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Canadian Armed Forces Culture Change: A Regulative Delusion

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CANADIAN ARMED FORCES CULTURE CHANGE: A REGULATIVE DELUSION

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ABSTRACT

The CAF as an institution must be a reflection of the society in which it resides or risk having its legitimacy questioned by that society. Women in the Canadian Armed Forces have always faced barriers to inclusion within its masculinized culture. Since the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in 1970, to more recently with Operation HONOUR, the CAF has relied on regulative measures to attempt culture change toward women's inclusion. While each attempt at change yielded modest results, the CAF is again at an inflection point. Successive Chief of Defence Staffs and other high-ranking institutional leaders face accusations of abuse of power and sexual misconduct, bringing with it attention and demands for change. Canadian society is again questioning the legitimacy of the CAF and demanding systemic culture change. Creating meaningful culture change is difficult and through a thorough study of the CAF's historical attempts at culture change and a view to the future, this paper will both examine the faults of the past and make recommendations toward a more inclusive, accepting and diverse CAF culture.

While Canada's armed forces were referred to as both the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and Canadian Forces (CF) during the period described in this paper, for the purpose of simplicity 'Canadian Armed Forces (CAF)' will be used throughout, regardless of the time period being described. References quoted will retain the original author's structure.

INTRODUCTION

Women in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) have and continue to be disadvantaged. The regulated introduction of women to the CAF and the overt resistance the CAF exhibited, seemingly sabotaging the acceptance of women into its ranks by taking overt measures to prove that women did not belong, was the environment that many of Canada's first serving women had to contend with. Today, women continue to be subjected to systemic discrimination brought about by a deeply engrained masculine culture and the attitudes and preferences toward masculine characteristics and traits that continue to disadvantage women serving. The barriers to women serving appear countless.

While the overt nature of this disenfranchisement has waned and Canada is now seen as a world leader with respect to the treatment and employment of women within the ranks, there is still much work to be done for the CAF to fully institute the type of cultural change for women to serve without barriers.

Dating back as far as the Roman Empire masculinity has been a desired trait for the soldiers serving. Roman historian, Ammianus Marcellinus, detailed this as the state entering, "manhood [and] won laurels of victory in every part of the globe."¹ This

¹ M.E. Stewart, "The Soldier's Life: Roman Masculinity and the Manliness of War," *University of Queensland*, ResearchGate publication 259828644, 23 January 2014, 3.

masculine culture still exists in the CAF today. From masculine military culture to masculine competition culture, the deeply embedded traits are arguably the reason and tools that both limit women's participation and prohibit women's promotion within the CAF.

Chapter 1 of this paper examines the theory behind some of the masculine cultures that reside within the CAF. Militarized masculinity and masculine competition culture expose some of the barriers women face in their service while offering a starting point in understanding military culture. An examination of the presence of these cultures suggests that many of the negative realities that women in the CAF face are direct and indirect consequences of a hyper-masculine environment.

While women are now able to occupy any role within the CAF, their integration has not been a smooth transition. Initially women were simply inserted into a masculine system without any other consideration for their participation than the right to serve in these roles. This resulted in rampant abuses, amplified by an institution that held a great deal of hostility against women's participation. Further, in absence of further changes the existing system forced women to adapt themselves to assimilate into the masculine culture or risk becoming ostracized.²

Using Scott's model, which will be further described, the CAF has demonstrated that since 1970 very little has been done to institute any change with respect to women serving, beyond the regulative pillar.³ That is to say, the CAF has done little more than

² Marie Deschamps, *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada), 27 March 2015, 17.

³ W. Richard Scott, *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests, and Identities*, 4th ed. (London: Sage, 2014), 59-60.

institute rules or policy, often forced by government and society, to implement changes in the advancement of women serving in the CAF.⁴ The CAF, as an institution operating in the greater Canadian society, needs to be a reflection of that Canadian society, or at the very least closely aligned. If not closely aligned the CAF risks its legitimacy.⁵

Since women were first introduced to CAF service until present day, the legitimacy of the CAF has been questioned numerous times, many of them explored throughout this paper. Each time its legitimacy has been questioned, the resulting consequence has brought about some change to bring the CAF back closer to the norms and values of Canadian society. Be it laws forced by a dissatisfied Canadian society, a reaction from government, or the result of explosive reporting, changes in the CAF were rarely voluntary, instead forced out of obligation or legislation.⁶

Progressing chronologically, the early years of women in the CAF will be examined as well as the barriers faced both at the macro and micro level, exploring anecdotal accounts of some of the CAF's first women to serve. The history and the culture that allowed the behaviours to exist and the masculine culture to flourish will be explored, as will how these factors have transformed over time.

Through the examination of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, the Canadian Human Rights Act, the SWINTER (Servicewomen in Non-Traditional Environments and Roles) and CREW (Combat Related Employment of Women) Trials

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, "Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002).

and the associated policies that were drawn, this chapter demonstrates how the CAF seemingly embraced and promoted a masculine culture that discriminated against, and overtly discouraged, women from participating.

As chapter two concludes, more recent events are examined and with them a noted change in the CAF's outward attitude toward women. Gone from the discourse was the overt resistance to women serving, but extant is the CAF's resistance to cultural change. The CAF continued with the expectation that legislation and regulation changes would be enough to force change, and as a result masculine culture and attitudes persisted and women suffered.

Through a series of shocking media accounts and the Deschamps Report it was demonstrated that the CAF continued to deviate from the norms of Canadian society. Again, through regulative measures the CAF made attempts at change. Operation HONOUR was a top-down driven regulation aimed at stamping out sexual misconduct in the CAF,⁷ but came with challenges.

Chapter three concludes with a series of recommendations aimed at improving culture within the CAF. Canadian society changes, and to this point in history its tempo for change has far outpaced that of the CAF. The series of recommendations made are aimed at helping the CAF become agile in its approach to diversity, aiming to become a more welcoming environment for those who do not identify with the current dominant

⁷ "The Operation Honour Manual, Chapter 1," last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/conflict-misconduct/operation-honour/orders-policies-directives/operation-honour-manual/overview.html#1.1>

CAF membership, namely white males.⁸ The recommendations also focus on a halt to measuring diversity as a number.⁹ Granted, percentages of particular demographics is a quantifiable way to visibly be a more diverse institution. However, if the culture does not change are you truly becoming a more diverse institution? Or, are you simply becoming a visibly diverse institution where membership is forced to take on the qualities, positive or negative, of the dominant membership?

Finally, chapter four takes a turn toward the present and future. It examines the effects of COVID-19, specifically how COVID-19 has negatively affected women of all backgrounds, but even more so those who are racialized or gendered to a far greater degree than men.¹⁰ The notion of ‘frontline’ is then examined. At one time the term was almost exclusively reserved for soldiers fighting on the frontlines of battle, very much a masculine image. Most recently the term has pivoted, although still valid in its historical context, media and society have taken ownership and projected the image of essential workers as members of the frontline and particularly, health care workers, roles dominated in numbers by women. The term frontline now brings to mind images of a physically and mentally exhausted health care worker. The images of these health practitioners, predominantly women, battling to save patients has become a new norm in media. The notion of the CAF using this distinctly more feminine version of a frontline

⁸ Alan Okros and Vanessa Brown, Academic Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence in support of the current study examining Diversity within the Canadian Armed Forces, 8.

⁹ Ibid, 9.

¹⁰ Vanessa Brown, “The Gendered Division of Emotional Labour and Post-Pandemic Reconstruction,” in *Military Psychology Response to Post-Pandemic Reconstruction*, Samir Rawat, Ole Boe, Andrzej Piotrowski Eds. Jaipur: Rawat Publications (2020), 124.

warrior to help or expedite and progress toward positive culture change is examined to close out the paper.

The CAF is once again at a pivotal moment for positive culture change. As successive Chief of Defence Staffs (CDS) accused of inappropriate behaviour and numerous media accounts of impropriety within the CAF,¹¹ there is once again a divide between Canadian society and the CAF. With this divide there is opportunity, opportunity to use the momentum gained to bring about change, to implement the changes necessary, to educate, to take advantage of external experts, and to tackle the deep-rooted masculinities that act as barriers to women serving. To this point, the CAF has been able to implement regulatory adjustments in response to the question of legitimacy. Canadian society is demanding change and the CAF has promised culture change, but will it be able to deliver? If the CAF is unable to embrace sweeping culture change it risks having its legitimacy questioned once again, this time in a society that seems far more progressive and far less forgiving of institutional, systemic discrimination. The CAF must embrace positive cultural change toward the acceptance of women or risk losing legitimacy in the eyes of Canadian society.

CHAPTER 1 THEORY

Defining Masculinity

As Tait affirms, the military as an institution has a long history of a masculinized culture.¹² Manifesting in a number of ways, a masculinized culture poses many

¹¹ Articles cited from Stephenson, Brewster and others detail many accounts of impropriety.

¹² Victoria Tait, "Regendering the Canadian Armed Forces," *Atlantis Journal*, 41.2, (2020), 13.

challenges for institutions, in this case the CAF. More specific to the CAF is a militarized masculine culture, with specific nuances that differ it somewhat from traditional masculinity. Eichler defines masculine characteristics prevalent in the military as, “strength, aggression, courage, and toughness over characteristics stereotypically associated with femininity, such as pacifism, empathy, vulnerability, or weakness.”¹³ Grant and MacDonald further characterize those characteristics associated with toxic masculinity as, “dominance, aggression, strength, sexual conquest and the rejection of traits or behaviours associated with femininity.”¹⁴ While these definitions offer some explanation, it is important to understand masculinity in the military context.

Militarized Masculinity

A militarized masculine culture seems simple to understand on the surface. However, digging deeper there appears to be conflict in the definition with both complimentary and contradictory traits engrained in the definition. Traits deemed masculine dominate the definition; however, this conflict is created when some traditional feminine characteristics are introduced as desirable in the military context. As Rebecca Tapscott writes, “militarization produces ‘manly warriors’ who will voluntarily kill on behalf of the state; militarized masculinities prize ‘dominance, assertiveness,

¹³ Maya Eichler, “How Gender Became a Defence Issue: A Feminist Perspective on Canadian Military and Defence Policy,” In *Turbulent Times, Transformational Possibilities? Gender and Politics Today and Tomorrow*, ed. Fiona MacDonald and Alexandra Dobrowolsky, (University of Toronto Press 2020), 216.

¹⁴ John Grant and Fiona MacDonald, “The “Alt” Right, Toxic Masculinity, and Violence,” In *Turbulent Times, Transformational Possibilities? Gender and Politics Today and Tomorrow*, ed. Fiona MacDonald and Alexandra Dobrowolsky, (University of Toronto Press 2020), 550.

aggressiveness, independence, self-sufficiency, and willingness to take risks’.”¹⁵ This description paints the traditional view of a strong masculine warrior and describes what is generally understood as masculine. The conflict occurs with the introduction of traits associated with the feminine that are deemed desirable in the military context, described as, “sacrifice, compassion and cooperation.”¹⁶ These feminine characteristics seem to be in contrast to those listed above but in the military context are valuable, desired complimentary traits of a soldier.¹⁷ As Tapscott proclaims, both those who support and oppose the hyper-masculine military recognize the importance of these traits for, “a well functioning force.”¹⁸

Why is this? Why does it seem that in such a masculinized culture those feminine traits would be so valued? In a militarized culture, significant value is placed on the ability to work in a team, to be empathetic toward others in the group and to care for and about your subordinates. These caring and compassionate traits are often associated with femininity, while at the same time being very important for even the most masculine soldier.¹⁹ The need for militaries to embrace these traditional feminine traits is becoming ever more necessary, as Kaldor states, “Contemporary wars...disassemble the state. Participation is low. They are decentralized and globalized wars.”²⁰ In such conflicts feminine traits are necessary, especially considering the need to operate in an

¹⁵ Rebecca Tapscott, “Militarized masculinity and the paradox of restraint: mechanisms of social control under modern authoritarianism,” *International Affairs* 96, (April, 2020), 1569.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Mary Kaldor, “Peace Making in an Era of New Wars,” *Carnegie Europe*, 14 October 2019.

environment with mass human migration and humanitarian security emergencies.²¹ In these situations, feminine traits such as empathy, caring and understanding could be seen as more valuable than those associated with masculinity, such as aggression and dominance. That is to say, even in the most masculine environment of military culture, a compassionate, empathetic soldier, willing to work in a team environment is valued.

While masculinity in general may value individual performances, and while individual performance assessment is a means to promotion,²² the achievements of the military ‘team’ are seen as far more significant than those of the individual soldier.²³ As such, “militarized masculinities are characterized by a foundational tension, resulting from the contradiction between unrestrained violence (or the will to kill) and disciplined order.”²⁴

Hayley Lopes goes on to state “Militarized masculinity is a combination of traits and attitudes that are hyper-masculine, hegemonic, and are associated primarily with military soldiers.”²⁵ She contends that militaries coerce young men, appealing to their uncertainty and desire for manliness assuring these impressionable young men that they will be made a man in the military.²⁶ This is important, as it implies that the overt masculine nature of the military is not necessarily the starting point for many new recruits entering the CAF, but rather it is taught and nurtured, beginning when a new member

²¹ Ibid.

²² Canadian Forces Personnel Appraisal System Manual

²³ Rebecca Tapscott, “Militarized masculinity and the paradox of restraint: mechanisms of social control under modern authoritarianism,” *International Affairs* 96, (April, 2020), 1569.

²⁴ Ibid, 1569.

²⁵ Hayley Lopes, “Militarized Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations: An Obstacle to Gender Mainstreaming,” *Peace Build*, (March, 2011), 2.

²⁶ Ibid, 3.

joins the CAF. It is then persistently nurtured, re-affirmed and rewarded throughout a career.

David Morgan describes the overt masculine nature of a soldier as the hyper masculine visualization depicted in society. He builds on some of the traits mentioned above and affirms that masculinities associated with the military are some of the most direct and aggressive. Despite political, social and technological changes in society the soldier's image of being a warrior, "still seems to be a key symbol of masculinity."²⁷ This societal image of a soldier persists and is reproduced through society's symbols, "In statues, heroic paintings...and popular films the gendered connotations are inescapable. The stance, the facial expressions, and the weapons clearly connote aggression, courage, a capacity for violence, and, sometimes, a willingness for sacrifice."²⁸ These types of images are found throughout CAF installations and are particularly prevalent decorating the campus of the Canadian Forces College.

The definitions above paint a picture of the militarized masculine soldier, an aggressive soldier, taught and nurtured throughout a career to embrace the image that is portrayed and reaffirmed in images, media and films. Composed very much of traditional masculine traits, the soldier is further defined and conflicted with a desire for some traditional feminine traits, the willingness to sacrifice and empathy to name two. Women, as will be explained, have had to live in and adjust to a culture not historically made for them. As they are introduced to the dominant masculine culture, they are expected to

²⁷ David Morgan, "Theatre of War: Combat, the Military, and Masculinities" In Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman (eds.), *Theorizing Masculinities*. (London: Sage Publishers, 1994), 165.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 165.

assimilate. Many women have had to adjust their own values and sense of self in order to succeed, or even survive in the masculine military culture.²⁹

Masculine Contest Culture

While it is important to understand the nature of a militarized masculine culture, it is not the only masculine concept important to acknowledge in military service. Masculine contest culture is also a significant factor in the hindrance to women's progression in the CAF, particularly when assessing the individual aspect of masculinity. While militarized masculinity lends to the idea of 'team,' masculine contest culture focuses on the success of the 'strong' individual. Masculine contest culture is a, "culture [that] endorses winner-take-all competition, where winners demonstrate masculine traits such as emotional toughness, physical stamina, and ruthlessness."³⁰ While this may seem to be the definition of what society expects of a warrior, the collaborative nature of today's military renders the winner-take-all attitude inappropriate to organizational goals. The ability to work in a team and navigate complex situations toward a defined end state is far more important in today's military than the Hollywood version of a callous, machine gun toutng, one-man assaulter. However, this winner-take-all idea, prevalent in masculine contest culture,³¹ does have some standing in describing the institutional bias

²⁹ Anne Reiffenstein, "Gender Integration- An Asymetric Environment," in *Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces*, ed. Karen D. Davis, Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007, 3. Reiffenstein highlights this notion throughout with specific example on page 3.

³⁰ Jennifer L. Berdahl, Peter Glick and Marianne Cooper, "How Masculinity Contests Undermine Organizations, and What to Do About It," *Harvard Business Review*, 2 November 2018, last accessed 3 April 2021, <https://hbr.org/2018/11/how-masculinity-contests-undermine-organizations-and-what-to-do-about-it>.

³¹ Ibid.

towards men and promotion and with that the oppression of women within military culture. So, how does this contest culture disadvantage women in the military context?

CAF Personnel Evaluation Reports (PER) are conducted for each member of the force annually. The assessment factors for the PER are straight forward, with amplifying information available in the Canadian Armed Forces Personnel Appraisal System (CFPAS) manual.³² To summarize, the PER is composed of performance and potential based markers with scores ranging from unsatisfactory to mastered for performance and low to outstanding for potential. A short narrative is attached to describe the performance and potential markers.³³ These PERs constitute the basis upon which members are considered for promotion. Masculine competition culture is embedded within performance and potential measurements and institutionally favours men and disadvantages women.

