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Gender Blindness in US Doctrine

Jody M. Prescott

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ABSTRACT: US military Joint and Army civil affairs doctrine has failed to consider the operational relevance of gender, posing a risk to mission accomplishment and force protection. A comparison of NATO and Australian Defence Force doctrine reveals gender considerations have been included in Allied doctrine in recent years. US land-force operational planning can provide an example of how a focus on civil affairs doctrine could jump-start the process to address the larger doctrinal gender deficit quickly and effectively.

The US military's failure to consider gender as an operational factor will result in incomplete operational pictures from the tactical to the strategic. Moreover, because US Allies such as NATO partners and Australia already factor gender into their doctrine and operations, this gap in doctrine degrades interoperability.¹ All military doctrine must include analysis informing commanders, planners, and operators what the operational risks of failing to consider gender could be, and how these omissions could impede mission accomplishment unless appropriately mitigated.

In his influential book, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World*, General Sir Rupert Smith introduced the idea of “war amongst the people” as an evolving characteristic of conflict in the modern international security environment.² In Smith's view, conflict was becoming ever more civilian-centric, and adversaries found themselves contending less for key terrain on the ground and more for influence over the people living there. This evolution is in part the result of trends such as the continuing growth of the world's population, increased urbanization, the flowering of the megacity, the global reach of the Internet, the negative impacts of climate change, and the use of social media platforms to mobilize individuals and communities of interest.³ Importantly, about half of these people are female.

The Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Act of 2017 carves out a role for the US military in operationalizing certain aspects of gender.⁴ Although the Department of Defense has made progress incorporating

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1. Jody M. Prescott, *Armed Conflict: Women and Climate Change* (London: Routledge, 2018), 130–51, 168–69, 212–14.

2. Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Knopf, 2007), xiii, 269–307.

3. Prescott, *Armed Conflict*, 8–9.

4. UN Security Council, Resolution 1325 (2000); and Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017, Pub. L. No. 115-68, 131 Stat. 1202 (October 6, 2017).

gender considerations into military activities and operations, implementation has been uneven and slow.

This article assesses the status of the incorporation of gender considerations into US military doctrine, highlighting recent progress and continuing overall deficits. To provide a concrete example of such deficits, this article examines the failure of US civil affairs (CA) doctrine to consider gender adequately and, by way of comparison, explores approaches taken by NATO and the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in their respective civil-military cooperation (CIMIC) and civilian-related doctrines.

Next by way of remedy, this article analyzes US land-force planning doctrine to identify where and how gender considerations could be effectively included in the mission, enemy, terrain, troops available, time and civilian considerations (METT-TC) component of the planning process.⁵ Because civil affairs is the staff section expected to bring the C of “civilian considerations” into the land-force METT-TC planning tool, updating both Joint- and land-force-level CA doctrine is a profitable point from which to jump-start a reassessment of US operational doctrine in terms of gender.⁶ Finally, the article explores recently updated ADF doctrine to describe the gap that still exists between an evolving modern doctrinal approach to gender and a methodology facilitating the assessment of operational risk posed by neglecting gender considerations.

Gender in US Strategy and Doctrine

The 2019 national WPS strategy promotes “the meaningful inclusion of women in processes to prevent, mediate, resolve, and recover from deadly conflict or disaster.” To accomplish these aims, the strategy sets out four lines of interrelated efforts across the government, primarily focused on increasing the “meaningful participation of women . . . in decision making processes related to conflict and crisis” in US programs and by partner nations, promoting “the protection of women and girls’ human rights,” and adjusting international programs to boost outcomes in women’s equality and empowerment.⁷

To accomplish its overarching objectives, the June 2020 DoD implementation plan (required by the national strategy) outlines intermediate objectives, each with effects that can be measured. One important effect is the establishment of “policy, doctrine, and training, as appropriate, to enable implementation of the WPS Strategy.”⁸ This emphasis on WPS augments meaningful work already underway at the combatant command level, such as gender-related training programs,

5. Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), C2, *Commander and Staff Organization and Operations*, Field Manual (FM) 6-0, (Washington, DC: HQDA, 2016), 9-22.

