Women, Peace, and Security: A Transformative Agenda?

Sara E. Davies and Jacqui True

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Edited by Sara E. Davies and Jacqui True

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Abstract and Keywords

The Women, Peace, and Security agenda (WPS) stands at a juncture with significant potential to prevent conflicts, protect human rights, and promote recovery from conflict but inadequate progress and institutional resistance to meeting the commitments enshrined in UNSCR 1325. The chapter builds on feminist constructivist theories of normative change to put forward a pragmatist understanding of “women, peace, and security” as a “work in progress,” wherein advocates and scholars work together with activist states to advance principles of equal and lasting peace. We argue that WPS theory and practice in conflict, post-conflict, and peaceful situations is a dynamic, normative agenda, and iterative reform process committed to realizing a critical gender perspective on peace and security. Drawing on scholars, practitioners, and advocates’ experiences from the Global North and South working on the WPS thematic agenda and on women’s diverse practical experiences of promoting peace and inclusion, we defend a gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive perspective on peace and security.

Keywords: WPS agenda, women peace security, pragmatism, UN Security Council, inclusive peace, feminism

WE live in a world where the scale and egregiousness of violent conflicts are increasing and where all evidence suggests that their effects on the human rights of women and girls are severe and intensifying. The Women, Peace, and Security agenda (WPS) stands at this juncture with significant potential to bring knowledge and social transformation to prevent conflicts, protect human rights, and promote recovery from conflict and insecurity. Yet there is a major disconnect between the great expectations of WPS advocates and the inadequate progress made by powerful institutions in meeting those expectations as enshrined in Resolution 1325. Indeed, the central argument in the United Nations Secretary-General commissioned Global Study on the Implementation of 1325 (2015), “Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing Peace,” was that “much of the progress toward the implementation of resolution 1325 continues to be measured in ‘firsts,’ rather than as standard practice. Obstacles and challenges still persist and prevent the full implementation of the women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda” (UN Women 2015: 14).

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The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 and seven subsequent resolutions make up the cross-cutting WPS agenda.¹ This agenda is a significant international normative and policy framework addressing the gender-specific impacts of conflict on women and girls. The Security Council itself has admitted deep concerns about the “persistent obstacles and challenges to women’s participation and full involvement” (1820 [2008] preamble); the “underrepresentation of women at all stages of peace processes” (1888; 1889; 1960 preambles); and the negative impact of limited WPS implementation on “durable peace, security and reconciliation” (1889 [2009] preamble). It has urged the UN and member states to demonstrate “greater commitment to implement the women, peace, and security agenda, notably through more systematic and concrete reporting,” and called for “women’s full and meaningful participation and leadership in all efforts to maintain peace and security, including with regard to preventing conflict, sustaining peace, and responding to new threats” such as violent extremism, mass displacement, and climate change-induced disasters (UNSC 2017).

(p. 4) All WPS major policy forums and UNSC open debates on WPS have featured continual appeals to states and international institutions to scale up their commitments to implementing the WPS agenda. Repetition is necessary. Significant goals of the normative agenda, including to prevent conflict and promote peace through women’s participation, are not easily achieved in short or medium time frames. There are, in essence, multiple time frames and scales of WPS, both institutional and localized, that need to be considered, as well as many intersections between WPS and other normative agendas that are contributing to an ever-evolving and dynamic realm of international affairs. The burden today is measuring progress in vastly different locations and situations from UN headquarters to peace operations on the ground; as well as being sure that the implementation gaps identified in the Global Study, for example, are receiving attention equal to the areas that are more readily accepted and implemented (Idris 2017).

In this volume, we draw on scholars, practitioners, and advocates’ experiences from the Global North and South working on the WPS thematic agenda. We aim to draw on women’s diverse practical experiences in promoting peace and inclusion and in developing a gender-sensitive and gender-inclusive theoretical perspective on peace and security. We also examine the broad cross-cutting projects of national and global security, and empowerment for all populations.