In a culture where particular leaders have grown and prospered and often refer to the mentorship program as a means ‘to find their replacement’ it seems natural they would transfer their benefits to those who look, think and act in a manner similar to themselves.³⁴ Further, while the military does value the ability to work together as part of a team, and even mentions teamwork as one of its performance-based markers, it does assess the marker for the individual. The fact remains that the promotion system is implicitly associated with male traits, articulated in a competitive rather than collaborative framework. In many occupations, there are very limited opportunities for

³² Canada, Canadian Forces Personnel Appraisal System Manual, Canadian Armed Forces.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Emily Feyes, “Leadership and the Promotion of Diversity in the Work Force and Beyond,” *Leadership in Healthcare and Public Health*, Spring 2018.

promotion, creating an extremely competitive environment where men overwhelmingly benefit.

These PERs make up the base of an individual to accompany other supporting documents, which are then ‘competed’ against peers for limited promotions.³⁵ So inherently, in actions, achievements, and through the course of completing day-to-day activities, members are in direct competition with each other for these limited promotions, thus creating a competitive masculine culture, with the winner-take-all aspect being promotion.

Promotion boards are typically staffed by senior members of the same occupation who succeeded under the same competitive circumstances of comparing peers for limited promotions. These senior members progressed through their careers and became successful in the same ultra-competitive masculine environment, where strength, stamina and a willingness to place work above all else are valued above other characteristics such as ensuring a supported team, compassion, and inclusion. Evidence shows a subordinate who emulates their supervisor, likely a man in the military environment, will be promoted above an equally capable peer of a different culturally or ethnic background.³⁶

Due to unequal gender roles and socialization, “History has shown that the average man is more competitive than the average woman.”³⁷ Women are less likely to describe themselves as competitive and are less combative in general.³⁸ In the public and

³⁵ Canada, Canadian Forces Personnel Appraisal System Manual, Canadian Armed Forces.

³⁶ Emily Feyes, “Leadership and the Promotion of Diversity in the Work Force and Beyond,” *Leadership in Healthcare and Public Health*, Spring 2018.

³⁷ Selin Kesebir, “How Women and Men View Competition Differently,” *Harvard Business Review*, (6 November 2019) last accessed 22 January 2021.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

private sector, this is a causal factor to the wage gap, as competitive people tend to succeed to a higher degree in the workforce when compared to those who are not competitive. As Selin Kesebir notes, “among graduates of a top MBA program, the gender difference in competitiveness accounted for 10% of the gender gap in earnings nine years after graduation; among female and male economists in France it accounted for 76% of the promotion gap.”³⁹

In terms of the CAF, this competitiveness equates to promotion and rank. In the case of women, where men tend to be more competitive, a lack of promotion and rank. This inherently leads to a number of questions, does competition lead to greater productivity and performance, and more importantly in terms of the CAF, even if competition does lead to increased performance does it equate to the potential to succeed with the greater leadership responsibilities of the next rank? While performance in the higher ranks of the CAF may be important, traits such as compassion, empathy, humility and inclusiveness, traits that are typically seen as feminine, are often eclipsed by traits that are more masculine.⁴⁰ This de-valuation of traditional ‘feminine’ traits and characteristics may well be a causal factor to the de-valuation of a woman’s potential to succeed at the next rank, as women are more closely associated with femininity.

Moreover, the terms crisis management and military leadership are complimentary and there is evidence that shows women are better leaders in crisis, even

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Leigh Buchanan, “What a Leader Needs Now: 7 'Feminine' Qualities,” *Inc. Magazine*, June 2013, last accessed 4 February 2021, <https://www.inc.com/magazine/201306/leigh-buchanan/what-leaders-need-to-know.html>.

though men still dominate the upper echelons of CAF leadership.⁴¹ This notion will be explored further, but what are the second, third order effects of masculine conceptions of leadership, and male dominated commands? How might the promotion of traditional masculine traits and the de-valuation of traditional feminine traits affect women's perceptions of and reception in the institution? Does the idealization of men and masculinities manifest as problems with retention and recruitment? Do these organizational archetypes impact motivation, and create complacency and result in a flattened career progression?

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY OF CAF'S DISCRIMINATION OF WOMEN

Understanding masculinized military culture and the competitive nature of the CAF adds some perspective to perceptions of the institution by those on the outside as well as how military culture impacts members differentially. Indeed, the CAF has long been criticized for its lack of diversity and its lack of self-awareness regarding the issue of women serving.⁴² Perhaps no case provides a better visual image of integration disparities in the CAF than the February 10, 2021 incident involving a CDS tweet on diversity. A caption attached to the image stated, "Diversity makes us stronger, inclusion improves our institution."⁴³ A fairly simple statement promoting CAF diversity, until you

⁴¹ Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman, "Women are Better Leaders During Crisis," *Harvard Business Review*, (30 November 2020), last accessed 30 January 2021.

⁴² Madsen, Chris. *Another Kind of Justice: Canadian Military Law From Confederation to Somalia*. 9780774850629. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999. Canadian Electronic Library/desLibris.

⁴³ David Pugliese, "Military tweet on diversity faces backlash after it features eight white male officers," *Ottawa Citizen*, 12 February, 2021, last accessed 4 April 2021, <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/military-tweet-on-diversity-faces-backlash-after-it-features-eight-white-male-officers>.

take into account the image of eight older, white officers who represent the highest echelons of CAF leadership, sitting in board room, with a single female on a screen in the background. It is a glaring example of how the CAF simply cannot come to grips with its lack of diversity and how the highest levels of CAF leadership still struggle to see and understand the problem.⁴⁴

Efforts need to be made toward, “embedding a culture of inclusion.”⁴⁵ In this case, the highest levels of CAF leadership came across as not understanding the problem. The simple tweet further alienated diverse members of the CAF and sent an unwelcoming message to those outside the CAF, all at a time the CAF is striving for more diversity.⁴⁶ Statements like the one above demonstrate the historical and continued systemic discrimination of women in the CAF. The tweet provides a visual to the barriers women face, and have faced, since their introduction to the armed services.

Women have served alongside and within the CAF since the Northwest Rebellion of 1885.⁴⁷ The roles of women in the CAF continued to evolve through the First and Second World Wars, with the majority of women serving in nursing roles.⁴⁸ Through the Second World War the introduction of women into non-traditional roles such as mechanics, drivers, and parachute riggers, again saw the roles of women in the CAF

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Wendy Cukier et al., “Diversity Leads, Diverse Representation in Leadership: A Review of Eight Canadian Cities,” *Ryerson Diversity Institute*, (Canada 2020), 8.

⁴⁶ National Defence, “Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity Plan (*DRAFT*),” (Canada 2020), 4.

⁴⁷ “Canadian Armed Forces and Women over the Years,” *Canadian Military Family Magazine*, last accessed 22 February 2021, <https://www.cmfmag.ca/history/canadian-armed-forces-and-women-over-the-years...>

⁴⁸ “Women in the Canadian Armed Forces,” *Government of Canada*, last accessed 7 January 2021.

evolve.⁴⁹ Acceptance of women in the armed forces was not borne from institutional benevolence but out of necessity due to the limited men available to fill required military roles.⁵⁰

With the conclusion of the Second World War also came a reduction in the size of the CAF and with it the number of women serving. At its height, the Second World War saw some 50,000 women serving in traditional and non-traditional support roles.⁵¹ In the years after the Second World War, limits were placed on the number of women able to serve.⁵² This matched or at least was closely aligned with the sentiment of society, when in 1950 women represented only 21.6 % of the workforce.⁵³

Women continued to serve within the CAF in limited support roles for years until the culture gap between Canadian society and that of the CAF began to grow to the point where women's exclusion from many facets of service was no longer acceptable. The CAF, notorious for being conservative, slow to change to cultural shifts in Canadian society, and rigid in its ways⁵⁴ was in an uncomfortable position. The CAF began to face external pressure to change; women in the workforce were becoming more and more prevalent and accepted by Canadian society, where participation in Canada's job market

⁴⁹ "Canadian Armed Forces and Women over the Years," *Canadian Military Family Magazine*, last accessed 22 February 2021, <https://www.cmfmag.ca/history/canadian-armed-forces-and-women-over-the-years...>

⁵⁰ Ruth Roach Pierson, "They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986).

⁵¹ Philip McCristalla, and Katherine Baggaley, "The progressions of a gendered military: A theoretical examination of gender inequality in the Canadian military" *Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health*, 5(1) 2019, 1

⁵² "Women in the Canadian Armed Forces," Government of Canada, last accessed 7 January 2021.

⁵³ Melissa Moyser, "Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report," Statistics Canada, 9 March 2017, last accessed 22 March 2021, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-503-x/2015001/article/14694-eng.htm>

⁵⁴ Major Brad Coates, "Alternate Dispute Resolution and the Canadian Forces," *Canadian Military Journal*, Summer 2006, 39

reached 40% in 1970 and 60% by 1980.⁵⁵ This momentum continued with the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, in 1970 making six CAF specific recommendations pertaining to women's integration.⁵⁶ These recommendations, along with the SWINTER and CREW Trials the CAF initiated in response, will be examined later in this chapter.

By all accounts, the government of Canada and its citizens rarely see failure in CAF operations, and the organization is often counted on in the direst of situations to provide leadership and aid, both at home and abroad, with the CAF's assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic being the latest example. On the other hand, and perhaps more nefarious, the CAF's reluctance to change can be partially attributed to a group of like-minded people, in this case CAF leaders, either consciously or subconsciously protecting the organization that has allowed them to succeed and climb the ranks and power structure.⁵⁷ The CAF met this new societal pressure with resistance and continued to justify the inequitable treatment of women in the service for years.

The CAF posed questions and gender biased assumptions to support women's continued exclusion, such as a supposed lack of physical and emotional strength, as well as assumed fraternization and suppositions that women would be disturbing to unit

⁵⁵ Melissa Moyser, "Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical Report," Statistics Canada, 9 March 2017, last accessed 11 April 2021, Chart 1, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-503-x/2015001/article/14694/c-g/c-g01-eng.htm>

⁵⁶ Karen Davis, "From Ocean Ops to Combat Ops: A Short History of Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces," in *Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces*, ed. Karen D. Davis, Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007, 73.

⁵⁷ Herminia Ibarra, Nancy M. Carter, and Christine Silva, "Why Men Still Get More Promotions Than Women," *Harvard Business Review*, September 2010, last accessed 12 March 2021, <https://hbr.org/2010/09/why-men-still-get-more-promotions-than-women>

cohesion.⁵⁸ Because of the CAF's opposition to change, by those predominantly men in power, women have always been significantly under-represented,⁵⁹ and even more so as rank progresses.⁶⁰ In exploring theories, it begins to emerge that much of the change the CAF has undertaken with respect to the inclusion of women was the result of Canadian society acting as a forcing function.⁶¹ The forcing functions that have occurred through time placed the CAF in positions that imposed or pressured change. In addition to the Human Rights Tribunal on women, two other examples that stand out are Standard for Harassment and Racism Prevention (SHARP) training and Duty with Honour following the Somalia affair⁶² and Operation HONOUR following the Deschamps Report.⁶³ Change did not come easy and the CAF resisted at every juncture with significant negative consequences for those who may have benefitted the most from change, women.

Scott's Framework

To assess an organization's ability to change there are a number of tools available. Noted institutional analysis expert W. Richard Scott offers a three-pillar model that proves effective for use in evaluating CAF policy and practices throughout history. The

⁵⁸ Karen Davis, "From Ocean Ops to Combat Ops: A Short History of Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces," in *Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces*, ed. Karen D. Davis, Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007, 73.

⁵⁹ Gwyn Harries-Jenkins, "Institution to Occupation to Diversity: Gender in the Military," *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, National Defence, (Canada, 2004), 41.

⁶⁰ Beth J. Asch, Trey Miller, Alessandro Malchiodi, "A New Look at Gender and Minority Differences in Officer Career Progression in the Military," *Rand Corporation*, 2012, ix.

⁶¹ Madsen, Chris. *Another Kind of Justice: Canadian Military Law From Confederation to Somalia*. 9780774850629. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999, 14. Canadian Electronic Library/desLibris

⁶² Col Bernd Horn and Dr Bill Bently, *Forced to Change: Crisis and Reform in the Canadian Armed Forces*, Dundurn, Toronto, 2015.

⁶³ Maya Eichler, "Learning from the Deschamps Report: why military and Veteran researchers ought to pay attention to gender," *Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health*, 2(1) 2016, 5.

model offers some evidence toward the CAF's resolve, effort and approach toward institutional change. Presented in 1995, the three pillars of Scott's model are composed of the regulative, normative and cognitive-culture pillars. The model speaks to the relationship between the three dimensions and how they relate to organizational change.⁶⁴

The regulative element speaks to the legal and policy aspect of change. That is to say, the rules that are put in place to allow, force or otherwise bring about change.⁶⁵ In terms of the CAF and its integration of women, it is the policies, the rules and the laws put in place that allowed women to serve. As new rules and laws were brought forth, it forced change through regulative means.

The normative dimension is the moral and ethical aspect of an institution that recognizes the need to change. As Jennifer Palthe argues, "Normative theorists emphasize the role of social obligation and are likely to focus on informal structures rather than formal structures in organizational change."⁶⁶ The normative pillar is as much about 'appropriateness' than it is anything else. Rather than considering what is in one's best interest the central question is, "Given this situation, and my role within it, what is the appropriate behaviour for me to carry out?"⁶⁷ In the case of the CAF, the result in answering this question is members acting in accordance with the norms and values of the institution. This pillar could be considered a contributing factor to the CAF's inability

⁶⁴ Jennifer Palthe, "Regulative, Normative, and Cognitive Elements of Organizations: Implications for Managing Change," *Management and Organizational Studies*, (Vol 1 No.2), 2014, 60

⁶⁵ W. Richard Scott, *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests, and Identities*, 4th ed. (London: Sage, 2014), 59-60.

⁶⁶ Jennifer Palthe, "Regulative, Normative, and Cognitive Elements of Organizations: Implications for Managing Change," *Management and Organizational Studies*, (Vol 1 No.2), 2014, 60

⁶⁷ W. Richard Scott, *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests, and Identities*, 4th ed. (London: Sage, 2014), 65.

or difficulty in implementing cultural change. Meaning members accept the status quo with respect to the social values and norms, such as masculine traits, behaviours and practices. Members also embrace competition, including practices of the exclusion of marginalized members to come out on top. They do not necessarily understand or accept that a greater degree of change is necessary within the institution.

The final pillar in Scott's model is the cultural-cognitive pillar. This element focuses on cultural systems, beliefs and the assumptions of an organization.⁶⁸ Scott describes the cultural-cognitive pillar as, "The perceived correctness and soundness of the ideas underlying action."⁶⁹ With the cultural-cognitive element, change can occur because members truly believe in, support and want to be a part of the change.⁷⁰ To put the three pillars in simple terms the regulative element equates to the 'have to,' while the normative element is the 'ought to' and the culture-cognitive element is the 'want to' change.⁷¹

Finally, Scott speaks to the legitimacy of an institution. Essentially the legitimacy of an institution is the acceptance of the practices and contributions of the institution within the society in which it operates. When the society in which an institution operates no longer aligns with the institution, it creates an arena for change, whereby the society questions the legitimacy of the institution. Canadian society tends to progress quicker than that of the CAF. This delta between what is expected in society and that of the CAF

⁶⁸ Jennifer Palthe, "Regulative, Normative, and Cognitive Elements of Organizations: Implications for Managing Change," *Management and Organizational Studies*, (Vol 1 No.2), 2014, 61.

⁶⁹ W. Richard Scott, *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests, and Identities*, 4th ed. (London: Sage, 2014), 68.

⁷⁰ Jennifer Palthe, "Regulative, Normative, and Cognitive Elements of Organizations: Implications for Managing Change," *Management and Organizational Studies*, (Vol 1 No.2), 2014, 61.

⁷¹ Ibid, 61

creates a situation where the legitimacy of the CAF is questioned. This questioning or pressure mounted on the CAF by the society in which it operates then forces change through one or more of Scott's pillars. The change is either forced through regulative, accepted as right through the normative, or embraced as desired through the culture-cognitive.⁷²

Royal Commission on the Status of Women

One of the first occasions of Canadian society questioning the legitimacy of the CAF's exclusion of women came in 1970 with the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. In 1970 The Royal Commission on the Status of Women released a report with 167 recommendations.⁷³ Of the 167 recommendations, six were specific to the CAF.⁷⁴ The first being the opening of all trades to women. The second was the elimination of a policy that banned married women from enlisting. The third recommendation centered on making the length of a member's initial engagement the same, regardless of sex. Elimination of a release policy for pregnant women was the focus of the fourth recommendation. The fifth recommended an amendment to the CF Superannuation Act⁷⁵

⁷² W. Richard Scott, *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests, and Identities*, 4th ed. (London: Sage, 2014), 71-74

⁷³ Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada, *Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1970), 395.