6. HQDA, *Commander and Staff Organization*, 9-37.

7. White House, *United States Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security* (Washington, DC: White House, June 2019), 4, 6, 16.

8. US Department of Defense (DoD), *Women, Peace, and Security Strategic Framework and Implementation Plan* (Washington, DC: DoD, June 2020).

considerations of gender in training exercises with international partner militaries, and gender coaching programs for combatant command senior leadership.⁹ At the Joint service level, doctrine is being updated during the regular review process to include gender considerations.¹⁰

Doctrine is one area where it is possible to assess the magnitude of the challenge facing the Department of Defense in meaningfully incorporating gender considerations across the spectrum of military operations and activities with some degree of quantitative certainty. The military has made important progress in some areas, such as updated joint foreign humanitarian assistance doctrine in 2019 that includes substantive references to WPS and the most recent iteration of Joint stability operations doctrine.¹¹ In general, however, gender considerations barely register.

For example, Joint urban operations doctrine notes only that “culturally inappropriate interaction with women” by US soldiers might antagonize a population, and that a population analysis should include “delineating its primary attributes, such as age, wealth, gender, ethnicity, religion and employment statistics.”¹² Thus it is not clear the regular review process is as effective as it should be. A better approach would be using US civil affairs doctrine to jump-start the inclusion of gender considerations in all levels of US military doctrine.

US Civil Affairs Joint Doctrine

On the ground, US civil affairs operations consistently consider gender. There are numerous examples of CA units and troops in the field taking a gendered approach to promote the growth of social, economic, and political stability in different areas of operation. For example, these troops assisted combat units in sponsoring women’s bazaars in Iraq so local women could earn hard currency to help support their families and learn business skills.¹³ What is missing from CA doctrine, however, is a methodology that would provide civil affairs units with a platform for more consistent implementation of these efforts and promote greater interoperability with Allied forces in conducting them.

One might expect joint CA doctrine would be first and foremost in dealing with the operational relevance of gender. Joint Publication (JP) 5-37, *Civil Military Operations* dashes such assumptions. Women are mentioned only three times and only in the planning context. For example, planners are advised to consider including logistic support for civil-military operations that normally falls “outside military logistics,

9. Office of the Secretary of Defense for Policy, Stability & Humanitarian Affairs and Joint Staff J5, Global Policy & Partnerships, “Department of Defense Women, Peace, & Security” (December 2019), Briefing Slides.

10. Dr. Elizabeth Lape, e-mail to author (May 22, 2019).

11. Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), *Foreign Humanitarian Assistance* Joint Publication (JP) 3-29 (Washington, DC: JCS, 2019), I-4, III-11, IV-9, 16, 31–32, A-1–A-3; D-4–D-5; and JCS, *Stability*, JP 3-07 (Washington, DC: JCS, 2016), II-7, III-12, III-51, IV-25.

12. JCS, *Joint Urban Operations*, JP 3-06 (Washington, DC: JCS, 2013), III-15, A-6.

13. Specialist Jamie Vernon, “Women’s Bazaar Helps Local Iraqi Families,” *US Army*, February 24, 2009, https://www.army.mil/article/17381/womens_bazaar_helps_local_iraqi_families.

such as support to the civilian populace (e.g., women, children, and the elderly).¹⁴ Lastly, in preparing for negotiations, planners are advised to consider culture in setting the “appropriate construct” for a meeting, asking themselves “for example, what role do women play in the society?”¹⁵

One could argue although women are only mentioned three times, men are not mentioned at all—thus the doctrine is intended to be gender neutral, and perhaps therefore nondiscriminatory. A closer review, however, confirms the doctrine is not gender neutral—it is instead male normative. The lens through which the operational environment is analyzed is male, apparently based on an assumption that what is applicable to the men in a civilian population is equally applicable to the women.

