge, or the relationship between them' (Kenway and Modra

1992, 139). Learning involves pedagogic encounters, and these encounters involve relations saturated with emotion. On the one hand, hooks calls for feminist educators to question the ways in which education has been framed as exclusively serious, and to revisit the role of fun and pleasure and learning (hooks 1994, 7). On the other hand, the pedagogical scene may also involve encounters with what Deborah P. Britzman (1998, 2) describes as 'difficult knowledge' and what Boler (1999, 175) terms a 'pedagogy of discomfort'. Britzman (1998, 11) elaborates:

What education asks of students [is to] confront perspectives, situations, and ideas that may not be just unfamiliar but appear at first glance as a criticism of the learner's view. In all demands, education seems to be asking selves to risk their resistance even as educators have difficulty tolerating the forms working through resistance takes.

While I devote more sustained attention to resistance in pedagogical encounters in Chapter Eight, this attention to relationality highlights the importance of attending to 'affectively steeped pedagogical relations' more broadly (Sedgwick 2003, 159, see also Lewis 1992). The pedagogical encounter involves moments of both pleasure and pain, and an ethical praxis of negotiating such encounters requires an attentiveness to the politics at play. As hooks reminds us: 'Not all pain is harm, and not all pleasure is good' (1994, 154).

### ***Teaching: experience, voice and power in the classroom***

Though feminist pedagogies reject understandings of learning that prescribe knowledge transfer, favouring instead a conceptualisation of learning as knowledge production, this does not mean feminist pedagogies are not interested in the practice of teaching. To the contrary, an understanding of learning as knowledge production has far-reaching implications for what teaching consists of and how it might be practised in a feminist manner. Because liberatory pedagogies 'necessarily embrace experience, confessions and testimony as relevant ways of knowing, as important, vital dimensions of any learning process' (hooks 1994, 88), liberatory pedagogies view the role of the teacher as facilitating the production of knowledge from experience. Feminist thought on teaching is therefore centrally concerned with the role of the teacher-facilitator, and driven by a desire to ensure that the ways in which classroom

interactions are practised is consistent with the theory engaged with: that it constitutes feminist *praxis*. This involves introducing feminist anti-hierarchical, collaborative processes into the classroom, which becomes a place 'to practice feminist visions of the world' (Shrewsbury 1987, 9, see also Schniedewind 1987). Accordingly, founded on both critical understandings of learning and commitment to feminist process, 'making the classroom a democratic setting where everyone feels a responsibility to contribute is a central goal of feminist pedagogy' (hooks 1994, 39, see also Kenway and Modra 1992, Schniedewind 1987, Shrewsbury 1987).

What is noticeable about this vision of feminist teaching is the extent to which it is derived from experiences of teaching women's/gender studies classrooms, and premised on the assumption that students share an experience of oppression that feminist theory speaks to. Consider, for example, hooks' characterisation of her engaged pedagogy: 'When our lived experience of theorizing is fundamentally linked to processes of self-recovery, of collective liberation, no gap exists between theory and practice' (1994, 61). It bears noting, however, that this view of pedagogical practice is by no means blind to differential power dynamics in the classroom, and has consistently interrogated who is authorised to speak, about what, and on behalf of whom (Mehta 2019, 26, Ellsworth 1989, 317). These forms of attentiveness to power relations within the classroom 'dispel the misplaced notion that feminist teachers merely facilitate a process emerging from a class that gives equal validation to any and all student values and attitudes' (Schniedewind 1987, 27-8, see also hooks 1994, Scott 1992). This attentiveness to power is particularly important in the context where 'our students are no longer necessarily already committed to or interested in feminist politics (which means we are not just sharing the "good news" with the converted)', implying that '[f]eminist scholars must change ways of seeing, talking and thinking if we are to speak to the various audiences' (hooks 1994, 111, see also Moore 1998, Lewis 1992, Lather 1991). The feminist pedagogical literature therefore offers a nuanced theorisation of questions of student voice, political

confrontation, and power in teaching and classroom practices. These questions are particularly germane for efforts to theorise teaching gender in the context of peacekeeper training, where students are typically not members of marginalised groups, nor do they (often) enter the classroom with a commitment to feminist politics. Accordingly, I suggest that an attention to questions of voice/experience and power are of particular importance in thinking about how feminist pedagogy might be practised in institutional settings saturated with power and privilege (Cornwall 2016, Ferguson 2019a).

The recognition that students bring different experiences and values to the classroom – and not always ones predisposed to liberatory projects – does not negate the fact that these experiences and values inform how they engage with the material presented and their colleagues in the first place. Hence, questions of student experience and voice cannot simply be dismissed because they do not necessarily serve feminist political projects. Even if we are of the political view that not all students' voices need empowering, I suggest that feminist pedagogical theories' grounding in a politics of difference offers helpful analytical tools to navigating questions of voice and experience in the classroom (Ellsworth 1989, 322, see also Haraway 1988). This, however, is no small ask of gender trainers working in martial institutions. A politics of difference requires a double epistemic shift away from traditional modes of education. First, it requires taking students' experiences and feelings seriously, seeing learners as complex subjects with pre-existing histories and desires rather than as empty vessels to be filled. However, fostering student voice in this way risks giving in to a kind of tyranny of experience, in which student experiences cannot be challenged (i.e. 'I have not experienced discrimination, so discrimination does not exist.') (hooks 1994, 81). The second epistemic shift required then is to historicise experience and treat any knowledge deriving from experience as inescapably partial (Boler 1999, 123). Coming to see experience as valuable, but also as partial and situated, requires a willingness to listen to and take seriously the experience of others (Ellsworth 1989, 316). It requires a capacity to entertain the notion

that two contradictory views may both be true at the same time. This recognition of situated and partial knowledge – thinking of pedagogy in the context of peacekeeper training – amounts to nothing short of an epistemic revolt in a world characterised by liberal scientific rationalism. It precipitates ‘poststructuralist crises of truth’ in that it ‘denies the reader’s desires for certainty’ and ‘replaces coherence and resolution with vulnerability and ambiguity’ (Boler 1999, 169, see also Biccum 2007). What this means is that teaching gender in a feminist pedagogical sense is less about establishing a new regime of truth to replace an old one, and more about disturbing the notion that any one thing alone is true. It is not about replacing ‘X’ with ‘Y’ so much as it is about insisting on also seeing y, a, z, b, and an infinite number of other possibilities in addition to ‘X’.

Creating the conditions to practise a politics of difference requires an attentiveness to operations of power within the classroom. Feminist pedagogical theorising has typically focused on moderating the unequal power relations both between students and between student and teacher in a quest to create a more democratic and participatory classroom setting (Ellsworth 1989). However, when dealing with students who enjoy a socially privileged position, and draw upon classed, raced, and gendered forms of power in the classroom, the dilemma becomes ‘how to acknowledge male students’ “voices” without validating the racism and sexism inherent in their positions’ (Bell, Morrow, and Tastsoglou 1999, 29). It is at this juncture that the consistency between feminist teaching practice and the insistence on attention to political context becomes germane. ‘Because,’ as Elisabeth Ellsworth reminds us, ‘all voices within the classroom are not and cannot carry equal legitimacy, safety, and power in dialogue at this historical moment, there are times when the inequalities must be named and addressed by constructing alternative groundrules for communication’ (Ellsworth 1989, 317). Accordingly, feminist pedagogical theory affirms the importance of using the teacher’s situational power in the classroom to interrupt ideologies of domination: ‘Feminism is a politic that is both historical and contingent on existing social relations. I had no problem justifying



the use of my own institutional power to create the possibility for privilege to face itself and own its violation publicly' (Lewis 1992, 181, see also Bell, Morrow, and Tastsoglou 1999, Lather 1991). In other words, a key feature of teaching in feminist pedagogical theory is a constant attentiveness to operations in power – both in the classroom and in attending to the relationship between classroom power dynamics and broader social structures. Power is, in this analytic, both situational and structural.

## EPISTEMOLOGY: THE STAKES OF KNOWLEDGE

As is hopefully evident from the above discussion on pedagogy, '[a]ny notion of education depends upon a theory of knowledge' and 'such a theory must begin with the tensions exercised when the knowledge offered through pedagogy meets the knowledge brought to pedagogy' (Britzman 1998, 5). My account of learning processes as intersubjective and affective gestures towards the epistemological assumptions that animate my inquiry regarding what it means to *learn* and to *know* things. In this section, I direct my attention to these epistemological assumptions, extending the discussion into the question of what I understand to be at stake in teaching, learning, and knowing gender.

### ***Why knowledge production processes matter***

The epistemological framing of my inquiry can be described as broadly poststructuralist, drawing on the work of Foucault, and importantly informed by feminist and postcolonial engagements with and critiques of poststructuralism. This means that I do not assume that knowledge, or its articulation through language, corresponds to some underlying objectively knowable and independently existent truth. Rather, knowledge constitutes truths that are discursively produced precisely through their articulation, systematically forming the subjects and objects of which it speaks (Foucault 1991, 194). I introduced this framing in Chapter One, in my characterisation of gender not as an objectively knowable 'thing', but as a process of

subjectification, a technology of power (Bhabha 1994, 95, de Lauretis 1989, 2). These truths are performative, in that they require articulation through discourse – albeit discourse that is not understood as strictly linguistic, but also includes communicative articulations such as gesture (Butler 2004, 21, Sedgwick 2003, 6, Foucault 1998, 100). Importantly, this knowledge is productive (in a normatively agnostic sense of the word productive); it does not describe a pre-existing social reality, but rather brings this reality and subjects into being (Foucault 1998, 94). Knowledge is, then, a technology of power, a technology that produces a range of options as to who, what, and how we can be in the world (Butler 2004, 58, Foucault 1998, 93).

In this sense, my analysis follows a strand of poststructuralist understandings of feminist pedagogy that read pedagogic encounters as ‘a politics of signification and as historically contingent cultural practice’ (Luke and Gore 1992, 4). It is worth noting at this juncture that I pursue this question in relation to training with the understanding that power-knowledge is not confined to an institution such as the military or an apparatus such as training (Foucault 1991, 215). While gender training constitutes one node of this technology of power, one site of the articulation of a productive discourse, the training site does not in and of itself constitute a regime of truth. Rather, the training endeavour is simply one site at which to examine the operations of power-knowledge.

This epistemological perspective informs why and on what terms I attach importance to the pedagogical encounters of gender training. Many of the approaches to feminist and critical pedagogies (especially those produced prior to feminist pedagogies’ turn to poststructuralism in the 1990s) describe as their key ambition to prompt students to take concrete political action to enact change. For example, Ellsworth describes teaching a course that involves students undertaking protest action against racist school structures, and laments that in the broader field ‘there have been no sustained research attempts to explore whether or how the practices [critical pedagogy] prescribes actually alter specific power relations outside or inside

schools' (1989, 301, see also Boler 1999, 111). Such accounts suggest that the aim of feminist pedagogy is to produce a 'feminist revolutionary subject' (Hutchings 2013, 20-1). The expectation that critical education produces observable, explicitly political action, can be read as a variant of the question: Does gender training work? In contrast, throughout my setting up of this inquiry, I have specified that this is not the question that drives my research, but that my inquiry is instead interested in the epistemically distinct question: What work does gender training do? This question is fundamentally informed by a poststructuralist understanding of knowledge as productive of ways of being and acting in the world, and training as a discourse that 'makes possible particular identities, fixes categories of things and people, and makes various forms of conduct thinkable' (Prügl 2010, 4-5).

I do not assume that in order for pedagogy to be politically productive, it needs to result in directly observable, explicitly political action. In this way, my reading of pedagogical practices through a poststructuralist understanding of knowledge departs from certain strands of feminist pedagogical theorising. Rather, my interest in pedagogy is characterised by the more diffuse ways in which knowledge provides 'a grid of intelligibility' that determines the range of possibilities of who or what I can be in a racialised and gendered global order (Foucault 1998, 93, see also Butler 2004, 58). My inquiry is interested in questions similar to those Razack asks, seeking to understand 'who people think they are and how this informs what they do' (2004, 8) and examining 'how people are educated to participate in the social, how they are interpellated into practices that leave the trails of violence in their wake' (2004, 57). In other words, my epistemic perspective posits knowledge as productive of ways of being and acting in the world, and seeks to understand how such knowledges are produced in the training setting; what modes of being and acting these knowledge provide for peacekeepers; and what their effects and consequences may be both for peacekeepers and for peace-kept populations (Jennings 2019).

### ***Feminist investments in bodies, emotions, and agency***

A poststructuralist epistemic stance that foregrounds knowledge as a technology of power raises familiar feminist questions about the relationship between discourse, embodied selves, and possibilities for change (Madhok, Phillips, and Wilson 2013, 1, Butler 2004, 3). Feminist theory has had to navigate the collision of poststructuralism's denial of autonomous subjectivity with feminism's political imperative and analytical desire 'to provide an autonomous notion of female subjectivity, sexuality, and corporeality' (Grosz 1994, 155, see also McNay 2000). On the one hand, feminist theory has embraced poststructuralism's deconstruction of the unitary and coherent subject, as this dovetails with feminist efforts to think about subjects as multiply constituted through race, gender, and class, alongside other axes of difference (de Lauretis 1989, 2, see also Bhabha 1994, 42). On the other hand, feminist engagements have further been troubled by the extent to which poststructuralist theory appears to deny possibilities for, or at least lack an account of, agency and political change (de Lauretis 1989, 16). In grappling with these limitations, feminist inflections of poststructuralist theory provide helpful theoretical moves that facilitate an engagement with emotion and agency within a broad paradigm of poststructuralist interest in power-knowledge.

As outlined in the above account of pedagogy, I understand knowing and learning to encompass a felt, affective dimension, which implies an embodied subject. A Foucauldian reading of the productive nature of power insists that there is no subject prior to its production by discourse, no recognisable mode of existence outside relations of power: 'there is no escaping from power ... it is always-already present, constituting the very thing which one attempts to counter it with' (Foucault 1998, 82). However, feminist readings of Foucault suggest that this does not by necessity imply a deterministic understanding of the workings of power, as not all subjects experience the effects of power in the same way. For example, Butler describes how: 'I may *feel* that without some recognisability I cannot live. But I may also *feel* that the terms by which I am recognized make life unliveable' (2004, 4, emphasis

added). Accordingly, I suggest emotional orientations provide a clue as to how subjects relate to knowledge and experience power *differently*, providing an account of embodied subjects that invest in, and occupy certain discursive positions over others (de Lauretis 1989, 16).

This admittance of feeling and different orientations to power into my account of knowledge is not intended to posit an individualised or psychologised account of relationships to power-knowledge, resting on a conceptualisation of an atomistic individual who exists independently of the social/discursive realm (Boler 1999, 128). Rather, these accounts highlight how emotion and feeling are produced by social locations and histories. What is at stake is therefore an investigation of ‘how the dominant discourses within a given local site determine what can and cannot be felt and/or oppressed’ (Boler 1999, 142). Emotions and feelings are not asocial or apolitical – to the contrary, ‘[t]he staging of affect and desire is clearly one way in which norms work their way into what feels most properly to belong to me’ (Butler 2004, 15, see also Ahmed 2014). The significance of attending to the affective dimension of knowledge is not then to reassert a kind of liberal conception of individual subjectivity into the epistemic stance. Instead, I draw attention to the fact that an understanding of knowledge as a technology of power does not produce a deterministic and closed production of subjectivities in a fully ‘negative paradigm’ of agency (McNay 2000, 20). Rather, it illustrates that subjects can and do invest in different discursive positions within power-knowledge regimes.

In this vein, it is helpful to note that not only is knowledge felt, but it is also produced by embodied subjects. Discourse is dependent on repetition, and its repetition through verbalisation and other performative acts is a bodily articulation: ‘there is a body here, and there can be no saying without that body’ (Butler 2004, 172). This need for embodied repetition is significant because ‘reiterations are never simply replicas of the same’ (Butler 1993, 18, see also Bhabha 1994). The moment of repetition necessary for power-knowledge to operate is therefore also a moment of instability for that configuration. Repetition

introduces a possibility for alteration, a possibility of change – a question I (re)turn to next. However, before getting to that, I should note that an admission of the dependence of discourse on its repetition by embodied subjects does also not amount to an account of knowledge that establishes an autonomous subject that exercises fully voluntaristic agency outside of a social context. The subject of will and social reality exist in a mutually constitutive relationship: ‘If I have any agency, it is opened up by the fact that I am constituted by a social world I never chose. That my agency is constituted with paradox does not mean that it is impossible. It means only that paradox is the condition of possibility’ (Butler 2004, 3). This understanding of paradoxical possibilities of agency introduces constraints on being in that there is no form of subjectivity, no option for being, fully outside the existing knowledge configurations. It also, however, means that power-knowledge is not ‘automatic or mechanical’ in its functioning – subjects can enact ‘a practice of improvisation within a scene of constraint’ (Butler 2004, 1). In other words, it introduces a possibility of *change* into poststructuralist accounts of the workings of power/knowledge complexes.

### ***Locating possibilities for change***

As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, my inquiry is interested in how gender becomes known through training, what political and epistemic work this training does, and, centrally, what political effects the training may have. This is a feminist inquiry, insofar as ‘[f]eminism is about the social transformation of gender relations,’ and therefore centrally concerned with possibilities for transformation and change (Butler 2004, 204). Informed by poststructuralist perspectives, I suggest that possibilities for change can be located through an attentiveness to discursive multiplicity, and at the margins of hegemonic discourses.

I argued above that gender training can be understood as one node in a wider discursive formation, but training itself is also a site at which multiple discourses are at play. We can think of gender training as involving struggle between existing truth claims. In Chapter Three,

I discussed how the literature on peacekeeping reveals tensions in gender training practices, insofar as it asks soldiers trained in warfighting to take on peacemaking tasks, and, of particular interest to this study, it introduces ideas of gender equality (however diluted) into institutions founded on inequality. What is at stake in such training is the articulation of competing truth claims by the different discursive regimes of cosmopolitan liberalism, feminisms, and martiality. This recognition of different discourses at play pushes us beyond the notion that a single hegemonic discourse determines the range of options for thinking and being in the world. Indeed, the very practice of gender training attests to the fact that '*the terms of a different construction of gender exist*' (de Lauretis 1989, 18, emphasis in original). Training is therefore a practice located at the interstices of multiple discursive formations. Its ambitions are similar to the ways in which the broader field of feminist epistemologies and pedagogies seeks to cultivate 'the *practice* of self-consciousness' as 'the analytical and critical method of feminism,' with the aim of opening up ways of occupying a discursive position outside of the norm (de Lauretis 1989, 20, emphasis in original). The question then becomes, how is it that some truth claims become accepted and are made to work as true, while others are discredited? An attentiveness to pedagogical encounters echoes the question Teresa de Lauretis asks: 'what will persuade women [and men] to invest in other positions...?' (1989, 17). The attentiveness to emotional orientation outlined above goes some way in helping understand how investments in certain truth claims are nurtured or ruptured, illustrating how we choose what we choose to know.

What is important to note here is that competing truth claims are not fully separate from hegemonic discourses. As Butler reminds us: 'being outside the norm is still in some sense being defined in relation to the norm' (2004, 42). When feminist knowledge intervenes in martial institutions, this intervention is staged in 'spaces in the margins of hegemonic discourses, social spaces carved out in the interstices of institutions and the chinks and cracks of the power-knowledge apparatus' (de Lauretis 1989, 25). Accordingly, feminist interventions

are, in this encounter as in many others, perhaps most usefully thought of as 'disruptive or oppositional' knowledges in relation to hegemonic discourses (de Lauretis 1989, 16).

Foucault's theorisation of resistance offers a helpful way of thinking about such oppositional politics. He suggests that 'there is no single locus of great Refusal, no soul of revolt, source of all rebellions, or pure law of the great revolutionary' (1998, 95-6). Instead of looking for such 'radical ruptures' and 'massive binary divisions', he notes (1998, 96):

more often one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, facturing unities and effecting regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves, cutting them up and remolding them.

What follows is a sense that rather than looking for a singular revolt (Foucault 1998, 101):

We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy.

In terms of political change, what is interesting here is the suggestion that a hegemonic discourse can be an effect of power, at the same time as it is power's hindrance and stumbling block.

Homi Bhabha's theorisation of ambivalence helps understand this suggestion, as he underlines that all discourses contain paradoxical and contradictory elements (1994, 160). The ambivalence of hegemonic discourse therefore provides the means of its own challenging, suggesting a political strategy of subversion from within, of '*working the weakness in the norm*' (Butler 1993, 26, emphasis in original). The political vision therefore becomes: 'To intervene in the name of transformation ... to disrupt what has become settled knowledge and knowable reality, and to use, as it were, one's unreality to make an otherwise impossible or illegible claim' (Butler 2004, 27). In other words, the political possibilities for change in this epistemic stance are most accurately described not as a supplanting of or transcendence over hegemonic discourses, but rather in encounters at the margins of hegemonic discourses which 'wrench the boundaries of a discourse around in productive ways' (Sedgwick 2003, 34). It is



centrally involved in the task of both identifying the limits of this discourse and in transgressing and challenging these limits (Butler 2004, 27).

It is important to bear in mind that ambivalence and paradox are not features of hegemonic discourses alone. Rather, instability and the potential for subversion characterise all discourses: '[r]elations of power-knowledge are not static forms of distribution, they are "matrices of transformations" subject to constant modifications, continual shifts' (Foucault 1998, 99). The feminist critiques that I discussed in Chapter Three, which examine how feminist politics become defanged through gender mainstreaming initiatives, demonstrate that resistant discourses are also characterised by fluctuating operations. Discursive regimes are not reliably stable, coherent, or unitary, nor is it possible to consistently keep them apart as diametrically opposed. Bhabha's influential concept of hybridity (which has been eagerly taken up in the peacebuilding literature) offers a useful vantage point to understand such encounters and interactions between knowledge formations, suggesting that the result of the encounter is a hybridised form of knowledge, not properly one or the other, but rather something new (Bhabha 1994, 37). What emerges from these encounters is unpredictable: 'something will be accomplished in the course of this exchange, but no one will know what or who is being made until it is done' (Butler 2004, 173). This openness to hybridity and constant modification is what animates this study. It is why I insist on not framing my approach as comparing gender training to an imagined originary version of feminist pedagogy in a binary success/fail model, nor do I suggest that there is a definitive picture for what success would look like for disruptive, oppositional, and subversive politics. This indeterminacy is what gives rise to my interest in the lively forms of political and epistemic work that take place in these encounters, and their political effects.

## CRITIQUE: THINKING NON-DUALISTICALLY

In Chapter Three, I characterised literature on peacekeeping as alternately critical or problem-solving in orientation, and signalled my sympathies with critical literature. In line with these sympathies, I understand my analysis of peacekeeper training practices to constitute a critique. In this final section, I reflect on how my understanding of pedagogical projects and the epistemic perspectives informs how I set about analysing the political work that gender training does. I outline how I see critique as functioning, and what formulating a critique means for analytical and political engagement.

### ***Ambivalence and the challenge of thinking non-dualistically***

Sedgwick observes that in queer (and) feminist scholarship, '[a] lot of voices tell us to think nondualistically [but fewer] are able to transmit how to go about it' (2003, 1). I suggest that the ideas of ambivalence and hybridity developed by Bhabha are helpful in opening up some ways of thinking beyond dualistic terms. Thinking with these concepts demonstrates that the task of critique is to stretch our thinking beyond a given set of binary outcomes and to track instead the shifting terms of contestation. As Bhabha (1994, 37) explains:

The language of critique is effective not because it keeps forever separate the terms of the master and the slave, the mercantilist and the Marxist, [*the militarist and the feminist?*], but to the extent to which it overcomes the given grounds of opposition and opens up a space of translation: a place of hybridity, figuratively speaking, where the construction of a political object that is new, *neither the one nor the other*, properly alienates our political expectations, and changes, as it must, the very forms of our recognition of the moment of politics.

This normative understanding of critique differs from criticism, in which the goal is for one account, one understanding of a situation, to prevail over another (Mahmood 2005, 36-7). In contrast, critique remains open to the notion that neither prevails, but rather something new is produced in the exchange. This has significant implications for how we might read the politics of gender training.

In Chapter Three, I characterised feminist literature on gender training – and gender mainstreaming more broadly – as lamenting the co-optation of feminist projects to serve the interests of the status quo. In other words, much of the literature criticises feminist politics for failing to transform patriarchal institutions (or criticises patriarchal institutions for co-opting feminism). Such accounts, I suggest, are haunted by the spectre of an imaginary, originary, and pure feminism that has become corrupted and co-opted. They emote a desire to be properly feminist and ‘not-duped’ (Chow 1994, 146). However, considering these dynamics through the lenses of ambivalence and hybridity demands that we rethink the terms of opposition. They suggest that co-optation is not likely to be complete or final, and invite us to disinvest from the fantasy of what Foucault terms the ‘single locus of great Refusal’ (1998, 95). Rather, formulating a critique from this epistemic perspective invites us to think, as have many feminists and upon whose work I build on, beyond narratives of ‘victory and danger’ in engaging with the martial politics of peacekeeping (Otto 2014, see also Väyrynen 2004, Jauhola 2010).

This understanding of critique does not lend itself readily to pronouncing that feminism is *either* successful in transforming martial institutions involved in peacekeeping *or* co-opted in the process and, ultimately, failed. It shifts our analysis, as feminist scholarship has schooled us, from thinking in the terms of either-or logics into thinking in the terms of both-and logics (Ferguson 2017, 271). To think in this mode, I argue, means to pose the question of co-optation or transformation as an open question. It necessitates on-going, contextualised analyses, while acknowledging that the answer may be neither and both – a political object that is, as Bhabha suggests, new. Accordingly, I am interested in understandings of critique that are characterised by their attempt to look at forms of knowledge that are ‘in-between’ or ‘beside’ a binary option of political possibility (Bhabha 1994, 41, 43, Sedgwick 2003, 8).

### ***Paranoid and reparative interpretive strategies***

Pushing beyond a narrative that either confirms the failure of gender training to effect feminist transformation, or affirms that such transformation is indeed underway, requires an analytical mode open to recognising political effects beyond this binary. It requires a mode of thought in which it seems 'realistic and even necessary to experience surprise', as Sedgwick described it in her influential and evocatively titled essay 'Paranoid reading and reparative reading, or, you're so paranoid you probably think this essay is about you' (Sedgwick 2003, 146)<sup>23</sup>. It requires letting go, at least partially, of our anxious desire to be the not-duped, and opening up analytical space to see beyond two diametrically opposed political outcomes. It requires, I argue, a combination of critical and reparative reading practices, which navigate the twin dangers of paranoid reading on the one hand, and naïve faith in progress on the other.

Critical analysis, in my understanding of the term, involves interrogating the workings of power, scrutinising how knowledge is produced and with what effects. Such analyses deconstruct the workings of power by exposing the constructedness (as opposed to givenness or naturalness) of settled truths. These analytical efforts are necessary and valuable to the project of identifying the workings and limits of a discursive formation. They reveal that because the social world is made rather than found, it is not only changeable, but perhaps ought to be changed (Milliken 1999, 244). Interrogating the workings of power, in the context of my study, involves approaching the proposition that gender training will improve the conduct of peacekeeping operations (and, indeed, that peacekeeping is a reliably benevolent enterprise) with suspicion. It involves looking for how power shapes the pedagogical project in order to produce a specific kind of knowledge about what gender is and does. Informed by a body of work that has exposed the martial, colonial, and heteronormative logics of power

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<sup>23</sup> For a rich and insightful account of the development of this essay and the ways in which it is taken up in queer feminist scholarship, see Wiegman (2014).

in peacekeeping enterprises more broadly, I look for these same logics in the pedagogical encounter. These critical feminist analytics help identify the workings of power in training practice, because they provide an alternative view of how gender could be understood and pedagogy practised. Such work is necessary, both to caution more optimistically inclined readers against assuming that gender training is unambiguously a normative good, as well as to investigate the microphysics of the workings of power. At the same time, however, such a mode of analysis is limited in its political utility and analytical purchase, and, if pursued on its own, tends towards paranoid reading practices.

A paranoid mode of analysis can be characterised as an analytical stance that assumes that the nebulous workings of power are omnipresent, and is determined to expose them in any object of analysis. Sedgwick's point of departure in describing paranoid reading practices is a conversation with her friend and colleague Cindy Patton about conspiracy theories that the HIV epidemic was engineered and intentionally spread by the U.S. Military. Patton, in Sedgwick's rendition of their conversation, voiced little interest in investigating the truthfulness of such claims, asking instead: 'Suppose we were ever so sure of all of those things ... *what would we know then that we don't already know?*' (Patton quoted in Sedgwick 2003, 123, emphasis added). We *know* that Black and gay lives are devalued by the U.S. government; we *know* that military research is centrally involved in the business of killing. In a parallel move, critically inclined readers of my inquiry may remark that *of course* the military militarises gender knowledge, and, similarly to Patton, ask what have we learned that we don't already know? While I maintain that exposing these dynamics is necessary, I also agree that its political potential has limits. A singular faith in exposure, Sedgwick highlights (2003, 138), is a problem of paranoid reading practices:

[P]aranoia for all its vaunted suspicion acts as though its work would be accomplished if only it could finally, this time, somehow get its story fully known. That a fully initiated listener could still remain indifferent or inimical, or might have no help to offer, is hardly treated as a possibility.

Not unlike the critiques of early articulations of critical pedagogy, a reliance on critical practices of exposure alone rests on a cognitivist paradigm that if only we *knew*, we would be compelled to act. However, critical scholarship has grown increasingly 'unsure of the self-authorising thesis that has given political motive to decades of scholarly work: that *knowing* is the means for knowing *what to do*' (Wiegman 2014, 7). Placing all critical faith in the practice of exposure, in other words, is limited in political utility.

Sedgwick also highlights an analytic problem with paranoid reading practices, in that they tend to slip into tautological reasoning. Critical analytical practices tend to anticipate negative effects, and paranoia creeps in in the form of an anxious concern: '*There must be no bad surprises*' (Sedgwick 2003, 130, emphasis in original). Based on this anxiety, paranoid analysis 'can't help or can't stop or can't do anything other than prove the very assumptions with which it began' (Sedgwick 2003, 135). The issue of circular reasoning is also raised in some of the feminist critiques of poststructuralism discussed above, in that to assume that subjects are the effects of power appears to posit a closed loop that forecloses agency and change. Even when attending to the possibilities of constrained agency and the potential to destabilise discursive regimes, an element of tautology remains. I do not propose it is possible to write it off entirely. However, this does signal an analytical limitation of paranoid reading practices, in addition to the political problem discussed above.

Accordingly, if we work with an epistemology that locates possibilities for change in disruptive practices at the margins of hegemonic discourses (as I do), and if we take seriously the political possibility opened by ambivalence and hybridity (as I argue we should), then it is imperative to remain open to, as Bhabha put it, moments that might alienate our political expectations and change the terms of our recognition of the moment of politics (1994, 37). Hence why it is 'realistic and necessary to experience surprise' (Sedgwick 2003, 146).

This is not to say that approaching analysis with suspicion is undesirable, nor that critical reading practices are in and of themselves bad. Rather, it is to acknowledge that such modes of critique have limitations. In Sedgwick's analysis, reading practices become paranoid when criticism becomes an injunction, when it *disallows other modes of knowledge* (2003, 125). Sedgwick therefore argues for the cultivation of alternative modes of inquiry, namely those of reparative reading, which seeks to find reason for hope, and small moments of sustenance, through critique. The notion of repair, stemming from the psychoanalytic work of Melanie Klein, signals the construction of a whole from part objects. It results in 'a guilty, empathetic view of the other as at once good, damaged, integral, and requiring and eliciting love and care' (Sedgwick 2003, 137). This stands in contrast to the negative affect of a paranoid reading, in which the need to find the bad eclipses any desire to identify the good (Sedgwick 2003, 136). It admits that in addition to uncovering bad news, critique may also reveal the good; neither negates the other.

In the context of my inquiry, reparative reading means that, though I provide a critical account, I seek to account for the good as well as the damaged. While queer feminist scholarship engaged in reparative reading has typically privileged the relation of love identified in Sedgwick's essay (Wiegman 2014, 7), my emphasis is more on the desire to 'assemble and confer plenitude on an object' of study (Sedgwick 2003, 149). This desire to go beyond 'symptomatic reading' (Wiegman 2014, 7) means remaining open to the notion that gender training may, at times, constitute what I qualify as feminist pedagogical practice. This is a pleasurable motive, given my personal implication in the gender training enterprise. I admit to experiencing pleasure in identifying feminist gender training practices which are subversive of the norm, and that this pleasure-seeking prompts me to take up a reparative analytical position, especially in Chapter Nine. I hesitate, however, to call this a loving relation, unless the conceptualisation is carefully fleshed out as signalling that 'the arrival into "love" is never innocently given but instead part of a defensive manoeuvre' (Wiegman 2014, 17, see

also Berlant 2011, 122). I return to the question of the positionality of the researcher in Chapter Five. To conclude this reflection of reparative critique, I would like to underline that reparation should not be a naïve practice – it does not replace a determination to find only the bad with a determination to see only the good. Rather, a reparative critique is one that remains open to the possibility that an object (gender training) may be both good and bad politics at the same time. It provides, in other words, a means for working with the paradox that I identified as the central feature of gender training in Chapter One.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter framed the theoretical perspectives that inform this study. I began with the contention that examining practices of gender training requires an account of how we teach and learn. Thinking about teaching and learning with the help of feminist pedagogical theory, I constructed an account of pedagogy as political, intersubjective, affective, and infused with relations of power (Boler 1999, Britzman 1998, hooks 1994, Luke and Gore 1992). Playing with the duality of pedagogy as either the practice of freedom or a practice that serves to reinforce relations of domination, I suggested that these theories help us understand the politics of pedagogical encounters, and offer a vantage point from which to arbitrate when an encounter might be understood as feminist. Throughout this discussion, I identified questions I take up in more detail in the empirical chapters of this thesis, questions such as the work of emotion in learning (Chapter Seven), resistance in the classroom (Chapter Eight), and issues of voice and power in pedagogical encounters (Chapter Nine).

Underlying all accounts of pedagogy are theories of knowledge. In the second section of this chapter, I discussed the epistemic stance from which I examine the pedagogical encounters of gender training. Informed by poststructuralist theories, I provided an account of knowledge as productive of ways and being and acting in the world (Butler 2004, Foucault 1998, Bhabha 1994, de Lauretis 1989). This understanding of knowledge importantly informs why I think



gender training matters – not necessarily because it produces in some directly observable sense revolutionary subjects or actions (Hutchings 2013), but rather because it shapes the field of possibilities in the first place. In other words, I characterised gender training as one site at which we are interpellated to participate in the social, and where the terms of this participation are negotiated. Through an engagement with feminism and postcolonialism, I provided an account of knowledge within a poststructuralist framework that attends to possibilities of agency and change. I suggested that agency and change can be identified in forms of resistance, subversion, and oppositional politics, not (only) as big revolutionary moments or acts.

This understanding of political change and transformational possibilities prompted the reflection on the nature and workings of critique which concludes the chapter. In this section, I outlined an understanding of critique informed by queer, feminist, and postcolonial theorising that expands our understanding of political effects beyond a binary set of possibilities (Mahmood 2005, Sedgwick 2003, Bhabha 1994). I suggested that a combination of critical and reparative interpretive practices provides for an analytical strategy that allows us to see, and to grapple with, the paradoxical politics of gender training as both damaged and good feminist political practice.

This theoretical framing reinforces the suggestion, laid out in Chapter Three, that an account of the epistemic and political effects of gender training requires reading the intersubjective dynamics of knowledge production, tracking struggles over meaning as they play out in the classroom, and attending to moments of disjuncture or subversion that take place at the margins of the dominant discourses of peacekeeping or gender training. In other words, it requires a research archive that extends beyond policy commitments and formal curricula. In the next chapter, I turn to describe the content of the research archive I base my analysis on, and discuss how I compiled this research archive.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### METHODOLOGY: READING PEDAGOGICAL ENCOUNTERS

*All speaking, even seemingly the most immediate, entails a distanced  
decipherment by another, which is, at best, an interception.  
That is what speech is.*

- Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (2010 [1988], 64)

So far, this thesis has argued that gender training is an emergent transnational practice that warrants analytical attention; articulated the questions that I ask of this practice; and explored the theoretical perspectives and political attachments which inform how I come to ask these particular questions. In this chapter, I turn to the methodology I use to investigate these questions. Feminist research methodology has been described as the interaction between epistemic perspectives, research methods, and ethics (Harding 1987, 23-5; see also Ackerly, Stern & True, 2006). Chapter Four focused on the epistemic perspectives that animate this research. In this theoretical framing, I explained that I attach political significance to gender training because I see it as a site at which power-knowledge operates to produce grids of intelligibility. The epistemological nature of this inquiry means that rather than looking for causal pathways to revolutionary subjectivity or transformative action, I am interested in identifying what ways of being and acting in the world the discursive frames of gender training enable or preclude. Methodologically, this interest in knowledge practices circumscribes the scope of inquiry to training encounters in and of themselves, rather than attempting to measure causal impact of training on trainees' subsequent behaviours or performance. I also stressed the importance of situating learning and knowledge in pedagogical encounters, suggesting that the text of a curriculum only communicates the desires of those providing the training, obscuring from view how these texts are taken up and their meaning inflected at the

scene of pedagogy. A purely textual analysis of training curricula or mandates is therefore insufficient to account for the political and epistemic work that training does. Rather, such an endeavour necessitates research methods that allow access to pedagogical encounters, such as participant observation and interviews.

In this chapter, I describe the multi-sited ethnographic method I used to study peacekeeper gender training, discuss how the epistemic perspectives introduced in Chapter Four inform the research methods of this study, and reflect on the ethico-political considerations this method gave rise to. I understand epistemic perspectives, methods, and ethics to be overlapping and mutually implicated. Research with human subjects – as alluded to in the quote from Spivak that introduces this chapter – raises questions about how the researcher accesses and interprets what she hears; questions that have epistemic, methodological, and ethico-political implications. Nonetheless, for the sake of clarity, I divide the discussion in this chapter in two sections: methods and ethics. The first section describes how I defined the object of this inquiry; how I compiled a research archive and what this archive consists of; and how I interpret this material. The second section of this chapter then reflects on ethics, discussing the responsibilities of the researcher towards both direct participants in the research, and the broader communities that this research relates to.

Woven throughout this discussion are reflections on my positionality as researcher, and how this positionality informs the questions that I ask and those that either escape or fail to interest me; the sites and materials that I can and cannot access; what research participants would and would not say to me or in front of me; what I am and am not able to hear; and how I interpret my findings. I engage in these reflections, not with an intent to ‘navel-gazing’, but rather informed by a feminist epistemic perspective that sees all knowledge as situated and inescapably partial, and that advocates for researchers to account for the location from which they are writing through reflexive engagement (Henry, Higate, and Sanghera 2009, 469, see

also Spivak and Grosz 1990, Haraway 1988, Harding 1987). In other words, these reflections are introduced with the intention of engaging in a feminist research ethic, which places under scrutiny the knowledge claims and critiques put forward by exposing the positionality of the researcher.

## METHODS: THE RESEARCH ARCHIVE

The preoccupation of this inquiry with pedagogical encounters demands a research method that allows analytical access to training sites; to ‘the micrological texture of power’ that Spivak suggests is so important to understanding how subject formations operate in relation to power (2010, 33). Accordingly, the way I set about exploring the politics of gender training was through observing and participating in training practices. I conducted participant observation on seven gender training courses for peacekeepers, amounting to a total of eight weeks of observation. I conducted twenty-three formal interviews with individuals involved in the design and delivery of gender training, mainly outside the scope of this participant observation. In addition, I compiled a documentary archive of training-related policy mandates, curricula, reports, course schedules, and presentations (for a catalogue of the research materials, see appendices Two through Four). In this section, I elaborate on this method. I describe how the location of research was determined, how the participant observation was conducted in practice, and the interpretive strategies I employ to analyse this archive.

The theoretical framework that informs my inquiry, as laid out in Chapter Four, is an interdisciplinary framework, and it follows that the methods I use likewise borrow insights and techniques from across a range of feminist approaches to methodology. I describe the overarching method of this inquiry as a multi-sited ethnography (following similar transdisciplinary approaches in feminist international relations such as Jauhola 2013, Cohn 2006). This is an ethnographic method insofar as it involves participant observation of training

sessions, interviews with training instructors and those being trained, as well as close readings of training materials. It is multi-sited in that it examines several geographic and institutional locations. This research, however, departs from traditional understandings of the ethnographic method in a number of key ways, which I will discuss in this section.

### ***Identifying the site of research***

In Chapter Two, I described gender training for uniformed peacekeepers as an emergent transnational practice, carried out in different institutional and geographic locations. Importantly, the transnational aspect of this practice is not simply the product of local articulations of a globally mandated policy. Rather, gender training involves a transnational community of practice of gender trainers. My prior professional experience in this field meant that I approached the research aware that a loosely bounded community of individuals are involved in the design and delivery of gender training across multiple institutional and geographic sites, designing courses and debating best practice in meetings held at the UN in New York, NATO in Brussels, and the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations in Sweden. They conduct training at various regional and national peacekeeping training centres, as well as on deployment in missions. This circulation of people is associated with a circulation of knowledges: during the course of my professional experience and fieldwork, I often came across the same trainers and training activities, examples, and presentation slides across a range of locations in ways that a process of policy diffusion and standardised curricula could not account for. There are continuities to the practice of training, in other words, that are not the direct result of an overarching policy mandate, but that are forged through the horizontal travelling of knowledges. It is this transnational community of practice on gender training that constitutes the object of inquiry for this study.

Drawing inspiration from ethnographic work interested in global networks, my examination of gender training as a transnational practice tracks a story that unfolds across multiple

institutional and geographic locations (see for example, Nordstrom 2007). The multifocal approach of the research involves jumps in scale as well as geography – from examining individual training at different locations, to discussing policy mandates and reference curricula produced by intergovernmental organisations. In this sense, my inquiry departs from conventional understandings of ethnographic study as organised around a specific place, and restricting inquiry to the scale of that place (see for example, Spradley 1980, 40). Rather, my study seeks to understand the culture of a knowledge community whose activities are not geographically or institutionally constant.

The selection of physical sites for research was largely opportunistic. Security institutions such as the police, and especially the military, are well known for their culture of secrecy, and are not generally welcoming of outside researchers, especially when that researcher is a foreign national (Rubinstein 2012, 186-7). It was therefore not feasible to choose at the outset which training sites would inform my research, as access to them was far from guaranteed. Initially, my access to research sites was mediated through personal and professional connections. In the language of ethnographic inquiry, these connections became my ‘key informants’, featuring in the research endeavour as ‘sources of information, as links to other informants, as agents of legitimation, as friends’ (Joseph 1996, 107). These connections in turn facilitated access to other training courses, or recommended other individuals for an interview. This research process also shaped the object of inquiry: following recommendations of research participants meant that I followed the flows of relationships and knowledges in a transnational community of practice.

