



Applying Women, Peace, and Security in the Intelligence Community: Integrating Gendered Perspectives into Intelligence Analysis

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Applying Women, Peace, and Security in the Intelligence Community: Integrating
Gendered Perspectives into Intelligence Analysis

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A Thesis in the Field of International Relations
for the Degree of Master of Liberal Arts in Extension Studies

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Abstract

The Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) framework serves as a set of guiding principles essential for effective integration of gender perspectives into the intelligence community, aligning with the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 imperative that women assume a pivotal role in conflict prevention worldwide. Limited initiatives have been undertaken to implement this framework, and the United States has predominantly directed its WPS efforts externally, utilizing it as a diplomatic instrument rather than embracing it internally as a national security imperative. This research delves into the historical integration of women into the intelligence community, specifically in the capacity as intelligence analysts, highlighting the psychological, social, and cognitive differences between men and women that underscores the necessity of integrating the WPS framework within the IC. These differences contribute to a richer, deeper, more comprehensive understanding of intelligence and substantiate the assertion that the adoption of WPS principles within the IC stands to only strengthen our national security.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to all of the women who have served, are currently serving, and who will serve in the U.S. Intelligence Community.

Acknowledgments

To Donna, my first example of feminism and my constant champion. Thank you for the years of creativity and quiet inspiration. To Alex and Melissa, thank you for the strength and encouragement you have provided throughout this process. Here's to becoming crazy old ladies together. To my partner in life, Christian, thank you for providing the space and the occasional kick in the pants I needed to complete this journey. Your constant belief in me is the only reason I have made it this far.

To Sebastian, my reason for everything. Thank you for the study breaks and sharing with me the joy of fractions and nuclear physics. Never lose your love of learning and wonder at all of the things this world holds. I love you to the moon and back.

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Chapter I.

Introduction

It is not the intelligent woman v. the ignorant woman; nor the white woman v. the black, the brown, or the red. Nay, tis woman's strongest vindication for speaking that the world needs to hear her voice.

—Anna Julia Cooper

Inherent in the name, Women, Peace, and Security, lies the recognition that women constitute an indispensable facet of a nation's security apparatus. As laid out in the Women, Peace and Security Act of 2017, a discernable gap exists in the global representation of women within the sphere of conflict prevention, a deficit that extends to the United States. We understand, “the meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention [...] helps to promote more inclusive and democratic societies and is critical to the long-term stability of countries and regions.”¹ Nevertheless, should the United States aspire to become the “global leader in promoting the meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention,”² our focus must originate domestically, specifically within the intelligence community.

The principal objective of the intelligence community resides in the protection of the United States, encompassing the dual aims of preempting adversarial actions that might take the government by surprise and forestalling conflicts with the nation's sovereign borders. Beyond safeguarding domestic interests, entities within the US

¹ Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017, Pub. L. No. 115–68, 1 (2017).

² Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017.

intelligence community engage in collaborative efforts with analogous organizations in allied nations, facilitating the reciprocal exchange of information and provisioning of security assistance to foreign jurisdictions. Within this context, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence offers a definitional framework for intelligence, characterizing it as, “information gathered within or outside the U.S. that involves threats to our nation, its people, property, or interests; development, proliferations, or use of weapons of mass destruction; and any other matter bearing on the U.S. national or homeland security.”³

Historically, women have assumed an integral role within the intelligence apparatus. This was particularly pronounced during World War I, a period marked by the absence of formalized intelligence functions within the United States, and World War II, which saw the establishment of structured intelligence services tasked with countering the technological strides achieved by Axis forces. During this time, women played a foundational role in the realms of data collection and analysis. Working alongside eminent male minds in the disciplines of mathematics, linguistics, science, engineering, and computing, women actively contributed to the security of Allied troops and the disruption of Axis initiatives. Post conflict, while the majority of women departed the labor force, the intelligence community retained a substantial female workforce.⁴

Today, women hold positions at every level within the intelligence community. However, despite years of contribution and serving in the most influential positions within intelligence, women have far less influence on intelligence outcomes than their male peers. Modern initiatives aimed at increasing the number of women, minorities, and

³ Office of the Director of National Intelligence. “What Is Intelligence?,” n.d. <https://www.dni.gov/index.php/what-we-do/what-is-intelligence>.

⁴ R, Jacqueline. “The Petticoat Panel: The 1953 Study of the Role of Women in the CIA Career Service.” Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2003.

disabled workers continue to fall dismally short of Congressionally mandated benchmarks.⁵ But even if the intelligence community were to successfully meet their aim of employing a female population of 30% or greater, their efforts are fruitless without the acknowledgement of gendered perspectives and the integration of those perspectives into the analytic framework.

⁵ Miner, Michael, and Lindsay Temes. “*The Past, Present, and Future of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the American Intelligence Community*.” Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. April 2022. 5.

Chapter II.

Research Methods

Since its initiation in 2017, the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda in the United States has predominantly centered its implementation efforts on the Department of Defense and the Department of State. Limited emphasis has been placed on other government domains, as WPS is often perceived as an exportable initiative, with diversity, equity, and inclusion as the internal impetus for gender-informed perspectives. This work directs its attention towards assessing the ramifications of integrating WPS principles within the national security framework of the United States, specifically examining its potential impact on the tangible security of the nation.

Understanding the full scope of the predicament at hand, along with its prospective resolutions, necessitates a methodical investigation rooted in a multidisciplinary framework. This research endeavors to undertake a thorough examination that integrates both the historical trajectory and evolutionary development of the Women, Peace, and Security theoretical paradigm in tandem with an examination into the historical narrative chronicling the engagement of women within the Intelligence Community (IC). This information is necessary to provide context to the analysis presented in this paper.

The definitions of intelligence are diverse and characterized by broad philosophical nuances, making it challenging to encounter consensus among intelligence community members regarding a definition. The concept of intelligence is explored through a deep dive into the descriptions and definitions of intelligence published by multiple intelligence agencies and practitioners with the aim to distill it down into a

single, all-encompassing definition capable of withstanding the application of the WPS framework.

A scrutiny of the analytic process within the domain of intelligence establishes a foundation for examining differences in the analytic and cognitive functions between men and women. Drawing upon literature from psychology, neurology, sociology, and behavioral science, this investigation explores the parallels and divergences in information processing, decision making, problem analysis, communication, and team interaction among men and women. Subsequently, case studies are then analyzed applying the WPS framework to determine the significance of gender differences in information analysis and to determine whether a recommendation for the implementation of WPS across the intelligence community is justified.

The transformative impact of gendered viewpoints in the formulation of policy and allocation of resources is a subject that has not undergone comprehensive scrutiny and it stands to reason that, given the considerable influence exerted by gendered perspectives on domains spanning international relations, domestic affairs, economics, and societal constructs, the repercussions of such perspectives may extend into the realm of national security.

Methodologies

The following section outlines the systematic approach undertaken to conduct this research. This section attempts to illuminate the path undertaken to gather evidence and also highlights the conscious decisions made in navigating the challenges inherent in this topic.

Literature Review/Primary Sources

The primary sources used in this thesis research include the following.

United Nations. The United Nations forged the path into WPS with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) in the year 2000. This study employs UNSCR 1325 and all subsequent WPS Security Council Resolutions as a foundational platform and the principal basis for examining the integration WPS framework into the domain of national security.

United States. The United States possesses a singular governing document pertaining to Women, Peace, and Security serving as the foundational framework guiding all government entities in their WPS endeavors. This document constitutes the focal point of reference in my research, wherein I will assess its applicability to intelligence analysis within the overarching context of national security.

Psychology, Neurology, Sociology, and Behavioral Science. An examination of psycho-social, neurological, and behavioral parallels and distinctions between genders will either corroborate or refute the effectiveness of the WPS framework within the intelligence domain. Limited research has been conducted at the intersection of the social sciences, gender studies, and intelligence, making this inquiry an exploration into uncharted territory.

Secondary Sources

Intelligence agencies are mandated to declassify documents following a designated timeframe and a formal review process, with the majority of such documents subsequently archived and made accessible only by request. Online availability of these documents is limited, primarily comprising historical reports and books authored by

official historians of the organization, derived from primary sources. Due to the restricted access to primary source documents, I am reliant upon resources produced by other scholars who had the privilege of accessing these primary materials.

Research Limitations

The realm of intelligence analysis is murky, and few individuals possess direct access. In this instance, the use of information gathered from primary sources is problematic because of classification issues. Careful presentation of data becomes imperative to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of sources and methods, while simultaneously upholding academic rigor.

Academic resources do not present a wholly precise depiction of the operational methodologies employed by intelligence agencies, a deliberate obfuscation that serves a legitimate purpose. Such limitations in information can hide factual details, posing potential challenges in analyzing the optimal application of the WPS framework within the intelligence community.

Chapter III.

Background

This chapter discusses Women, Peace, and Security in general and Women's Participation in the Intelligence Community in particular.

Women, Peace, and Security

The theoretical framework of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) finds its origins in the acknowledgement of women's pivotal contributions to the domains of peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and post-conflict reconstruction. This theoretical construct has materialized as a global initiative to address the gendered impacts of armed conflicts, advance the active participation of women in decision-making processes, and to safeguard women's rights during conflict and its aftermath. The evolution of the WPS paradigm has a condensed but robust history as international policy starting in the year 2000 with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325).