In this chapter, we build on feminist constructivist theories of normative change to put forward a pragmatist understanding of “women, peace, and security” as a “work in progress,” wherein advocates and scholars work together with activist states to advance principles of equal and lasting peace. We argue that the theory and practice of WPS in conflict, post-conflict, and in peaceful situations—examined in this handbook—are best appreciated as a dynamic, normative agenda and iterative reform process committed to realizing a critical gender perspective on peace and security.

A Feminist Pragmatist Approach

WPS is characterized by tensions and ambivalences as state and non-state actors struggle, compete, and collaborate to define and implement the atypical security agenda. The agenda is expected to challenge the patriarchal normative framework and unequal political economies that underpin peace and security institutions, but, at the same time, to actively engage with these very institutions to transform gender power relations. It must straddle vital local networks where women are more likely to be present, but also ensure representation and engagement at the international and national levels of practice, in which elite men dominate.

WPS represents a pragmatic attempt on the part of women's rights activists to address the significant violence and inequality that characterizes conflict, particularly women's experience of it. It is not based on an *a priori* theory of gender and conflict but on a trial-and-error process committed to creating realizable pathways to gender equality, social justice, and peace. The normative agenda is the result of the practical capacities of diverse women's rights' actors around the world—scholars, activists, practitioners, political leaders, and policymakers—to build connections between their specific institutional and local contexts and the global norm, (Zwingel 2012).

(p. 5) WPS exemplifies the feminist pragmatist method as outlined by Tickner and True (2018). It aims to amplify voices of women from conflict zones, gender-based violence survivors, displaced and refugee women, *inter alia*, by bringing them to international fora to share their practical knowledge of how best to protect “vulnerable” populations and enable their participation. It seeks to bridge these voices with expert knowledge, which is often ignorant of peace and security solutions in local contexts and unaccountable to those most affected by international policies and interventions. In this process, the “truths” about conflict derive not from macro policy or data analysis but from on-the-ground experience. WPS advocates then make pragmatic choices about which issues are best pursued vis-a-vis states or the UN Security Council and which issues they must pursue outside institutions through social movement protest and activism.

In this volume, contributors evaluate the WPS normative agenda to ask “what works” and “what doesn't work” to deliver even more just and effective peace and security outcomes. Naturally, authors are concerned with what hasn't been achieved in the WPS agenda, but a number of contributors are also concerned with examining what aspects of the WPS agenda have been advanced, often in the face of great opposition and minimal resourcing. These contributions illustrate why we must study the WPS commitments and programs with an open, inquiring mind. WPS programs should be judged not only for their compromises and their use of discourse, but their usefulness and impact on end goals, such as “meaningful women's participation,” “gender-responsive peace-building,” and the like.

In addition to reflecting on what the WPS “community of practice” actually does, we observe the feminist pragmatist approach as a middle path for the ambitions of WPS against

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the harsh political realities. Politics among states has required compromise on some of the feminist revolutions required to transform global politics. For example, a major compromise is between a feminist, rights-based approach that advocates for women's equal participation in peace and security and opposes military solutions, and an instrumental approach that sees gender equality as a means to the ends of security, stability, and military effectiveness (see more on this discussion in part I). A pragmatic approach accepts that both rights-based and instrumental WPS approaches have the potential to recognize gender-specific experiences and impacts of conflict, as well as the need to prevent conflict in ways that enhance women's agency. Here we endorse the need for "pragmatism in the alternation between the use of soft and hard power," as Aggestam and Bergman-Rosamond (2016: 330) argue with respect to feminist foreign policy.

Concretely, the feminist pragmatist approach has enabled significant innovations in international peace and security processes—for example, the deployment of women protection advisors alongside gender advisors in peace operations, and the establishment of an Informal Experts Group on Women, Peace, and Security to routinely brief the Security Council on peace operations (see UNSCR 1960 [2009] and 2242 [2015], respectively). The inclusion of women's civil society in UNSC deliberations on political and peace missions is an important marker of progress. This is the first time the UNSC has agreed that, in principle, women's groups should participate in their meetings due to their particular risk of exclusion from political processes within a country under discussion. Would we have seen this or other innovations without first the "groundwork," without the pragmatic activism of the WPS community?

