

The Piece Missing from Peace

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“Legitimizing principles triumph by being taken for granted.” --Henry Kissinger¹

Introduction

Over centuries, viewed through the lens of international conflict and the incidence of peace, who governments and their citizens view as human (versus “other”) has changed dramatically.² The conception of “humanity” held by the various parts of the world, the sovereign states that form it, and the international community at large has evolved and shifted over time: we have developed a Law of Armed Conflict,³ the norm of the Responsibility to Protect,⁴ and have created and nurtured numerous international organizations that seek peace, offer common identities, and enable free and lasting communication between states.⁵ In many of these international organizations, we collectively embrace democratic ideals that proclaim equality, rights, and self-government.⁶ As we encourage ever greater tolerance and acceptance of other cultures, we learn to assimilate with and recognize the needs and particular impacts of those who are different from ourselves. “Who is human’ has changed,”⁷ and with it so have our ideas of who and what should be included in ending conflict and enabling peace.

As we approach the 15th anniversary of the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, which formally recognized the “inordinate impact of war on women” along with the “pivotal role women should and do play in conflict management, conflict resolution, and sustainable peace,”⁸ we must remember the processes by which our collective understanding of who is human changed over time, both individually and throughout different cultures. History shows that for our concept of humanity to change into something more

¹ Finnemore, Martha. 2003. *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*. Cornell University Press: Ithaca, NY.

² Ibid.

³ The Laws of Armed Conflict. International Committee of the Red Cross website: https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/law1_final.pdf. Accessed October 2015.

⁴ Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide: The Responsibility to Protect. UN: <http://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/adviser/responsibility.shtml>. Accessed October 2015.

⁵ Barnett, Michael, and Martha Finnemore. 1999. “The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations.” *International Organization* 53 (Autumn): 699-732; Abbott, Kenneth, and Duncan Snidal. 1998. “Why States Act through Formal International Organizations.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 42 (1): 3-32.

⁶ United Nations website. <http://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/overview/index.html>. Accessed October 2015.

⁷ Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*.

⁸ United States Institute of Peace website: http://www.usip.org/gender_peacebuilding/about_UNSCR_1325#What_is_U.N._Security_Council_Resolution_1325_. Accessed July 2015.

inclusive, as it did, community and national leaders had to accept these normative shifts.⁹ This offers both an example and a warning for those who celebrate the anniversary of UNSCR 1325.

Norm development and change is described convincingly in constructivist International Relations literature. For example, according to the Finnemore and Sikkink model of norm development, norms emerge, develop, and take root through three stages: initial emergence through norm entrepreneurs, cascades of acceptance through phenomena or leaders' actions, and widespread norm internalization.¹⁰ Finnemore traced the path through these stages taken by the concept of the growing inclusiveness of "humanity" over time,¹¹ as did Tannenwald with the idea of the normative nuclear "taboo."¹² Like our collective notions of humanity and nuclear weapon use, our idea of a gender perspective and the need to include *all humans* and a larger perspective in conflict resolution and negotiation must also move in stages. Examples appear throughout history of normative changes. Yet a careful read of the literature on normative shifts also uncovers a warning: including women throughout the peace process will not automatically lead to stronger outcomes and lasting peace. Peace, via the inclusion of men and women alike, along with their perspectives, will only come through internal changes along with external ones.

In our work toward the vision that inspired 1325, we often overlook what should be a major component of any lasting peace: men. Addressing, empowering, and including women in leadership positions and throughout the peace process will only take us part of the way toward that peace. To truly develop a lasting solution, the other half of humanity must buy in. While focusing on the women of the world, we must likewise include, teach, and enable the men of the world as well. We must engage and include men in order to change the global notion of who is human and whose opinions count, and to teach an understanding of the varied perspectives that lasting peace must accommodate. And to do that, we may have to redefine masculinity. Nowhere is this task more critical and tough to accomplish than within the force providers of the world, those on the front lines who both cause and fight the suffering of humans daily: the military.