UNSCR 1325, adopted unanimously in October of 2000, stands as a pioneering and watershed proclamation in international policy. It secured the position as the inaugural directive to explicitly acknowledge the disproportionate impact of armed conflict upon women, underscoring the imperative to ensure their active participation in the peace process. Central to the mandates enshrined in UNSCR 1325 is the stipulation for the engagement of women across all levels of decision-making, alongside provisions for the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence in conflict zones. Moreover, the resolution underscores the imperative to weave gender-oriented

perspectives into the framework of peacebuilding efforts.⁶ In 2004, the UN Secretary-General released a comprehensive report delineating the progress in the implementation of UNSCR 1325, highlighting the need for heightened attention toward women's roles vis-à-vis conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Notably, this report emphasized the significance of including women in peace negotiations, peacekeeping missions, and post-conflict reconstruction.⁷

As a means to address gender disparities and women's empowerment, the United Nations established UN Women in July 2010 as a pivotal organizational entity within the UN framework. UN Women assumed a principal role in fostering the implementation of UNSCR 1325 alongside other gender-centric initiatives. Building upon the foundation established by UNSCR 1325, the Security Council progressed further by adopting Resolution 1820 in June 2008.⁸ This subsequent resolution marked a significant stride, acknowledging sexual violence as an instrument of war and demanding an end to sexual violence in armed conflicts. It also called for accountability for perpetrators and the provision of comprehensive support mechanisms for survivors.

In September 2009, the Security Council passed Resolution 1888, which served to reiterate the commitments delineated in UNSCR 1820. Resolution 1888 advocated the incorporation of gender advisors within peacekeeping missions, as well as the strengthening of legal frameworks tailored to address instances of sexual violence, and the establishment of specialized units tasked with the investigation and prosecution of

⁶ Resolution 1325 (2000).

⁷ United Nations. "Women, Peace and Security: Study Submitted by the Secretary-General Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)." New York: United Nations, 2002.

⁸ Resolution 1820 (2008). [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/391/44/PDF/N0839144.pdf?OpenElement](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/391/44/PDF/N0839144.pdf?OpenElement).

crimes involving sexual violence.⁹ A subsequent resolution, UNSCR 1960, adopted in December 2010, was distinctly oriented towards accountability for sexually violent offenses. It emphasized the need for justice and urged member states to strengthen their legal frameworks, increase access to justice for survivors, and facilitate the participation of women in the justice and security sectors.¹⁰ Furthermore, UNSCR 2242, adopted in October 2015, was formulated with the goal of strengthening the implementation of the WPS agenda. This resolution underscored the importance of women's participation within conflict prevention, mediation, and peacebuilding processes. The resolution emphasized the necessity for increased funding to bolster gender equality initiatives and called for the appointment of more women in leadership positions within the UN system.¹¹

Women's Participation in the Intelligence Community

Observed within the broad context of human history, the United States Intelligence Community (USIC) is juvenile. Despite its youth, the USIC has undergone substantial transformation since its formal establishment in 1947. US presidents resisted efforts to create centralized intelligence organizations until the end of World War II, which led to a patchwork of fragmented initiatives spearheaded by various military departments to fill information gaps that existed during World Wars I and II. Women

⁹ Resolution 1888 (2009). <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N09/534/46/PDF/N0953446.pdf?OpenElement>.

¹⁰ Resolution 1960 (n.d.). <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N10/698/34/PDF/N1069834.pdf?OpenElement>.

¹¹ Resolution 2242 (n.d.). <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N15/311/09/PDF/N1531109.pdf?OpenElement>.

played an integral part in the work done in these piecemeal offices, though their efforts went largely unmentioned for decades.

Women in World War I

Women played a consequential role as telephone operators during World War I. While not a traditional intelligence gathering role, their efforts had a massive effect on the outcome of the war. Deemed far more efficient and reliable than enlisted men, female telephone operators were able to accurately connect battlefield commanders, gather and relay information, and provide essential translation services, all while on or near the front lines.

The Signal Corps Female Telephone Operators Unit, encompassing a cohort of 223 women, operated telephone systems across military bases and command centers within France. These women worked tirelessly over long hours under adverse conditions, their indispensable role instrumental in the seamless functioning of the AEF communications architecture.¹²

Women in World War II

Women also occupied a pivotal role in the intelligence community during World War II. They worked in both military and civilian domains, and their contributions held profound implications for the ultimate triumph of the Allied forces. Among the most consequential contributions made by women to the intelligence community during the second world war was their involvement in cryptography. Cryptanalysis, the art of

¹² Frahm, Jill. "Women Telephone Operators in World War I France." *Center for Cryptologic History*, 2016.

breaking codes, emerged as a critical asset, allowing the Allies to read enemy communications and gain a strategic advantage.¹³ Women were particularly adept at this work because of their intrinsic acumen for pattern recognition and skill at detail-oriented tasks.

A noteworthy figure representative of the role women had within the field of cryptanalysis was Genevieve Grotjan. As a civilian working in the Signals Intelligence Service (SIS), Genevieve broke the Japanese code known as “Purple” in 1940, allowing the Allies to read Japanese diplomatic messages for the duration of the war. Her work is credited with playing a crucial role in shortening the duration of the war by several years.¹⁴

Women During the Cold War

Following the culmination of World War II, a significant number of women exited the labor force with the intent to provide employment opportunities for returning servicemen. This post-war transition prompted a substantial departure of women from the intelligence community, although a sufficient number chose to remain within the newly formed National Security Agency (NSA) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to make their mark on the community. Within this context, Operation VENONA was one project where women made significant contributions.

Initiated in 1943, Operation VENONA predates the formation of the National Security Agency, which subsequently assumed oversight of the project following 1947.

¹³ Wilcox, Jennifer. *Sharing the Burden: Women in Cryptology during World War II*. Center for Cryptologic History, 2013.

¹⁴ Wilcox. *Sharing the Burden*.

The initial intelligence agent assigned to the project was Gene Grabeel, a former schoolteacher turned cryptanalyst. In 1944 three women, Cecil Phillips, Genevieve Feinstein, and Lucille Campbell, broke the KGB cipher. Women working on Operation VENONA were instrumental in decrypting and translating Soviet diplomatic communications which provided valuable intelligence about Soviet espionage activities in the United States during the Cold War. Their efforts culminated in the exposure of prominent KGB operatives such as Klaus Fuchs, Harry Gold, David Greenglass, and Theodore Hall.

Female cryptanalysts Mildred Hays, Angela Nanni, and Janice Cram continued efforts on Operation VENONA until its dissolution in 1980. The VENONA project yielded substantial intelligence success, and the women who worked on it made significant contributions.¹⁵ Their collective endeavors were instrumental in protecting the United States from Soviet espionage and, ultimately, win the Cold War.

Women in the Modern Intelligence Community

Today, women hold positions at every level within the intelligence community, including occupying the highest seat of leadership. However, the craft of intelligence analysis has predominantly retained its historical characteristics, reminiscent of the turn of the 20th century. The contributions of women within the field, while well documented, are primarily confined to technical fields such as translation and cryptography, two disciplines that require attention to detail but little application of critical thinking and analytic skill.

¹⁵ Benson, Robert L. *The VENONA Story*. Center for Cryptologic History, 2019.

The 2021 Intelligence Community (IC) Annual Demographic Report reaffirmed the strategic imperative outlined by the Office of the Director of National Security (ODNI), which aims to build a workforce that will “leverage the talent and perspectives of diverse backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints.”¹⁶ This objective seeks to foster an intelligence community characterized by a “workforce who thinks differently, sees problems differently, and overcomes challenges differently.”¹⁷ One method proposed for realizing this overarching objective is met involves the application of the Women, Peace, and Security framework to the process of intelligence analysis.

¹⁶ “Annual Demographic Report: Hiring and Retention of Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities in the United States Intelligence Community,” 2021.

¹⁷ “Annual Demographic Report: Hiring and Retention.

Chapter IV

Intelligence

The concept of intelligence exhibits multifaceted characteristics that vary in definition across diverse sources. In general, intelligence refers to the capacity for learning, reasoning, problem solving, and adapting to new situations. It involves the ability to acquire and apply knowledge, understand complex ideas, and engage in critical thinking. Ultimately, the meaning of the word “intelligence” is context driven depending on the field of inquiry. How, then, do we define “intelligence” within the context of national security?

Misconceptions surrounding national security intelligence are prevalent, often perpetuated by individuals who work outside of the intelligence field. These misconceptions persist due to the inherent confidentiality constraints incumbent upon practitioners in the field, which hinders them from dispelling such rumors. A comprehensive understanding of the nuanced definitions of national security intelligence is crucial for comprehending the pivotal role it plays, and if we are to examine how a feminine perspective affects national security intelligence it is imperative that we define exactly what is meant by the term, “intelligence.”

