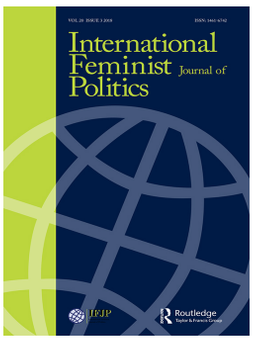

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The "male" privilege of White women, the "White" privilege of Black women, and vulnerability to violence: an intersectional analysis of Peace Corps workers in host countries

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ABSTRACT

This article is an intersectional analysis of race, gender, and nationality in development work. Using interview, document, and observational data, I situate this inquiry in the context of US women's work in the Peace Corps, an organization within a field marked by colonialism. I find that White women and women of color have similar and yet instructively different experiences of their gendered identities in field sites, because race and gender differently affect their identities and relative privilege abroad. Specifically, White women volunteers are often afforded some degree of "male" privilege because of their race (though their race may render them vulnerable to sexual violence), while some volunteers of color are afforded a degree of "White" privilege because of their nationality (although their race may also render them vulnerable to violence). However, because the Peace Corps does not challenge conventional race and gender privileges, it lacks the organizational orientation and capacity to effectively address safety and assault among its women volunteers.

KEYWORDS Intersectionality; development; race; gender; Peace Corps; women

Introduction

Intersectional perspectives have increasingly offered scholars opportunities to analyze people's experience of identity in nuanced ways. This article is an intersectional analysis (Crenshaw 1989; Duong 2012; McCall 2005) of race, gender, and nationality of Peace Corps volunteers in the field of international development.

A voluntary service program of the United States, the US Peace Corps has been framed (and criticized) as a colonial project virtually since its inception (cf. Harvard Crimson 1968; Matthews-Trigg 2013; Nkrumah 1966), as has

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development generally (Gray 2005; Kothari 2005). The term "colonial" refers to domination by individuals or groups over the territory and/or behavior of other individuals or groups (cf. Horvath 1972). Its instantiations range from economic exploitation to cultural processes to volunteer work, but all forms of colonialism "involve a cultural, political, and psychological assault on the colonized" (Steinmetz 2008, 589). Colonial systems also create social and political categories (Appadurai 1993; Levine 2000), through which they define race, gender, and nationality, and inscribe them into the institutions that continue to shape people's lives. This is visible in the institutions of IR and international development that form the Peace Corps' lineage: they are both highly masculine (Cohn 2006, 2014) and highly white (cf. Darnell 2007; Kothari 2006). The Peace Corps was founded as an aggressively cheerful arm of the US foreign policy apparatus during the Cold War. It was powerfully gendered and racialized – built on the experiences and assumptions of those who had gender and racial privilege, and incorporating those experiences and assumptions into its design – and has retained those imprints in its organizational character.

In this paper I ask: how do Peace Corps women experience their gendered and racialized identities abroad, in an organization and a field shaped by colonialism? My results indicate that, through complicated interplays of gender, race, and nationality, women volunteers are afforded privileges that are usually set aside for other groups. Specifically, White women volunteers receive some degree of "male" privilege because of their race (though that visibility may render them vulnerable to sexual violence), while some volunteers of color are afforded a degree of "White" privilege because of their nationality (although their race may also render them vulnerable to violence). However, because the Peace Corps does not challenge conventional race and gender privileges, it lacks the organizational orientation and capacity to effectively address safety and assault among its women volunteers, and elides responsibility for its participation in systems of oppression.

The remainder of this article is arranged in four parts. I first give a historical and theoretical orientation of the Peace Corps, followed by an outline of my theoretical perspective and contribution – grounding and developing an intersectional understanding of American women's experiences abroad. Results are then presented and the article concludes with theoretical and practical implications of my findings.

Empirical background: gender and race in the Peace Corps

The Peace Corps, a US national voluntary service program, sends volunteers to developing countries for two-year service tours. Established in 1961, its work typically relates to social or economic development in pursuit of three goals:

> 1) Helping the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women; 2) Helping promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served, [and] 3) Helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans. (US Peace Corps 2012)

The agency employs paid staff both in the US and in host countries, who oversee all aspects of volunteers' experience. All volunteers are American citizens; they are usually in their early twenties, recent college graduates, and receive a stipend consistent with standards of living in their host communities. At the end of 2016, there were volunteers in 65 countries.

Peace Corps posts worldwide are divided into regions and managed under a central office in Washington, DC. A US country director, supported by safety and security, medical, programming, financial, training, and administrative staff, leads each overseas post. The Washington headquarters is a standard modern bureaucracy, with staff attending to volunteer programs, financial operations, innovations, and the like. The agency is funded by Congress; in 2018, its budget was US$432 million (US Peace Corps 2018c). The budget is developed and maintained by US contributions; however, host country contributions (in-kind and cash) are accepted by different country programs in service of different projects. Congress requires that such contributions are treated as "fiduciary funds" that belong to the host country and are held in trust by the Peace Corps (US Peace Corps 2018a). Roughly 50 percent of USAID staff are former Peace Corps volunteers, and the organization is highly visible within the development apparatus primarily through diffusion of its alumni.

The Peace Corps emerged from a particular Cold War tension: developing countries in the postwar years used the threats of communism to garner Western support, but were simultaneously subjected to interventions as conditions of that support (Cobbs 1996; Cobbs Hoffman 1998). While it traded publicly on a heady mix of idealism and development, the Peace Corps also reflected John F. Kennedy's conviction that the US needed to compete for the allegiances of many (newly independent) countries. Coupled with these foreign policy pressures, the Peace Corps itself "was lineal descendent of the missionary tradition originated by Christian Europeans" (Cobbs 1996, 84) whose formation reflected a number of entrenched colonial ideologies premised on assumptions of racial and national superiority (see also Said 1994). The Peace Corps both verbally opposed but also benefited from a prevalent belief that the US was morally obligated to civilize the world (Cobbs 1996).