Feminist pragmatism has informed our approach in the handbook from the beginning and can be seen in the structure of the volume, the selection of sixty-seven chapters (p. 6) authored and coauthored by nearly one hundred practitioners and scholars, and the selection of particular cases of WPS institutions and implementation. It has informed the questions we ask ourselves and "our" institutions and those that the contributors in this volume bring to the fore such as: Should we persist with a mainstream agenda that seeks compromise rather than revolution, and how can we pursue the mainstreaming of WPS without undermining essential reforms? These are possibly the most important questions at this moment. The scholarship on international norm contestation discussing other cases of normative diffusion and change may be helpful here. We learn from this literature that ideas and interests that provide practical, feasible solutions often take over the agenda. In the case of WPS, militaries and security sectors seek gender inclusion for operational effectiveness and are tending to leave other implementing actors behind in WPS national action plans, and in so doing entrenching a militarized approach to WPS (e.g., see chapters 28 and 44 on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] and Australia case in this volume). But because these defense institutions are invested in WPS, this can lead to institutional transformation as well as to greater uptake and investment by other state and non-state actors and new coalitions of these actors. Normative development and further acceptance of WPS can be built upon by advocates who put forward alternative nonmilitary approaches, harnessing women's agency and leadership in conflict prevention, peace mediation, and peace-building. Similarly, local adaptation may not always re-

flect the full intent of WPS resolutions, but it provides an opening that was not there before and would not be there if we pushed for a “perfect” version of what the normative agenda should look like in that local context. Thus, from a feminist pragmatist perspective, incremental progress may be more generative of durable solutions to intractable problems than revolution.

What Is Addressed in This Book and Why

The scholarship to date on WPS is immense and growing fast. Since the adoption of Resolution 1325, there have been thousands of articles and hundreds of books devoted to its discourse, its theoretical impact, and its practice. Despite the semblance of permanence given by UNSC resolutions (UNSCR), the norm of WPS is a “work in progress”—its content is contested and dynamic rather than fixed. This is precisely as it should be and a central theme throughout all chapters involves realizing that the WPS agenda is just beginning, even after over a century of women’s peace activism.

We adopt a feminist constructivist approach to norms following Antje Wiener’s (2009) theory of contestation that judges norms in terms of their “meaning in use” rather than their statement in treaties, laws, and policies. Focusing on fluid rather than fixed normative meanings explains why norms such as WPS emerge and appear to diffuse rapidly, at the same time as they rarely achieve their intended aims or have disappointing “concrete effects” (Krook and True 2012: 105). As a broad and nonbinding UN normative framework, WPS has changed as it has diffused across different sites.² The ambivalences in the normative agenda explain both its success and its limitations with respect to actual implementation.

As a “work in progress,” it was intended that WPS would be holistically implemented although *protection*, one of four pillars of WPS, has taken precedence in the norm’s meaning in use over the past decade. Conflict-related sexual violence was the substance of (p. 7) five UN Security Council resolutions and fourteen presidential statements between 2008 and 2016 that were adopted with specific reference to action required, in stark contrast to no resolutions between 2000 and 2008 (Davies and True 2017: 703).³ Non-state actors represented by the 1325 NGO Working Group have argued that the focus on protection against sexual violence highlights the victimization rather than the agency of women in peace and security. Domestic actors may also reject dominant “protection” frames using different frames as they adapt WPS for their own context. This can be seen in Asian states, where the “development” frame is predominantly used to localize WPS as a women’s empowerment issue in the context of conflicts fueled and affected by poverty and underdevelopment (Association of Southeast Asian Nations [ASEAN] 2017). This normative contestation over the prioritizing of protection over participation in the WPS agenda has been a continual theme since 2008 (see Jansson and Eduards 2016; Kreft 2017).

