The Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2015

Barriers and Solutions

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Abstract

This paper addresses the issue that the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2015 is not yet passed. The bill was presented on January 21, 2015 and sent the Committee on Foreign Relations. The purpose of the bill is ensure the inclusion of women and girls and the consideration of the specific needs during the entire peace process and their meaningful participation in mediation and decision-making. A lens of intersectional and transnational feminism is used to examine the barriers that have prevented the passage of the bill. Through an examination of gender stereotypes and the casting of the concepts of masculinity and femininity as well as how they influence women's presence and experience in leadership, sexism and racism are identified as the primary issues preventing the bill from being passed. Suggestions for actions to help pass the bill are advocacy, community organizing, lobbying, and organizing across difference. Long-term approaches presented are education, research, and taking steps toward changing personal behavior.

Keywords: Intersectional Feminism, Transnationalism, Women, Peace, Security

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"The goal of this National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security is as simple as it is profound: to empower half the world's population as equal partners in preventing conflict and building peace in countries threatened and affected by war, violence and insecurity. Achieving this goal is critical to our national and global security (Obama, 2011)."

Introduction

The Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2015, or S.224, was presented by

Senator Barbara Boxer, a Democrat from California, Senator Mark Kirk, a Republican

from Illinois, and Senator Jeanne Shaheen, a Democrat from New Hampshire, on

Wednesday, January 21, 2015. The bill was then sent to the Senate Committee on

Foreign Relations. This bill has also been presented to both the 112th and 113th

Congress without having made it to the voting process. The bill's purpose is:

"To ensure that the United States promotes women's meaningful inclusion

and participation in mediation and negotiation processes undertaken in

order to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict and implements the

United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security

(S.224)."

The National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (NAP) mentioned in

the bill orders the integration and institutionalization of a gender approach in all

development, diplomatic, and defense activities of the United States. It also calls for the

full participation of women in conflict prevention, peace processes, and decision-making

as well as the protection of women and girls in conflict zones. The bill would also

require women and girls have access to relief and recovery services in conflict zones

where the United States is involved. The necessity of the bill lies in that presently the

NAP only applies to the executive branch of the government. If passed, the bill would

require that the objectives mentioned above be integrated into all policy produced by the legislative branch of the United States government. While this is an issue of human rights, not women's rights, in order to have true gender equity and equality, the mention of women's specific needs and interests is needed.

This bill is of particular importance because women and girls disproportionately suffer from the effects of war. In addition to the violence that is experienced by both men and women in conflict zones, women and girls also experience gender-based violence (GBV) such as increased levels of human trafficking, rape, and sexual assault. The negative effects of war also continue to affect women and girls in specific ways in post-conflict situations. Research proves that when women take part in conflict negotiations and peace building, peace agreements and treaties are more effective and last longer (www.unwomen.org, 2015). The involvement of women also improves economies and overall quality of life in conflict and post-conflict zones (www.unwomen.org). If these facts are known, what is stopping this bill from being voted into law?

This paper seeks to identify why *The Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2015* has not yet passed. To examine these barriers, a framework of the feminist theories of transnationalism and intersectionality is applied. Transnationalism is a feminist theoretical lens that allows for an exploration of parallels and intersections of experience in areas such as militarism, marginalization, poverty, and violence, without minimizing the difference in personal context (Falcon & Nash, 2015). It is generally used in a cross-border analysis. For example, if can be applied to investigate the similarities and differences in experience of Afro Peruvian women and African American women.

Intersectionality can be defined as an " analytic, method, theory, politic, framework – a way of describing experiences, structures, identities, resistance, legal doctrine, and a mode of capturing the multiply-marginalized or the social location of subjects."(Falcon & Nash, 2015, p. 4). Looking at experience across borders and interpersonal power dynamics created by social location allows the barriers preventing the passage of the Women, Peace, and Security Act from being passed to emerge.

Transnationalism is integral in this process because it gives us a tool to see across state borders and identify parallels in women's experiences that require an internationally focused law. This understanding of similarity across difference could mobilize women living in the United States to act on behalf of other women in conflict zones. The idea that women are suffering because they are women can inspire a connection based on a shared identity characteristic and the commonality of marginalization.

The theory of Intersectionality is a necessary component of this analysis because it allows us to examine the barriers of difference created by the marginalization of certain voices in both the United States and abroad. It provides recognition of difference and power dynamics, rather than an erasure, and makes it possible to answer the questions, "Where do our identities intersect with each other?" and "What does that mean for the human rights of women as a group?" The answers to these questions may provide the opportunity for breaking down barriers caused by power dynamics and inspire collective action.

The power of intersectionality is that it was created to expose the role of both racism and sexism in the failure of anti-discrimination laws to protect the bodies of

American black women, something that is still true today (Nash, 2014). Crenshaw's article translates the theoretical to the material and offers us two insights (1989). One, it allows us to see the barriers and power dynamics that prevent us from working together in the United States. And two, we can see how existing laws, or the lack thereof, may be playing out on the bodies of women around the world in conflict zones where the United States is involved. *The Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2015* creates a layer of accountability to both the executive and legislative branches of the government regarding the physical effects of policy.

Additionally, it is racism and sexism within the United States that prevents the *Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2015* from being passed. These issues are most glaringly apparent in the lack of women in the upper levels of government and leadership positions in all sectors. If politics and money are a measure of how much power a group possesses, the existing statistics give a clear picture of the marginalization of women and people of color of both genders.

Issue

UNSCR Resolution 1325

The Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2015 was created in response to an executive order made by President Barack Obama based on the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSRC) 1325 (2000) and reaffirmed by resolutions 1828 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), and 2212 (2013). The resolution affirms the importance of women's meaningful, equal, and full participation in the peace process and decision-making regarding security issues. It states that due to

the presence of sexual and gender based violence, civilian women and children most adversely affected by war and displacement.

UNSRC 1325 discusses the importance of incorporating a gender perspective into peacekeeping efforts and of creating gender sensitive trainings for those in relevant programs. Member states are to take into account the different needs of women and men ex-combatants. They must attend to the special needs and requirements of women and girls in refugee camps and situations of displacement. The resolution further recommends that attention be paid to how women and girls are affected during repatriation and the need for their inclusion in the creation of a constitution and election system and other state and society building measures. The resolution also encourages consultation with local and international women's organizations during the peace process. It stresses the importance of studying both the impact of armed conflict on women and girls as well as the affects of gender mainstreaming in the peace process.

