

from protecting the inequitable *de facto* distribution of world power to one of liberation? Or, to put it in less utopian terms, do these developments open some new possibilities for promoting a more liberatory approach? In attempting an answer to these questions I will examine, first, the ways in which the new security and peacekeeping developments function to reinforce dominating forms of global power and, second, how they also create new conditions for the contestation of militarized notions of gender and security.

### Peacekeeping as a Protective Strategy

There are many ways in which post-Cold War security and peacekeeping developments are serving to entrench existing global regimes of power which are reliant on the production of narratives of gender which subordinate women. I will focus on three: first, the enormous powers that have been assumed by the democratically unaccountable Security Council in constructing how we understand contemporary threats to international peace and security; second, the blurring of the boundaries between peacekeeping and peace enforcement resulting in an extension of the legitimized use of force in international law and the corresponding normalization of militarism in ever more local forms; and third, the neocolonial effects of many peacebuilding efforts.

### Security Council Powers

Turning first to the issue of Security Council powers in the post-Cold War UN: this can be thought about in several ways, one of which is the Council's power to construct an authoritative global discourse or *Truth*<sup>28</sup> about global security. In

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<sup>28</sup> Michel Foucault, "Two Lectures" in Colin Gordon (ed), *Power/Knowledge* (1980) 78, 93. Foucault describes knowledge or Truth as the product of a complex of power relations whereby Truth is the product of power and power is exercised by the production of Truth.