On its face, 1325 signifies a growing recognition of the general exclusion of women from peace processes and government leadership positions and the need to include *all citizens*, regardless of gender, in conflict resolution.¹³ Yet underneath the grand words and noble gestures lies a simple hope: that peace, cooperation, and empathy can be learned, and that by having more women involved in governing and developing peace agreements, the hypermasculinity so often observed in troubled nations will be challenged and altered, creating space for peace. As Chantal de Jonge Oudraat and Carolyn Washington note in "Gender

⁹ Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*.

¹⁰ Finnemore, Martha, and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. "International Norm Dynamics and Political Change." *International Organization* 52 (4): 887-917.

¹¹ Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention*.

¹² Tannenwald, Nina. 1999. "The Nuclear Taboo: the United States and the Normative Basis of Nuclear Non-Use." *International Organization* 53 (3): 433-468.

¹³ United States Institute of Peace website:

http://www.usip.org/gender_peacebuilding/about_UNSCR_1325. Accessed July 2015.

Mainstreaming: Indicators for the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and Its Related Resolutions,” gender does not mean women alone, and a gendered perspective does not strictly mean the perspective of a female. Thus, it is not enough to simply bring women to the table and include them in the peace process; men must also change for peace to have a chance. Turning men into agents of change—especially those fighting in our militaries around the globe—is critical to advancing toward peace.

Statistics

What are the dangers of a male-centered world? Such a world values hypermasculinity, and the desires of men are reflected through state policy, state behavior, and conflict resolution. We are living in such a world today, across the globe and particularly in our most fragile and war-torn states, a world where the voices of women are marginalized or silent, and the options in conflict are limited and violent. Consider this:

- States with greater gender inequality are unstable and at greater risk of conflict and poor governance¹⁴
- Traditional, more patriarchal states tend to be more militarized and violent than less patriarchal states¹⁵
- The hypermasculinity observed in patriarchal cultures and militaries often demeans traditional “feminine” ideals such as cooperation, nonviolence, negotiation, and community/family concerns while celebrating traditional male ideals such as violence, aggression, and the superiority of men over women¹⁶
- When violent groups such as terrorist organizations gain control in contested regions, the first steps they often take are meant to celebrate masculine ideals over feminine ones and to subvert the authority and rights of female citizens¹⁷
- Hypermasculinity enables, creates, and furthers violence¹⁸

¹⁴ Herbert, Sian. 2014. “Links Between Women’s Empowerment (or lack of) and Outbreaks of Violence Conflict.” GSDRC Research Report. <http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/HDQ1170.pdf>.

¹⁵ Ibid; Cockburn, C. (2010). Gender Relations as Causal in Militarization and War. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 12:2, 139 — 157.

¹⁶ Drake, Monica Jansen. 2003. “Ambivalence at the Academies: Attitudes Toward Women in The Military at the Federal Service Academies.” *Social Thought and Research* 27: 43-68; Herbert, “Links Between Women’s Empowerment (or lack of) and Outbreaks of Violence Conflict.”; Rosen, Leora, Kathryn Knudson, and Peggy Fancher. 2003. “Cohesion and the Culture of Hypermasculinity in U.S. Army Units.” *Armed Forces and Society* 29 (3): 325-351.

¹⁷ Haq, Farhat. 2008. “Militarism and Motherhood: the women of the Lashkar-i-Tayyabia in Pakistan.” In *War and Terror: Feminist Perspectives*, eds. Karen Alexander and Mary Hawkesworth. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

¹⁸ Haq, “Militarism and Motherhood: the women of the Lashkar-i-Tayyabia in Pakistan.”; Herbert, “Links Between Women’s Empowerment (or lack of) and Outbreaks of Violence Conflict.”