As I have described in more detail elsewhere (Holvikivi 2019), much of this research was conducted through relations of ‘critical friendship’ (Chappell and Mackay 2015) with gender trainers, and from the vantage point of an ‘empathetic collaborator’ (Prügl 2016, 26, Sylvester 1994, 13). By this I mean that the research was conducted in the context of on-going personal

and professional relationships that exceeded the temporally and spatially bounded encounters that the terms participant observation and interview imply. These relations of proximity not only helped determine sites at which to construct research, but also produced a dialogic relationship with research participants, which meant allowing my research questions to be shaped by the conversations I had with research participants in the spirit of ethnographic inquiry.

My desire to trace the transnational circulation of gender knowledge, and to conduct research at multiple sites, clearly ruled out any ambitions of compiling an exhaustive research archive on gender training practices. Gender training is a widespread enough practice that it was simply not feasible to attempt to observe it in every location where it takes place. While this study does not claim to provide a complete account, and examines opportunistically chosen sites, I did strive to provide some degree of geographic variation in the choice of research locales. As I note in Chapter Three, the few studies of gender training for peacekeepers that exist largely focus on the Global North. This empirical focus intimates an analytic slippage – whether introduced by the author or the reader of the text – which assumes gender training in the Global North to represent the best in this field.<sup>24</sup> In compiling the archive for this research, I was motivated by a desire to resist the logic of ‘first in the West, and then elsewhere’, and, at the minimum, to ensure that not all sites of research would be located in the minority world (Chakrabarty 2008, 6, see also Pruitt 2018). While I do not claim that my research remedies an epistemic oversight of gender knowledge produced in the Global South (it certainly does not), expanding the locales of research beyond the Global North at the very least prompts us to examine gender knowledge produced in the minority world as partial and

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<sup>24</sup> There is evidence of an unfortunate slippage in both academic analyses and policy reports. Carson for example claims: ‘if a wealthy country such as Australia, which contributes only a small number of personnel, does not conduct gender training for *all* personnel, it is questionable whether other troop contributing countries do. Generally, the largest troop-contributing countries are developing nations such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Pakistan and Rwanda, and their capacity to carry out such training remains unknown’ (2016, 287, see also Lyytikäinen 2007, 9).

‘to recognize its own limited horizons in the light of asymmetrically given relations’ (Schutte 2000, 48).

This multi-sited method offers both advantages and limitations. Perhaps most obviously, it provides a contingent picture of gender training. The scope of the research undertaking means that this project does not provide a complete overview of all gender training for uniformed peacekeepers undertaken across the world, or even in a single institution. Given the transnational reach of this practice, an exhaustive analysis of gender training is an unrealistic ambition. Rather, I seek through this inquiry to open – to borrow Carol Cohn’s apt metaphor – a number of windows that allow me to theorise how gender training (re)produces certain subjectivities and logics, and thus (re)creates or disrupts a gendered, racialised, and sexualised order. Cohn (2006, 92) reflects on the limitations and potential of this method:

My method derives its strength from the juxtaposition and layering of many different windows. Someone else who chose ten different windows might have come up with a very different analysis. I know that. But I think there is a lot of power in the fact that there are ten windows open, and among them, I have found these continuities.

In a similar manner, I recognise that the scope of my inquiry may be limited, but argue that it is nonetheless capable of fulfilling its intention to draw attention to a diversity of knowledges and knowledge practices.

A multi-sited ethnography has limitations not only in terms of coverage, but also in terms of richness of contextual description. Because I conducted participant observation across a number of national sites, my linguistic and cultural understanding of the research sites was inconstant and often limited. This is admittedly reflected in a certain thinness of the contextual descriptions I provide. This limitation is further compounded by the fact that, in order to protect research participants and to ensure their anonymity, I have removed descriptors such as the nationality of research participants from my account. Here again my method departs from conventional understandings of ethnography, which locate scholarly value in thick contextual descriptions (Wolf 1996, 3). Whilst this limitation emerges as



somewhat ironic, given the critiques I formulate in subsequent chapters of the colonising effects of dehistoricised and decontextualised narratives, I maintain that there are advantages to a multi-sited approach, which enables an investigation into features of a transnational political economy of knowledge around gender training. A multi-sited approach can cast light on the processes of multicultural communication that pervade peacekeeper training, and it opens up questions of the (un)translatability of concepts (Ben-Ari and Elron 2001, 295, Schutte 2000, 50). This approach therefore complements more localised accounts, which provide stronger contextualisation in terms of both national cultures and institutional settings (for excellent examples of such work, see Holmes 2019, Duncanson 2013).

### ***Compiling a research archive***

This multi-sited ethnography consisted of participant observation of training courses, formal interviews, and textual analysis of training documentation (see appendices Two through Four). This process produced a body of research materials, which I describe in this section. Together, I describe these materials as comprising an 'archive', following Ahmed's description of a research archive as 'an effect of multiple forms of contact, including institutional forms of contact (with libraries, books, web sites), as well as everyday forms of contact (with friends, families, others)' (2014, 14). I use the concept of archive because it captures the various kinds of engagement I had with training practices; which resist attempts to neatly delineate the forms that this research material took. Further, the notion of archive hints at the types of interpretive strategies that I use to 'read' this archive, which I return to in the next section.

Five out of the seven courses that I observed were specialised gender courses, devoted to gender in their entirety, and aimed at gender advisers, gender trainers, and general military or police audiences. In addition to these specialised courses, I observed national pre-deployment training, and a gender lecture provided as part of professional military education in a national setting. The geographic locations of the courses include the Nordic region,

Western Europe, the Western Balkans, East Africa and West Africa. In order to protect the collective anonymity of research participants, I do not specify institutional or national locations further.

In effect, my research focuses on specialised courses offered by regional peacekeeping centres for multinational audiences.<sup>25</sup> These specialised courses were all either one or two weeks long. With the exception of one course for police officers in West Africa, the other courses were primarily aimed at the military, although training audiences and facilitation teams also included a handful of police officers, civilian experts, and civil society representatives. For both police and military, such specialised courses involve primarily middle ranking officers – rather than enlisted soldiers or police officers from the lower ranks – meaning that the audiences were on average older and more educated than in a typical pre-deployment training attended by all ranks and functional specialisations. Additionally, as many course participants told me, women are more likely than men to apply to and be selected for specialised gender courses, meaning that the courses were remarkably gender-balanced. In contrast to the overall low numbers of women in police and military institutions, women counted for roughly half of all participants in the gender courses I observed.

The participatory dimension of my participant observation varied, from relatively passive observation to highly participatory engagement (for details, see Appendix Four). In a number of cases, permission to observe courses was granted in exchange for my agreement to support the course facilitation team, including by delivering training sessions, facilitating group work, and collecting anonymous participant feedback. This active participation provided a way to practise reciprocity with the individuals who gave their time and insight for this research, and who lent their professional capital to vouch for my presence on their courses; a practice

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<sup>25</sup> This focus stems both from the object of inquiry being a transnational community of practice, as well as from availability of access. Multinational training courses are easier for outside researchers to access, as information regarded as national military secrets is not shared in such settings.

commonly used in feminist research to attempt to ameliorate the unequal benefits of research encounters (Huisman 2008, 374, Jacoby 2006, 166, Wolf 1996, 24). The practice of reciprocity did, however, also have specific impacts on the research process. On the one hand, being part of the facilitation team meant that I was invited to team meetings and gained valuable insight into how the trainers envisioned the course and their goals, and reflected on the pedagogical process throughout. It also gave me access to course materials, such as anonymous feedback forms from participants.

On the other hand, participating in the course delivery meant that I was perceived by the training participants as an instructor, which doubtless shaped on what terms participants were willing to discuss the course content with me. My role as an instructor in some ways increased the positional power that I held in the research encounter, and could have proven problematic in that no feminist approach to methodology advocates *increasing* the power of the researcher (Jacoby 2006, 154, Cook and Fonow 1986, 22). However, in practice, training participants seemed keenly aware of the fact that I exercised no institutional power in military and police hierarchies, and negotiated my ambiguous status on the course through humour, dubbing me, among other monikers, their pet civilian and course mascot, and on one instance deciding to give me an honorary officer rank (of captain, which made me the lowest ranked person present!). While this behaviour suggests that the participants read me as mostly harmless, norms of politeness likely circumscribed how critical of the course delivery they were likely to be with me.

I was able to take notes throughout the participant observation of courses as the classroom format meant that many participants were also engaged in taking notes. In addition to recording course content, I wrote down observations about trainees' interjections and questions; observable physical responses; the spatial layout of the room; the visual landscapes of art on the walls and presentation slides; and my own feelings of frustration or puzzlement

as they occurred. In addition to these field notes, I also collected a range of artefacts in the form of copies of presentations, activity handouts, and feedback forms, and took photographs when this was allowed. The practice of observation spilled over the scheduled training sessions, and involved a good deal of 'hanging out' with course participants and instructors during coffee breaks and meals. Most of the courses were residential, and all meals shared. In each course, I came across participants and trainers who were happy to be my informants, sharing their experience and impressions of the course with me. Such exchanges became informal interviews, and I took notes either during the conversation or shortly thereafter and included these in my field notes.

In addition to these less structured exchanges, I conducted twenty-three formal in-depth interviews with twenty-two participants, most of which took place outside the context of participant observation. These interviews were with individuals who are involved in gender training in the security sector, working either as military officers (6); civilian experts and defence educators (5); UN gender advisors (3); or civil society representatives and NGO experts (8). Thirteen of the interviewees identified as women, and nine as men. The interviews were loosely structured around a series of prompt questions, though I encouraged interviewees to take the conversation in the direction that they thought was most relevant. The interviews lasted between half an hour and two hours, and all but three were recorded and transcribed. Two participants declined permission to record the interview, and in these cases, I took detailed notes during our discussion. One interview was conducted over the phone, and all others in person. As with training sites, I have changed the names of interviewees and removed personal markers that would make them identifiable. I offered to share the transcripts with the interviewees, encouraging them to make any changes they wished, not only to ensure accuracy. While I do not claim that this practice means that my analysis provides a faithful representation of research subjects by 'letting them talk for themselves' (Acker, Barry, and Esseveld 1991, 143, Jacoby 2006, 161), I suggest that this

practice has the potential to moderate in some measure what is an unequal distribution of power in terms of representational practice. While few interview respondents made any significant use of this option, it seemed only fair to grant research participants the option to exercise some on-going control over their contributions, particularly in view of the iterative writing process through which their contributions are framed.

I read these structured research encounters against the backdrop of a documentary archive on gender training catalogued in Appendices Two and Three, and discussed in Chapter Two. Further, my engagement with gender training practices both predates and exceeds the formal research encounters. I continue to guest lecture in a number of Western European defence academies and occasionally conduct training sessions for civilian experts involved in crisis management. I do not include direct observations from these engagements, or from my previous employment in the field, in the research archive that I have outlined here, as I have not sought the consent of those involved to do so. However, this backdrop is worth mentioning, as it of course shapes my understanding of the nature of the field, what questions I ask, and what I deem to be recurrent themes and logics. Although I make no claims to experimental research, delivering gender training does afford the researcher additional opportunities to engage with military audiences to see whether she has ‘got it’ in terms of the dominant logics at play, and where and how it is possible to push the boundaries of these discourses (as suggested by Cohn 2006, 101).

Finally, it is worth noting the ways in which this research archive was produced through interactions inflected by dynamics of gender, race, and class. That the researcher’s positionality impacts on the fieldwork process and subsequent knowledge claims is well established in the feminist methodological literature (Henry 2003, Wolf 1996, Harding 1993, Fonow and Cook 1991). The ways in which research participants read my positionality doubtless shaped the types of conversations research participants would have with me or in

front of me. In agreement with the feminist literature on positionality, I contend that this is not a problem that can be overcome, but rather advocate for accounting for the ways in which positionality affects what knowledges are available to the researcher.

As the fact that I obtained the moniker 'pet civilian' attests to, and as is discussed in the feminist critical military studies literature, military culture can be suspicious of civilian presence (Gray 2016b, 77, Cohn 2006, 98). Nonetheless, being consistently read as a young cis woman moderates this suspicion somewhat, and I encountered the phenomenon that Cohn describes, of benefiting from the fact that naïveté about the military and national security is most likely to be forgiven in a young woman (2006, 96). Indeed, many of my interlocutors were notably willing (often eager) to take time to explain military culture to me.

Femininity intervened in other ways as well. When speaking with a male NGO trainer I call Malcolm, we swapped stories of informal coffee-time encounters with training participants on a course we were both involved in. As we compared notes, we identified important differences in what stories we had heard. I had had military culture patiently explained to me, and learned a great deal about the lives of training participants – stories of lost spouses; traumatic experiences of violence in peacekeeping missions; gendered division of labour in their homes; and worries over children's health and schooling. That such stories were readily shared with me suggested that my interlocutors were reading feminine qualities of nurturing and caring onto me (Kaplan 1994). Malcolm, in turn, had been told that deployment on peacekeeping missions was a wonderful opportunity, because it meant you could have a girlfriend in the mission area as well as a wife at home. This was despite the fact that Malcolm had delivered a training session on the UN policy of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse, and had outed himself as a gay man. At the same time, Malcolm said that he had felt judged by the trainees for his status as a civilian man against a backdrop of cultural norms that associate soldiering with masculinity (Barrett 1996). How our gendered subject positions

were interpreted by the training participants had clearly shaped what kinds of stories they made us privy to.

My attention was drawn to the dynamics of gender and class when a military gender advisor I call Katie, in a session on dealing with resistance, noted that sometimes a male commander will feel that he must be polite to a woman, and that a female gender advisor might circumvent possible resistance because of this politesse. Her remark prompted me to reflect on who I was conversing with as trainees. In specialised gender training courses, most participants were officers – a role that is often linked to a particular class positioning – and as such were likely to have been professionally socialised to regard themselves as ‘an officer and a gentleman’. Further, as a researcher from a prestigious institution, military officers probably estimated that I shared their class positioning (see also Gray 2016b, 77). Such concerns likely dissuaded them from sharing overtly negative comments or crude jokes about gender training with a female trainer and feminist researcher.

In some of the courses I observed, racialisation was another factor impacting positionality and hence what I, as the researcher, was able to hear. I often pass as white, and given my institutional location and education in the Global North, I came to the research encounter equipped with, as Suruchi Thapar-Björkert and Marsha Henry put it, the ‘colonizer’s language/tools/knowledge’ (2004, 370). An entry in my field notes from a multinational course in East Africa reads:

The challenge of doing fieldwork in an international environment: national/linguistic/racial grouping of participants. At dinner, I noticed how I keep finding myself among the European/Anglo/white participants – not the African and South Asian participants. Must make more of an effort to speak to people equally.

In other words, I noticed that participants, trainers, and myself tended to drift into national/linguistic/racial groupings during a multinational course. While I tried to ensure I spent equal amounts of time conversing with all participants, I was not always able to transcend my association with whiteness. In particular, although I wanted to formulate a

postcolonial critique of some of the racial dynamics of the training, I noticed that Black African participants were particularly cautious in criticising Eurocentrism to me. My association with the coloniser circumscribed what trainees would say in front of me and undoubtedly also what I was able to understand (discussed further in Holvikivi 2019).

### ***Interpretive strategies***

Like other feminist ethnographic work, my research methodology has to grapple with disjunctures between traditional ethnographic methods and feminist epistemic perspectives and political commitments (Stack 1996, 103). To work through these disjunctures, I treat the materials collected through fieldwork as a research archive, which I interpret by employing a variety of reading practices. In other words, I treat the materials of my research archive as texts. In so doing, I follow stands of feminist poststructuralist theorising which conceptualise texts as encompassing images and non-verbal communication, and discourse as including both linguistic and non-linguistic utterances (Jauhola 2013, 25, Sedgwick 2003, 6). Though I use the two terms somewhat coterminously, I suggest that text refers to form (the object analysed), and discourse to its substance. Overall, my interpretation of training discourses attempts to get at their 'underlying assumptions, ontologies and limits' (Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2013, 3, see also Shepherd 2008a). In this section, I expand on different types of reading practices, which form my interpretive methods.

Before I explicate how the reading strategies I employ work, a brief note on my use of the term reading is in order. There is a double entendre to this term, in that 'reading' is commonly used in queer vernacular to describe criticism, or mocking another for comedic effect, as popularised to mainstream audiences by Jennie Livingston's 1990 cult documentary *Paris is Burning* and subsequently the television show *RuPaul's Drag Race* (2009-present) (Murray 2009-2019, Livingston 1990, see also Butler 2014, 241, Halperin 2012, 204). It is not my intention to 'read' research participants in this sense of the term. I do not mean – to stick with



the vocabulary of queer culture – to be shady, although I do recognise that this may be an unintended consequence of my analysis, which is often critical in its tone.

To moderate this impression, I would like to underscore that the primary objects of my analysis are discursive formations and knowledge practices. I understand these as exceeding any individual's subjectivity. At the epistemic level, I do not claim to make pronouncements on any person's subjectivity; pronouncements which I would regard as analytically and ethically suspect. Following from my understanding of categories such as gender, race, and sexuality as processes of subjectification, I understand that people may be 'discontinuous, divided subjects caught in conflicting interests and identities' (Bhabha 1994, 42). In agreement with this epistemic stance, I follow Spivak's suggestion to cede that 'knowledge of the other subject is theoretically impossible,' and to understand representations as relating 'to the divided subject in an indirect way' (2010, 48, 33). As such, I try to resist fixing subject positions – whether that of the feminist, or the racist, or the homophobe – onto individuals, even when I interrogate what kinds of logics any practice or utterance aligns with. In other words, it is not my intention to criticise or to 'read' any *individual*, but rather to expose to critique *systems* of meaning making.

To interpret discursive formations, I employ a feminist method of close reading – what Ahmed describes as 'an ethics of closer reading' (1998, 17). The notion of reading is interpretive in nature, departing from more structured approaches to content analysis which might include, for example, subjecting texts to frequency counts of terms. The practice of close reading can be understood as one that attends to discourses as '*doing* something rather than merely *expressing* something' (Ahmed 1998, 17, emphasis in original). This way of reading is often described as a 'disobedient' practice, in that it denaturalises truth claims put forward in a text by exposing how they function (Ahmed 1998, 17, Butler 2016, 72). Close reading practices examine how a narrative works, who the narrative invites us to be, and what competing truth

claims are disavowed or delegitimised in this narrative. In order to get at these questions, I examine three features of discursive formations: subject positioning, authoritative knowledges, and instability and contradiction.

I have outlined that my research is interested in the political and epistemic work that gender training does, and that I understand this work as one of interpellation, shaping how we can be and act in the world by making a number of subject positions available to us. What this means is that I approach training discourse with an ambition to analytically 'see' what subject positions this discourse makes available, how the relationship between different subject positions is set up, and what kinds of understandings of the self this discourse encourages (Dunn and Neumann 2016, 112). I am interested, in other words, in the 'question of the epistemological position to which we are recruited' (Butler 2016, xii). Further, this question implies an interest in how the process of interpellation works. It is therefore not only a question of which subject positions are available, but also a question of how one comes to invest in that subject position. Following Ahmed, I suggest: 'The narrative invites the reader to adopt the "you" through working on emotions' (2014, 1). Appeals to emotions shape our desire to take up a particular subject position. In other words, my reading of the knowledge formations of gender training examines not only how different subject positions are constructed, but also how, in terms of an emotional pedagogy, trainees are invited to occupy different subject positions.

Second, related to the epistemic and political work that training does are also questions of how gender is rendered a knowable object, and what processes of translation, negotiation, and resistance are implied in this process. These questions suggest an attentiveness to where training discourses gain their authority from, and what earlier knowledge/investments it presupposes (Dunn and Neumann 2016, 110). Discursive utterances gain their power through reference to already accepted truth claims. Citation of existing power is what makes for

authoritative speech; its 'constitutive historicity' is established because an action '*accumulates the force of authority through the repetition or citation of a prior, authoritative set of practices*' (Butler 1993, 19, emphasis in original). Relatedly, appeals to emotions are dependent on past histories of emotional reactions (Ahmed 2014, 6). Following from this understanding of discourse as citational, I examine what makes certain knowledge claims work as true by examining what accepted truths they cite, and to what effect.

Third and finally, as outlined in the theoretical framing in Chapter Four, I contend that discourses are often ambivalent, encompassing contradictory claims (Bhabha 1994, 95). Because discourses are iterative in structure, repetitions pose 'a structural risk'; they are a 'site where a politically consequential break is possible' (Butler 2016, 24). Accordingly, the third aspect of my close reading strategy involves looking for tensions, inconsistencies, instabilities and slips within the training discourse (Dunn and Neumann 2016, 96).

What is common to all of these practices is that they engage in an analytical practice of tracing the limits of a discourse. They are founded on a conviction that knowledge could be constructed differently, and so 'read against the grain' of the text (Bhabha 1994, 36). The impulse to look beyond the text, to see what it is foreclosing, is what makes the practice disobedient. What enables the practice is a body of critical scholarship, which provides forms of 'counter-knowledges' that make it possible to think about how these understandings could be constructed differently (Bhabha 1994, 33). Accordingly, in this task, I engage in a practice of *reading with*, drawing on critical feminist, queer and postcolonial insights as 'critical material' in order to see what the training discourse is 'doing' (Kronsell 2006, 115).

#### ETHICO-POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS: RESPONSIBILITY AND REPRESENTATION

Ethical considerations in research are pervasive and not always neatly separable from questions of method or epistemic perspective, and this chapter has already touched upon

questions of what it means to read and write human subjects. Ethical dilemmas arise at each stage of research – from the choice of subject and site of inquiry, to the conduct of fieldwork, to the writing of the research and the representational practices involved (Wolf 1996, 32). Further, researchers have ethical responsibilities towards not just their direct interlocutors, but to the broader communities their research is interested in and may affect (Gray 2016b, 79). Such a recognition of the broader social space that research intervenes in links the ethical responsibilities of the researcher towards research participants to concerns about the political effects of research, hence why I call this section ‘ethico-political’ considerations. With full acknowledgment that ethical and political decisions permeate the research project, in this section, I draw out some of the ethico-political considerations that arose in my research. I begin with relationships with direct participants in the research, who are the traditional referent object of research ethics. I then consider the ethics of writing and representational practices, and finally expand the scope of reflections to consider the broader political implications of this study.

### ***Research participants***

Feminist reflections on the ethics of research that involves direct interaction with human subjects often centre on the question of power. The assumption that feminist research studies women, and especially women in marginalized positions, animates much of the early literature on feminist methodology, and produces an ethical focus on moderating the power of the researcher (Wolf 1996, 19, Harding 1987, 21). An alternative mode of thinking through power relations in research is presented in the suggestion that feminist researchers studying powerful institutions are engaged instead in a process of ‘studying up’ (Nader 1972; see also Cohn, 2006, p.103). My research, because of its focus on martial institutions, is often understood as a typical example of such studying up, and consequently some feminist

colleagues have questioned my need to spend much time on ethical considerations in the first place.

However, both extremes are oversimplifications of the discontinuous and shifting ways in which power works in research endeavours (Thapar-Björkert and Henry 2004). As alluded to in earlier discussions on positionality, in some ways this research involved studying up: the access of a civilian researcher to military institutions is contingent and easily withdrawn and the presence of a young woman in such spaces is often regarded with patronising amusement. Nonetheless, this research dynamic is not simply captured in an assertion of the relative powerlessness of the researcher. Importantly, my social location as someone placed at a prestigious institution in the heart of London, equipped with the coloniser's language, tools, and knowledge; as somebody with the connections that enabled me to move with ease through restricted spaces; and as an 'expert' and instructor on gender produced a non-negligible amount of situational power. In yet other instances, the power relations were remarkably equal, such as when I dealt with NGO experts and military officers with similar amounts of international mobility and comparable educational backgrounds. In other words, the relations of power involved in this research endeavour were complex and shifting.

The uneven nature of these power relations was exposed in my efforts to navigate questions of informed consent as standard ethical research practice. On the one hand, questions of consent were particularly clear-cut in the formal interviews I conducted with gender trainers. These were all individuals with higher education, several of whom hold doctorates, and most of whom had exposure to academic writing, including critical feminist scholarship. In my interviews with these trainers, we negotiated the terms of the interview (e.g. whether it could be recorded), and how I could refer to interviewees in writing (as suggested by Cohn 2006, 100). While the majority of interviewees requested to be referred to by name, in the end I have anonymised all contributions, in order to preserve the anonymity of those who did not

wish to be identified among what remains a relatively small community of experts. In these interviews, I felt especially confident that the research participants fully comprehended what they were consenting to: they understood the nature of the research endeavour, appreciated that they were free to withdraw their consent at any point, and were able to effectively negotiate the terms of their participation. In these research relations, shared facets of 'insiderness' (shared experience of both gender training and academia) created relatively equal relations (on 'insiderness' in feminist research, see Zavella 1996, Naples 1996).

In participant observation of training courses, this relationship was messier. My access to these courses was dependent on gate keepers who were either course directors or in managerial positions in training institutions. Individual training participants or trainers did not have the opportunity to veto my participation in, or observation of, the training course. In order to create the possibility for instructors and participants to decline to participate in the research, I drew up a statement of research purpose, outlining the aims of the research, assuring anonymity, and advising participants that they could withdraw their consent to be observed (i.e. that I would remove any mention of their participation from my notes) without any repercussions. As these statements were often buried in a deluge of administrative information at the start of the course, I also sought to speak to each training participant about what I was doing. None expressed concern about being observed, and many sought to help me with my research, seeking me out subsequently to volunteer their assessment of the course, and on one occasion, providing an extensive critique of my research questions and framing.

I engaged in some lengthy conversations about my research with training participants, during which I often found it difficult to translate what exactly it was that interested me into terms that were accessible to those not familiar with or convinced by these forms of academic study. My explanations had to work against assumptions that my research was a quality evaluation

of training, or that it measured the effectiveness of training on subsequent performance of peacekeepers. I struggled to find the words to explain the epistemic difference between 'does it work' and 'what work does it do', or to communicate my ethnographic interest in pedagogical encounters against cognitivist-rationalist understandings of learning. I had to engage with understandings of sexism or racism as individual failings, as opposed to pervasive structures and processes of subjectification. These conversations suggested to me that fully informed consent can be an unreasonable expectation of research participants who may not have extensive exposure to academic (and especially critical feminist) scholarship.

While acknowledging that fully informed consent is an imperfect way to describe the involvement of training participants and many trainers, in the end I decided that my efforts were sufficient. One consideration was that I do not believe that research should be limited to those subjects who most closely resemble the researcher (Zavella 1996, 140). I settled on weighing the consideration of consent against the potential for the research to cause harm. I estimated the harm this research might cause to individual participants to be negligible. I made no reports to their superiors about the performance of either participants or trainers on the course, meaning that I had no influence on any possible career progression. I have removed personal descriptions to ensure that no comments can be traced back to individuals who made them.

### ***Representational politics***

My assessment of the (in)ability of my research to do harm to participants is one based on material considerations such as career progression. This estimation does not, of course, in any way resolve the ever-present potential of writing to do epistemic violence to its subjects (Dhawan 2012, 47). Given the poststructuralist and postcolonial theoretical framing of this research, I believe it necessary to reflect on the ethics of representational practices as well as material repercussions. In some ways, considerations of ethical representational politics are

in tension with the choice to protect the anonymity of research participants. This is the case because anonymity and removal of specific identity markers broadens the scope for the author to make decisions about how to portray research participants. Consider the following example provided by Sexwale (1996, 57), in her reading of an article which describes resistance in gender training:

It is interesting that the authors found this the only important moment to name the race of those involved in this educational exercise. And only two are named: the trainer, the “young Black woman” who cannot tell “what social theory informs her theoretical position”, and one of the participants, the Black man who is the first to raise this question. What is the significance of the challenging participant being identified as Black? What about the youth, blackness and womanness of the trainer? ... I wonder whether other factors qualifying her identity beyond these three might have been equally or more significant. For instance her academic and professional background and experience which would have gone some way towards preparing her for her task – or, in this case, her ordeal.

Sexwale’s example poignantly draws attention to the risks that inhere to representing subjects of research, risks compounded by the use of anonymity and general identity markers. It demonstrates the ways in which a researcher’s attempt to represent those discussed veers towards reductionism and is always inflected by the author’s estimation of where and how identity markers such as gender, race, age, or education matter. My writing in this thesis contends with similar problems. I provide various forms of contextualisation, including geographic location, gender, and sexual orientation of research participants where I deem it relevant for the analysis I pursue, and where it does not compromise the anonymity of research participants. I do not consistently provide the same amount of contextualisation, but rather do so where it is analytically pertinent, and seek to explain how such identity markers impact on my analysis. However, I acknowledge that such forms of representation involve a form of interception (as described by Spivak in the quote that opens this chapter), and present an inescapably incomplete account of the subject.

The ethical dilemmas of representation extend beyond the potential to misrepresent the individual subjectivities of research participants. This is because the positionality of, and



choices made by, the researcher also impacts on whose voices and experiences the research privileges in the first place. As mentioned above, because the research relationships in this study were inflected by gender, race and class (as all relations are), there is an admitted tendency in my research to privilege the points of view and experiences that are most easily accessible to me – the voices of those with whom I share a similar educational background and institutional location. As I have argued elsewhere, this research dynamic results in the representational privileging of voices and experiences of gender experts situated in the Global North (Holvikivi 2019).

While my positionality as researcher means that Global South peacekeepers' and gender experts' voices are less represented, it is further worth noting that my choice to study peacekeeper training in the first place produces its own set of exclusions. The WPS agenda speaks the language of the interests of the 'woman-in-conflict', and gender training purports to ameliorate harm wrought by conflict and the peacekeeping operation itself to peace-kept women (Cook 2016, see also Chapter Two). While my inquiry is attentive to the ways in which training discourse constructs the 'woman-in-conflict', this inquiry hardly offers a way of examining how peacekeeper gender training impacts on the experience of actual women in conflict, thereby producing another set of silences.

I bring up these representational limitations and ethical dilemmas, not because I propose that I can easily resolve or gloss over these problems, but because I believe it is important to acknowledge that the representational politics of this study are imperfect, and to mark the silences it produces or perpetuates. I suggest that naming the silences within a text is in and of itself an ethico-political practice. Marking the point of exclusion, drawing attention to 'negative space', presents the knowledge put forward as partial and incomplete (Duriesmith 2019, Hammonds 1994). Identifying limitations goes some way towards 'provincializing' knowledge produced in the Global North, speaking against totalising claims, and undoing

epistemic privilege (Chakrabarty 2008). Marking absences in this way of course requires accounting for the location of the researcher, as I discussed in the beginning of this chapter, enabling the reader to see where knowledge is produced from, by whom, and whose interests it may serve (Mohanty 1988). Such a politics of location can help provincialise the scholarly gaze and take away any pretensions to the 'god trick' that has been extensively critiqued by feminist epistemological thought (Haraway 1988, 587).

I do not propose to remedy the limitations of my representational practice in this study through an effort to 'give voice' to peace-kept women, or by attempting to provide a more authentic image of the 'woman-in-conflict'. Postcolonial feminist thought on alterity has sufficiently disabused us of the simplicity of such fixes. Representations of "'subalternized" perspectives' come with their own sets of ethical dilemmas and troubled histories, suggesting that the ethical response to a silence in the text may not always be to fill that silence (Dhawan 2012, 56; see also Spivak, 2010; Chow, 1994). By drawing attention to the challenges of a politics of representation, I do not mean to suggest that postcolonial feminism should abandon its commitment to representation as a political necessity. I mean, rather, to point out that 'giving voice' is not a simple fix, and to open up the space to consider the ethics of representation beyond a prescription that feminist research must always seek to represent the most marginalised.

Beyond marking the limitations of knowledge claims, I suggest that representational ethics relate to broader research politics. In response to the lack of scholarship on Black British women, Hazel Carby notes the troubled history of white women researching Black communities (including as part of the colonial enterprise), and argues that: 'Instead of taking black women as the objects of their research, white feminist researchers should try to uncover the gender-specific mechanisms of racism among white women' (1982, 232, see also Hammonds 1994). In a similar spirit, Nikita Dhawan argues that 'the task of the postcolonial

feminist-as-critic [is] to make transparent the structures of power that block, inhibit and invalidate those counter-narratives ... focusing on the exclusions that ground the privileges and authority of dominant discourses' (2012, 59). While Dhawan is rightly insistent that representation of marginalised perspectives is necessary, I read in her statement also a call to interrogate the workings of power itself as a complementary effort. Thinking with Carby and Dhawan suggests that naming the exclusions produced by our representational practices should not only be a confessional undertaking, but rather can provide impetus to critically interrogate the workings of power from within. In other words, the way in which I attempt to navigate silence and exclusion in this research is by marking the point of silence, as well as in investigating how the knowledge structures that I examine work to produce exclusions.

### ***Political dilemmas of critical engagement***

Finally, the political considerations of research also relate to the broader communities the research speaks about and to. Critical feminist research that examines martial institutions often contends with two contradictory political impulses. On the one hand, feminist researchers have called for vigilance against scholarly militarisation (Baker et al. 2016, Enloe 2010, Cohn 1987). On the other hand, critical feminist scholars have grappled with the fact that critique of gender policies and initiatives may feel like a betrayal by gender experts, and have drawn attention to the risks of undermining progressive politics in institutions of power (Otto 2014, 157, Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2013, 112). In practice, as these strands of scholarship suggest, I locate possibilities for ethically and politically responsible engagement as emerging from a simultaneous consideration of these two dangers. While I expand on the implications of the critical engagement for feminist political strategising in the concluding remarks in Chapter Ten, a brief consideration of these questions in terms of the research process is in order.

First, there is a danger that engaging with martial institutions – as Cohn famously warned – exposes the researcher to '[m]echanisms of the mind's militarization' (1987, 715). Much critical feminist scholarship on martial institutions is written from a political location that opposes martial institutions and the logics that legitimate their violence. However, a number of reflexive and thoughtful feminist accounts have pointed out that such political commitments do not render the researcher immune to the disciplinary effects of martial power (Baker et al. 2016, Gray 2016b). Militarisation does not occur as a single momentous shift in which one is converted to accepting violent means as legitimate; rather, this process unfolds through the entry of the researcher into military institutions and her subjection to the disciplinary effects of these institutions.

When conducting participant observation in a military space, a researcher is obliged to learn to speak the language and decode the abbreviations used by the institution (Cohn 1987, 708). She becomes subjected to military time and may make more of an effort to be punctual in order to be taken seriously by her uniformed interlocutors (Higate and Cameron 2006, 227). The feminist researcher who is able to convincingly perform gender normativity and middle class respectability is likely to be advantaged in negotiating and maintaining access to these sites (Gray 2016b, 79). I encountered all of these dynamics during the course of this research, observing that subjection to these disciplinary processes was rewarded in terms of access to and rapport with research participants. Further, such processes can be pleasurable. Cohn famously notes: 'talking about nuclear weapons is fun. I am serious. The words are fun to say: they are racy, sexy, snappy' (1987, 704). In a similar manner, I often found myself delighting in being able to successfully draw on the language of the institution to make a point. Pleasure and rewards aside, these processes bear all the hallmarks of military discipline. They provoke a feminist anti-militarist anxiety when viewed through the lenses of Foucault's explanation of disciplinary processes as: 'Small acts of cunning endowed with a great power of diffusion, subtle arrangements, apparently innocent, but profoundly suspicious' (1991, 139). In other

words, there is a danger in engaging with martial institutions that the researcher comes to accept and think through these logics, rendering what was once strange all too familiar.

In navigating these dangers, feminist accounts have reminded us that militarisation is a pervasive feature of society, and subsequently advocated that feminist research should lay bare the workings of these processes in their lives and research, as opposed to claiming to occupy a moral high ground that is untouched by martial logics (Enloe 2010, see also Hutchings 2018). To ensure that feminist research is attentive to its own implication in militarisation, Enloe suggests that we make sure our work is regularly exposed to a critical feminist gaze in her characteristically witty wisdom: 'Never be the most feminist person you know' (cited in Bates 2017).

In addition to being held accountable for our inevitable complicity, feminist researchers have identified ways of resisting militarising dynamics in the research process itself. They describe, for example, undertaking forms of engaged critique in their interactions with research participants (Baker et al. 2016). Further, feminists working in or with military institutions appear to navigate the disciplinary power of these institutions through strategies of subtle resistance. Over the course of my research, I encountered more than one civilian woman working in a military institution who dyed her hair an unnatural shade of pink and purple, one noting with apparent mischief that the institution's dress code failed to mention hair colour. In a similar manner, I found myself probing and sometimes challenging articulations of particularly militarising or colonising logics in the course of interviews and training courses. Like the woman with pink hair, I took some delight in wearing bright colours in a space in which everyone else was dressed in camouflage, thereby disturbing the visual landscape of the setting. My engagements with martial institutions, like many other feminist researchers', were therefore marked both by acquiescence to military logics and disciplinary techniques, but also by diffuse strategies of resisting these demands. None of these strategies of writing

and interpersonal and embodied engagement transcends the problems of militarisation in this type of research, though they do suggest some ways of disrupting these dynamics.

Examining the political dilemma of militarisation brings into relief the problematic nature of the demand that research be responsible to the community being researched: to what extent, and on what terms, should critical feminist research be held responsible to martial communities and institutions? This question is further complicated by the fact that the object of inquiry relates specifically to gender training within martial institutions. At this juncture, it must be noted that such training is one manifestation of the broader WPS agenda, which has been hard fought for by feminist activists and ‘femocrats’ working in institutions of governance (Otto 2014, Cohn, Kinsella, and Gibbings 2004). The fact that this practice is indebted to the labour and personal risk-taking of individuals involved in feminist activist communities and institutions of governance raises political considerations, similar to the questions that Maria Eriksson Baaz and Maria Stern pose regarding their own research on international attention to wartime rape: ‘Is it responsible ... to criticize the manifestations of a great victory for feminist progressive politics? Do we not risk contributing to renewed silence?’ (2013, 112). While I ultimately agree with Eriksson Baaz and Stern’s evocation of Spivak’s call to engage in a persistent ‘critique of what one cannot not want’, I also suggest that in the context of this research, this overall critical impulse requires some further unpacking (Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2013, 113, Spivak 1993, 46).

In that vein, it is worth pausing for a moment to consider what political risks pertain to a critique of gender training practices. At the systemic level, one could imagine that such a critique might discredit such initiatives, playing into the hands of forces hostile to feminism, and contributing to the practice being phased out. Such concerns, however, seem to me to exaggerate the impact of academic critique. This is a vantage point shared by several of the gender trainers who participated in this research, who brushed off concerns about anonymity,

noting that it was unlikely that their superiors would engage with this research in any depth. I am, similarly, not overly concerned that formulating this academic critique has the power to substantially undermine such an enterprise in the eyes of decision-makers in global governance.

Indeed, the political risks involved are more indeterminate, and relate to the concern that scholarly critique will be perceived as a betrayal by feminist activists (Otto 2014, 157). Communities of gender trainers may see critique as devaluing their work. Such perceptions could result in hurt feelings and, not insignificantly, make research access more difficult for other researchers. On the one hand, I seek to navigate this dilemma by ensuring that this project also engages with, as Cohn suggests we do in relation to WPS, 'the appreciative aspect of critique' (2004, 139). As discussed in Chapter Four, I understand critique to be something other than criticism aimed only at pointing out flaws or problems (Mahmood 2005, 36-7). What this means in the context of my study is that not only does my critique engage in both critical and reparative readings of gender training practices, it also aims to reflect on the practices of training with attentiveness to contingency and contextual limitation. To continue thinking with Spivak, I suggest that this means striving for engaged analysis that does not hold 'theoretical purity' as the highest standard (Spivak and Grosz 1990, 12). Rather, my analysis attempts to draw attention to a politics of the present; to cultivate 'an awareness that what we are obliged to do, and must do scrupulously, in the long run is not OK' (Spivak et al. 1990, 45). If our analyses allow for the fact that practices of gender training cannot afford to be theoretically pure or politically uncompromising, this creates analytical space to appreciate their political worth in the historical present.

On the other hand, by suggesting that feminist critiques of this work attend to its contingencies, and provide reparative as well as symptomatic readings, I am not suggesting that analysis should be driven solely by a desire to protect the research participants' feelings,

or that we should imagine that gender trainers will be singularly upset by critique. As Dianne Otto points out, the division between activist (or trainer) and academic (or critic), is in many ways an oversimplification: many individuals working in this field take up both positions (2014, 158; see also Holvikivi, 2019, p.132). The gender trainers I spoke with during the course of this research noted that their interactions with academia often produced frustration, at the same time as they voiced a desire for more opportunities for dialogue and mutual learning. Those working in this field often engage in critical reflections of their own engagements (see, for example, Puechguirbal 2017). In other words, it would be wrong to assume that practitioners or activists are necessarily injured by, or defensive towards, critiques. This does not negate the fact that such research and critiques may sometimes result in fraught relationships. However, I do suggest that practices of critical friendship and reciprocity go some way towards forms of engagement with research participants that facilitate mutual understanding. I suggest that engaging in on-going dialogue with the community of practitioners this research speaks about, and working on translations of the language of critique, offer the most realistic chances of mutual understanding, and has the potential to contribute to an increasingly politically responsible practice.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has described the research archive that informs my analysis, explained how this archive was constructed, and discussed how I go about interpreting it. In sum, this study involves a multi-sited ethnography: participant observation in gender training for peacekeepers; interviews with trainers, curriculum designers and trainees; and a documentary archive of materials for or about gender training. This chapter has discussed how I defined the object of study and identified locations for research, as well as sketched out what the actual process of research entailed, in conversation with feminist literatures on research methods (Cohn 2006, Wolf 1996, Fonow and Cook 1991). This explication of research



methods also extends the theoretical discussion from the previous chapter, considering how I understand the epistemic standing of the research materials, and how interpretive strategies influenced by poststructuralism lend themselves to ethnographic tools (Jauhola 2013, Ahmed 1998). Finally, this chapter has considered the ethico-political considerations involved in choosing sites of research, conducting research with human subjects, and the (representational) politics that are involved in writing such research (Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2013, Dhawan 2012, Spivak 2010). This discussion has been punctuated throughout with observations about how my positionality as researcher has shaped the design and findings of the study.