The agency's connection to US colonialism is bound up with its own gendered and racialized institutional history: the type of national security discourse from which it originated was part of an elite world of White masculine politics (see also Blanchard 2003; Cohn 2006). In other words, the organization was oriented around the experiences and beliefs of those who

had White male privilege; the intersections of gender and race were (and are) often concealed or ignored within the organization in ways that excluded women of all races, and women of color particularly. It was the brainchild of John F. Kennedy, and initially directed by Kennedy's charismatic brother-in-law, Sargent Shriver. Its proponents framed it as "the moral equivalent of war"; it was synergistic with the technostrategic and highly masculine narratives that have circumscribed national security discourses for generations (see also Cohn 1987). Particularly in the 1960s, the Peace Corps "provided a public theater of masculinity for left-leaning liberal internationalists in the Democratic administration" (Dean 1995, 259) – and notably, for *White* left-leaning liberal internationalists. In addition to being modeled after the military,[1] the Peace Corps is profoundly shaped by a long history of what Dean calls an "imperial brotherhood," of which Kennedy and Shriver were full-fledged members – a collection of institutions, including all-male, mostly White prep schools, Ivy League universities, and exclusive men's clubs, which fashioned members of the foreign policy establishment. The commitment to aggressive masculinity that these men shared created a Peace Corps grounded in masculine heroism and pioneer spirit (Dean 1995, 261, 2001).

As much as it is gendered, the Peace Corps is also deeply racialized, even as it adheres studiously to a policy of "colorblindness." In 1961, Shriver presented on the Peace Corps to a Chicago-based community group, neatly encapsulating what was to become the agency's approach to race: "I have … a volunteer questionnaire for Peace Corps service," he announced. "Nowhere does it ask for the candidate's race" (Zimmerman 1995, 999). This omission of race reflected the Peace Corps' stated intention "to see people as people – to come to terms with human beings as persons apart from qualifying adjectives" (Zimmerman 1995, 999), perhaps confusing *seeing* race with *being* racist. As a predominantly white organization, the Peace Corps has always formally sought qualified "Americans," explicitly avoiding mention of race and relying on universalist language in recruitment and training. And yet, the agency's first 100 volunteers in 1961 included just two volunteers of color, which even its high-minded directorate recognized as problematic (Zimmerman 1995, 1004). Nearly 60 years later, the Peace Corps remains overwhelmingly white. Additionally, its mission of promoting democracy, peace, and understanding abroad sits uneasily with its lack of explicit engagement against racial oppression at home – both historically and contemporarily. The Kennedy administration's own commitment to racial justice was uncertain at best (Navasky 1971), and Black critics of the Peace Corps have always been particularly conscious of this paradox. (Malcolm X in 1964 referred to volunteers as "spies" to a Nigerian audience. He was particularly harsh towards Black volunteers, whom he perceived as traitors to their race because of their participation in a colonial organization [Perry 1991, 181, 269].) These

patterns all suggest that, although the Peace Corps' founding philosophy chose not to "see color," this approach obscures the ways in which volunteers of color experience service differently from White volunteers, and supports a particular type of "colorblind" organizational racism that supports White privilege (cf. Bonilla-Silva 2017; Burke 2017).

These racialized and gendered structures persist in the Peace Corps in consequential ways. Peace Corps training places a great deal of emphasis on intercultural exchange, and while there are occasional addenda that address probable challenges that volunteers of color will face, the program is primarily oriented towards the experiences of White middle-class volunteers. This has consistently been the case; in the 1960s and 1970s, training curricula almost never addressed how host communities would receive Americans of color. Trainers warned Black volunteers against expecting an unambiguous welcome, but questions of race were ignored, even as race in America gained visibility (Zimmerman 1995, 1010). Similarly, Peace Corps training historically addressed women's issues as something separate, in a program where men were considered the default. Contemporary training features women more and emphasizes physical safety for female volunteers (including a controversial video on how to "avoid rape," eventually removed from circulation because of critiques of victim-blaming [US Peace Corps 2011]), but not the way in which race, gender, and nationality may combine in their experiences, failing to see them as interlinked. Both race and gender are downplayed within the organization – as is any interaction of the two.

And yet, even given this meaningful White masculine blueprint, there have been shifts in development with respect to gender, including within the Peace Corps. In the past several decades, a raft of scholarship exploring women's experiences within development has emerged (Baker and Leicht 2017; Branisa, Klasen, and Ziegler 2013; Goetz 1997; Razavi 2009).[2] At the same time, the *delivery* of development programs and services has also been feminized: women make up ever-increasing numbers of the cadre of development workers. Contemporarily, many development agencies embrace a set of policies known as "gender mainstreaming," designed to promote "both the integration of women into existing systems as active participants and changes to the existing systems to reduce gender inequalities stemming from women's disadvantaged position in societies" (Tiessen 2004, 690). This policy is consonant with shifts in the field of development more broadly. For instance, in 2013 women represented 55 percent of United States Agency for International Development (USAID) employees, and men 45 percent (US Office for Personnel Management 2013). Likewise, the gender composition of the Peace Corps has also changed. Nearly two-thirds of all volunteers in the 1960s (at the Peace Corps' inception) were men; 63 percent were men in the 1970s. But those numbers are now almost entirely inverted:

62 percent of all volunteers were women in the 1990s and two-thirds of volunteers were women in 2013.

This gendered and racialized basis upon which the Peace Corps was founded (White masculinity, heroism, etc.) is still very present in the organization. The Peace Corps has, in some ways, followed the trajectory of the so-called "feminization of development," though it retains its masculine contours. In other words, it is getting somewhat more femin*ist* as it femin*izes* – though it perhaps can never be fully feminist because of its original design. It has more or less maintained the racial characteristics with which it began. This is not to summarily dismiss the work that thoughtful reformers within the organization have done in attempts to render it more inclusive (such as increased diversity training [US Peace Corps 2017a]). It is, however, to say that organizations cannot shrug off their blueprints so easily; the practice of development remains profoundly racialized and gendered – specifically, it is heavily white, though now also heavily female. This plays out both in services that are delivered, but also – and the focus of this article – in the experiences of women who work in this field.

Theoretical framework: intersectionality in development work

This article is an intersectional analysis (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013; Crenshaw 1989; McCall 2005) of race, gender, and nationality in the context of development work. An intersectional framework is premised on the notion that distinctive systems of oppression are co-produced by, and productive of, unequal realities (Dhamoon 2015). While Crenshaw is credited for the term "intersectionality" (Crenshaw 1989; McCall 2005) and Patricia Hill Collins (1998, for example) popularized it considerably, the idea drew upon decades of work by other feminists. This included thinking by the Combahee River Collective, which articulated a version of intersectionality in 1977, emphasizing "the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking" (Combahee River Collective 1977). Rather than examining gender, race, class, and nation as separate systems, an intersectional approach may look at how these systems comprise and complicate one another (Collins 1998; Slack 1996), and what effects those combined experiences produce in people's lives (see also Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1983).