Consider, for example, the perspective conveyed in the JP 3-57 section dealing with civil information management (figure 1).

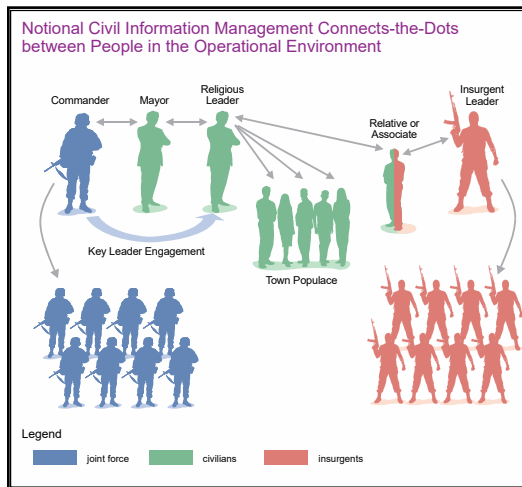


Figure 1. Civil information management (reprinted from Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), *Civil-Military Operations*, JP 3-57 [Washington, DC: JCS, 2018])

This diagram illustrates what JP 3-57 sets out as an innovative approach to interacting with local civilian leaders. This approach relates to “understanding who local leaders are; how they relate to others; and the populace’s needs, strengths, weaknesses, and limitations.”¹⁶ In this example, the Joint force commander, “[in accordance with] conventional wisdom,” chooses to “conduct [key leader engagement] with the [male] town mayor to influence public attitudes toward the local insurgency.”¹⁷ Joint Publication 3-57 instead

14. JCS, *Civil-Military Operations*, JP 3-57 (Washington, DC: JCS, 2018), III-12.

15. JCS, *Civil-Military Operations*, II-12, B-15.

16. JCS, *Civil-Military Operations*, C-2.

17. JCS, *Civil-Military Operations*, C-2.

suggests the more fruitful path to accomplish the commander's intent is to work through the local male religious leader, because he is related by marriage to the local insurgent leader and has more influence on the townspeople.

While this is a plausible scenario, let us look instead at the story the diagram tells visually rather than textually and assess whether the lesson it seeks to convey is truly innovative. First, the primary actors in this civilian-centric situation are the Joint force commander and troops on one side and the insurgent leader and his force on the other. The mayor, the religious leader, and the "relative or associate" have male silhouettes. The civilian populace is represented by a mixture of smaller silhouettes, and two of the five figures appear to be female.

Visually, in this civilian-centric environment in which the commander wishes to influence the attitudes of members of the population, less than 8 percent of all the actors are recognizable as female and at most only 40 percent of the population itself is female. Further, although the civilian population's attitudes are the primary objective, the arrows between the religious leader and the populace flow only from him to them—there is no feedback loop indicating the town citizenry have input to or opinions on the matter. Further, to the extent the women have different perspectives, not only do their opinions apparently matter less than the men's, but their views are at risk of not being conveyed back to the Joint force commander.

Finally, this scenario pivots on an unexamined assumption: the relation by marriage provides a possible influence vector simply because two key leaders have a common brother-in-law. This assumption ignores the fact a woman is likely the reason for this linkage. Her attitudes toward her brothers-in-law may have a significant impact on whether and how any information is transmitted between the men in question. The diagram and its textual explanation ignore this possibility, but human nature suggests it is entirely plausible. Rather than presenting an innovative scenario, this example reflects the conventional male-norming seen throughout the rest of the document.

