

HOW DOES ONE BECOME A SOLDIER?

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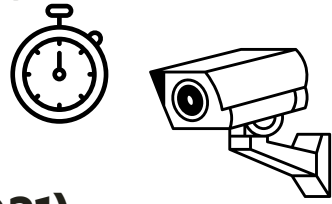


Those recent years, the Belgian Armed Forces have tried to open their ranks to more diversity. But how can we analyze this organization in relation to groups dynamics, individual identities and professional training ?

1. FROM CIVILIAN TO SOLDIER

A specific instruction for a dangerous job

- Risk management for oneself but also for others (civilians and colleagues) (Rogalski, 2003)
- Professional activity must be monitored to ensure safety
- A total institution (Goffman, 1961) that explicitly regulates seclusion
- High risk jobs tend to produce a gendered division of labour : prison workers (Cardi et al., 2024) - police officers (Monjardet, 1996)



A compulsory rite of passage (Do & Samuels, 2021)

- Goes beyond simple professional knowledge (Teboul, 2017)
- Socialisation into norms, codes and values
- Physical and psychological testing in an environment combining stress, endurance and combat (Do & Samuels, 2021)
- Well-thought process of militarisation of new recruits

In order to build a collective identity and group

- "Manufacturing" (Foucault, 1993) and shaping recruits for incorporation (Teboul, 2017)
- Fundamental alteration of individual sense of identity and creation of cohesion (Callahan, 2009)
- Learning institutional discourse
- Compulsory collaboration in a dynamic, high-risk environment



2. A GENDERED PROFESSIONAL ETHOS

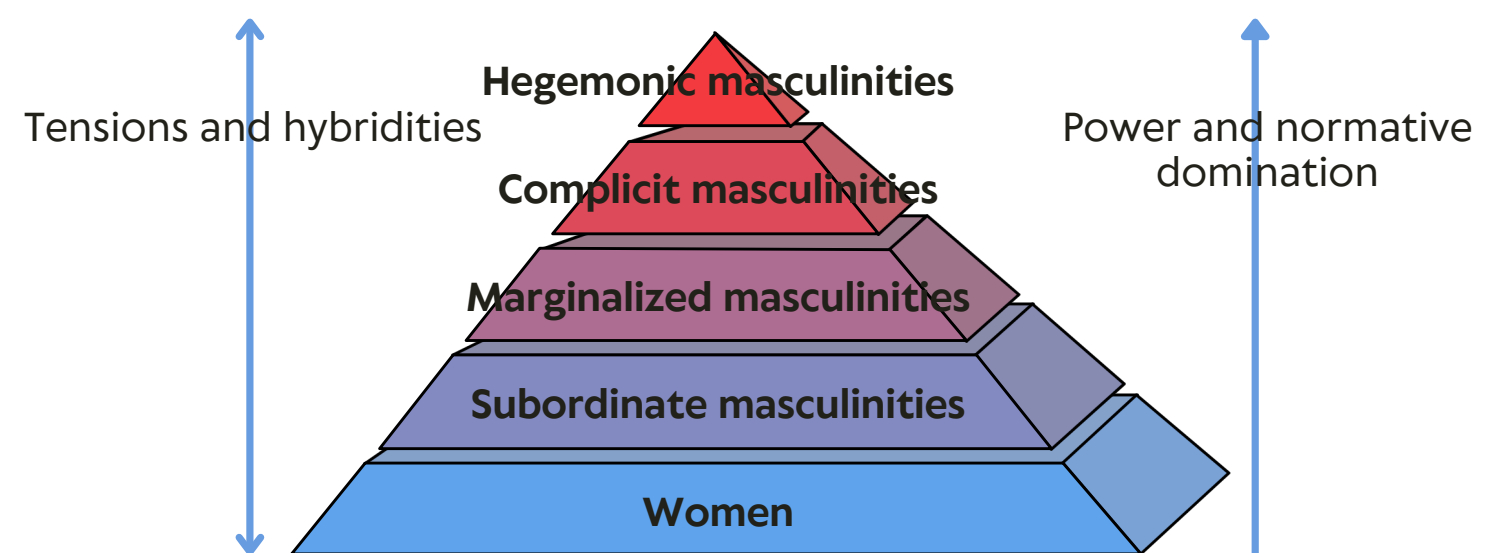
When you think of a soldier or an officer, you often picture...



The army promotes a set of gendered references that compile situated norms and values (Marly, 2018) that are crafted and shared during professional socialisation.

It's a man's world

- Based on the Masculinities model developed by Raewyn Connell (1995)
- Theoretical framework for analysing gender and power relations from an intersectional perspective
- Relies on cultural consent, institutionalisation and interaction between costs and consequences



HOW ARE THE MILITARY TRAINING AND THE INSTITUTION (REALLY) ADAPTING TO INTEGRATE MORE DIVERSITY ?



- Compliance with the institution's standards
- Integration into the community
- Development of teaching practices towards inclusion
- Building a professional identity

Objectives

- Establish links between types of masculinities and risk management and analyse the sensitivity to diversity of training courses
- Analyse the production and reproduction of gender at The Belgian Defence
- Analyse the construction of a professional military identity

THE THESIS PROJECT

Methodology

- Participant observation of 4 sessions of Military Initiation Phases (PIM) : summer and winter camps
- Semi-structured interviews with instructors and new recruits
- Thematic analysis of the documentary corpus: training content and written records relating to the educational commitment and institutional diversity plans

Future contributions of the thesis

- A case study of a male-dominated professional environment that is seeking to change its practices to become more inclusive
- Insights into the creation of professional groups, homosociability and the dynamics of integration/exclusion within groups