Duong (2012, 371) characterizes existing intersectionality research as fitting either "descriptive" or "critical" paradigms. "Descriptive" intersectional study, for Duong, focuses on the multiple dimensions of identity as a puzzle to be solved; it critiques the use of, for instance, "woman" as a unitary category and points out the ways in which one's experience of being a woman may differ by race, class, or sexual orientation.[3] "Critical" intersectional theorists, on the other hand, explore the underlying intersecting structures that

pattern social life, produce injustice, and determine collective identity – for instance, the conditions that *led to* the construction of "woman" as a unitary category. Intersectional research appeared as a response to exclusion: either the tendency to reduce the many aspects of an individual's identity to a single attribute, such as privileging gender at the expense of racial identity (cf. Crenshaw 1991, 1989), or the broader exclusion of individual persons from a group, such as the absence of Black women in otherwise women-oriented spaces.[4]

The categories that intersectional analyses seek to deconstruct are also regularly inscribed into organizations through social processes. That is, power relations are frequently purveyed and/or experienced *organizationally*. Patterns of class, race, and gender are not "the shards of history, but are continually created and re-created in today's organizations," as people are contracted, dismissed, compensated, and as work is executed (Acker 1990, 2000, 198). In the case of development organizations specifically, colonial relations intersect with gendered and class relations (Baines 2010), as well as with nationality.

The consequences of this matrix of relations become particularly interesting when we consider how women volunteers are simultaneously part of a colonial institution and shaped by colonial norms (see also Song 2005). They are also frequently carriers of Western feminism, which is sometimes critiqued for being itself colonial (cf. Mohanty, Russo, and Torres 1991). These legacies of colonialism remain within the development apparatus and international relations – including in the Peace Corps – that continue to influence inequality (Engerman and Sokoloff 2002; Lange, Mahoney, and vom Hau 2006; Mahoney 2010). McClintock (1995) argues that, to understand colonialism and post-colonialism, one must recognize that race and gender come into existence through each other. "Imperialism," she writes, "is not something that happened elsewhere – a disagreeable fact of history external to Western identity. Rather, imperialism and the invention of race were fundamental aspects of Western, industrial modernity" (McClintock 1995, 5). According to this framework, the practice of development is constituted by the racialized and gendered contours of its origins, and the intersectional experiences of women within it can tell us a great deal about how such social relations continue to manifest. This article analyzes the experience of women volunteers rather than the experiences of service recipients, and in doing this I focus more on expressions of colonialism *within the organization* than on expressions of colonialism moving outward into host communities. However, the two are, to a large extent, entwined.

While the study of development institutions and practices has expanded to include gender and gender perspectives (cf. Baker and Leicht 2017; Branisa, Klasen, and Ziegler 2013), this work has generally not incorporated an intersectional analysis. Yet, everywhere that intersectional perspectives *have*

emerged, they have revealed important aspects of gendered power concealed by those same institutions and practices (cf. Baines 2010). Most writing in this vein aims to produce better outcomes for the recipients of services (cf. Deere and de Leal 2014; Njoh and Ananga 2016). Critical development perspectives tend to focus on deconstructing colonialism as it articulates within development projects (Cornwall, Harrison, and Whitehead 2007; Mukhopadhyay 2014). Both are worthy undertakings. Relatedly, literature on women expatriates tends to focus on organizational dynamics or barriers to women's entry, finding that women working abroad face particular challenges, including to their credibility (Adler 1984, 198; Napier and Taylor 2002; Stroh, Varma, and Valy-Durbin 2000). This stream of research is, as well, useful and meaningful. Within development literatures (and to some extent international management), there have been passing references to intersectionality, but usually in service of a different point (for instance, Adler and Izraeli [1994] remarked that some women in international management were able to "rise above a gendered categorization and are more likely to be treated as foreigners rather than as women"). Setting aside the troublesome metaphor of "rising above" one's gender, the point remains that an explicitly intersectional analysis of institutions and practices is warranted. An intersectional study of women in the Peace Corps can provide empirical resolution of how different women experience and navigate their identities during their service, and the social, historical, and organizational dynamics that feed these processes.

Methods

By exploring the experience of women in the Peace Corps, this article pushes against the social science tendency to universalize the experience of men and other dominant groups. An intersectional analysis is part of what Harding (1988) calls feminist "methodology" (theorizing about research). That is, a feminist methodology should "do the work of 'excavation,' shifting the focus of standard practice from men's concerns in order to reveal the locations and perspectives of (all) women" (DeVault 1996, 32).

This article draws on a dataset of 127 in-depth interviews that I conducted with Peace Corps staff, current and returned Peace Corps volunteers (RPCVs), and government officials, including women and men who served in different countries and at different times, though it focuses analytically on women's experiences. I sampled RPCVs who served in 44 different countries from five cohorts (in ten-year increments from 1961 to 2014), in order to gain an understanding of how the organization has changed, and how the experience of its participants may have shifted through time. The median age of interviewees at their swearing-in was 22 years. Additionally, I interviewed staff in Washington, DC, and former staff who had also been volunteers.

I used a carefully seeded snowball sample that made use of three categories of potential respondents, because volunteers' identities are federally protected (and thus I could not draw a random sample). These categories included country of service (e.g., RPCVs of Ghana), geographical location in the US (e.g., RPCVs of Pennsylvania), and interest/identity group (e.g., RPCVs of color, RPCVs at the State Department, etc.). My techniques yielded a gender, race, income, and age distribution among respondents that is very similar to the Peace Corps' numbers, suggesting that my sample is, demographically at least, representative of the general population of RPCVs. I also sampled staff from three interview field sites (discussed below), as well as from the agency headquarters in Washington, DC. The interview schedule included open-ended questions about volunteers' experience of gender, race, and sexual assault, as well as volunteers' perceptions of training, placement, and experiences in their host communities. Interviews took place over the phone and in person over a period of nearly two years, from 2012 to 2014 (Figure 1; Table 1).

I also draw on qualitative field observations of three to four weeks at each of the Peace Corps offices in three countries. These countries were selected to capture a range of levels of development, in addition to a geographical spread.[5] In each site, I spent most of my time at the main office, attended as many staff meetings as permitted, observed both the meetings and the

Table 1. Respondents by decade of service.