Additionally, the resolution restates the need for member states to implement international humanitarian and human rights law in relation to women and girls during and after conflict situations. This includes the Refugee Convention of 1951, which the United States did not ratify. However, the United States did ratify the Protocol in 1967, which incorporated the original convention. The resolution also includes the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979 as well as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989, both of which the United States has signed. However, neither have been ratified (www.un.org, n.d.). The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court 2000 is also present in the resolution. It was signed and never ratified by the United States, then unsigned in 2002

by then President George W. Bush (www.globalpolicy.org, 2003). The lack of signature and ratification on the Rome Statute conflicts with the responsibility of member states to hold war criminals accountable by not offering them amnesty as required by UNSRC 1325. Combined, the four conventions provide a rights based approach to gender based violence prevention.

An unwilling Congress blocked the ratification of CEDAW and the CRC. While they are conventions created by the UN General Assembly, and UNSCR 1325 is a resolution created by the UN Security Council, something similar is happening with regard to the barrier created by Congress in making human rights part of the permanent policy of the United States.

Also, notably the resolution urges all member states to increase the representation of women in their national, regional, and international institutions as well as in their mechanisms for management, resolution, and prevention of conflict (2000). The UN resolution for gender equality made in 1996 has a goal of 50% representation of women (Haack, 2014), and the United States has made a global commitment to implement UNSCR 1325, which incorporates the resolution. Despite the United States having committed to 50% representation of women in the Congress based on accepting UNSCR 1325, the number currently stands at only at 20%. (http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu, 2015).

Although the United States is a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, and according to the Charter of the United Nations, Chapter V, Article 25, "The Members of the United Nations agree to accept and carry out the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the present Charter (www.un.org, n.d.)",

President Obama did not sign the executive order instituting a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security until 2011, ten years after the original resolution (www.un.org, n.d.).” Thus far, 43 countries have created National Action Plans. Of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, France (2010), the United Kingdom (2011), and the United States have NAPs. While Russia and China have ratified CEDAW, in 2002 and 1996 respectively, they still do not have NAPs (www.un.org, n.d.). The issue of representation and holding countries accountable is global.

Executive Order 13595

President Obama released Executive Order 13595, *Instituting a National Action Plan on Women Peace, and Security* on December 19, 2011. It stated that it would be the policy of the United States to promote the participation of women in conflict prevention, negotiation, relief and recovery as well as development and to have a NAP (Obama, 2011). The order recognized the need for countries to protect their citizens from war crimes and that the use of sexual violence is used as a systematic tactic of war. It gave a brief outline of the NAP and ordered the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to create NAP implementation plans for their departments (Obama, 2011). The president is able to create policy that mobilizes the government agencies connected to the executive branch, but only the legislative branch is able to create federal law to which Congress can be held accountable. Therefore, while President Obama can presently influence the activities of the executive branch, future presidents

can later repeal his policies. Only if they are turned into federal law can future presidents be expected to uphold them. If the NAP created by Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2015 is not passed, all of the progress made in women's inclusion in the peace process may be lost.

United States National Action Plan

The White House released *The United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security* in December 2011, shortly after Executive Order 13595. The plan outlined five principles in the "Statement of National Policy." First, involving and protecting women as active participants in creating peace and stability will be central to conflict prevention and resolution, the promotion of security, and post-conflict rebuilding for the United States. Second, the NAP will enhance and complement existing United States efforts to advance gender empowerment, equity, and equality as well as human rights such as in the United States National Security Strategy. Third, the United States will carry out this policy with a principle of inclusion by engaging diverse stakeholders including marginalized groups such as indigenous people and the LGBT community. Fourth, the plan will be coordinated through all relevant departments. And fifth, United States government agencies will be held accountable to accomplish the plan.

The national objectives and framework detailed in the plan include the integration and institutionalization of a gender perspective in all United States diplomatic, defense, and development activities. They require the full participation of women in the peace process and decision-making as well as in conflict prevention. Also, women are to be protected from violence including human trafficking, sexual and gender based violence,

exploitation, and discrimination. Lastly, women and girls in conflict-affected areas and in refugee situations are to have access to relief and recovery services. The final statement in the NAP is a call to action,

> "The United States is committed to ensuring that the National Action
> Plan on Women, Peace, and Security does not begin and end merely
> as words on paper. Today we dedicate ourselves to bringing the ideas
> and goals expressed in this document to life in our work around the
> world, and commit the United States to the essential effort of
> empowerment and sustained, equitable peace for all (2011)."

As stated in the executive order and the NAP, the Department of Defense released their NAP implementation plan in June of 2012, and both the Department of State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) released their implementation plans in August 2012. They are to report in 2015. Shortly after the NAP was created, the first Women, Peace, and Security Act was proposed in 2011.

The Bill S. 224

The bill, S.224, presented on January 21, 2015 to the 114th Congress and read twice, was sent to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, the bill is to enforce the meaningful inclusion and participation of women in all, "conflict prevention; countering violent extremism and terrorism; mediation, transition processes, and peace and security negotiations; peacekeeping

and peace-building efforts; humanitarian response; and post-conflict reconstruction and governance (2015)." It states that one of the primary purposes of the action plan is to increase global prosperity and stability. Research in the UN Women report *Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, and Securing Peace* (2015) supports this statement, indicating that the involvement of women in the processes mentioned above creates more sustainable peace agreements and more stable societies, both socially and economically.

If passed, the bill would legally obligate the United States, under federal law, to maintain a NAP at all times with active implementation plans for the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and USAID. These agencies would be obligated to present their plans to Congress and then report on their progress once a year as well as carry out ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Additionally, Congress would commit to advancing NAP principles in all related policy. It would also require that all existing related policy be assessed for potential unintended negative effects on women and girls and then, if needed, making necessary adjustments.

An important detail is that the standards of the NAP not only apply to the Department personnel, but also the contractors they hire for additional security work. This would include appropriate training on applying a gender perspective and incorporating the perspectives and the needs of women and girls into all of their activities while addressing barriers to women's participation that may be caused by security issues. All staff and hired contractors would also be expected to learn and follow all humanitarian and human rights laws laid out by the United Nations. A rejection of the bill would indicate that the majority of Congress does not believe that the

inclusion of women's voices is important, that gender based violence is a problem, or that there is a need to create a safe environment for women and girls in conflict zones. Thus far, this is the only conclusion that can be drawn. The political will to pass the bill does not appear to exist, so an expression of public will would be required to motivate its passage.