However, as mentioned earlier, between 2000 and 2008 there were *no* WPS resolutions passed. The 2008 Resolution 1820 on sexual violence in conflict situations was narrow,⁴ but it permitted the practices that have been, arguably, essential for achieving a broader

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engagement on the Security Council on matters pertaining to WPS in recent years (women's participation in peace-building, peace agreements, women protection advisors, women's expert testimony): the UN Secretary-General was authorized to convene a session of the UN Security Council to hear situations where widespread and systematic sexual violence against women was taking place, and to include evidence from other UN agencies and actors to inform the decisions of the Security Council. At the time this was seen as a dramatic expansion of the Security Council's purview, and diplomacy has been strong on both sides—with some member states advocating a broader mandate for WPS in the Security Council, and others consistently pushing back on these attempts.

There is justifiable concern about the location of the WPS agenda, its terminology, and a potential hierarchy among the four pillars pursued in local, national, and international forums. This concern was expressed in the 2015 UN Women's *Global Study on Women, Peace, and Security: Security the Peace*: "Frequently, women are portrayed alongside children, either in pictures or in the pages of reports, and they are almost universally shown as defenceless and vulnerable victims. This has had an effect in policy and in practice. Our most urgent interventions to assist women and girls in crisis situations are focused on their protection rather than their empowerment" (UN Women 2015: 86). Yet even crisis responses to protect women and girls should put in place some enabling mechanisms and be coherent with long-term peace-building efforts to empower women and girls. Women's groups are frequently the groups on the frontline of crisis response, and committed to remaining in-country for recovery and reconstruction despite resource-based constraints limiting the use of funds for long-term empowerment and prevention (Higelin and Yermo 2016; Davies 2017).

How has the WPS agenda been pursued to date? How should the WPS agenda be pursued in practice? These are the questions we asked of our contributors, and in answering these questions, they have had to engage with the normative and policy tensions involved in practically realizing the spirit and intent of UNSCR 1325.

Contention and concern does arise when the WPS thematic agenda refers to gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the defense forces, in peacekeeping operations, and more recently, in the promotion of women's roles and gender perspectives on preventing and countering violent extremism. Does gender mainstreaming in militaries and peacekeeping (p. 8) missions mean, by extension, that WPS legitimizes the use of violence? WPS's origins in the UN Security Council has meant that the agenda has had to follow its institutional conventions, but does this preclude multiple and intersecting WPS practices in other institutional contexts? To date, the UN General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, and Bretton Woods institutions left discussions on how to implement the WPS agenda to the UN Security Council, the UN Secretariat, and to a lesser extent, UN Women, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) General Recommendation 30, however, makes it clear that the WPS agenda is not exclusively the purview of the UN Security Council. How then should WPS proceed

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and be coordinated, and where can political support be mobilized for its ongoing institutionalization and implementation?

We approached the structure of the handbook with a desire to be sensitive to these conceptual and structural disagreements but not to further binary, either/or positions. The introduction of the WPS agenda bridged a knowledge gap between acts of significant violence and the inequalities that characterize and enable such violence. The scholarship, policy engagement, and activism that have flowed since the introduction of Resolution 1325 seek to further bridge this gap. We contend, however, that greater advancement of the WPS agenda comes from attempts to pragmatically reconcile conceptual tensions. The feminist pragmatic method pays attention to how WPS is constituted by a community of practice and inquiry. As such, we have sought contributions in this handbook that pay particular attention to how WPS concepts, WPS pillars, and WPS practices are being contested, but also how they are being reconciled in practice.

The contestation of WPS meaning and practice is to be celebrated. Antje Wiener (2017: 173) argues, “[o]nce societal boundaries become blurred through border-crossing, it is international encounters that become the sites where contested norms of governance are most likely to become visible.” In the case of WPS, the existence of contestation is vital to ensure that there are a variety of actors who can contribute their views. Legitimacy is achieved when representation is balanced and when access to contestation is continually expanded to new individuals and groups. We have structured this volume to deliberately include such an expansive cross section of voices, perspectives, and experiences.

The book is organized into six distinct areas of inquiry: part I—Concepts; part II—Pillars; part III—Institutions; part IV—Implementation; part V—Cross-Cutting agendas; and part VI—Future and Ongoing Challenges. Authors were deliberately selected to represent a cross section of scholars, policy practitioners, and activists. Particular attention was given to different local experiences of WPS in practice, scholarship, and activism. We live in a complex world where people have multiple loyalties, migrations, and locations. We have encouraged co-authorship to further promote learning across this diversity.