Decade	No. of respondents
1960s	13
1970s	15
1980s	8
1990s	17
2000s	18
2010s	20
Staff	36
Total	127

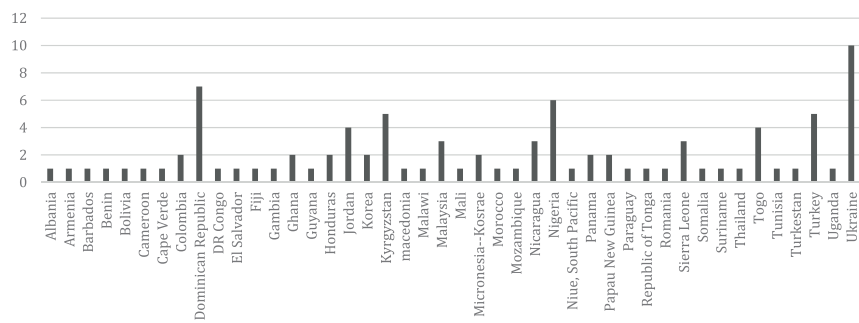

Figure 1. Respondents by country of service.

office environment in general, and conducted formal interviews with office staff. Additionally, I observed different Peace Corps activity programming in each country. In one country, I traveled outside the capital to observe at a remedial training session (targeting the group of volunteers struggling with language acquisition). In the second country, I attended a mid-service training session that took the most committed volunteers for a five-day period of language refreshers (widely considered a treat among current Peace Corps volunteers for its retreat-like feel). In the third country, I attended a summer camp held by volunteers, to observe volunteers as they ran five days of activities at a boys' camp. The goal of these observations was to complement interview data with observational, on-site data that focused on how Peace Corps programs articulate "on the ground." Observation is not a probability or a representative undertaking. Rather, I use it to provide meaningful grounding and observational insights that can triangulate other types of data (see also Carter et al. 2015).

Finally, I analyzed a host of print data, including articles, blog posts, and magazine entries authored by current and former volunteers, and primary source documents, including organizational documents, reports, and correspondence (including letters) that are archived both online and at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston, MA.

Qualitative data coding and analysis

Following Hancock (2007), I assume that, while various categories of difference should be equally attended to in research, the relationship among the categories is an open empirical question. I explore answers to this empirical question in the context of female Peace Corps volunteers, exploring how they make sense of and navigate their identities in development work. I conceive of categories of difference as dynamic productions of individual and institutional factors. In other words, race is not merely a static social construction; the construction of race is an institutional and organizational process, experienced at the micro-level – in the lives of individual women in my sample.

Data collection was undertaken by myself, primarily but not exclusively in English. I translated and transcribed conversations that took place in languages other than English myself; interviews recorded in English were transcribed by a professional service.

Qualitative data coding is an integral part of data analysis (see also Weston et al. 2001). This project relied upon methods of grounded coding, which differs from other qualitative techniques in its emphasis on theory development, which occurs simultaneously with data collection (Strauss and Corbin 1990, 274). Grounded theorists construct levels of abstraction directly from the data, conducting additional readings to check and refine emerging

analytic categories. This culminates in an abstract theoretical understanding of a studied experience – a "grounded theory" (Charmaz 2014). Indeed, this article began when I noticed a pattern of women gaining access to male spaces, as I coded the data in service of different sets of research questions. Grounded coding is particularly useful when studying women, whose experiences are often "omitted and distorted" in mainstream social science (DeVault 1996, 30), because it begins with women's own lives rather than with a set of hypotheses that may be subject to this "omission and distortion." An initial data reading helped me identify broad themes among women volunteers (such as access to public spaces, and whether/how it differed by race). Secondary data readings helped me refine those broad themes into more precise codes (for instance, theoretical mechanisms by which gender is linked to sexual assault). This iterative process permitted me to construct an analytic framework and an understanding of mechanism that both emerged from and remained tightly bound to my data (Eisenhardt 1989), and that was grounded, first and foremost, in the experiences of women themselves.

Results

Patterns emerge among women RPCVs through an intersectional analysis of gender, race, and nationality; these identities combine in distinct and paradoxical ways. Nationality, when combined with race, often affords White women "male" privilege, but may also make them vulnerable to sexual violence in ways that I explore specifically below. My data offer suggestive initial findings that women of color's experiences may vary by geography: they may be treated as "White" in African and African-diaspora countries of service, affording them "White" privilege, whereas volunteers of color are treated as "not really American" in predominantly White or non-African countries of service, which can be dangerous. While the sample size is too small to parse these variations definitively, initial patterns are suggestive of the ways in which host country context also shapes reactions to American women of color. In other words, race can afford women different privileges than they experience in the US, depending on context, but gender almost universally makes their experience dangerous.

The "male" privilege of White women: surviving gender nonconformity through racial privilege

White women Peace Corps volunteers often experience themselves abroad as able to access spaces that are locally designated as both "for women" and "for men." In addition to being afforded entry into women's spaces, White

volunteers often gain entry to spaces typically restricted to men. One who served in Uganda recalled:

> I thought it was great being female [in Uganda], because I felt like I could interact with the men on a level – because I was White – I could interact with the men on some level, but because I was female I could interact with the women a lot more, and the kids. (RPCV 2000s, Uganda)

As this volunteer suggested, gender is not indelible, but its significance for interactions became less salient when coupled with her Whiteness, giving her a "male" privilege. This privilege emerges for many White women; one serving in the Gambia in the 1990s recalled:

> [Being a woman was present] in every second of every minute of every day. I mean starting from: what are women's rights within the Gambia? Which is basically to be a co-wife and reproduce. It was sort of like, "Why aren't you married, and what are you doing here, and where's your husband?" … Because I was [an agriculture volunteer] and because in the Gambia if you plant a tree, you're claiming ownership of that land and because the land is held by men, women don't plant trees. Obviously. It meant that a lot of my formal work had to be done with men, and I'm sure there was some misconstrued notions of what I was doing out in the fields with men, which I just ignored.

This volunteer continued, articulating the ways in which she also had access to female spaces, even as she spent time working with men:

> Because back in the compound, I had really good relationships with the women. I would pound the grain with them and I would cook with them and I would fetch water with them and I would carry their children on my back. I think it was hard because the Peace Corps is two-thirds cultural exchange, so I'm just like, "I'm going to focus on the cultural exchange." I mean yes … I'm going to do ag[riculture], [but] I'm going to try to do as much as I can with women within that realm … because being in the fields with the men is a really tough role, because I'm not a man.

This volunteer experienced difficulties in harmonizing the two aspects of her gender – the grudging flexibility that she was allowed as a White woman into men's spaces, as well as her access to women's spaces – which she dealt with to the extent possible by "just ignoring" gossip, while trying to maintain relationships with women. Gender, for her, profoundly shaped her experience of her work, though it did not disqualify her from participating (as it might a Gambian woman) because race and nationality afforded her privilege. These binds are characteristic of the White women I interviewed, who joked about "honorary male" status. One who served in Togo remembered:

> You know, [Togo is] a very patriarchal society. All of the ethnic groups there are very patriarchal. But really, my Whiteness and my Americanness took

> over, and I feel like that was the main issue. So even though I was a woman, I had access to so many things that a Togolese woman would never have access to.