Literature Review

One of the primary barriers to mobilizing women as a group is the marginalization of some women's voices due to social inequities. United States society is broken into groups that are maintained by power dynamics and the silencing of some in favor of others. Some of the divisions that have received a lot of attention in social and political analysis are gender, race, class, and sexuality. Analytical and methodological tools provided by feminist studies such as transnationalism and intersectionality conceptualize a way of navigating and removing the power dynamics that are preventing women from cooperatively reaching a goal that would serve their mutual benefit, namely passing Bill S.224 (Crenshaw, 1989; Grewal & Kaplan, 1994; hooks, 1984; Mohanty, 2003).

Examining the manifestation of gender inequity through the presence of women in leadership provides a concrete example of discrimination and the contradiction of the espoused value of equality based on both physical sex and socially constructed gender. It also demonstrates the silencing of women's voices and the devaluation of issues that concern their health and safety. Even when women achieve positions of leadership,

they experience additional challenges caused by gendered perceptions of their behavior (Shollen, 2015). Additionally, women leaders may need to act under certain behavioral restrictions to maintain the level of power they have acquired (Osborn, 2014). The required behavior may not always allow them to act in the best interest of women exemplified by the case of Republican women senators being forbidden to collaborate with Democratic women to further policy pertaining to women's issues (Osborn, 2014).

This paper discusses the paradigm shift that is taking place in leadership theory and how women may function within this new environment to embody the concept of feminist leadership in the interest of dismantling the power structures that marginalize them as a social group. For true equality and equity as it relates to leadership and gender, all levels of social inequity must be taken into account, because women in all social categories live with different levels of power and marginalization. In this case one form of marginality is not privileged over another. The purpose of the application of intersectionality is at once to identify personal social location, and at the same time to identify where people with differently defined social locations experience identity parallels by experiencing the affects of a law that treats them as a unified group, both locally and globally. Carrillo Rowe (2009) calls this a "politics of relation" through a concept of multiple belongings (p.26).

Intersectionality

The metaphor of intersectionality as a theoretical concept first appeared in Kimberlé Crenshaw's article "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics"

(1989). She used the metaphor of the traffic intersection to describe the damaging impacts of racism and gender discrimination on Black American women's bodies (Crenshaw, 1989). If there was an accident, then neither of the "cars" could be solely responsible. Black women experience discrimination because they are black, because they are women, and because they are a combination of the two. Crenshaw (1989) was specifically referring to the failure of anti-discrimination laws to protect black women. Intersectionality began as a tool to examine the physical effects of structural inequalities, making it particularly fitting lens to view a law with the intent of improving the physical security of women and girls.

While the terminology was first used by Crenshaw, intersectionality has its roots in the work of feminist women of color theorizing race around multiple identities. For example the Combahee River Collective (1983) practiced their analysis based on their racial, sexual, and class identities, and Gloria Anzaldua (1987) developed her feminist theory incorporating her identity as a Chicana lesbian. Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall (2013) explain, "intersectionality helps reveal how power works in diffuse and differentiated ways through the creation and deployment of overlapping identity categories"(p. 797).

Since its introduction, intersectionality has been expanded to facilitate analysis not only in feminist contexts, but also in sociology, literature, history, philosophy, and anthropology. It has been used on a broad scale to define experience of social locations not only including race and gender, but also adding an ever-expanding list such as class, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, nationality, education, physical ability, and Global North/Global South (Cho, Crenshaw & McCall, 2013).

The dominant narrative of the United States is one of equality in regards to education, opportunity, and work. Additionally, the idea that any citizen can vote or run for office can disguise blatant social inequity and inequality. Dean Spade, a legal scholar and critical race theorist, uses a population control lens in his analysis to expose the complicity of the legal system with the, "foundational violence of slavery, genocide, and heteropatriarcy" (2013, p. 1031). Spade uses "intersectionality-informed resistance strategies," which focus on "dismantling the violent capacities of racialized-gendered systems that operate under the pretense of neutrality,"(1033) and rejected the goal of legal equality. However, I would suggest the use of both. Bill S.224 is necessary to make sure women are included, and their specific needs are respected and met. The necessity of an intersectionality-informed strategy is also apparent because the passage of Bill S. 224 is being stymied by the existing racialized-gendered system and its proliferation into the social identities, and therefore social functioning and social interaction, of the population.

Transnationalism

Transnationalism makes use of intersectional analysis for the purpose of analyzing "multiple forms of difference" (Demplsy et al, 2011). The women responsible for the development of contemporary transnational feminisms come from diverse backgrounds, such as Third World/Global South identified women, women of color, working class women, and lesbians (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994; Heng, 1997; Wekker, 1997). They challenged the lack of attention to racial and class power in mainstream

feminism (Collins, 1990; hooks, 1984; Mohanty, 2003). The theories that make use of transnationalism are defined by their mutual attempt to create a shared identity and politics that reaches across difference, yet stops short of universalizing the experiences of women (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994). In order for women to work collectively and build public will for Bill S.224 it is necessary, "to address the complex systems of discrimination and privilege," that cause divisions and prevent alliances (hooks, 1984).

If it is essential to work across difference marked by power dynamics that prevent cooperative action, then it is necessary to find a way to remove or mitigate them. These systems of inequality have been dissected and defined by intersectional and transnational feminists. The next step is to acknowledge these structures and work to destabilize them. This would require the development of a personal awareness of these issues. As Winch states, "political transformations are only possible when power and privilege are personally and politically acknowledged" (2014, p. 19). Transnational Feminist Networks such as World March for Women act as a model, by including an acknowledgement of the reproduction of social inequalities by women within their organization they express their commitment to destabilize them an make sure everyone's voice is heard (WMW, 2008). This step would be necessary if women across the United States are to collaborate and gain men as allies to pass Bill S.224.

Discussion

Women in Leadership

Levels of power and privilege can be read through the presence of certain groups in upper level leadership across sectors. Women as a group are highly underrepresented in relation to their percentage of the population. Women are 51% of the population and over 46% of the work force. In 2015 in the political sphere they compose only 19.4% of the total Congress, with 20% in the Senate, and 19.3% of the House (www.cawp.rutgers.edu). With 19.4% representation in the Congress, the United States falls below the 22% global average for women in parliamentary seats. However, social gender equality and gender equity is not purely an issue of representation. While Rwanda is leading the world in parliamentary representation of women at 68% (www.un.org, 2015), after the 2015 election, 50 documented divorce cases were filed by husbands when their wives voted against their wishes (Reuters, 2015). Analysis of meaningful participation and inclusion and its obstacles require looking at deeper social structures.

