

Miriam J. Anderson. *Windows of Opportunity: How Women Seize Peace Negotiations for Political Change.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. xi, 217 pp. (\$65 cloth).

In *Windows of Opportunity*, Miriam Anderson unpacks the means by which language pertinent to women's rights is incorporated into peace agreements worldwide. The book makes a number of contributions in improving our empirical and theoretical understandings of transnational advocacy networks (TANs); the women, peace and security agenda; and peace processes. It is both rigorous in drawing inferences and accessible in revealing the practical applications. It should be considered as essential reading for the growing communities of scholars and students studying international norms diffusion and the role of gender in international relations.

Anderson begins the book by exploring the patterns of language that specifically refers to women in peace agreements. She finds that 55 out of 195 peace agreements between 1975 and 2011 contained such language. Much more, she finds abundant similarities in the language that references women across the agreements, and that much of the language stems from international women's rights norms. These stylized facts spur three questions that become the core of Anderson's investigation. First, why do so many peace agreements include references to women? Second, why do the references so often reflect international norms related to women's rights? Third, what explains why some agreements include language pertaining to women while others do not?

To address these questions, Anderson builds a theoretical framework, nested in an understanding of TANs, of the inclusion of women's rights into peace agreements. She systematically focuses on five elements of that framework: the actors involved; the mobilization of the actors; the objectives; the strategies; and the construction of the agreement language. This framework provides a useful and important edifice to make sense of the multiple moving parts in the argument.

Using two cases in which women's rights language was included in the agreement (Burundi and Northern Ireland), a case that did not result in the inclusion of women's rights (Macedonia), and cross-sectional data on all the peace agreements from 1975 to 2011, Anderson arrives at the core answers to the three questions. With regard to the first question, she finds that local women's groups, often nested within TANs, are the key actors that value the inclusion of women's rights language and that push for participation in the peace processes. With regard to the second question, it is the nesting of the local women's groups with international civil society that helps explain the similarity in language across the agreements with major international women's rights documents. Turning to the third question, the key factors that well predict the inclusion of language pertaining to women are the presence of women's groups at the negotiation table, the ability for women's groups to transcend local ethno-political divides, and having peace processes of sufficient duration to allow for the mobilization and inclusion of women's groups.

Anderson's contributions in this book are myriad. Related to the literature on the women, peace and security agenda, the book sheds light on the ways in which advocates of women's rights resonate with advocates of general human rights, but also how general human

rights efforts are not dependable as champions of women's rights. Related to the literature on TANs, the book demonstrates the crucial interplay between local and international actors in successfully advocating for women's rights — we cannot understand the diffusion of norms by either focusing only on the TANs or focusing only on the local stakeholders; we need to understand both. Related to the conflict resolution and mediation literature, the book demonstrates the importance of considering the participation of civil society at the negotiation table. The case studies of Burundi, Northern Ireland and Macedonia bring to light elements of those peace processes that have been underexplored. Moreover, her data on the inclusion of language specific to women in peace agreements has the potential to be used to address a number of additional research questions.

On a more critical note, in future work Anderson might further expand on whether it is simply female bodies that are important to have at the negotiating table, or whether the key is to have women that are part of a women's rights organization. In other words, it would be useful to more clearly differentiate between the influences of professional female diplomats that represent parties to the conflict and women's advocacy groups that have a seat at the negotiation table. This is desirable for a few reasons. First, the policy implications could be clearer. At times, it is not clear if it is just women that are needed at the negotiation table or specifically women that are part of an organization striving to advance women's rights. Second, theoretical tensions arise between the notion that women have a complex role to play in peace processes (a point that Anderson makes clearly) and the notion of "strategic essentialism" — using essential elements of gender identity to cut across ethno-political divides at the root of conflict. The heterogeneity of the objectives of the women involved in a peace process would seem to interfere with their ability to serve as cross-cutting influences on the peace agreements. Third, and related, it would be interesting to consider what the implications are for further progress in the women, peace and security agenda — if it becomes more normal for women to participate in peace processes, will their ability to serve as bridges across the parties hold and might we actually see a decline in language related to women's rights? Fourth, by clarifying the role of women as women per se and the role of women in advocacy organizations, the role of men becomes clearer. Anderson's conclusion that the advancement of women's rights cannot be simply left to advocates of broader human rights is compelling, but it is also important to understand the variation in how other actors, including men, can influence positively or negatively the attention to gender inequality and women in peace processes.

As a whole, the breadth and depth of this study is impressive, as it makes clear contributions across multiple literatures, it builds a systematic theoretical framework that can be applied to other situations of norms diffusion, and the analyses are both rigorous and informative. Anderson's book is also timely, as the women, peace and security agenda advances into uncharted waters. Future work on the relevance of gender to peacemaking, peacebuilding, and peacekeeping would do well to use this book as a model.

Kyle Beardsley
Duke University