Even as she had access to both male and female spaces, this woman – like the volunteer quoted previously – was conscious of how the increased access to male spaces was linked to her race and nationality. She continued:

> I would say that primarily it was who I was as an American [that let me do my work]. But that said … hearing male volunteers and what they went through sometimes – they probably didn't have to fight quite as hard by times, especially with the Ministry of Health, that kind of stuff. Because it was more that, like, brothers, boys' clubs that they could easily break into that, as a woman, I couldn't. But that's true here, too. (RPCV 1990s, Togo)

For this woman, experiencing her own gender and race while abroad helped her see and reflect on gender dynamics (old boys' clubs, for instance) that exist in the US. Another White woman serving in Mali linked gender explicitly with race:

> Being a woman in Mali at that time, a young White woman – it's interesting because I wasn't really a woman, but I wasn't a man. I was in this weird category. People didn't know really. They considered me a woman but not a Malian woman, and I could do things that Malian women couldn't do. (RPCV 1990s, Mali)

This respondent clearly perceived herself as occupying a type of liminal gender space, in which her gender was transformed by her Whiteness into something different: "a woman but not a Malian woman." This transformation facilitated access to work and social spaces that were otherwise restricted to men. In other words, Whiteness often affords American women male privilege.

White volunteers may be self-reflective about this because – as people with a background of racial privilege in the US – they often become aware of that privilege for the first time during their Peace Corps service. A White woman who served in Fiji during the 1990s remembered, "I think [Peace Corps service was] the first time I was aware of my gender and color and who I am." Unlike many women of color, who can frequently "see more" about gender and race because they move between dominant and oppressed cultures (cf. Collins 2000), many White women become aware of, and begin to consider, their race for the first time when they become a numerical racial minority and an outsider. This respondent, for instance, described having never been in a situation where the significance of being a White female was obvious to her prior to her service.

The "White" privilege of Black women: surviving racial non-conformity through national privilege

While White women may become recipients of male privilege because of their race, both nationality and gender operate differently for volunteers of color. They tend to produce results that are disconcerting for volunteers themselves, often because the racialized scripts of the US transfer awkwardly into international contexts. Many volunteers of color find that their nationality is differently salient during their work abroad, though race remains a defining piece of their experience. Volunteers of color are often treated as "White" in African and African-diaspora countries of service, but treated as "not really American" in predominantly White or non-African countries of service, a dynamic I explore in the following section. One woman recalled of her time in Guyana:

> They call[ed] me a "White girl" even though I'm obviously Brown, but anyone from America is a White girl. Then it was like "there's a White girl that lives behind Auntie Theresa." Then people would come and look for the White girl. Of course, they wouldn't find a White girl and then they would find me. (RPCV 2000, Guyana)

For this volunteer, her race – a tremendously salient category in the US – mattered differently in Guyana, while her nationality gained importance because "anyone from America is a White girl." Her Americanness brought with it an assumption of race and racial privilege that persisted even after her neighbors had seen her skin color. Decades previous, an African-American volunteer had a similar experience. In 1962, she asked her primary students in Nigeria to describe her, and was told she was "of White colour" and had "white skin" (Watson 1962, 1963; cited in Zimmerman 1995). Nationality and race are conflated in the language of both the Nigerian and the Guyanese host communities; this conflation is not challenged by narratives within the Peace Corps itself that emphasize nationality and deemphasize race. The first volunteer recalled racialized language that she encountered in the beginning of her stay:

> What took me more by surprise was during training one of the Guyanese people was saying, "Well, we've got East Indians and we've got Negroes." I was like, "You have *what*? *Excuse* me?" Negro, hearing that every day I'm like, "I feel like I'm back in the fifties."

The American understanding of race transposes imperfectly onto this woman's experience of race in Guyana, producing a disconcerting effect. As these excerpts show, RPCV women of color reported that they often faced awkward exchanges abroad with people who thought of all Americans as "White." This type of exchange may indicate that host communities use the word "White" as a code for "privilege," which American women of color retain based on nationality (for a related exploration, see Willis 2015). (It may also indicate the mistaken belief that all Americans are White, explored

below.) In either interpretation, it suggests that racialized conceptions of Americans move across national boundaries and manifest within host country communities. American women of color must then both make sense of and cope with these perceptions, often without the support or recognition of the organization.

"Not really American": experiences of oppression among women of color

As much as "White" privilege can exist for volunteers of color based on their nationality, this privilege is mixed with an explicit danger borne of being an American of color which, in my data, appears most among volunteers who have served in Asian, Eastern European, and other non-African communities. Volunteers of color are sometimes explicitly endangered by the combination of their gender and their race during service, because being an "American of color" is an unintelligible identity in many host countries. One Black volunteer serving in the Caribbean told me that she was harassed on city buses for speaking the local language poorly; she was assumed to be an immigrant from a neighboring country, and doubted when she said she was American. This woman's race was an explicit liability when coupled with her nationality (and her language skills), making her unsafe in public spaces. She also reported that she was not prepared for this dynamic or warned about it in her training.

Data from volunteers of color overwhelmingly suggested that Peace Corps orientation did not prepare them to deal with the confusion they would encounter at their host sites, particularly where people could not imagine non-White Americans. A volunteer who served in Ethiopia recalled, "When people think of Americans, they think of White Americans. The burden of explaining the transatlantic slave trade was overwhelming" (US Peace Corps 2017b). In order to simply explain her presence in her community, this woman had to tackle the history of slavery and colonialism that had created the social world of which she was part, a responsibility she assumed individually. Another volunteer who served in Thailand in the 2010s said, "the intention of the Peace Corps and their trainings in cross-cultural competency are good; however, how do you teach those that have lived and maneuvered in their home country as an outsider to maneuver as an outsider in another?" (Fitz 2017, unpaginated). While the Peace Corps training includes material on safety and sexual assault, it remains focused largely around gendered self-protection rather than racialized self-protection, or identity. She continued:

> [in] Pre-Service Training, there is a monolithic presentation of [American] culture and being. Inevitably I am excluded and silenced from this because my experience … in many ways is not shared amongst my White counterparts … What makes this experience unique is that being Black makes me a double outsider.