The first part of the book, *Concepts of WPS*, asks authors to engage with the criticisms but also the practical efforts. Starting from the history of feminist inquiry into peace and security by J. Ann Tickner, we then turn to examine the origins of the WPS agenda. Perspectives are deliberately drawn from those in civil society, academic, and diplomatic fields. Our authors come from alternative perspectives; they have different understandings of what choices prevailed and what compromises occurred when attempting to integrate gender perspectives and knowledge into a traditional peace and security institution. Resolution 1325 was intended to mainstream gender in peace and security policy-making—how this happened in practice is the concern of chapters by those who were involved in advocacy at (p. 9) the time, as well as those who have studied the passage of WPS resolutions subsequently. Finally, the section turns to the consequences of the male/female gender binary and what mainstreaming success the first eighteen years of Resolution 1325 can claim.

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Having introduced the emergence and evolution of the WPS agenda in practice in the Security Council, the second part of the book turns to the *WPS Pillars*: specifically, the development and implementation of the four pillars—individually and holistically—since 2000. The first four chapters in this section examine the theory underlying each pillar, while the remaining four chapters examine the practice within each pillar to date. These chapters seek to provide a methodology to inform and document the community of practice that has developed for each pillar. Some of the chapters point to the conundrum raised already—that some pillars have received relatively more attention than others and that this has made the documentation of practice quite difficult. As such, these chapters demonstrate *why* it is important to study each respective pillar in its own right but also to recognize the interplay among the pillars to avoid silos.

Sensitive analysis that seeks to trace the conditions and opportunities for one pillar to promote or extend conversation and practice into another pillar is a point often made in this section. A clear example of this is how the original focus on the protection pillar, specifically protection of women in conflict and humanitarian situations, led to discussions about who is best placed to protect them. Practice soon led to awareness of the need for women to be mainstreamed into protection roles—primarily military roles. However, to achieve gender mainstreaming in the security sector, it has also been essential to integrate women personnel into political and justice institutions and in conflict prevention, civilian policing, and peace agreement negotiations. The chapters in this section demonstrate how ideas have shaped practical actions and the trial-and-error process that this has set in motion from the outset.

The *Institutionalization of WPS* in practice beyond one location (New York) and beyond one institution (the UN Security Council) is the purpose of the third section of the handbook. As previously noted, when WPS discourse is examined for meaning and import, the primary location that scholars turn to is the UN Security Council. However, as this section shows, not all *practitioners* turn to the Security Council to interpret the meaning and import of WPS in practice. There are many international and regional organizations working to realize WPS commitments, ever increasing in number, examined in this section. Some have a long-standing affiliation with the WPS agenda, such as the NATO, while others are yet to align their gender equality engagement with WPS obligations (i.e., the World Bank and International Monetary Fund). Regional organizations (ASEAN; the African Union; the Organization of American States; and the Pacific Islands Forum) are examined in this section as institutionally adapting the WPS agenda to guide and assist member states. The chapters in part III (as in the previous section), highlight how regional institutions may not always echo the precise language of the WPS resolutions, but there are, nonetheless, meaningful debates on gender inclusion and gender empowerment in local peace and security institutions that we should be aware of and monitor. How to advance such discussion so that transformation is not being held hostage to local “traditions” is the next puzzle for assisting local participation in the WPS agenda (George 2017).

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In part III we also ask a selection of authors to take up CEDAW General Recommendation 30 by considering how agencies and organizations within the UN (aside from UN Women) can carry out their responsibility to the WPS agenda. The (p. 10) Secretary-General annual report on WPS requires the UN system to report progress on mainstreaming the WPS agenda. Some organizations, like the Department of Peacekeeping are obvious locations to assess how the four pillars of WPS agenda are progressing; but we also have chapters that examine less-considered UN locations for WPS policymaking—such as the Human Rights Council, the International Criminal Court, and the World Bank. This section highlights the benefit of understanding WPS in different institutional environments and provides insight into the pragmatic pathways to mainstream WPS across a range of regional and international environments. These chapters find that advancement of respective WPS pillars is rarely neglected deliberately. Rather, in environments where there are competing resources, obligations, and local resistance, the task becomes focused on harnessing entry points and opportunities to build the WPS agenda while complementing existing remits.

