Photo Essay: Militarism and Humanitarianism

This suite of images is drawn from photos published by the U.S. military and military personnel to publicize the community-building, reconstruction, and social welfare projects it has supported in Afghanistan and Iraq, including school programs, medical care, and village-development projects involving women and children. Showcasing the range of current military-led humanitarian efforts taking place within active combat theaters, these photos were taken by ordinary servicemen and servicewomen in the course of duty. Except for one image from a separate source, their publication has been approved by public affairs officers and represents part of the American military's evolving counterinsurgency-related "information operations." Justine Pak played an essential role in organizing this photo essay for the journal.



In Kapisa Province, Afghanistan, U.S. Air Force Tech Sergeant Joe Laws shows local children how to take a picture with his camera (August 2011).



At Camp Adder, Iraq, Staff Sergeant Jeffrey King gives ice and water to local Iraqis as his team refuels water pump generators (September 2009).



In Jalrez, Afghanistan, an Afghan interpreter meets with a school principal and Afghan teachers, as part of an Afghan medical personnel skills improvement mission (November 2009).



Marine Captain Alison Anderson, a member of a "female engagement team" (described further in the essay by Keally McBride and Annick T. R. Wibben elsewhere in this dossier), shakes the hands of local Afghan women after a chai break (December 2009).



In eastern Baghdad, an unnamed soldier searches an Iraqi civilian on election day (January 2009).



Specialist Daniel Hubbard shakes a boy's hand after applying a bandage to his face (July 2009).



In Diyala Province, Iraq, an unnamed officer waits at a street corner while a child stands by (July 2011). This photo is printed courtesy of Lee Craker.



In Adhamiyah District, Baghdad, Iraq, Staff Sergeant Shane Glowcheski (right) and Sergeant Hector Hernandez rest on the steps of an elementary school alongside a young student (September 2007).



At a patrol base in Jaker, Afghanistan, Petty Officer 2nd Class Daniel Elsey dresses a child's wound (December 2009).



In Al Diwaniya, Iraq, Private David Couleas patrols the streets of Diwaniya as children look on (September 2005).



In Garmsir District, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, Sergeant Kimberly Nalekna speaks to a teacher about the day's lesson plan at a local school (April 2011).