US Civil Affairs Land-Force Doctrine

If the unspoken male-normative nature of Joint CA doctrine creates an unnecessary blind spot in operational analysis, it unfortunately is replicated in land-force-level doctrine. Some land-force-level doctrine publications simply make no mention of operational gender considerations. Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-57.20, *Multi-Service Support Techniques for Civil Affairs Support to Foreign Humanitarian Assistance*; ATP 3-57.30, *Civil Affairs Support to Nation Assistance*; and ATP 3-57.70, *Civil-Military Operations Center* fall into this category.¹⁸

18. HQDA, *Multi-Service Support Techniques for Civil Affairs Support to Foreign Humanitarian Assistance*, Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-57.20 (Washington, DC: HQDA, 2013); HQDA, *Civil Affairs Support to Nation Assistance*, ATP 3-57.30 (Washington, DC: HQDA, 2014); and HQDA, *Civil-Military Operations Center*, ATP 3-57.70 (Washington, DC: HQDA, 2014).

In other CA doctrine, operational gender considerations register, but barely. Although revisions that include gender will be published soon, Field Manual (FM) 3-57, *Civil Affairs Operations*, does not mention gender explicitly; it only notes, in the context of populace control in providing humanitarian assistance, that women may be in the category of at-risk persons who have greater needs than others.¹⁹ ATP 3-57.10, *Civil Affairs Support to Populace and Resources Control*, and ATP 3-57.60, *Civil Affairs Planning*, note only that “if applicable,” the gender of host-nation persons who might be helpful to the mission be included in their descriptions.²⁰ These formulations, too, reflect the male-normative nature of these doctrinal publications and suggest considering the women in the local population is optional, perhaps even unnecessary.

NATO Doctrine

NATO doctrine does not reflect this gender blindness. Since the 2009 publication of the first bi-strategic command directive on gender in military operations, NATO has continued to refine requirements and expectations for dealing with the operational relevance of gender.²¹ Under Bi-Strategic Command Directive 040-001 (2017), NATO emphasized the need for Alliance members to increase the number of women they provide to NATO missions and to provide qualified staff to fill headquarters-level gender adviser (GENAD) positions and civil engagement teams to work with women in the field.²²

Sweden is a member of NATO’s Partnership for Peace program, and its Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations has been appointed by NATO as the department head for education and training for gender in military operations.²³ The Centre conducts courses on gender in operations for commanders and trains GENADs and tactical-level gender focal points—troops who work on gender matters as a collateral duty.²⁴ Graduates of the Centre’s courses have served as gender advisers in deployed NATO headquarters.²⁵ Further, in the civil affairs context specifically, the NATO-recognized CIMIC Centre of Excellence located in The Hague, Netherlands, has strongly advocated for the inclusion

19. HQDA, *Civil Affairs Operations*, FM 3-57 (Washington, DC: HQDA, 2019), 2-29.

20. HQDA, *Civil Affairs Planning*, ATP 3-57.60 (Washington, DC: HQDA, 2014), B-12; and HQDA, *Civil Affairs Support to Populace and Resources Control*, ATP 3.57.10 (Washington, DC: HQDA, 2013), A-12, A-21, A-30.

21. Allied Command Operations and Allied Command Transformation (ACO and ACT), *Integrating UNSCR 1325 and Gender Perspectives in the NATO Command Structure including Measures for Protection during Armed Conflict*, Bi-Strategic Command Directive 040-001 (Norfolk, VA: ACO & ACT, 2009).

22. ACO and ACT, *Integrating UNSCR 1325*.

23. ACO and ACT, *Integrating UNSCR 1325*, 16.

24. *Forsvarsmakten*, “Courses and Seminars at NCGM,” Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations, <https://www.forsvarsmakten.se/en/swedint/nordic-centre-for-gender-in-military-operations/courses-at-ncgm-and-how-to-apply2/>.