Definition of Intelligence

From a conventional military perspective, intelligence predominantly centers on the assessment of military threats. Organizations like the Department of Defense commonly characterize intelligence as information pertaining to the capabilities,

intentions, and activities of foreign adversaries, particularly in the context of military operations. This viewpoint underscores the contribution of intelligence in supporting defense strategies and informing military decision-making processes, thereby exhibiting a discernably limited scope, that focuses primarily on military threats rather than encompassing a comprehensive range of issues.^{18,19}

A more expansive definition of intelligence emerges when adopting a holistic security framework. This perspective, often advocated by scholars specializing in security studies, transforms the definition beyond conventional military considerations. It encompasses a diverse array of threats, including economic, environmental, and societal dimensions. This approach posits intelligence as a mechanism for anticipating and mitigating various risks that may affect a nation's stability and overall well-being.^{20, 21}

Increasingly, emphasis in the intelligence community has had a discernable shift towards homeland security and counterterrorism. Agencies such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) define intelligence within the framework of preventing terrorist attacks and safeguarding the homeland. The Department of Homeland Security articulates that intelligence is “the process by which specific information is collected, evaluated, analyzed and disseminated for the purpose of short-term and long-term threat assessment, providing early warning, supporting security operations, and guiding national security policy.”²²

¹⁸ Army. “Military Intelligence,” n.d. ikn.army.mil/apps/IKNHostedWebsites/Home/LoadPublishedPage?PageUID=0c8d5824-6649-4b2e-9895-ba5a277ef2f4.

¹⁹ RAND. “Military Intelligence,” n.d. <https://www.rand.org/topics/military-intelligence.html>.

²⁰ Federation of American Scientists. “Intelligence Cycle,” n.d. <https://irp.fas.org/cia/product/facttell/intcycle.htm>.

²¹ International Association for Intelligence Education. “Intelligence Cycle,” n.d. <https://iafie.org>.

²² Department of Homeland Security. “Intelligence,” n.d. <https://www.dhs.gov>.

While intelligence agencies proffer definitions of intelligence that serve as guiding principles for their operations, there is still significant debate as to whether intelligence is a product or an action.²³ Martin T. Bimford addressed this issue in his internal paper, “A Definition of Intelligence,” declassified by the CIA in 1994. He compares the act of defining the word intelligence to “making a microscopic portrait of a continent.”²⁴ It certainly appears that Bimford is correct when the myriad definitions available to us are compiled. No two dictionaries have the same definition, and every agency within the intelligence community has a different focus on the form and function of the concept.

As an example, the National Security Agency (NSA) adopts a specific focus on signals intelligence (SIGINT), and this specialization is distinctly reflected on NSA’s definition of intelligence. Their definition of intelligence is “the collection, processing, analysis, and dissemination of information and intelligence data for foreign intelligence and counterintelligence purposes.”²⁵ Notably absent from their definition are references to threat assessment, early warning, or national security policy, elements that are encompassed within the definition employed by the Department of Homeland Security, and yet, intelligence provided by NSA undoubtedly effectively contributes to these aspects.

Historically, the concept of intelligence was defined only as information that policy makers use to make informed decisions about national security, defense, and foreign policy. This broad definition faced censure by Wilhelm Agrell of the University

²³ Martin T. Bimford. “A Definition of Intelligence.” Central Intelligence Agency. 1995

²⁴ Martin T. Bimford. “A Definition of Intelligence.” 1.

²⁵ National Security Agency. www.nsa.gov.

of Lund in Sweden. In his speech titled, “When everything is intelligence-nothing is intelligence” Agrell contended that the broad nature of the definition of intelligence impeded the professionalization of the field. He proposed a refined definition, positing intelligence as information imbued with an inherent element of uncertainty, with the management and exploitation of such uncertainty constituting the primary intellectual activity.²⁶ While acknowledging the veracity that intelligence involves information characterized by a measure of uncertainty, Agrell’s formulation lacks a succinct encapsulation suitable for practical use by both practitioners and theorists.

Consensus among the intelligence agencies acknowledges intelligence as an inclusive construct, encompassing the systematic processes of information collection, analysis, evaluation, and dissemination. This multifaceted approach equips policymakers and security agencies with the requisite tools to make well-informed decisions, protect the nation’s interests, and respond effectively to a diverse range of threats. Intelligence operations incorporate a multitude of disciplines, sources, and methodologies, emphasizing the need for accuracy, relevance, and timeliness throughout the intelligence process.

Intelligence Cycle

The intelligence cycle serves as the foundational framework in intelligence analysis. It is a systematic and immutable process uniformly employed across all intelligence agencies. This cycle comprises multiple distinct phases, including the collection, processing, analysis, integration, and dissemination of information,

²⁶ Wilhelm Agrell. “When everything is intelligence – nothing is intelligence.” The Sherman Kent Center for Intelligence Analysis. Occasional Papers, 2002.

accompanied by feedback pertaining to the relevance and value of that information from the consumer. While not explicitly incorporated into traditional intelligence cycle models, National Intelligence University (NIU) includes direction and planning as integral components, as they guide the entire process, from collection to dissemination. Moreover, the International Association for Intelligence Education (IAFIE) expands the cycle by incorporating an execution phase, emphasizing the implementation of intelligence to achieve specific objectives.

Integrating the perspective of NIU into the intelligence cycle, the first step is direction and planning. Direction comes from the National Intelligence Priority Framework (NIPF), based upon the President's National Security Strategy. Planning encompasses the strategic allocation of collection methods, platforms, and personnel to target the highest priority objectives and safeguard the highest priority assets. Direction and planning are dynamic and evolve based on world events, national disasters, and changes in administrative leadership.

The collection phase involves "the acquisition of information from a variety of sources, including human sources (HUMINT), technical sensors (SIGINT, IMINT), and open-source materials (OSINT)."²⁷ A critical determinant in the information collection process is the legality of the method employed to collect. U.S. citizens are afforded specific legal protections regardless of where they are located globally. Additionally, a set of laws governs the collection of information within U.S. sovereign territory, whether that is within the borders of the United States, on a protectorate, or within an embassy.

²⁷ Central Intelligence Agency. "Intelligence Collection," n.d. <https://www.cia.gov>.

A secondary but crucial consideration is the necessity of the information.

Ensuring that the collected information fulfills a specific intelligence requirement is vital and responsibility falls upon intelligence planners as they strategize the locations and timing of collection efforts.²⁸ It is rare that information gathered proves relevant without a communicated, specific need. The notion perpetuated by Hollywood where the intelligence agent stumbles upon a piece of information that just happens to avert a global crisis is not only fictional, but also entirely implausible. Collection operations are guided by highly specific goals and objectives and closely adhered-to rules.

The processing phase involves the transformation of raw data into a format that is usable and meaningful. Examples of processing activities include the development of photographs, translation of documents or conversations, and the uploading of data into a searchable database. While processing can occur concurrently with the collection phase, it predominantly occurs subsequent to the collection process, depending on the mission or objective. The information introduced into the processing system is not considered as intelligence at this stage; rather it is merely raw data lacking a defined objective.

While analysis, evaluation, and integration are distinct phases within the intelligence cycle, their operational synergy is evident. Analysis and evaluation are conducted at the office level. For example, a single intelligence agency contains hundreds of different offices all representing different mission sets or intelligence priorities. Intelligence analysts within these individual offices analyze and author reports on the processed intelligence available to them and distribute that information to a larger,

²⁸ Johnson, Loch K., and James Wirtz. *Intelligence: The Secret World of Spies*. Fifth. Oxford University Press, 2019. 54.

controlling office. That larger office takes all the analyzed information resulting from the individual missions, potentially integrating multiple types of information, i.e., SIGINT + HUMINT, to form a comprehensive intelligence product.²⁹ This product is then distributed out to external customers.

Dissemination, in this context, is synonymous with distribution. The dissemination process involves sharing information with various stakeholders across a broad range of customers. Intelligence can be conveyed through various channels, including serialized reports, briefings, secure communications channels, and electronic platforms.³⁰ The medium through which intelligence is disseminated is contingent upon the specific requirements of the recipient consumer.

All consumers of intelligence products contribute feedback to the originating agency. Typically, feedback evaluates the timeliness, relevance, and accuracy of the information presented, as well as an assessment of the overall quality of the report. Additionally, feedback provides insight into information gaps and weaknesses, facilitation adjustments by those overseeing the information collection process.

The intelligence cycle operates as a continuous and iterative process, wherein feedback from consumers plays a crucial role in shaping subsequent cycles. The process places an unwavering emphasis on maintaining security, protecting sources and methods, and adhering to legal and ethical considerations. It is the consistency of the process that helps make intelligence for national security reliable and “actionable” – rendering it capable of practical implementation – and it is the implementation of intelligence that protects us from our adversaries.

²⁹ Johnson, Loch K., and James Wirtz. *Intelligence: The Secret World of Spies*. 55.

³⁰ Johnson, Loch K., and James Wirtz. *Intelligence: The Secret World of Spies*. 56.

