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THE ARBOUR REPORT AND BEYOND

MAYA EICHLER, TAMMY GEORGE, AND NANCY TABER



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Executive Summary

Background: On May 30, 2022, former Supreme Court Justice Louise Arbour released her *Independent External Comprehensive Review of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces*. Her report focuses on sexual misconduct and leadership as they relate to culture. While the 48 recommendations take a primarily legal approach to military culture change, Arbour also speaks to revising existing policies and practices that contribute to sexual misconduct and the poor treatment that survivors receive in the aftermath of reporting.

Our approach: This paper provides a feminist intersectional trauma-informed analysis of the Arbour report. Drawing on Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality, we see sexism and misogyny as intersecting with and compounded by race, ethnicity, sexuality, Indigeneity, ability, and other dimensions of identity. Our approach highlights the need to engage with how power operates at various levels of the CAF, as structural systems of power affect how discrimination plays out at the individual level.

Our argument: We argue that the Arbour report, while containing important discussions and recommendations, does not draw enough connection between sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, sexism, and other forms of harmful conduct, such as those resulting from ableism, colonialism, homophobia, and racism. Therefore, the Arbour report should be read in concert with related reports, such as the Deschamps report (2015) and the Minister's advisory panel report on systemic racism (2022). Below, we outline key points that should inform implementation discussions of the Arbour report.

Key points: Although separated out for ease of discussion, the following key take-away points are understood to intersect with one another and are intended to be addressed in a holistic manner.

- **Go Beyond Adding More Women:** Setting numerical targets places the onus for culture change on the shoulders of military women, rather than focusing on the role and responsibility of the institution in bringing about culture change by removing systemic biases and legacy barriers. It also overlooks the experiences of men and 2SLGBTQIA+ members who experience sexual misconduct and discrimination.
- **Question the Warrior Ideal:** Instead of defining the military as a place where masculinity is achieved and celebrated, the military needs to redefine itself as a place where everyone is welcome, valued, and can thrive, regardless of whether they identify as a man, woman, nonbinary, or 2SLGBTQIA+ and regardless of their specific military role (i.e., operator or support role). Culture change requires challenging the power and privilege associated with the existing warrior ideal and not just expanding the scope of what it means to be a warrior.
- **Create Oversight and Civilian Involvement:** Greater civilian involvement should be paired with an honest look at the current state of military-civilian relations in Canada. Arbour's recommendation regarding external monitoring can be strengthened by establishing an external monitoring committee made up of diverse, interdisciplinary, and cross-sectional military and civilian voices that go beyond an External Monitor who simply checks boxes on implementation.

Drawing on Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality, we see sexism and misogyny as intersecting with and compounded by race, ethnicity, sexuality, Indigeneity, ability, and other dimensions of identity.

- **Critically Rethink Approach to Education and Military Colleges:** Education from a narrow professional ethical lens tends to reproduce military ideals and culture that are harmful to members' physical and mental health. Therefore, military education should assist members in identifying, analyzing, critiquing, and changing problematic elements of CAF culture. Any review team focusing on the Canadian Military Colleges should examine what and how cadets learn—in formal and informal contexts—with particular attention to gendered, racialized, ableist, heteronormative, and colonial discourse.
- **Challenge Universality of Service Policy:** As Arbour explains, the Universality of Service policy promotes a warrior ideal that disproportionately and negatively affects those who have experienced sexual misconduct and have PTSD or other related injuries. This policy does harm to women as well as members with disabilities, non-Christian religions, and those with intersectional identities, including 2SLGBTQIA+. In order to change CAF culture as well as to decrease sexual harassment and sexual assault in the CAF, gender and other forms of discrimination must be eliminated. Adaptive career paths and dual track jobs should be created.
- **Focus on the Health and Healing of Impacted Members:** Sexual misconduct negatively affects the health and wellbeing of impacted military members, often with long-term consequences. Health and wellness are central elements to military culture change and need to be considered in relation to intersectionality and larger structures of power, such as colonialism, patriarchy, and white supremacy that negatively impact individuals within the institution. Moving forward, culture change efforts should focus not on the needs of the institution but on empowering the impacted individual and providing opportunities for healing rather than privileging legal solutions that can be re-traumatizing.

Moving forward: Addressing harm and inequitable outcomes requires more than legal solutions, and more than “adding” more women (and other historically underrepresented groups) or adding more “training.” It requires fundamentally rethinking foundational building blocks of military culture such as the masculinized warrior ideal, and its intersection with relations of power and systems of oppression built on sexism, misogyny, racism, colonialism, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism.

CAF culture, policies, practices, and education continue to privilege cisgender, straight, white men. Moving forward, what is needed is to *learn about and challenge* the underlying structures of power and oppression on which the military, like broader Canadian state and society, are built on.



Introduction

On May 30, 2022, former Supreme Court Justice Louise Arbour released her *Independent External Comprehensive Review of the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces* (DND/CAF). Her report focuses on sexual misconduct and leadership as they relate to culture. Arbour's 48 recommendations take a primarily legal approach to military culture change, focusing on how legal responses to military sexual misconduct incidents and reports can be improved. Beyond concrete legal changes, Arbour also provides recommendations about revising existing policies and practices that contribute to sexual misconduct and the poor treatment survivors receive in the aftermath of reporting. Her wide range of recommendations are aimed at helping to prevent and better respond to incidents of sexual misconduct.