⁷⁴ Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, "Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002), 654

⁷⁵ The Canadian Forces Superannuation Act prescribes the pay, pension and benefits for Canadian Forces members. Canadian Forces Superannuation Act (R.S.C., 1985, c. C-17)

to create equality for men and women. The final recommendation was to admit women to the country's military colleges.⁷⁶

The CAF assessed the recommendations and adopted some almost immediately, while others were not. Progress was made with respect to married women being permitted to serve, women with children were no longer forced to release and initial engagement and superannuation terms became the same for women and men.⁷⁷ This said, the transition was far from perfect and although the regulative structures were changed to allow women who were married and with children to serve, the changes did little to sway gender stereotypes and create cultural inclusion. Normative resistance to women's participation in the CAF meant that regulative changes failed to address social barriers and create the institutional desire to *want* to change. As much as society acted as a forcing function and questioned the legitimacy of the institution, the CAF never fully embraced change; it simply changed the rules.

A simple example of these legacy attitudes on how the CAF has failed to change culture persists today with the notion of pregnancy, motherhood and the ability for a woman to have a family. Comments surrounding the issue are still commonplace fifty years later. Men, but pre-dominantly women, are still on the receiving end of comments stemming from the days of pregnancy and family prohibition. From numerous first-hand accounts, it is not uncommon to hear phrases, particularly during moments when childcare and family commitments create inconveniences for supervisors, such as "If the

⁷⁶ Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, "Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002), 654

⁷⁷ Ibid, 654.

CAF wanted you to have a family they would have issued you one!” While perhaps having the intent of a joke, albeit inappropriate, it does show the deep-rooted systemic nature of how prevalent masculinist assumptions are in today’s CAF. Engaging in micro-aggressions designed to attack, humiliate or embarrass an individual for acts of caring and compassion, traits typically identified as feminine, are common.⁷⁸ If this sentiment persists more than fifty years removed, the backlash, harassment and discrimination that would have been in place at the time of change would have been unbearable. Despite being permitted to serve through policy change, the feeling of being welcome in the masculinized culture described above was absent and left many feeling like outsiders in the ‘boys club.’⁷⁹ The legal framework was built to allow participation in a system and culture built for men. Therefore, the work environment was entrenched by an institutional reluctance and resistance to inclusion.⁸⁰

The military colleges across Canada also met the forced changes with resistance. Having the option to adopt the same model as many other institutes of higher learning and allow full attendance of women at the colleges, the CAF resisted. This resistance rested on the argument of a need to adapt to the unique requirements of being both a military and higher learning institution. The CAF used this argument of complexity to prolong the admission of women into the military colleges for ten years.⁸¹ Further, in the ten years of delay the CAF did little to address the cultural pillar with respect to women

⁷⁸ National Defence, “Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity Plan (*DRAFT*),” (Canada 2020), 13.

⁷⁹ George B. Cunningham, Mindy E. Bergman and Kathi N. Miner, “Interpersonal Mistreatment of Women in the Workplace,” *Sex Roles* (2014) 71, 1

⁸⁰ Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, “Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration,” *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002), 655.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 655.

serving. Ten years later, when women finally attended class, the culture was still hostile and resistant to the acceptance of women in the CAF.

Similar barriers persist today at Canadian Forces College (CFC), where Brown concluded after a series of interviews, “CFC culture was determined to constitute a significant social barrier to the equal and equitable treatment of female, racialized, linguistic, and sexual and gender minorities in the learning environment.”⁸² Going on to note that there is, “a masculinist culture that privileges whiteness, the English language, heterosexuality, and combat warrior identities.”⁸³

Ten years after the 1970 Royal Commission on the Status of Women report, Kate Armstrong became one of the first women in a group of 32 cadets to begin studies at Royal Military College.⁸⁴ In a 2019 article penned for the *Toronto Star*, she described her experience. Entering the college with optimism for the future, she described the moment, “The stage seemed set for success. Canada’s Human Rights Charter and equality laws,” had been enacted at RMC to ensure that, “lady cadets [were] fully accepted.”⁸⁵ However, the moment of excitement was short-lived. Despite regulatory changes made allowing women to attend the college, there was a general distain among men for the women attending. Upon reflection, Armstrong had this to say about her time spent at the Royal Military College: “I wouldn’t complain about sexist jokes or casual misogyny. I would

⁸² Vanessa Brown, “Locating Feminist Progress in Professional Military Education,” *Atlantis Journal*, 41.2, (2020), 34.

⁸³ *Ibid*, 34.

⁸⁴ Kate Armstrong, “I was the first female cadet at Royal Military College. Decades later I realized I was never ‘one of the guys,’” *Toronto Star*, 26 May 2019, last accessed 22 Feb 2021, <https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/2019/05/26/i-was-the-first-female-cadet-at-royal-military-college-decades-later-i-realized-i-was-never-one-of-the-guys.html?rf>

⁸⁵ *Ibid*.

make fun of myself to let the guys know that I wasn't a threat to them."⁸⁶ There was also a competitive masculine culture present, where women were not only belittled, but were often not welcomed to participate. Armstrong describes the environment, "What I didn't realize then was that... the harder I worked and the more I tried to assimilate, the worse it got for me,"⁸⁷ highlighting the delicate balancing act she manoeuvred to survive.

Living in the militarized masculine culture, Armstrong was forced to walk a fine line of acceptance. She felt she had to perform to a higher standard than the men at the college to be recognized as good enough. Trying to fit, in she worked desperately to prove herself, finally coming to the realization that she would never belong: "The bar for achievement was set higher for women to prove our competence, but only within the proviso of not outshining our male peers. So every day we walked a tightrope over the jagged rocks of cultural bias against women."⁸⁸

The issue is not universal to Canada, Woodward and Winter also detail issues women faced in the British armed forces and the tone is remarkably similar, with women's acceptance facing a perceived distraction from the delivery of lethal force, due to the new obligations women bring with them.⁸⁹ Woodward and Winter go on to state, "there is scant evidence that the support and services required specifically for women personnel are of such expense and complexity that they undermine the ability of forces to do their job."⁹⁰ Women in the US faced similar barriers. Excluded from combat roles in

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Rachel Woodward and Trish Winter, "Sexing the Soldier: The Politics of Gender and the Contemporary British Army," Routledge, London and New York, 2007, 9-10.

⁹⁰ Rachel Woodward and Trish Winter, *Sexing the Soldier: The Politics of Gender and the Contemporary British Army*, Routledge, London and New York, 2007, 9-10.

the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks⁹¹ and seeing enlisted female sailors limited to serving on fewer than 50% of US naval ships as recently as 2013.⁹² The oppression of women serving in uniform is far greater than a Canada only problem. Other progressive nations are also suffering from similar barriers to women's inclusion.

Canadian Human Rights Act

In 1978 after some years of progress, mainly through regulative measures brought about by legal challenges, women were represented in 81 of 127 occupations in the CAF.⁹³ Although progress was made through the force of law, the CAF continued to question the utility of women serving. In 1978 the CAF, in anticipation of the Canadian Human Rights Act (CHRA) took its next step in attempting to limit the roles women could play in the CAF. The CAF, understanding the imminent release of the CHRA took the brash step of sending 4000 surveys to CAF members and their spouses. The CHRA would only allow the CAF to restrict employment of Women if it could, "base that restriction on bona fide requirements; that is, by demonstrating that women could not perform the job 'safely, efficiently and reliably.'"⁹⁴

It is important to note that the CAF took proactive steps to 'protect' the traditional composition of the institution. In doing so, the CAF made efforts, through the survey, to

⁹¹ Stephanie Szitanyi, "Violated Bodies, Combat Injuries and Sexual Assault in the U.S. Military" *Gender Trouble in the U.S. Military: Challenges to Regimes of Male Privilege*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan 2020), 77.

⁹² Ibid, 33.

⁹³ Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, "Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002), 655.

⁹⁴ Karen D. Davis, "From Ocean Ops to Combat Ops: A Short History of Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces," in *Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces*, ed. Karen D Davis (Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 74.

stifle change. The survey essentially attempted to demonstrate a woman's inability to, 'safely, efficiently and reliably,'⁹⁵ complete certain duties within the CAF. The study, published by the Canadian Forces Directorate of Personnel Development Studies, focused on the opinions of respondents with respect to women in combat roles and in isolated postings. The study found the majority of those polled supported women in aircrew roles. Conversely, most respondents believed women should not serve in the combat arms or on submarines. The survey was split on naval destroyers. With respect to serving in isolated posts, the survey was split with most believing women should serve in isolated posts, the exception being spouses, who thought otherwise. Results of the survey showed most respondents thought that women would negatively affect the operational effectiveness of combat units, with the one exception of the Air Force. The survey also showed that most believed women could serve in all support roles.⁹⁶

As was discussed earlier but must be emphasized, the CAF seemingly took pre-emptive steps to demonstrate that women were incapable of serving in what is typically described as the most masculine roles of the CAF, the combat arms. Further, the CAF began a process to further open the gap in the acceptance of women into these roles. The CAF in giving some 4000 people a voice, most of whom would have been biased toward the institution, offered a form of validation through consensus. The CAF, in anticipation of being ordered towards women's greater inclusion, attempted to pre-emptively send the message that 'women don't belong.' Although the CAF adhered to the regulatory

⁹⁵ Ibid. 74.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 74-75.

pressure placed upon it by society, there was no cultural desire on behalf of the CAF to accept women, especially into its most masculine domains.

Those who feel isolated or not welcome at work have been shown to display lower degrees of organizational commitment and engagement.⁹⁷ A recent Harvard Business Review study found employees who have a strong sense of belonging see a 56% increase in productivity and a 50% decrease in turnover risk,⁹⁸ providing evidence to CAF retention consequences when diverse groups of people feel unwelcome.

SWINTER Trials

Despite resistance from the CAF, the CHRA represented a significant step forward for women toward equality. That said, a statement embedded in the Act offered a mechanism the CAF attempted to exploit. The CHRA states, “any refusal, exclusion ... or preference in relation to any employment is established by an employer to be based on a bona fide occupational requirement,” is not a discriminatory practice.⁹⁹

The Servicewomen in Non-Traditional Environments and Roles (SWINTER) trials were a CAF response to the CHRA and originally intended to prove that the exclusion of women was an operational requirement. The SWINTER trials were conducted between 1979 and 1985. The goal of the trials was to determine the effectiveness of men versus women at the specified trial units. Also measured was the

⁹⁷ Evan w. Carr et al., “The Value of Belonging at Work,” *Harvard Business Review*, 16 December 2019, last accessed 5 April 2021, <https://hbr.org/2019/12/the-value-of-belonging-at-work>.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Canadian Human Rights Act (R.S.C., 1985, c. H-6), Part 1, para 15 (1) a, <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/h-6/page-2.html#docCont>.

effectiveness of groups of servicewomen versus servicemen versus integrated groups, the behavioural and sociological impacts of women's participation on the unit and families, the degree of public and ally acceptance, and the implications for resources due to women's participation.¹⁰⁰ The trials included Land, Sea, and Air units and saw women assigned to roles that they had previously been excluded from participating in. On the surface it seemed like the CAF was making progress toward inclusion, but in looking deeper, it appears the SWINTER Trials may have been an attempt for the CAF to control the degree of integration that was being imposed upon them. As Winslow and Dunn state, "the CF attempted to justify discrimination against women through the SWINTER trials."¹⁰¹ While the trials were marketed as an effort to study the effects of integrating women into non-traditional roles, the CAF spent much time and energy in assuring the trials were conducted in a manner to lead to the justification for the exclusion of women, rather than working towards inclusion in the spirit of the CHRA.¹⁰²

The SWINTER trials provided strong evidence that factors beyond women's performance and ability influenced male attitudes towards women.¹⁰³ The study showed that in actuality male attitudes needed to be considered more so than the actual abilities of servicewomen. The consequence of this need for a shift in male attitudes being, it would take more than simply inserting women into traditionally all male workplaces to achieve

¹⁰⁰ Karen D. Davis, "From Ocean Ops to Combat Ops: A Short History of Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces," in *Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces*, ed. Karen D Davis (Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 75.

¹⁰¹ Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, "Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002), 655.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 655.

¹⁰³ Karen D. Davis, "From Ocean Ops to Combat Ops: A Short History of Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces," in *Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces*, ed. Karen D Davis (Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 75.

integration. Leadership and education would be required to assure real and perceived issues could be overcome.¹⁰⁴

CREW Trials

In the wake of the SWINTER trials, and with increased pressure from the Minister of National Defence (MND), an additional study was completed. In 1987, the Combat Related Employment of Women (CREW) trials began with an aim for the Army and Navy to determine if there would be any degradation in operational effectiveness with the inclusion of women. The CREW trials took a turn in 1988 when another major step toward inclusion took place, again forced by pressure from outside the CAF. The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, after numerous complaints and resistance from the CAF, made a ruling that permitted women to serve in all roles and occupations within the CAF. It also determined that certain CAF policies were discriminatory. While the CAF agreed that some of the identified policies were discriminatory, it also argued against inclusion based on negative impacts to operational effectiveness. The tribunal pushed back, once again questioning the CAF's legitimacy, and gave the CAF ten years to implement the full integration of women into all CAF roles.¹⁰⁵ The CREW trials were scrapped in their intended form and the process continued with a new goal of being the initial steps and measures taken toward full integration.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 75.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 78.

¹⁰⁶ Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, "Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002), 658.

Finally in 1990, after twenty years of significant and near constant pressure from Canadian society, the CAF took steps to eliminate all restrictions on the participation of women in all occupations with only two exceptions, Ordained Roman Catholic Chaplains (for obvious reasons) and onboard submarines, as it was deemed too difficult to compensate for issues surrounding privacy.¹⁰⁷ One other major step the Human Rights Tribunal provided toward women's inclusion was the elimination of a minimum-male requirement.¹⁰⁸

While these regulative steps removed legal barriers to women's integration across roles and occupations in the CAF, cultural barriers persisted. The Human Rights Tribunal, expressing disappointment with CAF progress, noted in 1999 that women represented 1% of the Combat positions in 1989, ten years later that number had only increased to 3.1%, hardly a number representative of full integration.¹⁰⁹

CHAPTER 3

Current Issues (1990- present)

Circa 1990 saw a major shift in the attitudes of the CAF toward integrating women. Although far from perfect, many of the regulatory barriers previously restricting women from participation had been removed. The CAF's actual and perceived resistance to integration was less intense and with the two exceptions listed, women could now serve in all roles. Before these significant regulatory advancements, women's roles in the

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, "Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002), 659

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

CAF were not only limited, but also efforts from society to correct CAF inequalities were met with resistance. With each exterior pressure and attempt to change CAF culture toward greater equality, the CAF put up an equally aggressive defense as to why the advancement of women should not occur. As time progressed, particularly since 1990, the CAF as an institution seems to have taken a more active role in promoting inclusion, attempting to combat historical discriminations and perceptions and making strides to expand the roles and opportunities for women in the CAF. This said, and as previously mentioned, progress has not been perfect, there have been many mis-steps, and the CAF has largely approached change through ‘top-down’ regulative measures. As a result, women still face barriers related to the CAF’s male, masculine dominated culture.

This chapter will explore more recent and current issues surrounding inequality and the roles of women in the CAF. From widespread sexual misconduct to ridding the CAF of legacy attitudes towards women, focus will be on challenging the institution’s next steps toward inclusion. Time has passed since women and society had to fight for the right to simply wear the uniform. While the right, as provided by the law, now exists to wear the uniform, there are still many pieces missing in the equation toward full inclusion.

Within the CAF, and society to a lesser degree, there are still underlying sentiments and feelings of women not belonging in certain areas and women not being as capable as men are. While these sentiments have certainly improved in years that are more recent, it is important to explore how this attitude affects the women who serve, and what impacts these attitudinal impediments have on the institution. Have these systemic,

underlying attitudes created barriers to women's participation and resulted in retention issues? Has the institution suffered, and in what way? And finally, does the CAF, an institution that must be closely aligned to Canadian society to remain legitimate, risk losing legitimacy if it is unable to adapt to the culture changes society accepts as it values and norms?

Sandra Perron

In 1989 Private Heather Erxleben became the first female member of Canada's infantry.¹¹⁰ The following year Sandra Perron completed a similar feat and became the first female officer in Canada's infantry.¹¹¹ The two have been labeled as trailblazers and heroes in numerous literatures and government produced communications, but the transition into the world of the combat arms did not come easy.

Perron has told her story in detail and in more recent years has gone on to become an advocate to empower women in uniform.¹¹² Perron's time in uniform, particularly those years spent in the infantry, were difficult and rife with discrimination. Speaking to the point that inherent, deep-rooted sexism in the CAF was present, Perron endured constant comments and actions aimed directly at undermining her abilities as a soldier, solely because she was a woman. Even prior to her time in the infantry, Perron was a survivor of the CAF's masculine culture. A member of the CAF prior to infantry training,

¹¹⁰ Dr. Eva Abaogye, "Gender and Development: Issues, Trends and Definitions," *Global Citizen Digest*, Vol 1 Iss. 2, (2012), 13.