The Analytic Process

The analytic process, as expounded by Richards Heuer in his work, “Psychology of Intelligence Analysis”, constitutes the preferred methodology utilized across all United States Government agencies with an intelligence mission. Heuer advocates for the adoption of structured analytic techniques to enhance the rigor of intelligence analysis, incorporating methods such as scenario analysis and red teaming. The Heuer process places particular emphasis on the identification of and avoidance of cognitive biases, with a special focus on group think. Additionally, Heuer introduces probabilistic thinking as a method for dealing with uncertainty, assigning probabilities to various scenarios to enhance decision-making.

Heuer’s perspective on cognitive biases is characterized by a pragmatic and action-oriented approach. Rather than merely acknowledging the existence of biases, he offers proactive strategies for intelligence analysts to actively mitigate their impact. Cognitive biases refer to systematic patterns of deviation from norm or rationality in judgement, often stemming from the way the human brain processes information. Heuer underscores the importance of analysts recognizing and acknowledging their own cognitive biases, a step that is crucial for minimizing the impact of cognitive bias on the analytic process.³¹

Structured Analytic Techniques

Structured analytic techniques encompass systematic methodologies employed when approaching intelligence analysis. They provide a framework for breaking down

³¹ Heuer, Richards S. *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*. Martino Fine Books, 2019.

complex problems into manageable components.³² Their principal objective of these techniques is to enhance the analytical process, increasing the transparency and systematic nature of the analytic process, and reducing susceptibility to cognitive biases.

The intelligence community employs twelve distinct structured analytic techniques, namely red teaming, scenario analysis, indicators and warning analysis, contrarian analysis, premortem analysis, structured brainstorming, hypothesis testing, SWOT analysis, decision matrix, key assumptions check, complexity reduction, and deception detection techniques.³³ While not every technique is uniformly utilized by every analytic team on every occasion, multiple techniques are applied to each analytic product before publication and dissemination. This comprehensive approach ensures the robustness and reliability of the intelligence output.

Red teaming is a methodology that involves assigning a separate team to challenge and critique the assumptions and conclusions of the primary analytic team. This process, characterized by the introduction of a dissenting perspective, serves to reveal potential weaknesses in the analysis and uncover alternative explanations or hypothesis.³⁴

Scenario analysis constitutes a methodological approach involving the creation and analysis of multiple plausible future scenarios with the aim of assessing potential outcomes and their implications. This analytic technique helps to prepare analysts for a

³² *A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques for Improving Intelligence Analysis*. Center for the Study of Intelligence, 2009.

³³ Heuer, Richards S. *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*. 2019.

³⁴ *A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques*. 19.

range of possible futures, fostering a mindset of flexibility and adaptability in response to uncertainties and unforeseen developments.³⁵

Concentration on key indicators provided within indications and warnings analysis enhances analysts' proficiency in anticipating and responding to emerging threats or developments. Indications and warnings analysis involves the identification of specific indicators that, upon observation, may serve as warnings or early signals indicative of significant events or changes.³⁶ The deliberate scrutiny of indicators enables analysts to proactively interpret signals, thereby enhancing the capacity to mitigate potential risks and respond strategically to evolving circumstances.

Contrarian analysis, commonly called the "Devil's Advocate" approach, encourages analysts to deliberately adopt an opposing viewpoint to challenge the prevailing consensus. This method serves the purpose of uncovering underlying assumptions, biases, and weaknesses inhering in the dominant analytic perspective, fostering a more nuanced and well-rounded understanding of the information.³⁷ The intentional introduction of a dissenting stance contributes to the enhancement of analytical rigor and the cultivation of a more robust and holistic analytical framework.

Premortem analysis involves a cognitive exercise wherein analysts envision a hypothetical scenario in which a contemplated course of action has failed, and subsequently identify potential reasons for its failure. This analytic technique serves the purpose of proactively identifying potential risks and vulnerabilities that might be overlooked in a more optimistic analysis. Particularly valuable in planning military

³⁵ *A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques*. 22.

³⁶ *A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques*. 12.

³⁷ *A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques*. 17.

operations, premortem analysis offers a structured approach to anticipating and mitigating possible shortcomings, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive strategic planning process.³⁸

Structured brainstorming involves a systematic and organized approach to generating ideas and hypotheses employed within a group setting.³⁹ This technique is designed to foster creativity and diverse thinking while providing a structured framework to guide and organize the brainstorming process.

Hypothesis testing, on the other hand, involves systematically evaluating and testing various hypotheses to determine their validity. Through subjecting hypotheses to rigorous scrutiny and evidential analysis, analysts can methodically refine their understanding of complex issues, enhancing the precision and reliability of their analytic outputs.⁴⁰

SWOT analysis, short for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis, constitutes a methodological approach for examining both internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats pertaining to a particular issue or decision. This analytical tool provides a structured framework for the systematic assessment of factors that may influence the success or failure of a given course of action.

In its structure, SWOT analysis bears a resemblance to a streamlined decision matrix. A decision matrix is a systematic tool for evaluating and comparing different options based on multiple criteria. It serves as a methodical aid in decision-making by objectively weighing the pros and cons of various alternatives.

³⁸ *A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques*. 24.

³⁹ *A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques*. 27.

⁴⁰ *A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques*. 14.

Key assumptions check is a process that involves the explicit identification and evaluation of the fundamental assumptions that underly a given analysis. Through meticulous scrutinization of these assumptions, analysts aim to uncover potential vulnerabilities and ensure that their conclusions are based on solid foundations.⁴¹ This analytical step ensures that the derived insights are firmly grounded and minimizes the risk of drawing conclusions based on flawed or unreliable premises.

Complexity reduction involves the strategic process of deconstructing complex problems into simpler components, thereby facilitating a more manageable and targeted analysis. This approach, centered on simplification, enables analysts to concentrate on more effectively understanding and addressing specific aspects of a complex problem. Through systematic simplification of intricate issues, analysts enhance their ability to discern and tackle individual elements, contributing to a more nuanced and in-depth understanding of the overarching problem.

Finally, analysts can apply a technique known as deception detection. Given the pervasive nature of deception in intelligence, these techniques are instrumental in enabling analysts to critically assess the credibility of information.⁴² Analysts employ a ranking system for each information source, with 1 denoting high credibility and 5 indicating a lack of credibility. This systematic ranking facilitates analysis by assisting analysts in making determination regarding the utility of the information, aiding in the discernment as to whether the information should be incorporated or discarded based on its potential for deception or irrelevance.

⁴¹ *A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques*. 10.

⁴² *A Tradecraft Primer: Structured Analytic Techniques*. 12.

The Effects of Cognitive Bias on Intelligence Analysis

Cognitive biases play a substantive role in influencing the quality of analysis and the effectiveness of structured analytic techniques. Every individual engaged in the analytic process brings with them inherent biases that are ingrained and challenging to completely eliminate. However, acknowledging the inevitability of cognitive biases and acquiring the ability to discern and identify them contribute significantly to mitigate the impact they have on the analytic process. This awareness of cognitive biases empowers analysts to manage their presence more adeptly, fostering an objective and rigorous analytical framework.

Numerous biases exert influence over individuals' perceptions of the world, but intelligence analysts are trained to screen for specific biases, including confirmation bias, anchoring bias, availability bias, overconfidence bias, and groupthink.⁴³ Confirmation bias, for instance, manifests when analysts unconsciously seek information that aligns with pre-existing beliefs, hypotheses, or training. This inclination towards confirmation biases prompts a selective processing of information, wherein contradictory information may be overlooked. Consequently, such biased information processing undermines the objectivity of the analysis, potentially leading to flawed and unreliable conclusions.

Anchoring bias is observed in instances where analysts excessively depend on the initial piece of information encountered when formulating subsequent judgements. This cognitive bias can constrain the exploration of alternative perspectives or the incorporation of new evidence, thereby exerting an influence on the overall accuracy of the analysis. The propensity to anchor judgments to the first information encountered

⁴³ Heuer, Richards S. *Psychology of Intelligence Analysis*.

may impede the ability to adapt the analytical approach in response to evolving data or nuanced perspectives, potentially compromising the comprehensive and well-rounded nature of the analysis.

The influence of availability bias is characterized by analysts assigning disproportionate weight to information readily available to them rather than seeking out a comprehensive range of sources. This cognitive bias can lead to an incomplete or skewed understanding of the situation, as relevant but less readily available information may be overlooked or disregarded. The proclivity to rely on information readily at hand may impede the thoroughness of the analysis, limiting the consideration of diverse perspectives and potentially resulting in an analysis that lacks the necessary breadth and depth for a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. Acknowledging and mitigating availability bias is crucial for promoting a more exhaustive analytical approach.

Overconfidence bias manifests when analysts exhibit an inclination to overestimate their own abilities, resulting in an undue sense of confidence in their assessments. This cognitive bias has the potential to lead to the underestimation of uncertainties, disregard for potential alternative explanations, and a tendency to overlook the need for continuous reassessment. Particularly prevalent in analytic teams characterized by a high ratio of senior to junior analyst, overconfidence bias may be exacerbated when senior analysts lack confidence in the capabilities of their junior counterparts. This dynamic can further contribute to an environment where the potential for overconfidence among senior analysts hampers the overall analytical rigor and diminishes the receptiveness to diverse perspectives within the team.