25. Megan Bastick and Claire Duncanson, “Agents of Change? Gender Advisors in NATO Militaries,” *International Peacekeeping* 25, no. 4 (2018): 554–77.

of gender considerations into CA operations, supplying practical, deployment-tested examples and best practices.²⁶

Doctrinally, NATO sees gender as “an integral part of” crosscutting topics—such as children, armed conflict, and WPS—in the operational environment and linked “to the social attributes associated with being male and female learned through socialization . . . [which] determines a person’s position and value in a given context.”²⁷ Accordingly, “integration of gender perspective is a way of assessing gender-based differences of women and men reflected in their social roles and interactions, in the distribution of power and the access to resources.” This integration is operationalized in an overarching manner by making gender advisers and gender focal points responsible for bringing this perspective into the “planning, execution and evaluation processes of military operations.”²⁸

Importantly, the CIMIC staff is still responsible for providing the commander the CIMIC estimate of the operational situation to be used in planning, which is a “comprehensive analysis of the civil environment, all its components and actors and their relationships (including an integrating gender perspective).”²⁹ Thus doctrinally, the gender advisory staff will work with and through the CIMIC staff to incorporate gender considerations into the staff analysis for the commander. This civil-military cooperation effort, however, only produces gender analysis not an operational risk analysis of neglecting gender.

Joint Australian Defence Force Doctrine

NATO’s efforts to include operational gender considerations in its civil affairs doctrine mark a significant advance over the US CA doctrinal approach, but the Australian Defence Force outpaces even NATO’s efforts in many instances. Australia, which has an individual partnership arrangement with NATO, has taken the lead in efforts to incorporate the operational relevance of gender into both nonkinetic and kinetic military operations.³⁰

The ADF has established its own GENAD training course, which allows it to develop a bench of deployable gender advisers to assist in operations, and its Peace Operations Training Centre has conducted weeklong gender seminars for mixed civilian and military audiences.³¹

26. Captain Stephanie Groothedde, *Gender Makes Sense: A Way to Improve Your Mission*, 2nd ed. (Den Haag: Civil-Military Co-operation Centre of Excellence, 2013), https://issuu.com/ccoe_pao/docs/a5-g2nd-main-body_cover-v0.7.

27. NATO Standardization Office (NSO), *Allied Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Cooperation*, AJP 3-19, ed. A ver. 1 (Brussels: NSO, 2018), 1-10, 1-11.

28. NSO, *Civil-Military Cooperation*, 1-12.

29. NSO, *Civil-Military Cooperation*, 5-3.

30. Australia Department of Defence, *Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme between Australia and the North Atlantic Trade Organization* (Canberra, Australia: Department of Defence, 2013), <http://www.defence.gov.au/publications/docs/Australia-NATO-Individual-Partnership-Cooperation-Program.pdf>.

31. Australian Defence Force (ADF), “Operational GENAD Course,” (2017), syllabus, copy on file with author; and Major Attila Ovari, e-mail to author, August 29, 2019.

The ADF provided course materials to assist the United States in developing and conducting its own operational gender course.³² The ADF has ensured the role of the gender adviser and the operational relevance of gender figure prominently in the large-scale biennial training exercise it holds with the United States, *Talisman Saber*.³³ Finally, the ADF has provided several senior-ranking GENADs to the multinational missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.³⁴

The ADF has undertaken a whole-scale revision of existing joint doctrine including the operational relevance of gender. Australian Defence Force Procedures (ADFP) 5.0.1, ed. 2, *The Joint Military Appreciation Process* (August 2019)—equivalent to the US Joint Operation Planning Process—recognizes the role of the senior gender adviser in the command group and identifies the lack of appropriate gender proportions in the force. This doctrine makes special provisions for the protection of women as potential risk elements and provides a hypothetical scenario in which the senior gender adviser consults with the J5 plans staff as part of the framing and scoping process to clarify operational problems posed to the mission.³⁵ Other ADF doctrine has been, or will be, revised.³⁶

Importantly, the ADF has also created new doctrine specifically focused on gender in military operations. These documents, Air Force Doctrine Note 1-18, *Gender in Air Operations*, and Joint Doctrine Note (JDN) 2-18, *Gender in Military Operations*, are pioneering efforts to establish practicable and methodological approaches for leveraging gender matters in operations.³⁷ In particular, JDN 2-18 outlines the role civil-military cooperation units can play in taking a gendered approach to joint and multinational operations.