As this woman suggested, the intersection of nationality and race is frequently disguised or underestimated within the Peace Corps itself, in ways that exclude women of color – and, further, that reinforce one specific (White) narrative of what "American" culture is and how it looks. This is consistent with the colonial orientation of the development apparatus described in the beginning of this article. Another African-American woman who served in a nearly all-White country said:

> I think they [Peace Corps] just put[s] it all in the same bowl, as "You're going to have a hard time integrating to this city, community, blah, blah, blah," that they don't pull [people of color's experience] out … It's the monkey in the room. We're just going to say, "It's going to be difficult for you when you get out there." They're not going to point fingers and say, "You Brown people come here because we're getting you something extra." I think that they would prefer, like I said, to put it all in a big bowl and say, "You don't have problems."

She continued:

> [Eastern Europe] hasn't had a lot of people of color come to their communities, and they [the Peace Corps] tell[s] you, "You kind of figure it out." They don't come out and say, "They hardly ever see any minorities come here so they're going to stare at you." … They kind of disguise it in "safety and security, don't talk English if you're in a train, don't be out late, if you're drinking go with another person" but they don't really say, "You might have a problem [because you're Black]."

This woman, a volunteer of color in a majority-White country, had a different experience than the Black volunteer in a majority-Black country cited previously, though neither served in African or African-diaspora countries. They both encountered racism, though the racism varied in manifestation. They both were expected to navigate those unexpected racial dynamics without organizational support or, indeed, recognition of their struggles. In the latter case, the volunteer explicitly perceived the organization to be "disguising" the issue of race within a universal discourse of safety and security. Such universalist language is a hallmark of colorblind racism that fails to challenge racial hierarchies.

Women of color also recounted stories of racial encounters among their own colleagues in Peace Corps. They reported that the agency is unwilling to engage questions of race within its organizational machinery, and actively attempts to minimize those conversations when they arise. This same volunteer told me that she thought it made White volunteers (as well as the Peace Corps) uncomfortable to talk about how her experience may have been different from the experience of a White person in Eastern Europe. She continued:

> I'm going to have a totally different acceptance [in this White country] than you are. They can go someplace to get their hair cut. For me, I have to find somebody

> that really knows how to cut my hair … I have totally different needs for hair products, facial products, and everything else. I just think they just don't see that.

For this woman, lack of access to hair products was symbolic of the other ways in which her experience abroad would differ from that of her White cohort-mates, and the lack of consideration the Peace Corps offers volunteers of color. Her challenges came from two directions – in her field site, as a Black woman in a predominantly White country, and from within the organization itself, which does not recognize or prioritize her experience. While the agency does tackle gender explicitly in training and throughout service in a language of safety, its unwillingness to tackle race reinforces racialized notions about who development workers are, and the alienation that women of color experience is a testament to how they are continually treated as an "other" within their service. By maintaining the narrative of "colorblindness," and failing to explore how various facets of women's experiences combine, the Peace Corps can elide responsibility for participating in systems of racism and sexism.

Gender non-conformity, cultural context, and race: assault and violence among women volunteers

I have argued thus far that American women's experience of their gender is not incidental in the Peace Corps, but that it varies by race. I have also suggested that women of color's experience may vary by region. Those differences are particularly meaningful in the context of women's experiences of assault while living abroad. One of the most important ways in which women's experience is both (a) rendered invisible by the power structure within the Peace Corps, and (b) qualitatively different from that of many men, concerns sexual assault and violence. For White women, the combination of race and nationality brings them a freedom from responding to certain cultural expectations around gender, as we have seen. While this "male privilege" may afford them access to different spaces, it can also put them in danger because their racial privilege does not protect them against potential or attempted assault and indeed may make them especially vulnerable to it. For women of color in the data, references to their race were largely absent in how they talked about sexual safety. This final empirical section theorizes sexual assault in the Peace Corps in the context of gender and race for volunteers, and reflects on the ways in which women must negotiate the complex interplay of nationality, race, and gender with minimal support.

While there are not consistent data, several reports taken together can give us a sense of the scope of sexual assault and rape among volunteers. Reported physical assaults nearly doubled in the first ten years of data collection, averaging nine assaults per 1,000 volunteer years in 1991–93, and 17 assaults in

1998–2000 (Ford 2004). Other estimates report that between 2000 and 2009 there were over 1,000 sexual assaults, including 221 rapes or attempted rapes (Strickler 2011; underreporting may account for the discrepency in estimates). Among female volunteers, in 2016 there were 52 reported rapes, 31 reported aggravated sexual assaults, and 209 reported non-aggravated sexual assaults (US Peace Corps 2016). White volunteers comprise 74 percent of the Peace Corps population but make up 82 percent of reported crime victims; women comprise 60 percent of volunteers and make up 69 percent of reported crime victims (US Peace Corps 2010, 1; notably, sexual assault numbers are not disaggregated by race or gender in most reports). There has been a great deal of controversy surrounding the Peace Corps' handling of sexual assault, whistleblowers and former volunteers having accused the agency of failing to adequately respond to or support victims (CBS News 2015, 2018). Although it has repeatedly defended itself against these accusations (cf. US Peace Corps 2018b), both news coverage and volunteer accounts suggest that the Peace Corps faces major difficulties in its approach to these issues.

Interview data from Peace Corps officials provide interesting perspective here, drawing attention to the organizational logic behind the agency's response. One country director pointed to the coordination difficulties of implementing security systems in multiple countries simultaneously: "You can have smart people together," he observed, "and very caring [people], and they'll work hard on it, but with communications and different perceptions, and you don't have a lot of time, something gets missed." Although coordination and communication difficulties are substantial – many staff reflected on the difficulties of managing programs in so many places simultaneously – the official's remarks suggest another issue:

> [The Peace Corps] is throwing a lot at us, and they're asking us to base [our response to assault] on the military system. Which A, isn't working. But it's the only [federal agency] that has something like that. And B, it's because their generals are sexually assaulting people below them … and that's not our case. That's not what we're dealing with. So, we're modifying it, and we're doing a lot of good things with it, but it's a lot … And the last line of it – [our response] "shall be done without any additional funds." We're adding a whole new system, whole new department, whole new roles and requirements, without any extra funding.

Several Peace Corps officials noted that Congressional expectations for decreasing assault numbers were not supported by sufficient funding. Funding is important, of course, and often reflects organizational priorities. However, this official's observation about the military is instructive, and echoes other points in the Peace Corps' history (for instance, when training was modeled after military boot camps). Not only is the agency asked to adopt a response designed for a wholly different organization, but the military

is an explicitly masculine organization wherein the sources of problems are different, and wherein an ethic of "colorblindness" is also salient.