Traditional feminine and masculine ideals are not the only compelling indicators. States that place less value on the opinions, livelihoods, and quality of life of their female citizens suffer for their choices:

- The greater the gap that exists between the status of women in multiple spheres—political, economic, and social—and that of men in a state (henceforth the “gender gap”), the lower the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of that state¹⁹
- The greater that gender gap, the lower the rate of economic growth²⁰
- The larger the gap, the more likely a state will face civil or interstate conflict, and the higher the levels of violence in conflict will be²¹
- The larger the gap, the greater the actual and perceived corruption of state leaders²²
- When women are represented in government leadership positions at higher percentages, a state gives more attention to social welfare, education, and legal protections²³
- When women are included in post-conflict resolution, peace negotiations are more satisfactory and durable²⁴

These benchmarks and statistics are matched by a fairly robust gender gap in opinions on matters of violence, the use of force, and the need for aggression. Globally, men and women tend to hold different opinions on when military force should be used, the nature of that force, and the level of violence or aggression employed when force is used.²⁵ While the size and nature of the gap itself varies under differing circumstances and groups, overall, women are less likely than men to support war, the use of force, and force escalation when force is employed.²⁶

Social Learning and Normative Acceptance

¹⁹ Hudson, V. M. & Emmett, C. (2012b). *Sex and World Peace*. A presentation at the Woodrow Wilson Center, April 2012.

<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/Hudson%20Presentation.pdf>; Hudson, Valerie, Mary Caprioli, Bonnie Ballif-Spanvill, and Rose McDermott. 2009. “The Heart of the Matter: The Security of Women and the Security of States.” *International Security* 33 (3): 7-45.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Caprioli, M. (2000). Gendered conflict. *Journal of Peace Research*, 37(1), 51-68; Caprioli, M. & Boyer, M. A. (2001). Gender, Violence, and International Crisis, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (August), pp. 503–518.

²² Hudson and Emmett. *Sex and World Peace*; Hudson et al, “The Heart of the Matter.”

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.; Maoz, I. (2009). The Women and Peace Hypothesis? The Effect of Opponent-negotiators' Gender on Evaluation of Compromise Solutions in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. *International Negotiation*, 14, 521-538.

²⁵ Caprioli, M, “Gendered conflict.”

²⁶ Caprioli, M. & Boyer, M. A. (2001). Gender, Violence, and International Crisis, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (August), pp. 503–518.

At first glance, these statistics suggest that simply including women in political decision making and throughout the peace process would somehow bring the averages closer to an ideal, or that the voices of women would moderate the voices of men, ensuring widespread buy-in on any negotiation. Yet on closer look, questions arise. Where do gender-based differences originate: are they biologically formed, or socially learned? Despite a growing literature focusing on the women and peace hypothesis and the role of feminine ideals in state behavior and conflict decision-making, the origins of gender-based differences are unclear. How these differences develop matters, however, because if women are simply, by nature, *different* than men, then including women and gender-based concerns in leadership positions and throughout the peace process can only bring us so far. Men may react to the presence of women, and female opinions may, over time, partially moderate male ones, but no individuals and no cultures will substantially change as a result. If gender-based differences are biological, then, we would need the missing piece of the puzzle—the men—to affect any long-term changes in how states resolve conflicts and seek peace. Men would have to accept a gender perspective throughout the peace process, a benchmark that—given the state of the world today—would require substantial effort to reach, yet even then the chances of widespread acceptance of egalitarian ideals and perspectives would be poor because men would simply be more inclined toward aggressive, confrontational behavior.

Anecdotally, however, feminine and masculine characteristics seem to be at least partially socially-based. In other words, we learn how to be men and women through the societies or cultures we belong to. And scholars have made inroads into studying this question. Can feminine traits or ideals be taught and learned? And what would that suggest for the future of UNSCR 1325 and the vision it represents? Could that change the decisions made by political and military leaders in times of conflict?