Joint Doctrine Note 2-18 recognizes actions which effect people differently on the basis of gender can have a negative impact on mission efforts to establish peace or stability, and “[a] detailed analysis of sex disaggregated reporting and data using this gender lens can also provide the commander with a richer intelligence picture and deeper understanding of the operational environment.” In this regard, JDN 2-18 distinguishes between “gender analysis” and “gender assessment.” It notes although some organizations see the terms as synonymous, “the

32. US Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM), “U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Delivers First U.S. Operational Gender Advisor Course,” USINDOPACOM, June 8, 2018, <https://www.pacom.mil/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1545572/us-indo-pacific-command-delivers-first-us-operational-gender-advisor-course/>.

33. Vince Lowery, “Coping with Noncombatant Women in the Battlespace,” *Military Review* 97, no. 2 (May-June 2017), 39–42.

34. Prescott, *Armed Conflict*, 218–19.

35. Chief of Joint Operations (CJO), *Joint Planning*, Australian Defence Doctrine Publication (ADDP) 5.0, ed. 2 (Canberra, Australia: CJO, 2014), 3-16–3-17; and Vice Chief of the Defence Force (VCDF), *Australian Defence Force Procedures*, (ADFP) 5.0.1, ed. 2, *The Joint Military Appreciation Process* (Canberra, Australia: VCDF, 2019), 1B-3, 1C-14, 2-28, 2B-2.

36. Prescott, *Armed Conflict*, 164.

37. Director, General Strategy and Policy, Air Force (DGSP-AF), *Gender in Air Operations*, Air Force Doctrine Note 1-18 (Canberra, Australia: DGSP-AF, 2018); and VCDF, *Gender in Military Operations*, Joint Doctrine Note (JDN) 2-18, (Canberra, Australia: VCDF, 2018).

ADF considers a gender assessment to be standing information about a context, whereas the gender analysis entails applying that information to draw out deductions relevant to an operational context.” Importantly, these deductions are not just the impacts military forces might have on local populations, but they are also aimed at “understanding how different sections of a population might affect all phases of an operation at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.”³⁸

Joint Doctrine Note 2-18 also recognizes that gender analysis has many purposes—grounding planning decisions on facts rather than attitudes and assumptions, identifying otherwise overlooked key community actors with whom to engage, and shaping “force protection and population engagement strategies.” Importantly, gender considerations are not to become planning orphans, relegated to some obscure annex at the back of the operations plan. Instead, “gender considerations and the key implications from the gender analysis should be incorporated into the main body of all operational planning products and documents to every extent possible.”³⁹

The factors to be evaluated in this analysis are holistic: population demographics, health demographics, power structures and leadership, control and access to resources, and sex- and gender-based violence in the area of operations. What the gender analysis seems to lack, however, is a rigorous methodology for its creation. In particular, a review of the figures used to explain the development of the analysis provide a cautionary note in the development of gender analysis as it pertains to operational risk—such analysis is crucial, but at the current time it is perhaps underdeveloped.⁴⁰

Although joint doctrine notes are not official doctrine in the Australian doctrine hierarchy, JDN 2-18 is surprisingly directive in terms of specific responsibilities for military leaders. Not only are commanders tasked with ensuring their staffs and units have “a clear understanding of gender issues and gender awareness at all levels,” they must also ensure gender expertise is integrated at all decision-making levels and applied in all planning and decision-making processes. Senior officers and specific commanders in the ADF are charged with taking steps to incorporate gender considerations in their staffs’ and commands’ work, including the vice chief of the Defence Force, the chief of joint operations, the service chiefs, and the Australian Defence College commander.⁴¹ These steps are already complemented by efforts underway to consult with intelligence staff to ensure better integration of gender considerations with intelligence processes.⁴²