This research methodology has importantly shaped the findings and conclusions of this thesis. As described in the first section, the participatory research method with a community of gender trainers, and my own positionality among them, contributed to the fact that the object of research is a transnational community of practice. Sustained interaction with research participants also shaped the epistemic perspectives of this study. Over the course of this research, I noted that research participants often took up several different subject positions, and sometimes contradicted themselves in their statements. Rather than attempting to impose a singular reading on subjects, I found a more satisfactory solution for dealing with these contradictions in an epistemic lens that sees subjectivities as incoherent and contradictory, and representation in writing as relating to these subjects in indirect ways (Spivak 2010, 33, Bhabha 1994, 42). In this sense, the theory of the study does not fully precede the research, contrary to what a linear ordering of chapters in a monograph might imply (though one has to start somewhere). Rather, the epistemic framing of this study rather was produced through many iterations of doing research, and of considering theoretical perspectives to make sense of empirical observations.

Second, the phenomenological experience of participating in courses doubtless shaped the overall argument regarding attentiveness to a politics of the present advanced in this thesis. I have always found residential training courses to be an immersive social experience; they can be described, like academic conferences, as temporary institutions (Lewis 2013, 880). The intensity of these courses produces, for me, an experience in which the rest of the world momentarily recedes into the background and blurs out of focus. The all-consuming, yet temporary, nature of this experience contributed to my interest in questions of temporality and politics, leading me to explore the notion that such training courses may be usefully thought of as enacting a 'politics of the present' (Otto 2014, 158). In other words, it prompted me to think about how we might think about the politics of social, cognitive, and affective encounters that are both intense and temporary.

Finally, being immersed in security spaces and training courses for the research has produced a nagging sense of contradiction and unease that in many ways drives this research. While I do not imagine that being confronted with one's research subjects face-to-face is in any way a requirement to see contradictions, I also do not doubt that this process made these contradictions more apparent to me. Shuffling between the institutional spaces of military training courses on the one hand, and a critical feminist academic community on the other, has ensured that I have been regularly exposed to two very different epistemic communities. An attempt to take seriously the perspectives and experiences expressed by individuals in both of these communities has produced a steady supply of self-doubt and general uneasiness. When on military courses, I have often questioned the critiques I formulate, wondering if they are not in fact too reductive, or simply pursuing the wrong questions. When in a critical, feminist academic space, I have then turned to worry that I have been seduced by military logics (Cohn 1987, 715), and often felt insufficiently critical in my approach. This sense of unease motivated me to engage with theoretical perspectives that cede that two contradictory things may be both be true at the same time, and that enduring unease may be

productive; thereby fostering an affinity for exploring contradiction and ambivalence as a focus of the study.

Having thus set up the context of this study, located its research questions in the relevant literature, and explained the methodology (including epistemic perspectives, methods, and ethics) of the inquiry, the next chapter begins the empirical discussion of these research findings.

## CHAPTER SIX

### FIXING GENDER: THE POLITICS OF CURRICULUM DESIGN

*[T]ruth is not by nature free ...  
its production is thoroughly imbued with relations of power.*

- Michel Foucault (1998 [1976], 60)

Having set out the empirical and theoretical context within which this inquiry is situated, and outlined its animating questions and methodology, this chapter begins my empirical investigation of gender training for uniformed peacekeepers, with an examination of how training curricula are produced. Curricula on gender exemplify an effort to ‘fix’ an understanding of what gender is and does (Ferguson 2019b, 31, Whitworth 2004, 162). It is a process that renders gender knowable, establishing, per Foucault, a regime of truth. An examination of the contestations and negotiations that go into designing curricula exposes that there is no essential or inner truth to gender, but rather its meaning is contested and (re)produced through relations saturated with power (Jauhola 2010, 30, see also Butler 2007a). I introduced this strand of analysis in Chapter Two, where I examined training mandates contained in policy, investigating what aspects of gender are considered relevant training topics. This chapter picks up on this analysis, focusing on processes of curriculum design, and producing an account of the political economy of knowledge production and contestations around curricula (Foucault 1998, 73). I ask: How is gender rendered a knowable object? Who can know gender? I interrogate the relations of power that fix meaning to gender and the logics that make it work as true. I show how contestations over curricula shape the contours of the field of gender training, and thereby its political possibilities. Specifically, I demonstrate how curriculum design functions to (re)produce colonial hierarchies of power

imbued with heteronormative logics, but also that this process is characterised by contradiction and ambivalence.

Though this chapter focuses on curriculum design, it is worth remembering that trainers and individual training institutions exercise a considerable amount of freedom in their training practice (as also observed by Holmes 2019, 67). Further, what trainees learn as a result of this exercise may be weakly linked to either the content of the curriculum or the intentions of the trainer. While the term curriculum is sometimes used to refer to the totality of learning experiences implied by both the text of the curriculum and teachers' and learners' interactions with it, in this chapter I employ a narrow conceptualisation of the curriculum as that which is fixed in writing in various forms of training plans (Kenway and Modra 1992, 143). My intention in examining how these curricula are designed is not to suggest that these texts provide an accurate or complete picture of what happens at the pedagogical site of training. Rather, my purpose here is to interrogate the dynamics behind fixing an understanding of gender in training curricula.

This focus on what the curriculum prescribes requires a practice of reading against the grain (Bhabha 1994, 36). Throughout this exploration, I trace contestations and disruptions, attentive to silences, or that which is foreclosed from the curriculum. This analytical practice not only helps reveal the workings of power in the design process, but also facilitates making visible that which is omitted – who and what are erased from this regime of truth. In this sense, I pay analytical attention to the 'hidden curriculum' as well as that which is explicitly articulated (Skelton 2006).

To that end, I begin with a description of the formal processes through which curricula are designed. This discussion maps the contours of the process, examining the actors and dynamics involved. Next, I examine what, according to the curriculum, should be known about gender, interrogating the ways in which meaning is fixed to gender. In the third section of this

chapter, I examine how gender should be taught according to the curricula – how the epistemic authority of the trainer is envisioned and performed. This last section foreshadows the empirical chapters that follow, which emphasise the importance of the pedagogical process for what is known about gender as a result of training. Implied throughout is a theory of *how* gender can be known – what forms of epistemic authority validate this knowledge.

## THE POWER TO DECIDE: THE CURRICULUM DESIGN PROCESS

While not all gender training adheres strictly to set curricula, this does not imply that there is not an attempt by powerful institutions to standardise and harmonise the gender training provided to peacekeepers. As set out in Chapter Two, the enterprise of gender training derives its mandate from policy frameworks relating primarily to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. These political mandates are then translated into a training framework through the process of curriculum design. In this section, I provide an account of how this process works, demonstrating that the curriculum is a site at which many different actors vie for influence, and revealing a messiness that underlies the official institutional narratives of how curricula are designed. Attending to the silences this process produces, I suggest that curriculum design excludes the voices of many affected by gendered military violence, and argue that the curriculum design process plays out within constellations of power that re-marginalise the intended beneficiaries of such training.

### ***Whose curriculum? The authority of mandate***

The United Nations, as the primary organisation mandating peacekeeping missions, is in a position of authority to prescribe or recommend gender training for troop and police contributing countries. As UN Gender Advisers explained to me in interviews, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations provides pre-deployment training materials to troop contributing countries, including core lessons on WPS, conflict-related sexual violence, and sexual

exploitation and abuse. Once deployed, peacekeepers receive further in-mission training to contextualise broader gender topics to the area of operations (see also Table 1 in Chapter Two). In-mission training is delivered by mission gender advisors who have usually attended a DPKO-led training on their tasks.

This process, centred on an official UN curriculum, is notable for its top-down conceptualisation of gender knowledge. It suggests that what should be known about gender can first be established in general terms, and subsequently applied to local mission contexts. In other words, it demonstrates a dynamic identified in research on gender expertise, where a 'geographical hierarchisation of gender knowledge privileges supposedly universal insights and problem-solving skills over socioculturally specific gender knowledge' (Kunz, Prügl, and Thompson 2019, 34). I will return to this hierarchisation of knowledge when discussing the definition of gender in the section that follows.

However, the UN is not the only organisation that oversees peace operations, nor is it the only institution that has a stake in the design of training curricula. Troop and police contributing countries often also send personnel to African Union, NATO and European Union missions, each of which have their own training mandates and requirements. In the training that I observed for this research project, course participants almost without exception were deploying or have deployed on diverse types of missions: some were or will be involved in UN peacekeeping, some on NATO –led operations, some on EU missions, and yet others on AU missions. Many of the courses run by regional peacekeeping training centres were accordingly certified by multiple organisations. Actual training practices therefore respond to multiple institutional requirements. Further, many of the instructors involved in the design and delivery of training have worked for a number of different organisations, and speak across institutional boundaries. Some come from a military background, others count civilians who are employed by UN, NATO, or the EU, or by national ministries of defence.

Whether any given training is UN gender training or NATO gender training is therefore not always a clear-cut question. This diversity of mandates reveals the messiness of the institutional environment in which training is carried out. This complexity of institutions and actors produces dual effects. On the one hand, it means that the curriculum design process is characterised by inter-institutional contestations over what the scope and purpose of gender training should be, and which institution owns which approach. On the other hand, the involvement of a diversity of institutional actors to some degree harmonises knowledges, because it produces a community of practice around gender training, creating a shared language and terms of contestation among institutions of global governance.

### ***Whose knowledge? Experience and expertise***

While the mandate for gender training derives from political authorities' policy guidance, such as Security Council resolutions or regional and national action plans, the official source of knowledge for gender training for uniformed peacekeepers, like much of military training, are what are called operational demands. Reports from on-going military and peacekeeping operations are used to identify training requirements, which are then translated into learning topics, and introduced to curricula as learning outcomes (for an example of how this process is conceptualised, see Holvikivi and Valasek 2016, 84). These training needs are often enumerated on the basis of who needs to know and what given their rank and functional specialisation. In military gender training, these are usually disaggregated as the tactical, operational, and strategic levels (see for example NATO ACT 2017, DPKO/DFS 2010). However, this conceptualisation of a neat feedback loop from operations to training obscures the extent to which a greater diversity of actors contribute to the production of knowledge about the field of gender.

Many organisations that do not have a governmental mandate to send troops abroad and therefore to train them nonetheless partake in contestations that shape the field. Primarily



international non-governmental organisations, they lack the institutional authority to mandate training requirements, but support the institutions who do by developing training materials that inform the development of curricula (see for example Johannsen 2009). These training materials were mentioned as valued resources by many individuals working in the UN and NATO contexts in my interviews, and can be assumed to inform the design of training by these institutions. Further, these INGOs actively partake in debates surrounding gender training practices, both through publishing policy papers as well as partaking in multi-stakeholder meetings and supporting the delivery of training courses (see for example Razakamaharavo, Ryan, and Sherwood 2018, NATO 2017a). Their presence in official proceedings and in training courses is welcomed as a source of expertise by some, and regarded with suspicion given their outsider status by others. Overall, the participation of non-governmental actors in the process demonstrates Kunz' observation that knowledges about gender 'circulate in many different ways and directions, defying the simplistic, linear top-down version of the transfer scenario' (2016, 111, see also Holmes 2019, Otto and Heathcote 2014). The range of actors who partake in the negotiation of what merits inclusion in gender training curricula therefore also includes gender experts from non-governmental organisations who have the ability to access institutional debates and curriculum design processes.

The key to mapping the actors involved lies precisely in their ability to *access* institutional curriculum design processes. Two key organisations developing gender training for peacekeepers include the UN and NATO, whose curricula are designed in New York (UN); Brussels (NATO Headquarters); Norfolk, Virginia (NATO Allied Command Transformation); and Stockholm (Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, NATO Department Head for Gender Education and Training). While the geographic location of these centres is not the sole determinant for what outside actors are involved, location does hint to the types of organisations and individuals who are able to input in the process. During the eight years in

which I have worked in this field, the people I have met who are involved in the curriculum design process have nearly exclusively hailed from the Global North/minority world. While Global South nations also develop their own gender training curricula, experts from the majority world rarely input into the training curricula of international organisations (in a similar dynamic of discounting gender expertise in the Global South as described by Pruitt 2018).

Some of the gender experts involved in this undertaking are keenly aware of the overrepresentation of the minority world in these processes, and invest in mediating this imbalance by inviting actors from the Global South to participate in the consolidation of such expertise (see for example Pepper 2012). However, such efforts remain marginal, and do not amount to any radical reconfiguration of the knowledge paradigms that constitute gender training for peacekeepers on a transnational scale. While my own situation in the Global North has no doubt contributed to the fact that I have primarily encountered gender experts from this area, I contend that this observation is not solely reflective of my experience. Rather, it speaks to a broader and well documented trend of the dominance of the field of gender expertise by the minority world (Sexwale 1996, Kunz, Prügl, and Thompson 2019). This does not, of course, mean that gender training is not carried out in the Global South, or that gender expertise is not located there, but that this expertise is discounted in structures of global governance.

### ***Who's missing? Experience without authority***

This dominance of institutions and experts located in the Global North is particularly notable given that the majority of UN peacekeeping troops come from the Global South.<sup>26</sup> The ways in which actors in the minority world continue to position themselves as those with the

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<sup>26</sup> As of December 2018, the top 18 troop contributing countries to UN peacekeeping operations were countries located in the Global South (United Nations 2019).

requisite expertise to design curricula mirrors a broader hierarchical global division of peacekeeping labour (Henry 2012). Not only do Global South peacekeepers constitute the majority of peacekeepers, the WPS agenda has been described as establishing the ‘woman-in-conflict’ – imagined as a woman in the Global South – as a figure of central concern to international peace and security (Cook 2016, see also Holvikivi and Reeves 2017, Tryggstad 2009, Cohn, Kinsella, and Gibbings 2004). Accordingly, providing gender training to peacekeepers, as mandated by WPS policies, can be understood as part of the implementation of a mandate intended to benefit conflict-affected women.

However, an examination of how training curricula are designed reveals that concern for the figure of the *Woman*-in-conflict does not translate into taking seriously the experiences of actual *women* in conflict, to borrow Chandra Talpade Mohanty’s famous distinction between a universalised third world Woman (singular) and women (plural) as ‘real material subjects of their collective histories’ (1988, 62-3). While the content of training materials often mentions the need to consult women among the local population, it appears that this is the task of the soldier on patrol, and the woman-in-conflict is thereby positioned as the soldier’s informant. She is not consulted on the content and priorities training curricula at the design phase. The woman-in-conflict therefore informs the development of training curricula as a figure whose needs and priorities are presumed to be already known; she does not partake in the curriculum design process as a subject considered to be in possession of the type of knowledge that need inform training initiatives. In this sense, the conflict-affected woman emerges in the curriculum design process as an object of knowledge rather than a knowing subject; as the one who is spoken *for* rather than the one who *speaks*; as Spivak’s ‘gendered subaltern’, ‘the one most consistently exiled from episteme’ (Spivak and Harasym 1990, 102-3; see also Spivak 2010 [1988], Razack, 2003, pp.134-5; Sexwale, 1996, p.55).

Further, given both the policy framework within which it operates, as well as the mission requirements that determine training needs, gender training is framed as always-already a response to operational demands. This entails that there is limited space to address concerns that are deemed to be internal to the peacekeeping endeavour. Problems such as sexual assault of colleagues or of the peace-kept population only factor in when they are deemed to have 'operational effects', affecting either the extent to which the peacekeepers are setting a 'good example' to the local forces in the peacekeeping area, or undermining relationships with the host community (see for example NATO ACT 2017).

In sum, the curriculum design process around gender training further contributes to the production of gender as something external to peacekeeping, as introduced in Chapter Two. In view of these omissions, the curriculum design process resembles the creation, as Nikita Dhawan put it, of 'paradigms of knowledge and constellations of power that marginalize, invalidate and annihilate "other" perspectives and "other" ways of being-in-the-world' (2012, 55). Through these omissions, the political economy of knowledge of the curriculum design process, while a site of institutional contestations, remains determined by the authority of military experience articulated as operational demands, and technical expertise expressed in Eurocentric terms.

## WHAT GENDER IS AND DOES: THE CONTENT OF THE CURRICULUM

Even with the exclusion of such a broad range of actors from curriculum design, what exactly gender is and does is not a foregone conclusion. To the contrary, these remain contentious questions in curriculum design processes. I begin this section with an exploration of how gender is defined in training, paying specific attention to what is omitted in the process, and how silences are produced. I note how the understanding of gender produced through training relies on heteronormative and colonising understandings of the term. I then turn to engage the definition of gender put forth in training on its own terms, tracing contestations

of how gender is thought to operate in relation to peacekeeping. This discussion marks the transition from considering what gender is thought to 'be' to what it is thought to 'do': what about it should be covered in training. As can be seen from the mapping of training materials and courses discussed in Chapter Two, an array of training topics travel under the umbrella term 'gender training'. This contestation is evident in heated disagreements between both agencies and individuals within those agencies as to what exactly should be in the curriculum. The final discussion in this section therefore focuses on what specific gender topics are thought to merit inclusion in training curricula.

### ***Troubled definitions***

Among the topics that are included in gender training curricula, one enjoys particular pre-eminence: the concept of gender. An assumption is largely shared by those who design training curricula and researchers interested in training: that, as Carson put it: 'In order for the goals of gender training to be achieved, *peacekeepers need, first and foremost, to understand what 'gender' means*' (2016, 277, emphasis added, see also Mackay 2005, 269). This much is agreed, and although the ways in which different training curricula define gender vary somewhat in their wording, these definitions largely align. The UN pre-deployment training package, as an illustrative example, states that whereas sex is 'biologically defined; usually determined at birth; [and] universal', gender 'is socially constructed; differs across cultures and time; [and] results in different roles, responsibilities, opportunities, needs and constraints for women, men, girls and boys' (DPKO & DFS 2017b, 5).

Examining this definition of gender against the training topics listed in Chapter Two, I contend that it is not self-evident why peacekeepers need to understand what gender means. Even a cursory overview of the stated learning outcomes of training casts some doubt on this necessity. It is not clear how nuanced an understanding of gender is needed to grasp that men's and women's roles and responsibilities in society are often differentiated, and to devise

tactics to protect women from conflict-related harms. Both of these learning items can be explained through a framework that relies on essentialist understandings of men and women as having different roles and vulnerabilities that peacekeepers are generally already well-versed in, and they imply little need to delve into the complexities of social construction. It is not therefore self-evident why an understanding of gender is required to achieve these learning goals.

Instead, I suggest that academics' and gender experts' insistence on introducing a definition of gender in training stems from a political goal: if gender is understood as socially constructed, it could be constructed *differently* (Otto 2014, 164, see also Butler 2007a, Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, Friedman 1996). In other words, the persistence in teaching definitions of gender in training might have less to do with practical and measurable learning outcomes of the training, and more to do with the political potential of understanding the world as changeable. I suggest that the persistence of framing training in terms of gender can be explained – at least in part, I will return to this question below – not through any actual rational-cognitive demands dictated by the training curriculum (or by operational demands), but rather through its indebtedness to the radical feminist roots of gender training as praxis (as discussed in Chapter Three).

Because the concept of gender serves a political purpose in training, how exactly this definition of gender is formulated and applied has been the subject of both academic critique and practitioner contentions. Debates around the definition centre on what terms gender is addressed, and what is omitted from this definition. Feminist analyses have lamented the ways in which this definition appears to have been emptied of feminist political goals. Carson critiques the ways in which gender is defined in peacekeeper training, arguing that this definition elides questions of power and patriarchy. She juxtaposes the depoliticised definition of gender used in training with the understanding of gender put forth by feminist activists who lobbied the UN to use the term in the first place; an understanding that was

grounded in feminist analyses of patriarchal power (2016, 280, see also Whitworth 2004). Carson's charge that the way gender is defined in peacekeeping training has lost the originary meaning of the term is an accurate and necessary critique. However, it also bears echoes of what Wiegman has called the 'apocalyptic' feminist narrative: that the future of feminist politics has been lost because feminism's present has betrayed its past (2014, 5). It is worth bearing in mind that a focus on the narrative of loss constrains our analysis by fixing the standard against which to measure how gender is understood (Otto 2014, 158, see also Hemmings 2011). The narrative of loss, therefore, limits the horizons of where we might analytically look in order to locate exclusions. I suggest a need to build on this line of critique, examining the further omission of race, coloniality, and heterosexism from this understanding of gender.

First, not only are power and patriarchy missing from how gender is conceptualised in training curricula, 'race' is also primarily notable for its absence. I mentioned above that gender training curricula are underpinned by an assumption of the universal knowability of gender. This universalism is supported by a non-recognition of the ways of in which gendered power relations are racialised. Race does not feature in training curricula in relation to gender, and a broad non-recognition of colonial histories mirrors the broader Global North cultural phenomenon of 'colonial aphasia' (Stoler 2011).

While race and coloniality are not explicitly addressed in training curricula, I argue that their operative logics nonetheless inform their construction of gender. Gender training curricula focus on what María Lugones describes as 'the light side' of coloniality, where gender is organised around biological dimorphism, heterosexualism, and patriarchy (2007, 190). This understanding of gender fails to take into account that these are Eurocentric, not universal organising principles of gender. Further, it neglects that in European societies, a 'differential construction of gender along racial lines' has persisted (Lugones 2007, 206). Women of colour

are not only racialised; their gender is constructed differently under conditions of coloniality. In contrast to the light side of coloniality, its dark side has involved the reduction of the colonised to inferior beings, and produced violences such as 'forced sex with white colonisers' (Lugones 2007, 206). European understandings of gender, grounded in the light side of the modern/colonial gender system, therefore produce blind spots, facilitated by the fact that '[t]hough everyone in capitalist Eurocentred modernity is both raced and gendered, not everyone is dominated or victimized in terms of their race or gender' (Lugones 2007, 192).

This erasure of 'the colonial difference' establishes a Eurocentric understanding of gender as the yardstick against which to measure progress (Lugones 2010, 743). The use of this yardstick produces an understanding of relations of oppression and violence as gendered but not racialised, and differences between them as questions of scale, not substance. It facilitates an understanding of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by peacekeepers as the case of a few 'bad apples' in an otherwise good barrel, rather than as the systematic operations of the dark side of coloniality (Belkin 2012, 56, Razack 2004, 6). It further creates an understanding of conflict and violence as stemming from an inferiority of peace-kept populations, who come 'to be mythically conceived not as dominated through conquest, nor as inferior in terms of wealth or political power, but as an anterior stage in the history of the species, in this unidirectional path' (Lugones 2007, 192, see also Spivak and Grosz 1990). In other words, a training curriculum which forwards an understanding of gender that fails to account for its imbrications with race erases colonial difference, thereby leaving unchallenged a discursive production of peacekeeping nations as inherently superior.

If the understanding of gender put forth in training obscures the ways in which gender is racialised, it also naturalises understandings of biological dimorphism and heterosexualism. This understanding of gender is nonetheless haunted by sexual subjects who do not map onto, per Butler, the matrix of binary gender identification determining heterosexual desire (2009,



135, see also Jauhola 2010). Training curricula rarely address or even acknowledge modes of being beyond compulsory heterosexuality, and trainers I spoke with asserted that they specifically did not want to address the topic. This disavowal was not typically framed in overtly homophobic or transphobic terms but rather, inclusion of sexual orientation and gender identity was described as ‘adding too much complexity’, and as something, as explained by a military trainer I call Robert, that ‘muddies the waters about what it is that we’re trying to do, because it becomes such a wide subject’. In this way, Robert did not go so far as to assert a personal disavowal of non-confirming practices and identities, but instead framed them as inconvenient, as disruptive.

At times, it appears that underlying this sense of sexuality being ‘too complex’ is the trainers’ assumption that their audiences are homophobic, and a desire to pre-empt hostile reactions (a similar observation about presumed homophobia is made by Belkin 2012). For example, a military trainer I call Max, explained to me that he provided an example of something he had experienced during a deployment as basis for discussion in his training. His patrol had come across local police officers beating two gay men. Max explained that in this scene, the peacekeepers needed to consider how to prevent human rights abuses while at the same time maintaining good relations with local security forces. When Max showed me the slide on this scene he had prepared for discussion, however, the victims of abuse had changed from gay men to children. When I asked what prompted him to change this description, Max responded that the example of children presented ‘a clearer human rights violation’, and one that ‘aroused more feelings’. In other words, he presumed that his audience would be less troubled by violence committed against gay men than violence against children. By framing the discussion around children (symbolic of reproductive heterosexuality), Max re-centred heteronormativity in gender training (see also Edelman 2004).

In other contexts, European gender trainers project the homophobia inherent in the erasure of queerness from gender onto the non-European training audiences they work with. For example, I attended a gender training in a West African context, where a team of European facilitators persistently brought up homosexuality, consistently coupled with the caveat 'Sorry to keep pushing the issue, I know that this is sensitive'. The moment when one of the participants retorted: 'Don't worry, we are quite comfortable!' suggested that perhaps what was at play in framing the issue of homosexuality as 'sensitive' was more to do with a European self-understanding of progressive superiority over cultures deemed 'traditional' than any actual hostile reaction to homosexuality from the training audience (Butler 2008, Puar 2007).

At other times, it appeared that the trainers' view of the topic as 'too complex' or 'too sensitive' was underwritten by a lack of education. Questions about sexual orientation and gender identity were posed by training audiences in every training course I attended. In a Nordic course I observed, a trainer, when facilitating a session on gender concepts, was unable to answer questions about non-conforming sexualities and directed them instead for me, seated at the back of the class in observation mode, to respond to. He later asked me and another trainer on the course to give a session on the topic, and carved out an hour from the course programme for us to do so. In other words, the design of training erases queer subjectivities from its conceptualisation of gender, even though training practice reveals that these subjects persistently trouble the foundations of the binary gender order put forth. The silence around sexuality is one that is actively produced by trainers, rather than an oversight.

Reading against the grain, we see that not only is gender defined in ways which erase power and patriarchy from consideration, this definition of gender is haunted by questions of race and sexuality. Haunted because both questions are present – through the continued operations of racial and colonial logics in training, and through the persistence of questions

about sexual orientation and gender identity in actual training practice – but disavowed by trainers and curriculum designers. Such hauntings trouble attempts to define gender as universal (white) and heterosexual, producing an *ambivalence*, or *contradiction*, at the site of constitution of the key concept around which training curricula are produced (Belkin 2012, Bhabha 1994).

### ***The (wo)man question***

Even though they are working with a binary understanding of gender that omits sexuality and race from discussion, those who oversee the development of gender training curricula differ on how best to depict the roles and needs of women and men. Academic critiques have argued that a focus on gender as synonymous with women obscures the relationality of gender, eliding from view systems of oppression, and both male violence and male vulnerability (Whitworth 2004, 125). Further, an exclusive focus on women often constitutes them through infantilisation and vulnerability, as the conflated category ‘womenandchildren’ (Enloe 2014, 1, see also Butler 2016, Enloe, 1990). On the one hand, such dynamics are reinforced by ongoing training practices. For example, the UN has taken a number of initiatives to increase the number of women deployed on peacekeeping, including through the provision by the UN of female officers’ courses on gender (see for example, UN Women 2013). Further, DPKO has at times collapsed job functions into the position of a ‘gender and child protection advisor’, evoking the image of ‘womenandchildren’. On the other hand, these debates are squarely on the radar of policymakers and gender trainers. Those working within and outside of the organisation have cautioned that efforts to raise the number of female peacekeepers perpetuate an essentialised understanding of women as kinder, gentler peacekeepers (Baruah 2017). Similarly, the establishment of training on gender and child protection was critiqued by some UN officials I spoke with, precisely on the grounds that it reinforces notions of female vulnerability.

In this ongoing contention of how the woman question is framed, in my interviews with those supporting such initiatives, they defended their choices on pragmatic grounds. The fact remains that in many of the places peacekeeping operations take place, local women are better able to speak to female peacekeepers (Pruitt 2016, Karim and Beardsley 2013). Further, they argued that if the gender advisor does not take on child protection issues, there is a risk that these issues will be neglected. In addition to these practical considerations, I suggest that there are also political reasons to be suspicious of an automatic, categorical rejection of traditional gender roles. Lugones' analytic exposes that there is a streak of coloniality underwriting the move to disavow any reference to particular skills or qualities women have *as women*, because this move can amount to a transnational projection of the concerns of white feminism. There is ample evidence both that the gendering of motherhood is not universal, and that women in various locations have successfully drawn political power through an appeal to the category of motherhood (Moran 2012, Oyèwùmí 2011). In this sense, the white feminist aversion to any claims smacking of essentialism may contribute to undermining claims to female authority in non-Western contexts. Accordingly, I suggest, following Spivak, that in the debates surrounding how women are understood in gender training, it may be less important to insist on a theoretical purity of anti-essentialism, and more important to recognise that some practical gender work may trouble the theoretical commitments of feminism (Spivak and Grosz 1990, 12).

The discursive move sometimes put forth in gender training to counteract the equation of gender with women and essentialising arguments about them is to insist that gender is about men, women, boys, and girls. Especially the inclusion of men has been a focus of some high-level policy initiatives (see for example UN Women's 'He for She' campaign). At the same time, the terms on which men have been included has attracted well-deserved criticism. Carson notes how the inclusion of men without mention of patriarchy or power differentials between men and women empties the term gender of its political potential (2016, 288). Specifically,

Laplonge has drawn attention to the ways in which, while training may include mentions of men and boys, it fails to take seriously the concept of masculinities as productive of violence and war (2015, 94).

When men and boys do appear as a topic of discussion in training, they are most often presented as also victims, and/or as necessary allies in the struggle for gender equality. While there can be no doubt that men and boys are also victims of sexual violence, and that men can work towards gender equality, this discursive framing precludes a discussion of male complicity in gender violence and perpetuation of inequalities (Zalewski et al. 2018, Kirby 2013). That this shallow analysis lends itself to doing away with questions of male violence is evident in the way some trainers emphasise women's violence in a purported attempt to deconstruct traditional gender norms. This insistence lends itself to some wild arguments with weak substantiation, such as the claim made by a presenter in the West African course I observed, who argued that women commit rape more often than men do. It is clear in this instance that the demand to include men in the conceptualisation of gender does not necessarily add complexity to the definition. Rather, it can be used as a vehicle to align the message of the training with deeply misogynistic 'men's rights' agendas that seek to negate or inverse gendered relations of power and violence (Duriesmith 2017).

While at the outset of this discussion I suggested that feminist trainers and academics invest in the term 'gender' because of its radical transformative potential, these contentions demonstrate that others invest in the term because it allows them to direct discursive attention away from male violence and female oppression. In other words, the prioritisation of gender as an analytical category carries ambivalent political potential – gender is used to *both* politicise *and* depoliticise the discourse of training.

### ***Defining the issues***

The question of what gender ‘does’ is also a matter a of ongoing contestation, evident in debates over what it is that should be taught and known about gender, beyond conceptual definitions. We have already seen that training mandates overwhelmingly focus on issues of sexual violence (see Table 2, Chapter Two). Given the transnational nature of peacekeeping enterprises and similar moves within the broader WPS agenda, training deals with questions of sexual violence through a distinction between internal and external gender issues (on the external orientation of WPS, see Shepherd 2016). This distinction separates out sexual harassment, deployment of female peacekeepers, and sexual exploitation and abuse as internal gender issues; and conflict-related sexual violence, liaison with and protection of the local population, and an analysis of the gendered effects of the mission as external gender issues (see for example NATO ACT 2017, STRATOP lecture 2). Because of the transnational nature of curriculum design, those issues deemed internal to the troop contributing country are usually sidelined in such training, as they are considered the responsibility of the individual nation, not the multinational mission.

Nonetheless, the linkages between internal and external questions of gender do not lend themselves to such a neat separation, and continue to be the site of debate. Some training materials, such as the NATO training package referred to above, do explore the link between internal and external gender dynamics, and training participants are often quick to point out the linkages between violence committed by the peacekeepers and that committed by local actors (explored further in Chapter Seven). However, there is a simultaneous move to keep these questions separate. A UN policy report (Anderson 2012, 15) features the following quote:

We initially thought “gender issues” were only about the behavior of troops...not realizing the operational interest, the added value to the effectiveness of the mission of integrating gender perspectives.

– Brigadier General Jean-Philippe Ganascia, Former Force Commander of EUFOR/CHAD

The report then goes on to lament the fact that ‘discussions of peacekeepers and sexual violence have disproportionately portrayed them as perpetrators rather than protectors’ and that ‘this has had the effect of distancing personnel from host populations, thereby limiting situational awareness of women’s needs and risks’ (Anderson 2012, 15). What appears to be at work in this discussion is a sense that addressing internal gender questions – the behaviour of the troops – detracts from gender as an operational question, and a call to reassert this distinction. While none of these discussions suggest that topics such as SEA and sexual harassment should not be part of peacekeepers’ training, these topics are delegated to nations rather than ‘gender training’ thus constructed.

However, the extent to, and terms on, which these topics are covered in national training remains dubious. Robert showed me a gender training module he had designed for pre-deployment training in his country. As a slide on SEA came up, Robert quickly skipped through it, noting ‘this is nothing new for them ... the types of things we’re talking about, one could really dumb this down to being a decent human being, ultimately embedded in our Army leadership code’. Lasse, a Nordic soldier I spoke with during his pre-deployment training, scoffed at the mention of SEA in training on similar terms: ‘For us this is a given, and sometimes in training you wonder, do they think we are complete morons?’ Lasse juxtaposed his self-described commitment to gender equality with soldiers from other countries he had met in missions: ‘Sometimes I wondered at how low a level some coming from African countries were. They had to be told that you can’t just pick up a woman off the side of the road and rape [her]’. In making these statements, Robert and Lasse were both drawing on a widely available racialised script that frames European soldiers as already gender aware and not prone to committing abuse, and which thereby inscribes morality on white bodies (Spivak 2010, Razack 2003). In this discursive move, the purportedly ‘internal’ gender issue of SEA is

re-externalised, and constructed as the problem of the ‘not-us’ African soldier ‘over there’ along the familiar racial-sexual hierarchy that characterises much of WPS work (Mertens 2019, Pratt 2013). In other words, the assertion of an internal/external distinction in training curricula appears to do the work of situating ‘gender’ as an external question, in a move which protects Global North peacekeepers’ sense of self: for *us* this is a given; *they* had to be told. What gender ‘does’, then, becomes a question for racialised others.

In addition to contestations around what constitutes internal and what constitutes external issues, are questions of expanding the focus from sexual violence. Some gender training does attempt to draw attention to broader gendered dynamics and effects of international interventions. For example, Robert explained what he had learned on a Nordic training-of-trainers course:

That’s when you start to realise what [gender advisors] and gender focal points do, which is something again, it’s not focused on the violence-exploitation side, but more on gender considerations in the military more widely. And so ... if we’re planning stability operations whereby we’re trying to facilitate elections ... and we gather information that suggests that 70% of the population is literate, we will go great, we will put out a leaflet campaign to tell people to vote. But if we don’t sex-disaggregate the data, we won’t find out that it’s 100% men and 40% women, or what have you.

In other words, some training interventions do attempt to foster an awareness of gender across job functions – to mainstream the issue. Nonetheless, much of the training focuses specifically on sexual violence. When asked about this focus, training designers and instructors typically emphasise the fact that the scale and gravity of sexual violence in peacekeeping operations render it the most pertinent issue to address. Without wishing to underplay the physical, psychic and social harm caused by sexual violence committed in war contexts, it is nonetheless worth drawing attention to the ways in which this rather singular focus on violence underwrites a focus on the spectacular, and diverts attention from the structures that enable such violence (Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2013).



I argue that the focus on sexual violence illustrates the coloniality of training discourses. In emphasising what are framed as 'the worst' forms of violence, the choice of topics for gender training implicitly sets up a comparative discourse that, per Mohanty, 'sets up its own authorial subjects as the implicit referent, i.e. a yardstick by which to encode and represent cultural Others' (1988, 64). The move to focus on the most spectacular forms of violence serves to establish a difference between the peacekeeper's home country and the mission area through its endorsement of reasoning that suggests: 'We may have some problems at home as well, but they are nothing compared to what the women in the DRC are experiencing'. My point here is not to contribute to the construction of a hierarchy of harms, but rather to highlight that this logic is also productive of what Mohanty famously called the logic of 'third-world difference' (1988, 80). The way this difference is produced is through an if-not-for logic: if not for these women being located in the Global South, they would not be exposed to this violence. The Global South therefore comes to be seen as the progenitor of violence, with little need for further explanation. Training on sexual violence in the Global South typically omits any serious consideration of context (a topic to which I return in Chapter Seven). It further removes the peacekeeper self from the realm of the violence, and presents the phenomenon as something which is, by its nature, external. Understanding it as external removes the need to examine the ways in which misogyny, racism, and deeply unequal power relations structure the peacekeeping endeavour itself, facilitated by an erasure of colonial difference. In sum, the choice of topics to train reinforces the notion that gender is something external to the peacekeeping endeavour, and a focus on sexual violence privileges reactions to spectacular acts rather than addressing structural conditions.

#### FACING THE UNIFORMS: EPISTEMIC AUTHORITY IN TRAINING

Training curricula produce theories of gender – as Spivak reminds us, 'no practice takes place without presupposing itself as an example of some more or less powerful theory' (1990, 2).

Considering curricula as theorisations of gender, it is not exactly difficult to identify points of critique in the content of training curricula by reading them against the vast bodies of knowledge in gender studies. However, reading the theorisation of gender in curricula would be incomplete without a consideration of their pedagogical purpose. The purpose of a curriculum is not necessarily to advance scholarly thinking on gender, but to identify what about it can and should be known by training audiences who may have little prior exposure to these questions. Gender theories typically question societal truths and read widely accepted norms against the grain. It would be unreasonable to expect students who have may have been schooled their entire lives in liberal politics and positivist thought to be able to fully internalise the insights that it has taken feminist scholarship cumulative lifetimes to arrive at within the space of a week-long training course. All this is to say that training is a strategic endeavour. Training curricula cannot simply be judged against the state of knowledge in the field of gender studies. Rather, they must be read as intervening in existing epistemic communities with their own assumptions and values. Accordingly, curricula are designed bearing in mind the interaction of the students with the material that is presented. Curricula represent pedagogical interventions designed to support understanding of the topic, and to prompt students to think about the world in a different way. In this last section of the chapter, I turn analytic attention to the strategies the curricula devise to persuade students. I ask, first, how does the curriculum conceptualise learners? What strategies does it identify as appropriate and convincing for them? I then turn to examine what qualities are identified as desirable in trainers, asking: how is epistemic authority embodied?

### ***The sceptical audience and the happy gender trainer***

Those involved in curriculum design often highlight that the peacekeepers to be trained are mainly men, and posit that they are at least sceptical of, if not hostile to, the idea of gender

training. Mackay, who was instrumental in designing some of the foundational UN training materials for peacekeepers, describes the challenge she perceived (2005, 267):

here we would be developing training material intended for soldiers, task oriented, 90 percent male, who had most likely not given the subject too much attention in the past, and who were likely to be defensive. Yet, it was important to grab their attention, without alienation – in a maximum time frame of one day.

What is clear from Mackay's description of the challenge, is that gender training curricula are designed with certain assumptions about the audiences they are intended for. In a similar vein, Puechguirbal, also reflecting on her own experience as a UN gender advisor and trainer, reports that many of the trainees, 'have never before heard the word "gender", or hold distorted and/or extremely negative views about what it means (2003, 117; see also Higate & Henry, 2009). These reflections by those involved in curriculum design provide insight into what type of audience the training materials cater to: uniformed men, with scant knowledge of, and little interest in, the topic. As such, the design of training interventions must be understood as a strategic move, which intends to persuade a hostile audience of the benefits of increasing their own gender awareness.

Accordingly, the strategies that these curriculum designers propose for training are, first of all, designed not to alienate the audience. As Puechguirbal puts it: 'it is important to use a "gender-friendly" approach, so as not to antagonize or "lose" the audience by being overly aggressive or confrontational' (2003, 118). In my observation of courses, I noted that trainers sometimes avoid the kinds of 'red flags' (Bonnell 1999, 216) thought to antagonise participants, such as the use of gender neutral language, leading to what sounds to an outsider like absurd discussions regarding questions of gender balance in 'manning' or the number of female 'seamen' in the navy. I heard gender trainers ban the use of the term 'gender issues'. The word 'issue', they explained, was negative and implied a problem. Gender, they argued, should be seen as a positive thing, an operational tool, a useful perspective (see also Hurley 2018b).

This concern with avoiding conflict is not always framed as a move to protect the trainer from hostility (though this may also be a consideration) so much as it is grounded in the suggestion that training should foster a positive affective disposition toward the topic. In her account of designing training modules, Mackay stresses the importance of ending the last module ‘on a *positive and proactive note* ... for participants to leave the training with the recognition that they had not only a personal responsibility as well as power to act, to be a force for not only doing harm, but hopefully doing good’ (2005, 269, emphasis added). This inclination to maintain a positive affect can also be observed, I suggest, in the hesitation to deal with masculinity discussed above. By introducing men and boys into the scope of the training by presenting them as also-victims and as ‘gender champions’, the training assuages any sense of shared male responsibility for violence by allowing male students to know themselves as potential victims rather than potential perpetrators (see also Kirby 2013).

In maintaining this positive affect among trainees, gender training curricula produce an understanding of gender that does not trouble trainees’ sense of self – observable also in the broader WPS discourse (see Hurley 2018b, Gibbings 2011). This insistence on positive affect produces an unwillingness to confront ‘difficult knowledge’, impeding the ability of training to address questions of complicity in structures of inequality and violence (Britzman 1998, 2). The foregrounding of a positive orientation towards the topic is also doubtless fuelled by practices of evaluating the training – which typically centre on methods such as feedback questionnaires, which measure less what the trainees learned, and more whether or not they liked the training and/or the trainer.

Not only does a strategy designed to keep sceptical or hostile military men on board rule out addressing important questions of complicity, it also risks pandering to the most extreme views. I argue that designing and delivering the training in a manner that is going to keep the most hostile attitudes on board and not agitate them is likely to concede too much. It is

important to interrupt the assumption that gender training audiences are uniformly hostile, and to bear in mind the possibility that some trainees may disagree (possibly privately, as suggested by Belkin 2012) with overt expressions of patriarchal attitudes. It is worth cautioning that such strategic thinking also needs to take into account the silent minority who are invested in gender equality, and for whom it may be empowering to see a trainer contest rather than concede to misogynist logics; to use their situational power to disrupt dominant logics of meaning making (see Lewis 1992, 181).

In addition to maintaining a positive orientation towards the topic, trainers engage in a form of bandwagoning, where they present the endeavour of gender training as supporting goals that the trainees already deem legitimate and important. I mentioned above that gender training is framed as a way of responding to operational demands. In a similar move, which is sometimes strategic and sometimes stems from genuine conviction, trainers often underscore the importance of the training as a way of applying a 'gender perspective' in order to increase 'operational effectiveness'. In other words, trainers feel that in order for their message to be heard, they need to speak the language of the organisation, to cite already accepted truths (Whitworth 2004, 120; see also Butler, 1993, p.19). This discursive move frames the topic (gender) as important, because it is linked to something that the students are already assumed to value highly (mission effectiveness). Training then goes on to demonstrate this value to the mission by providing concrete examples. As Mackay puts it: 'the focus had to be practical and of immediate relevance to the "soldier on the ground"' (2005, 268). She argues (2005, 270):

Theory can be fascinating, experiences and anecdotes telling, but throughout the training it had to be possible to answer the 'So what?' question if a peacekeeper asked it. If the material could not be demonstrated to be relevant, then attention would fade, and we would have failed.