Overcoming Cognitive Bias in Intelligence Analysis

To mitigate the influence of cognitive biases within the analytic process, analysts employ a variety of tools, the primary approach involving the utilization of structured analytic techniques. Discussed in a previous section of this chapter, these techniques offer a systematic and disciplined framework for conducting analyses, aiding in minimizing the impact of biases. Additionally, analysts employ tools such as overt devil's advocacy, multiple hypothesis generation, and critical thinking training. These supplementary approaches contribute to enhancing the objectivity and rigor of the analytical process by fostering an environment that encourages the exploration of diverse perspectives, consideration of alternative hypotheses, and the cultivation of analytical skills that actively counteract cognitive biases.

Devil's advocacy constitutes a methodological approach wherein individuals actively challenge prevailing assumptions and articulate arguments contrary to commonly held viewpoints, with the overarching objective of mitigating the deleterious effects of group think. Devil's advocacy differs from contrarian analysis as discussed in "Structured Analytic Techniques" in that it involves appointing a specific individual or group to actively challenge prevailing assumptions, decisions, or viewpoints. Contrarian analysis, on the other hand, is a broad analytical approach that encourages the consideration of alternative viewpoints and hypotheses as a regular part of the analytic process to prevent anchoring bias and myopic thinking.

Experienced analysts adeptly wield the tool of multiple hypothesis generation to counteract anchoring bias, ensuring a thorough exploration of potential explanations. By systematically considering various hypotheses, analysts actively work against the

inclination to overly rely on initial information encountered, facilitating a more nuanced and expansive understanding of complex issues. This method aligns with analytical best practices, enhancing the objectivity and depth of the analytical process, and contributes to the development of more reliable conclusions.

Ultimately, the most potent instrument within an analyst's toolkit is training in critical thinking.⁴⁴ Intelligence agencies allocate substantial financial resources to the training of their workforce, recognizing the paramount importance of fostering robust analytic capabilities. Following the events of 9/11, a heightened emphasis has been placed on instilling a culture of continuous learning. This strategic focus is driven by the imperative to preclude the recurrence of catastrophic events resulting from intelligence failures.

⁴⁴ Moore, David T. *Critical Thinking and Intelligence Analysis*. National Defense Intelligence College, 2007.

Chapter V

Gender and the Analytic Process

The discourse surrounding the inherent cognitive differences between men and women stands as an ongoing debate within the field of psychology. The prevailing consensus suggests that, while there are discernable variances in the information processing approaches employed by men and women, these disparities are generally marginal. However, I hypothesize that, despite the modest quantifiable distinctions, the consequential impact on behavior and decision-making is substantial. This conjecture asserts that the cumulative effect of these seemingly modest differences exerts a noteworthy influence on the overall analytic process, significantly shaping cognitive and behavioral outcomes.

Cognition is defined as “the mental process of knowing, including awareness, perception, reasoning, and judgment,”⁴⁵ As a subject of inquiry, gender difference and cognition has more than seventy years of extensive research science to consider. A consensus emerging from this body of research indicates discernable distinctions between men and women in various cognitive domains, to include the processing of emotions, spatial and verbal skills, risk-taking propensities, memory functions, and cognitive styles. Cognitive style, denoting an individual’s inclination toward analytical or holistic information processing, is recognized as a facet subject to influence by cultural,

⁴⁵ “Cognition.” In *The American Heritage Dictionary*, n.d. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/cognition>.

educational, and gender-related factors. The amalgamation of these findings contributes to a nuanced understanding of the landscape of cognitive disparities between genders.

The relationship between gender and cognitive style is intricate and has been subjected to exploration across various disciplines, incorporating perspectives from psychology, neuroscience, and sociology. Scholarly inquiries into this relationship reveal a nuanced understanding, indicating that cognitive style is influenced by subtle factors. Among these factors are biological and neurological distinctions⁴⁶, socio-cultural influences in the process of socialization, diverse communication styles, problem-solving methodologies, and the degree of cognitive flexibility exhibited by individuals.⁴⁷ Comprehensive study of the intricate dynamics of these factors contributes to a compelling argument asserting that women and men engage in distinctive modes of information analysis, with both approaches holding valid cognitive merit.

Research suggests that difference in hormonal composition and neurological factors play a pivotal role in delineating the variations in cognitive style between the male and female population. Cognitive function appears to be influenced by the presence and proportions of sex hormones, such as estrogen and testosterone, within the neural architecture. Studies underscore that men and women exhibit structural differences in key brain regions, suggesting these anatomical differences may have a substantive impact on the decision-making processes characteristic of each gender.⁴⁸ These findings highlight

⁴⁶ *Social and Behavioral Sciences for National Security*. Board on Behavioral, Cognitive, and Sensory Sciences. The National Academy of Sciences, 2017. 35.

⁴⁷ *Social and Behavioral Sciences for National Security*. Board on Behavioral, Cognitive, and Sensory Sciences. The National Academy of Sciences, 2017. 18.

⁴⁸ Li, Rena. "Why Women See Differently from the Way Men See? A Review of Sex Differences in Cognition and Sports." *Journal of Sport Health Science* 3, no. 3 (September 2014): 156–62. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jshs.2014.03.012>.

the intricacy and interconnectedness of hormonal, neurological, and structural elements in shaping cognitive style.

Scientific inquiry into the cognitive differences between men and women necessitates an acknowledgement of the profound influence exerted by social and cultural factors on their respective perspectives and information processing mechanisms. Gender roles and societal expectations emerge as pivotal determinants capable of significantly influencing cognitive styles. From an early age, individuals are subjected to a milieu of cultural norms and stereotypes that delineate what is deemed as appropriate behaviors for males and females. This process of socialization serves as a potent force in molding cognitive styles through diverse mechanisms, including the types of toys provided to children, the activities they are encouraged to engage in, and the societal and familial expectations imposed upon them. The recognition and examination of these intricate social and cultural dynamics are essential components in comprehending the factors contributing to the observed cognitive variations between genders.

The methodologies employed in problem-solving processes are intricately entwined with gender norms, reflecting both biological predispositions and cultural teachings. Empirical studies suggest that women, biologically predisposed toward cooperative approaches, are culturally instilled with the notion that the assertiveness often expected of men is not traditionally associated with femininity. Consequently, women may exhibit a reduced inclination to assert their perspectives in group decision-making settings. Also notable is the discernable tendency for men to process information in a linear fashion, while women, in contrast, tend to adopt a more holistic approach. These divergent problem-solving approaches potentially lead to variations in decision-making

dynamics. Women may demonstrate a proclivity to consider outlying information, fostering a comprehensive decision-making process. Conversely, men may exhibit tendency to discount or overlook the same information, reflective of their linear processing pattern.^{49, 50, 51, 52}

Two distinct models employed to delineate the variances in information processing mechanisms between men and women. The first, known as the Selectivity Model, states that women function as “comprehensive processors”, while men adopt the role of “selective processors.”⁵³ In accordance with this model, the cognitive process for the female brain entails the retrieval of detailed information, including implicit nuances, and subsequently integrates the information into an actively constructed narrative. Conversely, men are suggested to predominantly engage with the information immediately available within the current context, exhibiting a more selective approach to processing information.

The Item Specific/Relational Processing (IS/RP) model contends that there are distinct cognitive strategies employed by men and women in information processing. According to this model, men adopt an Item Specific Processing approach, wherein individual pieces of information are processed in isolation as they are presented. For

⁴⁹ Wirth, M., H. Horn, T. Koenig, M. Stein, A. Federspiel, B. Meier, C.M. Michel, and W Strik. “Sex Differences in Semantic Processing: Event-Related Brain Potentials Distinguish between Lower and Higher Order Semantic Analysis during Word Reading.” *Cerebral Cortex* 17, no. 9 (September 2007): 1987–97. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cercor/bhl121>.

⁵⁰ McGivern, Robert F., Brian Adams, Robert J. Handa, and Jaime A. Pineda. “Men and Women Exhibit a Differential Bias for Processing Movement versus Objects.” *Plos ONE* 7, no. 3 (2012): 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0032238>.

⁵¹ Arcand, Manon, and Jacques Nantel. “Uncovering the Nature of Information Processing of Men and Women Online: The Comparison of Two Models Using the Think-Aloud Method.” *Journal of Theoretical and Applied Electronic Commerce Research* 7, no. 2 (August 2012): 106–20.

⁵² Kiecker, Pamela, Kay M. Palan, and Charles S. Areni. “Different Ways of ‘Seeing’: How Gender Differences in Information Processing Influence the Content Analysis of Narrative Texts.” *Marketing Letters* 11, no. 1 (2000): 49–65.