Integrating WPS within existing remits demonstrates that the agenda is and should be core to conflict prevention, relief and recovery, peace processes, and the protection of civilians. Tragically for many populations at risk of violence and deprivation, the WPS agenda still lacks the perfect case of adoption, mainstreaming, and implementation, though there may be never be one given the dynamic situations of both conflicts and global politics. In part IV of the volume we take stock of the experience of *Implementing the WPS mandate*. Our authors examine a selection of conflicts, diplomatic actors, and conditions (such as displacement and disability) where a WPS mandate is intended to make a difference to the lives of conflict-affected women and girls. In this section we ask authors to explore the lessons learned in cases they examine, and what has had to be compromised, negotiated, and insisted on to bring WPS into the heart of peace and security situations where there are multiple agendas and needs. There are limited cases where WPS mandates have been pursued as a goal that is equally important to other goals in conflict, peace processes, and diplomacy. Making the case for WPS thus requires, as these chapters illustrate, a careful, often frustrating, compromise between the demand for evidence that a WPS focus works in a given setting when there may be little to be found, while avoiding simplistic gendered expectations that women are either the peacemakers or the victims, and so forth. These chapters illustrate the stark reality that practitioners face on the ground when needing to negotiate very different values and agendas between combatants, political leaders, and civilians. How to balance WPS values and competing local agendas lead us to ask when can WPS converge with other peace, security, humanitarian and development agendas without losing its focus and mandate?

Whether in a conflict or a diplomatic venue, there are always competing agendas. Is the success of some agendas also pivotal for the success and mainstreaming of the WPS agenda? In part V, we ask authors to consider what may be gained—and what may be lost—from pursuing *WPS as a Cross-Cutting agenda*. This section explores WPS advocacy that engages with other agendas advancing WPS perspectives on debates concerning arms control; migration; postcolonialism; conflict prevention; the responsibility to pro-

tection; torture; children's rights; the protection of civilians; as well as climate change; and countering violent extremism. Mainstreaming in these areas cannot stand alone without a specialized body of knowledge and practice on WPS and gender; likewise, WPS cannot advance gender mainstreaming without participation in areas that affect and determine the structures of gender relations. Given there remains so little understanding of the causes of women's marginalization in peace and security processes, as well as the consequences of (p. 11) this marginalization, the risk of issue-dilution from a broader focus needs to be weighed against the benefits of generating more evidence and awareness of the unequal gendered dynamics and effects of insecurity and conflict.

Division, doubt, and a lack of sustained interest persist despite almost two decades of scholarship, activism, and policymaking on the WPS agenda. These five sections of the handbook reveal the large ambition of the WPS project. This project was never going to be achieved without significant contestation as its full implementation is the promise of radical transformation of the structures and processes of the international system. It is important to pay attention therefore to what is possible and what is failing, what is not being delivered, and what is not being discussed, as well as who is present and who is absent from WPS debate and contestation. But it is equally important to build an evidence base of dialogue, compromise, policy, and practice. The success and failure of local adaptation, institutional engagement, and mainstreaming are all important lessons for progressing WPS. These may not be *best* practices, but they are good practices achieved in the face of diversity and opposition; and they are forging a dynamic normative agenda for WPS.

We invited contributors in the final section to think about the *Dynamic Normative Agenda of WPS* for the next twenty years of scholarship, advocacy, and practice. In part VI, authors put forward their most forceful recommendations for deepening engagement with gendered definitions of security, for networking advocacy with the use of technology, for attention to intersectionality, and for progressing peacemaking and foreign policy, because success depends upon gender equality and women's empowerment. They advocate for refinement in the methods of research and analysis, and for enhanced engagement between scholarship and practice in WPS.