In this paper, we use a feminist intersectional trauma-informed approach to interpret and add to Arbour's analysis and recommendations. We highlight what we see as her key contributions, propose some additional considerations, and reflect on what those implementing her recommendations should consider going forward. We begin by detailing the root causes of the problematic military culture that enable and normalize sexual misconduct. We then discuss the themes of women's integration, civilian involvement and oversight, education and the military college system, and the Universality of Service policy.

Finally, we explore how health and wellness are implicated within many of the areas we discuss. We conclude that moving forward on—and beyond—the Arbour report requires a critical examination of existing and emerging warrior ideals, how members learn about these ideals, the health and other impacts of intersectional harm on serving members and veterans, and the role of the CAF in the context of military-civilian relations.

A Feminist Intersectional Trauma-Informed Approach

While Arbour's recommendations span various areas of concern, engaging with them through a feminist intersectional trauma-informed approach takes the lives impacted by military sexual trauma (MST) seriously and is crucial to thinking through meaningful culture change in the CAF. Feminism is not just about and for women, but is a movement "for everybody" that aims to "end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression" (hooks, 2000, p. viii) as related to men, women, and those who do not identify within that binary.

Additionally, feminism is not just an academic theory, but is a lens through which governments and militaries can frame their goals and their work, such as with Canada's commitment to a feminist foreign policy that influences the nation's defence policy, *Strong, Secure, and Engaged* (National Defence, 2017).

Kimberlé Crenshaw, a legal scholar much like Arbour, coined the term "intersectionality" in her paper entitled, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Anti-discrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics" (1989) as a way to explain the particularities of oppression of Black women within the American legal system. Grounded in anti-oppression practice, which is concerned with structural power imbalances and working toward the promotion of change to redress the balance of power, an intersectional approach provides a way to think through the nuances of discrimination in the American legal system, which was suited to addressing gender discrimination and racial discrimination as separate entities, *but not as they intersected*.

Crenshaw's intersectional approach was born out of a need to address how gender oppression and marginalization intersect and are compounded by race, ethnicity, sexuality, Indigeneity, ability, and other dimensions of identity. Crenshaw's approach is the foundation for the Canadian Government's application of GBA Plus (Government of Canada, 2022).

Intersectionality as a concept of power structures has been largely absent in studies of military personnel and military sociology.

Thinking through the recommendations of the Arbour report and the application of an intersectional analysis means intentionally engaging with how power operates at various levels of the CAF and acknowledging that structural systems of power have a bearing on how discrimination plays out at an individual level. As Samantha Cromptvoets (2021) has argued in the Australian context, instead of focusing on “culture as the default organisational problem diagnosis and solution” we ought to examine, “how power operates formally and informally in organisational networks” (p. 71).

We contend that both aspects can and should be focused on simultaneously, that is, how culture enables and intersects with particular power relations that privilege certain members and ideals over others. Intersectionality as a concept of power structures has been largely absent in studies of military personnel and military sociology, which are often concerned with stratification and hierarchies within military organizations (Henry, 2017).

Rather than focusing on the practices of racialization and gendering as they are produced institutionally and lived out daily (Henry, 2017; Ito, 1984; Roy, 1978; Walker, 1989; Ware, 2012), literature on war and soldiering has largely focused on markers of identity such as race, gender, and sexuality as characteristics, attributes, and/or separate entities. Minimal scholarship has engaged with work centering on the lived experience of service members within the Canadian multicultural context; as such, there is a lack of holistic understanding of how key interlocking facets of the current military culture from sexism, misogyny, racism, colonial legacies, and ableism—set the conditions for a wide range of harmful behaviours.

It is necessary not only to understand the differential experiences of racialized women, but to name and tackle key facets of military culture that lead to marginalization, shunning, and other forms of social policing which are enacted by the dominant group to force 'others' to fit the prototype ideal—or quit. If militaries continue to try to change individual behaviour rather than tackling the structures informing such behaviour, they will constantly end up reproducing the prototype ideal and further entrench the awarding of power and privilege to the chosen few.

We argue that the Arbour report does not go far enough in connecting these dots from sexual harassment to other forms of harmful misconduct, and to the structural foundations of culture rooted in systems of oppression and marginalization. We need to therefore read the Arbour report through a feminist intersectional lens as well as in concert with other related reports such as the Deschamps report (2015), the findings of Statistics Canada (Cotter, 2016; Cotter, 2019; Maxwell, 2020), the Minister's advisory panel on systemic racism (National Defence, 2022), and more. What was once seen to be a series of isolated, anecdotal, and disconnected incidents is now recognized as a deeply rooted organizational problem that requires a cultural overhaul across the CAF.

Understanding the connected and systemic nature of the harmful behaviours documented by these various reports, as well as thinking through meaningful and sustained culture change and its implications, also requires a trauma-informed approach.

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Structural barriers related to racism, sexism, heterosexism, and classism shape the experience of trauma itself, and influence the trauma recovery process. Those impacted and marginalized by various, often intersecting, forms of structural oppression will experience the world around them differently, often leading to trauma experiences significantly dissimilar from trauma survivors of the more dominant cultural groups. An organization or system that deploys a feminist intersectional trauma-informed approach considers four tenets.