This reflection emphasises the assumptions at work about the peacekeeper subjectivity – that they will only consider relevant what is deemed relevant for their professional identities. It

portrays trainees as single-mindedly professional and rules out the possibility that this is not their primary identity or concern.

However, and in contrast, my observations of training suggest that such a singular professional identification is not consistent among training audiences. In some of the training courses I observed, students were asked to share their expectations of the course. What was notable was that many did not, in fact, frame their expectations in professional terms. Many voiced instead a desire to learn something that they could take back to their home communities, to their family, to their church. Marketing the utility of gender training on such terms is unlikely to secure the formal approval of the military organisation to conduct gender training, but these observations do suggest that military training audiences do not always engage with the training through a single-minded task orientation. Rather, it reveals that military subjectivities, too, are fragmented and discontinuous (Bhabha 1994, 42).

This expectation of a hostile audience is reproduced in specialised courses aimed at gender trainers and gender advisers. On the one hand, trainers I spoke with expressed a desire to prepare those they were training to face resistance. Malcolm, for example, explained that in his training he would sometimes ask participants to consider resistant statements:

I have also been in a situation where people go to the gender training and think it's great, and then you realise you almost throw them under the bus because they haven't talked about this before, and they're not always completely aware that they're going to face resistance. So, I think once you've got people on board, it's important to arm them with resistance statements.

Malcolm, in other words, anticipated that his training participants, no longer hostile to the idea of gender themselves, would have to contend with the resistance of their colleagues and future trainees. Bearing this in mind, he sought to prepare students for resistance by prompting them to think in advance how they would respond. His attempts to prepare training participants for a hostile environment bears echoes of strategies outlined in feminist

pedagogy: 'Students need skills for surviving and thriving as a feminist in a patriarchal society when the support of a women's studies program is gone' (Schniedewind 1987, 25).

Not only does some specialised gender training attempt to equip students with skills to deal with hostile audiences, I suggest that these courses are also involved in building a community of support for those who work on gender. During the end-of-course graduation ceremony in the Nordic training-of-trainers course I observed, the course director congratulated participants on completing the course, and welcomed them into 'the gender family'. She went on to describe various community fora, such as social media pages that the participants could use to keep in touch, and talked about an alumni network for those who had completed a gender course. This work of community-building also took less structured forms. During the course I observed in East Africa, one participant told me that she loved going on gender courses, because they were different. She explained: 'You always meet people who are passionate. And they are friendly. When I arrived, two people came to give me hugs. I've never been on another military course where I'm hugged, especially by the course director!'. In other words, I suggest that because gender trainers feel that they are under attack from the broader establishment, they work to support one another, by providing gender trainers and advisors with skills and emotional support.

What emerges from an examination of the strategies deployed in curriculum design, then, is that of a sceptical audience, and a happy gender trainer who frames the topic in a positive light – not disturbing the peacekeepers' sense of self, and providing them with the tools to improve their job performance. These happy gender trainers draw strategic and emotional support from a community of gender specialists working in this field. However, I suggest that these performances preclude asking difficult questions that may implicate the peacekeeper self in violence, and they also rule out the possibility of the peacekeeper subject who wishes

to transform gender relations in his (to repeat the assumed masculine subjectivity) personal life.

***Speaking infantry: epistemic authority in the classroom***

‘I wouldn’t call myself a subject matter expert, but I speak infantry.’ This was how Max began his presentation during the gender training-of-trainers course I observed in the Nordic region. His statement provides a wealth of information about how epistemic authority is embodied as masculine and martial in the training endeavour. Puechguirbal voices a common concern among the gender training community in her statement (2003, 126; see also Higate, 2004, p.29):

Another critical challenge is to involve more men as gender trainers, especially military or ex-military, because they are sometimes better able than women to convince male trainees of the issue’s importance.

Statements such as these demonstrate how training leaves unchallenged dominant perceptions of masculine epistemic authority, and panders to the notion that when women speak about gender, they are perceived as pursuing a ‘personal agenda’ (Wright 2016, 351, see also Hurley 2018b). However, there is a rather facile assumption at work here: that male students would prefer to speak about gender with male instructors. This seems at odds with Mackay’s assertion that having women constitute at least a third of the students in the classroom leads to ‘an entirely different dynamic and provides a richer learning experience for everyone’ (2005, 273). Indeed, it seems equally plausible that the presence of a male trainer might encourage male students to perform masculinity with more bravado than they would with a female trainer. Nonetheless, the desire for men to deliver gender training remains largely unchallenged by those who design curricula.

This importance attached to the trainers’ masculinity is also observable in practice in efforts to disavow traits associated with femininity and queerness (Belkin 2012, 35). For a man to work as a gender trainer was perceived by some of my interlocutors as risking their



masculinity. During the course of my observation, I was told that one male trainer said that he could deliver gender training, because he was married and had several children. The implication in this statement is that being a gender trainer renders one's masculine image vulnerable; but that heterosexual marriage and reproduction inoculated him from being perceived as queer or feminised (as likewise observed by Hurley 2018a, 83). Female trainers also often make efforts to distance themselves from qualities associated with femininity. A UN gender advisor I call Fiona explained: 'This is Security Council, this is not an option. We're not doing it because it's nice to do, we're doing it because it has to be done.' I read in Fiona's rejection of niceness an impulse to push back against the notion of women as caring and nurturing; and in her evocation of the Security Council mandate a desire for gender training to achieve normative alignment with a form of militarised masculinity (Otto 2014, 160-1; see also Kaplan, 1994).

Importantly, epistemic authority is embodied as not only male, but also military. Privileging the uniformed trainer constitutes not only an appeal to likeness, but also to the ways in which epistemic authority is constructed in military communities. Joanna Tidy highlights the importance of 'ground truth' in claims to authoritative knowledge within military organisations (2016, see also Väyrynen 2004). Ground truth is based on the belief that in order to speak authoritatively on a topic, the speaker must have first-hand experience: he or she must have experienced it 'on the ground'. This form of epistemic authority was enthusiastically validated by some of the gender training participants I spoke with, who expressed appreciation at hearing from instructors who had already been deployed as military gender advisors. As a military officer on the gender advisors' course held in East Africa put it to me: 'You learn more from experience than you learn from the book. Because the reality on the ground is different than what you read in the book'. This valuation of ground truth is inversely observable in the framing of theory in relation to the training. Mackay recalls (2005, 268):

The theory was the main challenge. How could national troop trainers understand and learn themselves to be able to deliver? At the same time, the theoretical underpinnings had to be relatively invisible if the trainers were not to be scared off.

This inclination among curriculum developers was likewise borne out in my observations. Whether they found theory 'scary' is debatable, but trainees did often critique sessions that included discussion of theory as 'too philosophical', suggesting that it was less real, or that it held no relevance to them.

That being said, the epistemic authority of 'ground truth' is not always framed by training participants in exclusively military terms. For example, in feedback forms on a military course on conflict-related sexual violence, participants requested a more holistic approach, incorporating more civilian perspectives and more consideration of victims' perspectives (Axmacher 2013, 23-4). What this request suggests is that 'ground truth' is not necessarily a military prerogative. Rather, in the trainees' appreciation, participants to and victims of the conflict may also possess it. It is at this juncture that those exiled from the episteme in the design of curricula re-appear, if not as knowers themselves, then at least valued informants. Mackay cites an example of the inclusion of community representatives (clergy, nuns, teachers, mayors, civil society associations, etc.) as a fruitful training practice (2005, 275). In a similar manner, on one course I observed, participants suggested that visiting a local women's organisation would have been a useful activity for the course participants. In other words, it appears that the forms of epistemic authority that are considered valid in military training can be expanded to non-military subjects. While this broadens the scope of who is authorised to know gender, it does still position the local population more as 'native informants' rather than as knowers who have the authority to shape the training itself (Chow 1994).

What is notable in the embodiment of epistemic authority as masculine and military, is the fact that much of the curriculum design, described in the first section of this chapter, involves

primarily women and many civilians. A split is thus discernible between who is thought to have the requisite expertise to design curricula, and who is perceived as embodying epistemic authority. Indeed, expertise on gender seems to be a secondary consideration for who is an appropriate trainer. Max' admission that he might lack subject matter expertise was echoed by many male military gender trainers I spoke with. Robert, for example, noted that his training amounted to a job performed by 'enthusiastic amateurs'. Nonetheless, many civilian women, who do hold more extensive expertise on gender, eagerly affirm that training is best delivered by a man in uniform.

Civilian women ceding epistemic authority to military men nonetheless happens from a position of relative power, as it is the designer of the curriculum who makes this determination in the first place. In the process, they concede not only their own epistemic authority, but also the authority of others who do not fit this mould. Because of the hegemony of Global North gender experts in the design of gender training, these experts may be poorly qualified to evaluate forms of expertise that are expressed in different terms (Pruitt 2018). This bias in determining who a competent trainer is was brought to my attention during the multinational gender advisors course I attended. One training session was delivered by a civilian gender expert from East Africa. Her presentation style differed from that of the Global North trainers who ran most of the sessions. After her presentation, a Nordic military officer I call William approached me and remarked that I had just gotten an example for my research of how *not* to do gender training. William's slight smirk and conspiratorial tone implied that he assumed I would share his conclusion that the session we had just witnessed was a pedagogical disaster. Nonetheless, when I reviewed the participants' feedback for that day, I found that many (I suspect that these included the African officers on the course, but cannot verify this as the feedback was anonymous) were elated with this presentation. While some feedback was very critical, others praised this particular instructor for her skill in presenting and her ability to involve participants. What I concluded from this episode was that the

presenter was able to communicate in culturally specific forms that spoke to some (but clearly not all) of the participants; and that she embodied a specific form of female authority that (again, some of) the participants responded to very positively. William was clearly not qualified to evaluate her training skills. Nonetheless, it is the Williams of this world who dominate training design and – by proxy – evaluation practices. That is to say, because experts from the Global North dominate training design, they are also in danger of constructing the ideal of a good trainer in their own image. Epistemic authority is therefore produced as normatively male, military, and white.

## CONCLUSION

The demand to provide gender training for peacekeepers implies that there is a shared understanding of what gender *is* and *does*. However, the point of departure of this chapter has been that what exactly gender means is not a foregone conclusion. Rather, its meaning is produced, per Foucault, within and through relations of power. This epistemic perspective complicates the question of what it means to train peacekeepers on gender. If the meaning of gender is produced rather than given, then an investigation into what gender is made to mean in a training context requires an attentiveness to the conditions of production of knowledge, because these conditions implicate relations of power and govern the political possibilities of such an enterprise.

In this chapter, I have interrogated the ways in which the processes of designing training curricula produce gender as a knowable object and who, in this knowledge production paradigm, can know and speak gender. In service of this goal, I have (a) sketched out the parameters of the process of curriculum design; (b) examined key contentions around the substantive understanding of what gender ‘is’ and ‘does’ that animate the training endeavour; and (c) interrogated the forms of epistemic authority that are enlisted to facilitate the circulation of this knowledge.

Through this analysis, I have argued that the political economy of knowledge around gender training involves three key features. First, the ways in which knowledge is produced facilitates the epistemic erasure of colonial difference. I mean this both in the sense that the voice of the peace-kept subaltern is not heard (Kunz, Prügl, and Thompson 2019, Spivak 2010); and in the way the world is presented through a universalised understanding of heterosexual and binary gender that obscures racialised operations of power (Lugones 2007, Mohanty 1988). Second, the circulation of knowledge about gender involves a series of strategic moves designed to make this content palatable especially to military institutions, with implications for what can be said, how it can be said, and who can say it (Mackay 2005, Puechguirbal 2003). Finally, the ways in which curriculum design processes re-centre whiteness, heterosexuality, maleness, and martiality is fraught by contradictions, and those exiled from the episteme continue to haunt its margins (Belkin 2012).

An attentiveness to these contradictions in the curriculum design process does not yet provide an account of how the pedagogical process plays out. An intersubjective account of knowledge production is required for this. While the discussion in this chapter has focused on the text of the curriculum – i.e. what curriculum designers *plan* should be taught and how – I have already begun to juxtapose these plans with how the delivery of the curriculum plays out in practice. I have drawn attention to classroom practices to demonstrate how the ambivalences of gender knowledge continue to haunt the pedagogical site of training. These dynamics hint at my broader argument to extend the analytic gaze to the classroom. They demonstrate that examining what the curriculum prescribes is not sufficient to produce an account of what is *learned* in gender training. The next chapter takes up this task, examining the dynamics of knowledge production around conflict-related sexual violence through the lens of emotional pedagogy.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### EMOTIONAL PEDAGOGY: KNOWING WARTIME RAPE

*Institutions are inherently committed to maintaining silences (e.g. about emotion) and/or proliferating discourses that define emotion by negation.*

- Megan Boler (1999, 141-2)

In Chapter Six, I introduced the figures of the sceptical military audience and the happy gender trainer, as imagined by those who design gender training curricula. That these figures are evoked by curriculum designers demonstrates an interest in managing the affective charge of the pedagogical encounter. It gestures towards an acknowledgment of a relationship between what people feel and what or how they learn. In this chapter, I expand on this discussion, examining the discourses about or around feelings that circulate in the gender training setting. An attentiveness to emotion is both suggested by my conceptualisation in Chapter Four of pedagogy as involving emotional work – fostering investments in certain epistemic stances and subject positions over others – as well as by the preoccupation of curriculum designers with managing emotions in the training setting. Shifting the analytical gaze towards actual training practices, I examine what discourses about emotion circulate in gender training classrooms, and what knowledges these enable. In this endeavour, I draw on Ahmed's (2004, 117, see also Ahmed 2014) conceptualisation of emotions as social facts that have political effects, and Boler's (1999, 108) argument that emotions in education can constitute either a site of social control, or a site of political resistance. I ask: How does training foster investments in certain ways of being in the world? What do emotions mean for how gender is learned in training? To get at these questions, I examine classroom practices around one topic of gender training that enjoys particular pre-eminence in curricula: that of conflict-related sexual violence.

I suggest that peacekeeper training on CRSV prompts trainees to talk about their feelings, and that talking about emotion constitutes a contradiction. The argument I develop in this chapter centres on confusion in discourses about emotion in gender training for peacekeepers, and how contradiction is managed or not managed through the pedagogical endeavour. Training practices prompt trainees to deal with the topic of sexual violence through a prism of emotion, at the same time as military masculinity produces a demand to disavow emotionality. In other words, talking about feelings in gender training disturbs the binary opposition between stoic soldiers and emotional others. This analysis is importantly indebted to Belkin's (2012, 33) identification of military masculinity as structured by contradictions. I argue that the pedagogical practices of training attempt to resolve, or, in Belkin's (2012, 44) terms, to smooth over this contradiction by proposing martial action and a warrior identity as a way of solving the problem of sexual violence. Importantly, this re-assertion of warrior subjectivity is sustained through the confirmation of binary divisions between us and them; protectors and perpetrators. At the same time, I suggest that this attempt to reassert the stoic/emotional binary is rendered incomplete by the persistence of 'excess emotion'; that the humanitarian impulses fostered by an emotional orientation toward the topic of sexual violence are not completely smoothed over or resolved by the affirmation of stoic warrior masculinity. This incomplete resolution of the contradictory emotional demands of gender training can, I argue, be understood as enduring ambivalence, in Bhabha's sense of the term (1994, 160).

To that end, this chapter progresses as follows. First, I lay out the argument that training on conflict-related sexual violence produces an incitement to talk about feelings, and that this demand exists in contradiction with the terms of martial institutions. Next, I examine the pedagogical work that emotions do, discussing the emotional discourses of trainees, and the practices that attempt to resolve or to smooth over this contradiction, suggesting that this work is done through a re-establishment of the binaries of us/them, stoic/emotional, and

warrior/humanitarian. Finally, I explain where I identify excess emotion, and the ways in which this excess sustains ambivalence within the pedagogic enterprise.

### STOIC/EMOTIONAL: TROUBLED BINARIES

In November 2016, I observed a pre-deployment training course for military peacekeepers in a Nordic country. During this course, I spoke at length with one of the training participants, whom I call Lasse. Lasse was an army reservist. He was about to deploy to a peace operation; the latest in a series of deployments he had undertaken to different mission areas. I asked Lasse for his opinion on the gender lecture, which formed one part of the overall course. His response was unenthusiastic, noting that it was 'OK', but that it had not really offered any new information. I probed further, asking Lasse, given his experience in previous missions, what he thought the gender lecture should contain. His response caught me by surprise:

Lasse: One could emphasise that sexual violence really is used as a weapon. One could advise on response mechanisms – like what organisations can help. Otherwise there's nothing you can do when encountering victims, apart from offering condolences.

Aiko: That sounds like a difficult situation.

Lasse: Yeah... The training should tell what one might see in the area of operations. Like what it feels like to see a raped person, or a mutilated person, or a murdered person, or a dead person. Those kinds of things aren't everyday stuff for us. They should say that it might feel bad, and that's normal. At the point when it doesn't feel bad, that's when you need to start worrying.

My sense of surprise at this comment stemmed from the fact that the military environment in which we were in is frequently characterized – both in the literature as well as by military personnel themselves – as an environment of hegemonic military masculinity, where stoicism rules and talking about your feelings is off-limits (Goldstein 2003, 267-9, Barrett 1996, 136). Against this backdrop, I experienced Lasse's introduction of feelings into the conversation as a rupture in dominant discourses. This sense of rupture appeared to be shared: as Lasse finished saying this, one of his course mates walked by, and Lasse invited him to join the conversation with the quip: 'Hey, come join us! Come talk to Aiko about your feelings!' The



chuckles that followed suggested a sense of surprised amusement at the turn the conversation had taken: 'Come talk to Aiko about your feelings'.

This conversation with Lasse stood in contradiction with an understanding of soldiering masculinity as structured through an oppositional positioning of toughness and emotionality, where stoicism characterises military masculinity and emotionality is disavowed. While official military discourses typically construct soldiering masculinity as stoic and unemotional, this conversation suggested that there is something about gender training that incites discourse about emotion, or even that *requires* expressions of emotion from peacekeepers. My field work subsequently demonstrated that this contradiction was not a one-time occurrence, but that gender training (and possibly peacekeeper training more broadly,) consistently produces a vexed relationship between stoicism and emotionality. This contradiction prompted my curiosity: What kinds of feelings circulate in the training setting? How to account for the way in which these feelings trouble prevailing notions of unemotional military masculinity? What pedagogic work do emotions do? Emotion therefore informs my inquiry at two levels. Discourse about feelings constitutes the object of study, but emotion is also a methodological tool, as what animates my curiosity is the sense of 'affective dissonance' that my conversation with Lasse provoked (Hemmings 2012, 148, see also Åhäll 2018). In this section, I first discuss the stoic/emotional binary as characterising military masculinity, and then examine the ways in which training on conflict-related sexual violence encourages peacekeepers to talk about emotion in gender training.

### ***Stoicism and military masculinity***

Military masculinity is typically characterised as structured around a series of binary oppositions, such as masculine/feminine, aggressive/passive, and strong/vulnerable, where attainment of properly masculine status involves embodying the former and rejecting the latter (Belkin 2012, 38, see also Goldstein 2003, Barrett 1996). Albeit the focus of the

literature, and of my analysis, is on military personnel, police officers can also enact forms of military masculinity (see for example, Bevan and MacKenzie 2012). Importantly, these binary oppositions often include a stoic endurance of hardship, as juxtaposed to an emotionality characteristic of femininity.

The structuring binaries of military masculinity are inflected in particular ways in the peacekeeping endeavour and the Nordic context Lasse was speaking from. On the one hand, the peacekeeping mandate these soldiers undertake is structured around an appeal to masculinity as protective of women and feminised civilian populations. Importantly, nascent forms of military peacekeeping masculinity typically valorise restraint over an eagerness for combat (Duncanson 2013, 92, see also Young 2003). The Nordic countries have cultivated an image of the Nordic peacekeeper as particularly apt in peacekeeping, as possessing the traits of being professional, neutral, and calm. This figuration of the Nordic peacekeeper is evident in both official imagery produced by Nordic governments, and in Nordic peacekeepers' self-representations (Mäki-Rahkola and Myrntinen 2014, Haaland 2012, Kronsell 2012, Penttinen 2012).

In many ways, gender training for peacekeepers reproduces the structuring binaries of military masculinity. Training materials on conflict-related sexual violence (see Appendix Three) reveal that training relies on gendered binaries. Training scenarios depict victims of sexual violence as female, and peacekeepers as male, thereby upholding the opposition between masculine/warrior/protector and feminine/civilian/victim. These materials consistently locate sexual violence as a problem of conflict-affected areas, sustaining a binary opposition between us/protectors and them/perpetrators. Importantly for my purposes here, these training curricula also maintain a problem-solving orientation towards the topic, implicitly reproducing the stoic/emotional binary by circumventing discussions of feelings and privileging rational action. Gender training practices have been critiqued for presenting

subject matter in a technical, problem-solving manner, divorced from political considerations, and training curricula on CRSV are no different (Ferguson 2019b, 91, Sexwale 1996, 53).

Such training typically begins with an interactive lecture on the nature and incidence of conflict-related sexual violence, sometimes incorporating video clips. Many training materials then present peacekeepers with short scenarios, which they work in groups to devise responses to. By way of illustrative example, a scenario in a training guide produced by United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM 2014, 26) reads:

A squad-sized patrol is driving along a trail in an uninhabited area approximately three kilometers from the nearest village. They see a partially-clad woman crawling towards the trail and stop to render assistance. She appears to be in a state of shock, but is able to say that she was getting water for her family and was abducted by four armed men and gang-raped. The men wore different mixtures of military-type uniforms and spoke in a language she did not recognize. The rape occurred about 500 meters away from their current location, and she believes the rapists are probably still in that vicinity.

This scenario is typical in both the level of detail it provides and its descriptive tone. The scenarios are concrete and unambiguous, and demand immediate action. Trainees are given contextual facts regarding the operating environment, rules of engagement, and command structure; and must devise an appropriate response to the situation at hand. These exercises reduce the scenario to a problem to be solved, and any references to emotion – such as the woman appearing to be in a state of shock – are promptly circumvented. In this case, the problem posed by emotion is resolved, because the woman is nonetheless able to describe what happened to her. Further, concern for the victim is underplayed by an emphasis on describing the identifying characteristics and location of the perpetrators. In all of this, I suggest, emotion is marked by its ‘absent-presence’ (Boler 1999, v; see also Ahmed, 2004, p.120). It is this type of training design that Lasse alluded to when he pointed out the silences that persist around sexual violence; it does not encourage or require talking about what it feels like to meet a rape victim, nor is it focused on what the patrolling soldiers might do to support the victim.

While I suggest that training curricula reproduce an understanding of military masculinity as stoic rather than emotional, it is worth bearing in mind, as Belkin (2012, 33) urges us to do, that the structuring binaries of military masculinity are not as stable or clear-cut as they might appear (see also Duncanson 2013, Titunik 2008, Morgan 1994). As laid out in Chapter Four, feminist theorisations of emotion already trouble this binary juxtaposition between stoic and emotional. They suggest that rather than understanding stoicism, toughness, or hardness as an absence of emotion, these types of expressions can be understood as a specific type of emotional orientation towards others (Ahmed 2014, 4). Studies of Nordic peacekeepers demonstrate how such stoic emotional expressions are socially produced. Teemu Tallberg (2007), for example, examines the workings of homosociality among a group of Finnish male peacekeepers, and describes how banter, gossip, and the consumption of alcohol are produced as socially accepted ways for men to deal with the stresses of deployment, presumably in lieu of discussing one's emotions. A discourse that does not express emotion is therefore, somewhat paradoxically, an affective discourse and an emotional investment in stoicism. Boler's extensive examination of the role of emotion in education similarly traces the ways in which pedagogy has functioned as a site of the social regulation of expressions of emotion. Boler rightly contends that a demand to disavow emotion is best understood, not as unemotional, but rather a specific, politically informed coding of emotion: 'Simply stating that one does not express emotion in the classroom when in the role of authority is a culturally coded form of denial about what counts as "emotion"' (1999, 148). Accordingly, what is at stake in defining military masculinity as stoic is properly understood not as a lack of emotion per se, but rather as '*proliferating* discourses that define emotion by negation' (Boler 1999, 142, emphasis added). Such discourses do not evacuate emotion, so much as they produce what are and are not acceptable emotions to feel and/or express.

Indeed, military educators and trainers routinely implement pedagogical strategies to manage the emotional investments and orientations of military personnel, even though these

strategies are not typically understood as dealing with emotion. During a gender training-of-trainers course that I observed in the Nordic region, participants were asked to consider training design from the point of view of the different domains of learning outlined in Bloom's taxonomy (see for example, Martin and Briggs 1986). The instructors noted that many different kinds of training involve cognitive, affective, and psycho-motor skills, providing as an example how recruits are taught to clean their weapons. This training requires, the instructor explained, a *cognitive* understanding of how the weapon works, the requisite *psycho-motor* skills to carry out the cleaning, and, importantly, the belief, or *affective* investment, in the importance of cleaning a weapon regularly. This training example demonstrates that military trainers and educators are aware of the fact that pedagogic projects aim to manage the affective lives of trainees. What is at stake in stoic military masculinity is therefore not a blanket refusal of emotion, but the operation of 'dominant discourses within a given local site [that] determine what can and cannot be felt and/or expressed' (Boler 1999, 142).

### ***An incitement to discourse***

Not only does the stoic/emotional binary not hold conceptually; an empirical examination of actual training practices suggests a further contradiction. Namely, some training on conflict-related violence, in practice encourages, or even requires, trainees to talk about their feelings. In courses that I observed, feelings often became 'something to say', resembling a Foucauldian confessional practice (Foucault 1998, 32, see also Fejes 2013). One of the ways in which trainers encourage participants to talk about feelings is through the use of video clips in training. This training practice is often suggested by gender training curricula, and was advocated by the gender trainers I spoke with. The rationale for it was described by trainers as two-fold: video provides variation in the mode of delivery and therefore pre-empts boredom, but it also provides a sense of how things 'really are on the ground', evoking a claim to authenticity (on the epistemic authority of documentaries, see for example van Munster

and Sylvest 2015). As Puechguirbal explains, the use of video in training is thought to enable ‘trainees to see other “realities”’ (2003, 117). Though trainers themselves explained their desire to incorporate video into training on these grounds, my observations of training suggest that the use of video also serves as a technique to incite participants to talk about their feelings.

For example, during the gender training-of-trainers course I observed in a Nordic country in March 2017, the class watched a documentary titled *The Greatest Silence* (2007) on wartime rape in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In this film, producer and director Lisa F. Jackson – a white woman from the United States – travels in the DRC, interviewing victims and self-professed perpetrators of sexual violence. The victim testimonies are highly emotive: the detailed descriptions of violent acts and close-up shots of tear-stained faces invite the viewer into personal stories, to witness suffering and partake in grief, in the familiar ‘representational economy’ described by critical literature on conflict-related sexual violence (Mertens 2019, 669). The film maker herself tries to draw linkages between sexual violence across different contexts. She inserts herself in what Robin May Schott calls ‘the circle of harm’, beginning each interview by telling her own story of having been gang raped thirty years earlier in the United States (2015, 137). In this sense, the documentary appeals to a common sense of humanity while exposing harm, trauma, and suffering wrought by sexual violence. The film is action-oriented in its message: it begs the audience to take action to prevent sexual violence from occurring.

This documentary forms a part of the regular curriculum for the gender training-of-trainers course. The course director, who I call Vera, mentioned that in a previous iteration of the course, the film had been screened in the evening, with no debriefing after the viewing. Vera found this arrangement unsatisfactory, because the documentary is, as she described it, horrible and upsetting, and students need to be able to debrief the film after watching it. In

other words, Vera described the film as productive of emotion, and regarded this emotion as something that needs to be addressed. She was of course accurate in this assessment – the upset produced by the film was palpable in the classroom, and was voiced by participants in subsequent conversations as well as in their course feedback.

Following the screening of the documentary, the atmosphere in the classroom was sombre. Many students mentioned that they found the film difficult to watch, and their shock circulated through utterances such as ‘How can this happen?’. These reactions were reflected in the course evaluation questionnaire, where trainees mentioned that the documentary ‘touched me deeply’, ‘really influenced me’, and was an ‘eye opener’. In other words, these reflections on the documentary demonstrate a sense of having been touched by the film. The emotions that the film evoked were described by students as ‘sad’, ‘terrible’, ‘scary’, and ‘powerful’. The viewing of *The Greatest Silence* catered precisely towards the emotional shortcomings of training that Lasse identified. While Lasse himself was not involved in this course, one of the students in their feedback form pointed to the ways in which the course responded to the training need Lasse had discussed with me months earlier: ‘This [film] can be used also for the soldiers that are [sent] out to [the] mission area to prepare them [for] what they can encounter and prepare them to meet these difficult questions’. In other words, the viewing of the film was seen as productive of a discussion of emotions. Importantly, this pedagogical engagement with emotion centres the person who witnesses the violence, embodied as the Global North peacekeeper (Razack 2007).

I suggest that this discourse around emotion is not necessarily an automatic product of the film itself, or the topic of wartime rape on its own. Rather, the way in which the film was presented amounted to an ‘incitement to discourse’ about emotion (Foucault 1998, 17). The class was warned prior to viewing that the film was emotionally distressing, a few shed tears during its viewing, and many spoke of their emotions after. Vera introduced the film to the

class and, in voicing her concern about the upsetting nature of the film, could be read (as I suspect Lasse read me in our encounter) as embodying the kind of feminine nurturance and empathy that invited students to address their feelings (Kaplan 1994). Talking about feelings became the norm in the classroom, and it would have felt inappropriate not to display concern, or to make light of the topic in this setting. In this way, the training invited or even compelled students to discuss emotional reactions to the film: it would have been difficult to report not being touched by the film.

The feelings of upset were coupled with efforts to understand what we had seen: How to make sense of these overwhelming feelings? What purpose do they serve in the training course? One student summarised in her learning diary: 'The document[ary] we saw in the morning was very awakening and brought up lots of emotions and thoughts. It was horribl[e] to watch it but still it was good to learn about these things'. In other words, there was an awareness that this film, and the feelings it evoked were important, they served a purpose, they were part of a learning process. This feeling was echoed by many students, who mentioned that the movie was 'very important', and provided a 'powerful message and motivator'. The students were reporting that the movie had *touched* them, in the sense that it produced emotion; and that it had *moved* them, in that it motivated them to act upon their knowledge of wartime rape.

This training practice, screening a documentary about conflict-related sexual violence, therefore encouraged peacekeepers to talk about their feelings. The incitement to discourse about emotion produced a confusing demand in an environment of hegemonic masculinity; it troubled the expectation that soldiers would embrace stoicism and disavow emotionality. However, as I suggest in the next section, this pedagogical project also contained strategies of smoothing over this contradiction, for resolving emotional responses in ways that domesticate knowledge about CRSV to the demands of martial institutions.



## EMOTIONAL PEDAGOGY: TOUGH GUYS AND MARTIAL FRAMES

So far, I have suggested that training on conflict-related sexual violence produces a contradictory demand of peacekeepers. Peacekeepers are predominantly military personnel, expected to embody norms of military masculinity. At the same time, this training produces an incitement to talk about one's feelings, in a move that troubles the constitutive stoicism of military masculinity. In many ways, this contradiction can be read as part of the larger contradiction of peacekeeping, which asks soldiers trained in war-fighting to take on peacemaking and humanitarian tasks (Whitworth 2004, Fetherston and Nordstrom 1995). It requires them to display both an emotionally infused humanitarianism, as well as the stoicism of military masculinity. Indeed, literature on peace operations has highlighted that soldiers and police officers deployed on peace operations navigate contradictory demands of their subjectivity and performance by opting for either 'warrior' or 'humanitarian' strategies (Miller and Moskos 1995, see also Bevan and MacKenzie 2012, Razack 2004). In this section, I examine how the contradiction between stoicism and emotionality plays out in the pedagogical encounter of training, asking: What kinds of knowledges about violence does emotion produce? How are the contradictory demands of stoicism/emotionality and warrior/humanitarian strategies managed or smoothed over?

### ***Towardness and awayness***

To return to the viewing of *The Greatest Silence* during the gender training-of-trainers course, though being touched and moved by this documentary were common features of the emotional scripts that circulated, it seemed that there were two different directions in which students were moved. These emotional reactions can be understood as establishing orientations towards others, producing or undoing boundaries and subject positions. Ahmed explains: 'Emotions are relational: they involve (re)actions or relations of 'towardness' or 'awayness' in relation to such subjects' (2014, 8). The students' reactions of horror, pity, guilt,

and disgust seemed to combine in different ways to move them either toward or away from the subjects represented in the documentary. The emotional responses were, in other words, marked by ambivalence.

On the one hand, trainees described their reactions in terms that placed themselves within the world of the documentary. Comments such as: ‘What I learned was a reminder that the world is not [a] very nice place to live, especially for female persons’, combined with the admission that it ‘made me ashamed to be a man’ suggest that the viewer is somehow complicit, through his manhood, in the acts of violence depicted in the documentary.<sup>27</sup> Such feelings prompted classroom conversations that were grounded in attempts to situate the peacekeeper self within the world of the documentary, and to explore how the presence of peacekeepers impacted on the dynamics of sexual violence. Consequently, students raised questions of sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by peacekeepers against the peace-kept population. Participants noted that SEA fell on a continuum of harms experienced by the local population, and that at the very least, their responsibility was to make sure that peacekeepers did not add to these harms. Further, such feelings prompted some students to consider the needs and wishes of the victims of wartime rape, leading them to question whether the UN should really be paying to send tens of thousands of troops to conflict areas to conduct military patrols, and whether that money would not be better spent in providing medical and psychosocial support to victims instead (uncannily echoing arguments put forward by some critical feminist scholars, see for example Whitworth 2004, 186). In other words, an emotional script that locates the peacekeeper self within the world of the documentary appeared to lend itself to situating one’s own role and responsibility vis-à-vis

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<sup>27</sup> As discussed in Chapter Six, trainers often seek to manage this sense of shared responsibility for male violence. Some do so by screening documentaries that depict male rape victims, such as the 2011 documentary *They Slept with Me* produced by the Refugee Law Project. Discussions with trainers suggests that they seek to highlight the existence of male victims both to add to the gravity of the problem (it is not ‘only’ a women’s issue); as well as to assuage male guilt by allowing them to know themselves not only as perpetrators but also potential victims (see also Duriesmith 2017, Kirby 2013).

the violences depicted in the documentary, in an impulse that I consider prompts a movement *toward* the subjects of the documentary.

In contrast, other reactions involved an effort to maintain a distance to the subjects of the documentary, ranging from a move to keep one's own subjectivity outside this 'circle of harm', to forceful expressions of disgust (Schott 2015, 137). This kind of distancing began with how Vera, the course convenor, introduced the film. Her framing of the film suggested that the phenomenon of wartime rape would come as new and shocking to the trainees, belying an assumption that the corporeal experience of sexual violence was a reality previously unknown to them. The trainees were positioned in Vera's framing as outsiders to the violence, rather than as subjects already having experienced or perpetrated it. Accordingly, some students concluded in their learning logs that what they learned from the film was: 'Different cultures behave differently,' and that 'war, as we take it in western countries, is something different in other places'. These types of comments demonstrate the ways in which wartime rape comes to be known as a problem that is essentially foreign and located outside their sphere of existence, allowing them to feel a sense of moral superiority (Razack 2007). It facilitates an understanding of sexual violence as inhering to peace-kept societies, suggesting that peace-kept populations are inherently lacking and potentially unsalvageable. Such dehumanising and racialised discourses, as documented in a number of studies, lend themselves to an apathetic attitudes towards peacekeeping tasks (Henry 2015, 385, Jennings 2019, 35). In perhaps the most brutal articulation of this logic, one student responded to the film in their course feedback form: 'Proves my motto, that is Crap Obeys Gravity [sic] and the smell of it spreads around the continent'. The movement *away* from the subjects of wartime rape is painfully clear in this last quote, which portrays the African continent (we are led to understand that the movement of gravity analogises movement southwards) as characterised by 'Crap', in imagery that violently weaves together racist associations of a dark continent with the smell of faeces. In other words, in my reading of this statement, wartime rape is portrayed as an

essentially African problem, and one that is productive of racist disgust, linked to colonial imaginaries of filth and revulsion (Mertens 2019, 668, Henry 2015, 385, Belkin 2012, 127, Bhabha 1994, 112).

My decision to reproduce this last particularly vile comment here was not taken lightly. I feel uneasy, both for re-enacting its violence, as well as for singling out for excoriation a single comment from an anonymous feedback form. Nonetheless, I feel an obligation to discuss the comment specifically, as it is indicative of more widespread, if often less explicitly articulated, logics. This statement demonstrates Razack's point, that when violence is presented through 'a decontextualized and dehistoricized narrative, the traumatized peacekeeper's story imports race into the very meaning of morality' (2003, 207). Training instructors sometimes make the effort to mention that wartime rape is not *only* an African problem – as they did in this Nordic training-of-trainers course, as well as in other courses I have observed. At the same time, such comments sit in tension with other statements made by – often the same – instructors who point out that CRSV is *mainly* a problem in African countries (statements sometimes also included in training curricula, see for example PSOTC 2014, p.116). This tension does not transcend the 'stickiness' of the association of sexual violence with the African continent (Ahmed 2010b, 30). This much has been evident in a number of courses that I have observed, such as when a multinational group of European participants attending a gender course in the Western Balkans balked at the suggestion that sexual violence could occur in their home contexts, articulating their protest in the terms: 'This is not Africa!'. Such statements emerge as particularly paradoxical, considering the wealth of evidence about sexual violence, including CRSV, that occurs and has occurred in Europe. Ahmed writes: 'how we recognize sexism or racism here can be a way of not recognizing it there. A location can be a reduction' (2017, 29). In this case, a similar logic applies, in amended form: how we recognise sexism *there* can be a way of not recognising it *here*. How we recognise *sexism* there can be a way of not recognising *racism* here. The location still does the work of reduction. In

this case, the location of wartime rape in a geographically separated zone facilitates a movement *away* from the subjects of the film; and the script of ‘horror and alterity’, as identified in the critical literature on CRSV, persists (Mertens 2019, 669).

The pedagogic work that trainees’ emotional reactions to the documentary does can therefore be described as ambivalent, or as producing contradictory movements. On the one hand, movements towards the scene of violence, either by identification with victims or with perpetrators, imply what Laura Miller and Charles Moskos (1995) describe as humanitarian strategies employed by peacekeepers, grounded in empathy and a desire to examine the problem from the point of view of peace-kept populations. On the other hand, movements away imply revulsion, and possibly apathy on the part of peacekeepers. Such movements of awayness imply Miller and Moskos’ descriptions of warrior strategies, which rely on sustaining fundamental distinctions between ‘us’ and ‘them’. In other words, emotional responses lend themselves to two different and mutually contradictory kinds of knowledge about sexual violence. The pedagogical project of gender training proposes, I suggest next, a script for navigating these contradictory impulses, and in so doing, for smoothing over the contradiction between stoicism and emotionality.

### ***Warriors and humanitarians***

The contradictory emotional responses of trainees to the topic of sexual violence described above suggest a need for the management of emotion at the pedagogical site of training. On the one hand, the point of training is to convince peacekeepers that sexual violence is not simply an inevitable by-product of war. Peacekeeping mandates, with their focus on protection of civilians and a responsibility to protect, involve humanitarian action (Bergman Rosamond and Kronsell 2018, Duncanson 2013). Rather than recoiling in disgust, or sinking into apathy, the aim of the training is to convince peacekeepers to act, to convince them to move towards the scene of violence (see for example, Cammaert 2019, 89). This training

occurs in the context of broader policy shifts aimed at challenging the notion that sexual violence is an inevitable by-product of war, but rather a strategy or tactic of war, and one that can and should be addressed (Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2013, Kirby 2012). Accordingly, trainers speak to the broader humanitarian mandates of peacekeeping missions. For example, an instructor on the gender course I observed in the Western Balkans in 2017 spoke about the military's response to CRSV, that it is, as his presentation slides declared: 'Morally the right thing to do!!! If we are not acting to Protect Civilian [sic] – why are we there?'. This remark is in keeping with the aim of training to convince peacekeepers that they have a duty to prevent and respond to sexual violence. Viewed in this light, the incitement to talk about emotions can be read as a strategy to convince trainees to care about the issue. If trainees agree that sexual violence is horrible, this constitutes the first step in convincing them to act upon it. This is driven by a perception of training designers that what is needed for peacekeepers to address sexual violence in conflict is 'a switch in the mindset' (Cammaert 2019, 92).

This switching of mindsets is, however, not simply achieved through an appeal to humanitarian impulses. I argue that peacekeeper training proposes martial action as the appropriate response to CRSV, thereby smoothing over confusion about whether soldiers are emotional or stoic through an affirmation of warrior strategies. This emotional incitement is subsequently channelled to an understanding of the phenomenon as a military problem. For example, in the Nordic training-of-trainers course, the viewing of *The Greatest Silence* was followed by presentations on CRSV. One trainer's presentation slide read: 'Conflict-related SGBV is used by our adversaries as: command and control; strategic communication; and biological weapon/force generation'. He went on to explain that rape is a reward for soldiers, and thus a feature of the 'command and control' structure of the warring group. Further, it is used as 'strategic communication' to send out a message of fear to the civilian population in the conflict area as well as a message of control to adversaries. Finally, the spread of HIV/AIDS through rape is a 'biological weapon' used to decimate the affected community, whereas

orphans and children born of rape can be recruited into the armed groups, and hence rape also serves the purpose of 'force generation' for armed groups. As another instructor on this course summarised: 'Armed terrorist groups are using an operational gender perspective to achieve their political and military goals'. In both cases, the trainers sought to domesticate the problem to the military by describing it through strategic terminology. This framing of wartime rape as a military strategy or tactic is dominant but not comprehensive. Many of the prescribed training materials and training practice do mention the consequences of wartime rape for the individual victim/survivors as well as for the society. Nonetheless, the dominance of the martial frame serves to emphasise that the *reason* peacekeepers are concerned about the phenomenon is a military one. In Enloe's terms, the framing of rape as a martial problem works towards its 'remilitarization' (2000, 109). The significance of this discursive move is, I suggest, to channel the emotional impetus towards 'doing something' about wartime rape into martial action.