Women volunteers – nearly all that I spoke to – had stories about sexual assault. These data tell a counterintuitive story for White women: their gender coupled with their visible Whiteness often renders them vulnerable, even though they perceive the liminal gender space that they occupy to be a privilege. As a White volunteer recounted:

> I was only the fourth group that had been there, but in the first four groups since the fall of the Soviet Union and the Peace Corps came into the country, there had already been several rapes of women [volunteers] … [C]ulturally, the messages that were out there about US women were pretty skewed, as far as women from the US being permissive and just wanting sex. Whether people really believed them or it was just convenient to believe that, I'm not sure. At least that's what we were told in our training that culturally, there had been such a non-communication – not blending between the US and the former Soviet Union for so long that when things opened up, there really was a lot of misunderstanding about what the cultures were like. (RPCV 1990s, Turkestan)

She outlined a culture of "wife stealing" in some areas of her host country, and continued:

> Against this backdrop, you can imagine some of the gender stuff was pretty pervasive. There was one woman in the year ahead of me who was raped and ended up going home, terminating her service early, and so of course we all knew about that and were very affected by that. (RPCV 1990s, Turkestan)

For this woman, and for other White women in the Peace Corps, perceptions about American women's promiscuity make them vulnerable to catcalls, come-ons, and assaults, reinforced by media narratives or, as this woman pointed out, other forms of misinformation. Real or perceived attachment to men can signal adherence to culturally appropriate womanhood, and can have the effect of engendering approval and/or ensuring safety in host communities. A White woman who served 20 years later recalled:

> There were a couple other instances where guys would joke with me and kinda cross a line, and say something about American girls being sluts … And constant joking about my boyfriend at home – and did he really exist! – and "Oh you're a good girl because you have a boyfriend at home." And I think that a lot of volunteers wound up making up stories like that, or even buying fake wedding rings just to get people off their backs. Because it did help a little bit to say, you know, "I have this boyfriend." And I think that the women in the village thought better of me because I did have a boyfriend and I wasn't, like, on the prowl.

White women, who in many Peace Corps host countries are quickly visibly recognizable because of their skin color, reported encounters in which they felt vulnerable. A woman who served nearly 50 years earlier recalled:

> You pretty much had to be a real modest type girl. You wore your sleeves to your wrist and up your neck and your hemline below your knee. It didn't really matter because the men will all stare at you all the time walking on the street. They tried to bump you if they can. You spot one up the street and you figured out, "Yes, he is going to try to bump me." He's coming along, and just at the moment of bump I do a quick side step and move around him. I got pretty good at that, and I got used to it. (RPCV 1960s, Turkey)

When asked about preparation for going abroad, this woman reported that she had been "given ideas" about the challenges she might face, but that much was left unsaid. In the 1960s men outnumbered women, and the standard training heavily emphasized the experience of White male volunteers. These experiences of danger and judgment around gender (and attendant coping mechanisms, like fake wedding rings) sit paradoxically with White women's claims that gender affords them access into multiple spaces at once, suggesting that race is relevant to their gendered experience of work (and safety), and that certainly not all of it is a privilege.

Women of color frame their assault and safety issues differently, likely because, except in predominantly White countries, they are not coupled with the same degree of racial visibility and privilege that White women have. What is instructive in the data is not what appears, but what *does not* appear: women of color tended to omit discussion of race in their interview responses to questions about assault. One said:

> I have a really stiff backbone, and I worked in what we call "machismo" societies before, so having things yelled at me down the street like, "Oh, you look like a big can of sweetened condensed milk" – like, eh. I kind of thought some of them were funny more than anything else. I'm sure they meant them to be crude and I probably should have been insulted, but at the end of the day, all I could do was just be like, "Oh, I feel bad for you!" … If you were the type of person that couldn't take it in stride, then you definitely were leaving the country. Some of the women in our group did not make it and they cited that as one of the reasons. (RPCV 2000s, Guyana)

This woman, although she made mention of her skin tone, did not talk about her race specifically when she described harassment. This pattern held for women of color with whom I spoke. Another volunteer said:

> Harassment is kind of an issue for women in Morocco. I never felt unsafe in my village. But in order for me to travel anywhere I had to go through a city that was pretty unsafe. [Rape] is a really big issue … So there have been issues – there was one issue of a woman wanting to prosecute a Moroccan man for rape when I was in the Peace Corps. And one of the issues is because the penalty is *soooo* severe, they [the Peace Corps] essentially pressured this volunteer not to press charges. They were like, "This man will be shamed, he will be beaten!" … and sort of the general comments and criticisms that people have about how the Peace Corps handles sexual assault and rape [poorly], I would agree with many of those. (RPCV 2010s, Morocco)

Women of color overall reported encountering fewer stereotypes of American women as promiscuous – perhaps because, as people of color, their nationality was not immediately read as "American." Race, for them, limits their experience of gender privilege, and may also redirect local stereotypes about promiscuity (which are usually premised on Whiteness) away from them. Additionally, women of color may frequently "see more" about gender and race because they move between dominant and oppressed cultures (cf. Collins 2000) more than White women; evidence of this appears in how women of color reported on their own behavior. One woman of color who served in Thailand couched safety in terms of cultural propriety, even as she recounted an active social life and a romantic relationship with a local man – behaviors that may provoke gossip or even make someone vulnerable. She adhered strongly to local norms as a way both to demonstrate respect and to maintain her own safety. She reported that she

> tried to make some modifications – again, because I'm a very careful person, so I was a little bit concerned for my safety and I also didn't want to break a major rule about what was proper and what wasn't. (RPCV 1990s, Thailand)

Finally, the coupling of gender, race, and nationality appears in the ways in which sexual assault is reported and patterned. While medical attention is readily available for volunteers, data suggest that this attention can be insensitive to the needs of women because it fails to take culture and identity into account. One woman who served in the 2010s in North Africa mused:

> I would say I think one of the reasons that questions of sexual assault are [hushed] is, for a while, all of our doctors were Moroccan. Which for me was fine; I had no problem with it. But obviously they're doctors, so they have to ask you about your sexual activity. And so [volunteers] felt that they were being judged by the fact that they are unmarried and sexually active. So, a year in, we had an incident where a volunteer actually died … because of that, there was an overhaul of the medical team.

Peace Corps women are conscious of the intersecting standards and expectations that they face, and deal with them as best they can. In this case, the combination of gender and divergent cultural norms created a situation in which women withheld information from doctors – in one case with disastrous results. Women in this setting were more stigmatized for sexual activity than men, and yet, until someone literally died, the Peace Corps continued to engage male doctors. Women intentionally hid behaviors from doctors that might be seen as non-conforming, resulting in at least one case of lasting and consequential harm. The Peace Corps was responsive to the problem as it arose – and yet it took a tragedy to bring the stakes of the gendered nature of healthcare into relief. If it does not acknowledge and prioritize the ways in which the various dimensions of their identities combine and

matter for their health and safety, the Peace Corps cannot wholly support its women volunteers.