First, it *realizes* the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential pathways for recovery (University of Lethbridge, n.d.). In the case of the Arbour report, addressing MST and the culture that perpetuates this violence translates into centering the people most impacted and amplifying their voices. Second, it calls for the *recognition* of the signs and symptoms of trauma in service members, their families, support staff, bystanders and others involved with the CAF and defence community. Third, how an organization *responds* by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into its policies, procedures, and practices is crucial to a trauma-informed approach. Finally, this approach seeks to actively resist *re-traumatization*. As the CAF engages with culture change across the organization, a central tenet of this approach is to think about how trauma may be reproduced through the implementation of policies and procedures grounded in Arbour's recommendations. Re-traumatization has been recognized to occur during legal investigations but can also occur in other ways during everyday experiences in the military workplace.

A trauma-informed approach focuses on those harmed and puts emphasis on facilitating their healing. This healing is also grounded in structural accountability and thinking through what it means to minimize harm across institutional life for its most vulnerable members.

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A trauma-informed approach reflects adherence to six key principles rather than a prescribed set of practices or procedures. The following principles are important for DND/CAF to keep in mind when considering the implementation of the Arbour Report across multiple types of settings, including training and education:

- **Inclusion of its members** – Throughout DND/CAF, service members, staff, and their families should feel physically and psychologically valued, and able to express their concerns and needs.
- **Trustworthiness and transparency** – Organizational operations, decisions, procedures, and processes should be conducted with openness and transparency and with the goal of maintaining trust among its members.
- **Provision of peer support** – Peer support is central for the positive functioning of the organization and its members through building trust as well as establishing safety and empowerment.
- **Collaboration, mutuality, and accountability** – Healing occurs in relationships and through discussion, communication, and accountability. The DND/CAF should recognize that everyone has a role to play in a trauma-informed approach and that healing does not reside solely with medical professionals.

- **Empowerment, voice, and choice** – DND/CAF should understand and aim to strengthen its members' experiences, choices, and voices. It should recognize that while there is a uniformity built into its structure, everyone is unique and requires an individualized approach; non-conformity should not be seen as a deficit.
- **Cultural, historical, and gender issues** – DND/CAF should actively move beyond cultural and gendered stereotypes and biases and aim to provide culturally responsive services to its members. Finally, the institution should support the value of healing, traditional cultural connections, the depths and nuances of moral injury, as well as recognizing and addressing its role in historical trauma. (Adapted from: The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2014).

Keeping these principles in mind alongside Arbour's recommendations will assist in addressing the consequences of trauma, reduce the risk of unnecessary harm, and facilitate healing. In the sections below, we apply our feminist intersectional trauma-informed approach to themes in Arbour's report as relates to women's integration, civilian-military relation, education, the Universality of Service policy, and health and wellness.

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Women's Integration:

Going Beyond Numbers and Questioning the Warrior Ideal

Arbour (2022) begins her report with a brief overview of women's history in the CAF, linking (like Deschamps) the problem of sexual misconduct specifically to the incomplete and troubled integration of women into this historically male-dominated and deeply masculinized institution. The need to address women's underrepresentation in the military is a key logic driving her recommendations. Arbour sees the military's "toxic and sexist culture" as the "root cause" of sexual misconduct (p. 35), and names sexual misconduct as one of the key reasons for the military's continued failure to significantly increase the number of women recruits. She correctly highlights that the number of women is low not out of "disinterest," but that the "uneven treatment of women, coupled with other forms of systemic discrimination and widespread sexual misconduct, feeds into poor recruitment and retention, as well as underrepresentation at all ranks" (p. 34).

Despite recognizing the need to fundamentally change the military workplace, Arbour argues that numbers will make a difference in advancing culture change. She recommends the establishment "of progressive targets for the promotion of women in order to increase the number of women in each rank, with a view to increasing the proportion of their representation in the GOFO [general and flag officer] ranks above their level of representation in the overall CAF workforce" (recommendation 36).

She argues: "When a critical mass of women at all levels and in all trades and occupations of the CAF, including combat arms, has been achieved, the CAF will transition to a modern organization, fully reflective of Canadian values and aspirations" (p. 14). While such an approach is in line with the principles of the *Employment Equity Act* in terms of achieving equity and reflecting the Canadian population, increased numbers alone will not transform the toxic and sexist culture.

Arbour adds an important nuance to the still dominant (and often criticized) critical mass argument, which asserts that once women's numbers have reached a certain threshold in an organization (usually, the assumption is something around 30%, see Childs and Krook, 2008), then the organization will change for the better (i.e., become more gender-equal). As Arbour points out, it matters *where* the women are, not just how many there are. Women, as her recommendation makes clear, need to be promoted to leadership positions in order to begin to tip the sexed/gendered imbalance of the military. The military is, both quantitatively and qualitatively speaking, a male-dominated and masculinized institution and workplace. However, setting numerical targets, even if more nuanced ones, still puts the onus for culture change on the shoulders of military women in leadership, rather than focusing on the role and responsibility of the institution in bringing about culture change. Below, we suggest additional ways to think about the question of how to change the military's gender makeup to create a more gender-equitable, not just gender-equal, institution.

