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In 2016, the Secretary of Defense opened all ground combat jobs in the military to women, permitting work in a field that had been off limits to them since the inception of the Women's Army Corps in 1948. Yet little is understood about female soldiers' journey to attain these roles. This dissertation shows how the 2016 decision did not emerge out of nowhere; earlier generations had laid the foundation. That foundation reflected both advocacy and achievement on the part of military women to gain access to a range of noncombat jobs on the battlefield. Women's integration into these positions changed the meaning of combat from a geographic space exposing soldiers to hostile action, to a soldier's specific direct ground combat role attacking the enemy.

Women's integration fundamentally transformed the Army workplace. Between 1964 and 1994, their presence in the Army increased from one percent to thirteen percent. As their numbers grew, they increasingly infiltrated the leadership ranks; by 2016, over seventeen percent of Generals were women. Having women in these leadership positions meant they commanded men, established plans for war and led troops in battle. Many ordinary soldiers pushed for policies that enabled mothers to serve, allowed women access to professional military education, and they consistently forced the military to confront the problem of sexual violence. Lesbian soldiers consistently pushed the Army for inclusion, by 2010 their efforts resulted in the right of all homosexuals to serve openly. Women's opportunities visible in the Army today are the result of female soldier's consistent push for equal treatment as soldiers.

SOLDIERS, NOT WACS: HOW WOMEN'S INTEGRATION
TRANSFORMED THE ARMY, 1964-1994

by

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GLOSSARY TERMS

Chapter I and II

ACLU – American Civil Liberties Union (established in 1920).

ANC – Army Nurse Corps (established in 1901).

AVF – All-Volunteer Force (the draft ended in 1973).

DACOWITS – Defense Advisory Committee on Women in Military Services
An advisory committee established in 1951 by the Secretary of Defense to provide advice and recommendations on policies concerning the recruitment and retention, treatment, employment, and integration of women in the Armed Forces.

DOD- Department of Defense.

MAAG – Military Advisory Assistance Group, Vietnam (1950-1964).

MACV – United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (1962-1973).

MOS – Military Occupational Specialty (code that identifies a specific job in the Army).

NCO – Non-Commissioned Officer Military: Enlisted leadership grades E4-E9.

PX – Post Exchange (Army shopping center).

USARV – United States Army, Vietnam (1965-1973).

WAC – Women’s Army Corps (1943-1978).

Wac – Individual member of the Women’s Army Corps.

WAC detachment – Women only military command that housed enlisted women. Female officers and NCOs commanded the group. Wacs were generally assigned to WAC detachments when assigned a job at an Army base. The number of Wacs in a detachment depended on the Post, but usually at least 100 women.

WACF – Women’s Armed Forces Corps (Vietnamese women military force).

WAF – Women in the Air Force (1948-1976).

WAVES – Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (Navy, 1942-1972).

Chapter III

AVF - All Volunteer Force (1973-current).

DCSPER - Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel. This was the WAC Director's immediate supervisor in the Army's Chain of Command.

OCS – Officer Candidate Schools

These schools train enlisted and civilians to become officers in the United States Military. The length of the schools is usually less than a year and do not lead to a degree, but a military commission.

Public Law 625 – 1948 Women's Integration Act

Law allowed women a permanent place in the military for the first time.

ROTC - Reserve Officer Training Corps

College students enrolled in the ROTC attend military training courses, participate in military drill and training with their respective service branches. Upon graduation, they are commissioned into the military as an officer.

Branches of the Army during the era of Women's Army Corps where officers could be assigned– Adjutant General, Chemical, Engineer, Finance, Military Intelligence, Judge Advocate General, Medical Services, Military Police, Ordnance, Quartermaster, Signal, and Transportation.