¹¹¹ Brian Bethune, "Canada's First Female Infantry Soldier Breaks Silence on Abuse," *Maclean's* (18 April 2017), last accessed 2 April 2021, <https://www.macleans.ca/culture/books/canadas-first-female-infantry-officer-breaks-silence-on-abuse/>

¹¹² <https://valourcanada.ca/military-history-library/sandra-perron/>

Perron was a survivor of sexual assault, and on another occasion had two men sleep outside her tent when two other men, “decided they wanted to move in.”¹¹³ This incident was brushed off as a ‘boys will be boys’ moment and the subject of jokes at the mess.¹¹⁴ Again, speaking to just how deep rooted and sexualized the masculine culture was.

From the moment Perron arrived for infantry officer training the harassment began, “the consistent harassment, the bullying, the rejection, the keeping information from me—the intention behind all that was hateful... That was worse than any physical demand, because the intent was to make me fail...That hurt more than anything.”¹¹⁵ Perron persisted and despite enduring abhorrent conduct perpetrated by her colleagues, she completed her training with outstanding results.¹¹⁶ Years later Perron reflected on her time in the infantry and why so many men treated her with such contempt:

I was breaking the barriers of their beloved male bastion. I was intruding upon the sanctity of a male-only combat unit, threatening their beliefs about what it meant to be a soldier...they let me know it relentlessly, until the only option I felt I had was to become a civilian once again.¹¹⁷

The question remains, while Canada was celebrating the progress made toward someday reaching equality, where was the CAF? The CAF had accepted the regulatory framework to allow women into the combat arms but had its actions created an environment of acceptance toward the undermining, insulting, harassment, and sexual

¹¹³ Sandra Perron, “Out Standing in the Field: A Memoir by Canada’s First Female Infantry Officer,” Cormorant Books, (Canada 2017), 44.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 44-45.

¹¹⁵ Brian Bethune, “Canada’s First Female Infantry Soldier Breaks Silence on Abuse,” *Maclean’s* (18 April 2017), last accessed 2 April 2021, <https://www.macleans.ca/culture/books/canadas-first-female-infantry-officer-breaks-silence-on-abuse/>

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Sandra Perron, “Out Standing in the Field: A Memoir by Canada’s First Female Infantry Officer,” Cormorant Books, (Canada 2017), 12.

assault of women? The CAF, leading up to this moment, had made attempt after attempt to limit the roles of women, especially in the combat arms, arguing that women would erode unit cohesion.¹¹⁸ Moreover, it would seem the CAF, through inaction in the cultural domain, might have maintained an enabling environment for the continued exclusion of women.

The CAF showed a lack of foresight, leadership, willingness and awareness to address what should have been identified as a vulnerable situation. CAF leaders were focused on, “assisting women to fit into the existing culture,”¹¹⁹ rather than looking internally at the masculine culture of the CAF.¹²⁰ In a study of traditional versus non-traditional workplaces, evidence shows that women in non-traditional workplaces face more social-sexual behaviour such as, “looks, gestures, required dating and required sex,” compared to those deemed more traditional roles for women.¹²¹ Women were regularly reminded that they were “a woman in a man’s job... perceived and treated differently.”¹²²

In the case of Canada’s first female combat officers, the CAF may have allowed the conduct to occur by taking no significant steps to account for negative cultural responses to a female being introduced, except accepting the regulative framework imposed on them. What the CAF failed to realize was, according to Davis, “sex

¹¹⁸ Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, “Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration,” *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002), 643.

¹¹⁹ Vanessa Brown and Alan Okros, “Dancing Around Gender: Changing Identity in Canada’s Post-Deschamp Military,” *Culture and the Soldier: Identities, Values, and Norms in Military Engagements*, UBC Press, 2019, 35.

¹²⁰ Vanessa Brown and Alan Okros, “Dancing Around Gender: Changing Identity in Canada’s Post-Deschamp Military,” *Culture and the Soldier: Identities, Values, and Norms in Military Engagements*, UBC Press, 2019, 35.

¹²¹ Karen D. Davis, “Organizational Environment and Turnover: Understanding Women’s Exit from the Canadian Forces,” *Thesis, Department of Sociology McGill University* (Montreal, 1994), 38.

¹²² *Ibid*, 39.

discrimination... is a built-in aspect of the organization which ‘does not disappear with the elimination of discriminatory rules.’”¹²³ Leadership did little to protect individuals put in vulnerable situations and as Perron describes, she was in no situation to complain, she felt she had to persevere and complete the training and could not be seen as a complainer.¹²⁴

In describing a disturbing event early in her career and explaining why she felt she couldn’t report the event she writes, “I feared I would look like this victimized person. And I didn’t want that. I wanted the progress I had made to pave the way for women to continue, so they couldn’t say, ‘See, it’s a failure. Women can’t be in combat arms.’”¹²⁵ On a more macro scale Perron reflected, “it wasn’t until I started writing this book in 2015 that I fully grasped the extent, to varying degrees, of the wrongness of all the transgressions.”¹²⁶

Sandra Perron’s story as the first female infantry officer is one example of the CAF’s failure to care for its people. The CAF failed to assess the extent to which its institutional culture resists change, privileges males as the dominant group, and can express this male dominance through the professional and often sexual dominance of women. The CAF failed to understand that solely changing the rules for women to participate in the environment, although a necessary first step, did not remove barriers to their integration and inclusion. Not adequately attending to militarized masculinities and

¹²³ Ibid, 38.

¹²⁴ Brian Bethune, “Canada’s First Female Infantry Soldier Breaks Silence on Abuse,” *Maclean’s* (18 April 2017), last accessed 2 April 2021, <https://www.macleans.ca/culture/books/canadas-first-female-infantry-officer-breaks-silence-on-abuse/>

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Sandra Perron, “Out Standing in the Field: A Memoir by Canada’s First Female Infantry Officer,” Cormorant Books, (Canada 2017), 60.

its masculine competitive culture was a critical error. This error may be considered a causal factor in placing the safety of the initial cadre of women in jeopardy.

Alex Auclair

A second ethnographic case, corroborated¹²⁷ and shockingly recent, that reaffirms the CAF's ignorance of its militarized masculine culture is that of Alex Auclair, a former member of CAF's combat arms and a student at Canada's Infantry School in 1997.¹²⁸ Auclair, in a recent interview with Global News, The West Block, revealed details on the abuses she suffered as a combat arms student in 1997.

Self described as young and naïve, Auclair had no family history of military service, "I didn't come from a military family, so I didn't know what I was getting into."¹²⁹ Auclair was one of two female students on a course of 200 undergoing officer training in the combat arms. Over the duration of her course, she was subjected to abuses that were not only enabled by her superior but also encouraged. The superior, a captain at the time and still serving today, has not yet faced repercussions for his actions but an investigation has begun because of the interview.¹³⁰ Auclair states the course officer, "made it very, very clear that women were not welcome."¹³¹ Auclair, now a public servant, is not ready to fully disclose the abuses she faced while on the course. She did however, detail how the course officer forced the two women to shower with their 198

¹²⁷ Mercedes Stephenson, Twitter retweet of corroborating tweet, 14 March 2021, accessed 16 March 2021.

¹²⁸ Mercedes Stephenson, "Interview of Alex Auclair" The West Block, Global News, 14 March 2021.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

male course mates. When asked why the women were forced to shower with men, Auclair gave the following response, “He was directing it because ‘why should we have any special privileges? Why should we have two minutes to shower before the men? It wasn’t right for the men.”¹³²

Although reluctant to share details, Auclair did offer, “I’m sure you can imagine when you’re two women and so many men, there’s no good ending.”¹³³ Again, the CAF failed to provide the necessities for these two women to succeed. They were made to feel unwelcome from superiors and then course mates were encouraged to do the same. The culture was such that Auclair felt she had nowhere to turn: “It’s really the feeling of having no protection,” she said, “there’s no protection and there’s no support, and knowing that the course staff want you gone.”¹³⁴ While skeptics may claim that this example is the case of one ‘bad apple’ instructor, the CAF did little more to prepare for women in the combat arms than permit their inclusion. The course officer certainly bears responsibility, as does the staff and infantry school, yet research on militarized masculinity in armed forces demonstrates that the root cause of similar violations can be attributed to an enabling masculinist culture. As Taber states, “Masculinization must be challenged as a route to successful military membership just as feminization must be challenged as a way to devalue and objectify people.”¹³⁵

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Nancy Taber, After Deschamp: Men, Masculinities, and the Canadian Armed Forces,” *Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health*, 4(1) 2018, 105.

Following the summer of 1997, Auclair and the other female student were given the opportunity to travel to Ottawa to speak with a CAF general officer about their experiences. After hearing their reports, Auclair summarizes that the general officer, “essentially told us to ‘shut our mouth’ if we wanted to be part of the military, if we wanted to have any type of a career we were going to shut our mouth and accept that this is what the institution is like, and we did.”¹³⁶ The experience left Auclair feeling hopeless in the institution, feeling unwelcome and unwanted. She states, “I think the hardest part is knowing there’s no where to turn to. There’s nobody who’s going to help you, nobody back then who believed you, when I had something to say.”¹³⁷

Indeed, armed forces have been criticized for creating a culture of silence around experiences of physical and sexual abuse, where survivors are routinely discouraged from reporting inappropriate behaviours.¹³⁸ The CAF, through all their litigation and resistance to accepting women in the forces had created the environment where it was accepted, and sometimes encouraged, for men in positions of power to act in a manner that ostracized, singled out, dissuaded and discouraged women from participating.¹³⁹ Despite the years that had passed since the introduction of women to the CAF and particularly the combat arms, very little had been done to address the CAF’s dominant culture of aggressive masculinity. Nancy Taber argues that, “masculinity is constructed and can therefore be

¹³⁶ Mercedes Stephenson, “Interview of Alex Auclair” The West Block, Global News, 14 March 2021.

¹³⁷ Mercedes Stephenson, “Interview of Alex Auclair” The West Block, Global News, 14 March 2021.

¹³⁸ Stephanie Szitanyi, “Violated Bodies, Combat Injuries and Sexual Assault in the U.S. Military” *Gender Trouble in the U.S. Military: Challenges to Regimes of Male Privilege*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan 2020), 97.

¹³⁹ Karen D. Davis, “From Ocean Ops to Combat Ops: A Short History of Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces,” in *Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces*, ed. Karen D Davis (Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007).

challenged,”¹⁴⁰ so it is possible to challenge the masculine and competitive culture in the CAF. According to Lopes, diminishing the value of the feminine in the military can, “pave a way for violence outside the military realm, such as sexual exploitation and abuse of women.”¹⁴¹ Thus, the CAF’s militarized masculine culture can also create insecurity for those the CAF is responsible for protecting. Thus, this culture is not only an impediment to women’s inclusion and protection within the CAF, but also a threat to women’s protection outside of it.

Maclean’s

Two of the Society of Professional Journalists guiding principles in their Code of Ethics: A Guide for Responsible Journalism are, “Be vigilant and courageous about holding those with power accountable. Give voice to the voiceless.”¹⁴² Second, “Recognize a special obligation to serve as watchdogs over public affairs and government. Seek to ensure that the public’s business is conducted in the open, and that public records are open to all.”¹⁴³

In what was considered a ‘bombshell’ series of articles, *Maclean’s* acted as the conscience of society and gave a voice to a number of women who felt the CAF failed them due to their experiences of sexual assault.

¹⁴⁰ Nancy Taber, “After Deschamps: Men, Masculinities, and the Canadian Armed Forces,” *Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health*, 4(1) 2018, 105.

¹⁴¹ Hayley Lopes, “Militarized Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations: An Obstacle to Gender Mainstreaming,” *Peace Build*, (March, 2011), 4.

¹⁴² Society of Professional Journalists, “SPJ Code of Ethics,” 6 Sept 2014, last accessed 22 March 2021, <https://www.spj.org/ethicscode.asp>.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

In the late 1990s, Canada was considered to have one of the most progressive societies in the world. In a 1998 U.S. News ranking, Canada placed second in the world for ‘Best Overall Country’ and number four in ‘Citizenship’¹⁴⁴ which is described as, “Countries that care about human rights, gender equality and religious freedom are the nations held up by academics, advocates and others as examples worth imitating.”¹⁴⁵ This said, the CAF was not progressing at the same pace as Canadian society.

The *Maclean’s* articles offered a significant blow to the CAF’s desired public image of a progressive organization of equality and increasing diversity. The article detailed a number of firsthand accounts of how prevalent and accepted sexual misconduct was within the CAF.¹⁴⁶ The series of articles acted as a watershed moment and gave the first large scale platform to women who had been afraid, ashamed, silenced or otherwise coerced into remaining silent since the full regulatory acceptance of women into all CAF roles (with the exception of submarines). The *Maclean’s* articles spoke to the problem of sexual assault but also hinted at the prevalence of mistreatment, demeaning and non-acceptance of women in the CAF. The articles gained significant traction both in society as well as in the institution, highlighting gender-based violence as a serious problem.

¹⁴⁴ “Overall Best Countries Ranking” *U.S. News and World Report*, last accessed 12 March 2021, <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/canada>.

¹⁴⁵ “Overall Best Countries Ranking,” *U.S. News and World Report*, last accessed 12 March 2021, <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/citizenship-rankings>.

¹⁴⁶ Jane O’Hara with Brenda Branswell, John Geddes, Shanda Deziel, Sharon Doyle Driedger and Stephanie Nolen, “Rape in the Military,” *Maclean’s Magazine* (25 May 1998), last accessed 4 April 2021, <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/rape-in-the-military/>; Jane O’Hara with Brian Bergman, John Geddes, Brenda Branswell, Shanda Deziel, and Stephanie Nolen, “Speaking out on Sexual Assault in the Military,” *Maclean’s Magazine* (1 June 1998), last accessed 4 April 2021 <https://www.macleans.ca/facebook-instant-articles/speaking-out-on-sexual-assault-in-the-military/>.

Unfortunately, it ultimately led to senior government and military officials to draw the conclusion that sexual misconduct is the product of a few ‘bad apples.’

Defence Minister, Art Eggleton went so far as to state, “there are always individual cases—there is going to be some poor behavior.”¹⁴⁷ He then followed up with a suggestion that the problem was no more serious than in Canadian society, “We don’t have a statistical basis that would indicate that in the Canadian Forces this occurs more than it might in other places.”¹⁴⁸ The CAF and its leaders were unwilling to accept that culture played a significant role in creating the environment that enabled the behaviour. Years later, it would be acknowledged that the CAF did have a serious problem with a sexualized culture,¹⁴⁹ and a sexualized culture does increase the risk for serious infractions.¹⁵⁰ By laying the blame at a few individuals and not elements of the CAF’s institutional culture, diverse members continued to try to succeed in an environment where differences are devalued and marginalized.

The CAF squandered the opportunity to investigate its culture and use the event as a catalyst for change and instead went about correcting behaviours of individual offenders. As a counterpoint, some female members of the CAF were frustrated with how *Maclean’s* framed sexual abuse as endemic in the CAF. This group received permission from the Chain of Command to speak up in defense of the institution. Some claimed they

¹⁴⁷ Jane O’Hara with Brenda Branswell, John Geddes, Shanda Deziel, Sharon Doyle Driedger and Stephanie Nolen, “Rape in the Military,” *Maclean’s Magazine* (25 May 1998), last accessed 4 April 2021, <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/rape-in-the-military/>

¹⁴⁸ Jane O’Hara with Brenda Branswell, John Geddes, Shanda Deziel, Sharon Doyle Driedger and Stephanie Nolen, “Rape in the Military,” *Maclean’s Magazine* (25 May 1998), last accessed 4 April 2021, <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/rape-in-the-military/>.

¹⁴⁹ Marie Deschamps, *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada), 27 March 2015, 74.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 20.

had not seen the abuse and resented comments suggesting sexual assault and harassment was rampant, while others suggested the situation was improving.¹⁵¹ The sheer number of women who had stepped forward with tales of abuse and the attached societal outrage would suggest the problem was as serious as *Maclean's* reported.

Once again, the CAF had done little in exploring and combating the masculine nature of the organization, and as a result, women continued to be abused, discriminated against, and marginalized systemically. With the *Maclean's* articles of 1998 the CAF was handed an excellent opportunity to initiate and expedite research and programs to advance culture change. At the very least, the exposé offered an opportunity to identify the cultural forms of discrimination that women faced in the institution. The climate that journalists exposed, and that society reprimanded, presented an opportunity that may not have otherwise been accepted by the predominately male regular members of the CAF, but it was squandered and the moment for action passed.