Further, the framing of wartime rape as a purposive and goal-oriented action by 'the enemy' serves to foster an understanding of gendered violence as committed by 'others', enabled by what is portrayed as a barbaric racialised sexuality in combination with illegal tactics of war (Mertens 2019, 666, Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2013, 31). This frame serves to obscure the gendered violence committed by peacekeepers themselves, placing SEA outside of the framework of conflict-related sexual violence. This learning outcome often requires disciplining the sense-making processes of the students, and is not always successful. In the Nordic training-of-trainers course, the lecture on CRSV mentioned both SEA and sexual harassment, but in very narrow terms. First, the instructor outlined that it is important to avoid sexual harassment and SEA in order to ensure that intervening forces would 'set a good example' for local forces. Second, he continued, these were separate matters and *not* CRSV. This discursive framing circumscribes the violence that is discussed. It addresses reactions such as that mentioned in the previous section that witnessing the horror of wartime rape

‘made me ashamed to be a man’, by allowing the trainees to know (however unfounded the claim may be) that they are implicated in what they have seen only as protectors, not as complicit in the perpetration of sexual violence (see also Anderson 2012, 15).

Framing wartime rape as a military problem, and one that is committed by enemies, is supported by prescribed solutions that accommodate the impulse to ‘do something’ about the problem. The goal of the training for the military is to use emotional responses to the phenomenon as a motivator for the troops to take *martial action* against warring parties, in keeping with a warrior strategy (Miller and Moskos 1995). As such, the emotion must be carefully managed, not necessarily to helping victim/survivors so much as to undertaking military action. The training therefore provides concrete but carefully circumscribed actions to undertake. The prescribed courses of action typically involve apprehending perpetrators; using military patrols to protect women and girls; devising early warning mechanisms of CRSV; reporting; and liaising with other actors, including community organisations (for a more detailed enumeration of suggested courses of action, see DPKO/DFS 2010, Anderson 2012).

One notable feature of this training is its focus on organigrams and reporting structures. Many training sessions on CRSV dedicate a large portion of time available to reviewing organisational charts, detailing who (including the civilian and police components of peacekeeping missions, as well as humanitarian organisations and non-governmental organisations) does what and to whom different issues can be referred. The underlying point: the role of the military in relation to CRSV is to report, not to investigate. In this way, the training reels in the more proactive impulses of students, who often jump to conclusions such as, when encountering victims: ‘They must tell us who did this to them so that we can catch them!’. The disciplining of such impulses may be desirable, as few would argue that military personnel (who are mostly men) untrained in victim-centred responses to SGBV should be encouraged to interview victims of sexual violence. However, such moves also indicate how



training serves to channel empathetic emotional responses to the production of military subjectivities that follow a martial logic. In other words, it resolves emotional discomfort by presenting martial action as the resolution.

The training also suggests more proactive measures than reporting, including measures that involve physical action for the peacekeepers. One such example is that of early warning mechanisms. In these, the peace-kept population and the peacekeepers devise ways for the population to communicate with the peacekeepers in the event of an impending threat, for example, through radio channels, drumming, or smoke signals. Such scenarios position military actors as ready to intervene with martial solutions in the event of an attack, and suggest that security is achievable through military patrols (Higate and Henry 2009, 86). In other words, it positions the peacekeepers in ways that enable them to use force to address the problem. Such strategies reassure peacekeepers that the emotional discomfort that they may feel as a result of witnessing sexual violence can be resolved through warrior strategies. Consider for example the remarks of Patrick Cammaert, a retired Dutch general who has been instrumental in the design and delivery of CRSV training for peacekeepers (2019, 90):

you have to remain very unpredictable, very mobile and quick with a strong, robust posture. It scares people off and gives the impression of “I have to be careful with those guys, because those guys are tough.”

In these remarks, Cammaert is responding to a question of how peacekeepers can prevent sexual violence. His framing positions peacekeepers who take action to prevent and respond to sexual violence as strong, as having a robust posture, and as generally tough guys; all attributes which are commensurate with traditional concepts of military masculinity. Cammaert then goes on to lament that many countries’ peacekeepers are reluctant to act on sexual violence because they are ‘risk-averse’ (2019, 92). A binary opposition is thus confirmed, between tough, manly peacekeeping countries whose peacekeepers are willing to take risks, and feminised peacekeepers who lack this courage or moral resolve (see also Higate and Henry 2009, 118).

Although the training suggests responses in keeping with the logic of military engagement, training participants often suggest solutions that are not grounded in the use of force. For example, in several of the courses I observed, some participants worked in the medical corps as nurses. Their first reaction was that they wanted to provide medical assistance to victims, and wondered why they were not provided with post-exposure prophylaxis and other supplies needed to provide medical assistance to a victim of sexual violence. The instructors told them that providing medical care to the peace-kept was not part of their mandate; that they were on the mission to provide medical care to the peacekeepers and that the local population should be referred to non-governmental organisations in the area (as also observed by Miller and Moskos 1995, 624). The logic at work in restraining the desire to provide help to victims is not solely one of containment, but also one of serving larger protection goals. Instructors explained that because the military are legitimate targets according to the laws of war, their close involvement with peace-kept populations can expose civilians to martial violence. One participant succinctly summarised this learning in her student presentation: 'When military units provide direct assistance and engage in civilian activities they blur the line between civilian and military targets and can place civilians at risk'. By evoking both the military mandate of the peacekeepers, as well as appealing to the safety of the population, the instructors sought to contain humanitarian strategies for peacekeepers, re-affirming warrior subjectivities.

In short, training on CRSV enacts an emotional pedagogy. It seeks to convince peacekeepers to care about the issue of sexual violence, and in so doing, encourages them to talk about their feelings in response to the topic. This incitement to talk about emotion produces a contradiction, insofar as it violates the stoicism traditionally considered an attribute of military masculinity. The training then provides some resolution to this confusion, in proposing martial action and warrior subjectivity as an appropriate response. In so doing, the training re-establishes the oppositional binaries of us/them, protector/perpetrator, and

warrior/humanitarian. However, as I discuss in the next section, training practice demonstrates this resolution to be incomplete; the contradiction is not decisively smoothed over, and ambivalence persists as to peacekeepers' sense of self, the nature of sexual violence, and what should be done about it.

### EXCESS EMOTION: KNOWING OTHERWISE?

The regulatory moves described in the previous section signal the ways through which the military institution manages feeling through an emotional pedagogy. This regulatory pedagogy is, however, not always successful. In this section, I examine moments of instability for this discourse, by tracing disagreements and ruptures: the excess emotion that endures. Against the backdrop of stoic masculinity, I described my encounter with Lasse as a disruption of dominant discourses. Lasse's introduction of feelings to the conversation can be described as the surfacing of excess emotion: that which exceeds the social boundaries of the organisation; that which does not fit. Emotions are socially produced and regulated; social norms prescribe how one is supposed to feel in a given situation (Ahmed 2014, 10; see also Boler, 1999; Jaggar, 1997). For example, after watching *The Greatest Silence*, we the viewers were *supposed* to feel upset and horrified. Alison Jaggar (1997, 396) describes emotions that do not conform to what is socially expected as 'outlaw emotions', whereas Ahmed describes the non-conforming emotional subject as an 'affect alien' (2010a, 30). Jaggar and Ahmed's descriptions of emotions out of place are similar to that of my characterisation of excess emotion. However, Jaggar and Ahmed are both speaking about disavowed feelings that stem from an experience of oppression by marginalised subjects such as Ahmed's feminist kill-joys, unhappy queers, and melancholic migrants. This is a category which I feel ill at ease extending to describe uniformed peacekeepers, given the situational and material power they exercise. As such, I continue to privilege the term excess emotion to describe disjunctures and

disagreements with the dominant narrative. In this final section, I ask: In what ways does excess emotion manifest? What does this enduring excess signify?

### ***Enduring excess***

One way in which the regulatory techniques of training fail to provide resolution to emotional discomfort, at least for some students, is in the suggestion that the forms of violence committed by peacekeepers are entirely separable from those committed by warring parties. One participant in the gender advisors' course I observed in East Africa protested upon being told that addressing SEA was not in the gender advisors' remit, insisting that, from the view of the peace-kept, the distinction of whether they were attacked by a local armed group or by a peacekeeper was not the most salient factor of their experience. She proclaimed: 'It cannot be that we encourage troops to violate the local population while we claim to protect them from abuse committed among themselves!' In a similar manner, in the Nordic training-of-trainers course, one student explained in her learning diary:

There exists an internal-external continuum in the frameworks related to CRSV, from harassment that happens inside missions to actual SGBV that happens external to the mission. Between these exists SEA, which relates to abuse by members of missions. Understanding the continuum and the fact that gender topics are not just related to mission activities, should be discussed in any training I will have on SV.

For these students, their commitment to keeping the violence committed by peacekeepers in their analytical vision appears to have contributed to an enduring feeling of outrage and responsibility. This emotion did not find resolution in the suggestion that the violence committed by 'us' could be completely separated from the violence of 'them'.

Other training participants exposed how limitations posed on them by institutional mandate were an insufficient resolution to their impulse to 'do something' to help victims. During the course of my observation, I heard several accounts from instructors, in front of their classes, about how their military mandate did not accommodate their emotional reactions, and how they had stepped outside of their military role to pursue what they felt was the right course

of action (such strategies were also observed by Miller and Moskos 1995, 631). One military instructor on the multinational course in the Western Balkans, who I call Mark, detailed how on deployment his task was to implement 'quick impact projects', which are designed to help the local population in the area of operations and thereby win their trust and support. Mark had to choose between allocating funds to support a school or support an orphanage. He had been advised that he should support the school, because that would win over the parents of the school children (the orphans, by implication, had no parents whose hearts and minds needed to be won). Mark ruminated on this decision, lamenting that the choice to support the school over the orphanage 'wasn't the right choice morally, but it was the right choice tactically'. However, he had subsequently made a private donation and volunteered at the orphanage: 'I did have to go do something off my own back with the orphans because I felt guilty. The lesson of CIMIC [civil-military cooperation] is to not get emotionally attached, but that's impossible'. Mark's account exposed the ways in which his military mandate could not accommodate his desire to help. His emotional disposition was in excess of it. Indeed, numerous studies have demonstrated that soldiers join militaries for a number of reasons, one of which they report as a humanitarian desire to help populations in need (Whitworth 2004, 151).

While military organisations may not have the mandate to assist victims, police peacekeepers have this mandate, and at least some are trained in victim-centred responses. However, while police officers have the mandate to assist, they may lack resources. I observed one multinational police training course on victim-centred approaches to CRSV in West Africa. Like much of military training, this training devoted large portions of time to examining institutional mandates, mainly in the form of referral pathways. This aspect of the training sought to clarify how the police work with victims' services: medical care, safe houses, social services, legal aid, and so forth. It outlined how police response was only one aspect of the response to cases of sexual violence, and that individual police officers should not be

responsible for addressing all of the victim's needs. However, unlike military training, where NGOs and women's groups are often presented as a reliably present panacea to all otherwise unmet needs, this police training explicitly addressed the other organisations' lack of capacity, or even non-existence. An instructor who I call Angela noted, as she was presenting the referral pathways: 'but sometimes the institutions we are referring to them are even worse off', alluding to institutional resource shortages. She coupled this with examples of police officers exceeding their role within this formal division of labour, such as using a police vehicle to drive victims home from the hospital, even though this should be social services' role. A participant pointed out that using the police vehicle for this purpose was against organisational rules, to which Angela simply responded: 'This is where your humanitarian instincts kick in'.

Over the course of the two-week police training course, participants and instructors alike recounted stories reminiscent of Mark's, except what was transcended here were resource limitations as well as limitations posed by institutional mandate. Two students – both policewomen – mentioned that they currently had victims of SGBV living with them in their homes, and were providing care in the form of food, shelter, counselling, and medical care. Both had undertaken to do so at their own initiative, albeit with the approval of social services, which lacked the resources to provide such care. One woman, who had taken in an eight-year old girl who had been forced by her mother to sell sex, reflected: 'You have to focus on the best interests of the child. We know it is not right [that I should take this child in], but we must protect the child'. At this juncture, Angela chimed in:

Who here has not parted with some of his [sic] own money to help victims? Once they brought somebody to my office, she had been selling herself, she was not quite right in the head. She was in menses and her clothes were stained with blood. I have a whole suitcase of things in my office that I could give her. I have sanitary towels, I have clothes. We are not supposed to be doing this. But we are tormented by the plight of the victims. What are you going to do?

In other words, what was privileged in these accounts was the underlying institutional mandate of providing a police response to sexual violence that is centred on the needs of the victims. The officers who recounted these stories had transcended constraints of institutional resources and divisions of labour by taking on themselves the responsibility and often also the cost of providing for the needs of the victim. By recounting these stories, they brought into sharp relief the shortcomings of their own institution in providing needed assistance. Their excess emotion manifested in these stories of taking on personal responsibility in the face of institutional shortcomings.

### ***Knowing otherwise?***

It would be disingenuous to pretend that I was not deeply touched by the stories of Mark, Angela, and many training participants in their attempts to do whatever they could to help people in vulnerable situations. Nonetheless, I do not extend this admission to a claim that a humanitarian emotional orientation is ethically unproblematic, or that warrior strategies are always misguided. My own emotional response to the West African policewoman recounting taking in a child victim of sexual abuse is informed by the gendered assumption that a girl child must be safe from further exploitation and abuse when placed under the care of a woman – an assumption I have no way of verifying. At a more fundamental level, it is worth bearing in mind the dangerous political potential of emotions such as pity, sympathy and empathy, given their selective application to those we deem ‘deserving’ and the function they can serve in affirming our own sense of moral superiority, or at least non-complicity (Boler 1999, 159; see also Razack, 2007; Sontag, 2004). What is more, it can hardly be read as surprising that military training prescribes military solutions. It is worth noting that the concerns, such as potentially turning civilians into military targets through close association with peacekeeping troops, are genuine and likely reasonable. In other words, I do not suggest that an empathetic emotional orientation is necessarily the normatively superior one.

This being said, I want to return to the question of what this excess emotion signifies, and argue that it exposes the limits of martial thinking. As detailed in the above examples, these admissions of exceeding institutional mandates and resources exposed the fundamental lack that underlies peacekeepers' interventions on conflict-related sexual violence. The discussion around SEA also rejected efforts to remove peacekeeper violence from the field of vision when it comes to CRSV. In other words, these discursive moves draw tentative linkages between the peacekeeping endeavour and, per Razack, 'peacekeeping violence, Western complicity, [and] the illusory foundations of the New World Order' (2003, 207). They provoke moments of instability in a discursive frame that insists on holding these questions apart. Through the pedagogical work that these emotions do, in exposing limits and shortcomings in prescribed solutions, excess emotion can provide the basis of knowing conflict-related sexual violence otherwise, potentially serving as, in Boler's terms, 'a site of political resistance' (1999, 108).

Further, the persistence in talking about emotion chips away at the hegemonic masculinity at work. That the military relies on ostensibly unemotional orientations was explained by one of my interlocutors:

You can't talk about feelings, like what it means to shoot someone. If you did, the whole organisation would unravel. That's why so many of these guys have problems when they come home from deployments.

In other words, this destabilising move has implications not only for how sexual violence is understood, but it also exposes the silences that enable the exercise of military violence, and the consequences of post-traumatic stress disorder for those who wield it (Whitworth 2008). Enduring excess emotion therefore exposes the unstable foundations on which CRSV training is predicated: it collapses firm distinctions between peacekeeper violence and conflict-related violence; it undermines the hegemony of unemotional military masculinity. It exposes, in Bhabha's (1994, 160) terms, an ambivalence at the heart of hegemonic discourses of peacekeeping and military intervention. It resists attempts to smooth over the contradiction between peacekeepers as stoic warriors and emotional humanitarians.



If enduring excess troubles the regimes of truth which training (re)produces, what does knowing otherwise do? I suggest that excess emotion signifies cracks in the discourse, moments of instability productive of new questions, but falling short of revolutionary vision. It takes away the sense of emotional resolution offered by framing the problem of sexual violence as one amenable to military solutions; it undermines the sense of clarity offered by a warrior stance, but offers little certainty in its place. Discussions of the shortcomings of institutional mandates and resources are characterised by both the admission of limitations and a sense of powerlessness to change them. The only actions on offer are immediate responses characterised by personal responsibility rather than structural change (Wiegman 2004, 169). In this sense, actions such as taking in a child victim into one's own home are similar to Berlant's characterization of activities that involve the exercise of 'lateral agency', insofar as they provide 'a relief, a reprieve, [but] not a repair' (2011, 117).

## CONCLUSION

This chapter began with a contradiction: the discussion of feelings in an environment of hegemonic masculinity. This contradiction suggested that stoic military masculinity cannot simply be taken as a given, but rather that its production must be analytically accounted for (Belkin 2012). It prompted an interrogation of what pedagogical work emotion does in training on conflict-related sexual violence. In this chapter, I have drawn on a conceptualisation of emotions as social facts that have political effects through the ways in which they create subjectivities, and position subjects vis-à-vis the social world (Ahmed 2014, Boler 1999). I have argued that feelings matter in gender training, because they are implicated in how investments in certain institutional cultures and mandates, in certain politics, are produced. My analysis demonstrates that training is productive of emotion, and that this emotion stems from and reinforces investments in certain discursive constructions. Training on CRSV, I argue, first incites a discourse on emotion, provoking a contradiction between stoic military

masculinity and talking about one's feelings. The pedagogical project of training then provides a way of smoothing over this contradiction; suggesting an investment in martial action and warrior subjectivity as a way of containing emotional or humanitarian impulses (Miller and Moskos 1995). Training, in this account, deploys an emotional pedagogy that encourages investment in understanding sexual violence as a military problem, and one that is amenable to the use of martial force. These findings demonstrate one aspect of the politics of knowledge circulation through gender training: they provide insight into how the purportedly gender-progressive initiative of training the troops on CRSV is domesticated into the military context, and how this knowledge is transformed to serve the military institution in the process.

However, my investigation of the workings of emotional pedagogy also points to ruptures in the discourse, to moments of instability. I read these ruptures as excess emotion: they reveal that which the training, and the pedagogical discourse it forwards, cannot contain (Ahmed 2010a, Jaggar 1997). I suggest that the persistence of this excess emotion exposes contradiction and ambivalence within the peacekeeping endeavour more generally, and in particular in relation to interventions against CRSV. There is little to suggest that such excess emotion leads to a meaningful challenge or transformation of the structures of peacekeeping or the martial institutions that dominate it: excess emotion is not necessarily a transformative force. Nonetheless, it sustains the ambivalence of peacekeeping discourse, and resists a smoothing over of its discourses.

The contradictory nature of the emotional discourses that circulate around peacekeeping attest to unresolved tensions within gender training. They suggest that the knowledge about gender that the curriculum puts forth is neither comprehensive nor ultimately fixed. They imply an on-going struggle over meaning within the gender training classroom. In the next chapter, I devote attention to how struggles over meaning play out, and what their epistemic and political effects are.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### RESISTANCE: STRUGGLES FOR MEANING IN THE CLASSROOM

*Not all pain is harm, not all pleasure is good.*

- bell hooks (1994, 154)

The previous chapter of this thesis revealed that gender training practices often produce pedagogic experiences and learning that exceed what is explicitly prescribed by training curricula. My examination of training on conflict-related sexual violence suggested that an emotional pedagogy underlies the curriculum, and indicated that this training produces different sense-making processes and a range of options for understanding one's own subject position (Ahmed 2014, Boler 1999). I argued that training on conflict-related sexual violence is characterised by confusing demands on peacekeeper subjectivity with contradictory implications for being and acting in the world as a warrior/humanitarian (Miller and Moskos 1995). In addition to exploring the different political options that knowledges about sexual violence open up, this analysis speaks to the broader importance of paying careful analytical attention to what happens in pedagogical encounters. It confirms that the training enterprise cannot simply be understood as the transfer of knowledge from curriculum or trainer onto students, but rather attests to the intersubjective constitution of knowledge (Freire 2005, 73, Maher 1987, 94, see also Chapter Four). In this chapter, I turn my attention to a more sustained examination of the intersubjective dynamics that are at play in learning gender, through a consideration of resistance in gender training.

The notion that trainees might be indifferent, sceptical, or even hostile to the message of gender training – that they may be resistant to it – has already appeared in previous chapters

of this thesis. This continued theme reflects the fact that resistance in gender training (as distinct from gender training as resistant in the Foucauldian sense, a distinction to which I return below) is a key concern of training developers and trainers; with several studies of peacekeeper training raising the issue (Mackay 2005, 267, Higate 2004, 18, Puechguirbal 2003, 117, see also Chapter Six). Gender trainers often swap stories of resistant trainees in social encounters, both to share response strategies and in search of a sympathetic ear. Many training manuals provide advice to trainers on how to overcome resistance from audiences (see for example, Reimann 2013, 48, Johannsen 2009, 15). The issue of resistance is not confined to peacekeeper training: gender trainers in other institutional settings also highlight the question (Cornwall 2016, 77, Kabeer 1991, 192), and resistance is discussed at some length in the feminist pedagogical literature in reference to higher education settings (Bell, Morrow, and Tastsoglou 1999, 29, Lewis 1992, 168, Lather 1991, 123; see also Chapter Four). Given this pervasive preoccupation with the question of resistance in gender training, I ask: How is resistance performed in gender training? What does resistance tell us about the epistemic and political effects of this training?

I suggest that resistance offers a helpful vantage point from which to examine how gender knowledge is negotiated at the site of pedagogy, and contend that an attentiveness to resistance helps see what articulations of gender knowledge are (more easily) accepted in the peacekeeping endeavour, and what forms of gender knowledge remain contentious. Resistance, in other words, exposes where the challenges to and limits of political possibility lie. In this chapter, I examine how resistance is performed in gender training settings, and how instructors respond to resistance. I argue that resistance is performed through a number of different scripts, not all of which involve explicit disagreement with the aims of gender training. Rather, resistance works in ambiguous ways through joking and laughter, and aims to limit understandings of gender to forms that are politically neutral, heteronormative, and founded in colonial difference.

This being said, resistance is also distinct from refusal. The word connotes friction and struggle rather than a dead end or clean break, meaning that resistance is best understood as a process rather than a conclusion. In agreement with the feminist pedagogical literature, I suggest that resistance to feminist analyses is not necessarily inherently a problem for gender training, but may in fact be fundamental to the pain involved in learning, as alluded to in the quote from hooks which opens this chapter (see also Ferguson 2019b, 37, Britzman 1998, 11).

To that end, this chapter proceeds as follows. In the next section, I provide a conceptualisation of resistance in gender training, explicating the way in which I use the term and the types of resistance I examine in this chapter. Next, I discuss three examples of resistance scripts, describing how they work, how we might interpret their politics, and how trainers understand and respond to these forms of resistance. The concluding section of this chapter then summarises what resistance tells us about the politics of gender training.

### CONCEPTUALISING RESISTANCE: POLITICS AND PERFORMANCE

Resistance is a broad concept, and one that is used to describe many different types of politics. Some remarks are therefore necessary to narrow down the conceptualisation of resistance that informs the analysis in this chapter. This section discusses first the political motivation and effects of resistance, differentiating between resistance as a form of counter-hegemonic politics and resistance to feminist analyses. Next, I examine how resistance is performed, arguing that the types of resistance I examine follow broad patterns or scripts. Finally, I suggest that this conceptualisation of resistance means that resistance is not necessarily only performed by training audiences, but that trainers themselves can resist feminist analyses and arguments in the training setting.

### ***Political ambiguity***

The concept of resistance is marked by political ambiguity. Consider for example the seeming discontinuity between gender trainers' descriptions of audiences hostile to arguments about gender equality as 'resistant', and my suggestion in Chapter Four that feminist pedagogy or gender training might enact a form of subversive, 'resistant' feminist politics per Foucault and Butler. The term is also used in the feminist pedagogical literature in two similarly contradictory senses. One use of the term refers to radical political movements – ranging from the French Resistance (Trimbur 2001, 9) to a 'mass-based feminist resistance struggle' (hooks 1994, 77). The other way in which the term is used is to denote student resistance to such radical political projects, and to the classroom practices these projects inspire. Resistance, in the latter sense of the term, involves the resistance of 'male students to the feminist teacher' (Trimbur 2001, 3), and manifests as "“resisting” students who [do] not want to learn new pedagogical processes, who [do] not want to be in a classroom that [differs] in any way from the norm' (hooks 1994, 9). In other words, the term resistance has been used both to denote the resistance of radical political movements to forms of oppression, and to signify the resistance of students to critical ideas.

Highlighting the political ambiguity of the term resistance, Elizabeth Flynn (2001) argues that educators should differentiate between three different kinds of resistance: strategic, counter-strategic, and reactive resistance. Flynn explains that strategic resistance involves collective or individual resistance against structures of oppression, such as feminist protest, or feminist pedagogical practice. Counter-strategic resistance, in turn, involves 'deliberate attempts by the group in power to oppose or undermine strategic resistance', such as the concerted movement against feminist politics (Flynn 2001, 18). In contrast to these two deliberate types of resistance, Flynn suggests that what is most often at stake in pedagogical encounters is reactive resistance: 'a spontaneous and emotional reaction which may have multiple and conflicting motivations and effects' (2001, 18). Flynn's typology is helpful in that it establishes

political motivations and effects as a means of navigating the ambiguity of the term. Resistance itself is not inherently progressive or regressive; it can be an effect of different political motivations. In this chapter, I use the term resistance in the sense that it is often used by gender trainers and feminist educators, to denote forms of resistance against feminist politics and feminist analyses; forms of resistance that the feminist pedagogical literature characterises as ‘neither liberatory nor benign’ (Prebel 2014, 535).

While I agree with Flynn’s contention that reactive resistance is not necessarily destructive – indeed, it may in fact be a productive dynamic in the classroom – I am uneasy with the notion of drawing a neat distinction between deliberate counter-strategic resistance and spontaneous reactive resistance for both methodological and epistemological reasons. First, my research method, as discussed in Chapter Five, does not lend itself to making pronouncements about whether the performances of resistance in my research archive were produced by conscious and deliberate strategies to undermine the training or trainer, or spontaneous individual reactions. I have no way of determining the authenticity of or level of deliberation underlying such statements. Second, a strict delineation between what is deliberate and what is reactive sits uneasily with the epistemological framing of this study. It implies a level of autonomy and voluntarism that does not quite fit with how resistance works in training settings. This is because resistance is often enacted through fairly predictable patterns or scripts, suggesting that even when it is not articulated as part of a deliberate political strategy, it cannot be understood as a wholly individual reaction.

### ***Scripts and performance***

Understanding resistance as *either* strategic *or* reactive does not map onto the examples of resistance in my research archive. In my observations of training, even seemingly reactive forms of resistance follow fairly predictable scripts. This patterned nature of resistance was brought to my attention in an interview with an NGO trainer I call Alessia, who mentioned

that training participants often make inappropriate comments during or after the training. Alessia said that she entertained the notion of keeping a record of these utterances, and cataloguing the types the comments she heard on a PowerPoint slide. She explained:

I mean, you don't want to open a workshop or training with it, but at some point, if something like that comes out, you might just come up with a nice slide with like, these are some of the things people might say. And they feel uncomfortable about it, and you're like "Oops, yeah..." Just to show that it's, it's a pattern in a way. You know what I mean? That it's something that, yeah, there's some deeper reason for it. It's not just that you're being funny.

Alessia's impression that there is a pattern to the forms that resistance takes finds traction in research that examines resistance in training and educational endeavours. This literature charts forms of resistance, sometimes organising them into typologies.

Emanuela Lombardo and Lut Mergaert provide a succinct example, tabulating forms of resistance in gender training according to the following categories: denial of the need for gender change; trivialising gender equality; and refusing to accept responsibility (2013, 305). The feminist pedagogical literature likewise records forms of student resistance, including the repeated use of tropes such as insisting on hearing 'the other side of the story' in relation to feminist analyses; women students' anger at the suggestion that women as a group are oppressed; and the persistence of 'phallo-centric myth-making' (Lewis 1992, 184). It is worth noting that these characterisations of resistance also rightly highlight the significance of non-linguistic forms of resistance, such as silence and withholding strategies enacted by students, as well as the under-prioritisation and under-resourcing of gender training and feminist educational programmes. However, for the sake of scope, in this chapter I focus on verbalised or active forms of resistance, and the patterns that they take.

I suggest that the patterned nature of resistant statements is significant, and that it can be understood with the help of the sociological notion of social interaction as scripted (Simon and Gagnon 2003, Goffman 1990). Understanding resistant statements as drawing on broader interactional frames suggests that it is too reductive to interpret resistance that does not fall



into the category of a deliberate, conscious politics (i.e. Flynn's counter-strategic resistance) as simply reactive and individual. Rather, the patterning of resistance attests to the availability of existent scripts that provide legible ways of articulating objections to feminist politics. They demarcate a site at which broader struggles over truth claims play out.

Understanding resistant interactions as drawing upon, and producing, social scripts suggests that trainers and training audiences can be read as, extending the theatrical metaphor, *performing* certain roles within these encounters. In reading resistance as performative, I draw on Higate and Henry's (2009, 100-105) characterisation of peacekeepers as engaged in performances of different types of peacekeeper subjectivity, according to established scripts and enacted in specific 'interactional frames' (see also Goffman 1990, Butler 1997).

The notion that resistance involves a performative element was also emphasised by some gender trainers I spoke with. In our interview, an NGO trainer I call Vincent recounted the following story about a training workshop he had facilitated with security sector personnel:

As we were doing the introductions around the room ... one of the prosecutors stood up and said "Hello my name is such and such, I'm the prosecutor from such city, and I believe that if there are no scratches, it's not rape". And that was his business card, the way that he introduced himself to everybody. I honestly don't think that he truly believed that. I think that he needed to establish his own place in the group, and say, you know, that I am a force to be reckoned with, and I demand respect, and I'm not going to sit here and have these people tell me how to do my job.

Without wishing to dwell on the (in)authenticity of resistant statements such as that described by Vincent – as it is not possible to arbitrate here whether this prosecutor truly believed what he said – what is of particular interest in Vincent's analysis of the encounter is the suggestion that the resistant utterance is a performance of the self that serves a particular social function. When read in this light, resistance can be seen as a performance that establishes a subject position, and marks out where one stands in relation to struggles over truth claims. As such, resistant statements are social rather than purely individual.

Reading resistance as performative has important implications for understanding its function: a performance has an intended audience, and communicates how a person wishes to be seen (Simon and Gagnon 2003). What this implies in a training context is that when trainers or participants engage with the group, they are not only convincing or failing to convince the individual who voiced the resistance to see another point of view, but also involved in performing the interaction for the rest of the training audience. Again, this suggests that what is at stake in resistance is not only, or even primarily, the act of convincing a resistant individual, but also the staging of broader struggles over truth claims.

Similarly to the discussion of possibilities for change and agency introduced in Chapter Four, my characterisation of resistance as scripted and performative does not aim to negate the fact that individual responses and emotional reactions play a role in resistance. Indeed, and as I will explore in more depth in the next section of this chapter, I contend that the performance of resistance is importantly informed by efforts to grapple with what is experienced as ‘difficult knowledge’ (Britzman 1998, 19). Being asked to consider truth claims that challenge how we see the world and our sense of self – to unlearn what we know (Mehta 2019, 29) – may well involve, as hooks reminds us, a degree of pain. An account of resistance as scripted and performative does not amount to a negation of emotion or choice, but rather draws attention to the ways in which emotional responses are socially informed, and how their articulation is conditioned by what are socially legible forms of resistance. These struggles over meaning are, in other words, both personal and political.

### ***Subjects and objects***

Much of the literature on both gender training and feminist pedagogy portrays resistance as performed by the student/training participant against the teacher/trainer. The image of resistance that these accounts produce is often that of the white, heterosexual, male student, who is resisting the feminist teacher. In other words, such accounts imply that counter-

strategic or reactive resistance is performed only by those who enjoy *structural* power and privilege, but who find themselves in a position of diminished *situational* power given the classroom setting (Boler 1999, 148, Lewis 1992, 181).

However, an understanding of resistance as performative introduces some complexity to who can be the resistant subject in gender training or the feminist classroom. First, it is important to note that resistance to feminist analyses may also be performed by women, or by other subjects in marginalised positions. As feminist pedagogy has noted, in continuity with broader feminist analyses, ‘students may be expressing forms of dominant ideology ... in which their practices are invested without necessarily being members of the dominant group’ (Bell, Morrow, and Tastsoglou 1999, 25). Resistance to feminist analyses is not the sole preserve of those who enjoy structural power and privilege, but may also be performed by members of oppressed groups who may reap certain advantages from aligning their performance with the interests of the dominant group (see for example, Stoler 2010, Kandiyoti 1988).

Second, a conceptualisation of resistance as the staging of particular types of political claims means that resistance does not only find expression among students or trainees. As is hopefully evident from the analysis in preceding chapters, clearly not all gender trainers subscribe to or practise feminist politics (as also observed of the broader field of gender training, see for example, Ferguson 2019b, 115, Sexwale 1996, 61). My research archive likewise points to the fact that trainers themselves may be resistant to more progressive elements found in some training, or to more intersectional approaches to gender. Accordingly, the resisting subject of my analysis is not always the white heterosexual man, or the training audience; what is germane in this analysis is what is being resisted rather than who is the resistant subject.

I have already introduced the object of resistance as feminist politics and feminist analyses. To add some specificity to what is resisted in gender training settings, I suggest that, in broad

terms, forms of overt resistance that I observed in gender training settings resonate closely with the typologies of resistance introduced above (Lombardo and Mergaert 2013, Lewis 1992). For example, an NGO trainer I call Malcolm described his understanding of resistance to me in an interview:

People talk about gender equality as self-evident ... For me, it is political, it is inherently political. It is a norm, and the resistance we're talking about is people who reject the worldview that women are fundamentally disadvantaged, and that they're complicit. At best complicit and at worst actively contributing to it.

In this description, Malcolm pointed towards a form of resistance to feminist politics that is grounded in the argument that feminism, or gender training, is irrelevant, because equality has already been achieved. Further, Malcolm pointed to trainees' resistance to seeing themselves as implicated in perpetuating systems of dominance, suggesting that the imperative to deny the existence of oppression is intimately linked to the refusal to question one's own position in hierarchical relations. As such, his characterisation of resistance maps onto what Lombardo and Mergaert describe as denial of the need for change in gender relations, coupled with a refusal to accept responsibility (2013, 305).

In addition to questioning the persistence of gender inequalities, the concept of gender itself can be the object of resistance. A trainer I call Johanna recounted a training in which she attempted to distinguish between sex and gender, and in which a participant rejected this framing, saying 'but this is simply, you know ... God has made us differently'. What appears to be at stake in Johanna's example is a form of 'antigenderism': the rejection of an understanding of gender as socially constructed, and an insistence on a stable and reliable distinction between men and women (Korolczuk and Graff 2018). Such an objection to a socially constructed understanding of gender, in the context of peacekeeper training, lends itself to what Magda Lewis describes as 'phallo-centric myth-making' in the classroom, re-asserting traditional understandings of gender roles (1992, 184). For example, an NGO trainer I call Aisha recounted multiple stories of military officers declaring to her that women were

not able to perform in the military, and that they would refuse to be led by a female officer. In other words, an objection to feminist analyses of gender, and a re-assertion of biological dimorphism, serve to undermine any political challenges to the status quo.

Finally, sometimes the object of resistance is more total and less specific, as Alessia described: ‘there’s the very open one where they, you’re starting a workshop on gender and they’re like: “Can we leave? We don’t want to be here”’. As likewise observed by Higate, sometimes the object of resistance is not specific to the content, but rather evoked by the mere mention of ‘gender’ (2004, 19). I suggest that what such statements imply is that the resistance to feminist analyses and feminist politics is assumed to be so commonly shared in the institutional or cultural environment that it need not be specified any further. A blanket resistance to gender indicates resistance in the form of trivialising gender equality work (Lombardo and Mergaert 2013), and is so prevalent that it becomes a form of patriarchal common sense (Zalewski 2006, 58).

## RESISTANCE SCRIPTS: JOKING, DISTANCING, PROJECTING

While the examples I used to describe the object of resistance above involve overt articulations of resistant logics, in many cases such resistance is couched in more indirect discursive manoeuvres. Further, a focus on resistance as denying inequality between men and women or the need to address it can obscure the ways in which colonial thinking and heteronormativity pre-empt resistance and secure attachments to narrow understandings of gender inequality. In this section, I discuss in more detail the operations of such forms of resistance, which I characterise as: joking and laughter; distancing from feminist politics; and projection of questions of gender inequality onto racialised others. In discussing these resistance scripts, I do not mean to propose an exhaustive or fixed typology of resistance. These were simply elements of resistance that emerged from my research archive, and which

I believe shed light on the epistemic and political implications of the gender training endeavour.

In describing these scripts, I also discuss how trainers interpret and respond to them. Training manuals that address the question of resistance typically offer an array of counter-arguments, ways of either pointing out the fallacious logic of the resistant statement or providing additional information to undermine these claims (see for example, Reimann 2013, 51-55). In practice, however, trainers and audiences practise a number of pedagogical strategies in response to resistant claims. Their responses are equally important to understanding how the struggle over meaning is staged; responses to resistance that go beyond countering arguments are significant for understanding the epistemic and political effects of struggles over truth claims in the training setting.

### ***Joking and laughter***

When I first asked Alessia about resistance she encountered in gender training, the first thing that she brought up was not overt resistance in the form of ‘Can we leave?’, but rather ‘the little joke cracked at gender training, before, during, or after’. Accordingly, I suggest that one script that resistance follows is less the kind of overt disagreement that lends itself to counter-arguments, but rather a subtler undermining of the message of training through humorous interjections. Alessia explained:

You do the gender training with this group, and then in the end somebody comes up with a joke: “You know why in Afghanistan women now walk in front of men?” You’re like “Oh, why?” “Landmines”. And you’re like “Ha ha ha” [sarcastic]. Or even more inappropriate ones, but it’s just like ... why did you feel you had the need to share this after a gender training?

Many trainers I spoke with related similar stories of trainees joking about the topic of the training. These jokes, like the example provided by Alessia, bring to mind Paolo Virno’s (2008, 119) formula, according to which:

Jokes reside in a no-man’s land that separates a norm from its realization in a particular case. The point of the witty remark lies in its ability to show how many

different ways one can apply the same rule. Or, if you prefer: in its ability to show that no application agrees with the rule; nor, after all, does it contradict the rule, given that between one and the other there exists an overwhelming gulf.

Although Virno does not delve into the content or politics of jokes, he does hint at a multiplicity of political effects in stating that the content of a joke 'is not always irreverent to the establishment and to social hierarchies' (2008, 165). Indeed, in the case of joking as resistant performance in gender training, the content of the joke appears designed to uphold social hierarchies, and points to the futility of trying to change them. To return to Alessia's example, this joke is showing different ways that one can apply gender equality thinking, pointing out the supposed absurdity or impossibility of more equitable gender relations.

Further, joking serves to establish or reinforce communal bonds (Lewis 2010, 642). By sharing a laugh, a group is formed; laughter serves to demarcate boundaries of inclusion or exclusion in the group (consider for example the 'inside joke'). Because of the social function of the joke, the use of inappropriate humour by training audiences presents trainers with a dilemma. While it would be wholly appropriate to challenge sexist, racist, or homophobic humour in the classroom, doing so risks being seen as the person who spoils the fun – the feminist killjoy, to borrow Ahmed's evocative term (2017, 65). By taking up the position of the feminist killjoy, the trainer positions herself outside of the in-group, which could have problematic consequences for her ability to engage in dialogue and be heard.

Instead of directly pointing out the problematic politics of such jokes, some trainers encourage self-reflection by pointing towards a problem, disrupting the flow of laughter, but stopping short of naming the problem directly. Aisha explained:

I call people on crap. When [a] military officer for St Patrick's day decides to put up a huge poster in the classroom of a big-breasted woman dressed as a leprechaun with her tits hanging out, saying join us in this bar, [I ask:] "Do you really want to use that as a motivator for a social activity? Because I don't feel very excited". That's what I said, and the next day it was gone. But I didn't tell him to get it out, I made him think about the reason why.

Aisha noted that in other situations, she might pose the remark made to the class, asking the group for differing opinions, noting that what was important was:

Finding the right people to convey the message, because maybe I'm not the right person to convey the message. Maybe the right person to convey a message to a guy like that would've been [a male trainer] ... The message is as important as the messenger, right? It's not finding just who you need to speak, but how many different people, also. Sometimes you need the message to come multiple times.

In other words, Aisha's account appears to be characterised by a desire to avoid taking up the killjoy position in relation to trainees with a direct challenge ('That's not funny!') – a position which would likely be interpreted through the derogatory script of the humourless feminist; the woman who can't take a joke. Arguably, being framed as the feminist killjoy would play right into the joke, and rob the killjoy trainer of her ability to disrupt its meaning-making process.

While Aisha's account was focused mainly on demonstrating to the resistant trainee the error of his ways, Vincent saw this strategy as having broader implications:

As a facilitator, definitely the last thing you should do is confront them directly. But the very least you can do is make sure they don't ruin the whole group. What you do is, you have other members of the group from the same context, from the same cultural milieu, from the same religious group maybe, not challenge the person, but indicate that he doesn't speak for the whole culture, or for the whole religious group, or for the whole country. That there are different opinions. And at least he may come out of the workshop believing that there is diversity of opinion. He may agree or disagree, but there's diversity of opinion, he doesn't hold the absolute truth.

Like Aisha, Vincent is arguing that a trainer should not engage in a direct debate with a participant, as this would lessen their situational power and undermine their credibility.

Two further observations pertain to Vincent's account. First, he is drawing attention to the performative element of resistance discussed above, suggesting that perhaps the most important issue at stake is not to convince the resistant trainee, but rather to manage the scene so that 'they don't ruin the whole group'. Virno (2008) reminds us that a joke is performed for an audience, and that laughter creates a sense of community and agreement. There is a sense in Vincent's account that it is important to challenge the joke, not to convince



the resistant trainee, but rather to disrupt its ability to create shared meaning among the group. Second, Vincent is highlighting the importance of providing different opinions, to challenge the notion that the resistant trainee is privy to some 'absolute truth'. In other words, I read in Vincent's account a desire to prevent the joke from becoming the basis on which a resistant in-group identity is formed.