Army Grade, Ranks and Insignia

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Rank (insignia) women/men</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Rank (insignia) men only**</u>
O-1	2 nd Lieutenant (1 gold bar)	O-6	Colonel (silver eagle) **
O-2	1 st Lieutenant (1 silver bar)	O-7	Brigadier General (one star)
O-3	Captain (2 silver bars)	O-8	Major General (two star)
O-4	Major (gold leaf)	O-9	Lieutenant General (three star)
O-5	Lieutenant Colonel (silver leaf)	O-10	General (4 start)

Between 1948 and 1967, women were only allowed promotion to ranks O-1 to O-5. **One exception was that one woman, the Director of WAC could have a temporary promotion to O-6 during her term as WAC Director.

Women's Army Corps Directors:

1942–1945	Colonel Oveta Culp Hobby
1945–1947	Colonel Westray Battle Boyce
1947–1953	Colonel Mary A. Hallaren
1953–1957	Colonel Irene O. Galloway
1957–1962	Colonel Mary Louise Milligan Rasmuson
1962–1966	Colonel Emily C. Gorman
1966–1971	Brigadier General Elizabeth P. Hoisington
1971–1975	Brigadier General Mildred Inez Caroon Bailey
1975–1978	Brigadier General Mary E. Clarke

Senior Service Colleges for Army Officers – (Department of Defense)

U.S. Army Command and General Staff College (1881)

Graduate school for Army majors

Army War College (1901)

Graduate school for Army Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels

Industrial College of the Armed Services (1924)

Educational institution for senior military leaders

National War College (1943)

Joint military education institution for mid-level and senior officers

ERA – Equal Rights amendment, passed by Congress in 1971, but failed to achieve ratification.

Gates Commission – 1969 commission established by President Nixon to explore the feasibility of ending the draft and moving to an all-volunteer Army.

NOW (1966) – National Organization for Women

PCSW – Presidential Committee on Status of Women

The initial committee was established by President Kennedy in 1961.

Public Law 90-130 – The 1967 Act that removed women's officer promotion restrictions and eliminated the two percent cap on the number of active duty women allowed in the military services.

Military Service Academies – Federal four-year undergraduate college for students who must be nominated by federal political leadership (Congressional Representatives, Senators, Vice President, President).

USMA (1802) United States Military Academy, West Point, New York

USNA (1845) United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland

USAFA (1954) United States Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado

USCGA (1876) United States Coast Guard Academy, New London, Connecticut

USMMA (1943) United States Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, New York

(Students in USMMA are not on active duty as are the other academy cadets)

Court Cases

Crawford v. Cushman (1976) – The Second Circuit Court decision that found that the Marine Corps involuntary discharge of pregnant women violated women’s 5th Amendment constitutional right to due process and equal protection.

Frontiero v Richardson (1973) – A Supreme Court case ruling that military benefits could not be restricted because of gender.

Struck v. Secretary of Defense (1971)– A case that went to the Supreme Court, but never argued after the Air Force after deciding to allow a female officer to remain in the service after a pregnancy when she gave the child up for adoption. The Air Force had previously indicated she needed to have an abortion to remain in the service, or be discharged if she gave birth.

Chapter IV

Army Unit Organization for a Linear Battlefield

<u>Name of Unit</u>	<u>Size of Unit</u>	<u>Location/Battlefield Role</u>
Corps	2-5 Divisions	Farthest from Fighting
Division	3 Brigades	
Brigade	3 or more Battalions	
Battalion	3-5 Companies	Closest to Fighting
Company	3-4 Platoons	Main Fighting Unit
Platoon	3-4 Squads	
Squad	4-10 soldiers	

Institutional Army - Component of the Army that remains largely in the United States that recruits, trains, equips and supports the troops going to war. Generally, not a deployable force.

Military Posts/Installations
Medical Centers
Training Centers
Research Centers

Operational Army – Component of the Army that trains and prepares to deploy for war operations. Consists of Combat Arms, Combat Support and Combat Service Support Units.

Combat Arms- Units involved as direct fighting component of operational Army: Infantry, Armor, Artillery, Special Forces, Combat Engineers, and Combat Aviation.

Combat Support- Units involved in providing significant operational assistance for combat arms troops in operational Army: Military Intelligence, Military Police, Signals, Chemical, Engineer, Aviation.