In contrast with US civil affairs and NATO civil-military cooperation doctrine, the entry point for gender analysis in the Australian military

38. VCDF, *Gender in Military Operations*, 4, 6–7.

39. VCDF, *Gender in Military Operations*, 8, 9.

40. VCDF, *Gender in Military Operations*, A-1, A-3, A-4–A-7; and Prescott, *Armed Conflict*, 11.

41. VCDF, *Gender in Military Operations*, 10–13.

42. Major Attila Ovari, e-mail to author, January 23, 2020.

appreciation process is through the intelligence staff (with the gender adviser assisting), rather than through the CIMIC staff, as part of the joint intelligence preparation of the operational environment. The CIMIC staff is expected to undertake actual actions ensuring “funding is provided for specific gendered activities and programs,” such as key leadership engagement meetings, providing “engagement and liaison with local women,” and promoting projects geared toward local women.⁴³ This division of labor reflects the tendency of GENADs to work at the operational level, while CIMIC staff tends to work at the tactical level.⁴⁴

Australian Land-Force Doctrine

Although ADF joint civil-military cooperation doctrine is not available in the public domain, Australian Army doctrine is. Published in 2017, Land Warfare Doctrine (LWD) 3-8-6, *Civil-Military Cooperation*, combines its discussion of gender perspectives with the crosscutting theme of WPS. On a full page, it explains the Australian National Action Plan on WPS and related UN Security Council Resolutions. It notes as an example that quick impact projects among the local population should be “sensitive to considerations of gender, ethnicity, age and vulnerability.”⁴⁵

In apparent contrast with the scheme set out in JDN 2-18, LWD 3-8-6 confirms civil-military cooperation is expected to contribute a civil estimate to the intelligence preparation of the battlespace, which includes an assessment of “operational risks from threat force civil space objectives and actions, as well as consequences of friendly force actions.”⁴⁶ Land Warfare Doctrine 3-8-6 presents a thorough methodology for developing individual key leader engagement briefing packs. This methodology includes conducting a residual assessment to determine what risks remain after mitigation actions have been taken regarding the key leader and assessing the mission and its personnel, relationships with other individuals, and unintended consequences, such as physical damage and intangible second- and third-order effects.⁴⁷ This appendix is complemented by an annex specifically dealing with nonkinetic-effect target risk assessment.⁴⁸

Interestingly, LWD 3-8-6 assesses the variables present in the area of operations using the political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time (PMESII-PT) rubric coupled with the Area, Structures, Capabilities, Organizations, People, and Events (ASCOPE) analysis approach, revealing perhaps a slight disconnect between Australian and US planning doctrine, since the US Army would ordinarily use PMESII-PT-style analysis in Joint planning

43. VCDF, *Gender in Military Operations*, A-1, B-5.

44. Major Attila Ovari, e-mail to author, January 23, 2020.

45. Commander, Headquarters, 2nd Division (HQ 2nd Div.), *Civil-Military Cooperation*, Land Warfare Doctrine (LWD) 3-8-6 (Sydney, Australia: HQ 2nd Div., 2018), 42, 95.

46. HQ 2nd Div., *Civil-Military Cooperation*, 58.

47. HQ 2nd Div., *Civil-Military Cooperation*, 77–85.

48. HQ 2nd Div., *Civil-Military Cooperation*, 157–64.

and ASCOPE to determine civil considerations in METT-TC for mission planning.⁴⁹ This may not make a significant functional difference in the Australian Defence Force since both GENADS at the operational level and CIMIC staff at the tactical level use this tool.⁵⁰ Similarly, although none of the information collection categories for PMESII-PT analysis explicitly include gender, assessments of the humanitarian situation in areas of operations do include information about at-risk populations.⁵¹ From a multinational perspective, ASCOPE could include gender in the people category, but as noted earlier, US civil affairs planning doctrine only suggests nonmilitary personnel supporting CA in the area of operations have their gender noted, “if applicable.”⁵²