The performative element of joking was also highlighted by a military trainer I call Kalle. I asked Kalle why he thought trainees made such jokes, and he responded that they are looking for 'some form of relief, or they are trying to be manly, or they are observing each other's manliness'. What Kalle was suggesting was first that a form of relief was needed as a break, in order to create space to, as he explained, 'have a bit of a laugh, and to think back on the things that did happen to many of them, even though you don't want to remember them'. In this sense, Kalle was suggesting that laughter provided a break in the discussion, a break that was necessary for dealing with the difficult knowledges that gender training brings to light (see also Britzman 1998, 24). In other words, Kalle was drawing attention to the emotional, reactive discomfort that training participants might be experiencing. Second, Kalle surmised that misogynistic humour provided a way of performing a certain form of manliness, of re-asserting a properly masculine subject position that was made vulnerable or insecure by participation in gender training. Kalle's account highlights the resistant nature of inappropriate jokes in gender training – through re-asserting their status as properly manly men, trainees are signalling to one another that their subjectivity has not been transformed by the training.

Kalle's strategy for managing this resistance script was somewhat different from the challenges that Vincent and Aisha suggested. Kalle suggested that because the element of relief provided by laughter was needed to be able to cope with difficult knowledge, he built in jokes into his gender training session, starting with the introductory comment: 'This is the

kind of topic that you have to lighten the mood a bit at the outset'. Kalle explained that he was offering his own humorous comments as a way of pre-empting participants feeling like they needed to volunteer their own, possibly offensive jokes. At the same time, though Kalle did not mention it, the effect of his jokes appeared to also secure his own masculine status in front of the all-male training audience. That being said, the purposive use of humour is not the sole preserve of military men. Johanna explained to me that she likes using 'playful' methodologies in training, and encourages banter. As an example, Johanna noted that she sometimes slips and makes gendered assumptions, and that trainees 'love calling me out when I'm being not gender sensitive'. Johanna explained that 'I don't want anyone to feel there's this, you know, this angry person, who looks down on me if I say anything. That closes every door'. Like Kalle, Johanna could of course be read as upholding a normative arrangement in refusing to perform the angry feminist (on laughter serving the status quo, see Lewis 2010).

However, I contend that there are good pedagogical reasons to ease discomfort experienced by trainees so as to maintain an openness to learning. In making strategic use of humour, Kalle and Johanna appear to be enacting the suggestion made by Ferguson that sometimes the pedagogical role of a trainer is to be a joker; that lightening the mood is necessary in order to bring down defences and for trainees to be able to engage with new knowledge, rather than shutting it out (2019b, 104). 'Laughter,' in other words, serves as 'a political operator [that] reconnects the disconnected' (Lewis 2010, 642, see also hooks 1994). Rather than attempting to curb laughter, Johanna and Kalle appeared to try to control the content of jokes, while at the same time establishing a sense of community in the group that did not position them as outside of or in opposition to the group.

In sum, joking and laughter can involve either a performance of resistance to gender training, trivialising and mocking the topic; *or* a pedagogical strategy that seeks to navigate the pain

involved in confronting difficult knowledges. This diversity confirms Tyson Edward Lewis' argument that there exists, in political terms, a 'complexity of laughters' (2010, 638). The political effects of laughter are neither guaranteed nor are they stable. Rather, joking and laughter are implicated in ongoing struggles over meaning.

### ***Distancing from feminist politics***

Another way in which trainers and trainees perform resistance in gender training is by distancing the concept from feminist analyses and feminist politics. In this script, resistant subjects do not contest the importance of gender per se (narrowly defined), but maintain a vigilance that the approach must not go 'too far'. They agree, in principle, on the need for better gender awareness or more equitable gender relations, but insist that this approach should be distanced from, or constitute a disavowal of, feminist politics.

A poignant example of this resistance script played out in the multi-national gender course I observed in the Western Balkans. On this course, every morning a trainer would ask participants to recap what they had learned on the course so far. On the fourth and penultimate day of the course, one participant asked to show a video clip which, he said, summarised his learning. The video clip was a seven-minute-long YouTube film titled 'Modern Educayshun [sic]', produced in 2015 by comedian Neel Kolhatkar. In the clip, Kolhatkar (whose social media presence is characterised by misogynist and anti-feminist comedy) is shown in a dystopian school classroom, in which the laws of science and meritocracy have been suspended, and in which students are rewarded in inverse relation to their 'privilege points'. In the opening scene, a teacher asks what the answer to '1+1' is, and Kolhatkar's character is horrified to learn that the correct answer is not '2', but rather 'equality'. When Kolhatkar's character protests the absurdity of the exercise, he is violently assaulted by the teacher and other students, who shout: 'Stop violating me with your different opinions!'. The clip, in other words, exemplifies the violently misogynistic fear-mongering of so-called 'men's rights

activists', who contend that feminism poses a threat to societal order, and particularly to (straight) men (Ging 2017).<sup>28</sup> After showing this clip, the participant shared that what he had learned was that it was important 'not to take gender too far'. His intervention went uncommented and unchallenged by other participants and trainers alike.

In my research archive, many gender trainers seek to pre-empt such resistance against feminism and 'going too far' by assuring their audiences that the version of gender that they are presenting is uncontaminated by such influences. Kalle, during the course of the Nordic pre-deployment training I observed, at one point noted about gender perspectives to his exclusively male audience: 'I can't find any kind of feminist point of view in this, in case somebody's horrified that soon we won't be anything'. This desire to assuage men's assumed fear of feminism was also deployed by the military trainer I call Robert, who noted that in designing gender training:

We had to demonstrate that it was a mainstream issue. Which was sort of divorcing from a particularly sort of feminist agenda and just sort of explaining why people should genuinely care about this stuff.

Implicit in this declaration is, of course, that feminist demands did not constitute something people need genuinely care about.

Not only were Kalle and Robert invested in presenting gender as something that was safe from what they implied was an excessive and misguided feminist focus on women, but they also sought to protect a binary and heterosexual gender order. Kalle explained that trainees might also be worried about a 'homosexual, purple hue' to the topic, but insisted to me that there was no such content in gender training. In a similar vein, Robert noted that a problem with the term gender was that it can be associated with women and also 'associated with

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<sup>28</sup> Kolhatkar's comedy is eagerly taken up by online communities of 'men's rights activists', for example on the online discussion site Reddit: [https://www.reddit.com/r/MensRights/comments/4hp932/check\\_out\\_the\\_short\\_films\\_made\\_by\\_neel\\_kolhatkar/](https://www.reddit.com/r/MensRights/comments/4hp932/check_out_the_short_films_made_by_neel_kolhatkar/) (accessed 4 July 2019).

transgender in a bizarre way as well'. Both were keen to disavow any such content in their training. In this way, these gender trainers sought to make gender a 'safe' concept, amenable to hetero-patriarchal logics. By insisting that gender training should not be too focused on women, and especially not related to feminism, they were denying the ways in which gender works as a structure of power to create hierarchy and inequality. Rather, they sought to reduce gender to equivalent difference by, for example, concluding from the fact that men are also victims of sexual violence that there is no gender hierarchy. Further, the effort to rule out transgender subjects from discussion signals an unwillingness to question the normative framework of gender as fixed and given, rather than fluid and performative. These gender trainers themselves, I contend, performed resistance to feminist ideas, by seeking to make gender a safe concept, devoid of feminism, and reliably binary, cis, and straight (on the depoliticisation of gender, see for example Otto and Heathcote 2014, 10, Whitworth 2004, 121).

While gender is typically emptied of critical feminist content in this way in training, some trainers clearly communicate that this a strategic choice rather than a personal conviction. Puechguirbal, for example, notes a need 'not to antagonize or "lose" the audience', signalling a strategy for managing discomfort (2003, 118). Malcolm explained that creating a pedagogically productive space often required him to self-censor:

I think not only do I not come out as a feminist, I think I also present things in a less extreme way than I might otherwise. I don't use words like patriarchy, because it's not conducive, and I think also within work I limit the scope of my activities to things that are more acceptable in the mainstream than my political opinions.

Malcolm related how he managed his performance in the classroom, not only as a feminist, but also as a gay man:

Usually I don't come out before I give sessions ... I think there's a certain element of performance when you work as a gender trainer, and if people label you as gay you're somehow feminised. And you become less credible to some audiences ... There's a stereotype, and then there's a sense of betrayal, maybe, that they might see. That the gay man betrays their gender somehow. I think I'm comfortable being open once they've reflected on how they are also restricted by their own gender roles, but I think

at the beginning, you might be seen as co-opted into some kind of female-led feminist agenda.

Malcolm, similarly to Puechguirbal, did not himself disavow feminism or insist on heteronormativity in training. In fact, he communicated his personal commitment to the feminist and LGBT movements. What was at stake in his account was a strategic distancing from stereotypes in an effort to maintain a connection with the training audience, to 'lessen the red flags' (Bonnell 1999, 216).

The strategic distancing of gender training from feminism nonetheless aims to introduce feminist ideas into the training when audiences are deemed receptive to it ('once they've reflected', as Malcolm put it). The trainers I encountered differed on when and how to push feminist analyses, indicating differences in strategy and their ability to transgress norms.

Johanna, for example, related:

Yeah, I do [disclose that I'm a feminist], and actually I enjoy, let's say I enjoy confusing people with that, because they think I'm too happy to be a feminist [laughter]. And so kind of owning it and challenging the preconceptions that people hold.

While Johanna sought to challenge conceptions of feminism through her own performance, other trainers put up contentious questions for explicit discussion.

On the West African course I observed, one participant asked during a group activity: 'Nature has made a man different from a woman. Rather than equality, why don't we talk about gender complement?' In response to this comment, Angela, one of the instructors on the course, came back the next day with an addition to the programme: a 45-minute discussion on patriarchy. Angela described gendered issues such as female genital mutilation and son preference, and explained: 'At the root of this is the master's hand; patriarchy'. She described how patriarchy 'affects the way we are taught to act and exist in the world', and cited extensively from bell hooks' work. Angela clearly did not shy away from introducing feminist concepts to her training. In the face of student resistance, rather than distancing herself from feminist analysis, she drew upon its concepts to articulate a stronger case for gender equality.

When I spoke with her after the session, she admitted that patriarchy is a difficult word for men, suggesting that it is hard for men to admit its existence because they often do not see it. Angela's training therefore appeared to be practising a form of a 'pedagogy of discomfort', demanding that students examine structures of inequality that they are implicated in (Boler 1999, 175). The ability of trainers to practise a pedagogy of discomfort doubtless stems not only from their own political strategies, but also from the position of situational and social power from which they are speaking.

What is clear from these examples is that the resistance script of distancing gender from feminist politics can dovetail neatly with deeply misogynistic and homophobic 'men's rights' agendas. This resistance script is performed by (some) training participants and trainers alike. However, interviews and observation of training practices also indicate first, that such distancing is sometimes strategic, and second, that gender trainers sometimes embrace the label of feminist and feminist analytical concepts such as patriarchy. Indeed, in continuity with one of the broader argumentative threads I advance throughout this thesis, an examination of the resistance script of distancing gender from feminist politics reveals that gender trainers have complex and varied relationships to feminism.

### ***Projecting gender onto 'others'***

If distancing from feminist politics constitutes one way in which feminist understandings of gender are contained in peacekeeper gender training, then the projection of gender onto racialised others constitutes another. Like distancing, this resistance script is covert, insofar as it takes the form of agreement, in principle, on the importance of gender, accompanied by a simultaneous move to ensure that gender does not implicate the self in any uncomfortable knowledge. There are countless examples of how this projection works. I described in Chapter Six Robert and Lasse's comments in which they positioned themselves, as Western men, as already gender aware, but noted that African peacekeepers needed instruction on the

question. Similarly, in Chapter Seven, I discussed the ‘stickiness’ of conflict-related sexual violence to African contexts (Ahmed 2010b, 30). Both gender trainers and training participants, in other words, often frame gender along the lines of the well-rehearsed trope of ‘white men saving brown women from brown men’, in which the problems of gender are reliably located in another geographical space (Spivak 2010, Pratt 2013).

However, this is not the only form that this projection takes. In contrast to the saviour narrative, one oft-heard comment in training settings, typically articulated as a resistant statement to the trainer, takes some form of: ‘We have to be careful not to impose Western values on these societies’ (this particular phrasing was used by a participant in the Western European gender course I observed). While this statement appears to be challenging the white saviour narrative, it also constitutes a retreat to ‘cultural essentialism’, where manifestations of gender inequality are explained as inherent and immutable characteristics of ‘other’ societies (Duncanson 2013, 121; see also Narayan, 2000, Jennings 2019). Projection is therefore best understood as a script that is performed through a number of articulations, all of which have the effect of displacing the problems of gender onto the bodies of racialised others. These scripts are rehearsed by trainers and training participants alike.

Some gender trainers I spoke with recognised the displacement of gendered violences onto other geographical locations as a problem, and characterised the move to do so as a form of self-preservation. Johanna explained:

People like to talk about gender when it’s “over there”, they like to talk about gender inequality in a faraway conflict-affected country. But when you talk about how actually their own understandings of gender, their identities, gender relations, influence the work; how there’s power imbalances in the relations that they’re in with partners or local contacts, I mean, that’s when it gets really uncomfortable. Where it’s challenging what you think, how you live your own life, and how maybe that, you prize yourself on being kind of a modern liberal citizen, and realise that in your daily life there’s a lot that’s not quite as “modern” and “liberal”.

Johanna’s account of the desire of training audiences to locate gender inequality elsewhere, and to avoid critical self-reflection, attests to the well-established colonial mode of thought,



which projects undesirable qualities of the self onto racialised others (Belkin 2012, 127, Bhabha 1994, 238). In a similar manner, Malcolm spoke about the problem of displacing gender issues elsewhere: 'It means you're stuck in the sympathy bracket, where we're just going to be crying about how sad it is that women in the Congo get raped, because we can all agree that's terrible'. Malcolm explicated that focusing solely on 'other' places in Global North training contexts is problematic because it fosters sympathy rather than empathy, and in doing so, elides questions of complicity. It allows trainers and trainees to 'exempt themselves from the category of the oppressor ... by saying that we too were nauseated' (Boler 1999, 186).

Some trainers and training audiences do then attempt to bring questions of complicity into view. Recall for example the frustrated declaration by a training participant described in Chapter Seven: 'It cannot be that we encourage troops to violate the local population while we claim to protect them from violence committed among themselves!'. Further, some trainers I observed sought to disrupt the dehistoricised and decontextualised discourses of gender training, which are operative in occluding questions of complicity from view (Razack 2003).

For example, in the training course I observed in West Africa, a West African police trainer I call Samuel talked back against the 'colonial aphasia' that characterises so much of Global North discourse (Stoler 2011, see also Bhabha 1994, 231). Samuel delivered a session on gender and security sector reform (SSR). Training on SSR typically focuses on political challenges and technocratic solutions, where the need for SSR is premised on the assumed mismanagement and/or incompetence of those countries deemed in need of reform (Hudson 2016, Kunz 2014). Contextualisation in this training – as is the case with CRSV training – is typically limited to conflicts in the immediate past and recent political developments. In contrast, Samuel began his session by asking his audience of West African police

peacekeepers: 'Why do we have these problems?', referring to corruption and police misconduct. The answer: 'Colonial histories'. Samuel spoke of the police services instituted under colonial rule, and explained that their function was to protect those in power – 'the colonial masters'. He argued that this was a common feature of police forces of the time in Europe as well as in the colonies. Samuel thereby gave police corruption and brutality a history; denying an ahistorical reading that would fix these as characteristics of West Africa in need of no further explanation. His insistence on historical context enabled him to speak back to colonial tropes that portray countries in need of reform as somehow inherently deficient.

In the multinational course in the Western Balkans that I observed, a Western Balkans trainer I call Maja directly challenged especially the Western European participants to consider their own positionalities and complicities in peacekeeping operations. Maja facilitated a session on gender stereotypes. This type of session is fairly standard in gender training, and usually involves laughter and joking, as training audiences enjoy the opportunity to make jokes out of stereotypical ideas such as 'men are strong' and 'women are vain' with impunity. These sessions are often a source of much mirth, but end up doing little to demonstrate why such stereotyping may be harmful. To the contrary, they often run the risk of reinforcing notions of essentialised gender difference. Maja's session began with similar light-hearted exchanges, accompanied by cartoons that play on gender stereotypes projected onto the screen.

The session then took a turn towards the serious. Maja showed the group a photograph of a graffiti, telling them that the photograph was of a wall in the Dutch peacekeepers' compound in Srebrenica<sup>29</sup>. The graffiti reads: 'No teeth? Moustache? Smells like shit? Bosnian girl!'<sup>30</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Srebrenica was the site of a notorious massacre in 1995 of an estimated 8,000 Bosniak men and boys in the context of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Baker 2015). The evacuation of Dutch peacekeepers from the town prior to the massacre has been widely criticised, with legal cases brought against the Dutch government (Ryngaert 2017).

<sup>30</sup> This photograph, along with other graffiti, is available on the website: <https://srebrenica-genocide.blogspot.com/2008/06/dutch-graffiti-in-srebrenica-sickening.html> (accessed 5 July 2019). It was also featured in the 2005 BBC documentary 'Srebrenica: Never Again?' (Wollaston 2005).

Maja asked the group to reflect on the fact that this graffiti was written by peacekeepers, who were ostensibly there to protect the local population. How would Bosnian women and girls, many of whom lived in refugee camps where getting nutritious food and maintaining personal hygiene was a daily struggle, feel knowing that their 'protectors' so callously mocked their plight? How could we expect peacekeepers to adequately protect civilian populations if they demonstrated such lack of respect? The atmosphere in the class became sombre – no doubt partially in recognition of the pain Maja appeared to be feeling in relating this example. At the end of the session, Maja noted that the training audience, especially those who came from outside the region, may hold certain preconceptions about what this post-conflict space would be like. Maybe especially the Western European participants had certain notions of blindly aggressive men and violated women. She said that she hoped their week in the country would help challenge some of these stereotypes, and they would get to know real people who lived there, perhaps coming to see them differently. With this example, Maja challenged Western peacekeepers' sense of self as an inherently benevolent and gender-aware presence, and invited them to see the peace-kept population in a deeply humanising light.

While the central involvement of local trainers, speaking from an understanding of their own context, is a particularly powerful way of challenging colonial discourses of projection, efforts to do so are also undertaken by some Global North trainers. Eric, a Western European NGO trainer, spoke in our interview about consulting anthropological literature to deepen his understanding of the socio-cultural spaces he worked in abroad. Katie, a Western European military trainer who directed the course I observed in East Africa, told me that she now incorporates visits to a local women's organisation into the course programme, both for her and training audiences to gain a better understanding of the local context, and to demonstrate the value of consulting women's groups. Other Global North trainers bring up examples of violence and inequality in their home contexts, in order to underscore that gender violence cannot simply be written off as a characteristic of 'other cultures'. Such moments in training

represent, I argue, a postcolonial pedagogical practice that seeks to disrupt forms of national stereotyping that present some countries (and peacekeeping contingents) as already gender equal, and other countries and contingents as pathologically disposed towards corruption and violence (Higate and Henry 2009, 119).

The script of projection, in sum, works to resist the notion that an examination of gender might require critical self-reflection. Instead, it follows a colonial logic, projecting any gender problems onto racialised others. This is a common resistance script in training, performed by training developers, trainers, and trainees alike. What is being resisted is not the concept of gender or gender training per se, but rather readings of gender that bring an 'intersectional analytical sensibility' into play (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013, 795). However, a number of gender trainers and training audiences identify this projection as problematic, and seek to challenge the script by speaking back to colonial stereotypes, and by insisting on locating the peacekeeper self within history and power relations. As with the scripts of joking, and distancing from feminist politics, the performance of the resistance script of projecting marks a site of struggle over meaning; a meaning that continues to be contested, and thereby resists an attempt to fix its political affects.

## CONCLUSION

I began this chapter with the suggestion that an examination of resistance in gender training provides a way of seeing the political contestations at work in gender training for peacekeepers. Though resistance in and of itself is neither politically regressive or progressive, in this chapter I conceptualised resistance as resistance to certain types of intersectional feminist politics (Flynn 2001, Lewis 1992). I characterised resistance as scripted, pointing to the mutual implication of personal emotional responses and the availability of broader interactional frames, meaning that resistance cannot be adequately understood as a purely individual response (Higate and Henry 2009, Goffman 1990). Resistance is performative, and

it is staged in front of and for an audience, meaning that it marks an attachment to (or disinvestment from) truth claims that others are invited to share in. Accordingly, I have argued that resistance matters because it serves as a kind of weathervane for where struggles over the meaning of gender and the aims of gender training play out.

While overt contestation of the concept of gender, of the existence of inequalities, or of the desirability of addressing them, are certainly present in gender training classrooms, these are well documented in the literature on gender training and feminist pedagogy (Lombardo and Mergaert 2013, Lewis 1992). I have chosen instead to focus here on subtler forms of resistance, which I characterise as following scripts of: joking and laughter; distancing gender from feminist politics; and projecting gender issues onto racialised others. These particular resistance scripts demonstrate that acceptance of the term 'gender' is often purchased at the price of intersectional feminist politics. Participants of gender training may be willing to accept the term gender, insofar as it is separated from feminist politics and non-normative sexual subjects. They may be willing to accept gender as long as the definition sustains colonial difference. Resistance, in other words, is not necessarily against gender in and of itself, but against attempts to make gender 'unsafe'; against having the term implicate the peacekeeper self.

In describing how these scripts function, I also examined strategies trainers and training audiences use to deal with them. The overarching observation of this discussion is that struggles over meaning are complex and dynamic. Trainers as well as trainees may take up a resistant position. Joking and laughter may constitute an attempt to mock or trivialise the topic of gender, or it may be part of a pedagogical effort to help students manage difficult knowledge. Distancing from feminist politics may echo deeply misogynistic agendas, but it may also be part of a deliberate strategic move, designed to introduce feminism or feminist concepts when the audience is more likely to be receptive to them. Projecting the problems

of gender onto racialised others may produce either a desire to save 'others', or an unwillingness to challenge relations of domination. The logic of projection is disrupted by moments in training where trainees are invited to see peace-kept populations differently, or where they are asked to confront their own complicities in oppressive structures. These dynamics of struggle echo the argument I put forth in the introduction to this chapter: resistance is best understood as a process of negotiation, in which meaning is only contingently fixed.

While active resistance to intersectional feminist political projects may take on some rather jarring forms (I certainly felt a rush of anger and frustration when watching the video clip 'Modern Educayshun'), this does not mean that resistance is necessarily bad. If not all pleasure is good (such as laughter at misogynistic jokes), as hooks reminds us in the quote that opened this chapter, then neither is all pain harm (1994, 154). To the contrary, feminist work on pedagogy and gender training insists that 'for there to be learning, there must be conflict within learning' (Britzman 1998, 5, see also Ferguson 2019b). Indeed, Malcolm told me: 'I would be very disappointed to have a long training session where there was no resistance', explaining that he understood resistance to be an indicator that training audiences have had to grapple with how the topic of gender affects them personally; that the training has unsettled or at least disturbed some established understanding. An instructor on the Western European course I observed likewise expressed satisfaction that trainees were verbalising their doubts, as this indicated, in his appreciation, a willingness to work through these questions. Resistance, in other words, opens up a possibility for negotiation.

After all, while hearing resistant statements may be uncomfortable from the point of view of practising feminist politics, it is not as if – pace Virno (2008) – these statements are introducing any new knowledge. Misogyny, homophobia, and colonial thinking are widely available as systems of meaning making, and often circulate freely in martial institutions. When they are

evoked in a gender training setting, this resistance suggests that a struggle over meaning is being staged, not that some new meaning is disturbing a pre-existing feminist consensus. The outcome of such struggles is uncertain, but I suggest that the existence of this struggle has political worth in and of itself. The next chapter takes up these questions of feminist pedagogical practices and their uncertain politics.

## CHAPTER NINE

### SMALL SUBVERSIONS: FEMINIST PEDAGOGICAL MOMENTS

*All of this is a gamble with meaning,  
against the tide of predetermination.*

- Deborah P. Britzman (2013, 112)

The previous chapters of this thesis have pointed to a tension between intersectional feminist politics and the martial logics that characterise peacekeeper gender training. In chapters Six and Seven, I traced how gender in peacekeeper training is framed as an operational perspective and tool that supports the work of uniformed peacekeepers, and how sexual violence is conceptualised as a martial problem that can be addressed through the use force. I argued that gender in peacekeeper training reproduces heteronormativity, and constructs gender along the colonial difference (Lugones 2007). In Chapter Eight, I examined how performances of resistance to feminist analytics in gender training seek to ensure that gender is understood as reliably binary, straight, and untouched by postcolonial thought. In sum, these analytical threads expose the different ways in which gender training serves the status quo of patriarchal protection, colonial difference, and heteronormative gender.

However, such framings of gender in training are dominant but not exhaustive. In Chapter Seven, I described the contradiction contained in the demand that peacekeepers care about sexual violence and protecting civilians, highlighting ways in which trainers and training audiences recognised that military peacekeeping is insufficient and imperfect as a remedy to sexual violence in conflict, interpreting their acting on their 'humanitarian instincts' beyond their military mandate as an exercise of 'lateral agency' (Berlant 2011, 95, 117). In Chapter Six, I suggested that gender training is haunted by colonial difference and non-normative



sexual subjects. Chapter Eight, in turn, demonstrated that these hauntings produce a need to continually reassert the disavowal of such analytics, taking the form of resistance to feminist politics. I argued that the persistence of resistance signifies that these are ongoing struggles over meaning rather than secured conclusions. In other words, my analysis has sought to draw attention to the persisting ambivalence of the politics of gender training for peacekeepers (Bhabha 1994, 160). In this chapter, I focus attention on how this ambivalence might be worked in the service of resistant feminist politics, asking: What might feminist pedagogical practice look like in peacekeeper gender training? What epistemic and political effects does such practice produce?

In exploring the possibility that some peacekeeper gender training might involve feminist pedagogical practice, my intention is to provide an analysis that goes against the tide of predetermination, as alluded to in the quote from Britzman that introduces this chapter (1998, 112). From a critical feminist point of view, that training in martial institutions often robs gender of its radical political potential is not wholly surprising. However, in the analysis that I undertake in this chapter, I seek to highlight that this is not the whole story. Undertaking a reparative reading of training practices (Sedgwick 2003, Wiegman 2014, see discussion in Chapter Four), I argue that gender training (sometimes) involves discernible moments in which trainers appear to be enacting the promise of liberatory pedagogy to function ‘as a decentering, displacing, and transforming force in a project aimed at pursuing social justice’ – that is, moments where feminist pedagogical practices appear to be at work (Peters and Lankshear 1996, 33).

Examining elements of feminist pedagogical practice in gender training, I seek to provide an account of the politics of such practices. I suggest that they constitute moments of instability, or ‘small subversions’, rather than an assured programme for structural or cultural transformation. I argue, however, that the smallness of these subversions does not render

them without political worth. Rather, picking up on Britzman's (1998, 112) notion of 'a gamble with meaning', I suggest that feminist pedagogical practice in peacekeeper gender training might be thought of as, per Spivak, a 'practical politics of the open end' (Spivak and Harasym 1990, 105). This type of epistemic and political project does not guarantee a transformed future, but it does highlight the importance of continuing to partake in struggles over the meaning of gender.

To that end, I begin this chapter by briefly explicating my understanding of feminist pedagogical practice – how we might recognise pedagogy as feminist, and who can practice such pedagogy. Next, I examine instances of feminist pedagogical practice that emerge from my research archive, and explore what kinds of feminist politics are at work in these practices. I then turn to consider the epistemic and political significance of such practices, introducing the concepts of 'small subversions' and a 'practical politics of the open end'. I conclude with a reflection on where such contradictory dynamics of gender training leave the analysis. Does the smallness of these subversions mean that the feminist political project of gender training has failed? How might we think about the political implications of subversion from the margins? This discussion introduces the concerns that drive the following, concluding chapter of this thesis.

## FEMINIST PEDAGOGY: POLITICAL AND EPISTEMIC COMMITMENTS

In this chapter, my aim is to explore instances of feminist pedagogical practice that emerge from my research archive, and to interrogate the political effects and potential of such practices. While I introduced feminist pedagogical thinking in the theoretical framing laid out in Chapter Four, a few words are in order to explicate why and on what basis I identify certain pedagogical practices as enacting feminist politics. In this section, I first outline what I see as intersectional feminist pedagogical practice in the particular case of gender training, and then explicate who I see as practising feminist pedagogy.

### ***Feminist politics and epistemologies***

In Chapter Four, I characterised feminist pedagogical practice as constituted by a desire to practise transgressive education that works for social justice and against systems of domination (Mehta 2019, Boler 1999, Britzman 1995, hooks 1994, Gore 1993, Shrewsbury 1987). While I insist that feminist pedagogical practice is inextricably linked to feminist political and epistemological projects, as outlined in my theoretical framing, I suggest that these projects relate to ways of being and acting in the world, rather than the directly measurable production of ‘feminist revolutionary subjects’ (Hutchings 2013, 14).

This epistemic stance is instructive to my examination of the politics of peacekeeper gender training. Consider, for example, the quintessential understanding of feminist pedagogy as devoted to improving women’s lives (hooks 1994, 61, Maher 1987, 94). On the one hand, as I argued in chapters Two and Six, the underlying policy rationale of gender training of peacekeepers is to better address the needs and priorities of the ‘woman-in-conflict’, within the framework of the international Women, Peace and Security agenda (Cook 2016). As such, gender training could be understood as ipso facto invested in ameliorating women’s lives. However, my analysis in the preceding chapters of this thesis underscores that the terms on which gender training concerns itself with improving women’s lives is of crucial import. I have suggested that the woman-in-conflict is consistently marginalised in the episteme; constituting an object of knowledge rather than a knowing subject (Spivak 2010, 61, see also Dhawan, 2012). Further, I have drawn attention to the racialised frames of gender training that allow peacekeepers to understand themselves as innocent protectors of the woman-in-conflict, rather than being implicated themselves in the structures that produced her insecurity in the first place (Razack 2003, 207). In other words, a feminist critique of the politics of gender training requires looking not only at the extent to which it centres the goal of improving women’s lives, but also examining the terms on which these women, and the peacekeeper selves, are interpellated into the knowledge production scenario.

Indeed, an uncritical concern for the plight of the woman-in-conflict can lend itself to politics that reinscribe unequal relations of power. I have already alluded to the problematic politics of empathy for women victimised in conflict, and cautioned that empathy is not necessarily a normative good in gender training (see Chapter Seven). Boler devotes sustained attention to this question in her account feminist pedagogy, and urges us to ask: 'Who benefits from the production of empathy in what circumstances?' (1999, 164). If we think back to Malcolm's sarcastic comment, introduced in Chapter Eight, of training scenarios where 'we are all crying about how sad it is that women in the Congo get raped', we can see that the injunction that a feminist pedagogical focus on ameliorating women's lives is not so simple. Rather, as Malcolm's example lays bare, there are many ways of striving to address women's victimisation which facilitate an imperial gaze, in which the 'self is not required to identify with the oppressor, and not required to identify her complicity in the structures of power' (Boler 1999, 160). In the face of this political problematique, I suggest that Boler's injunction to move from a practice of 'spectating' to a practice of 'witnessing' provides a critical understanding of how feminist pedagogy might be practised in gender training (1999, 184).

Through the practice of witnessing, Boler suggests that we 'undertake our historical responsibilities and co-implication', and learn to sit with discomfort; not to foster paralysing and unproductive guilt, but rather to construct '*genealogies* of one's positionalities and emotional resistances' (1999, 186, 178, see also Razack 2004, 12). This practice of witnessing constitutes a 'pedagogy of discomfort', and Boler concludes: 'Learning to live with ambiguity, discomfort, and uncertainty is a worthy educational ideal' (1999, 198). Accordingly, what I take from Boler's argument is that a feminist pedagogical praxis in the context of peacekeeper training must not only include a concern for ameliorating women's lives, but must also be informed by a feminist epistemological stance, which involves a critical interrogation of positionalities at play.

### ***Practising feminist pedagogy***

As the previous section demonstrates, I foreground intersectional feminist political and epistemic perspectives in the quest to identify instances of feminist pedagogy in my research archive. It is important to note, however, that I do not suggest that in order to qualify as feminist pedagogy, such pedagogical practice need explicitly derive from or reference feminist theory. As Spivak notes: ‘When you practice ... you construct a theory and irreducibly the practice will norm the theory, rather than be an example of indirect theoretical application’ (Spivak et al. 1990, 44, see also hooks, 1994, p.59). In other words, in identifying instances of feminist pedagogical practice, I do not mean to posit a linear understanding in which theory is neatly separable from, and prior to, practice. Rather, I suggest that it is possible to engage in pedagogical practices that enact or create feminist pedagogical principles without being self-consciously involved in the elaboration of feminist pedagogical theory.

Flowing from this understanding of feminist pedagogical practice, I locate feminist pedagogy in moments of practice and specific reflections provided by gender trainers. While I refer to trainers who self-identify as feminist and who reflect on the relationship of feminist political commitments to gender training as ‘feminist gender trainers’, this fixing of political subjectivity should be understood as contingent and provisional. Though gender trainers have varying relationships to feminism – with some using the term to name their political commitments, and others pointedly disavowing it – I do not wish suggest that there is a linear connection between claiming feminism and consistent feminist pedagogical practice. First, feminism, as noted in Chapter One, is ‘not a uniform referent even for those of us who regularly [deploy] it to name the politics of our intellectual investments’ (Wiegman 2016, 86). Second, and as outlined in Chapter Five, my epistemic approach aims to create space to understand individuals as inhabiting multiple and contradictory subjectivities, meaning that the politics of an individual are not necessarily structurally predetermined, but rather produce uncertain outcomes. In sum, I identify feminist pedagogical practice through a reading of the

politics and effects of the practice itself, rather than as flowing automatically from individual identifications or structural positions.

## MOMENTS OF FEMINIST PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE: CARE AND CONTEXT

Against the backdrop of militarising dynamics of gender training for peacekeepers, several gender trainers I encountered during my research described and enacted practices in the classroom that align with what has been theorised as feminist pedagogy. In this section, I describe such instances of feminist pedagogical practice, which I characterise as: theorising from experience, and practising an ethic of care in the classroom. Some gender trainers seek to disrupt hierarchical classroom practices by emphasising the importance of personal histories and lived experience as a basis for knowledge. They recognise their training audiences as individuals with needs and desires that exceed the learning interaction, and relate to them in a caring fashion. Throughout, these pedagogical practices demonstrate an attentiveness to context, to the ways in which the positionalities occupied by trainers and training audiences have been historically and politically shaped. These endeavours are grounded in a recognition of the complex (dis)empowering effects of coloniality and patriarchy for men and women in different locations of the world. Through an attentiveness to complex subject positions occupied by training audiences, these approaches combine elements of ‘pedagogy of the oppressed’ (Freire 2005) with a ‘pedagogy for the powerful’ (Cornwall 2016), or a ‘pedagogy for the privileged’ (Ferguson 2019a).

### ***Theorising from experience***

I argued in Chapter Eight that one way in which resistant training audiences and gender trainers attempt to ensure that gender is a ‘safe’ concept is by ensuring that it does not implicate the peacekeeper self. In most peacekeeper gender training, gender is understood as a property of peace-kept populations, and located in another geographical location.

However, as also mentioned in the previous discussion, some gender trainers view this tendency to project the problems of gender onto racialised others as problematic. In response to such othering epistemic perspectives, Malcolm for example explained that his approach 'is always to try and get them to connect with a personal experience'. Engaged in a type of 'pedagogy for the powerful', trainers like Malcolm seek to expose to training audiences their – our – own complicities in the maintenance and reproduction of structures of power (Cornwall 2016, 76).

It is interesting to note that in these trainers' accounts, the quest to make training personal is often explained through the trainer's own relationship with feminism. Many trainers I spoke with recalled feeling that something was out of joint as they encountered gender norms and discrimination when growing up. Johanna mentioned being excluded from the games that boys were playing in school because she was a girl; Malcolm recalled being forced to cut his hair at age eleven because his school deemed his hair too long for a boy. They recounted, in other words, events when they had 'sensed' something was wrong (Ahmed 2017, 22). Both talked about how, in their encounters with feminism in university curricula, they found the conceptual vocabulary to express what they had already felt and experienced. Their accounts aligned perfectly with a moment that countless feminists have described: 'In finding feminism, you are finding out about the many ways that feminists have tried to make sense, already, of the experiences you had, before you had them; experiences that left you feeling all alone are the experiences that lead you to others' (Ahmed 2017, 31).

Both Johanna and Malcolm linked their own experiences of finding feminism to the reason that they wanted their gender training to feel personal. As Malcolm explained, he sought in his training practice to cultivate that same awareness of gender dynamics in the everyday lives of the people he trained: 'I think perhaps fundamentally that was what got me into the field, was that once you see it in one instance in your daily life, you can't stop seeing it everywhere'.

This pedagogical desire maps onto Ahmed's account of the development of feminist consciousness: 'once you become a person who notices sexism and racism, it is hard to unbecome that person' (2017, 32). I suggest that this desire to get trainees to see gender as playing out in their own lives is linked to feminist pedagogical projects. Further, insisting that gender is not something that is a problem 'out there' but that it also fundamentally shapes the lives, and conditions of liveability, within the home contexts of those in the Global North goes against the grain of much of gender training and its racialising and colonising impulses.

This desire, which I interpret as a desire to foster a feminist consciousness, was coupled with an acknowledgment of the potentially colonising dynamics of imposing understandings of gender, especially in transnational contexts. Malcolm reflected:

What we're doing is we're providing a lens for analysis, and a language. And drawing attention to everyday interactions ... and this is where I feel OK about being a Westerner going to different contexts. [It is about] saying that I found these tools to be useful for better understanding my daily life; I'd be curious to see what these tools give you. I think pedagogically that's what we're doing: we're providing a framework for analysis and a language that enables individuals in your training audience to engage with both the training and with others.

The sentiment that comes through in Malcolm's statement is, I argue, linked to a feminist suspicion of universalising, totalising accounts of gender which, as I suggested in Chapter Six, appear to inform the design of gender training curricula in institutions of global governance (Kunz, Prügl, and Thompson 2019, 34). Such practice is commensurate with a feminist epistemology grounded on a 'foundation of difference', a position which 'suggests that we cannot claim single-strategy pedagogies of empowerment, emancipation, and liberation' (Luke and Gore 1992, 7). Malcolm's training practice implies a commitment to taking the context and life experiences of those he trains seriously. His practice, I contend, reflects the orientation of the "'queered" gender adviser' Jauhola advocates for, 'who instead of "knowing gender" [takes on] the task of interrupting the processes of knowing and subverting the normalized understandings of gender' (2013, 174). In other words, I suggest that feminist pedagogical practice, while provoking moments of 'unlearning' established understandings of



gender, remains cautious of the oppressive potential of seeking to replace old thinking with new and authoritative forms of knowledge (Mehta 2019, 24). This pedagogical project is more aptly described as ‘messing things up’ for dominant knowledge paradigms (Zalewski 2000, 126).

In a similar fashion, Johanna recounted using training activities that encouraged trainees to share their personal experiences with the group, emphasising the importance of ‘listening to each other’s ... struggles’. She explained: ‘I feel that helps... rather than me trying to give examples and definitions, helping them talk about it amongst themselves’. Taking students’ experiences seriously as a source of knowledge is attuned to the feminist pedagogical critique which insists on recognising students as subjects of their material, cultural, and political histories, and authorising experience as a way of knowing (Bell, Morrow, and Tastsoglou 1999, 26, Britzman 1998, 25, hooks 1994, 61). In other words, I suggest that Johanna and Malcolm’s accounts are underwritten by a feminist pedagogical practice that is committed to fostering student voice, disrupting hierarchical norms of the classroom, and taking personal experience seriously. They involve a practice of ceding the epistemic authority of the trainer, and thereby enabling collaborative knowledge production practices. They seek to create the space for new questions, rather than replacing one dominant knowledge paradigm with another. Importantly, these endeavours are coupled with a desire to foster an understanding of the world as ‘reality in process’ – to enable trainees to formulate critiques of the practices they witness and partake in (Freire 2005, 83).

However, this feminist desire to centre student voice requires, as feminist pedagogical theorising has pointed out, an attentiveness to context and power relations: ‘to do this when we perceive a student’s voice to have been marginalized based on their social location is clearly easier than when we are dealing with students whose “realities” we most wish to challenge (i.e., those of dominant social groups)’ (Bell, Morrow, and Tastsoglou 1999, 36, see

also Chapter Four). Like feminist theorists of pedagogy, feminist gender trainers observe that the problem with validating experience is that doing so may also validate myths about gender equality (Ferguson 2019b, 97). For example, Malcolm explained a dilemma he had to grapple with:

With women it's slightly more complicated and arguably, if people feel equal, it's not that nice to make them feel unequal, because you're making them feel less empowered than they feel. But I think it's also about suggesting that perhaps what they accept from society should be questioned.

Gender trainers have to grapple with the ethics of dispelling gender equality myths among audiences who may be personally invested in them; a question that ties up with the concern over whose experience is validated in classroom discussions (Schniedewind 1987, 27). Concern over the politics of amplifying student experience is germane in peacekeeper training, which typically involves groups who occupy positions of relative power and privilege, given their positioning as soldiers or police officers (see also Cornwall 2016, Ferguson 2019a). There are clearly limits to the extent that blindly affirming student voices and experiences can be considered a desirable outcome of gender training for peacekeepers, from the point of view of feminist politics. One way of navigating this tricky dynamic between granting epistemic authority to experience emerged in Vincent's account, introduced in Chapter Eight. Vincent highlighted that he sought to gather a diversity of opinions from among the training audience in order to demonstrate that no-one held the absolute truth. Vincent's pedagogical approach, I suggest, bears the markings of a feminist politics of difference, aimed at demonstrating the situatedness and partiality of knowledge claims (Ellsworth 1989, 303, see also Haraway 1988).

Not only do gender trainers seek to demonstrate to training audiences the partiality of each individual's point of view, they also create moments that resemble Boler's description of a

‘pedagogy of discomfort’ (1999, 175). An NGO trainer I call Sarah recounted facilitating a session on men and masculinities:<sup>31</sup>

It’s something that a lot of the men, particularly the ones from a more military kind of background, would tend to, in the first instance, really kind of engage with: “Oh, ok, you’re talking about men. You’re acknowledging that I have gender too, and that my experiences are relevant, and that we don’t have to just talk about women all the time”. And so in that sense, they would be energised by it, but then when I started to unpack the ideas around militarised masculinities, and that being something problematic, suddenly walls would go up, and some of them would start interrupting me when I was talking.

Sarah further explored this discomfort, noting that with Western audiences ‘it’s important not only to problematise masculinities of others in conflict-affected countries, but also Western, white men who are members of the army, or perhaps making policy’. The example she used was that of then President George H. W. Bush’s decision to invade Iraq in 1990, and how a performance of militarised masculinity was implicated in that decision. Sarah surmised that the trainees’ resistance to this framing was a response to their ‘personal investments in notions of masculinity’ being challenged. In this sense, Sarah asked her training audience to confront uncomfortable questions about the problematic politics of their own investments. While Sarah sought in our conversation to construct genealogies of their ‘positionality and emotional resistances’, what the effect for the training audience was remained unclear (Boler 1999, 178). In this particular example, in Sarah’s account, the resistant trainees sought to defend their investments indirectly, by arguing that ‘the First Gulf war was a good war, it was an important war, it was justified’.