Combat Service Support- Units involved in providing administrative, logistical, and personnel support to all components of the Army: Adjutant General, Chaplain, Finance, Ordnance, Quartermaster, Transportations, Medical, Civil Affairs, Judge Advocate General, Medical, Aviation, Military Police, Engineer, Chemical, Signal.

Combat and Combat Related Definitions

Close Combat- 1977 Army definition: Engaging an enemy with individual crew-served weapons while being exposed to direct enemy fire, a high probability of direct physical contact with the enemy's personnel, or a substantial risk of capture.

Direct Combat- 1983 Army definition: Direct combat takes place while closing with the enemy by fire, maneuver, or shock effect in order to destroy or capture, or while repelling assault by fire, close combat, or counterattack.

DCPC – 1983 Army Direct Combat Probability Code: Coding system used to identify every position and unit in the Army on the basis of how routine its mission or location on the battlefield involved direct combat.

Risk Rule – 1988 Department of Defense: DOD policy that exempted women from positions and units where the risk of exposure to direct combat, exposure to hostile fire, or capture...were equal to, or greater than that experienced by combat units" in the same locality.

Rear Area – Military Forces in a battlefield zone farthest from the enemy and fighting.

Forward Area – Position on the battlefield where troops are closest to the enemy and fighting.

Other Terms

Ben-Shalom v. Secretary of Army (1980) – U.S. District Court case ruling that the Army unconstitutionally discharged Miriam Ben Shalom from the Army for homosexuality.

NCOIC – Non-Commissioned Officers in Charge (enlisted).

Pruitt v. Cheney (1987) – U. S. District court case ruling that the Army's policy of discharging homosexuals merely on their status, not conduct, must be proved as rational basis for discrimination. Dusty Pruitt was reinstated pending new hearing.

Rostker v. Goldberg (1981)

Supreme Court decision ruling that the exclusion of women from the draft and selective service was not unconstitutional.

WITA – 1976 Women in the Army Study Group established to study women's roles.

Chapter V and VI

Aging – Military process for promotion that requires both a certain time at a rank and years in the service.

Cammermeyer v. Aspin (1994) – U.S. District Court case ruling that the military’s Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell policy is unconstitutional. Ordered reinstatement of Margarethe Cammermeyer.

DADT – 1994 Don’t Ask Don’t Tell

Department of Defense Policy and Federal Law (Two Parts)

Department of Defense Policy: Stated that homosexual orientation did not disqualify an individual from military service. Discharging individuals based solely on their status or identity as homosexuals was prohibited. The policy prevented the military from asking recruits about their sexual orientation during the induction process. Open declaration of homosexuality is not permitted.

Congressional Law: This law declares that individuals with a “propensity or intent to engage in homosexual acts” are not suitable for military service. The “Don’t Tell” portion of this law prohibits military personnel from declaring their homosexuality or engaging in homosexual conduct.

Direct Ground Combat Assignment Rule

1994 policy by the Department of Defense opening all positions to women with the sole exception of jobs or units where the principal mission meant “direct combat on the ground.”

IED – Improvised Explosive Device

POW – Prisoner of War

RAVEN 42 – Code name for a Military Police Squad in Iraq in 2005.

SCUD – Unstable ballistic missile with potential to carry chemical, biological or nuclear weapons. Used by the Iraqi Army in the 1980s.

STOP ERA – Phyllis Schlafly’s campaign between 1972-1982 to prevent ratification in the states of the Equal Rights Amendment.

SVC – Special Victim Advocate

Army designation for person assigned to assist victims of rape and sexual assault.

SWAN – Service Women’s Action Network

Founded in 2007 to support military women and veterans

WREI – Women’s Resource and Education Institute

Founded in 1977 as non-profit promoting equality for women.