Marc Tessler and Ina Warriner, in a 1997 article on the role of gender and gender inequality in opinions on the use of military force, found that it was not gender itself that played a role—it was a person's opinion about gender equality and its importance that mattered in determining decision outcomes.²⁷ Studying public opinion on the use and escalation of force in the Arab-Israeli conflict, Tessler and Warriner found that those who supported the idea of gender equality were less supportive of violence and the use of force than those who did not, while the gender of the respondent did not actually matter. This suggests that how an individual or a society views outsiders, and whether people are prone to consider "other" perspectives can play a role in how they feel conflicts should be addressed.

Which is why including men in this conversation, and helping men to see why the inclusion of women—of all people, really—in decision-making and in peace development is so critical to success to achieving the hopes identified by 1325. Since those that provide force and moderate the level of violence in displays of force are often our military leaders, including state militaries in this process seems a necessary step.

²⁷ Tessler, M., & Warriner, I. (1997). "Gender, feminism, and attitudes toward international conflict: Exploring relationships with survey data from the Middle East." *World Politics* 49 (2): 250-281.

Within the military, a handful of studies supports the idea that people can learn more feminine or masculine ideals, and that male-only units can suffer from hypermasculinity, which can lead to poor cohesion and negative, violent behavior.²⁸ An analysis performed on military cadets and officers found that military academy cadets/midshipmen of both genders (and Marine Corps officers) favored masculine traits and supported the idea of a fundamentally masculine military, while Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets and active duty officers from other services did not place a high value on a masculine culture as a prerequisite for an effective military.²⁹ While female cadets and midshipmen put a lower value on masculinity than male ones, their support for masculine values and culture was still greater than the support offered by women in ROTC and the general military population. Since academy cadets and midshipmen are isolated from the general population in relatively uniform cultures, this suggests that culture may, at times, play a greater role than gender alone. A second study on the acceptance of hypermasculinity in military units found that hypermasculinity on an individual level was negatively associated with unit cohesion, and that as women were introduced to units, the level and acceptance of masculine traits as good decreased.³⁰

Anecdotally, within the U.S. military, opposition to women in combat roles and to policies viewed as “family-friendly” from within the military itself is often seen mainly—and strongest—among currently serving and retired male servicemembers who have not served in mixed-gender units. A generational gap is also observed: younger members of Generation X and Millennials seem to hold more egalitarian views toward the capabilities of women, and support greater flexibility in family-friendly career options, than do older generations who grew up with more restricted roles for women.³¹ And American support for gender equality within the military services steadily increased over the past three decades, after citizens witnessed the performance of female military members in multiple wars.³² While no studies exist that test this relationship quantitatively, it is quite possible based on the literature to surmise that the negative relationship observed by Tessler and Warriner between support for gender equality and for the use of violence and force in conflict³³ will hold true in the military as well.

Across states and organizations, including men in this conversation is critical, and teaching an acceptance of equality across genders is a necessary step toward negotiating peace

²⁸ Drake, “Ambivalence at the Academies: Attitudes Toward Women in The Military at the Federal Service Academies.”; Morris, Madeline. 1996. “By Force of Arms: Rape, War, and Military Culture.” *Duke Law Journal* 45: 651-781; Rosen et al, “Cohesion and the Culture of Hypermasculinity in U.S. Army Units.”

²⁹ Drake, “Ambivalence at the Academies: Attitudes Toward Women in The Military at the Federal Service Academies.”

³⁰ Rosen et al, “Cohesion and the Culture of Hypermasculinity in U.S. Army Units.”

³¹ Haynie, Chris, and Jeannette Haynie. 2012. “Marines or Marines*?” *Proceedings Magazine* 138 (11).

³² Gallup Poll: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/160124/americans-favor-allowing-women-combat.aspx>. Accessed July 2015.

³³ Tessler and Warriner, “Gender, feminism, and attitudes toward international conflict: Exploring relationships with survey data from the Middle East.”

and avoiding violence. Focusing on our militaries means that we can focus our attention on the literal front lines of conflict around the world. By including the male half of the sky,³⁴ we have a greater chance of strengthening the ties that bind nations through peace.

³⁴ Kristoff, Nicholas D. and Sheryl WuDunn. 2009. *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*.