Additionally, for a perspective of intersecting racial and gender marginalization in politics one can view the percentage of women of color in the Congress, 6.2%, in relation to their representation in the population, almost 19% (www.cwap.org). Interestingly, women of color make up about 36% of women in the United States and 33% of women's representation in the Congress, indicating that they are marginalized at a similar level for being women and about 3% more on the basis of race. At the level of State Legislature women of color suffer further from racism representing 22% of women

in that position. However, using the term "Women of Color" is a generalization, discounting the difference of racial experience between African American, Asian American, Latina, Native American, Pacific Islander, Caribbean Islander, and women of mixed race who compose the category of women of color in the State and Federal Government. Although their experiences vary based on their intersecting social identities, they all experience political underrepresentation as women.

Across all other sectors in the United States, women composed 8.1% of top earners, 14.6% of CEOs, 4.6% of fortune 500 company CEOs, and 16.9% of fortune 500 company board seats, while holding 52% of professional level jobs. In the military women hold 7% of top leadership positions, while in the nonprofit field they hold 43% of top leadership positions (Warner, 2015). The contrast between the military and the nonprofit fields is stark, but it is complicated by the fact that about 14% of the military is composed of women, while women represent 75% of the nonprofit labor force (Warner, 2015). Not only is it representative of socially defined masculine versus feminine labor, the percentage of leadership in relation to the workforce is proportional, demonstrating a consistent leadership imbalance between men and women.

The espoused belief of equality and privilege in US culture is disproven by a lack of leadership presence by both women as a group and women of color as an intersecting group with some parallel interests. The question becomes, "What is causing this imbalance on the basis of sex?" To understand the marginalization of women due to their sex and its influence on their leadership representation, the social construction of gender needs to be interrogated and defined. Women exist in a social landscape where their identities and behavior are shaped by gender stereotypes and gender roles. There

are social expectations of how they are to act and qualities they must express. What is

gender and how is it affecting women's ability to lead as well as how they are treated

politically? This is important to assess because the political treatment of women is

based on how they are socially defined by the dominant culture.

Gender Stereotypes and Gender Roles

Gender is the focal category of political marginalization for this paper, requiring a

clear definition of how the concept is constructed to influence the lives of women and

men. The social category of gender is primarily built around gender stereotypes that

assign certain traits and characteristics to men and women that define the social

categories of masculinity and femininity (Brannon, 2010). These traits and

characteristics are then linked with acceptable and expected behaviors that produce

gender roles. Gender stereotypes and gender roles tend to be mutually reinforcing,

producing and reproducing one another. Gender affects the "conceptualizations of

women and men and establish social categories of gender. These categories represent

what people think, and even when the beliefs vary from reality," they can have a

powerful impact on judging oneself and others (Brannon, 2010, p. 162). If either men or

women step outside of their defined gender role or express traits outside of their

stereotyped gender expectation, there are generally social and professional

repercussions (Amanatullah & Tinsley, 2013; Kark et al, 2012; Osborn, 2014).

Masculinity and Femininity

Through a lens of intersectionality and transnationalism, femininity and masculinity are clearly terms used to enforce marginalization. Femininity and masculinity have become institutionalized terms, and when used in relation to leadership styles they claim an air of neutrality, giving neither positive or negative weight to either type of trait. This has sterilized the terms and divorced them from the physical, emotional, and legal effects they have on the people who manifest them in their lived experience. There are three gender identity instruments that are commonly used for consumer research (Areni, Kieker & Palan, 1999). The Bern Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ) and the Sexual Identity Scale (SIS). The first two are problematic because they were created in the mid-1970's by asking college students how they would define attractive traits for men and women (Myers & Gonda, 1982). The SIS has not yet been rigorously tested for validity based on sex and gender (Areni, Kieker & Palan, 1999). They are all used to measure ones self-concept against stereotypic gender ideals. None of them measure or seek to investigate whether the traits are positively or negatively charged based on their association with being masculine or feminine or why. Many studies state that they believe masculinity and femininity to be socially constructed traits, but none of them examine that the reason feminine traits are devalued in leadership is due to the devaluation of women as a group (Amanatullah & Tinsley, 2013; Areni, Kieker & Palan, 1999; Bern, 1981; Kark, Shamir & Waismeil-Manor, 2012).

A majority of psychologists view femininity and masculinity as two separate dimensions coexisting within each individual (Gill et al., 1987). In this case the physical meaning and repercussions of gender assignment is lost. The effort to disembody the

traits demonstrates that they should not be connected to sex and thus should not be defined using terminology that gives them a gendered trait assignment. In their study, Areni, Keiker, and Palan (2012) found that women identified with as many masculine traits as men did. The concepts of femininity and masculinity lose their meaning when separated from the bodies of the people they are used to define. As previously mentioned, change is only possible if power and privilege are acknowledged. If those studying masculinity and femininity don't acknowledge the power dynamics enmeshed within the subject matter, their work only serves to reproduce and enforce the existing negative repercussions of gender stereotypes through deploying masculinity and femininity. Currently, this academic reproduction is contributing to the ongoing marginalization of women and by association acts as a barrier to the passage of Bill. S.224.

Gender and Leadership

Presently there are two streams of thought enforcing the reproduction of gender stereotyped traits and characteristics in leadership. One posits that traits defining and benefiting a leader exemplify masculinity, including self-confidence, independence, assertiveness, dominance, and rationality (Koneig, Eagly, Mitchell & Ristikari, 2011; Powell & Butterfield, 1979; Schein, 1973; Schein, Mueller, Lituchy & Liu, 1996). The second, provides studies that support the idea that traits originally considered feminine, are now associated with effective leadership such as collaboration, interpersonal sensitivity, openness, empathy, and cooperative behavior (Buinveniste, 1993; Duehr &

Bono, 2006; Fondas, 1997; McDowell, 1997). Neither mentions the reason for the

original exclusion of feminine traits or addresses the negativity associated with them.

The first strand of thought does not overtly say that women shouldn't be leaders.

However, the implication by following the function of gender stereotypes that women are

expected to adhere to for social acceptance; they must be feminine and not exhibit

masculine traits. The role of leader is then forbidden to them by implicit communication.