In other instances, trainers sought to get training audiences to recognise the politics of their own investments through activities that were separated from historical events, in what appears to be a strategy to pre-empt the conversation veering into the politics of whether a certain war was justified. For example, in the course I observed in the Western Balkans, a

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<sup>31</sup> While the topic of men and masculinities is notably absent from UN and NATO level official curricula (as also observed by Laplonge 2015), in practice, some of the training courses I observed incorporated such sessions.

trainer I call Dalia facilitated the 'King and Queen' activity (for a detailed explanation of this activity, see Pepper 2012, 44). In this activity, the trainer recounts a fictional and purposely decontextualised story of a king and a queen. After a number of twists and turns in the narrative – which involves abusive behaviour in a relationship, infidelity, seeking assistance from bystanders, and following orders – the queen of the story is shot dead by a palace guard. Trainees are then asked to rank, in order of culpability, who they believe to be responsible for the death of the queen. The trainer facilitates a discussion around the different rankings that participants come up with.

I have observed and facilitated this exercise numerous times, and the ranking provided by participants is always varied, though typically with many assigning blame to the queen herself. The activity highlights the disjuncture between trainees' disavowing victim-blaming and following obviously illegal orders in the abstract; and their application of patriarchal sexual morality in their assessment of a particular case (the queen deserved to be shot, because she was unfaithful and disobeyed her husband's orders). In this instance, Dalia was clearly practising a pedagogy of discomfort, pointing out to the trainees after the discussion that the point of the exercise was to show that: 'When we think something is morally wrong, we find excuses for actions that are illegal'. Dalia ended the session on an empathetic note: 'When I was introduced to this exercise, I gave the same answers as most of you because I come from a patriarchal family and I've worked for the military for seventeen years. But as I've done this exercise many times, I've changed my mind'. I read Dalia's statement as fostering a critical awareness of the ways in which patriarchal modes of thought inform our thinking, but also providing a hopeful indication that it is possible to question these ways of perceiving the world. In this sense, Dalia was fostering not simply unproductive feelings of guilt, but rather attempting to give her audience the tools with which to critically interrogate their own positionalities (Boler 1999, 186).

Finally, while the examples I have provided in this section primarily demonstrate how gender trainers develop feminist pedagogical approaches that combine elements of a pedagogy for the oppressed (Freire 2005, hooks 1994) with a pedagogy for the powerful (Cornwall 2016) or privileged (Ferguson 2019a), it is worth highlighting that to understand peacekeeper training audiences as singularly privileged would be an oversimplification. Although soldiers and police officers doubtless wield power conferred upon them by both uniform and weapon, it is also the case that many of them join these services from situations of economic deprivation. Further, while Global South/majority world peacekeepers count for the majority of troops and police contingents deployed, gender expertise and gender training is dominated by actors based in the Global North/minority world (Pruitt 2018, Kunz 2016, Henry 2012). Power and privilege operate in complex ways in the gender training scenario.

Indeed, trainers I spoke with were attentive to complex positionalities and multi-faceted relations of power in the classroom. For example, Malcolm recalled a training course held in South Africa with a majority Black audience. A male trainer from a local NGO had asked a group of around fifty service men and women to reflect on who had been a male role model in their lives. Many trainees were troubled by the question, and several told the trainer that they could not think of anyone. A few participants shared stories of growing up with fathers who were absent, abusive, or alcoholic, and one young man reported that he was his own role model because he had provided for his family after his father had left. Malcolm raised this example out of a wish to recognise that many military personnel come from socially or economically deprived backgrounds: the majority of the trainees in this group were Black South Africans, whose history of oppression contributes to on-going economic marginalisation. In recounting this incident, Malcolm sought to recognise that racist patriarchy has complex (dis)empowering effects for men as well as women (Henry 2017). I suggest therefore that what these trainers' practice demonstrates, is that it is ethically suspect to assume that training audiences in peacekeeper gender training are singularly privileged

subjects, and that a feminist pedagogical practice should be attentive to shifting and uneven relations of power in the classroom.

### ***Care and classroom dynamics***

Feminist pedagogical theorising has long been attentive to the fact that asking students to share personal experiences in the classroom can involve the evocation of ‘difficult knowledge’ (Britzman 1998, 11, see also Zembylas 2013). While some gender trainers, as we have seen in Chapter Eight, seek to avoid discomfort in the first place, others, as described above, practice a ‘pedagogy of discomfort’ (Boler 1999, 175). The latter is a process that requires a great deal of care – in two senses of the word. First, introducing such conversations to the classroom requires an attentive handling of the topic for instrumental reasons. Care must be taken to ensure that students feel comfortable sharing experiences, and that the conversation is facilitated in a way that allows for self-reflection instead of defensiveness and the hardening of already established opinions and self-perceptions (Kenway and Modra 1992, 151). Second, facilitating these kinds of conversations also often involves care as an *ethic*; as a normative commitment (Beauboeuf-Lafontant 2002, Noddings 1988). Care as instrumental concern and care as ethic are of course not mutually exclusive, but often emerge as intertwined concerns in feminist pedagogical practice in training.

Martina, a civilian faculty member at a multinational security studies institution in Western Europe, spoke of the need to attend to students’ experience in a holistic manner. She reflected that students need time and space ‘to become familiar with a topic, or to feel safe with a topic, or to become interested in the topic, and curious about the topic’. For Martina, the emotional aspects of learning are of particular significance in the context of gender training:

For gender you need the space even more ... If you’ve never thought about this in your whole life, it has so many implications for your private life, for your family, marital relationships, with your friends, so many different aspects ... [You need to create] the space for an opening, for rethinking their own relationship with the world.

Martina's assertion that her students require time to think through questions of gender was posed in juxtaposition to what I described in Chapter Three as the neoliberal demands for efficiency made of gender training, which often result in restrictions on time available (Mukhopadhyay 2014, 362, Sexwale 1996, 61). Martina complained that in her organisation, students' schedules were filled with activities, and that empty space in the schedule was seen as wasted time. Her complaint was echoed by the military trainer Kalle, who likewise noted:

You could easily spend [more time] on this, we could discuss and mull over things, doing small group work and talking about things. That would be a good thing. There's a lot of experience in the classroom, that we could ask about from those people ... we could use that as the basis for the session. But then there isn't enough time. That's a challenge.

Kalle and Martina's sense of not having sufficient time to delve into questions of gender is common in the world of gender training (Alaga and Birikorang 2012, 17). Gender training becomes subject to, per Foucault, 'a theoretically ever-growing use of time: exhaustion rather than use; it is a question of extracting, from time, ever more available moments and, from each moment, ever more useful forces' (1991, 154). Against this regime of temporal regulation, Martina developed ways to carve out time and space for her students to rest, enjoy themselves, and let the ideas that their academic programme provided sink in. Martina explained that she tried to create more space for them by organising a city tour, and releasing students early on Fridays, recognising that they had travelled from far and had spent substantial time away from their families, and needed to 'buy presents for their children'. By doing so, she challenged the military organisation's view that the subjectivity of students could be reduced to their function as knowledge acquirers. She recognised them as individuals, with needs, hopes, and desires that exceeded their student role. I suggest that Martina was demonstrating a caring orientation in her approach to pedagogy.

In a similar display of attentiveness, many of the gender trainers I observed took an active interest in the training participants. This attentiveness was evident in the fact that instructors paid attention to the energy levels of the participants, and how much each participant

contributed to conversations. They put a lot of thought into the composition of small working groups, ensuring that shy or reserved participants would not be paired to work with someone who was likely to dominate them in conversation. For example, Katie, a Western European military officer and gender adviser, who was the course director of the training I observed in East Africa, constantly shared observations with me about levels of participation in the training group, and introduced fun activities such as tossing a ball around the classroom when she felt energy levels were waning. She monitored each trainees' classroom participation, seeking to understand and address any barriers to participation, such as gendered interaction dynamics, language issues, shyness, or any other inhibiting factors. Katie was consistently observing classroom interactions and asking herself 'Who speaks? For what and to whom? Who listens? Who is confident and comfortable and who isn't?' (Lather 1991, 144). This type of caring activity extended beyond the classroom as well. All the course directors I observed were constantly engaged in making sure participants were comfortable and supported, through activities that ranged from personally ensuring that all participants' accommodation during their stay on the course was satisfactory, to writing letters of support for them to their superior officers, trying to help students in their career progression.

While a strand of feminist pedagogical theorising argues that care is both a feminine quality and a feminist ethic, as with feminist pedagogy's advocating theorising from experience, this pedagogical commitment requires careful contextualisation in practice (Maher 1987, 92, see, for example, Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002, Noddings, 1988). As Laura Duhan Kaplan (1994) warns, the idealisation of care as feminist ethic can support patriarchal militarism. First, associating care with femininity risks affirming the essentialised gender difference that animates patriarchal militarism. Second, caring activity is easily recruited to the service of an imagined 'us' (who are deserving of care) over an imagined 'them' (who are devalued and not cared for) (Kaplan 1994, 123). I suggest that Kaplan's critique reveals that in order for care to



qualify as feminist pedagogical practice in gender training, a careful contextualisation is in order.

I am actually relatively less concerned by Kaplan's first critique of care ethics reproducing gender difference in the context of peacekeeper gender training. I contend that care is not an essentially feminised characteristic in the context of martial institutions. This is because the type of camaraderie that is often observed in military units and thought to foster 'cohesion' can also be understood as maintained by caring activity (Whitworth 2004, 159, see also, King 2013, Furia 2009, Titunik 2008). For example, the course directors who were making sure that the course participants had adequate lodgings, food, and access to healthcare when they needed it were performing both care work and the typical responsibilities of a commanding officer. In other words, I see care as an integral feature of the functioning of martial institutions, and suggest that these institutions have figured out ways to incorporate it into their culture, potentially amounting to a regendering of care as an attribute of military masculinity. Care in this context does not, then, necessarily reproduce the 'woman as caretaker' ideology that Kaplan critiques (1994, 123).

The potential of care to contribute to the devaluing of others, in contrast, is an important concern in martial institutions (Kaplan 1994, 123). Extending Kaplan's argument, I suggest that care is closely related to love as an emotion that binds together groups. Such love, in turn, is predicated on distinguishing members of the group from those who are excluded (Britzman 1998, 97). Ahmed provides an example of this dynamic, arguing that white supremacist hate groups draw on the emotion of love rather than hate to produce a sense of group belonging: 'those who love this nation ... anyone who loves liberty', and so forth (2014, 122). Bearing in mind this warning, I contend that care is not inherently or necessarily a feminist ethic. Rather, care can be an activity that demarcates those who belong from those who do not. As was the concern with validating personal experience and voice in the discussion above, the *politics* of

caring depend as much on *who* is cared for and *on what terms*. Care as feminist ethic requires recognising the complex positionalities and multidirectional power dynamics at work in this setting. It involves making choices and taking a stand.

In the East African training course I observed, Katie demonstrated how such care ethics are negotiated in practice. During a session on cultural competence, facilitated by another Western European female military instructor, a particularly uncomfortable exchange unfolded. When the instructor asked the group whether cultures can change, a female West African military officer offered the example of female genital mutilation (FGM) in her home country. Another West African military officer added to this, speaking about how in her generation cutting was the norm, but how this is changing, and how she would not allow anyone to cut her daughter. Strongly implied in both women's comments was that FGM was a practice they knew intimately. At this juncture, a young, white, male Western European military officer asked the two women whether they knew where the tradition of FGM came from. When the two military women referred him to culture and religion, he launched into an unsolicited historical explanation of Arab trading routes, and how these facilitated the spread of the custom of FGM. However, this display of 'mansplaining' was cut short by a loud snort from Katie in the back of the room who interjected: 'I think it's amazing that you think you should explain FGM to our West African sisters. I think you have given us a pretty good example of how *not* to do cultural awareness'.

Katie's interruption of this conversation demonstrated that the politics of the classroom require an on-going attentiveness to power relations, and affirmed that 'it may be necessary to exercise teacher authority and interrupt relations and ideologies of domination in the classroom' (Bell, Morrow, and Tastsoglou 1999, 40). In other words, Katie as the course director had to choose between allowing two Black women to be talked over and condescended to, and embarrassing a white man. Katie's choice demonstrates the need to

complicate our understanding of care as feminist ethic; it reveals, in my reading of the situation, that refusing to embarrass a training participant is not straightforwardly the most caring choice. Practicing care ethics requires instead an attentiveness to relations of domination in the classroom.

Katie's interruption of relations of domination in the classroom provides one example of the political considerations underlying care ethics in training. However, to develop an account of feminist care ethics as part of peacekeeper gender training, it is essential to also consider the politics of caring for peace-kept populations. Recalling the moment in which Maja asked her audience to consider the significance of the graffiti disparaging Bosnian women, described in Chapter Eight, provides an example of a gender trainer extending an ethics of care toward the peace-kept population. In showing that peacekeepers themselves were implicated in the harm experienced by peace-kept women, Maja made her audience uncomfortable. Again, this pedagogical strategy required an assessment of who our caring energies should be directed toward. I argue, based on the examples provided by Katie and Maja, that an ethics of care should foreground a consideration of relations of power and domination. In other words, for a pedagogical practice to qualify as feminist, it needs to be contextually grounded and informed by differential subject positions.

#### STRATEGISING AT THE MARGINS: SMALL SUBVERSIONS

The examples detailed above offer a reparative reading of peacekeeper gender training insofar as they demonstrate the possibility of practising feminist pedagogy. In short, they reveal that not all training simply reinforces martial thinking. In fact, feminist pedagogical practices appear to subvert martial logics. They challenge uniformity by affirming the importance of personal histories and lived experience; by making the training personal. They trouble the saviour narrative in which peacekeepers are portrayed as only protectors, not perpetrators of gender violence, by suggesting ways of knowing our own complicity in unequal

structures of power. They destabilise military modes of caring by disrupting relations of domination. They create a space that contains the possibility of contextual, situated knowledges that reveal the historical and social contingency of peacekeeping interventions. All of which goes against the grain of what I have identified in earlier chapters as the militarising dynamics of gender training. However, while I characterise such pedagogical practices as subversive, I also characterise these subversions as *small*. They take place *within* military institutions of hegemonic masculinity. They are best characterised as moments of instability and disruption rather than large, paradigm-shifting changes. In this section, I ask, how do gender trainers manage to be subversive within militarised institutions? How might we think of the significance of such subversions? I first explore strategic choices made by gender trainers, and then turn to reflect on how to think about the effects of these subversions.

### ***Strategically feminist***

Feminist gender trainers and gender experts are often characterised (and self-represent) as ‘Trojan horses’, who smuggle feminist knowledge into martial institutions under the guise of gender expertise, including through gender training (Kunz 2016, 103, Prügl 2013, 60, Woodward 2001, 3). Gender trainers who named their politics as feminist noted that the Trojan horse strategy was enabled by the fact that their work was not perceived as challenging the institution in any significant way. Johanna, for example, identified not only an obstacle but also an opportunity in the fact that gender remains a marginal question in peace and security work:

By gender never being taken, or often not being taken seriously, I’ve had a lot of space to do things that worked. And gender not understood as being something so political, and going to the core of everything. I was given that space to do quite a lot of things. So, I guess, that has worked for me in many ways too.

In other words, Johanna described a Trojan horse strategy of taking advantage of the fact that her work was seen as unthreatening, as something not ‘political’, to carve out space for

creative feminist interventions. Key to this strategy, I argue in this section, is carefully managing the pedagogical encounter of gender training so that the exchange does not upset audiences to the extent that they disengage from dialogue, or that they fully appreciate the subversive nature of the exercise.

In order to understand how the Trojan horse strategy works, how feminist gender trainers manage to keep doing what they are doing, it is important to recognise that the instances of feminist political practice identified in the previous section take place within institutions of hegemonic masculinity (Kronsell 2006). In this environment, hegemonic ‘norms of recognition determine what can be read, heard and understood as intelligible and legible’ (Dhawan 2012, 47). Trainers who subscribe to a transformative feminist political agenda are therefore constrained both by what can be *said* and by what can be *heard* by their audience (Ferguson 2019b, 30, 33, Whitworth 2004, 120). Even if feminist pedagogical practice does not necessarily entail an unwavering commitment to being the ‘happy gender trainer’ (as introduced in Chapter Six), singularly committed to not upsetting the audience, gender trainers practising feminist pedagogy do nonetheless have to be strategic as to how far they can push their analysis before it causes such an irreconcilable break with the trainees’ ways of being in and understanding the world that the conditions for genuine dialogue dissipate.

Martina explained the importance of easing training audiences into the topic slowly, for them to feel ‘safe so that they don’t feel it’s this feminist thing so I have to [shut down]’. In other words, she worked with what Ferguson describes as a ‘calculated ambiguity’, designed to not push training audiences (or the institution commissioning the training!) so far that possibilities for being heard would disappear (Ferguson 2019b, 30, 33). Malcolm related an instance in which the training audience included individuals who identified as feminists:

I agree with what you’re saying, but by shouting at people and calling them chauvinists, which did happen in [one training], and saying you need to read books, you’re very uneducated in this topic, I’ve done a Master’s degree in gender studies and I’m tired of this bullshit, I think that can be kind of difficult.

The exchange Malcolm describes sounds like the situation Ahmed (2017, 187) calls ‘feminist snap’; a moment in which one finds the demands of the situation too much, and refuses to bear them any longer: ‘I’m tired of this bullshit’. Feminist gender trainers themselves sometimes teeter close to snapping. I described in Chapter Eight how Johanna said that she enjoys confusing audiences who believe her to be ‘too happy to be a feminist’. However, Johanna also reflected on the stereotype of the angry feminist: ‘No wonder that you’re being made out as a feminist for being a difficult and angry person because it *does* make you very angry about a lot of things’. While acknowledging the reasons for feminist anger, both Johanna and Malcolm argued that in the pedagogical encounter, being angry or confrontational was unlikely to be productive. Gender training, as a strategic enterprise, does not allow for feminist snap among its practitioners.

Gender trainers who practise feminist pedagogy regulate not only their affective performance, but also the concepts and terms on which they speak. In contrast to Malcolm’s feminist trainees who insisted that their colleagues should pick up a book and educate themselves, Johanna described her practice as a work of translation:

I can’t make my colleagues read *Gender Trouble* ... they’re not going to do a PhD in gender studies, so if I want to see change then I kind of need to translate slightly what is happening, you know, what the thinking is in academia and what we can take from that, and make that kind of come into our work.

Johanna’s characterisation of her work relates to an understanding of gender training as a practice that involves ‘working across epistemological contexts’ (Mukhopadhyay and Wong 2007, 13). Johanna’s reflection not only describes strategies employed by gender trainers to ensure that they can be heard, it also offers a useful reminder for the grounds on which academic critiques of gender training should be formulated. It calls attention to her ‘contextual entanglements’ (Chappell and Mackay 2015). She suggests that maintaining theoretical purity is not feasible in her work. She recognises that her colleagues who work in this field have neither the time nor inclination to develop the kind of understanding of

academic debates on gender that would allow them to grasp the nuances of gender theory. Nonetheless, Johanna maintains that the insights of this work can inform practice. In other words, her reflection reminds us that academic critique of gender training should not be based on how closely its conceptual vocabulary resembles that of feminist works, but rather on how their ideas are being made to work through translation.

In taking up this work of translation, feminist gender trainers pick up both the vocabulary of the institution they are working in, as well as its discursive frames. For example, gender trainers often deploy the language of operational effectiveness, or remain silent about their feminist political commitments, in a bid to be taken seriously by the institutions they are working in. Vincent provided an example of adapting to the frameworks of the audience, describing a training he was involved in where participants consisted of military and police officers from a number of African countries. Vincent noted that many of these countries have in place the kinds of anti-sodomy laws used to persecute homosexuals, and reflected on his need to work within that framework:

If you're working with a group of police officers, no matter how repugnant the idea of LGBT being illegal is to you, you cannot ask police officers to break or ignore the law. [But] I think you can introduce other ideas that make them think a little bit deeper. My point was clear: that you perceive a person to be gay doesn't have anything to do with their rights as a citizen, their rights as a victim of a crime, their reliability as a witness of crime. Has nothing to do with it ... You're not directly challenging the law directly, but you're asking them to consider their [LGBT subjects'] humanity.

In other words, Vincent described how he both worked within the frameworks and the vocabulary of the institutions he was working with (by not challenging the law directly); as well as how he sought within that frame to prompt his training audience to examine the question from another angle. His personal disagreement, expressed in terms of anti-gay laws being repugnant to him, informed his decision to try and frame the question differently. In his attempt to reframe the question, I suggest that Vincent is both repeating a norm (accepting legal persecution of gays), as well as introducing a slight difference to that norm in its very

repetition (considering their humanity); in a move that can be read as demonstrating Butler's contention that 'repetitions are never simply replicas of the same' (1993, 18).

I suggest that Vincent's strategy of speaking within the normative framework of the context can be usefully thought of through Bhabha's conceptualisation of mimicry (1994, 121). Mimicry, in Bhabha's sense, involves the colonised adapting to and adopting the norms, language, dress, and mannerisms of the coloniser. However, this adoption is not simply an imitation; it involves 'an ironic compromise' in the form of a 'double articulation' where the repetition of the norm is never a faithful replica of the original (Bhabha 1994, 122). This deliberately imperfect repetition of the norm produces the effect of mocking the norm, exposing its ambivalence, and thereby resisting its power.

I cede of course that there are ways in which Bhabha's analytic resists application to this example: Vincent, as a Western European NGO employee, hardly occupies the position of the colonised in relation to the African police and military officers who comprise his audience. Nonetheless, as a gender trainer invited into a martial institution, his presence is contingent upon his ability to play by the rules of the organisation. The anti-gay laws that Vincent is attempting to subvert, in this scenario, constitute a hegemonic discourse. The relations of power that enable the comparison to mimicry are situational rather than structural.

Though it has subversive potential, mimicry is a politically risky strategy: irony has notoriously unpredictable political effects. One of these risks resides in the fact that the ironic element of mimicry can be misunderstood or even lost. I suggest that when feminist gender trainers are consciously employing the strategy of mimicry, we can think of them as articulating a lie. I do not mean this in a derogatory sense: as Adrienne Rich (1995) explains, lying is a strategy commonly used by those in marginalised positions to ensure their own survival. In the case of feminist gender trainers, they are lying insofar as they speak the language of martial institutions in order to be heard, even when they do not subscribe to these logics themselves.



Significantly, Rich cautions: 'There is a danger run by all powerless people: that we forget we are lying, or that lying becomes a weapon we carry over into relationships with people who do not have power over us' (1995, 189). I bring up Rich's warning as a way of highlighting that in order for mimicry to be an effective Trojan Horse strategy for feminist gender trainers, there is a need for a constant vigilance; to remember what are lies, what is mimicry.

Remembering what are lies is important because 'in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess' (Bhabha 1994, 122). Mimicry can be 'at once resemblance and menace', but in order to do so, it must remain an imperfect repetition of the norm: 'almost the same, *but not quite*' (Bhabha 1994, 123, emphasis in original). Vincent's subsequent reflections on his strategy of trying to push the norm slightly from within provides some clues as to how the effect of mimicry can be maintained. Vincent admitted:

I don't know if this is the cowardly way out ... I've always felt very unsatisfied by that solution and have doubts about whether it's the correct thing to do or not.

Vincent's account testifies to enduring unease with his strategy. I suggest that this unease is productive, because it serves as a reminder that this strategy is as imperfect as it is resistant. It prompts the feminist gender trainer to ensure that their repetition of the norm continues to produce the slippage which is essential to their discourse doing the work of resistance, to menacing the hegemonic discourse.

What I suggest feminist gender trainers can learn from Bhabha's concept of mimicry, then, is the need to sit with tensions, and to keep alive the discomfort that Vincent expressed, the feeling of being very unsatisfied. This dissatisfaction, I contend, is constitutive of the slippage or excess that guards gender trainers from forgetting that they are lying, that keeps alive the possibility of being a menace while navigating the hegemonic norms of martial institutions. Under these conditions, feminist pedagogy is possible in gender training for peacekeepers. If feminist pedagogical practice is possible, then '[t]here is also the possibility that patriarchal state elites have initiated something they cannot control' (Enloe 2000, 287).

### ***A gamble with meaning***

I call this type of strategising at the margins subversive rather than transformative, because it is less a programme for radical, foundation-shifting change, and more a series of moments which destabilise hegemonic narratives. Indeed, in interviews with gender trainers, when asked what the goal of their training was, what success looked like to them, many gave vague answers. Johanna for example, said: 'Success for me is not a complete, total, world-changed thing. I'm happy to see little steps along the way'. In gender training, she noted that this might take the form of 'a frank discussion among participants about what they *really* think about gender sensitivity, and how they understand gender, and kind of getting them to understand gender as being something that they live and do'. Johanna's understanding of success is shared by many gender trainers. McKay (2005, 277-8) proclaims:

We should not count converts but rather take sustenance from the participants who, at the end of the day, have gained a glimpse of recognition, who will continue to think about the subject, who are more sensitized to the world in which they carry out their duties than they were when they came in.

In an even more modest assessment of the value of gender training in the military, Malcolm quipped that all funds spent on gender training were funds not spent on weapons; every hour of gender training was an hour away from training in acts of violence. In other words, these trainers did not explain their pedagogical goals as constituting a calculated and linear progression towards transformed subjects or individuals, but rather drew sustenance from moments which destabilised martial logics. These trainers' accounts echo characterisations of other liberatory projects such as decoloniality as 'not a master plan for liberation, but a myriad of delinkings' (Mignolo and Nanibush 2018).

The emphasis on destabilising moments that I read in these gender trainers' accounts resonates closely with the broader literature on the practice of gender expertise. Elisabeth Prügl sets out to describe a feminist ethic for gender experts and gender trainers, and argues that such an ethic should be focused on process rather than outcomes (2016, 30). Despite this

focus on process over outcomes, accounts of gender training that recognise the feminist pedagogical potential of the practice typically rely on the implication that such gender training finds causal application in an overall project of transformation, forming a kind of slow drip of change that will ultimately flow over (Ferguson 2019b, 49, Bustelo, Ferguson, and Forest 2016a, 168, see also Duncanson 2013, Squires 2005).

In contrast to such assessments of feminist pedagogical moments as cumulatively amounting to large scale transformation, I propose we understand them instead as small subversions, that do not necessarily amount to a master plan for liberation. I believe such a consideration to be necessary, because, as Butler reminds us, ‘subversiveness is the kind of effect that *resists calculation*, [such acts] continue to signify in spite of their authors, and sometimes against their authors’ most precious intentions’ (1993, 29). Thinking for example about the political effect of mimicry, its subversive potential lies in its exposure of ambivalences in colonial discourses, a process of disturbing truth claims, rather than a vision of a different future. In other words, I suggest that we examine the political worth of small subversions through an epistemic lens that admits a degree of indeterminacy to the meaning of small subversions and an unknowability of their cumulative effects.

Small subversions, in this analytic, represent ‘a gamble with meaning’ (Britzman 2013, 112). I read Britzman’s phrase here in two senses: feminist pedagogical practice both gambles with the meaning of what constitutes gender; and this gamble is meaningful. I outlined above that I do not think it possible to assign causal effects to the subversions that feminist pedagogical practice performs, hence there is a gamble to the meaning of these moments. Here, I would like to suggest that this gamble nonetheless has political worth. Instead of looking for guaranteed pathways to transformation, it may be useful to think of feminist pedagogical practice as a form of what Spivak calls ‘a practical politics of the open end’. In Spivak’s explanation of political labour, she points to the interplay of large ideological acts with the

everyday work of maintenance, comparing the latter to the activity of brushing one's teeth (1990, 105):

When we actually brush our teeth, or clean ourselves everyday, or take exercise, or whatever, we don't think we are fighting a losing battle against mortality, but in fact, all of these efforts are doomed to failure because we are going to die. On the other hand, we really think of it much more as upkeep and as maintenance rather than as an irreducibly doomed effort. This kind of activity cannot be replaced by an operation. We can't have a surgical operation which takes care of the daily maintenance of a body doomed to die. The operation would be identical with death.

Spivak's analogy, I suggest, helps inflect our thinking into a different mode of political thought; one in which the worth of acts such as small subversions are not solely determined by their proven capacity to produce a transformed future (Wiegman 2004, see also Stern and Zalewski 2009). Even though the point of these acts is not a linear programme for change, paradoxically, as Aaron Belkin (2017) suggests, such transformation may not be the point. The point, I suggest, is to destabilise hegemonic discourses from the margins, to work their ambivalences in an attempt to carve out new modes of thinking and to resist the smoothing over of contradictions. The point is to continue to contest what political and epistemic work the concept of gender can be made to do. Keeping alive the possibility that gender may be thought of in liberatory and intersectional terms, I contend, sustains the *possibility* of different modes of being and acting in the world, at the same time as it does not guarantee that such a transformation will happen.

## CONCLUSION

What the analysis in this chapter has sought to highlight is that while gender training for uniformed peacekeepers can, and often does, involve the domestication of gender knowledge to serve the purposes of martial institutions, this dynamic is not reflective of all gender training, all of the time. To demonstrate this point, this chapter has taken an analytical approach that focuses attention on moments of feminist pedagogy at work in gender training. This analytical exercise was inspired by a recognition of the limits of 'paranoid' analytical

practices, most notably formulated by Sedgwick (2003). Thinking in a reparative mood, I have sought to highlight the ways in which training (sometimes) involves feminist pedagogical practice. The identification of moments of feminist pedagogical practice goes 'against the tide of predetermination', which would suggest gender training in martial institutions is inevitably bound to be a militarist and colonial exercise (Britzman 2013, 112).

In this endeavour, I have drawn upon principles identified in the feminist pedagogical literature, notably the practices of theorising from experience, and an ethics of care in the classroom (Boler 1999, Kaplan 1994, Luke and Gore 1992). Through an examination of these principles at work, I have sought to highlight that the particular power dynamics of gender training classrooms for uniformed peacekeepers demand a contextually informed application of feminist pedagogical principles, attentive to relations of domination within and beyond the classroom. I have drawn attention to the ways in which feminist gender trainers navigate experience and notions of selfhood in training, and the ways in which they practice an ethics of care in the classroom. Such practices, I argue, represent moments of instability and disruption for hegemonic martial logics in peacekeeper training.

Having identified moments of feminist pedagogical practice in gender training, this chapter has considered their political and epistemic effects. I have sought to draw attention to the ways in which feminist strategising is both enabled and constrained by its marginal position in institutions of power. Under these conditions, moments of feminist pedagogy amount, not necessarily to an overarching programme of feminist transformation, but rather to small subversions of the meaning-making apparatuses of martial institutions. In the final discussion in this chapter, I suggested that the political worth of such small subversions should be understood, not as a failure to produce large-scale structural change, but rather as, following Spivak (1990), a 'practical politics of the open end'. To invest feminist energies in continuing to contest what political work gender can and cannot be made to do through gender training

constitutes a gamble with meaning. This gamble, I suggest, is meaningful. In the next, concluding chapter of this thesis, I seek to situate this gamble within a broader consideration of feminist political strategising, examining what the implications are of attaching political worth to feminist pedagogical practice in the project of training uniformed peacekeepers on gender.

## CHAPTER TEN

### CONCLUSION: PRACTISING PARADOXICAL POLITICS

*Can there be life without transcendence?  
Politics without the dream of perfectibility?*

- Homi K. Bhabha (1994, 88)

Over the past two decades, gender training for uniformed peacekeepers has evolved into a wide-reaching transnational practice, involving significant numbers of military and police personnel deployed to conflict areas. Despite this evolution, scholarly knowledge on gender training remains limited. In this study, I set out to explore this practice, driven by an interest in what gender training is, and what epistemic and political work it does in the martial institutions involved in peacekeeping. This thesis contributes to the state of empirical knowledge about gender training for peacekeepers by providing an overview of the field, and an in-depth qualitative understanding of how gender training is practised in peacekeeping training centres in different areas of the world.

This empirical material provides the basis for the key theoretical intervention that this thesis stages. I draw on the conceptual vocabularies of postcolonial and queer feminisms to develop a mode of analysis that attends to ambivalence and contradiction in the training enterprise, and that reveals that gender training simultaneously serves martial logics and subverts them. I find, in other words, that gender training for peacekeepers constitutes a paradoxical practice from the point of view of intersectional feminist commitments. Attending to ambivalence, and thinking about gender training as specifically *paradoxical*, poses important questions for feminist political strategising, including how to think beyond the terms of transcendence and perfectibility, as Bhabha prompts us to do in the quote that opens this chapter. These

questions implicate both feminist engagements with the global governance of peace and security, and gender training as a strategy beyond the peace and security sector. In this concluding chapter, I draw together the different strands of analysis that emerge from my findings, and discuss their implications.

This chapter is organised as follows. I begin with a discussion of the empirical and theoretical insights that the analytical chapters of this thesis have generated, highlighting the contradictory and ambivalent nature of these findings. I argue that together, these findings lend themselves to the conclusion that gender training constitutes a paradoxical politics. Next, I expand on this understanding of paradox, and discuss the questions it poses for feminist political strategising. I then reflect on what further avenues for inquiry this study opens up. Finally, I conclude with a consideration of the implications of my findings for engagement with policymakers.

#### TRAINING THE TROOPS ON GENDER: A CONTRADICTIONARY PRACTICE

The point of departure for this inquiry has been the theoretical conviction that what exactly gender is and does is produced rather than given: gender can be understood in different ways, and different understandings of the term have divergent epistemic and political effects (Butler 2007b, xxii). Critical feminist analyses have pointed out that ostensibly progressive feminist interventions, such as gender mainstreaming of peacekeeping, can produce deeply problematic politics which sustain patriarchy, militarisation, coloniality, and heteronormativity (Carson 2016, Jauhola 2013, Pratt 2013, Razack 2004, Whitworth 2004). I locate the inquiry of this thesis within this body of scholarship, which interrogates the politics of deploying the language of gender in the governance of international peace and security. Informed by a feminist poststructuralist approach, I contend that training matters, because training produces knowledges, which in turn are productive of different ways of being and acting in the world. These theoretical insights gesture towards the importance of posing the



question: *What political and epistemic work does gender training do in martial institutions involved in peacekeeping?*

This epistemic stance further suggests that what gender *training* is and does is an empirical question, not automatically deducible from the concept itself. The first task for this thesis was therefore to establish an understanding of what exactly gender training involves. In Chapter Two, I examined the policy context that gives rise to gender training for uniformed peacekeepers as a transnational practice, and mapped varying understandings of what gender training does or should cover in different geographic contexts. This analysis demonstrated that peacekeeper gender training constitutes a significant transnational practice. This chapter further traced how gender, in the context of peacekeeper training, is rendered a knowable object. I argued that gender is primarily understood as a problem of sexual violence, which is external to the peacekeeping endeavour, and which is amenable to problem-solving and technical solutions. Gender, in other words, is framed as a discrete operational issue, with very few training mandates evoking questions of internal organisational dynamics or the peacekeepers themselves.

However, the review of existing literature on gender training presented in Chapter Three suggested that the dynamics and politics of training cannot be reliably deduced from policy mandates or training curricula alone. Studies of peacekeeper training, as well as gender training in related fields, attest to the fact that what happens in the classroom is crucially important to understanding the content and politics of training interventions (Holmes 2019, 67, Mackay 2005, 267, Sexwale 1996, 60). In other words, the literature on peacekeeper/gender training highlights that in order to assess the epistemic and political work gender training does, it is important to examine questions of how gender is learned, who is authorised to know it, and what processes of translation, negotiation, and resistance are involved in this process. In order to address these questions, I gathered empirical material

through a multi-sited ethnographic approach (as described in Chapter Five). I read the research archive this method produced with the help of feminist pedagogy, and feminist, postcolonial, and queer perspectives on what it means to learn, to know, and to do politics (as discussed in Chapter Four).

On the one hand, my research archive gives rise to a number of findings that resonate with critical feminist literature on peacekeeping and gender training, which cautions that feminist concepts, when deployed in martial institutions, often come to serve the interests of the status quo (Väyrynen 2004, 138, Whitworth 2004, 140). I characterise the status quo as: unequal relations of power in global politics, colonial thinking, martial logics, and heteropatriarchal arrangements.

Chapter Six demonstrated that the political economy of knowledge production privileges expertise in the Global North: training curricula are designed through processes which render conflict-affected women objects of knowledge rather than knowing subjects (Kunz 2016, 108, see also Dhawan 2012, Spivak 2010, Mohanty 1988). Epistemic authority – who can know gender – is consequently framed as male and military, in ways which mute other perspectives.

The knowledge about gender that training produces is importantly informed by colonial thinking. This is a finding that emerges in different articulations across the empirical chapters of this thesis. Chapter Six demonstrated that the understanding of gender that is deployed in training simultaneously denies ‘colonial difference’ (Lugones 2010, 746), *and* renders race hyper-visible in ways that facilitate colonial thinking (Razack 2004, 7). Chapter Seven expanded this discussion, describing how peacekeepers come to interpret conflict-related sexual violence through the lenses of colonial scripts of racialised difference. These scripts manifest in different ways in peacekeeper training: they either invoke a paternalistic desire to save women in the Global South; or they prompt recourse to cultural essentialism that denies a responsibility to challenge structures of oppression (Duncanson 2013, 121, see also Pratt

2013). Chapter Eight demonstrated that many training participants and trainers seek to ensure that the colonial difference is upheld, projecting gender onto the bodies of racialised others to ensure that gender thus understood does not implicate in the peacekeeper self (Belkin 2012, 127, Bhabha 1994, 238).

These logics of colonial difference are also inflected in particular, militarised terms. In Chapter Seven, I demonstrated that training on conflict-related sexual violence produces contradictory demands on peacekeeper subjectivity, by evoking both warrior and humanitarian identities (Miller and Moskos 1995). I argued that this training compels peacekeepers to speak about their feelings of discomfort, upset, horror, and disgust in relation to wartime rape, and that training then proposes to resolve this emotional unease by evoking warrior subjectivity: the training positions peacekeepers as ‘tough guys’, ready to use force to address problems of sexual violence. Training thereby domesticates the problem of gender into military logics and modes of acting.

Finally, my analysis has demonstrated that gender training typically works to sustain heteropatriarchal arrangements. In chapters Six and Eight, I drew attention to the fact that gender trainers and curriculum designers typically avoid addressing questions of non-normative sexual subjectivity, claiming that the topic of sexuality is ‘too complex’ for them to address, or that their audiences would not be receptive to it. Not only is gender framed as reliably binary, cis, and straight, training typically evades any questions that might challenge peacekeepers’ own performances of masculinity. In chapter Seven, I argued that the separation of peacekeeper SEA from training on sexual violence serves to protect peacekeepers’ understanding of themselves as protectors rather than perpetrators (Pratt 2013, Razack 2004). Further, in chapters Six and Eight, I related examples of trainers and training participants using male victimisation as a way to frame gender as a question of

equivalent difference, thereby evacuating from view questions of male complicity in violence (Duriesmith 2017, Kirby 2013).

In sum, the pedagogical project of training uniformed peacekeepers on gender clearly works to affirm martial logics, colonial thinking, and heteropatriarchal subjectivities. Although gender training as an enterprise historically derives from feminist knowledge and feminist political projects (Ferguson 2019b, 114, Sexwale 1996, 54), much of peacekeeper gender training actively resists intersectional feminist analytics and politics. Such defanging of gender knowledge demonstrates the dexterous nature of power, and its ability to fold in demands for transformation.

However, to note that collusion between feminism and imperialism is taking place is not the same as to posit that the tension between them is resolved. The findings of this thesis suggest that feminist knowledge is not fully co-opted into martial logics by practices of gender training; collusion in imperial politics is neither total nor final. A parallel analytical thread that runs through this thesis suggests that the pedagogical project of gender training sometimes precipitates productive moments (from the point of view of feminist politics) of crisis for martial logics, and that some gender trainers strategically exploit these crises.

First, gender training practices expose the contradictions and anxious features – the ambivalence – of martial logics themselves. While I noted in chapters Six and Eight that many gender trainers attempt to omit questions of non-normative sexual subjectivity from their training practice, my research archive points to the fact that queer subjects continue to haunt training discourses; rendering heteronormativity contingent and insecure (Belkin 2012). Similarly, I noted in Chapter Seven that training on conflict-related sexual violence proposes warrior subjectivity and martial action to peacekeepers. At the same time, I called attention to the numerous contradictions contained in this demand. The (unevenly enforced) omission from such training of sexual violence committed by peacekeepers (SEA), and the confinement

of peacekeeper responses to military action, provoke moments of cognitive and affective dissonance in the training setting. These contradictions provoke moral crises among some trainees, and expose the ambivalence contained within the demand that peacekeepers care about and take action on sexual violence. In other words, gender training is disruptive for hegemonic logics, because it exposes the ambivalence and contradiction which inheres to them.

Second, some gender trainers engage in feminist pedagogical praxis, and thereby subvert martial logics. Chapters Eight and especially Nine highlighted that gender trainers smuggle feminist analytical concepts and intersectional commitments into gender training. Such small subversions involve practices that disrupt martial time; make the training topic personal, exposing shared complicities in structures of oppression; and insist on the examination of 'problems' through the prism of colonial histories. Such subversion is often the product of specific strategies of disruption. As discussed in Chapter Eight, some gender trainers see resistance as an inevitable dynamic in an inherently contentious political project, and welcome its occurrence as an indicator that the training is (as they contend it should be) challenging the trainees' world views and sense of self. They do not shy away from 'difficult knowledge' (Britzman 1998, 11), and see a 'pedagogy of discomfort' (Boler 1999, 175) as necessary for their politics. Many trainers who practise feminist pedagogies describe, as noted in Chapter 9, their strategy as that of sneaking feminist concepts into martial institutions as 'Trojan horses' (Prügl 2013, 60).

In sum, these disruptive and subversive dynamics of gender training demonstrate that efforts to discipline gender knowledge are not (pun intended) uniform. The findings of this thesis also reveal that gender training can provoke moments of disruption, instability, and even crisis for martial knowledge.