Conclusion: A Dynamic Normative and Practical Agenda

As we have illustrated, conundrums and tensions continually surface at the heart of WPS: between the long-term quest for equal peace and the need for immediate gender-sensitive responses to conflict; between the importance of making visible women as agents and victims of war; between attentiveness to gender relations and the need to rethink gender as a binary concept; between the emphasis on nonviolent approaches to the resolution of conflict and support for gender equality across the security sectors that deploy violence; between the focus on conflict-affected, and often poor, countries and regions, and the practices of relatively stable, rich, and arms-trading nations that may foment war

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and conflict overseas. These tensions are both constitutive of the WPS normative agenda and productive in sustaining it. We think it is harmful to view the research in relation to WPS as progressive and its practice as regressive. Practice is often conducted in the face of immense policy and programmatic resistance. Different approaches will be taken and must be taken to fully realize the potential of WPS. Scholars must be sensitive to how the WPS agenda will be directly encountered by peace and security actors on the ground, including activists, practitioners, and politicians, many of whom may not have been introduced to gender analysis before.

(p. 12) As well as contestation of its meaning in use, WPS is having to accommodate cross-cutting issues such as terrorism, violent extremism, and climate change-induced displacement. Gender-specific protection and women's roles in preventing violence are being rethought and applied to a different set of issues (see UN Secretary-General 2016). The influence of gender-balance norms in economic governance following the global financial crisis has also influenced the broader normative environment for WPS. As a result, women's inclusion in peace processes has been promoted in a similar fashion to the advocacy for gender representation on corporate boards and the use of evidence on the investment returns from women's presence in decision-making. The discussion of women's representation in peace processes is in many respects an advance in the WPS agenda in progress. However, the fixation on the quantifiable nature of the number of women with a seat at the peace table must not become an end in itself, detracting from the substantive post-conflict gender-justice outcomes. To date, only the Colombian peace process "has addressed gender concerns (including sexual violence) in a systematic manner that exemplifies the aims of the Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008)" (United Nations Secretary-General [UNSG] 2017: 9–10; also see UNSG 2016: para 108). But that is not to prejudge the gender politics of peace implementation in Colombia discussed in several chapters in this handbook.

The normative issues regarding *which women* and *what agendas* they bring remain largely sidelined by states. This is the *next* discussion that women's rights activists and scholars want to have. NGO advocates campaigning for "meaningful" women's participation (see Paffenholz et al. 2016; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom 2017) ask how can societies be rebuilt in ways that ensure the sustainability of peace and that recognize the agency of women? The language of meaningful participation is further echoed in the most recent UNSC resolutions and debates. It illustrates the evolving meaning-in-use of WPS.

We offer this volume consisting of sixty-seven chapters and nearly one hundred authors as a synthesis of the body of knowledge in the fast emerging field of WPS to this point, and as "toolkit" for practitioners to continue experimenting with as well. We hope that the Oxford handbook on WPS will spurn many debates and contestations, which are so crucial to further advancing the "Women, Peace, and Security" agenda and its vision for equal and lasting peace.

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Notes:

(1.) The subsequent seven resolutions are in order: UNSCR 1820 (2008); 1888 (2009); 1889 (2009); 1960 (2011); 2106 (2013); 2122 (2013); and 2242 (2015).

(2.) WPS UNSC resolutions have been adopted under chapter 6, rather than chapter 7 of the UN Charter, which makes them non-binding in international law on member states.

(3.) Resolutions 1888 (2008), 1889 (2009), 1920 (2013), 2122 (2014), 2242 (2015), and Security Council Resolution 2272 (2016). A seventh resolution was introduced in March 2016 on addressing and reporting sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers.

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(4.) It was a narrower focus in contrast to Resolution 1325, and it raised concern that the WPS thematic agenda was being reduced to one issue—protection—and, at that, a limited understanding of who experiences sexual violence.

Sara E. Davies

Sara E. Davies is Associate Professor and ARC Future Fellow at the School of Government and International Relations, Griffith University, Australia.

Jacqui True

Jacqui True is Professor of International Relations and Director of Monash Gender, Peace, and Security Centre, Monash University. She is also an Australian Research Council Future Fellow and Global Fellow at Peace Research Institute Oslo.