Not only are women underrepresented in the military, at all levels of leadership, but they face, as Arbour recognizes "uneven treatment." This "uneven treatment" leads to experiences of trauma as a result of sexism and misogyny, as well as intersecting forms of oppression such as racism, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia. To get to the root of this "uneven treatment," the military needs to address head-on the systemic in-built biases and legacy barriers inherent in the military workplace that cause trauma beyond the expected trauma of operational injury and illness. The military is by definition not a "safe" workplace, but women and diverse members face an additional layer of systemic harm, resulting in interpersonal traumas and moral injury. For decades, women have been expected to fit into a workplace designed for men by men, in a way that treats the normative assumptions of men's bodies, life courses, and needs as the default. Women have been treated as if they are the same as men – the pertinent often quoted phrasing being "a soldier is a soldier is a soldier" (Eichler, 2017).

Thinking that emphasizes gender neutrality while reinforcing the male/masculinized norm is certainly beginning to be challenged (Davis 2020), but gender-neutrality rather than sex and gender equity is still the dominant approach.

Continuing to set targets to add more women, without fundamentally changing the system to make it more equitable for women, has the potential to create further harm and does not transform the taken-for-granted assumptions of male and masculinized norms associated with the military. A comprehensive strategy of culture change is needed, based on undoing systemic biases and legacy barriers (Davis, 2020; Eichler, 2019; Taber, 2018; Taber, 2020; Winslow & Dunn, 2002). This requires research that goes beyond attitudinal surveys to focus on the lived experiences of military women, including on their sex- and gender-specific health challenges and outcomes resulting from existing policy and occupational and operational contexts (Eichler, 2016).

As much as Arbour's report focuses on women as one of the linchpins of transforming military culture, it overlooks the experiences of men who are victims and survivors of sexual misconduct. Unfortunately, Arbour's report reinforces the conflation of military sexual trauma with "women," which is neither an accurate description of the problem nor useful for moving forward. Women make up around 16 percent of the military and while they are disproportionately more likely to become victims of sexual trauma during service, the actual number of men in Canada who have been victims of sexual trauma during military service is higher than that of women.

The military needs to address head-on the systemic in-built biases and legacy barriers inherent in the military workplace that cause trauma beyond the expected trauma of operational injury and illness.

More than 40 percent of the over 19,000 claimants in the recent Heyder-Beattie class action lawsuit are men (Connolly, 2021). Sexual misconduct is one of many women's issues, but it must be addressed as a *gendered issue* that negatively impacts women and men in the military, as well as non-binary and gender-fluid military members. Acknowledging that fact would allow us to ask more nuanced questions about how the military's gender order and social hierarchies need to be reorganized in ways that go beyond adding more women. It would also open up conversations around how individual men in the military may not benefit from the existing masculinized military culture (Abrams, 2016).

While victims and survivors of military sexual trauma as a whole face biases and barriers when seeking services and claiming benefits, male victims/survivors have faced even higher hurdles, for example, when seeking redress for a denied service-related disability claim through the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (Eichler, 2021). Recognizing that military culture is not only bad for women but also for men can help lift some of the silencing and shame experienced by male victims/survivors of military sexual trauma. It can furthermore enable a more productive path forward that does not reinforce gender binaries and antagonisms and focuses on redefining military masculinity as a central aspect of culture change (Eichler, 2014; Eichler, 2019).

Therefore, effort needs to be put into not only attracting and retaining more women but, more importantly, into redefining the gendered underpinnings of soldiering. This requires attracting new recruits without overly emphasizing masculinity, and without invoking the idea that joining the military 'makes you a man.' Instead of defining the military as a place where masculinity is achieved and celebrated, the military needs to redefine itself as a place where everyone is welcome, and where many expressions of masculinity and femininity can be performed, without negative repercussions but more importantly with positive outcomes for career success.

New recruits need to be trained in an environment free from valorization of a particular masculinity associated with strength, toughness, and violence over traits associated with femininity such as empathy, vulnerability, and support. The military needs to build a culture of respect and professionalism throughout the forces that does not exclude or undervalue members who do not fit the image of the ‘tough’ masculinized soldier. Instead, the military must accommodate diverse types of soldiering, including a notion of soldiering that is not implicitly gendered as masculine. Such a “re-gendering” or “de-gendering” (Duncanson & Woodward, 2016) of the military requires a radical rethinking of military recruitment and training (Eichler, 2019).

The military is beginning to have conversations about rethinking the warrior ideal. The revised *CAF Ethos: Trusted to Serve*, for example, moves “from a warrior model to a character-based inclusive ethos,” but may nonetheless reproduce implicit ideals of the warrior through its continued focus on Universality of Service (Taber, 2022, p. 18). Similarly, Chief Professional Conduct and Culture (CPCC) is shifting the conversation on the warrior ideal, by emphasizing the need to move from a singular ideal hero who is “physically strong, stoic, fearless” and “who masters combat arms and kinetic operations” towards the idea of a “fighting spirit found in multiple contemporary warriors” who are “physically fit and emotionally flexible” (CPCC Consultations PPT, May 2022). However, while moving away from the idea that only a certain type of man can be a warrior, there is little recognition that the warrior is still a masculinized ideal and that reproducing it, even while expanding its scope, does not go far enough in challenging the gendered privileging of warriors over non-warriors (Breede & Davis, 2020).