Considering these two analytical threads together reveals that gender training for peacekeepers is *both* a practice in which feminist concepts collude with martial logics, *and* a pedagogy that brings imperial knowledge to crisis. As I suggest in Chapter Nine, the epistemic and political effects of gender training in many ways resist calculation. This is not a dynamic that lends itself to a straightforward cost-benefit analysis in which *either* feminism *or* imperialism comes out on top. For feminist political strategising, this poses a paradox. Joan Wallach Scott explains that the technical definition of a paradox is: ‘a proposition that is both true and false at the same time’ (1996, 4). From the point of view of feminist politics, gender training is both good and bad at the same time. In an attempt to push our thinking beyond the eminently reasonable but analytically and politically unsatisfactory conclusion of ‘it is both’, in this concluding chapter, I want to reflect on what thinking about gender training as a specifically *paradoxical* pedagogy might mean for how we understand what work gender training does, and what this implies for feminist political strategising.

#### THINKING WITH PARADOX: FEMINIST POLITICAL STRATEGISING

Under the conditions of liberal thought, paradox is ‘a political condition of achievement perpetually undercut ... a state in which political strategizing itself is paralyzed’ (Brown 2000, 239). The question for feminist and postcolonial thinkers who critique liberal thought has therefore been to consider how paradox might be thought of productively, beyond such political and epistemological paralysis. In continuity with broader feminist (and) postcolonial projects of critiquing liberal epistemology, I suggest that thinking about the productive nature of paradox is implied by a broader epistemic challenge to liberal progress narratives.

Indeed, feminist scholars examining gender and security politics invite us to abandon such progress narratives in favour of a politics of the present (Otto 2014, 158). Accordingly, I suggest that the first analytical move that thinking with paradox suggests is a certain disinvestment from futurity, contesting the notion that feminism’s political worth is solely

determined by its ability to perform as ‘a future-producing epistemology and politics’ (Wiegman 2004, 164, see also Stern and Zalewski 2009). Such a disinvestment from futurity speaks to a mode of political thought that views politics as a process in which there are no guarantees, and that concedes: ‘the outcome of our efforts ... can never be known in advance’ (Wiegman 2016, 85, see also Rodríguez 2014, Agamben 2000). This mode of thought is suspicious of grand narratives that would either reassure us that feminism is on its way to meaningfully transforming the peacekeeping enterprise through gender training, or, conversely, that would declare gender training as a fatally flawed practice, consigning it to a scrap heap of misguided, and ultimately, lost feminist causes.

While this suggestion to disinvest from futurity may be unsettling for those committed to the pursuit of social justice, I suggest that thinking about this move with queer and postcolonial theorising also provides an element of relief, perhaps even hope, in the form of ‘an idea of action and agency more complex than either the nihilism of despair or the utopia of progress’ (Bhabha 1994, 365). What I mean by this is that it enables us to recognise that activities such as gender training may have political worth, even when they do not promise a transformed future. It alerts us to examine the ways in which gender training produces a form of hybridised (Bhabha 1994, 265) knowledge about gender, which is neither properly feminist nor reliably imperial.

This hybrid knowledge interrupts dominant scripts and effects shifts in the terms on which the social is produced. While there is no guarantee that the practice of training will deliver knowable, better futures, paradoxically, per Belkin (2017), transformation is not (always) the point. Gender training opens up – as described in Chapter Nine – a space for small subversions, a place from which to contest misogynist logics and from which to exploit ambivalences within colonial scripts. It constitutes a form of politics that recognises that while transformation may be elusive, resistance is imperative. In other words, a disinvestment from futurity and an

attentiveness to resistant politics suggest the importance of giving serious consideration to the questions Bhabha poses in the quote that opens this chapter – to attend to the possibility that there may indeed be life without transcendence, politics without the dream of perfectibility. Thinking with paradox, in other words, suggests that an analysis of gender training as colluding with empire need not end in the nihilism of despair.

Pointedly, in arguing for a recognition of resistant politics, I am not suggesting that we ignore the very real and harmful ways in which feminist concepts are deployed to forward martial ends. To the contrary, understanding these engagements as resistant rather than transformative highlights the need, as Otto argues, to produce forms of engagement ‘that are less amenable to institutional capture’ (2014, 165). Such forms of engagement take the inevitability of failure as their point of departure, and involve embracing forms of engagement that are inherently ‘flawed, imprecise, and corruptible’ (Rodríguez 2014, 8). They can be understood as ‘optimistically cruel’, per Wiegman’s reworking of Berlant’s famous ‘cruel optimism’. Berlant’s cruel optimism is a relation in which ‘something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing’ (2011, 1). In contrast, Wiegman (2016, 91, emphasis added) suggests that feminism’s attachment to an object (in her case, the academy), can be optimistically cruel:

our ongoing attachment to an object ... is only possible because *we know it will not deliver what we most want from it*. In this context the cruelty of our optimism – to be attached to an object that ‘impedes the aim’ that brought us to it – is a potent form of inoculation against the threat of institutional complicity.

Wiegman’s thinking about feminism in relation to academia as optimistically cruel, finds, I believe, a parallel in thinking about feminism’s relation to gender training. In a similar spirit, I contend that gender training in martial institutions will not deliver on a promise of a transformed future, but this does not mean that it is without political worth. The optimism of this attachment stems from a recognition of its worth; rejecting Bhabha’s nihilism of despair. This worth cannot and should not be premised on reassurances of transformed futures, but



rather must attend to the cruelty of this attachment. This cruelty lies in the recognition that gender training is an inherently flawed enterprise. This cruelty is necessary in order to avoid Bhabha's utopia of progress: the shortcomings of this approach must be recognised if it is to support the development of forms of engagement that are less amenable to capture. Thinking of an optimistically cruel attachment in these terms points to ways of engaging with paradox that is neither politically paralysed, nor analytically stunted. It does not propose an ultimate resolution of the terms of the paradox, but suggests a need to keep this tension alive, and to sit with the tension.

Reflecting on the paradoxical nature of gender training for peacekeepers leads me to suggest that there *is* political worth in tracking where and how feminist concepts travel, and in continuing to contest what political and epistemic work these concepts can be made to do, including through gender training. In other words, I identify political potential in cultivating resistant pedagogies, and developing ways of practising them. Such engagements must not come at the price of ignoring the ways in which such approaches are inevitably flawed, but must instead be grounded in a recognition that such projects are always messy, imprecise, and corruptible. What, then, are the implications of this theoretical argument for feminist political strategising?

In Chapter Nine, I suggested that we read the subversive nature of feminist pedagogical praxis in gender training through the lens of Spivak's 'practical politics of the open end' (Spivak and Harasym 1990, 105). I drew on Spivak's analogy of brushing one's teeth to characterise subversive pedagogies as the everyday labour of maintenance for resistant politics. What is important to note about Spivak's analogy is that she maintains that there are occasions on which 'surgical operations', or large ideological acts, are necessary. However, these surgical operations are not a substitute for daily upkeep, which remains vitally important. Thinking with Spivak's theorisation of resistant politics here, I want not only to suggest that subversive

practices in gender training can be thought of as a practical politics of the open end, but to also signal that my argument does not in and of itself disavow large ideological actions. It is not my intention to make a prescriptive claim for feminist strategising, that working with paradox and exploiting ambivalence should be the only, or indeed the preferred, feminist political strategy. Asserting such totalising truth claims is, in fact, contraindicated by the epistemological perspective that gives rise to my analysis in the first place. My argument is a more modest one, suggesting that there is political worth to resistant politics, and that there is opportunity opened up by gender training to engage in subversion. This strategy may be flawed, but, to borrow from Spivak again: 'That's the thing that deconstruction gives us; an awareness that what we are obliged to do, and must do scrupulously, in the long run is not OK' (Spivak et al. 1990, 45). This recognition does not imply that political worth may only be found in one form of feminist strategising, nor does it contraindicate other forms of political action such as anti-militarist feminist organising (Belkin 2017).

As one among many political strategies, the strategy of exploiting ambivalence and provoking instability and crisis in hegemonic discourse is, I contend, one that is particularly suited to martial institutions as a site of political contestation. In formulating this argument, I have drawn heavily on Bhabha's (1994) conceptualisation of resistant, hybridised politics that exploit the ambivalences of dominant discourses. It is interesting to note at this juncture that Bhabha's work has been critiqued for its inability or unwillingness to attend to the fact that such forms of hybrid politics are typically produced from relatively privileged postcolonial positions associated with class/caste privilege, migration, and diasporic identities. Critics of his work have argued that this location renders the strategies of hybridity of limited use to postcolonial politics, and that they fail to account for properly subaltern resistance (Huddart 2006, 151, Biccum 2007, 147). While my ambition here is not to make a pronouncement on the political import or lack thereof of hybridised discourses to overall projects of decolonisation, what I do want to highlight is the ways in which these critiques point also to

the limits of the argument that I am making, limits which I very much accept. My research is concerned with martial institutions and forms of gender expertise – both of which produce subject positions which are privileged, albeit on different terms. It deals, in other words, with a site imbued with power and privilege. My reluctance to make transformative claims about the political worth I identify in gender training stems from a recognition of the limits of this site – there is little indication that contestations staged in this space have the ability to transform broader structures of militarism, heterosexism, and coloniality. While I insist that there is political worth to this form of political strategy in this institutional location, its political purchase at other sites remains an open question.

Circumscribing the scope of my argument thus does still leave open the question of where feminist political energies are best spent (Sedgwick 2003, 124). Would it not be more worthwhile to invest in feminist antimilitarist activism, rather than to develop subversive forms of engagement through gender training? The response, of course, depends on context – whose energies and where we are speaking about. In the case of the gender trainers I met who practised forms of feminist pedagogy, this framing presents a false binary. Some gender experts engage in both gender training and feminist, anti-racist, and queer activism. One does not substitute for the other; activism and expertise are not mutually exclusive forms of engagement. Others only came to gender because of this job requirement, and for them the choice would be to work on gender training or work in other areas of military or development activities that do not deal explicitly with gender. In their case, feminist activism is ruled out from the outset – albeit some may discover it precisely through engaging in gender training. In the case of feminist academics, this question is slightly more complex. Here, I am not suggesting that we should privilege the study of gender training over other types of feminist strategising. My point is, again, more modest, amounting to a plea not to write off the practice as doomed to failure and therefore to be written off without analytical engagement. My aim has been to demonstrate that feminist theory can inform feminist pedagogical approaches

that have subversive potential, and that those who engage in feminist theorising can both support and learn from the practice of gender training.

Finally, in terms of considerations for feminist political strategising, is the question of whether there is a risk that engaging with martial institutions strengthens these institutions and the imperial projects they are engaged in. Are gender experts and gender trainers, and scholars who take seriously their perspectives and support their work, feminism's 'native collaborators' with martial power? Are they doing the work of smoothing over the contradictions of empire (Belkin 2012, 31)? There is always the risk that feminist rhetoric is deployed to justify martial action (as we have seen with the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001), and that feminist analyses are used to military ends. Further, gender mainstreaming efforts such as gender training can help create a public image of the military as a 'force for good', thereby normalising and legitimising the funding and use of military violence (Duncanson 2013).

Not wishing to understate this concern, as I remain troubled by this potential to cause harm, I do wish to point out that there is a risk of exaggerating the importance norms of gender equality play in securing the public legitimacy of martial institutions, and the relative influence making demands of martial institutions has on bolstering militarism (Belkin 2017). I wonder, given the pervasiveness of militarisation across the state system, and the persistence of these murderous institutions despite their well-documented involvement in attacks on civilians, sexual abuse, and other atrocities: Can we imagine a location in the historical present where a refusal on the part of military authorities to speak the language of gender would provoke a mass-based anti-recruitment movement, or better, a refusal to pay our taxes to fund military institutions? This example is of course reductive, and my intention is not to brush away concerns about feminist collusion with murderous institutions. My point is to draw attention to the importance of understanding militarism as a pervasive and resilient condition, and one

that extends beyond the boundaries of martial institutions, implicating us all (Hutchings 2018). This is not to detract from the importance of considering what it means to engage in feminist anti-militarist or pacifist politics, and whether and where attempting subversion from within, such as in the form of gender training for peacekeepers, may be harmful or counterproductive to such politics. To the contrary, it suggests a need to remain troubled by this question, opening up avenues for further inquiry. To remain uneasy with this question means to not only remain suspicious of collusion with murderous institutions, it also denies the possibility of claiming a purity or an innocence which is founded solely on a categorical refusal to engage with questions around peacekeeping practices carried out by martial institutions.

#### AVENUES FOR FURTHER INQUIRY

A recognition that gender training can open up institutional spaces for the practice of resistant politics has a number of implications for further inquiry. First, and as alluded to above, this argument intervenes in how feminist anti-militarist political strategies might be thought through. Locating a moment of politics in the subversion of a dominant discourse raises a whole host of questions that I am unable to address within the scope of this study. What new political pitfalls does the practice of subversion from within introduce? What political possibilities might it produce? Where and how are such politics practised and with what effect?

One way of investigating these questions would be to expand the empirical scope of this inquiry on gender training for both peacekeepers, and in martial institutions more broadly. This study has focused on a transnational community of practice involved in gender training for peacekeeping, and has primarily examined multinational courses. However, as detailed in Chapter Two, gender training is also conducted as part of national pre-deployment training, as well as in situ in peacekeeping missions themselves. Further, a number of militaries have introduced various gender-related topics into basic training and professional military

education (including sexual harassment, which is typically omitted from peacekeeper training). While my inquiry is transnational in nature, and does not provide the basis from which to investigate systematic differences in the terms on which gender knowledge is produced across a variety of geographical and institutional locations, my observations do point to some indicative locational differences in how the concept of gender is put to work in training. Accordingly, I see scope for extending this inquiry into different national and institutional settings.

Further, in order to address questions about where this feminist strategy might be practised, and in response to what problems, I see scope to examine training and questions of oppression and inequality across a range of geographical and institutional contexts. In Chapter Three, I discussed interlinkages between gender training for peacekeepers and training of development practitioners. In fact, training appears to consistently emerge as a response to a number of harms – ranging from implicit bias training to address the racialised violence of police officers in the US (Smith 2015); sexual consent classes in university campuses in the UK (Turner 2016); diversity training in corporations globally (Allaway 2017); educational projects to engage men on questions of gender equality by African civil society organisations (Peacock 2013); or classes aimed at disseminating ideas of gender equality to recent immigrants in the Nordic countries (Higgins 2015); to provide just a few examples. While incorporating analyses of such practices in any systematic way is beyond the scope of the present inquiry, there are clearly a number of similarities in such enterprises, though each undoubtedly presents its own set of contextually determined political and ethical dilemmas. I wholeheartedly agree with Ferguson's (2019b, 97) call for fostering dialogue between scholarship on gender training and scholarship on anti-racist training, and extend this call to examine the interlinkages between the different contexts in which training is proposed as a way of addressing relations of oppression. Especially at a moment in time when right wing politics and populism are on the rise, highlighting anew that oppressions based on race, gender, and sexual orientation

intersect, it is necessary to think through political strategies of resistance with an intersectional analytical sensibility (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013, Graff, Kapur, and Walters 2019).

Finally, throughout this thesis, I have drawn on the insights of the feminist pedagogical literature, fostering conversation between this body of work and scholarship on gender training (as also advocated by Ferguson 2019b, 71). I find that the body of work in feminist pedagogy provides helpful analytical and conceptual tools for interpreting how any educational activity, from childhood and higher education through to professional training, draws insights from and puts into practice feminist epistemologies and political commitments. In other words, this scholarship provides training with an understanding of praxis. Scholarship on gender training, in turn, provides helpful insights for the development of this literature, particularly when it comes to the question of how to engage with training audiences or students who have little grounding in feminist thought and may come to the classroom already hostile to feminist politics. I continue to advocate the fostering of a dialogue between these two bodies of work in further inquiries.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY ENGAGEMENT

A recognition of the political worth of gender training for feminist strategising alone does not translate straightforwardly into a prescription as to what feminist scholars and gender trainers should be advocating for when they (as most working in this field are apt to be) are asked for their 'policy recommendations'. Advocating for a feminist politics of disruption and subversion to policymakers is clearly an absurd proposition (although this idea does find traction with some feminist-identifying gender trainers in private conversations). Providing recommendations that are palatable to mainstream policymakers has not been a specific aim my inquiry, but that is not to say that some suggestions for how to respond to the inevitable demand for such recommendations are not suggested by my findings. In keeping with the

feminist poststructuralist account of political engagement I have developed in this thesis, these suggestions privilege process over outcomes (Prügl 2016, 29).

First, a cautionary note. I observe a tendency within the literature on gender training to lament the poor standardisation of gender training across institutional settings, the lack of coherent professional standards for gender trainers, and the absence of meaningful evaluation mechanisms in relation to gender training (Bustelo, Ferguson, and Forest 2016b, 2). I am deeply sympathetic to the fact that the demand for more standardised training practices stems from a concern about the prevalence of training practices that often – as my study provides ample evidence towards – affirm logics of misogyny, heteronormativity, and racism. Nonetheless, my enthusiasm for standardisation and systematic monitoring of training practices is limited. It is, I contend, specifically the lack of oversight that allows for more radical interventions; for ambivalence to be exploited. I worry that any set of standards that policymakers and trainers could agree on would curtail the space for resistant politics. While standardisation could reign in some of the more flagrant displays of white heteropatriarchy, it is also the case that such discourses already enjoy wide purchase and are authorised to circulate freely within martial institutions. Would the benefit of suppressing them in a gender training setting really outweigh the benefits of what is a relatively free hand for subversive gender trainers to introduce more radical concepts into the discussion?

Introducing more robust evaluation mechanisms – in effect, developing the means to answer the question ‘Does gender training work?’ – likewise has double-edged potential. On the one hand, such an exercise would provide insight into the relative stability of any discursive shifts introduced by gender training, allowing scholarship to track how crises of meaning precipitated by gender training play out beyond the classroom, and what forms the negotiation of these crises take. Nonetheless, a cautionary note is also due in advocating for this. There is always the possibility that such evaluations would find gender training does not



in fact 'work' on the terms it is expected to, which could have the effect of shutting down these conversations altogether. At the less extreme end, such findings could facilitate a process of quality evaluation that further consolidates the dominance of Global North gender experts of this field, portending parallel risks as standardisation. In other words, I caution those called upon to provide recommendations to those in power to carefully consider the risks of standardising this pedagogical exercise, and developing measures of success that may end up rather narrowly and conservatively defined.

The concern about the many forms of political work that gender training does, and the role of trainers and curricula can be addressed through different forms of engagement, not only through standardisation and evaluation. The practice of critical friendship, which I have conceptualised in more depth elsewhere, provides an underestimated avenue for developing subversive training practices (Holvikivi 2019). Critical friendship may offer a more productive route to developing feminist pedagogies in gender training than advocating for policy changes and structures, or issuing recommendations. The transnational community of gender trainers is an economy of knowledge production, where knowledges and ideas circulate. Over the course of my research, I came across the same arguments and same learning activities across different geographic contexts, suggesting that the ability to introduce changes to training practices in one context has a good chance of travelling. This knowledge economy is, I contend, potentially less impacted by bullet pointed lists of recommendations or policy briefs, than by the subtle nudges of 'Have you considered posing this question?' or 'I saw an exercise recently that seems to work well for this topic' issued over coffee breaks during training courses.

Opening up collegial dialogue with those who deliver gender training not only creates the conditions for exchange rather than direction, but it also, through this dialogic process, allows those engaged in research to gain a fuller understanding of the logics that inform any training

intervention (Prügl 2016, 36). Such contextual understanding is important to learning how to do the work of translating feminist thinking into a mode of enunciation that stands a chance of being heard by those who do not subscribe to feminist politics, or who do not have the theoretical grounding to engage with the conceptual vocabulary of feminist thought. Indeed, such processes may offer a more productive (and epistemologically consistent) route to 'policy engagement' than issuing recommendations and advocating for specific regulations for this practice.

While my reflections on policy engagement are marked by an epistemological and ethical discomfort with the notion of blanket recommendations, there are two related areas in which I am comfortable suggesting that our policy engagement advocates for specific action: time and expertise. As discussed in Chapter Nine of this thesis, the time devoted to gender training remains limited in most institutions. Indeed, some reports cite 'gender briefings' that are allocated ten minutes (Lackenbauer and Langlais 2013, 36). Clearly, if subversion is to stand a chance, more time is needed for gender training.

This lack of time devoted to the topic is also a concern in relation to how the expertise required for gender training is acquired. To my knowledge, the most expansive preparatory course for gender trainers is offered by the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, which provides a two-week long gender training-of-trainers course. This is hardly sufficient to prepare trainers to engage in nuanced discussions of gender concepts, and often leaves them unable to field questions posed by training participants. Questions, I might add, which often exceed the scope of the prescribed curriculum, including questions related to sexuality, the navigation of cultural difference, and the ethics of imposing understandings of gender equality in different contexts. I therefore see value in policy engagement aimed at advocating for the allocation of additional time and resources for gender training; a commitment which would reflect a valuing of gender expertise.

Finally, I want to suggest that expertise should not simply be considered a property of individuals; a property that can be infinitely increased by more time and training. As Sandra Harding reminds us: 'communities, not primarily individuals, produce knowledge' (1993, 454). Throughout this thesis, I have critiqued the ways in which the political economy of knowledge production in gender training concentrates epistemic authority in martial institutions in the Global North. Accordingly, I advocate for a diversification of the voices that can speak in and through gender training. There is an urgent need to recognise gender knowledge produced in the Global South as expertise and to challenge the unidirectional knowledge transfer scenario in which Global North experts travel to the Global South but not vice versa. Further, gender training interventions should not treat the needs and experiences of conflict-affected women (plural, lower case 'w') as already-known, but rather needs to create ways of hearing their voices. Finally, in the spirit of practising critical friendship, I suggest that feminist academics, civil society representatives, and military and police gender trainers have much to learn from one another, and can collaborate productively on developing gender training practices. The final recommendation I am at ease offering is therefore: gender training must draw on different forms of expertise, and create space for a variety of voices to be heard.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADL	advanced distributed learning
AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
AU	African Union
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIMIC	civil-military cooperation
CRSV	conflict-related sexual violence
CRSGBV	conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence
CSDP	Common Security and Defence Policy (EU)
DCAF	Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces
DDR	demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (NATO)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FET	female engagement team
FGM	female genital mutilation
GBV	gender-based violence
GENAD	gender advisor
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
INGO	international non-governmental organisation
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (NATO force in Afghanistan)

LACAAP	Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific
LGBT	lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans*
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
NAP	national action plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NATO ACT	NATO Allied Command Transformation
NATO HQ	NATO Headquarters
NCGM	Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations
NCO	non-commissioned officer
PfPC	Partnership for Peace Consortium of Defense Academies and Security Studies Institutes
PME	professional military education
PSO	peace support operation
SEA	sexual exploitation and abuse
SGBV	sexual and gender-based violence
SSR	security sector reform
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats
TCC	troop contributing country
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

## APPENDIX 2: POLICY DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

All documents, unless otherwise specified (see below), are available through the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom's (WILPF) *Peacewomen* database: [www.peacewomen.org](http://www.peacewomen.org) (accessed 18 July 2019).

Copies of national action plans not available on the *Peacewomen* database, including unofficial translations, were provided by an Australian Research Council funded project (DP160100212), Chief Investigator Laura Shepherd: <http://www.lse.ac.uk/women-peace-security/research/Rethinking-Policy-Advocacy-Implementation> (accessed 18 July 2019). These include the national action plans of: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mozambique, Paraguay, and the Solomon Islands.

### **2(A) United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security**

1. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)
2. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008)
3. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1888 (2009)
4. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1889 (2009)
5. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1960 (2010)
6. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2106 (2013)
7. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2122 (2013)
8. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015)
9. United Nations Security Council Resolution 2467 (2019)

### **2(B) Regional action plans on Women, Peace and Security**

1. African Union (2009)
2. Economic Community of West African States (2010)
3. European Union (2008)
4. Eastern Africa: Intergovernmental Authority on Development (2013)
5. North Atlantic Treaty Organisation – Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (2016)
6. Pacific Region (2012)

## **2(C) National action plans on Women, peace and security**

### **(I) NATIONAL ACTION PLANS REVIEWED**

1. Afghanistan (2015-2022)
2. Albania (2018-2020)
3. Argentina (2015-2018)
4. Australia (2012-2018)
5. Austria (2012-2016)
6. Belgium (2013-2016)
7. Bosnia-Herzegovina (2014-2017)
8. Brazil (2017-2019)
9. Burkina Faso (2012)
10. Burundi (2012-2016)
11. Cameroon (2018-2020)
12. Canada (2017-2022)
13. Central African Republic (2014-2016)
14. Democratic Republic of Congo (2010)
15. Chile (2015-2018)
16. Côte d'Ivoire (2008-2012)
17. Croatia (2011-2014)
18. Czech Republic (2017-2020)
19. Denmark (2014-2019)
20. East Timor (2016-2020)
21. Estonia (2015-2019)
22. Finland (2018-2021)
23. France (2015-2018)
24. Gambia (2012)
25. Georgia (2016-2017)
26. Germany (2017-2022)
27. Ghana (2010-2014)
28. Guinea (2009-2013)
29. Guinea-Bissau (2010-2011)
30. Iceland (2013-2016)
31. Indonesia (2014-2019)
32. Iraq (2014-2018)
33. Ireland (2015-2018)
34. Italy (2016-2019)
35. Japan (2015)
36. Jordan (2018-2021)
37. Kenya (2016-2018)
38. Kosovo (2013-2016)
39. Kyrgyzstan (2013)
40. Liberia (2009-2013)
41. Lithuania (2011)
42. Luxembourg (2018-2023)
43. Macedonia (2013-2015)
44. Mali (2012-2014)
45. Moldova (2018-2021)
46. Montenegro (2017-2018)
47. Mozambique (2018-2022)
48. Namibia (2010-2020)
49. Nepal (2011-2016)
50. Netherlands (2016-2019)
51. New Zealand (2015-2019)
52. Niger (2017-2019)
53. Nigeria (2017-2020)
54. Norway (2015-2018)
55. Palestine (2017-2019)
56. Paraguay (2015)
57. Philippines (2017-2022)
58. Poland (2018-2021)
59. Portugal (2014-2018)
60. Rwanda (2009-2012)
61. Senegal (2011)
62. Serbia (2017-2020)
63. Sierra Leone (2010-2014)
64. Slovenia (2010-2015)
65. Solomon Islands (2017-2021)
66. South Korea (2014)
67. South Sudan (2015-2020)
68. Spain (2007)
69. Sweden (2016-2020)
70. Switzerland (2013-2016)
71. Togo (2011-2016)
72. Uganda (2008)
73. Ukraine (2016-2020)
74. United Kingdom (2018-2022)
75. United States of America (2016)

(II) NATIONAL ACTION PLANS NOT REVIEWED

1. Angola (2017-2020) – only available in Portuguese
2. El Salvador (2017-2022) – only available in Spanish
3. Guatemala (2017) – not publicly available
4. Romania (2014-2024) – only available in Romanian
5. Tajikistan (2014) – only available in Russian
6. Tunisia (2018) – not publicly available

## APPENDIX 3: TRAINING MATERIALS CONSULTED

### **3(A) Institutional training curricula**

#### (I) UNITED NATIONS

Department for Peacekeeping (DPKO) and Department of Field Support (DFS). 2017. *Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (CPTM 2017)*. New York: United Nations. <http://research.un.org/revisedcptm2017/Introduction> (accessed 29 October 2018).

- Women, Peace and Security (core lesson)
- Conflict Related Sexual Violence (core lesson)
- Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (core lesson)
- Respect for Diversity (core lesson)
- I Know Gender (e-learning)  
<https://trainingcentre.unwomen.org/course/description.php?id=2>  
(accessed 29 October 2018)

DPKO and DFS. (Undated). *Specialised Training Materials on Conflict Related Sexual Violence*. New York: United Nations. <https://research.un.org/stm/CRSV> (accessed 29 October 2018).

DPKO and DFS. 2018. *Specialised Training Materials on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse*. New York: United Nations. <https://research.un.org/stm/PSEA> (accessed 29 October 2018).

DPKO and DFS. 2015. *United Nations Police Gender Toolkit*. New York: United Nations. <http://repository.un.org/handle/11176/387374> (accessed 29 October 2018).

DPKO. 2001. *Gender and Peacekeeping Operations: In-Mission Training*. New York: United Nations. <https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/files/DPKO,%20Gender%20and%20PKO%20In-Mission%20Training,%202001.pdf> (accessed 29 October 2018).

#### (II) AFRICAN UNION

Institute for Security Studies (ISS Africa). 2017. *Gender Mainstreaming and Dealing with Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Peace Operations*. <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/2018-01-30-training-manual-gender-pso.pdf> (accessed 29 October 2018).

#### (II) EUROPEAN UNION

Elroy, Gabriela. 2016. *A Gender Perspective in CSDP: Training Manual*. Folke Bernadotte Academy: Stockholm. <https://fba.se/en/how-we-work/research-policy-analysis-and-development/publications/a-gender-perspective-in-csdp/> (accessed 29 October 2018).



### (III) NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

NATO. (Undated). *Gender Education and Training Package for Nations*. Brussels: NATO. <https://www.act.nato.int/gender> (accessed 29 October 2018).

NATO. (Undated). *Gender in Terrorism Education and Training Package for Nations*. Brussels: NATO. <https://www.act.nato.int/gender> (accessed 29 October 2018).

E-learning modules available at <https://jidl.act.nato.int/> (accessed 30 October 2018):

- ADL 168 Role of Gender Advisors and Gender Field Advisors in Operations
- ADL 169 Improving Operational Effectiveness by Integrating Gender Perspective (previously: Gender Awareness)
- ADL 171 Gender Focal Point

### **3(B) Training handbooks and further resources**

#### (I) REGIONAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Jimenez, Ximena. 2018. *Gender Perspectives in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*. Peace Operations Training Institute. <https://www.peaceopstraining.org/courses/gender-perspectives-united-nations-peacekeeping-ops-v2-english/> (accessed 29 October 2018).

Rosga, AnnJanette, Megan Bastick and Anja Ebnöther. 2010. *Preventing Violence Against Women and Gender Inequality in Peacekeeping*. Peace Operations Training Institute. <https://www.peaceopstraining.org/courses/preventing-violence-against-women/> (accessed 29 October 2018).

NATO/PfPC/Canadian Defence Academy. 2011. *Generic Officer Professional Military Education Reference Curriculum*. [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_123844.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_123844.htm) (accessed 29 October 2018).

Balon, Bojana, Anna Björssön, Tanja Geiss, Aiko Holvikivi, Anna Kadar, Iryna Lysychkina and Callum Watson (eds). (2016). *Handbook on Teaching Gender in the Military*. Geneva: DCAF and PfPC. <https://www.dcaf.ch/teaching-gender-military-handbook> (accessed 29 October 2018).

Peace Support Operations Training Center (PSOTC). 2014. *Prevention of Sexual Violence in Conflict: Generic Reference Curriculum for Training in Security Sector*. Sarajevo: PSOTC. [http://mod.gov.ba/dokumenti/PSV TM Reference Curriculum.pdf](http://mod.gov.ba/dokumenti/PSV_TM_Reference_Curriculum.pdf) (accessed 29 October 2018).

United States Africa Command (Africom). 2014. *Preparing to Prevent: Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Mitigation*. Pennsylvania: Africom. [http://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/default/assets/File/CRSV Training Scenarios Preparing to Prevent.pdf](http://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/default/assets/File/CRSV_Training_Scenarios_Preparing_to_Prevent.pdf) (accessed 29 October 2018).

## (II) INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES

Ministry of Defence (Senegal). 2013. *Renforcement des capacités en genre des personnels militaires : Manuel du formateur*. (Not publicly available).

Ministry of Defence (UK). 2016. *Women, Peace and Security Training Needs Analysis*. (Not publicly available).

### **3(C) Miscellaneous presentations**

Schleicher, Elisabeth and Andy Young. 2012. *Integrating a Gender Perspective into KFOR Operations*. NATO/KFOR. [https://www.nato.int/issues/women\\_nato/meeting-records/2012/pdf/SCHLEICHER\\_NKU\\_GENAD\\_KFOR.pdf](https://www.nato.int/issues/women_nato/meeting-records/2012/pdf/SCHLEICHER_NKU_GENAD_KFOR.pdf) (accessed 29 October 2018).

### **3(D) Course catalogues**

Argentine Peace Operations Training Centre (CAECOPAZ). *Oferta Académica 2019*. <http://www.caecopaz.mil.ar/ofertaacademica.html> (accessed 18 July 2019)

Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operations Training (BIPSOT). *Courses at BIPSOT*. [https://www.bipsot.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=56&Itemid=197](https://www.bipsot.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=56&Itemid=197) (accessed 18 July 2019).

Ecole de Maintien de la Paix Alioune Blondin Beye Mali (EMP). *Calendrier de Formation*. <http://www.empbamako.org/index.php/Contenu-du-site/2015-02-17-14-53-02.html> (accessed 18 July 2019).

Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre Ghana (KAIPTC). *Training Course Brochure*. <https://www.kaiptc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Training-course-brochure.pdf> (accessed 28 July 2019).

Peace Support Operations Training Centre Bosnia and Herzegovina (PSOTC). *Course Catalogue*. [http://mod.gov.ba/OS\\_BIH/struktura/Komanda\\_za\\_podrsku/KOiD/PSOTC/documents/1401\\_2019\\_PSOTC\\_Catalogue\\_no-year.pdf](http://mod.gov.ba/OS_BIH/struktura/Komanda_za_podrsku/KOiD/PSOTC/documents/1401_2019_PSOTC_Catalogue_no-year.pdf) (accessed 18 July 2019).

Swedish Armed Forces International Centre (SWEDINT) and Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations (NCGM). *Course Catalogue*. [https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/siteassets/english/swedint/engelska/swedint/swedint\\_ncgm-coursecatalogue-interaktiv2-2016-10-05.pdf](https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/siteassets/english/swedint/engelska/swedint/swedint_ncgm-coursecatalogue-interaktiv2-2016-10-05.pdf) (accessed 18 July 2019).

### **3 (E) Reports on training**

Alaga, Ecoma, and Emma Birikorang. 2012. Integrating Gender in Peacekeeping Training: An Approach from the ECOWAS Subregion. In *Gender and Peacebuilding in Africa Occasional Papers*. Cape Town: Fahamu. <https://www.kaiptc.org/kaiptc-publication/integrating-gender-in-peacekeeping-training-an-approach-from-the-ecowas-subregion-gender-and->

[peacebuilding-in-africa-occasional-paper-issue-2-cape-town-dakar-nairobi-oxford-pambazuka-press-w/](#) (courtesy of authors).

Axmacher, Susanne. 2013. Review of Scenario-Based Trainings for Military Peacekeepers on Prevention and Response to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. New York: UN Women.  
<http://stoprapenow.org/uploads/advocacyresources/1394227122.pdf> (accessed 18 July 2017).

Lackenbauer, Helené, and Richard Langlais. 2013. Review of the Practical Implications of UNSCR 1325 for the Conduct of NATO-led Operations and Missions. Stockholm: Swedish Defence Research Agency.  
[https://www.nato.int/nato\\_static/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2013\\_10/20131021\\_131023-UNSCR1325-review-final.pdf](https://www.nato.int/nato_static/assets/pdf/pdf_2013_10/20131021_131023-UNSCR1325-review-final.pdf) (accessed 18 July 2019).

Lamprey, Comfort. 2012. Gender Training in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. In *Gender and Peacebuilding in Africa Occasional Papers*. Cape Town.  
[http://www.fahamu.org/resources/5\\_lamprey\\_v3.pdf](http://www.fahamu.org/resources/5_lamprey_v3.pdf) (accessed 18 July 2019).

Lyytikäinen, Minna. 2007. Gender Training for Peacekeepers: Preliminary Overview of United Nations Peace Support Operations. In *Gender, Peace & Security Working Papers*, edited by UN-INSTRAW. Santo Domingo: UN-INSTRAW.  
<https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/blog/document/gender-training-for-peacekeepers-preliminary-overview-of-united-nations-peace-support-operations/> (accessed 18 July 2019).

## APPENDIX 4: FIELD RESEARCH DETAILS

### **4 (A) Fieldwork sites**

#### **1. National pre-deployment training, Nordic country, November 2016**

Duration: 5 days course total (30 min session on gender equality)

Audience: National military personnel (regular and reserve enlisted soldiers, NCOs, and officers) deploying on a variety of UN, EU, and NATO operations. Approximately 35 participants, all male.

Trainers: National military officers (all male), civilian experts employed by the military (female)

Researcher participation: Not applicable (observer)

Topics covered: Administrative arrangements and terms of employment on peacekeeping; communication; culture and religion in areas of operation; laws of war, rules of engagement and conduct and discipline; **(gender) equality (30 min)**; weapons training; organizational structures of missions; context and threats in the area of operations; first aid.

#### **2. Professional military education, Nordic country, March 2017**

Duration: 90 min

Audience: 18 junior officers (national staff, 16 men and 2 women)

Trainers: Military officers (male)

Researcher participation: Not applicable (observer)

Topics covered: Gender stereotypes; gender roles in conflict; terms and definitions; WPS.

#### **3. Gender training-of-trainers course, Nordic region, March 2017**

Duration: 8 days

Audience: Multi-national audience (Nordic, Eastern European), national military personnel (officers), civilian experts, and defence academy educators. 25 participants, 17 men and 8 women.

Trainers: Military officers (male and female), one police officer, civilian defence academy employees, NGO staff.

Researcher participation: I participated in the teaching team as syndicate leader and delivered two sessions (gender equality, and sexual orientation and gender identity).

Topics covered: Improving operational effectiveness by integrating gender perspective (e-learning listed in Annex 3); gender terms and definitions; gender perspective in NATO and in PSOs; gender perspective in national defence; gender equality and inequality; gender equality and conscription; men and masculinities; target audience analysis and backward design; instructional strategies and active learning methods; conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence; international humanitarian law, human rights, and protection

mandates; UN Security Council Resolutions on WPS; national action plans on WPS; handling resistance in gender education and training.

Assessment: Trainees present a session plan on gender training and give a teaching demonstration (summative assessment).

#### **4. Military gender advisers course, East Africa, April 2017**

Duration: 5 days

Audience: Multi-national audience of military officers serving as gender advisers across a range of peacekeeping missions. Trainees came from Asia-Pacific, South Asia, Western Europe, Africa, and Eastern Europe, and counted 13 women and 6 men.

Trainers: Military officers (female). Guest speakers included NGO workers and civilian gender advisors (male and female).

Researcher participation: I facilitated one session on the WPS agenda, and supported course facilitation by collecting anonymous participant feedback.

Topics covered: Gender terms and definitions, gender in society and conflict; normative frameworks; overview of the UN system; experiences of gender advisors; relationships between force headquarters and UN and civilian agencies; role of the military gender adviser; conflict-related sexual violence; child protection; military planning; role of women in peacekeeping; sexual exploitation and abuse; UN Women He for She campaign; handling resistance; gender analysis in conflict; how to teach gender; culture and gender; standard operating procedures; reporting.

Assessment: Trainees give 5 min presentations each morning, recapping topics covered the previous day (formative assessment).

#### **5. Gender and peace support operations course, Western Balkans, June 2017**

Duration: 5 days

Audience: Multi-national audience (Western Balkans, Western Europe, North Africa) of military officers and NCOs. 31 participants, approximately 16 men and 15 women.

Trainers: Military officers (Western Balkans, Western Europe; male and female), police officers (female). Guest speakers included civilian experts (male and female).

Research participation: I observed lectures and facilitated syndicate group work.

Topics covered: Why gender is important; legal basis for gender perspectives in the security sector; gender terms and definitions; identity, stereotypes and prejudices; protection of civilians; human terrain and the role of women in contemporary armed conflict; integrating gender perspective for operational effectiveness; role of the gender adviser; disaster relief and development support operations; leadership on gender in the security sector; comprehensive approach and mandate to protect civilians; sexual violence; possible role of women in peacekeeping missions; sexual exploitation and abuse; NATO perspective of gender; role of UN police contingents; gender and change management.

## **6. Sexual and gender-based violence course, West Africa, August 2017**

Duration: 10 days

Audience: Multi-national audience (West Africa) of police officers, 30 participants, approximately 15 women and 15 men.

Trainers: Police officers (West Africa, Western Europe; male and female). Guest speakers included civilian experts and NGO representatives (West Africa, female).

Researcher participation: Not applicable (observer).

Topics covered: Definitions; relevance of the topic; legal framework; WPS; SGBV dynamics; crime scene management; referral pathways; SSR and gender; challenges in investigating SGBV; impact of armed conflict (human trafficking, domestic violence, female genital mutilation); preventing SGBV; interviews; international protocol on the documentation and investigation of sexual violence; case management; impact of domestic violence on victims and families; mass rape and genocide; trauma and trauma-sensitive victim approach; experiences from the field.

## **7. Gender in operations course, Western Europe, December 2017**

Duration: 5 days

Audience: Multi-national audience (Western Europe, Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, Nordic region) of 37 military officers, police officers, and civilian defence experts. 20 men and 17 women.

Trainers: Military officers, police officers, civilian experts, NGO staff (male and female).

Researcher participation: I observed lectures and facilitated syndicate group work.

Topics covered: Introduction to European Security and Defence College; comprehensive approach; international humanitarian law and gender; gender in SSR and DDR processes; gender and inclusive mediation processes; conflict-related sexual violence and protection of civilians; gender in planning processes.

#### **4 (B) List of interviews**

1. 'Johanna' (September 2016), gender expert in NGO sector in Western Europe
2. 'Fatima' (September 2016), West African military officer deployed with MINUSMA
3. 'Alessia' (September 2016), director of an NGO in Western Europe
4. 'Aisha' (September 2016), gender focal point, centre for executive education in security policy in Western Europe
5. 'Robert' (September 2016), Western European military officer, training development officer
6. 'Malcolm' (September 2016), gender practitioner at an INGO in Western Europe
7. 'Eric' (September 2016), head of gender team at an INGO in Western Europe
8. 'Elias' (October 2016), senior adviser in a Nordic ministry of defence
9. 'Vera' (October 2016), senior adviser in a Nordic defence academy
10. 'Caitlin' (October 2016), professor of practice
11. 'Martina' (October 2016), civilian faculty member at a multinational security studies institution in Western Europe
12. 'Max' (November 2016), military officer in a Nordic military, training officer
13. 'Kalle' (November 2016), military officer in a Nordic military, training officer
14. 'Sarah' (December 2016), gender advisor at a peacebuilding INGO in Western Europe
15. 'Vincent' (December 2016), head of gender team at an INGO in Western Europe
16. 'Mila' (January 2017), project officer in international NGO (based in Western Europe) working on gender in Africa
17. 'Marie' (February 2017), civilian faculty member at a Western European defence academy
18. 'Fiona' (February 2017), UN gender adviser
19. 'Matias' (February 2017), UN Women policy specialist
20. 'Sandra' (March 2017), UN gender adviser
21. 'Anna' (May 2017), officer in a North American military
22. 'Anna' (June 2017), officer in a North American military
23. 'James' (June 2017), NCO in a North American military