In the second strand of thought, rather than arguing for the de-gendering the concept of

leadership and the traits associated with it, they appear to be hoping to prove that the

traits that women have been socially assigned are worth of consideration and thus,

women should be included in leadership. Some of the authors look to the word

"androgynous" to define combined leadership styles (Kark, Shamir, & Waismel-Manor,

2012). But, there are two meanings of androgynous: to be partly male and partly female

in appearance or of indeterminate sex (www.merriam-webster.com, n.d.). From the

research it appears that the authors are saying that androgynous leaders display

characteristics of both sexes, which implies that femininity and masculinity are static

concepts. It is a mistake to equate sex with gender, especially when the feminine

gender is used to marginalize women and a lack of compliance. Additionally, the

feminine gender expression or role does not decide whether one is female or not.

Whether it is intended or not, a lack of acknowledgement of existing power dynamics

serves to support the continued marginalization of women contributing to their

challenges in obtaining leadership positions and its negative effects on all facets of their

lives.

Barriers to Women's Leadership

As a barrier to their leadership advancement, many women experience a "double bind" of being both agentic so they are seen as competent and communal and nurturing enough to be likeable within their feminine gender role (Shollen, 2015). Amanatullah and Tinsley (2013) demonstrate in their study that non-assertive women who focus attention on others suffer a negative leadership backlash and are seen as incompetent due to high association with feminine traits. However, multiple studies demonstrate that agentic women consistently experience negative consequences, such as not being promoted or hired, not because they are unqualified, but because they are seen as unlikeable and lacking social skills (Heilan, 2001; Lyness & Judiesch, 1999; Sonnert & Holton, 1996). Bound by these limiting and contradictory expectations, it appears that women's perception that they must adjust their leadership style so men don't feel intimidated is well founded (Ragins, Townsend & Mattis, 1998).

While some feminine characteristics are coming to be defined as components of effective leadership, due to embedded sexism associated with feminine traits and women themselves, the application of the traits still may not benefit women unless they temper them with masculine traits that signify competence. One such style that incorporates feminine traits of transformational leadership is coming to be recognized as a model for effective leadership (Chin, 2004). A transformational leader acts as a catalyst of change providing a vision for an organization and rallying staff around that vision (Bennis, 1984). Additionally transformational leaders are characterized by the support, recognition, and encouragement they give their staff as well as their efforts to

develop everyone into leaders (Bass, 1985). It is viewed as an androgynous form of leadership combining both agentic (masculine) and communal (feminine) behaviors. In the results of their study, Kark et al report (2010) that men and women will both benefit from androgyny, and to some extent femininity, in their leadership practices. However, women will only benefit from androgyny if their femininity outweighs their masculinity. Otherwise, they risk experiencing prejudice and disadvantage (Kark et al., 2012). Women who have achieved success seem to have identified that if they must combine masculine and feminine traits where they are assertive enough to get results, but feminine enough that they are not viewed as threatening their social gender identity. While it is admirable and impressive that women have managed this feat, the necessity of the feat is what indicates that sexism is the issue, not the traits women express.

An occasion representing the actions of a woman that balanced feminine and masculine traits to achieve success is demonstrated when Chin (2004) quotes a Boston Globe article, "He is called the Hammer. She's a velvet hammer. He is Tom DeLay, the newly elected House majority leader, who is all coercion and threat. She is Nancy Pelosi of California, who is all persuasion and smiles" (McGrory, 2002, p. A12). Brescoll and Uhlmann (2008) corroborate this need for women to portray feminine traits in their leadership style so their disruption of a gender stereotype is softened. They report that expressing anger is considered to be negative for women executives, but positive for men (Brescoll & Uhlmann, 2008). Women's marginalization is not only expressed through a demonstration of their lack of presence in upper level leadership roles, but also in their lived experience of the negative treatment they receive for not only

expressing behaviors either associated with femininity and thus weakness and incompetence, but also for expressing behavior outside of their gender role/stereotype.

Additionally, to add further complication to women's quest for leadership, they are still usually still responsible for the majority of child rearing and domestic tasks which can serve as a drain on their energy (Shollen, 2015). Women's lived experience of the repercussions or rewards received by following or deviating from their prescribed gender stereotype and role indicates the continuing negative association with many feminine traits. Their experience also calls attention to an underlying social structure of embedded sexism that still views women as obligated to uphold the expression of certain traits associated with incompetence in leadership even when they achieve roles as leaders.

Barriers to Women's Political Representation

One of the primary reasons Bill S.224 has stalled in the Committee on Foreign Relations is the lack of women in Congress. It is important to have women as political representatives to foreground women's issues because they have different interests in politics due to gender socialization (Thomas, 1994). Studies indicate that their gendered life experience enables them to bring distinctive interests to the legislative process as well all other intersecting identities (Mansbridge, 1999). It is understood that women's participation is highly valuable to the legislative process and serving the needs of citizens, but gender gap still remains. Fox and Lawless (2014) studied the gender gap in political ambition and they found that young men and women maintained a similar level

of political ambition in high school, but during their college years there was a shift, and

young women fell behind primarily due to a drop in self-confidence regarding their

qualification to run in the future. They identified an interest in political office to be

associated with parental encouragement, peer experiences, involvement in competitive

activities, politicized education, and a sense of self-confidence (Fox & Lawless, 2014).

They conducted an additional study, "Men Rule: The Continued Under Representation

of Women in U.S. Politics (2012)" where they identified seven factors that contribute to

the gender gap in political representation:

1. Women are substantially more likely than men to perceive the electoral environment as highly competitive and biased against female candidates.
2. Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin's candidacies aggravated women's perceptions of gender bias in the electoral arena
3. Women are much less likely than men to think they are qualified to run for office.
4. Female potential candidates are less competitive, less confident, and more risk averse than their male counterparts.
5. Women react more negatively than men to many aspects of modern campaigns.
6. Women are less likely than men to receive the suggestion to run for office – from anyone.
7. Women are still responsible for the majority of childcare and household tasks (p. 2).

Compounding these challenges with the general difficulties that women have in

achieving leadership positions creates a significant barrier to increasing women's

political representation. Before women even decide to run for office they appear to be

aware of the gender bias they must contend with. The question Fox and Lawless never

address is: why is there bias? Why do women feel less confident and qualified? And

why do they lose confidence in college? The studies provide all evidence and no

analysis. If an intersectional-transnational lens is applied to Fox and Lawless's studies,

we expose the results of the deployment of gender stereotypes, especially those

regarding leadership and qualification for leadership. Half of voters are women, so the

perceived bias that women feel about running for office is also a bias of women against

other women, which is another demonstration of how power dynamics work to

perpetuate one another and uphold existing social structures.