We pose several questions here. For example: How are the proposed changes reproducing existing power relations? Whose voices, stories, and experiences are emphasized and whose are being ignored or silenced? Whose histories are represented? How is harm reproduced and what accountability exists?

It is now time for the military and the political leadership to show how the military not only can add more women, but how it can fundamentally redefine the defence profession in ways that change its gender relations and normative assumptions around masculinity.

Confronting these questions also requires a grappling with bigger picture questions for the CAF and Canadian society more broadly, such as: What do defence professionals in the 21st century look and act like? What do they believe and value?

The military has historically been a tool of male power in society, and one that has for the most part reproduced gendered hierarchies and gendered power over women (Enloe, 2000). While military culture has benefitted men over women, it has also negatively impacted many men. Therefore, it is now time for the military and the political leadership to show how the military not only can add more women, but how it can fundamentally redefine the defence profession in ways that change its gender relations and normative assumptions around masculinity.

The “problem” of women’s lack of integration is not simply one of needing to “add more women” but of changing the military’s gendered culture and the broader societal understandings of what makes a military member. The burden of change should not be on women; rather, there is need to focus on political and institutional accountability for culture change, the role of men and masculinities in this change, and the systemic historic biases and barriers experienced by military women and diverse military members.

Oversight and Civilian Involvement

Civilianization is another key logic driving the Arbour report and its recommendations. The idea being that greater civilian involvement and input into the military are key to addressing the problem of sexual misconduct. One key premise behind Arbour's recommendations is that increasing external civilian input will help shift the military's problematic culture by dismantling its insular nature (see recommendations 24, 26, 32, 33, 45 and 46). As she says:

The resistance to external influence exacerbates the shortcomings of leadership. Even as a part of the Defence Team, which includes the DND, the CAF remains insular, closed, self-confident, persuaded of the merit of its methodology, and rarely exposed to the broader civilian organizational culture, particularly outside government. The CAF's leadership, at all levels, relies on its own history, culture, articulated values and repeated practices, in its attempt to affect the kind of change that requires revisiting these very practices (p. 15).

Arbour's approach relies on greater civilian oversight occurring as a result of moving some responsibilities from the CAF to civilian authorities (such as Criminal Code sexual assault cases) and bringing more civilians into contact with CAF. These two approaches to greater civilianization are two sides of the coin of military culture change for Arbour: "a renewed leadership formed and informed by a better connection with external actors, and the principle of civilian oversight of the military operationalized throughout the relevant aspects of military culture" (p. 17).

Similarly, in the aftermath of the Deschamps report (2015) and again during the 2021 military sexual misconduct crisis, there were many calls from stakeholders to create a permanent external accountability and oversight agency on sexual misconduct and culture change issues.

It was suggested that such an agency could take the shape of an external Inspector General reporting directly to Parliament (House of Commons, 2021; Eichler & Breeck, 2021). Others suggested an Inspector General internal to the Defence Team focused on holding all those in uniform accountable for maintaining professional standards of conduct (Okros, 2021). Arbour rejects both suggestions for an Inspector General but does call for the appointment of an external monitor “with the specific task of overseeing the implementation of those recommendations ... that the Minister accepts” (p. 275, also recommendation 47). In addition, she lays much of the weight of accountability on the shoulders of the minister. She says, “I believe the Minister of National Defence (Minister or MND) must be prepared to play an active role in holding Defence Team senior leadership accountable and ensuring that the CAF remains ready and able to adapt and change” (p. 16). In this respect, Arbour explicitly speaks to questions of power and political responsibility.

While we agree with Arbour’s criticism of how exceptionalism has been utilized in the past to resist change, we believe that the military’s complex role as an institution of national significance nonetheless needs to be considered.

Arbour fundamentally challenges how the idea of the CAF as a unique and exceptional institution has been used to justify a closed mindset and insular culture, despite far-reaching strides towards diversity, equality, and inclusion in civilian society. While we agree with Arbour’s criticism of how exceptionalism has been utilized in the past to resist change, we believe that the military’s complex role as an institution of national significance nonetheless needs to be considered. The military should certainly not be immune to external social forces, but the military is hardly akin to civilian institutions. Tasked with wielding the monopoly of legitimate force, it is a crucial site for the legitimacy of the state and the construction of the Canadian nation. Greater civilian involvement is an important and necessary step.

If followed, Arbour's recommendations could dismantle certain aspects of the exceptionality of the military institution. But on its own, does it guarantee cultural change? For example, does moving sexual assault cases into the exclusive jurisdiction of the civilian system (one of her key recommendations) solve the problem of military sexual misconduct or address the root causes of sexual misconduct? What can meaningful oversight in the form of an external monitor look like?

Thinking through the meaningful and successful transformation of military culture requires an honest look at the current state of military-civilian relations in Canada. In healthy democracies, militaries have strong civilian oversight. Saideman (2020) argues that "democratic control of the military is deceptively weak" in Canada and many other liberal democracies. It is important to understand that "the issue is not whether the military will seize control of the government, but whether there is adequate control over what the military is doing" (Saideman, 2020, p. 120). The prime minister and the MND are the primary civilian agents of control over the military, with the public, media, parliament, and civilian defence experts playing a minor and, as he puts it, "inconsistent" role (Ibid.). As Saideman also points out, "civilian control of the military is difficult" and "if politicians do not pay adequate attention, they can be accused of abdicating their responsibility" (Ibid., p. 121). Considering this basic insight that in Canada there is relatively *weak* civilian control over the military, how can the most be made of Arbour's recommendations? Drawing on her recommendations, what can be done to strengthen civilian control?