One of the reasons women suffered such discrimination in the early stages of their admittance into all CAF roles was that of masculinized ideals of leadership coupled with very few women in leadership roles. While women were now permitted in all roles across the CAF, many of these roles remained closely associated with masculine qualities. Women lacked a voice and were excluded from senior leadership positions. They occupied only the lowest ranks of both the officer and enlisted roles. In addition, there were no female role models to emulate, no mentors in the system to support, reward, and

¹⁵¹ Jane O'Hara with Brian Bergman, John Geddes, Brenda Branswell, Shanda Deziel, and Stephanie Nolen, "Speaking out on Sexual Assault in the Military," *Maclean's Magazine* (1 June 1998), last accessed 4 April 2021 <https://www.macleans.ca/facebook-instant-articles/speaking-out-on-sexual-assault-in-the-military/>.

promote women, rather leaders were more likely to reward those who looked and acted like them.

Had micro personnel policies, such as positive discrimination been used, the CAF may have capitalized on an opportunity to create such role models.¹⁵² While the climate pre-*Maclean's* may not have offered such an opportunity, post-*Maclean's* the CAF was well positioned to use such a policy to advance some of the best and brightest women in the service to act as the voice and role model for those who were to join the ranks behind them. Doing so may have also provided a vehicle to culture change, speeding up the process of greater parity between the influence of men and women on the institution.¹⁵³ The second and third order effects of this potential cultural change may have resulted in greater retention and recruitment. Considering the targeted recruiting campaign at the time, this would have been especially important.¹⁵⁴

The *Maclean's* articles highlighted survivor shaming and blaming, downplaying the significance of incidents and exposing cover-ups. The Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) at the time, Gen Maurice Baril, publicly disgusted with the events and unwanted attention went so far as to send a letter to members of the CAF:

We are not in the business of hurting, abusing, or exploiting people under our protection or in our custody. We are most definitely not in the business of hurting, abusing, or taking advantage of our own, especially our most vulnerable members and those with subordinate status or less power ... I will not allow the Canadian Forces to become a refuge or a training ground for thugs and brutes. Misconduct shall not be ignored. Apathy is

¹⁵² Gwyn Harries-Jenkins, "Institution to Occupation to Diversity: Gender in the Military Today," in *Challenge and Change in the Military: Gender and Diversity Issues*, ed. Franklin C. Pinch, Allister T. MacIntyre, Phyllis Browne, and Alan C. Okros (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2006), 40-42.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Madsen, Chris. *Another Kind of Justice: Canadian Military Law From Confederation to Somalia*. 9780774850629. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999. Canadian Electronic Library/desLibris. 153.

unacceptable. Everyone in a leadership or supervisory position has been given certain responsibilities for others and the necessary lawful authority to enforce the Code of Service Discipline. We must relearn the Code and use the authority we have been given.¹⁵⁵

The *Maclean's* articles did force the CAF to look inward. The articles were the first to shine a spotlight on the discriminatory and sexualized culture of the CAF, highlighted by the horrific details of sexual assault. It had many women reconsidering and second guessing thoughts on joining.¹⁵⁶ Further, an amendment to the National Defence Act that gave the military discretion in trying sexual assault cases in civil court or by court martial did little to quell concerns. Where previously all such cases were tried in civil court, now the military had discretion to try the accused themselves, the same institution serving and former members were now pointing fingers at and accusing of little to no survivor support and as having a general disdain for women serving in the first place.¹⁵⁷

The impact of the *Maclean's* articles was short lived and along with it the opportunity for the CAF to affect positive culture change. The terrorist events of 11 September 2001 and subsequent decade and a half of heavy CAF deployment to the Middle East over-shadowed the *Maclean's* articles and allowed the CAF to move on from what was a disastrous public relations decade. The narrative surrounding the CAF with the highly publicized Somalia incident and the shocking allegations of the *Maclean's* articles, both of which brought significant societal outrage, was changed to

¹⁵⁵ Madsen, Chris. *Another Kind of Justice: Canadian Military Law From Confederation to Somalia*. 9780774850629. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999. Canadian Electronic Library/desLibris, 152.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

that of an armed force fighting terrorism. Public opinion of CAF members was high during the war in Afghanistan¹⁵⁸ and the focus of culture change was put on the back burner during this seemingly prosperous moment in time for the institution. That is until 2014 when those wounds were once again exposed.

The Deschamps Report

2014 brought about another wave of media articles focused on sexual assault and misconduct in the CAF. Once again, the CAF was pressured through persistent journalism to face a problem that was seen as unacceptable by Canadian society. The media, once again acted as a voice for survivors and a mechanism for society to hold the CAF accountable for its divergent values and norms. The accusations the CAF faced were similar to those of the 1998 *Maclean's* articles, albeit in a Canadian climate that was nearly 20 years more progressive in their views toward women and equality.

Additionally, Canada was at the tail end of its commitment to the war in Afghanistan that saw soldiers, both men and women, fighting and dying. The visual was there, high profile cases of women fighting and sometimes dying in combat. Cases such as Captain Nicola Goddard, a woman of “firsts.”¹⁵⁹ The first woman to lead combat soldiers into combat, the first artillery officer to call in support fire since the Korean War

¹⁵⁸ Dylan Crimmins, “Canada’s Military Identity is Changing: Is Public Opinion Changing too?” *NATO Association of Canada*, 13 August 2013, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://natoassociation.ca/canadas-military-identity-is-changing-is-public-opinion-changing-too/>.

¹⁵⁹ “Nichola Goddard,” Valour Canada, <https://valourcanada.ca/military-history-library/nichola-goddard/>.

and, tragically, the first female combat soldier lost to enemy fire, all of which happened in the same battle.¹⁶⁰

Women were a part of the combat force, albeit a small percentage. The situation in many ways was perceived more seriously than in 1998. Society in general was far less accepting of inappropriate sexual behaviour and unprofessional conduct. Further, the CAF had appeared to turn a corner in its own attitudes toward women serving, openly acknowledging there was a systemic problem with the integration of women. Lieutenant General (retired) Christine Whitecross stated recently, “it takes a generation to affect cultural change and with that it takes 15 years to see the fruits of cultural change.”¹⁶¹ Whether you agree with the statement and its associated timeline or not, 15 years had passed since the 1998 *Maclean's* articles and the vast majority of men serving in the CAF had done so alongside some degree of female participation. The situation for women serving in the CAF in 2014 was far from perfect but it had improved from 1998.

The CAF was still a highly masculinized institution; sexual misconduct and harassment were still a problem. Society progressed at a pace faster than the CAF and was less accepting and less forgiving than it was in 1998, demonstrated by the rise of popularity of the #MeToo movement, starting in 2006.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Rose-Marie Barton interview of Christine Whitecross, embedded in Raisa Patel, “Canada's former top female officer on the shock, anger of military's sexual misconduct allegations,” CBC News, 14 March 2021, last accessed 4 April 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/christine-whitecross-military-sexual-misconduct-1.5949195>

¹⁶² Emily Shugerman, “Me Too: Why are women sharing stories of sexual assault and how did it start?” *Independent*, 17 Oct 2017, last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/me-too...>

Faced again with this seemingly perpetual issue of an overtly masculine culture that both advantages males and masculine traits enabling practices of sexual dominance,¹⁶³ the CAF commissioned retired Supreme Court Justice Marie Deschamps to conduct a review entitled the External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces (Deschamps Report).

In the words of Deschamps, “My report is the fruit of some intense work. I met over 700 people. I did an exhaustive and thorough study of policies, and I reviewed what are currently considered the best practices in the area of sexual harassment and assault.”¹⁶⁴ The major output of the report was 10 recommendations (Table 1). The CAF took some action, immediately accepting two recommendations outright and the remaining eight in principle.¹⁶⁵ However, what was particularly positive was the tone with which the CAF was approaching the situation.

¹⁶³ Report of the Standing Committee on National Defence, “Improving Diversity and Inclusion in the Canadian Armed Forces,” House of Commons, 42nd Parliament, 1st Session, June 2019, 57.

¹⁶⁴ Standing Committee on National Defence, House of Commons, 41st Parliament, 2nd Session, 25 May 2015, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/41-2/NDDN/meeting-60/evidence>

¹⁶⁵ “Military harassment report: 10 recommendations,” *CBC News*, 30 April 2015, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/military-harassment-report-10-recommendations-1.3055935>

Recommendation No. 1 Acknowledge that inappropriate sexual conduct is a serious problem that exists in the CAF and undertake to address it.
Recommendation No. 2 Establish a strategy to effect cultural change to eliminate the sexualized environment and to better integrate women, including by conducting a gender-based analysis of CAF policies.
Recommendation No. 3 Create an independent center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment outside of the CAF with the responsibility for receiving reports of inappropriate sexual conduct, as well as prevention, coordination and monitoring of training, victim support, monitoring of accountability, and research, and to act as a central authority for the collection of data.
Recommendation No. 4 Allow members to report incidents of sexual harassment and sexual assault to the center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment, or simply to request support services without the obligation to trigger a formal complaint process.
Recommendation No. 5 With the participation of the center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment: Develop a simple, broad definition of sexual harassment that effectively captures all dimensions of the member's relationship with the CAF. Develop a definition of adverse personal relationship that specifically addresses relationships between members of different rank, and creates a presumption of an adverse personal relationship where the individuals involved are of different rank, unless the relationship is properly disclosed. Define sexual assault in the policy as intentional, non-consensual touching of a sexual nature. Give guidance on the requirement for consent, including by addressing the impact on genuine consent of a number of factors, including intoxication, differences in rank, and the chain of command.
Recommendation No. 6 With the participation of the center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment, develop a unified policy approach to address inappropriate sexual conduct and include as many aspects as possible of inappropriate sexual conduct in a single policy using plain language.
Recommendation No. 7 Simplify the harassment process by: Directing formal complaints to COs acting as adjudicators in a grievance reducing emphasis on ADR.
Recommendation No. 8 Allow victims of sexual assault to request, with the support of the center for accountability sexual assault and harassment, transfer of the complaint to civilian authorities; provide information explaining the reasons when transfer is not effected.
Recommendation No. 9 Assign responsibility for providing, coordinating and monitoring victim support to the center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment, including the responsibility for advocating on behalf of victims in the complaint and investigation processes.
Recommendation No. 10 Assign to the center for accountability for sexual assault and harassment, in coordination with other CAF subject matter experts, responsibility for the development of the training curriculum, and the primary responsibility for monitoring training on matters related to inappropriate sexual conduct.

Table 1: External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces – Recommendations

Source: Marie Deschamps, External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada), 27 March 2015, Recommendations.

Unlike other moments in the past when Canadian society questioned the legitimacy of the CAF, forcing regulatory change to advance women's rights, in this case the CAF shelved previous tactics of sharp contradiction and resistance and seemed to embrace the notion that its culture needed changing, at least publicly.

Deschamps noted that the prevalence of sexual misconduct was the symptom of a deeper-rooted problem of culture.¹⁶⁶ Deschamps went so far as to note in the report, "the CAF needs to engage in broad-based cultural reform to change the underlying norms of conduct."¹⁶⁷ She went on to note that CAF culture and associated conduct was, "giving rise to pervasive low-level harassment, a hostile environment for women and LGBTQ members, and, in some cases, more serious and traumatic incidents of sexual assault."¹⁶⁸

The CAF, then reverted to historical practices. Not unlike the CDS Tweet on diversity, the CAF took a step backwards and halted progress. In a June 2015 interview with CBC's Peter Mansbridge then CDS, General Tom Lawson, made a comment first calling the situation a "terrible issue,"¹⁶⁹ but going on to attempt to provide a justification for inappropriate behaviour. He stated, "It would be a trite answer but it's because we are biologically wired in a certain way and there will be those who believe it is a reasonable thing to press themselves and their desires on others."¹⁷⁰ Lawson, with those words, received heavy criticism, seemingly insinuating, "men can't help but commit sexual

¹⁶⁶ Marie Deschamps, *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada), 27 March 2015, i.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, 86.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 86.

¹⁶⁹ Ishmael N. Daro, "Canada's top general Tom Lawson blames 'biological wiring' for sexual misconduct in the military," *National Post*, 17 June, 2015, ed 25 June 2015, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/gen-tom-lawson-biologically-wired-799584>

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

violence.”¹⁷¹ This brought the legitimacy of the CAF into question yet again, to the point that then Prime Minister Harper commented on Lawson’s remarks, calling them, “offensive, inappropriate [and] completely unacceptable.”¹⁷²

This, however, was not the only action Lawson took to undermine the Deschamps Report. Before the report was released to the public, Lawson went so far as to issue orders to twenty-one top ranking generals and military managers for the military to ignore a number of the recommendations. Despite the statement, “Sexual misconduct and harassment constitute abhorrent behaviours that have no place in the CAF,”¹⁷³ in Lawson’s orders he pre-emptively, by way of receiving an advance copy of the Deschamps Report, began to undermine the work completed. Lawson was replaced as CDS in July 2015, a culminating moment in the aftermath of the public outcry stemming from the Deschamps Report and the revelations of Lawson’s unacceptable comments and actions.

The CAF, adding to its long history of resisting cultural change and through the direction of its leadership had failed to move past the regulatory pillar of Scott’s model. Despite another opportunity, in the context of a far more progressive society, the CAF neglected to expedite social as well as regulative change. Instead, the CAF took secretive, pre-emptive steps to undermine institutional change, while at the same time attempting to explain away and accept sexual violence as inevitable within the institution.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² The Canadian Press, “PM condemns top general's comments on sexual harassment,” *Maclean's*, 17 June 2015, last accessed 11 April, 2021, <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/liberal-critic-calls-on-general-to-resign-after-harassment-comments/>

¹⁷³ James Cudmore, “Military's response to sexual misconduct report curtailed by general's orders,” CBC News, 13 May 2015, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/military-s-response-to-sexual-misconduct-report-curtailed-by-general-s-orders-1.3071386>

Deschamps stated any policy changes that were made would very likely not be effective without, “broad-scale cultural reform.”¹⁷⁴ This statement was particularly striking, more than 30 years overdue, but largely ignored. As explored earlier, women have been historically expected to assimilate into the CAF’s male dominated, masculine culture. According to Deschamps, many women, in an effort to cope and protect themselves in the militarized masculine culture of the CAF, would need to develop, “a thick skin,” and become, “desensitized” to discriminatory practices.¹⁷⁵

This sentiment of women needing to adjust to fit into the masculine culture becomes even more prevalent as women progress through the ranks to more senior levels. The Deschamps Report went so far as to acknowledge that higher ranking women, “adapt their own conduct and... adopt male attitudes in order to conform to the perceived social values of the organization.”¹⁷⁶ Indeed, diversity has been proven to create teams that are more effective and in general, diverse groups often perform better.¹⁷⁷ Yet, women who have adopted masculinist attitudes and conformed to masculine behaviours and practices have difficulty supporting and mentoring more junior women members.¹⁷⁸ Essentially, because of assimilative tendencies, the CAF was not achieving the diversity expected by integrating women. Instead, women were adjusting their behaviour to fall in line with the existing culture, a form of checking themselves at the door for survival. Adopting the

¹⁷⁴ Marie Deschamps, *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada), 27 March 2015, vii

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 15-16.

¹⁷⁶ Marie Deschamps, *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada), 27 March 2015, 16.

¹⁷⁷ Sheryl Sandberg with Nell Scovell, *Lean in: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*, (Alfred A Knopf, New York, 2013), 140.

¹⁷⁸ Marie Deschamps, *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada), 27 March 2015, 16.

same masculinized attitudes of their male counterparts helped the institution to maintain the existing culture. Further, this was becoming more and more prevalent as women progressed through the ranks. When women adapt to institutional culture through these types of coping mechanisms militarized masculinities are further normalized¹⁷⁹ and paints the current culture as acceptable and appropriate.

Operation HONOUR

If the 10 recommendations were the output of the Deschamps Report the military's response was Operation HONOUR, a detailed plan, "to eliminate sexual misconduct in the CAF."¹⁸⁰ With General Tom Lawson replaced by General Jonathan Vance as CDS in July 2015, Vance took quick steps to address the Deschamps Report. In August 2015, Vance issued Operation HONOUR, "the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) mission to prevent and address sexual misconduct within its ranks."¹⁸¹ With a vision for a CAF, "free of sexual misconduct where all are treated with dignity and respect."¹⁸²

Some of the early anecdotal results of Operation HONOUR tackled 'low hanging fruit.' The CAF focused on those actions that seemed easy to attack and easy to implement for quick policy victories. For example, almost overnight it became

¹⁷⁹ K. Davis, *Negotiating Gender in the Canadian Forces, 1970-1999*, Doctoral Thesis presented at RMCC, 2013, p. 66; K. Mackenzie Davey, *Women's Accounts of Organizational Politics as a Gendering Process*, 2008 Vol 15 Gender, Work and Organization, 650.

¹⁸⁰ "The Operation Honour Manual, Chapter 1," last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/services/benefits-military/conflict-misconduct/operation-honour/orders-policies-directives/operation-honour-manual/overview.html#1.1>

¹⁸¹ "About Operation Honour," Government of Canada, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/departement-national-defence/services/benefits-military/conflict-misconduct/operation-honour/orders-policies-directives/operation-honour-manual/overview.html#1.1>

¹⁸² Ibid.

unacceptable to make inappropriate jokes that either referenced sexuality or were sexist, a quick fix that spoke as much to decency as it did to large scale culture change. Even this simple change came with its own set of challenges. Comments such as the ‘kinder, gentler military’ or ‘this is not the same CAF my dad served in,’ began to circulate. What began as a well-intentioned initiative for a ‘quick win’ toward culture change manifested with resistance and further exposed deep-rooted and systemic sexism.