Lack of Women's Committee Leadership

Even once women are in office, there are additional obstacles that may prevent

them from acting in the best interest of women as a group. One of the issues is the lack

of women's representation in committee leadership. While women have made great

strides in terms of increasing their committee membership, there are still very few and

even fewer who hold chair positions (Osborn, 2014), and have the ability to move bills

onto the floor. Bill S.224's stagnation in the Committee on Foreign Relations is a perfect

example. Senator Boxer, who presented the bill, is on the Committee on Foreign

Relations, but she is just a member, not the chair. Also, the board is composed of

nineteen people, only two of whom are women (www.foreign.senate.gov, 2015).

Additionally, the majority of the committee are Republicans, who have a reputation for

voting against women's issues. This is another case where women's lack of

representation and the disregard for bills considering the welfare of women exemplifies

their marginalization.

Party Politics and Party Ideology

Some tactics for marginalizing women are covert, such as the deployment of masculinity and femininity, but some are overt, such as the barriers to collaboration caused by party politics and party ideology. Under democratic U.S. House control, moderate women Republicans are willing to collaborate with Democratic women to work on policy focused on women's issues (Osborn, 2014). However, when the U.S. House was controlled by Republicans, the Republican women were no longer willing to collaborate with the Democrat women for fear of repercussions for crossing party lines. Similarly when party ideology becomes more polarized, women from either party are less likely to cooperate for the benefit of women as a group (Osborn, 2014). As power becomes more concentrated and the environment more "masculinized" it restricts women's actions even further (Osborn, 2014, Chin, 2004).

Another challenge posed by party politics is that while the bill was presented as bi-partisan, it is built upon an executive order released by a Democratic President. In addition to the refusal to cooperate across party lines, the Republican majority has also expressed racist leanings among its ranks (Piston, 2010). The issue is more complicated than a split between the parties. Republican representatives cater to conservative groups within the United States that hold racist and sexist ideologies making "moderate" or cooperative action very difficult (Osborn, 2014). Using a transnational and intersectional lens, the blockage of the bill stems not only from the money and power that enable politicians to reach office, but also the nurturing of prejudice within their voter base so they can maintain their position (Piston, 2010). This nurturing of prejudice includes all people of color in a global context as part of the group who is "other" or not white.

      The Bill S.224 also becomes an issue of global monetary and political power, because those countries receiving aid are portrayed as taking money from the citizens of the United States. A perspective of the effects of socio-historical economics and the influence of neo-liberal monetary policies is lost on the general population of the United States. Again, this can be connected to a broader social problem caused by a divide in access to education and the degradation of the education system in the United States. If one delves further there are a myriad of racial and class issues connected to access to education also resulting in a lack of representation of the marginalized populations. The deterioration in the quality of the education system in the United States has primarily been caused by funding cuts initiated and passed by political players benefiting from the resulting ignorance.

      The Republican Party also has a history of conflict with the United Nations Security Council based on their endorsement and use of torture in the wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and when President George W. Bush unsigned the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (2000). A party that supports the violation of human rights as a tool of war seems very unlikely to support the protection of women and girls in conflict zones. It would contradict their stance on being able to treat people in inhumane ways and openly commit war crimes. If Republicans support Bill S.224, the resulting contradiction in behavior may be too extreme to maintain both stances simultaneously.

      The barriers to the passage of Bill S.224 presented in this paper are only a few of the many that exist. They are perhaps the most superficial and visible when using an analytical lens of transnationalism and intersectionality, but their power is easily

exposed. Even with all of these challenges, there are actions that can enable the

passage of the bill in the recommendations section below.

Recommendations

The recommendations resulting from this analysis fall into two categories. First

there is the immediate issue of passing the bill, which could be motivated by advocacy,

community organizing, lobbying, and organizing across difference. Second, is the need

for long-term social change and the removal of the power dynamics resulting in the

overlapping layers of marginalization of entire socially defined categories of people in

both the United States and globally. This may be achieved through education, research

and action.

Passing the Bill

Advocacy

Advocacy is the first step to passing the bill. There is a lack of public awareness.

Most people in the United States don't know that it exists or its purpose. This issue is

particularly salient at present because of the rise in terrorist activity and the massive

movement of refugees. Taking simple steps by educating friends and family about the

security issues that women face in conflict zones can make a big difference. Sharing the

stories of some of the refugees can inspire empathy. Sharing resources such as the

sites for the UN Working group on Women, Peace, and Security where people can learn

more about these issues and the organizations working on them can be helpful. See

Appendix for additional resources.

Community Organizing

A demonstration of public will is imperative to getting Bill S.224 out of the Committee on Foreign Relations and voted into law. Community organizing is what enables public will to become visible to representatives. To make an issue important to them, a group must make it clear that as a significant portion of the voter base they value this issue and that action must be taken.

Lobbying

Once one has advocated for the issue and organized the community around it, lobbying is the next step. Lobbying for the legislation itself is the most valuable action that can be taken. Writing letters, emails, making phone calls, and meeting with representatives is what will move them to act on your behalf. However, as mentioned above, there is a need for critical mass. Lobbying must be combined with community organizing to be effective at a local and national level. Approaching this issue from the perspective of national security could be beneficial. Materials for lobbying, including a sample email or letter, a script for calling your representative, a fact sheet to share with those interested in the issue, and talking points for meeting with your representative are provided in the appendix of this paper. Additionally, you will find a list of online resources and a list of involved organizations.

Organizing Across Difference

The multiple levels of marginalization in intricate power dynamics discussed above divide people and prevent them from working together to promote their own needs and representing the needs of others. Organizing across difference is challenging, but necessary for success. It is not required that people even work as one large group, but there is a need for alliances. Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall (2013) call it "collaboration and literacy rather than unity (p.796)" and Ackerly (2014) calls it "connected activism (p. 458)". This includes women and male allies. To break down power barriers you must engage.

Transnational Feminist Networks provide some tools that may be used to purposefully ensure meetings have diverse voices. They reach through their extended networks to find contacts to a wide range of socially defined groups and create an environment that acknowledges the existence of power dynamics and their influence on the interactions of the group and attempts to work through and around them. Another way they make meeting more accessible to a diverse group of people is to move the meetings to different locations to make sure of inclusion (Winch, 2014).