First, her recommendation about external monitoring can be enhanced. For example, instead of going with just one external monitor, oversight could be strengthened by establishing an external monitoring committee made up of diverse, interdisciplinary, and cross-sectional military and civilian voices. It is also crucial to extend the mandate of the external monitor to go beyond a "report card" writer who checks boxes on implementation.

For example, the external monitor may note that recommendation 5, which states that all Criminal Code sexual offenses should be placed under exclusive civilian jurisdiction, has been fulfilled, but what if it turns out that this is not actually better for victims/survivors? What can be put in place to track the cases over the next five years and to properly understand the consequences for those harmed? Arbour writes that the military police will receive a shadow copy of ongoing cases and the relevant Commanding Officer will be informed, so that information should be available, but how can it be tracked for analysis? Is this something the external monitor could keep an eye on? The minister should give an external monitor the authority to criticize implementation and go beyond the minimum threshold for implementing the recommendations. Secondly, meaningful change requires a rethinking of military-civilian relations, with thoughtful exchange and reflection from military and civilian sides, and a willingness on both sides—military and civilian—to engage in uncomfortable and difficult conversations.

Military and civilian spheres struggle with similar issues, but the challenges are amplified in the military due to its exceptional and insular position, but perhaps also because civilians are mostly disengaged from military issues. Often, military and civilian worlds are seen as oppositional and incompatible, rather than necessarily working in collaboration. The question is not only one of how the military can become more civilianized but how civilians can become more engaged in military issues. Thus, civilians will need to understand how sexism, misogyny, colonialism, racism, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia have operated across military and civilian lines (see Eichler et al., 2022).

Often, military and civilian worlds are seen as oppositional and incompatible, rather than necessarily working in collaboration. The question is not only one of how the military can become more civilianized but how civilians can become more engaged in military issues.

Ultimately, both military and civilian leaders will have to engage with a broader set of questions about the future of the Canadian military, such as: What kind of military do Canadians want and need? What should the military's main purpose and role be in the twenty-first century? What principles and values should be given emphasis in determining what the military is to do and how it is to do it? What military culture should look like in the future largely depends on how Canadians across military-civilian lines answer these questions. The MND should play a key role in facilitating this important broader national conversation.

Education and Military Colleges

In Part II of Arbour's report, under the heading of "Leadership," Arbour discusses military training, professional military education, and military colleges. In sum, she argues that although there is an "abundance of doctrinal and training materials, events have demonstrated that ethical education in the CAF continues to fall short of its objectives" with an "obvious disconnect between rhetoric and reality" due to a "misalignment between official values/ethos and practice—between what is taught and what is valued" (p. 214). She goes on to give examples of this issue at Basic Military Qualification (BMQ), Basic Military Officer Qualification (BMOQ), Joint Command and Staff Programme (JCSP), The Osside Institute, and Canada's military colleges (CMCs).

The recommendations associated with these sections include valuing and incentivizing training postings for instructors with "competence and character"; "creating a permanent cadre of skilled and professional educators and trainers" (p. 216); "releasing probationary trainees who display a clear inability to meet the ethical and cultural expectations of the CAF" (p. 217); increasing secondment to the private and governmental sectors; "implement[ing] the recommendations as described in the Deschamps report on training related to sexual offences and harassment" (p. 220); eliminating the CMC "Cadet Wing responsibility and authority command structure" (p. 226); and, "conduct[ing] a detailed review of the benefits, disadvantages and costs...to educate ROTP [Regular Officer Training Plan] cadets at the military college" which would include considering different models of training as well as "address[ing] the long-standing culture concerns unique to the military college environment, including the continuing misogynistic and discriminatory environment and the ongoing incidence of sexual misconduct" (p. 234). We argue that any assessment of "competence and character," "ethical and cultural expectations," "training related to sexual offences and harassment," or a review of the CMCs will not bring cultural change if conducted through a narrow professional ethical lens. This lens is a key reason why efforts to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct in the past have failed.

The CAF's hierarchical hypermasculine sexualized culture, with a focus on uniformity and obedience, is one that promotes gender and other forms of discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual assault (Taber, 2020). Therefore, the culture itself must be critically examined and discussed in training and education. For instance, the CAF's previous leadership doctrine, *Duty with Honour: The Profession of Arms in Canada*, promoted the values of duty, loyalty, integrity, and courage. This ethos may seem to be positive, but the ways in which it is operationalized in the text and related policies privilege a specific type of military member who is perceived as fitting into a warrior ideal: one who is male, masculine, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, and white (Taber, 2009, 2020, 2022). Those outside this ideal are more likely to be viewed as not dedicated to the organization and not capable of contributing to what is perceived as the core of military service—combat—and are discriminated against at individual and organizational levels. We argue that associated training about the ethos has done exactly as it has intended—meet policy requirements without changing military culture or practices.

