

A note from CSSD Director, Dr. Leah Sarson:

Earlier this month, the *Canadian Military Journal*, the peer-reviewed scholarly publication of the Canadian Armed Forces and the Department of National Defence, released a special issue focusing on transforming military cultures. The issue's editors and contributors argue that Canada's security and defence establishment must confront the evident cultural challenges affecting the Canadian military by recognizing how patriarchy, heteronormativity, colonialism, white supremacy, ableism, and classism shape and reproduce a variety of institutional systems and structures – necessary conversations that sometimes generate rash and unproductive reactions.

Editors Maya Eichler, Tammy George, and Nancy Taber have spent the past few years leading a Department of National Defence-funded project to encourage discussion on culture change in the Canadian military. The publication reflects their long-standing engagement and expertise in this dialogue.

Unfortunately, the special issue has yielded several pugnacious, baleful, and pullulating reactions from some commentators that belies the editors' dedication to thoughtful analyses of Canadian military culture and their deep commitment to the people and potential of Canada's security and defence institutions. Eichler, George, and Taber's treatment is part of a broader campaign to undermine those challenging the status quo by obfuscating reality and resorting to violence and intimidation. The CSSD unequivocally supports their work and their participation in these critical conversations.

As I have reflected on the vitriol with which my colleagues are contending, I have returned to some of the lessons offered by the panellists and audience members at a CSSD event on discourse and dialogue in times of conflict. The three featured guests, Bridget Brownlow, Daphna Levit, and Catherine Baillie Abidi, have spent their long and distinguished careers dedicated to peace-building and conflict resolution in places and spaces of long-standing acrimony and violence. They spoke of how they teach and model critical thinking and humility. How they remain hopeful. How they build bridges, particularly by working with children. Their remarks represent the antithesis of the response to the scholarship in this special issue of the *Canadian Military Journal*.

As a space dedicated to building a collegial network of scholars and exchanging ideas in global politics, I have spent my first few months as the director of the Centre thinking about how to encourage constructive, inclusive, and reflexive dialogue among our community members. I hope our Centre offers an antidote to the othering, silencing, and intransigence antagonizing professors Eichler, George, and Taber. They have our full backing.