Long Term Change

Education

Not only do the power dynamics producing marginalization at all levels need to be acknowledged and dismantled, the specific focus on the barrier to women's leadership caused by lingering structural sexism needs to be addressed. Shollen (2015) gives an excellent example of how this issue may begin to be dealt with at an

institutional level. She conducted a pilot course called Women and Leadership in the Leadership Studies Minor program at Christopher Newport University. She used the concepts of transformative learning through reflection and presented women in leadership as a "sensitive subject" that examined women's experiences in leadership and the prejudices and challenges they faced in treatment because they were women. The class also performed analysis of how displaying feminine and masculine traits and behaviors influenced women's leadership experience. Many of the students came out of the course with a much broader understanding of the binding standards placed on women in leadership positions and the influence of sexism in creating and maintaining these standards as well as understanding how not to perpetuate them (Shollen, 2015). This type of course or the material contained in it should be integrated into all management education.

Research

Chin (2004) asks, "Is there good Feminist Leadership or is it just good leadership (p. 2)?" There has been a lot of research on feminism and a lot of research on leadership, but what does it mean to be a feminist leader? This research would need to be combined with an examination of the deployment of masculine and feminine stereotypes on both women and men as leaders. There would need to be a focus on the nature of the punishment, unconscious or not, of women for displaying masculine traits associated with successful leadership and how to undo it. In many cases, those expressing disapproval and negative response are unaware of there internalized bias and have no ill intent. It is important to define the effects of sexist gender stereotypes

through trait reproduction as discussed in the studies above, but to create change one must add the lens of intersectionality and transnationalism and ask "Why and how can we change it?

Another interesting strand of research to indicate the negative effects of present gender stereotypes would be the policing of men in their portrayal of feminine traits. This has received almost no attention. Also, there has been a lack of attention paid to the intersection of gender and racially defined leadership experience.

The need for feminist leadership stems from the existence of a system of marginalization. As Chin (2004) defines it, the only difference between feminist leadership and good leadership beyond the incorporation of agentic and communal behavior, is that in addition to the acceptance and encouragement of defined traits regardless of sex or gender identity, feminist leadership acknowledges and works to dismantle damaging power dynamics within the organization and society as a whole. Based on this definition, will the need for feminist leadership still exist once those inequalities are eliminated? As demonstrated in this paper, the manifestations of marginalization on the health and wellbeing of women are far from resolved and warrant more attention using a lens that recognizes the existence of a social landscape composed of intricate power dynamics.

Action

People in positions of privilege keep insisting that interlocking systems of power didn't exist, so feminists such as Alexander, Mohanty, Crenshaw, and Grewal (1989; 1997), have spent several decades coming up with the theories of transnationalism and

intersectionality supported by case studies that prove it does. With awareness of how the, "intersections of power oppress people," (Winch, 2014) one can adjust their actions in everyday life to undo oppressive structures. Everyone should perform the personal work of self-reflection based on one's actions. This process is never done. Commonly, marginalizing behavior is unconscious and embedded in the way we interact with one another. Actions one can take are; first, expressing that you are open to having this behavior pointed out by people in a presently marginalized position and second, correcting the behavior. This process may need to occur repeatedly before the internalized idea causing it is undone. Not all marginalized people have the patience for constant unintentional abuse, so this may prove difficult. This unintentional abuse has been the result of the divide in the feminist and many other popular movements and actually produced intersectional and transnational feminist theory. It is necessary to commit to the personal work if there is to be true social change.

Conclusion

Using a lens of intersectionality and transnationalism, this paper exposes the underlying barriers to the passage of the Women, Peace and Security Act of 2015 caused by the marginalizing power dynamics supported by sexism and racism. A demonstration of the lack of presence of women and women of color in upper level leadership is followed by an examination of how the use of gender stereotypes deployed as acceptable and unacceptable traits and characteristics using the titles masculinity and femininity are used to marginalize women in positions of leadership.

With this perspective, the functions of sexism and racism as barriers to women's leadership and women's marginalization as a group in society are demonstrated as the reasons for the prevention of the passage of Bill S.224. Intersectionality and transnationalism again demonstrate their usefulness when analyzing the layers of party politics and party ideology that take place on the levels of gender and race at both the national and international level. Only by examining and exposing the negative effects, of the production and reproduction of power, in all of these contexts, can the multiple marginalizations that cause the disempowerment of women, locally and globally, as well as the physical effects and legal repercussions be identified and dismantled.

There are several ways of mitigating and eliminating the negative effects. In the short term, passing Bill S.224 by building political will through advocacy, organizing, and lobbying can have positive short and long term outcomes for women locally and globally. Using intersectional and transnational methods, people can work to breakdown power dynamics during the organizing process through acknowledgement and behavioral change. In the long term, education, research, and active personal behavioral change can lead to deeper systemic change and understanding of the damaging effects of marginalization on all social categories of people and society as a whole.

Future Research

What does political sexism look like transnationally, both across borders and in international governing bodies? One of the suggestions of UNSCR 1325 (2000) was for

the UN to have more women in positions on leadership and to train its own staff in a gender perspective as well as reassessing their own policies with a gender lens. While there has been an increase in women's leadership in the UN there are a number of upper level offices that have never been held by women. Women have been relegated to certain offices that are associated with women's issues. This phenomenon is referred to as encountering "glass walls"(Haack, 2014). Once the "glass ceiling" has been broken there are further systems of power dictated by gender roles. An example is the presence of women in certain committees but not others. In the UN women have led committees handling "soft" issues such as the environment, children and women, education, health, welfare, and human rights. Alternatively, men have always led the committees handling agriculture, industry, trade and economic issues, science and technology, and issues traditionally pertaining to sovereignty (Haack, 2014). A similar circumstance occurs in Latin American legislatures. There are higher numbers of women representatives due to quotas, but they are relegated to committees only handling "women's issues", while missing out on participating in the development of more broad reaching policy (Heath, Schwindt-Bayer & Taylor-Robinson, 2005).

Research into identifying the cultural parallels and differences in systematic marginalization based on sex and gender, using a transnational and intersectional perspective, could help unify women across borders and increase women's representation and meaningful engagement in all forms of policy resulting in a global shift in socio-political dynamics. Increasing quota requirements to include positions on committees and committee chairs could be a possibility. There is usually backlash against affirmative action, but representation is necessary, and where there is

embedded prejudice the process of change needs to be started with legal action.