This became an issue for the CAF and the educational program that accompanied Operation HONOUR became ever more important. The messaging needed to be correct but also timely, efforts to have Operation HONOUR make a positive cultural difference were at risk. In media and public relations it is much easier to control the message when you are in front of it, but in this case the CAF was lagging behind. CAF members were changing the narrative from one of positive culture change, perverting the message and holding on to the deep-rooted masculine culture of the CAF. A simple example of such behaviour being the undermining of Operation HONOUR itself. CAF members began referring to the operation as, ‘up on her’ or ‘hop on her’ in a play on words.¹⁸³

Perhaps the largest and most controversial act by the CAF in their response to the Deschamps Report, was the decision to only partially accept recommendation number three, the establishment of an independent reporting centre. Deschamps warned that the independence of a reporting centre was “essential.”¹⁸⁴ While the CAF did establish the

¹⁸³ Nancy Taber, *The Canadian Armed Forces: battling between Operation HONOUR and Operation Hop on Her*. *Critical Military Studies*, 6, (2017).

¹⁸⁴ James Cudmore, “Military’s response to sexual misconduct report curtailed by general’s orders,” *CBC News*, 13 May 2015, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/military-s-response-to-sexual-misconduct-report-curtailed-by-general-s-orders-1.3071386>.

Sexual Misconduct Reporting Centre (SMRC), it was not completely independent.

Debate over the requirement for an independent reporting body has re-emerged, in the midst of two successive CDS's being investigated for sexually inappropriate behaviour and a slew of other allegations against top CAF officers. Allegations against some of the CAFs most senior leaders has also placed significant focus on culture change.

The CAF has a history of the Chain of Command becoming too involved in investigations.¹⁸⁵ This involvement when applied to cases of sexual misconduct has eroded trust in the military justice system. For instance, the CAF has a very poor conviction rate for sexual violence compared to the civilian system,¹⁸⁶ and distrust that military police investigations are independent from the Chain of Command has further eroded the trust of survivors.¹⁸⁷ Even if well intentioned, involvement of the chain of command gives the impression of supervisors looking out for perpetrators best interests. The recent case involving a Major General defending, and writing a character reference for court proceedings in defence of a convicted sexual offender is a clear example. The victim, a retired member, and her spouse, a member of the same chain of command as the convict, felt violated by the Major General's actions.¹⁸⁸ As Elaine Craig explains, "there is a broadly held perception among... lower ranks... that the chain of command condone

¹⁸⁵ Murray Brewster, "Military members who report sexual misconduct still say they're being dismissed by chain of command: report," *CBC News*, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/sexual-abuse-harassment-canadian-armed-forces-1.5771855>.

¹⁸⁶ Elaine Craig, "An Examination of How the Canadian Military's Legal System Responds to Sexual Assault" (2020) 43:1 Dal LJ 63, 72.

¹⁸⁷ Marie Deschamps, *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada), 27 March 2015, 32.

¹⁸⁸ Ashley Burke, "Commander of Special Forces apologizes for mishandling of military couple's sexual assault case," *CBC News*, 30 April 2021. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/commander-special-forces-peter-dawe-apologizes-open-letter-1.6008705>.

or ignore inappropriate sexual conduct—that allegations of sexual misconduct are disregarded or dismissed with little if any sanction for offenders.”¹⁸⁹

An independent reporting centre combined with the application of recommendation eight, allowing survivors of sexual assault the option to refer or transfer investigations to civilian authorities would have been a giant step toward transparency for the survivors of sexual assault, members of the CAF, and Canadian society. It is not important if the system was actually or perceived to be inadequate, the mere notion of its inadequacy was enough to deter complaints. Thus, establishing an external reporting body would have sent a message to all Canadians that the CAF takes this issue seriously, and in order to provide the best care for its members it would give up some level of control.¹⁹⁰

Operation HONOUR was a large step forward for the CAF, it seemed to be an occasion where CAF leadership openly, and transparently acknowledged a serious problem with culture. So much so that General Vance wrote to all CAF personnel:

Whether you are a leader, a subordinate or a peer, any form of harmful sexual behaviour undermines who we are, is a threat to morale, is a threat to operational readiness and is a threat to this institution. It stops now.¹⁹¹
A survey completed by Statistics Canada in 2016 found that 70% of CAF

members believed that Operation HONOUR would be modestly to extremely effective.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁹ Elaine Craig, "An Examination of How the Canadian Military's Legal System Responds to Sexual Assault" (2020) 43:1 Dal LJ 63, 64.

¹⁹⁰ Marie Deschamps, *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada), 27 March 2015, vii.

¹⁹¹ Leslie Young, "'It stops now': New defence chief promises to fight sexual misconduct in military," *Global News*, 23 July 2015, <https://globalnews.ca/news/2127506/it-stops-now-new-defence-chief-promises-to-fight-sexual-misconduct-in-military/>.

¹⁹² Adam Cotter, "Sexual Misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces," Statistics Canada, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-603-x/85-603-x2016001-eng.htm>

The CAF continued efforts with Operation HONOUR and despite limited success in reducing the instances of violations over the first two years, confidence in the operation grew. In 2018 despite only reducing the number of women personally targeted by sexualized or discriminatory behaviour from 31% to 28 % and instances of sexual assault from 4.8% to 4.1%, optimism for Operation HONOUR increased. In 2018, greater than 80% believed that the direction was at least a moderate success, with even greater gains for those who felt it was very or extremely likely that Operation HONOUR would be a success in the future.¹⁹³ The CAF had, for at least two years, seemed to make significant strides, albeit through regulative and top down directives aimed to force membership into compliance.

One particular statistic of concern at the two-year mark was that of sexual assault being committed by a supervisor or superior. Although improved, of women who experienced sexual assault, 49% reported the perpetrator as their supervisor in 2016¹⁹⁴ compared to 38% in 2018.¹⁹⁵ Men on the other hand reported their supervisor as the perpetrator 36% of the time 2016¹⁹⁶ and 34% of the time in 2018.¹⁹⁷ While improved, this research demonstrates a significant power imbalance between men and women in the

¹⁹³ Infographic, Survey on Sexual Misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force 2018: Key Trends since 2016, Statistic Canada, 2018.

¹⁹⁴ Adam Cotter, "Sexual Misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces," Statistics Canada, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-603-x/85-603-x2016001-eng.htm>.

¹⁹⁵ Chart 1: Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force and Primary Reserve members who were sexually assaulted in the past 12 months, by gender and selected characteristics of perpetrators, 2018, Statistic Canada, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190522/cg-a001-eng.htm>.

¹⁹⁶ Adam Cotter, "Sexual Misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces," Statistics Canada, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-603-x/85-603-x2016001-eng.htm>.

¹⁹⁷ Chart 1: Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force and Primary Reserve members who were sexually assaulted in the past 12 months, by gender and selected characteristics of perpetrators, 2018, Statistic Canada, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190522/cg-a001-eng.htm>.

workplace, especially considering women were more than 4 times more likely than men to be the survivors of sexual assault.¹⁹⁸

While the CAF has seen modest gains toward cultural change with Operation HONOUR, approaches to cultural change have largely used regulative means. Language in Operation HONOUR presents a positive attitude and tone toward a desire to change. Further, there seems to be greater buy-in toward inclusion and equity among the regular members of the CAF, lending to hope for future organizational change endeavours. To this end, the following sections will make some recommendations on how the CAF might progress further.

Recommendations

The CAF has continued to apply pressure toward cultural change and establish itself as a legitimate organization by working to regain trust with Canadian society. Recently the CAF reached a settlement in the highly anticipated Heyder Beattie Settlement Agreement. The agreement states that Canada and the Department of National Defence “fully acknowledge the harmful impact that sexual misconduct and discrimination has had on members of the Defence Team.”¹⁹⁹ The Heyder Beattie lawsuit has seen the federal government set aside \$900 million dollars to compensate current and former members of DND, CAF, and the defence team, the overwhelming majority of

¹⁹⁸ Infographic, Survey on Sexual Misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces Regular Force 2018: Key Trends since 2016, Statistic Canada, 2018.

¹⁹⁹ Heyder Beattie Final Settlement Agreement, Government of Canada, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/proactive-disclosure/supplementary-budget-b-2019-2020/supp-est-b-items/voted-appropriations/heyder-beattie.html>

claimants being women, for various forms of sexual misconduct they endured during their service.²⁰⁰

The CAF is currently at an inflection point. It has seen the downfall of a contingent of senior leaders, the scrapping of Operation HONOUR, despite the positive momentum it created, and the very public failures of General Vance to practice the standards set out in Operation HONOUR, despite representing himself as the direction's champion.²⁰¹ Society is outraged at the allegations coming to light against CAF's senior leaders and the media has been relentless in exposing cultural inequities in the organization. Yet, despite this darkness, there seems to be a light at the end of the tunnel for the CAF. This moment presents a very real opportunity for the CAF to finally make positive culture change.

Former Ombudsman, Gary Walbourne, recently testified that despite the current turmoil he is optimistic, "I have met lieutenant-colonels and brigadiers-generals across this country who are young, upcoming whippersnappers who are going to get it right. What we need to do is get some of the dinosaurs off the table."²⁰² Hinting that in order for positive change to occur much of the older generation, and outdated ways of thinking, and those who have embraced a masculinist and competitive culture and resisted change, need to move on. Further, the Deschamps report noted that the sexualized culture tends to be, "less evident among junior officers," as they have likely not been in the CAF long

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

²⁰¹ Murray Brewster, "Campaign to end sexual harassment in Canadian Armed Forces shut down," *CBC News*, 24 March 2021, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/operation-honour-closed-down-1.5962978>.

²⁰² Standing Committee on National Defence, House of Commons, 4rd Parliament, 2nd Session, 3 March 2021, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/43-2/NDDN/meeting-18/evidence>.

enough to, “internalize the culture,”²⁰³ offering hope the newest generation will be able to aid and not hinder positive culture change.

This said and as was stated earlier, the CAF moulds its young members, often men, into the masculinized culture, as a form of passage into manhood.²⁰⁴ The CAF requires a systematic approach to changing culture. A do nothing approach, that is to say hoping and planning on the next generation of progressive, enlightened youth to bring about change organically, is unrealistic,²⁰⁵ especially given the CAFs history of masculine initiation.

The remainder of this chapter will focus on recommendations for the CAF to employ moving forward with positive culture change. The recommendations range from heeding the advice of academics, those most knowledgeable on the issues and challenges facing culture change, to embracing intersectionality and making efforts to understand the layers of discrimination facing the various members of the CAF and society. It is not as simple a problem as answering the inequalities between man versus woman and white versus black. The CAF must also explore why such an unbalanced number of women choose to take on convergent roles, those occupations most closely associated with a civilian equivalent. The ramifications of this convergent tendency sees underrepresentation at the highest levels with women employed in these so called ‘pink ghettos.’ The CAF also must abandon its operational mindset when approaching culture

²⁰³ Marie Deschamps, *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada), 27 March 2015, 17.

²⁰⁴ Hayley Lopes, “Militarized Masculinity in Peacekeeping Operations: An Obstacle to Gender Mainstreaming,” *Peace Build*, (March, 2011), 2-3.

²⁰⁵ Alan Okros and Vanessa Brown, Academic Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence in support of the current study examining Diversity within the Canadian Armed Forces.

change. Culture change does not have an end state and the CAF cannot approach it as such. The CAF must look to become an agile institution, able to change and adapt as Canadian society does the same. Finally, the CAF must continue to be seen as a world leader. Despite all the criticism and recommendations made in this paper, the CAF is and is seen in the international community as a world leader with respect to women serving. This momentum and the associated progress can prove beneficial as the CAF continues its forward progress.

Academics

As has been demonstrated in recent parliamentary hearings on sexual misconduct, the status of women, and systemic racism in the CAF, academics have an important role to play in shaping institutional cultural change for three critical reasons, expertise, legitimacy and education. Culture change is hard work. Identifying that cultural change is necessary is a crucial first step, but actually doing the work toward cultural change takes a deep understanding of CAF regulations, norms, and cognitive-cultural composition. The CAF has proven repeatedly that military personnel are not experts in addressing and preventing sexual violence and discriminatory practices. Recent missteps have proven that the CAF is not capable of achieving cultural change on its own. To make the institutional transformations desired, the CAF requires help. Academics are now, more than ever, willing and interested in aiding the CAF through this tumultuous time. Whether it be through advisory panels, the Standing Committee on National Defence, the conduct of academic research and consultations, there are experts such as Alan Okros,

Vanessa Brown, Maya Eichler, Nancy Taber, Tammy George, and Karen Davis, among others,²⁰⁶ offering their assistance and advice on how the CAF can best begin to approach culture change. No matter the medium or method that academics offer, it is essential that the CAF leverage their expertise to help understand the root causes of the problem and not haphazardly chart its own path. It is time to heed the advice of experts and progress toward positive cultural change in a systematic and enduring way.

The second reason the CAF must employ the help of academics is legitimacy. The legitimacy of the CAF is once again being questioned by Canadian society. In order to restore the legitimacy of the CAF in the eyes of Canadian society it needs to take steps beyond words, beyond regulatory changes, and towards changes in the normative and cognitive-cultural pillars. As Palthe mentions, “this perspective... stresses the importance of achieving change that is internalized by organizational members and [is] culturally supported.”²⁰⁷ Canadian society, especially with the consecutive allegations against two CDSs, is at a point where a top-down approach will not be palatable. As credibility and confidence in the institution’s leadership to enact the change has been lost, employing the advice academics offer provides an opportunity for the CAF to regain some credibility and public confidence. The introduction of academics that do not answer to the CAF Chain of Command creates transparency and may provide novel culture strategies to address inequalities experienced by servicewomen.

²⁰⁶ Various literature from these named academics, and others, are cited throughout this paper and within the bibliography.

²⁰⁷ Jennifer Palthe, “Regulative, Normative, and Cognitive Elements of Organizations: Implications for Managing Change,” *Management and Organizational Studies*, (Vol 1 No.2), 2014, 61.

The third reason academics must be involved is education. The CAF has for years focused on military education pertaining to war fighting, sustaining operations and emerging geo-political trends and only recently begun to explore education on dignity and respect.²⁰⁸ While the ground-work has been laid through educational initiatives surrounding Operation HONOUR,²⁰⁹ Gender Based Analysis + and other tailored education, there is still much work to be done in educating CAF members on how to affect change in the institution. This could prove very difficult especially in an institution that has proven to be resistant to change and having a deeply engrained masculine culture. Strong leadership is necessary, but not gender or culture-blind leadership. Leaders must be educated on culture change and provided the tools and skill sets to facilitate organizational progress. But, different skills, tools, and competencies are required depending of the level of leadership in the chain of command. This leads to the question of what education is required within existing professional development and professional military education?

Each year the CAF brings together 120 identified ‘future leaders of the institution’ on the Joint Command and Staff Programme (JCSP). JCSP is a senior leadership programme where the majority of candidates graduate with a Masters in Defence Studies. Noting allegations of sexual misconduct against senior leaders, JCSP seems a logical place to begin learning about how leaders might go about being a part of the institutional solution for cultural change. Currently JCSP offers very little content on organizational

²⁰⁸ Vanessa Brown, “Locating Feminist Progress in Professional Military Education,” *Atlantis Journal*, 41.2, (2020), 30.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

change and leadership, with much more emphasis being placed on traditional war fighting teachings. Vanessa Brown comments on current initiatives:

initiatives to integrate [critical gender and cultural] perspectives in training and education have not been enough to create the institutionally desired critical thinking capacities in military members that are required to create culture change within the military and to facilitate gender equality domestically and internationally.²¹⁰

She notes that learning about gender and cultural perspectives should be a part of professional development and professional military education programmes across all developmental levels. Often, students of JCSP are considering gender and military culture for the first time, within an already masculinized learning environment, with its own social hierarchies and inequities.²¹¹

With the current re-energization of the need for cultural change, perhaps now is the time the CAF re-evaluates its priorities for what it will value in its future institutional leaders, and educate those individuals in a manner to be the drivers of change, rather than those who are capable of recognizing the need.

Intersectionality

If the CAF is truly interested in diversity, it has to look much further than man versus woman. While the CAF is currently made up of 16.1% women,²¹² there is a need to look at the diversity among women and how this relates to inclusion. The Canadian government has set a goal of 25.1% women representation by the year 2026.²¹³ An

²¹⁰ Vanessa Brown, "Locating Feminist Progress in Professional Military Education," *Atlantis Journal*, 41.2, (2020), 28.

²¹¹ Vanessa Brown, "Locating Feminist Progress in Professional Military Education," *Atlantis Journal*, 41.2, (2020), 31.