The military ethos is not a neutral professional one, but a hegemonic one that values militarized masculinity (Taber, 2009). Gender and other forms of discrimination and harassment are accepted and even expected, which creates an atmosphere in which sexual assault is more likely to occur (Deschamps, 2015; Taber, 2020). The most recent iteration of the ethos, *The Canadian Armed Forces Ethos: Trusted to Serve*, appears to change the rhetoric to one that is more inclusive and accepting—even welcoming—of diversity; however, the intersection of *Trusted to Serve* with the Universality of Service policy may continue to organizationally discriminate against women and diverse peoples, especially in conjunction with the primacy that continues to be given to operations and operators (Taber, 2022). This new ethos and the associated policies (i.e., dress instructions) are an important step in moving towards culture change but, without structural intervention and related education, are unlikely to change the way members think and act in relation to women and diverse peoples.

Arbour's 29th recommendation calls for "a combination of Defence Team members and external experts, led by an external education specialist, ...[to] conduct a detailed review..." of the CMCs. However, as this review would include addressing "the continuing misogynistic and discriminatory environment and the ongoing incidence of sexual misconduct" (p. 234), we argue that it must be conducted through a feminist intersectional trauma-informed lens.

Research and memoirs by military officers who attended CMCs demonstrate the pervasiveness of gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual assault (Armstrong, 2019; Dececchi et al., 1998; Scoppio et al., 2022; Taber, 2005, 2007, 2011, 2020; Thompson, 2019). What Naval and Officer Cadets (N/OCdts) learn at military colleges does not equate to being a good Officer. Cadets learn to accept and conform to a sexist environment by valuing a masculine (warrior) ideal.

Therefore, it is essential that any review team focuses on what and how cadets learn formally and informally, in all aspects of college life, with particular attention on gendered, racialized, abled, heteronormative, and colonial aspects. Such a review team must have a sociological understanding of military culture with theoretical conceptualizations and analytical skills in the context of the scholarly discipline of adult education which, particularly in Canada, takes a social justice approach to learning and education, and can also be applied to military contexts (Hampson & Taber, 2020).

The review team must problematize aspects of college life that have heretofore been considered as sacrosanct, such as the ways in which 1st years are inculcated into the colleges by the 3rd and 4th years in charge of them, particularly during the First Year Orientation Program (FYOP) (previously called Recruit Term) as well as formal and informal rites of passage (i.e., constant surveillance, separation from other cadet years and civilians, obstacle course, Old Brigade with badging ceremony, mess dinners where heavy drinking is expected).

The ways in which these activities intersect with the social construction of N/OCdt identity and their related connections to discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual assault must be examined and addressed. Furthermore, it is critical that military personnel intellectually engage with feminist intersectional anti-oppression theories.

Organizations tend to focus on streamlining concepts with models and infographics; while this streamlining can serve a purpose in communicating information, it too often results in a surface-level understanding. In order for CAF culture change to occur, military personnel must first understand and agree that it is needed (Brown, 2021) through learning about how societal and institutional ruling relations privilege certain types of people over others—particularly in military organizations in general and the CAF in particular—and can also illuminate paths to organizational change.

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Universality of Service

Another of Arbour's recommendations addresses the Universality of Service policy, or soldier-first principle, which mandates that, with few exceptions, "CAF members must at all times and under any circumstances perform any function that they may be required to perform" which "includes, but is not limited to, the requirement to be physically fit, employable, and deployable for general operational duties" (p. 259). Arbour explains that this principle disproportionately affects those who have experienced sexual misconduct and have PTSD or other related injuries as well as women who are "often over-represented in medical temporary and permanent categories" (p. 260). This order continues to promote a warrior ideal which benefits able-bodied men who have a (typically female civilian) spouse to care for the home and any children; as such, it is a structural form of discrimination embedded in CAF policy and norms (Taber, 2009, 2020, 2022). Arbour's report demonstrates that current revisions to Universality of Service "include[e] only modest changes" (260) and must "go beyond formal equality" (p. 260). Recommendation 37 calls to "...review universality of service through a GBA+ lens and update it to ensure that women and sexual misconduct victims are treated fairly, taking into account their particular situation and risk factors" (p. 260). We argue that this recommendation is important but insufficient.

The Universality of Service policy legally discriminates against women (through family status), those with disabilities, and those with certain religions (connected to race), including those with intersectional identities, as well as other identity factors such as 2SLGBTQIA+. To decrease sexual harassment and sexual assault in the CAF, gender and other forms of discrimination must be eliminated. Adaptive career paths and office jobs that do not need to conform to the soldier-first expectation could be created with some form of dual track, incorporating ideas such as a fourth force, auxiliary force, or line and staff positions, which would allow for broader military membership. These options should concomitantly affect conceptions of who an ideal military member is, beyond the current and limited warrior ideal, to one that is more inclusive.

Strategies for Change:

Towards a Focus on Health and Healing of Impacted Members

Justice Arbour's recommendations, in addition to others that have preceded her, are in response to serious ruptures in the social fabric of military culture, an institutional betrayal leading to moral injury that should give Canadians pause. It is time for the CAF, the defence community, politicians, and the Canadian public to engage with the report seriously. If a national institution like the CAF continues to present strategies for social change in ways that only focus on the individual, or an approach which targets "a few bad apples," or is constantly seeking "buy-in," the organization will fail structurally because it will not be able to respond to the nuanced ways in which discrimination takes place for its most marginalized members, who are impacted by larger systems of power.