⁵³ Arcand and Nantel. “Uncovering the Nature of Information Processing of Men and Women Online”. 107.

example, in evaluating vehicle models, men may compare specifications such as size, headroom, horsepower, and fuel efficiency. In contrast, women, as proposed by the IS/RP model, engage in Relational Processing, seeking relationships between seemingly unrelated pieces of information. When comparing vehicle models, women may focus on identifying similarities and differences in the way they relate to her as an individual and those who may be passengers in the car, such as ease of entry and exit, trunk and backseat space, frequency of refueling, comfort of potential passengers, and various seating arrangements.⁵⁴

A research study aimed at determining which of the two models, the Selectivity Model or the Item Specific/Relational Processing Model, more accurately reflected gender differences in information processing overwhelmingly supported the Selectivity model.⁵⁵ This implies that, when confronted with new or novel information, men exhibit a proclivity to selectively choose which information to consider, and which to discard or disregard, without necessarily considering pre-existing knowledge. When faced with large amounts of factual data, men tend to make determinative selection, deeming certain facts as crucial and concentrating exclusively on what they perceive as consequential.^{56, 57}

Alternatively, women exhibit a propensity for elaborative information processing, characterized by the synthesis of presented information with existing knowledge. Women display an inclination toward a meticulous examination of details and adopt a distinctive organizational approach compared to men. In empirical assessments, women tend to

⁵⁴ Arcand and Nantel. "Uncovering the Nature of Information Processing of Men and Women Online". 108 – 109.

⁵⁵ Arcand and Nantel. "Uncovering the Nature of Information Processing of Men and Women Online". 115

⁵⁶ Kieker. "Different Ways of 'Seeing'". 51-52.

⁵⁷ McGivern et al. "Men and Women Exhibit a Differential Bias." 4.

categorize information into a greater number of categories, resulting in more intricate and detailed representation of the subject matter.⁵⁸ This tendency enables women to discern subtle cues, consider information that may not be immediately identified as relevant, and engage in comprehensive analysis of all available information to arrive at a nuanced conclusion. The observed cognitive tendencies among women underscore their capacity to integrate information holistically, emphasizing a detailed and interconnected understanding of the presented data.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Li. "Why women see differently from the way men see?" 5.

⁵⁹ Kieker. "Different Ways of 'Seeing'". 51-52 and McGivern et al. "Men and Women Exhibit a Differential Bias." 2.

Chapter VI

Gender Bias Within the Intelligence Community

As long as the United States has had an intelligence service, women have been included as employees within the intelligence community. However, their involvement in the analytic process was not common practice until the latter part of the 20th century. During the initial part of the century, women predominantly served in administrative functions or were engaged in the processing of information as translators or cryptographers. This trend persisted until the late 1970's, when a pivotal shift occurred, granting women the opportunity to actively contribute to the entirety of the intelligence cycle.

Despite their sustained engagement, women continue to face underrepresentation within the intelligence community. As indicated by the 2021 Intelligence Community Annual Demographic Report, women constitute a mere 39.5% of the entire intelligence community workforce. Within this demographic, 53.3% occupy positions at the GS-10 level or below, encompassing pay grades associated with clerical, administrative, and support positions. Furthermore, women's participation diminishes to less than 30% in technical and research positions within the intelligence community.⁶⁰ These statistics underscore the persisting challenges in achieving gender parity and equitable distribution across various hierarchical levels and occupational domains within the community.

⁶⁰ "Annual Demographic Report: Hiring and Retention of Minorities, Women, and Persons with Disabilities in the United States Intelligence Community," 2021.

The deficiency in representation within the intelligence community poses a significant national security concern. A shortfall of diversity among personnel translates to a dearth of varied perspectives and insights within intelligence agencies, consequently constraining the breadth of cognitive resources available to inform their operations. This limitation undermines the overall effectiveness of intelligence agencies, impairing their capacity to comprehensively assess, understand, and respond to complex and dynamic security challenges. Thus, addressing the lack of diversity becomes imperative not only from an ethical standpoint but also a strategic imperative⁶¹ for enhancing the intelligence community's ability to fulfill its role in safeguarding national security.

Data constitutes a significant component of the intelligence process, and within this framework, intelligence data commonly lacks a gender-sensitive perspective as it is aggregated. The practice of employing gender-blind data and analysis overlooks critical nuances inherent in security threats, conflict dynamics, and societal developments. This oversight subsequently impairs the depth and precision of intelligence assessments. Failing to incorporate gender considerations in data analysis undermines the capacity to discern gender-specific patterns, influences, and vulnerabilities that are integral to a comprehensive understanding of security landscapes.

While the principal objective of intelligence is the anticipation and prevention of threats, it is crucial to recognize that intelligence also plays a pivotal role during active conflict. Gender-blind intelligence practices tend to disproportionately overlook the unique experiences and perspectives of women in the context of security threats and

⁶¹ Miner, Michael, and Lindsay Temes. *"The Past, Present, and Future of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion."* 2022.

conflicts.⁶² Consequently, women are frequently marginalized and their roles as victims inadequately acknowledged within intelligence collection efforts. This oversight results in significant information gaps, representing missed opportunities to integrate valuable insights into the analytic process.

The primary driver of policy and decision-making is data. When data is inherently biased, policy is biased. Integrating gendered perspective into the entire spectrum of data collection and the analytic process becomes imperative for cultivating inclusive decision-making. An inclusive approach ensures that policies, spanning the realms of security, domestic, and foreign relations are more comprehensive and, consequently, more effective.⁶³ By acknowledging and integrating gender-specific perspectives, policymakers can foster a more equitable understanding of issues, contributing to the development of well-informed and inclusive policies.

Bias against women within the IC extends beyond underrepresentation, manifesting in various forms within the workplace. Reports indicated substantial stereotyping of women, often constraining their career trajectories, or diminishing the significance of their contributions.⁶⁴ Furthermore, workplace environments are marred by microaggressions, predominantly perpetuated by male counterparts, fostering hostile working environments. These conditions deter women from expressing dissenting perspectives or offering supplementary information, as they fear being disregarded or subjected to belittlement.

⁶² Hutton, Lauren. "Intelligence and Gender." Gender and Security Toolkit. 2019.

⁶³ Criado Perez, Caroline. "Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men".

⁶⁴ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood: The Secret History of Women at the CIA*. New York: Crown, 2023.

The traditional societal expectation for women to assume primary caregiving responsibilities for children and aging parents significantly influences the advancement of women within the IC. The nature of intelligence work often entails prolonged, demanding hours, frequently away from family. However, societal perceptions still align more with the traditional male role of the breadwinner, viewing women who prioritize family care as less committed to their careers compared to those who forgo familial responsibilities for extensive office hours. Though it may be unintentional, bias against women with family commitments introduces challenges in terms of career advancement, access to opportunities, and the attribution of credibility within the intelligence field.

Chapter VII

Case Studies

This chapter presents three case studies and their analyses to illustrate the challenges women face in intelligence agencies.

National Security Agency: Three Little Words

In 2022, a female intelligence analyst working with the National Security Agency (NSA) participated in a mission with a team of intelligence analysts tasked with surveilling a foreign government official. This analytic team comprised both mid-level and senior level analysts, with the female analyst being the sole woman on the team. All team intelligence analysts spoke the language of the country the foreign government official worked in at a professional working level as measured by the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT). Additionally, each team member possessed a minimum education level of a bachelor's degree. Noteworthy is the fact that all analysts had previous military experience, although none were actively serving in the military at the time this event took place.

The mission's primary objective was to provide comprehensive intelligence reporting on the activities, movements, and decisions of the targeted foreign government official. This strategic effort aimed to enhance United States' understanding of the official's likely locations at various points in time. Given the NSA's focus on signals intelligence (SIGINT), the team leveraged the official's communication methods to monitor and gather pertinent information. As a routine practice, the team compiled a

weekly report detailing the projected movements of the foreign government official for the upcoming week.

In this particular scenario, the targeted government official had consistently adhered to stated plans for an extended period, with communications maintaining a regular and predictable schedule. Notably, all aspects of the communications appeared typical, except for a nuanced alteration in the articulation of three specific words. The female analyst, discerning the subtle linguistic shift, raised awareness of the potential significance, suggesting an assessment that the official might have altered their plans. Unfortunately, her assessment encountered resistance and was ultimately discounted within the analytical discourse.

Despite providing a comprehensive explanation of her assessment, emphasizing the nuanced linguistic cues that suggested a change in the official's plans and predicting a specific location based on the vocabulary used in the communication, the remainder of the team concluded the weekly report with the assertion that there was nothing noteworthy to report. Their collective assessment reflected that, despite the altered vocabulary, the official did not explicitly convey any changes in plans. The dissenting perspective offered by the female analyst stood as the sole opposition within the team, yet the senior analyst overseeing the reporting process opted to align with the consensus view, shaping the final report accordingly.

Subsequently, three days following the issuance of the initial report, the foreign government official was located in a markedly different position than the established pattern. The seemingly innocuous alteration in vocabulary position, initially dismissed by the analytic team, turned out to be a coded expression for a meeting of significant interest

to the U.S. government, catching them unprepared. Consequently, the analytic team was required to retract their initial report and promptly issue another intelligence report accurately reflecting the altered movements of the government official. This event prompted an internal review within the team, culminating in the issuance of an after-action report outlining the reasons behind the team's oversight of the observed change in activity.

Case Study Analysis: Applying Women, Peace, and Security

The Women, Peace, and Security framework, a conceptual structure emphasizing the inclusive and substantial involvement of women across the spectrum of peace and security initiatives, is particularly relevant when applied to the provided case study. This theoretical lens accentuates the significance of integrating gender perspectives into intelligence analysis and underscores the potential ramifications associated with disregarding insights provided by a female analyst. It highlights the imperative of recognizing and valuing diverse perspectives, which, when overlooked, may lead to critical oversights and intelligence failures.