²¹² National Defence, "Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity Plan (*DRAFT*)," (Canada 2020), 10

²¹³ *Ibid*, 11.

optimistic goal for even the most hopeful of individuals. Some problems in reaching this goal are that representation of women has not been considered in relation to diversity in ethnicity, sexuality, age and so on. An understanding of how diverse women are represented in the CAF is required, or the CAF risks a significant portion of Canadian society being left out, feeling unwanted, or becoming uninterested in a CAF career.

Intersectionality is best explained as a layering of factors toward discrimination. To put it simply, race, class, gender, sexuality, family care responsibilities, among many other experiential and identity factors need to be considered.²¹⁴ In essence, one woman's experience is not the same as another; therefore, universal solutions for all women will not work. For example, a white upper-middle class woman may be discriminated against based on gender, but a black, lower-class, lesbian may be discriminated on the basis of gender, race, and economic status, especially in a masculinized culture such as the CAF. Thus, assessments of the layers of factors that lend to compounding discrimination is required. While the CAF has been extremely focused on achieving this 25.1% representation of women, the CAF must look deeper at what women are represented and recognize all intersecting factors that can lead to experiences of discrimination.

Although the COVID pandemic has taken its toll on women in the workforce, in 2014 women participated in the workforce at a rate of 82% compared to 91% of men and women made up 47% of Canada's workforce.²¹⁵ Looking deeper, Canadian society is

²¹⁴ Arica L. Coleman, "What's Intersectionality? Let These Scholars Explain the Theory and Its History," *Time*, 29 March 2019, last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://time.com/5560575/intersectionality-theory/>

²¹⁵ "The surge of women in the workforce," Statistics Canada, 17 May 2018, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2015009-eng.htm>

composed of 22.3% visible minorities²¹⁶ with this number expected to grow to 33% by 2031.²¹⁷ Additionally, 3% of Canadians identify as being gay or bisexual. The COVID pandemic has also taken a disproportional toll on gendered and racialized groups, as well as women. Either claiming employment or having them work in some of the most high-risk areas.²¹⁸ These factors demonstrate how much larger the problem of institutional discrimination is than man versus woman. If the CAF is to emerge beyond a white, male, masculine culture it must embrace exploring deeper than a man vs women mentality and look to solve the layers of discrimination that exist in society and are magnified within the masculine culture of the CAF.

Leadership, equity and inclusion expert, Golnaz Golnaragh, recently made comments speaking on BIWOC (Black, Indigenous and Women of Colour) and some of the challenges racialized women have faced:

diversity and inclusion conversations have gone only so far, and what we really need to do...is talk about equity and anti-racism, and really looking at our policies, practices, procedures...to really ask who's needs are being served? Who's at the table making those decisions? Whose voices are not there? And really starting to look at the structural and institutional practices more deeply.²¹⁹

²¹⁶ "Immigration and ethnocultural diversity statistics," Statistics Canada, 17 August, 2020, last accessed 10 April 2021, https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/subjects-start/immigration_and_ethnocultural_diversity

²¹⁷ "Minorities to rise significantly by 2031: StatsCan," *CBC News*, 9 March 2010, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/minorities-to-rise-significantly-by-2031-statscan-1.865985>

²¹⁸ Vanessa Brown, "The Gendered Division of Emotional Labour and Post-Pandemic Reconstruction," in *Military Psychology Response to Post-Pandemic Reconstruction*, Samir Rawat, Ole Boe, Andrzej Piotrowski Eds. Jaipur: Rawat Publications (2020), 125.

²¹⁹ Golnaz Golnaraghi, interviewed on CTV News, CTV Newsnet, 7 February 2021, last accessed, 11 March 2021, <https://www.ctvnews.ca/mobile/canada/time-will-tell-if-anti-racist-pledges-over-summer-will-close-gender-gap-expert-warns-1.5299308>.

Answering these questions, making efforts to find seats at these tables and audiences for these voices will certainly make headway in the CAF's challenge toward positive culture change.

Convergent Divergent Theory

Another idea that must be explored as a limiting factor to equity in the CAF is that of convergent and divergent theory. The theory indicates that women tend to participate in roles in the CAF that most closely align with roles similar to those found outside the institution (convergent). While those roles that are most closely aligned with traditional military, those of the combat arms and some naval positions tend to be less populated by women (divergent).²²⁰ If the Government of Canada is to one-day reach its goal of 25.1% representation of women, there needs to be opportunity for women to serve and thrive outside the so-called 'pink ghettos' of convergent roles. Additionally, if the CAF is to become a place where women can thrive in a career, there needs to be opportunity for them to succeed in all roles and at all levels. There needs to be women role models in all roles and occupations, women need to see that it is possible to succeed in all ranks and occupations and that their concerns are represented from the lowest to the highest levels.

There is a disproportionate number of men in the most senior roles of the CAF. These men tend to be from the roles of the most traditional masculine and combat oriented military occupations. Not only do women seem to gravitate to those positions most closely aligned with civilian life but also they are unable to progress to the highest

²²⁰ Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, "Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002), 643

levels of the institution because they have chosen these roles where career trajectories tend to be capped at lower ranks than those traditional roles. Women only make up 6%²²¹ of the officers in the combat arms, and of all the general officers wearing army uniforms, it took until 2016 for the CAF to name their first woman general officer from the combat arms.²²² Further, women make up 19.8% of the officer corps of the CAF, but at the highest levels of the institution, that of general officers, that number is nearly halved at 10.1 %.²²³ These numbers speak to the limited upward mobility women encounter in the CAF, where the numbers of women are disproportionately high at lower ranks.

While on the inverse side of the equation, many Royal Canadian Air Force roles, with the notable exception of pilots, currently have a greater representation of women than the CAF average of 16.1%.²²⁴ Seen as more cutting edge and modern, and convergent with societal roles than the other two services, the RCAF tends to be more attractive to women. Health care in the CAF also has a greater ratio of women comparative to the rest of the CAF, where women represent more than 50% of the medical and dental force.²²⁵ Clerical positions also comprise disproportionately high levels of women's representation.²²⁶ These roles, are more closely associated with feminine characteristics of care, support and compassion, and are very closely aligned with civilian

²²¹ National Defence, "Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity Plan (*DRAFT*)," (Canada 2020), Annex C 1/3.

²²² Meagan Campbell, "Meet the world's first female combat general," *Maclean's*, 3 June 2016, updated 12 April 2018, last accessed 11 April 2011, <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/jennie-carignan-will-be-the-first-female-general-from-the-combat-arms-trades/>.

²²³ National Defence, "Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity Plan (*DRAFT*)," (Canada 2020), Annex C 1/3.

²²⁴ National Defence, "Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity Plan (*DRAFT*)," (Canada 2020), Annex C 1/3.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid.

roles. Women's representation in these roles demonstrates the convergent nature of women's service in the CAF.

One implication of the so called, 'pink ghetto' is the limited opportunity for women to become institutional leaders. The roles of institutional leaders have traditionally been reserved for the CAF's more divergent roles. A review of CAF general officers confirms this to be true,²²⁷ with the bulk of CAF general officers coming from operational versus supporting occupations.

Operational mindset

The CAF must also let go of its traditional way of thinking when considering culture change. The CAF goes about planning military operations with decision points, and looking for centres of gravity for both friendly and enemy forces, defined as the 'thing' from which a nation or adversary draws power. Moreover, the Operational Planning Process demands a desired end state for operations.²²⁸ The CAF must pivot from this traditional, deeply engrained process when it comes to culture change. There is no defined end state for changing culture. Culture is fluid, and there is no state of too much inclusion, just as there is no occasion where the organization should stop striving toward a more inclusive environment. Many experts view diversity as a process rather than a measurable end state.²²⁹ As seen above, Canadian society will continue to become

²²⁷ Canada, Director Senior Appointments, Canadian Armed Forces, last accessed 21 April 2021.

²²⁸ Canadian Forces Joint Publication 5.0, The Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process (OPP) Change 2, B-GJ-005-500/FP-000, Government of Canada, 2008, 1-3.

²²⁹ Alan Okros and Vanessa Brown, Academic Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence in support of the current study examining Diversity within the Canadian Armed Forces, 3.

more diverse, for this reason the CAF must look into, as Okros and Brown state, “building institutional capacities to lead continuous change.”²³⁰

While CAF’s responsibility to implement the Employment Equity Act has meant setting goals for greater representation of Indigenous people, visible minorities and women,²³¹ the process of chasing these goals should not be the focus of diversity.²³² As was explained above, the benefits of diversity can be lost when diverse groups are forced to assimilate, accept and adjust their values to the norms and values of the institution.²³³ The CAF must continue to develop toward a culture of diverse thinking and worldviews, and look at perspectives larger than what currently dominates the CAF.²³⁴ It is more important that the CAF look to become an agile organization, flexible and open minded enough to adjust to the ever-changing make-up of what defines diversity in Canadian society. This will be far more important for the CAF to achieve positive culture change than chasing various ratios of diverse groups. While diverse group participation may be used as a quantitative marker in assessing CAF diversity, it cannot be the focus of culture change.

Initiatives

²³⁰ Ibid, 1.

²³¹ National Defence, “Canadian Armed Forces Employment Equity Plan (*DRAFT*),” (Canada 2020), 11.

²³² Alan Okros and Vanessa Brown, Academic Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence in support of the current study examining Diversity within the Canadian Armed Forces, 3-4.

²³³ Marie Deschamps, *External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces*, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada), 27 March 2015, 17.

²³⁴ Alan Okros and Vanessa Brown, Academic Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence in support of the current study examining Diversity within the Canadian Armed Forces, 4.

Another area where the CAF has an opportunity to improve culture is through involvement in programs such as the Elsie Initiative and Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. The Elsie initiative is a "multilateral pilot project that is developing and testing a combination of approaches to help overcome barriers and increase the meaningful participation of uniformed women in UN peace operations, with a focus on police and military roles."²³⁵ Canada is the launching nation of the UN initiative that is seeking to change the face of UN peacekeeping, which has only seen modest gains in female participation since 2015.²³⁶

Canada's National Action plan for Women, Peace and Security is Canada's response to the women, peace and security agenda, outlined in various UN Security Council Resolutions that calls on the international community to provide meaningful participation of women in peace and security operations.²³⁷ As of August 2020, Seventy-nine countries had established plans, including Canada.²³⁸ Canada's National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security is a whole of government approach led by Global Affairs Canada to ensure government activities align with broad commitments. Gender equality, empowerment of women and girls, respect for women and girl's human rights and

²³⁵Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations, Government of Canada, 3 September 2020, last accessed 11 April 2021, https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/gender_equality-egalite_des_genres/elsie_initiative-initiative_elsie.aspx?lang=eng

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, Women Peace and Security, Canada, 15 November 2017, last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/backgrounders/2017/11/15/women-peace-and-security>

²³⁸ Women, Peace and Security, Government of Canada, 18 August 2020, last accessed 11 April 2021, https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/gender_equality-egalite_des_genres/women_peace_security-femmes_paix_securite.aspx?lang=eng

inclusion and respect for dignity are some of the commitments Canada has with respect to the National Action Plan for Women, Peace and Security.²³⁹

Participation means much more for the CAF than simply pushing Canada's foreign policy abroad. Participation has the affect of instilling the values of each of these programs into our own members as they participate and promote equality, diversity, and the other components of the programs. In her study of Women, Peace and Security

Victoria Tate notes:

My research demonstrates that the CAF is at a critical juncture in the process of identifying and dismantling the hegemony of masculinity premised on violence and domination... It is through this "softening" of hegemonic masculinity that more egalitarian iterations of what it means to be a service member can begin to take hold.²⁴⁰

Although in the early stages, implementation of the Elsie Initiative and Women, Peace and Security have seen modest gains in eroding problematic forms of militarized masculinity as well as embracing and appreciating traits seen as feminine within militaries. Matthew Hurley's research shows small changes in gender norms within some militaries, he describes how these norms are being renegotiated, "through mutual respect, empathy and interdependence"; he also hinted at the fragility of these advancements as "embryonic, not hegemonic,"²⁴¹ indicating the need to nurture these cultural advancements or risk a relapse in troublesome military masculinities.²⁴²

²³⁹ Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, Government of Canada, https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_developpement-enjeux_developpement/gender_equality-egalite_des_genres/cnap_wps-pnac_fps.aspx?lang=eng

²⁴⁰ Victoria Tait, Regendering the Canadian Armed Forces, *Atlantis Journal*, 41.2, 2020, 11.

²⁴¹ Matthew Hurley quoted in Victoria Tait, Regendering the Canadian Armed Forces, *Atlantis Journal*, 41.2, 2020, 14.

²⁴² Victoria Tait, Regendering the Canadian Armed Forces, *Atlantis Journal*, 41.2, 2020, 14.

A common theme from the end of the Second World War through to the present has been the overt resistance and outward discrimination towards women in the CAF. This discrimination is rooted in military culture making gender inequality difficult to address. As Bruce Henderson, founder of the Boston Consulting Group, one of the most influential strategy consulting organizations in the world²⁴³ states, “Success in the past always becomes enshrined in the present by the over-valuation of the policies and attitudes which accompanied that success... These characteristics are deep-seated and difficult to change.”²⁴⁴

Change, and just as importantly, learning why change is required is an absolute necessity for organizations to progress. Organizations that fail to identify the need for change risk failure. As Jack Welch, former Chairman and CEO of General Electric, once said, “an organization’s ability to learn, and translate that learning into action rapidly, is the ultimate competitive advantage.”²⁴⁵ In the case of the CAF, an organization that should be a reflection of Canadian society, has at times struggled to remain legitimate within Canadian society. Further, due to the CAF’s resistance to change, even when change is forced upon it, once again has the CAF today at an inflection point. The CAF, as an institution, is once again drifting further and further away from where Canada is as a society, especially when focusing on culture. Like other times throughout history, the

²⁴³ “Great American Business Leaders of the 20th Century, Profile: Bruce D Henderson,” *Harvard Business School*, last accessed 10 April 2021, https://www.hbs.edu/leadership/20th-century-leaders/Pages/details.aspx?profile=bruce_d_henderson

²⁴⁴ Bruce D Henderson, “Why Change is so difficult,” *Boston Consulting Group*, 1 January 1968, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.bcg.com/en-ca/publications/1968/change-management-behavior-culture-why-change-is-so-difficult>

²⁴⁵ Greg Barnett, Building a learning organization from the ground up,” *The Predictive Index*, last accessed 10 April 2021, <https://www.predictiveindex.com/blog/building-a-learning-organization-from-the-ground...>

CAF requires outside pressure to act as a forcing mechanism compelling the CAF to make change.

CHAPTER 4

COVID

Historically the ‘ideal soldier’ has been depicted as a strong, white, masculine, male in the CAF. The CAF often uses images from the World Wars to promote military excellence, yet, these images almost exclusively depict white men. Consequently, when a member of the general public pictures the ‘typical’ military member they think of the these images and the prototypical war heroes portrayed in Hollywood movies. In particular, the ‘GI Joe’ image has been engrained into the cultural fabric of Western society.²⁴⁶ The COVID-19 context, however, has re-gendered the typical image of the hero. More often, feminized support roles are depicted as frontline roles in the fight against a deadly virus. Yet, roles such as nursing and ‘frontline’ work including retail services, are disproportionately represented by women and racialized members of society. These images may be useful for the CAF as it seeks to create a more inclusive workplace.

Women and COVID – Disproportionally Affected

COVID has taken an uneven toll across sub-groups of Canadian society where already marginalized members of society have been hit harder than others have. Dr Isaac Bogoch, a member of Ontario’s COVID Task Force, was recently quoted on CTV News

²⁴⁶ David Morgan, “Theatre of War: Combat, the Military, and Masculinities” In Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman (eds.), *Theorizing Masculinities*. (London: Sage Publishers, 1994), 165.

stating “COVID shut downs disproportionately affect women.”²⁴⁷ The gap between the impacts felt by men and women is vast. First women have been hit far harder than men with respect to employment. Women’s jobs are 1.8 times more vulnerable due to the crisis than that of men.²⁴⁸ Further, with COVID came a tremendous childcare burden placed on families. With no options to send children to childcare, women disproportionately bore a greater responsibility for domestic responsibilities than men. In addition, for those who were able to keep their jobs, there grew acute feelings of exhaustion, which affected women to a greater degree than men. For example, in a McKinsey and Lean In survey, “41% of senior-level men reported feeling exhausted, compared to 54% of senior-level women,”²⁴⁹ speaking again to the added burden placed on women outside work compared to men.

The Mental Toll of COVID

The mental toll associated with the virus has also been difficult. Many people feel they were being pulled in multiple directions and spread too thin. A general feeling of ‘I used to be a good parent and a good employee and now with the added stress of COVID I feel like I’m failing at both,’ has become common among professional women. So much

²⁴⁷ Isaac Bogoch, quoted on CTV News, CTV News network, 4 April 2021.

