



George Gittoes, *Corporal Julie Baranowski, Military Police, searching Somali women*  
pencil on paper  
drawn in Bundeena, NSW, in 1993  
acquired in 1993

(Accession number 90105)  
Australian War Memorial



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**About the Artwork:**

The need for sensitivity to local culture is central to peacekeeping. In an attempt to disarm local bandits, Australian soldiers in Somalia sometimes needed to conduct body searches of local civilians. Out of respect for local custom, only female Military Police were allowed to search Somali women. George Gittoes witnessed one occasion when the watching crowd objected to Corporal Julie Baranowski's searching a local woman:

*Things got very nasty until someone amongst the MPs realised the Somalis thought Julie was a man. To Somali men a woman soldier was unthinkable. It was only when Julie took her helmet off and showed the angry crowd her long blond hair that they began to believe this foreign soldier really was a woman. The emotion of the crowd turned from anger to amazement.*

**Questions:**

1. What do you think is happening in this painting?
2. From looking at the painting carefully, how do you think the woman being searched feels?
3. What is the meaning of the expression "personal space"?
4. What do each of the following words mean: "dignity", "privacy", "assault", "rights", and "responsibilities"?
5. Are these words important at school? Write about an incident at school that you have either seen or can remember where these words could be applied.
6. Why is Julie such an important member of the team?
7. What is Julie wearing and what is her rank?
8. Write an article for the school magazine outlining students' rights and responsibilities in regard to their personal space and cultural background.