First, the case study underscores a lack of gender diversity in the team, wherein the lone female analyst underscores the relevance of the WPS agenda. This framework emphasizes the imperative of incorporating diverse perspectives, specifically those of women, into decision-making processes associated to peace and security. Notably, the female analyst in this case, drawing on insights from Kieker et al., demonstrated a unique cognitive approach, recognizing subtle shifts in the foreign government official's communication pattern that eluded her male counterparts. Women, as discussed in Kieker et al, often employ a holistic processing of verbal information, enabling them to

discern subtext conveyed through vocabulary nuances.⁶⁵ In this instance, the female analyst appropriately raised concerns about the detected change, highlighting the intelligence implications. This scenario exemplifies the potential value of gender diversity in intelligence analysis, emphasizing the importance of recognizing and leveraging varied cognitive styles within the team.

The WPS framework, centered on facilitating the meaningful participation of women, encountered a setback when the team disregarded the assessment of the female analyst. This denial of meaningful participation raises critical questions about power dynamics and authority within the team. Instead of engaging in a discussion to understand the rationale behind the female analyst's perception of the foreign government official's vocabulary change, the team summarily dismissed her observations. The repercussions of neglecting the insights offered by the female analyst had a direct and adverse impact on national security. The WPS framework underscores the integral connection between women's meaningful participation and the effectiveness of security efforts. In this specific case, the team's dismissal of her assessment led to an unpreparedness for a meeting of significant interest to the U.S. government.

The case study highlights the imperative for a more inclusive and gender-sensitive approach within security institutions, the intelligence community specifically. Principles derived from the WPS framework advocate for the substantive engagement of women across all echelons of decision-making, encompassing intelligence analysis, with the aim of augmenting the efficacy of security outcomes. While this incident did not culminate in a catastrophic national security event or loss of life, it serves as an example of a pervasive

⁶⁵ Keicker, Pamela et al. "Different Ways of 'Seeing'"

issue within the intelligence community. In an altered scenario, the repercussions could have mirrored events of historic significance, akin to the magnitude of Pearl Harbor or 9/11.

In summary, when analyzed through the lens of Women, Peace, and Security, the case study highlights the critical significance of recognizing and valuing the contributions of women in intelligence analysis. It accentuates the potential risks associated with discounting diverse perspectives and advocates for a more inclusive and gender-sensitive approach in national security efforts. By confronting gender biases and promoting the meaningful participation of women, there is the potential to enhance the efficacy and comprehensiveness of security outcomes.

Central Intelligence Agency: It's Curtains for You

During the initial years of the 1990's, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) found itself engaged in the challenging task of identifying a double agent. Starting in 1985, operatives in Moscow, Russia, were systematically apprehended and subsequently either expelled or imprisoned after lengthy interrogations.⁶⁶ The identity of the perpetrator responsible for leaking the names of the operatives remained elusive, yet the repercussions were severe and swift, causing substantial damage to the meticulously cultivated network of agents and informants that the United States had diligently established over the course of several decades.

Assigned to the counterintelligence department, the task of identifying the double agent fell to a team of women comprised of Jeanne Vertefeuille, Sandy Grimes, and

⁶⁶ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood: The Secret History of Women at the CIA*. New York: Crown, 2023. 150.

Diana Worthen. The trio were part of a corps backhandedly referred to as the “sneaker ladies” in reference to the athletic shoes they donned to protect their feet while walking several miles per day. These women undertook the meticulous responsibilities of record-keeping, filing, and records retrieval within the agency. Functioning as human computers, their comprehensive knowledge spanned across various aspects of the agency’s operations. Commencing in 1991, these three, eventually joined by Sue Eckstein and Myrna Fitzgerald, embarked on a protracted and exhaustive pursuit of the mole responsible for compromising the identities of all U.S. assets in Moscow.⁶⁷ A prominent suspect on a long list of potential offenders was a case officer named Aldrich “Rick” Ames.

Rick Ames, characterized as a “typical case officer,” exhibited traits such as misogyny, heavy drinking, and a general demeanor marked by “smarmy behavior.” Female case officers had, years in advance of his eventual exposure, alerted headquarters to Ames’ recklessness and the potential compromise of ongoing operations. Regrettably, the prevailing culture at the CIA during that period tended to dismiss Ames’ behavior as inconsequential, attributing it to the notion of “boys will be boys.” Consequently, Ames was able to persist in his rather unremarkable career without attracting substantial scrutiny from the agency.

It was a seemingly innocuous comment made by Rosario, the wife of Rick Ames, that triggered the heightened scrutiny from the counterintelligence team. Following the Ames’ return from an overseas assignment, the couple made conspicuous purchases, including a large house and two new cars. These financial activities, which would

⁶⁷ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 140 -142.

typically warrant attention, were initially overlooked by headquarters. However, during a social gathering attended by Diana Worthen and the Ames couple, Rosario mentioned “ordering window treatments for every window”⁶⁸ in their new house.

That single phrase acted as a catalyst, drawing the attention of Diana Worthen. Custom window treatments, known for their expense, stood out as incongruent with the salary of a CIA case officer. Worthen, recognizing the potential financial inconsistency, raised concerns about the feasibility of Ames affording such luxury simultaneously for every window in their new house. This triggered the counterintelligence team to initiate a thorough investigation, delving into the timeline of Rick Ames’ career within the agency.

By 1992, the female investigators had meticulously compiled a 500-page digital dossier on Ames, painstakingly combing through records and scrutinizing files to find his real name and all aliases. They methodically accounted for every minute he stepped foot on CIA property, analyzed each financial transaction associated with Ames, and conducted an exhaustive examination of his activities. In a pivotal moment mid-1992, Sandy Grimes put the final piece in the investigative puzzle. She successfully correlated payments deposited to Ames’ account with his encounters with a confirmed Soviet operative in two distinct months of 1985.⁶⁹ They had caught their double agent.

Despite the substantial evidence assembled by the female investigative team against Ames, the CIA initially disregarded their findings. The FBI was enlisted to conduct the investigation, leading to an additional two-year effort before overwhelming evidence conclusively implicated Ames.⁷⁰ Due to the failure of CIA leadership to heed

⁶⁸ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 153.

⁶⁹ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 153.

⁷⁰ *FBI History, Aldrich Ames*. Federal Bureau of Investigation.

the findings of the women's team, the agency faced sharp scrutiny,⁷¹ with Jeanne Vertefeuille being called to answer for the debacle. While Paul Redmond, the director of the Counterintelligence Department, was honored with a medal for the dedicated work of the women, the team members themselves received only modest awards for their years of meticulous investigative efforts.⁷²

Case Study Analysis: Applying Women, Peace, and Security

The application of the Women, Peace, and Security framework to this case study underscores the detrimental impact of gender bias on intelligence outcomes. The WPS framework, aiming for gender equity across security operations, reveals disparities in the treatment of the women who identified Aldrich Ames. Initially, their evidence was dismissed, prolonging the investigation by two years, allowing Ames to continue compromising information. Subsequently, blame for the delay was placed on the senior woman on the team. Finally, when recognition was bestowed for the successful operation, it was the senior male member who received acknowledgement, while the women received symbolic tokens.

The apprehension of Ames can be solely attributed to the diligent efforts of the team of women, with their breakthrough arising from a casual remark made by Rosario Ames. The revelation occurred within a social context facilitated by the unique position held by a woman on the team. It is highly improbable that a man would have found himself in a similar situation to engage in that specific discussion with Mrs. Ames, let

⁷¹ *An Assessment of the Aldrich H. Ames Espionage Case and its Implications for U.S. Intelligence*. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, November 1994.

⁷² Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 154.

alone understood the implications of the information conveyed during the conversation. The heightened scrutiny directed at Ames was exclusively a result of that singular oversight, which only a woman could have identified.

The organizational culture at the CIA reflected a dismissive and permissive stance toward Ames' behavior, perpetuating a lack of accountability for men. The disregard for the warnings and evidence provided by women, coupled with the disproportionate accountability placed on female team members compared to the commendation awarded to the solitary male member, underscores the presence of a double standard and evident bias within the agency.

Examining the case study through the lens of Women, Peace, and Security reaffirms the critical significance of acknowledging and appreciating the contributions made by women in the field of intelligence analysis. It also accentuates the enduring gender biases ingrained within the intelligence community. The potential consequences of dismissing the efforts and outcomes of female analysts far surpass the potential risks associated with any inaccuracies in their assessments. This underscores the importance of eliminating gender biases and actively promoting the meaningful participation of women, as it can yield substantial benefits for national security.