This section has contrasted the various racial privileges that American women may acquire abroad with issues of safety and assault that they face in the field. Both women of color and White women face danger during service, and must navigate their own safety in the context of a highly self-protective organization that largely fails to consider the ways in which women's experience of assault may be shaped by their nationality and race.

Implications and conclusions

Because the Peace Corps was shaped by White masculinity, it retains gender and racial patterns today. The consequences of these patterns within development and service institutions are rendered visible through intersectional analyses. And they are wide-ranging, extending to field sites and affecting the experience of volunteers and employees, as well as programs and service delivery. Because of its inability to reassess its organizational assumptions about gender and race, the Peace Corps avoids taking responsibility for its participation in various systems of oppression and, indeed, reinforces those very systems. Understanding how these institutions function and how gender and race are experienced could serve as a corrective both for the Peace Corps and for development in general.

This article has focused on the social experience of gender in different contexts, finding that, for American women abroad, this construction varies by race and possibly by host country region. Women – regardless of race – confront danger contingent on their gender. These findings have implications for the role of race in perceptions of national authenticity: White volunteers are nearly always perceived as "authentic" Americans by their host communities, while women of color face challenges both in terms of social acceptance and in terms of safety. The possible geographic patterns regarding how host countries receive volunteers (or indeed American tourists of color) merit further study.

Women volunteers almost universally claim to feel ill-prepared to face the gender- and race-based challenges that they regularly meet in their host communities.[6] Because the Peace Corps does not challenge or engage conventional race and gender patterns, it lacks both the orientation and the capacity to address women's safety and assault. The Peace Corps fails women by not centering and supporting them in making sense of their gendered and racialized identities during their service; in many of the complicated situations they encounter, the agency itself is notably absent. Women describe being extolled by the Peace Corps to behave in a culturally appropriate way abroad, while also feeling invisible and disrespected within

the organization itself – a continued expression of the complicated four-way interplay between racism, sexism, Western feminist ideals, and sensitivity to local norms. Masculinity, imperialism and the construction of racial distinctions are fundamental to modernity, including modern development projects. By extension, they are also fundamental to the Peace Corps. This produces a highly particular and highly charged paradox for women. How this paradox manifests, and how they respond to it, as we have seen, varies among participants. The point is that the Peace Corps as an agency could benefit from establishing intentional, ongoing space to support volunteers grappling with these issues. It could rethink pre-service training so that it centers the experiences of women and acknowledges the ways in which women's experiences will differ by race. It could also take the form of ongoing inquiry into, conversations about, and support for women as they encounter racism, sexism, and violence during their service.

Second, the Peace Corps may benefit from directly grappling with the colonial history from which it emerged. Volunteers are sensitive to the tensions that service implies – they are cognizant of the charges of imperialism that the agency has faced over the decades and their own role in it (one remarked in 1975, "I couldn't draw the line between development and cultural imperialism" [Searles 1997, 68]). Other communities have attempted to take collective responsibility for past wrongs, including South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and Germany's public acknowledgement of wrongdoing during the Holocaust. In both cases, states acknowledged lasting damage wrought on minority communities, and potentially provide models for the development apparatus to engage in self-reflection. "I think there could be more of an effort to call for and listen to minority voices in Peace Corps," said one volunteer who served in Ethiopia in the 2000s. "I think everyone should be aware of how [the Peace Corps] reproduce[s] racist behaviors and systems" (US Peace Corps 2017b). Cultivating a greater awareness of America's history – including of race and colonial power, both within and outside of the US – might help volunteers make sense of their experience and might set a constructive example for other parts of the US state and development apparatus. Exploring the complicated interplay of nationality and gender (and if and to what extent Western feminist ideals are also colonial) might foster productive reflections both among volunteers and within the organization.

Finally, it is worth reiterating that it is difficult for any person – or organization – to fully embrace anti-colonialism, anti-racism, or feminism in a world that is structured by colonialism, racism, and misogyny. These challenges are magnified in the case of international relationships, wherein various cultures, practices, and histories are all entwined, and wherein people with good intentions are implicated in organizational and political histories and trajectories that extend far beyond individual control. Organizations are highly

inert; social change takes time. And yet the Peace Corps itself is in a unique position to potentially embrace some of these anti-colonial reforms, as an organization whose explicit mission is to cultivate peace and understanding. By doing so, it may also be able to deconstruct and reconstruct norms within other American institutions. "Peace Corps is an American agency," noted a Black woman who served in Thailand (Fitz 2017), "and you can't expect it to be any less American than America."

Notes

1. The first groups of volunteers, explicitly recruited as generalists, received training that resembled military basic training far more than it did a field internship at USAID, as it does contemporarily. Volunteers in the 1960s were taught basic survival skills, such as rappelling down the sides of buildings; one had his arms and legs bound and was thrown in a swimming pool and expected to free himself (Kallman 2016).
2. Some of these analyses are subtly intersectional in their approach (cf. Taş, Reimão, and Orlando 2014).
3. There are important strategic and political benefits, of course, to defining "woman" as a single or unitary category. Specifically, Hartsock (1983) has observed that analyzing women's experiences permits us to learn something about male supremacy and, by extension, capitalism.
4. For Duong (2012, 371), these two patterns of intersectional thought have stymied intersectionality's potential "world-making" aspect – that is, the piece that makes politicized identities political and calls forth new political collectives, in the way in which some queer theory does. At best, good intersectional analysis can provide new and qualitatively different spaces to open up ways of being.
5. As measured by the Human Development Index (HDI – see http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi).
6. These findings resonate with a trajectory of arguments by feminist researchers that feminism has become depoliticized by development institutions, and that feminist concepts have been appropriated and refashioned (Cornwall, Harrison, and Whitehead 2007). In this process, development governmentality has produced new female subjects that policy can more easily address – meaning, in this case, understandings of gender that turn on safety rather than identity.

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Appendix 1. Descriptive statistics of volunteer respondents

Characteristic	My data (2013–14) (%)	Official Peace Corps numbers (2011)* (%)
Female	63	66
Male	37	34
Volunteers with at least a four-year college degree	98	98
Minority volunteers (self-identified via survey)	13	17
White volunteers (self-identified via survey)	87	83

*Bridgeland et al. 2011.