In sum, at the combined and joint levels, NATO and ADF CIMIC doctrine have taken significant steps to include the operational relevance of gender into planning and operations, recognize the role of gender, and emphasize educational and training efforts to address gender. At the ADF land-force level, some gender information already exists in civil-military cooperation doctrine, and importantly, it already engages with the idea of risk as an integral part of civil-military cooperation analysis. Although the United States has undertaken important educational and training efforts, largely at the combatant command level it appears, gender is missing in most Joint and land-force civil affairs doctrine. This gap suggests while gender considerations might get attention at the highest US military planning levels, any connections between such planning measures and what is actually occurring in any given area of operations are modest.

Conclusion

The absence in current US civil affairs doctrine of any meaningful description of the operational relevance of gender in CA planning and operations is puzzling. Some might say this absence is purposeful because the doctrine is intended to be gender neutral. This rationalization is weak because civil affairs doctrine at its heart is male-normative. Further, while gender neutrality is important in staffing a force and affording career advancement opportunities to qualified personnel, it is a very naive lens through which to view civilian-centric missions in an area of operations. Among the different cultures and societies deployed US military personnel are expected to work with, life is rarely gender neutral. In these situations, ostensible neutrality regarding gender is not an operational virtue—as stated earlier, it is gender blindness.

Blindness to the potentially different security needs of women and girls—such as physical, food, energy, and water security—in an area of operations is imprudent and detrimental to mission accomplishment and force protection. Presuming all security needs of a population are

49. HQ 2nd Div., *Civil-Military Cooperation*, 204, 209–10; and HQDA, *Doctrine Primer*, ADP 1-01 (Washington, DC: HQDA, 2019), 4-4, 5-1; and Lowery, “Women in the Battlespace,” 90.

50. Major Attila Ovari, e-mail to author, January 23, 2020.

51. HQ 2nd Div., *Civil-Military Cooperation*, 174–75, 203–4.

52. HQDA, *Civil Affairs Planning*, B-12.

homogenous irrespective of gender is inconsistent with the granular level of cultural understanding special operations forces members, such as civil affairs personnel, are expected to achieve and exercise.⁵³

Further, failing to address the operational relevance of gender in a meaningful way could lead to operational inconsistencies with some of our closest allies and thereby compromise interoperability in multinational missions. Such failures could also negatively affect crucial domestic support in host countries for these missions. Having identified the gap, however, and recognizing the operational risks presented by neglecting gender in US civil affairs doctrine, what is the remedy?

Some might be satisfied just to include content about women, peace, and security in CA doctrine. This would be a significant improvement, but it risks implementing what Dharmapuri has cogently described as the “add women and stir” approach—by itself, it is unlikely to result in any meaningful improvement in providing commanders, planners, and operators with actionable analysis they can use to further their missions.⁵⁴ Instead, the doctrinal treatment of gender considerations should be purposeful. Addressing gender in doctrine should focus on developing gender analysis for the operational environment and then analyzing risks to the mission and personnel posed by neglecting to consider gender. This comprehensive approach would allow civil affairs units at the land-force level, for example, to use the C component of METT-TC to address the full range of threats posed to the mission in any civilian-centric area of operations.

Staff planners could develop and propose solutions to mitigate these risks, and commanders and operators could then weigh the benefits and costs of these solutions in the same context as other risks. Importantly, using gender-related content in doctrine to drive an analytical methodology that could be shared with valued allies and multinational partners would help build a bridge of common understanding in shared operational environments. In this way, a targeted focus on civil affairs doctrine could push positive systemic impacts across DoD efforts and help achieve US goals for peace and security as they relate to women.

53. HQDA, *Army Special Operations*, ADP 3-05 (Washington, DC: HQDA, 2019), 8-12.

54. Sahana Dharmapuri, “Just Add Women and Stir?” *Parameters* 41, no. 1 (Spring 2011), 65–66.