Central Intelligence Agency: A Surge of Insurgency

In the early 1990s, a cohort of three female analysts named Barbara Sude, Cindy Storer, and Gina Bennett, facilitated collaborative discussions to share their insights and information.⁷³ These analysts, each specializing in distinct domains and hailing from

⁷³ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 206.

various departments (notably, Gina Bennett served in the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence),⁷⁴ collectively expressed concerns regarding an emerging threat posed by a young Saudi Arabian man named Osama bin Laden.⁷⁵

In the year 1993, the CIA's Counterterrorism Center (CTC) comprised approximately 80 individuals dedicated to assessing global terrorism threats across every country in the world. At its inception, the CTC was characterized by its initial reputation as a "dumping ground" for analysts the agency perceived as unconventional or challenging to integrate elsewhere within the agency. It attracted individuals considered as "odd balls" and intellectual types that did not conform to the prevailing masculine culture of operational units.⁷⁶ Within this unique environment, a new branch was emerged, initially titled the "Terrorist Financial Links" branch, and eventually renamed the "Bin Laden Issue Station." This specialized team consisted of Sude, Storer, Bennett, and 16 other women from various other intelligence agencies. All members shared a conviction that Osama bin Laden posed a significant and immediate threat.

Over a period of years, the team diligently collected and analyzed information pertaining to Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda activities across Afghanistan, the broader Middle East, and Eastern Europe. These women painstakingly tracked every single financial transaction, communication, and individual associated with bin Laden or the Al Qaeda organization, attempting to discern the organization's motives and activities, witnessing with profound concern the organization's direct involvement in terrorist attacks worldwide,⁷⁷ all traceable back to the leadership of Osama bin Laden.

⁷⁴ Bergen, Peter. "The woman who was the first to warn about Osama bin Laden." CNN. August 3, 2021.

⁷⁵ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 196.

⁷⁶ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 223 – 230.

⁷⁷ Bergen, Peter. "The woman who was the first to warn about Osama bin Laden."

The pivotal moment for unraveling Al Qaeda occurred in 1996 when the number three man in the organization's network sought asylum. This key member had embezzled over \$100,000 from the group, and the information he provided aligned seamlessly with the information the team of women had meticulously pieced together.⁷⁸ Despite facing significant push-back from senior analysts who perceived Al Qaeda to be a disorganized backwater entity, Cindy Storer persisted in seeking support from any other analyst willing to engage. She wrote a comprehensive paper detailing the entire al Qaeda organization that was dismissed by her superiors, who asserted that it would lack appeal to readers, consequently preventing its full publication.

The effectiveness of the Bin Laden Station was undermined by skeptical leadership questioning the nature and intentions of Al Qaeda, fueled by doubts that Arabs could be organized enough to execute terrorist attacks. This skepticism represented a significant roadblock, hindering the acknowledgement of the organization's threat.⁷⁹ Additionally, interagency participation in the Bin Laden Station, involving collaboration between the FBI, CIA, and State Department, was a crucial factor contributing to the team's effectiveness. Despite their ability to construct a comprehensive three-dimensional picture of Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, the team's efforts faced resistance, and their insights struggled to gain traction, becoming yet another example of the challenges encountered by women analysts in conveying the gravity of emerging threats.

The analytic team watched as thousands of jihadist fighters attended and graduated from training camps in Africa and South Asia before being dispersed out

⁷⁸ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 238 – 239.

⁷⁹ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 241 – 243.

globally.⁸⁰ Despite thorough monitoring, it was not until 1997 when, during a live television interview with CNN analyst Peter Bergen, Osama bin Laden declared war on America and became a visible target for the CIA.⁸¹ This marked the initiation of efforts to devise strategies for eliminating bin Laden, an undertaking that unfolded over the course of multiple decades.

During the latter part of 2000 and the initial months of 2001, the communication within the al Qaeda network surged. Operatives engaged in discussions about ominous topics such as “the end of the world” and “the coming Armageddon.”⁸² Some disappeared from the network, while others actively prepared for martyrdom. Recognizing the heightened activity, the CIA sensed that a significant event was imminent, although the specific timing remained elusive. Between January and August 2001, over 30 reports were generated for policy makers, warning of impending action by al Qaeda.⁸³ In August, Barbara Sude was assigned the task of drafting a memorandum specifically focused on the possibility that al Qaeda would launch internal attacks within the United States. The agency had received intelligence that the organization would potentially sponsor aircraft hijackers, prompting Barbara to delve into further investigations.

Following consultations with the FBI, Barbara acquired sufficient information to begin drafting what is now commonly known as the August 6th Memo. In this memorandum, she detailed Al Qaeda’s intentions to execute attacks on the United States utilizing hijacked aircraft. When pressed by her superiors for precise statistics, Barbara discovered that the FBI was actively investigating seventy cases on U.S soil associated

⁸⁰ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 245 – 247.

⁸¹ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 246.

⁸² Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 285.

⁸³ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 288.

with Osama bin Laden.⁸⁴ The memo was presented to President George W. Bush on August 6, 2001. However, the administration did not address this critical information until September 4, 2001, four weeks after it was received.

On September 11, 2001, slightly after 8:30 am Eastern Time, the first airplane struck the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. This tragic event occurred five weeks after the President received Barbara's memorandum and 8 years after three women started warning their colleagues about a man named Osama bin Laden.

Case Study Analysis: Applying Women, Peace, and Security

This case study underscores the barriers and biases encountered by women within the broader intelligence community, extending beyond the CIA. These challenges contributed to delayed responses and, ultimately, tragic consequences that were potentially avoidable. Despite the pivotal role played by three women in identifying and analyzing the emerging threat posed by Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda, their efforts were consistently met with roadblock after roadblock every time they sought endorsement and attempted to elevate the priority of the information.

This study serves as an illustration of gender dynamics within the intelligence community, revealing a dismissive attitude toward the warnings provided by women that hindered effective decision-making. The failure to recognize women as integral contributors to operations and to heed their warnings, represents a missed opportunity to prevent one of the most significant attacks on US soil.

⁸⁴ Mundy, Liza. *The Sisterhood*. 289.

The outcome of this case has had a profound impact on the trajectory of the United States, underscoring the potential historical implications that could have been altered had the WPS framework been implemented within the CIA. By addressing the gender dynamics prevalent in the intelligence community and normalizing the integration of gendered perspectives into operations and analysis, a transformative working environment could have been established; an environment where women were recognized and valued for their contributions, and their perspectives actively sought and heeded in decision-making processes.

Chapter VIII

Conclusion

The paradigm of intelligence collection and analysis necessitates a profound and fundamental transformation. The incorporation of the WPS framework transcends the notion of merely introducing diversity into established practices; it calls for a comprehensive reconsideration of the entire intelligence landscape. The imperative is to progress beyond the concept of “intersectionality” towards authentic integration, wherein the lived experiences of women assume a central role in the entire intelligence process encompassing collection, analysis, and dissemination of information.

In the twenty-three years since publishing UNSCR 1325, the United Nations has distributed various WPS toolkits targeted at partner nations, one of which is specifically dedicated to intelligence. The UN advocates applying a gender lens throughout all phases of the intelligence process, emphasizing the importance of assessing how the information under analysis impacts women and girls. The incorporation of WPS principles into the intelligence domain extends beyond a mere diversity concern; it is unequivocally recognized as a paramount security issue. The Gender and Security Toolkit published by the UN states:

Given that the intelligence sector plays essential national security roles, it must be part of efforts to implement the commitments made under the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda. Governments should include the intelligence sector as part of Women, Peace, and Security national action plans and associated monitoring and reporting processes.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Hutton, Lauren. “Intelligence and Gender.” 16.

The benefits derived from embracing this transformative paradigm are multifold. The deliberate prioritization of the substantive integration of WPS principles within intelligence operations can yield extensive benefits. By prioritizing the incorporation of the female perspective, intelligence efforts stand to reveal previously unnoticed blind spots. This holistic approach aids in the identification of factors, actors, and dynamics that have conventionally been overlooked or undervalued. The outcome will be a more nuanced and comprehensive assessment of potential threats.

Employing a feminine perspective within intelligence operations stands to significantly enhance early warning and preventive measures. A nuanced understanding of the gendered dimensions inherent in conflicts facilitates the early detection of tensions and the potential for outbreaks of violence. This, in turn, enables the promotion of proactive peacebuilding initiatives. Additionally, incorporating a gendered perspective contributes to the reinforcement of partnerships and cultivation of trust within local populations, fostering the generation of more reliable and actionable intelligence.

Implementing this necessitates intentional and sustained commitment from the entire intelligence community. Agencies must take concrete steps to institutionalize WPS principles by incorporating them into training programs, doctrinal frameworks, and evaluation metrics. Furthermore, proactive efforts in the recruitment and advancement of women analysts from diverse backgrounds are essential to cultivate an inclusive environment that values diverse perspectives. Allocating dedicated resources for research, training, and technical assistance specifically focused on gendered analysis and the application of WPS principles within the intelligence domain is advisable. Early

investment in expertise during the transitional phase serves to minimize potential pitfalls and ensure a smoother integration of new perspectives.

The incorporation of WPS principles into the intelligence domain is not just a moral obligation but a strategic imperative. In a world grappling with complex and interconnected threats, neglecting the insights and experiences of half the world's population is akin to fighting blindfolded. Embracing the transformative potential inherent in WPS, intelligence agencies have the potential to enhance their effectiveness, build trust, and contribute to the realization of a more peaceful and just world. The choice is not between security and gender equality; it involves recognizing that genuine security is unattainable without both.

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