²⁴⁸ Anu Madgavkar, Olivia White, Mekala Krishnan, Deepa Mahajan, and Xavier Azcu, “COVID-19 and gender equality: Countering the regressive effects,” *McKinsey and Company*, 15 July 2020

²⁴⁹ Christine Ro, “Why this recession disproportionately affects women,” *BBC*, 26 October 2020, last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20201021-why-this-recession-disproportionately-affects-women>

so that the same McKinsey and Lean In study found one in four women had considered reducing or leaving paid work due to the pandemic.²⁵⁰ While women, largely, took on added household responsibilities brought about by the pandemic, they were already facing an uneven divide in household responsibilities.²⁵¹ With the additional responsibilities brought about by COVID-19, it becomes clearer why so many women are feeling burnt out, inadequate, and desperate. Women's mental health has also been disproportionately affected. A Centre for Addiction and Mental Health with Delvinia survey conducted as schools were re-opening in September revealed women had higher levels of anxiety and loneliness than men, with nearly one quarter reporting moderate to severe anxiety.²⁵²

COVID and Healthcare workers

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Javier Cerrato and Eva Cifre, "Gender Inequality in Household Chores and Work-Family Conflict," *Frontiers in Psychology*, Vol 9, article 1330, 2018, 3.

²⁵² Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, "COVID-19 pandemic adversely affecting mental health of women and people with children," Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 14 Oct 2020, last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://www.camh.ca/en/camh-news-and-stories/covid-19-pandemic-adversely-affecting-mental-health-of-women-and-people-with-children>

One group that have been hit particularly hard is healthcare. Women make up 79% of Canada's healthcare workforce,²⁵³ and that number goes up even more when looking at the subgroup of nurses, where women represent 91%.²⁵⁴

As has been discussed throughout this paper, society's traditional image of what constitutes a warrior is that of a white, muscular, masculine male. Hollywood has done nothing to dampen this notion, continually using the same image in major feature pictures to portray what Western society has normalized as a war fighting hero. Further, until recently the term "frontline" had been almost exclusively reserved for the profession of arms. To be even more specific, the term was generally reserved for soldiers literally fighting on the frontlines of battle, a role specific to the combat arms. Soldiers of the combat arms tend to make up the core of what society viewed as a typical war fighting man before COVID-19, but perhaps a new image of a what constitutes a frontline warrior can play a role in reversing or creating some level of equality in the CAF.

As mentioned, the term 'frontline warrior,' until recently, had been nearly exclusively used in relation to the combat soldier, the white, masculine male. However, COVID has seen the term pivot, and what used to be reserved for the societal and Hollywood image of a soldier is now widely recognized as those at the leading edge in the fight against COVID-19. That is to say the doctors, nurses, and other healthcare workers who come into contact with the virus in the course of their employment. COVID

²⁵³ Diane Galarneau, "Health Care Professionals," Perspectives on Labour and Income: The Online Edition, Statistic Canada, December 2003, last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-001-x/01203/6699-eng.html>

²⁵⁴ Nursing Statistics, Canadian Nursing Association, 2019, last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://www.cna-aiic.ca/en/nursing-practice/the-practice-of-nursing/health-human-resources/nursing...>

has caused a change in what society now views as a ‘frontline warrior,’ and the media references the term daily. While the traditional image described above is still relevant, just as relevant is the image of an exhausted healthcare professional, typically a woman, worn out, and physically exhausted from long hours and the expectation of working overtime. Further, it is acknowledged that healthcare workers are at a higher risk of mental illness when dealing with COVID-19 challenges.²⁵⁵ Due to the demands of the virus, health practitioners are reporting being mentally drained from both the physical toll that working has caused but also the stress of dealing with such a dire situation coupled with a home life to manage.²⁵⁶ The media portrayed image of this new ‘frontline’ warrior has been largely feminine, and immensely appreciated. Further to add to this notion, the CAF yielded a great deal of public support for its actions in rescuing long term care facilities in Ontario and Quebec and its support to the Canadian Government with vaccine roll-out.

Can a new Definition of “Frontline” help in CAF Culture Change

At a time when public perception of this new age ‘frontline’ warrior is high, it is time to question how the CAF can adapt and manoeuvre to take advantage toward its own image and cultural change. The current pandemic work of health care professionals has proven women can handle immensely stressful work, both physically and mentally, and

²⁵⁵ Neil Greenberg, Mary Docherty, Sam Gnanapragasam and Simon Wessely, “Managing mental health challenges faced by healthcare workers during covid-19 pandemic,” *The BMJ*, 26 March 2020, 2.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

with traumatic consequences, with over 23,000 Canadian deaths.²⁵⁷ The question remains, is it possible for the CAF to take advantage of this new societal image of a frontline worker to stimulate positive change for the institution?

Acting CDS, Lieutenant-General Wayne Eyre recently stated, “Parts of our culture are exclusionary. They’re harmful.”²⁵⁸ The CAF seems to be at a point where meaningful change may be possible, but like all windows of opportunity the CAF must act before it closes.

The first such action the CAF must make is to highlight the caring, compassion, selflessness and other traits their members displayed during the pandemic.²⁵⁹ Highlighting such traits be them in a man or woman, may have the affect of placing value on these traditionally de-valued traits when compared to those that are more masculine. Rhea Hoskin’s recent work focuses on understanding how attitudes contribute to the de-valuation of femininity and in her words, how this could encourage, “re-valuing of femininity as a strategy to combat misogyny, sexism, homophobia, transmisogyny, and rape culture.”²⁶⁰ It is through efforts like this that the CAF may be able to overcome some of the barriers to positive culture change.

²⁵⁷ Sean Boynton, “Canada shatters single-day COVID-19 case record with over 9K new infections,” *Global News*, 11 April 2021, last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://globalnews.ca/news/7750053/canada-covid-cases-april-9-2021/>

²⁵⁸ Murray Brewster, “Parts of Canada’s military culture permit ‘racism, discrimination, harassment,’ says acting chief,” *CBC News*, 11 March 2021, last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/wayne-eyre-sexual-misconduct-canadian-armed-forces-1.5946717>

²⁵⁹ Vanessa Brown, “The Gendered Division of Emotional Labour and Post-Pandemic Reconstruction,” in *Military Psychology Response to Post-Pandemic Reconstruction*, Samir Rawat, Ole Boe, Andrzej Piotrowski Eds. Jaipur: Rawat Publications (2020), 127.

²⁶⁰ Rhea Hoskins quoted in Phil Gaudreau, “Valuing femininity,” *Queen’s Gazette*, 2 September 2019, last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://www.queensu.ca/gazette/stories/valuing-femininity>.

The final recommendation is to embrace social movements and public opinion. There is no question the public perception of women in these newly defined frontline roles is at an all time high. Further, the tolerance for those who are seen or perceived to abuse their power with respect to women in the workplace is at an all time low. One of the most powerful images of how the current COVID environment can change perceptions of women serving in frontline roles can be found in a recently sold piece of artwork. Banksy, one of this generation's most successful and influential artists, recently had a piece sell at auction that sums up how quickly public perception can change. The image, titled *Game Changer* (Figure 1), which sold for \$29M USD, shows a young boy playing, beside him is a basket of toys where you can see some of the world's most well known superheroes, very much in the same image of how society and Hollywood traditionally portray soldiers. The young boy has his basket of super-heroes set aside and instead of playing with one of his more masculine super heroes he has, in his hand, a caped female nurse with arm outstretched, suggesting she is on a mission, a new age version of what constitutes a super-hero.²⁶¹

²⁶¹ BBC News, "Covid: Banksy painting for NHS charity sells for £14.4m," *BBC News*, 23 March 2011, last accessed 11 April 2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-hampshire-56497104>.



Image 1: Game Changer, Banksy.

Source: BBC News, "Covid: Banksy painting for NHS charity sells for £14.4m," BBC News, 23 March 2021.

CONCLUSION

The CAF's masculine culture has had lasting ramifications on the institution and particularly the women who serve in it. The oppression women face inside the militarized masculine culture, with conflict between the masculine and feminine, embracing some feminine traits as complementary but placing significant value on aggression, dominance and assertiveness, while molding young men into 'manly warriors',²⁶² is vast. Moreover, masculine competition culture plays a significant factor in the oppression of women in the CAF. Whether it be its winner-take-all nature or the biases of supervisors to promote

²⁶² Rebecca Tapscott, "Militarized masculinity and the paradox of restraint: mechanisms of social control under modern authoritarianism," *International Affairs* 96, (April, 2020), 1569.

and favour those who look and act like them, in either case or compounded, women are disadvantaged.

When the norms and values of the CAF deviate from those of Canadian society, the CAF's legitimacy is questioned and when legitimacy is questioned a correction is required. Women's integration in the CAF, when examined through the lens of Scott's institutional analysis framework, has relied heavily on regulatory change. The first occurrences detailed were the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and then the Canadian Human Rights Act. The CAF relied solely on legislation when introducing women to the armed services.²⁶³ Although legislation was introduced, the CAF took numerous steps to resist and push back against the changes. Through surveys, the SWINTER and CREW Trials the CAF took steps to discriminate against women and limit their roles. The arguments toward discrimination focused on operational effectiveness and unit cohesion, and how women serving would negatively affect both. These arguments were disproven and instead it was shown that it would take leadership, education and a shift in masculine attitudes to assure real and perceived issues would be overcome.²⁶⁴ However, none of these recommendations were implemented and the CAF continued to employ women with a 'add and stir' attitude.

As time passed and the CAF was forced to accept women into its academic institutions and the combat arms the CAF continued to rely strictly on regulation for their

²⁶³ W. Richard Scott, *Institutions and Organizations: Ideas, Interests, and Identities*, 4th ed. (London: Sage, 2014).

²⁶⁴ Karen D. Davis, "From Ocean Ops to Combat Ops: A Short History of Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces," in *Women and Leadership in the Canadian Forces*, ed. Karen D Davis (Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007), 75.

introduction. Little was done to prepare for women to serve and as a result women suffered.

The ethnographic stories of Kate Armstrong's experience at RMC and those of Sandra Perron and Alex Auclair during combat arms training detail some of the lived experiences with barriers, discrimination and outward unacceptance that women experienced.²⁶⁵ The CAF allowed this environment to persist until *Maclean's* published a series of stories that had Canadian society questioning the legitimacy of the CAF. The *Maclean's* articles detailed abuses and power imbalances that were allowed to thrive in its masculinized culture. In this instance the CAF had an opportunity to use the negative publicity and attention to implement change. Instead, it relied on the 'bad apple' theory,²⁶⁶ laying the blame on a few bad apples rather than recognizing a culture that fostered and affirmed masculine attitudes and encouraged the behaviour.

The CAF missing the opportunity for culture change following the *Maclean's* articles once again found themselves in a similar situation as operations in Afghanistan were ending more than fifteen years later. Canadian society, one of the most progressive in the world, once again questioned the CAFs legitimacy. This questioning led to the Deschamps Report. But even in the seemingly progressive Canadian culture of 2015 the

²⁶⁵ Mercedes Stephenson, "Interview of Alex Auclair" The West Block, Global News, 14 March 2021.; Kate Armstrong, "I was the first female cadet at Royal Military College. Decades later I realized I was never 'one of the guys,'" *Toronto Star*, 26 May 2019, last accessed 22 Feb 2021, <https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/2019/05/26/i-was-the-first-female-cadet-at-royal-military-college-decades-later-i-realized-i-was-never-one-of-the-guys.html?rf>; Brian Bethune, "Canada's First Female Infantry Soldier Breaks Silence on Abuse," *Maclean's* (18 April 2017), last accessed 2 April 2021, <https://www.macleans.ca/culture/books/canadas-first-female-infantry-officer-breaks-silence-on-abuse/>

²⁶⁶ Jane O'Hara with Brenda Branswell, John Geddes, Shanda Deziel, Sharon Doyle Driedger and Stephanie Nolen, "Rape in the Military," *Maclean's Magazine* (25 May 1998), last accessed 4 April 2021, <https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/rape-in-the-military/>

CAF, specifically the highest levels of CAF leadership, made attempts to undermine and limit the scope of the Deschamps Report's recommendations. Masculine attitudes persisted and ultimately ended with a new CDS appointed.

Operation HONOUR began with great intentions but again was a regulative measure taken by the CAF to correct a deviation between Canadian Society and the CAF. The rhetoric surrounding the program was positive and Operation HONOUR did produce some positive gains but it also encountered resistance. A masculine culture undermined the operation's good intentions and encountered old attitudes that manifested with comments such as "up on her" and "hop on her." Operation HONOUR also struggled to shed the long-standing mistrust in the masculinized Chain of Command that was perceived to look out for the best interests of the perpetrator, and not necessarily the survivor.

Should the CAF want to implement systemic cultural change and create an environment where the differences between all persons are respected, valued and desired, which today appears to be the case, there needs to be significant change. The CAF cannot simply chase percentages of representation²⁶⁷ and expect these diverse populations to check their identities at the door and assimilate into the white, male masculine culture. Certain steps must be taken. First, academics must be engaged to help. Their expertise in culture change, their ability to educate and the legitimacy they can bring to the CAF as outsiders, offers a distinct opportunity for the CAF to effect change. This said, their

²⁶⁷ Alan Okros and Vanessa Brown, Academic Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on National Defence in support of the current study examining Diversity within the Canadian Armed Forces, 9.

advice must be heeded and not discarded in favour of the CAF's next regulative attempt at change.

The CAF will also need to change its norms and ways of thinking. An operational organization by nature, the CAF cannot address culture change as having an end state. Canadian culture will continue to change as will the layers of discrimination certain segments of society experience. The CAF will be required to change with society and become an environment where all of Canadian society are valued. The CAF must become agile enough to adapt to these changes and recognize there will never be an end state of 'enough diversity.'

Convergent and Divergent roles must also be addressed.²⁶⁸ Women need to be seen and heard in all roles not just those that align closely with civilian equivalents. The institution is largely led by those who occupy divergent roles. If women are to have a voice, their concerns heard and role models to follow, the issue of 'pink ghettos' needs to be addressed.

The CAF needs to continue to embrace the positive steps that have been taken on the international stage.²⁶⁹ These initiatives not only offer an opportunity to push foreign policy but give opportunity for CAF members to embrace institutional and domestic culture change through actions abroad.

Finally, COVID has wreaked havoc on the world and with it has re-defined what it means to be a frontline warrior. No longer does an image of a gun-toting soldier come

²⁶⁸ Donna Winslow and Jason Dunn, "Women in the Canadian Forces: Between Legal and Social Integration," *Current Sociology* 50, no. 5 (September 2002).

²⁶⁹ Victoria Tait, "Regendering the Canadian Armed Forces," *Atlantis Journal*, Issue 41.2, 2020, 9.

to mind when Canadians hear the term ‘frontline.’ Instead, the term has become synonymous with those required to keep our country functioning during a global pandemic. A particularly strong image is that of an exhausted healthcare worker, compassionate, and caring. The CAF, with this distinctly feminine image, has an opportunity to help expedite its own culture change. By highlighting the caring and compassion displayed by CAF members during COVID operations, those traits traditionally feminine, the CAF can advance a more inclusionary vision. Further, the social aspect and societal acceptance of this image cannot be understated. Caring and compassion belongs on the frontlines.

Canadian society has questioned the CAF’s legitimacy on numerous occasions and is once again offering the CAF an opportunity to change. Successive CDS’ accused of sexual misconduct, and other detailed accounts of power imbalance within a hyper-masculine culture present an opportunity to implement positive change. The CAF cannot revert to its historical tendencies and implement regulatory change. The CAF is now at a point where the institution and its membership truly believe in the need for culture change, specifically normative and cognitive-culture change. The CAF must take steps to ensure the change is real and lasting or risk once again having its legitimacy questioned on its ability to become a diverse institution where all, including women of all backgrounds, are welcome.

When starting this paper I had very limited experience in the CAF with culture and culture change. Outside of attending the mandatory briefings and training, my exposure to culture had been somewhat pedestrian. A white, heterosexual, athletic male, I

had never contemplated the culture that has benefitted me was so exclusionary. This said, as the father of three young girls, and my spouse and I making up both halves of a military service couple, I did have a slightly different perspective than most in my situation. I had some insight into the barriers my wife has faced. In the weeks and months leading up to this paper and particularly in the middle of my research, when so many of the accounts of abuse and barriers to women serving were being exposed, I began to ask myself, would this be a safe environment for my children when the time came for them to consider what paths their lives would take? I hope so, but feel that is the point at where I am at today, hope.

I Hope that the momentum gained toward a more inclusive and diverse workplace will be a catalyst to real, systemic, institutional culture change. Despite the turmoil, the CAF has an opportunity. An opportunity to leverage all the hurt and pain that it has been responsible for, either fully or partially, and to use it under the heat and light of the current moment. There are experts willing to help and their contributions ought to be accepted. Yet, meaningful change will take more than the efforts of experts, it will take me and the many other CAF members like me who want to get it right by asking for help. We have seen what does not work, we want to get it right, but we are not sure of the path. We need help getting there but we cannot be bystanders in the process, we have to be part of the solution.

“We know this about all social movements, and all people who are marginalised, whether by race or gender, religion—it is not just their job to be fighting oppression. We need everyone else as well.”

-Megan Rapinoe, Captain, U.S. Womens National Soccer Team

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