

Gendering the Military, Militarising Gender: Military Representations in Pop Culture and Social Media

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The consequences of further integration of women, and LGBTQ+ personnel, in the military is a core object of analysis for feminist military studies and military sociology. This question is often addressed from a liberal feminist viewpoint, asking whether increased female presence in the military is 'empowering' for women, or whether it only ends up reproducing and reinforcing gendered patriarchal structures. Departing from this dichotomous perspective, this panel critically interrogates how the integration of female and LGBTQ+ personnel impacts gendered military practices and the traditional hegemonically masculine image of the military. This panel contributes to the diversification of studies in politics, by focusing on military representations in pop culture and social media. A central part of our everyday lives, pop culture and social media are increasingly afforded academic attention as constitutive sites of politics. Through analyses of both Western and non-Western militaries, the panel sheds light on how gendered representations can camouflage the ultraviolent image of the military and on how social media play a role in (re)militarisation processes. By so doing, we address the fundamental question of how gender and gendered representations can be mobilised for (re)militarisation purposes. Overall, we offer multifaceted analyses of how military representation in pop culture and social media offer avenues to reproduce and renegotiate gendered military narratives, and what impacts these have on the military as an institution and on state (re)militarisation.

Track Classification: Critical Military Studies Working Group