Acknowledgement that physical representation does not necessarily result in changed

gender dynamics or political treatment would be integral to a power shift.

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http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/fast_facts/levels_of_office/Congress-Current.php

56. http://www.foreign.senate.gov/about/committee-membership

Appendix

Helpful Links and Resources

Futures Without Violence: http://bit.ly/wpsact

Women's Action for a New direction: http://www.wand .org

Women for Women International: http://www.womenforwomen .org

WPS Act text and summary: https://www.govtrack .us/congress/bills/114/s224

Executive Order 13595 on Women, Peace, and Security: https://www.whitehouse

.gov/the-press- office/2011/12/19/executive-order-instituting-national-action-plan-

women-peace-and-securit

UNSCR 1325: http://www .un .org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/

Women, Peace, and Security Act

Supporting Organizations*

4Girls GLocal Leadership (4GGL)

Amnesty International USA

Andi Leadership Institute for Young Women (ALI)

CARE USA

Creative Associates International

Equality Now

Foreign Policy Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL)

Futures Without Violence

Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace & Security

Global Gender Program, Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington

University Inclusive Security

Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy

Institute for State Effectiveness (ISE)

International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)

International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)

International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX)

National Democratic Institute (NDI)

Peace X Peace

Promundo

Protect the People

Refugees International

Strategy for Humanity

United Nations Association of the National Capital Area

United Nations Association of the USA

U .S . National Committee of UN Women

Vital Voices Global Partnership

Women Enabled, Inc .

Women for Women International

Women in International Security (WIIS)

Women Legislators' Lobby

Women, Peace & Security Resources

Women Thrive Worldwide

Women's Action for New Directions (WAND)

Women's Democracy Network

Women's Refugee Commission

*Many of these supporting organizations are members of the U .S . Civil Society

Working Group (CSWG).

Credit: http://d3vc4vygg8dc62.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/Action-

Toolkit_Final.pdf

Sample Letter or Email to your Senator

Re: Please Co-Sponsor the Women, Peace, and Security Act 2015

Dear (Senator or Representative's Title and Name),

I am writing to you today as a constituent, and a citizen of the United States of America, to request that you co-sponsor **Bill S.224, the Women, Peace, and Security Act 2015**.

This bill ensures that the United States promotes **women's meaningful inclusion and participation** in mediation and negotiation processes to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict and implements the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security.

It is well known that women and girls suffer disproportionately from the effects of war, including, but not limited to, **increases in rape, sexual assault, human trafficking, and displacement**. When **women** are involved in creating peace agreements, it is proven that they **produce more sustainable long-term peace**, reduce extremism, and refocus attention on education and development. Not only is this an issue of human rights, it is also **a matter of national security,** with instability abroad **threatening citizens here** in the United States. With **multiple wars** raging, a growing **refugee crisis,** and **terrorism** on the rise, passing S.224 right now is more important than ever.

As a permanent member of United Nations Security Council, the **United States should use it's position of global leadership** to set an example to the rest of the world of what it means to be a **peaceful and equitable nation in policy and action.**

I appreciate your time and service.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

Sample Phone Script for Congress

Bill S.224: Women, Peace, and Security Act 2015

Capitol Switchboard Phone Number: **(202) 224-3121**

This number may be called to reach your Senators as well as your Representatives. Staff generally answer phone calls. Ask to speak to the aide that handles foreign affairs issues or women's issues.

1. When they answer the phone identify yourself as a constituent.

   "Hello, My name is (your name). I am a constituent of (Senator or Representatives name).

2. Then, state that you would like to leave a message for the Senator or Representative.

   "I would like to leave a brief message. Please tell (Senator/Representative's name) that I support the Women, Peace, and Security Act."

3. Ask for the Senator or Representatives position on S.224.

    "What is (Senator/Representative's name) position on the Women, Peace and Security

    Act?"

    a. If they are a co-sponsor say,

    "Please tell (Senator/Representative's name) that I thank them for the support and I

    urge them to help pass the Women, Peace, and Security Act in 2015."

    b. If they are not a co-sponsor say,

    "Please inform (Senator/Representative's name) that I urge them to cosponsor the bill

    and help pass the Women, Peace, and Security Act in 2015."

4. Politely excuse yourself.

    "Thank you for your time today. I really appreciate it. Have a good day."

Always request a written response to your phone call.

Talking Points for Meeting with your Senators and Representatives

Bill S.224: Women, Peace, and Security Act 2015

Who: Presented by Sen. Barbara Boxer

- Introduced by Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Mark Kirk (R-IL), and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) on January 21, 2015 for the fourth time since 2011.

What: For the meaningful inclusion and participation of women in the peace process.

- The bill ensures that the United States promotes **women's meaningful inclusion and participation in mediation and negotiation processes** undertaken in order to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict and implements the United States National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security.

United States National Action Plan for Women, Peace, and Security Objectives and Action Framework (2011)

1. Integration and institutionalization of a gender approach
2. Women's full participation in peace processes and decision-making
3. Protection of women and girls from violence
4. Women's full participation in conflict prevention
5. Women and girls' access to relief and recovery

Why is it important: War disproportionately affects women and girls. The inclusion of women results in more sustainable peace.

- Women and girls suffer disproportionately from the effects of war, including, but not limited to, **increases in rape, sexual assault, human trafficking, and displacement**.

- Including women in the peace process has proven to create **more sustainable peace agreements.**

- Women include issues like **healthcare, education, and food security** as part of the solution, stabilizing communities and resulting in the **reduction** of the economic desperation as well as **political & religious extremism** that leads to **terrorism.**

How will it help: Women address the root causes of war in their peace negotiations. Therefore, including them will enable more sustainable solutions to conflict.

- Instead of only treating symptoms of gender violence such as sex trafficking, the bill has the potential to **prevent the social conditions that cause gender violence** by empowering women to build peaceful societies where gender violence is less likely to occur.

- Their knowledge of local community needs enables women to bridge political, economic, social, and cultural divides and negotiate peace by building coalitions.

Action: Co-sponsor the bill and help it pass congress.

NAP Time Line

- **October 13, 2000:** United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1325
- **October, 26, 2010:** The U.S. committed to implement an SCR 1325 NAP
- **December 19, 2011:** President Obama creates the NPA by signing Executive Order 13595