What is needed is a disruption of the status quo that avoids constantly responding to crises and instead centres grievances stemming from the margins. Otherwise, those impacted by interconnected structures of sexism, racism, and homophobia, in addition to other intersections of power, will continue to be unrecognized and sidelined by the institution. Diversity and inclusion initiatives in their current form are not able to capture the complex lived experiences of service members, and will continue to serve as mere distractions.

According to George's (2018, 2020) qualitative research on service members in the CAF, equity-seeking groups often make concessions to belong and reproduce the status quo, but at what cost? According to Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC), women are more likely than men to report a difficult adjustment to civilian life. Based on a 2016 study, female veterans had higher odds of living with a disability, reported a lower quality of life than males, and had a higher prevalence of mental health conditions (Hachey et al., 2016).

In 2017, VAC indicated that the ratio of female veterans who commit suicide compared with women in the Canadian general population is higher than for men, but they did not provide research on other communities (Simkus et al., 2017). Most recently, the Lionel Desmond Inquiry cited that systemic failures and racism were partly to blame for the tragic chain of events that led the Afghanistan war veteran to kill his family and himself in 2017. Ruben Coward, a former serviceman in the Royal Canadian Air Force and now a community activist, has stated, “Complex PTSD is not only caused by war. Racism is a war that (Black, Indigenous and people of colour) are fighting” (The Canadian Press, 2022). In doing so, Coward challenges the military’s implicit warrior ideal. Furthermore, too often the focus in addressing issues is on holding individuals legally accountable for harm done, rather than on enabling healing for those harmed. Forcing victims through legal proceedings (i.e., police interviews, court testimony) often causes re-traumatization. Once the case is over, those harmed are typically not offered a viable path to healing.

These examples require thinking about health and wellness in relation to intersectionality more deeply, and engaging with how larger structures of power, such as colonialism, patriarchy, and white supremacy, have an impact on individual experiences of discrimination. Key questions include: How is the CAF/DND reproducing harm? Who is focused on in the implementation of these recommendations? How might the CAF/DND move from a problem-solving and crisis management response to one that is proactive and focuses on the health, wellbeing, and restorative healing of service members? Given the nature of these complex issues, culture change cannot solely rely on “image work” (Ahmed, 2012), that is, work that makes an institution appear welcoming and diverse, where attempts at social change continue to shield institutions from meaningful, integrated structural change and social transformation.

Instead, what is needed is an approach that empowers the impacted individual and gives them agency. It is important to recognize the differences between 1) restorative justice (getting the offender to recognize the full consequences of their actions), 2) restorative engagement as per the Heyder-Beattie Final Settlement Agreement (getting the organization to recognize how harm occurred), and 3) restorative healing (centering the harmed individual and creating paths to healing with the individual having agency to select the one they want to follow). Moving forward, there must be more emphasis on the third approach of restorative healing that empowers the impacted individual and prioritizes their needs over the needs of institution.

As Canadians emerge from a global pandemic, we are currently witnessing social, economic, and health inequities being experienced by many. Presently, Canadian institutions are revisiting and reevaluating their relationship to health, wellness, and work in relation to their employees. Culture change has become the buzz word for much of institutional life, particularly with respect to the implementation of equity issues. Fundamental meaningful culture change for the CAF would improve the health, wellness, and inclusion of its most vulnerable members by challenging the core power relations that have resulted in harm to service members. By addressing Arbour's recommendations in this way, we can begin to create a vision for the CAF that challenges existing power relations, centers those on the margins, and gets to the root causes of harm. At the core, meaningful and sustained culture change is inextricably linked to the health and wellness of people in the organization.

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Conclusion

This paper has engaged with the recommendations of the Arbour report, offering additional considerations and suggestions for advancing culture change in the military. We have argued that political accountability and oversight are a key precondition for addressing the systemic harm done to women and diverse members within the military system, which has historically led to inequitable and detrimental short- and long-term health and wellbeing outcomes for minority populations. However, addressing harm and inequitable outcomes requires more than “adding” more women (and other historically underrepresented groups), or adding more “training.” It requires fundamentally rethinking foundational building blocks of military culture such as the masculinized warrior ideal and its intersection with relations of power and systems of oppression built on sexism, misogyny, racism, colonialism, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism.

We need to not only revise existing CAF ideals, norms, and practices to make them more inclusive of difference, but to explicitly learn about and challenge the underlying structures of power and oppression on which the military, like broader Canadian state and society, are built.

While the warrior ideal is currently being revised, its new incarnations based on inclusion and respect still reproduce implicit assumptions about who is an ideal soldier: the soldier who is fit, available 24/7, deployable, resilient, and unencumbered, which once again privileges cisgender, straight, able-bodied white men. Moving forward, we need to not only revise existing CAF ideals, norms, and practices to make them more inclusive of difference, but to explicitly *learn about and challenge* the underlying structures of power and oppression on which the military, like broader Canadian state and society, are built. We also need to recognize the negative impacts of military culture on men in addition to women, and stop conflating military sexual misconduct with women, in order to reimagine what the military’s gender order should look like in the future.

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