In 1989, began providing policy information on women in the military.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 2015, Lieutenants Kristen Griest and Shaye Haver successfully led combat training patrols through the punishing swamps of Florida and backbreaking mountains of Georgia to become the first female soldiers to earn the coveted Ranger tab in the Army. Only a few years earlier, Griest and Haver's achievement had seemed unfathomable. The Ranger training course is among the most elite and grueling combat training in the U.S. military and until a month after the women's graduation, the Army had designated it as a male-only specialty. When Griest and Haver emerged triumphant, eight members of the first class of women to graduate from the Army's West Point Military Academy in 1980 met with them privately, presenting them with a gift of silver plated dog tags and a note.¹ Situating Griest and Haver as part of a long of women's advancement within the Army, the letter described "the respect of older soldiers for the younger, who reach higher heights."²

One year later, and sixty-five years after Congress allowed women to become a permanent part of the military, the Pentagon officially opened all jobs to servicewomen,

¹ Chuck Williams, "Battle Buddies," *Ledger-Enquirer (Columbus, OH)*, undated, <http://media.ledger-enquirer.com/static/projects/ranger-women2/> (accessed on June 14, 2016).

² Ibid.

including those designated as “combat.”³ Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, justified the decision by declaring that “women are contributing in unprecedented ways to the military's mission of defending the nation.”⁴ Referring to the decade long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, he acknowledged that “female servicemembers have faced the reality of combat, proven their willingness to fight and, yes, to die to defend their fellow Americans.”⁵ In emphasizing servicewomen’s roles in recent wars, Panetta did not acknowledge how female soldiers had been integral to military operations on the battlefield for several decades. Women’s combat related roles in Iraq and Afghanistan did not emerge out of nowhere; earlier generations had laid the foundation.

That foundation reflected both advocacy and achievement on the part of military women. For decades, servicewomen and their supporters lobbied Congress and the Department of Defense to expand job, promotion and training opportunities. And generation after generation of military women seized and succeeded in the new opportunities they secured. Like the women greeting them after they completed the Ranger course, Griest and Haver graduated from West Point military academy, a path not available until military women’s advocates pushed open the door in 1976. Griest, a military police officer, benefited from the resolve of female soldiers to be viewed

³ In 2013, the Secretary of Defense rescinded the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule and directed all services to prepare to integrate women into all units and positions by January 1, 2016. Secretary of Defense, “Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments,” Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Chiefs of the Military Services,” January 24, 2013, <http://www.defense.gov/news/WISRJointMemo.pdf> (accessed on January 10, 2014).

⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, *Press Briefing by Secretary Panetta and General Dempsey from The Pentagon*, 9 May 2015, <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=5183> (accessed June 14, 2016).

⁵ Ibid.

as equals with male troops when they initially integrated the Military Police Corps in 1973. Thirty years before Griest graduated from Airborne school and received her “jump” wings, female soldiers had demanded inclusion and proved their mettle during the rigorous training where few men thought they could complete. Haver, a combat helicopter pilot, stood on the shoulders of noncombat female pilots who transported troops and supplies under heavy fire during military conflicts of the 1980s and 1990s, and then successfully pushed Congress and the Department of Defense to open combat aviation to women in 1992. By 2014, Griest’s service during the war in Afghanistan had become routine for servicewomen, a possibility set in motion first when women pushed to serve in the combat zone during the Vietnam War, and later in the 1980s and 1990s when female soldiers deployed as part of combat related units in Grenada, Panama and the Persian Gulf war. Haver explained, “everything I’ve been able to do, from graduating from the academy to being an Apache pilot, were barriers broken [by other women] at one point or another.”⁶

This study explores the workplace change and policy reform that accompanied women’s integration into the Army between 1964 and 1994. It shows how the meaning and definition of combat changed as women moved into nontraditional jobs and deployable units that placed them alongside men while fighting the nation’s wars. Female soldiers and a number of women’s advocacy groups pushed for expanded training and leadership opportunities, admission to education programs, the right to serve as mothers, equality of promotions and access to all noncombat jobs on the battlefield. Along with this pressure, the end of male conscription and Congressional passage of the Equal Rights Amendment in the early 1970s led the Army to recruit more women. The Army opened limited numbers of noncombat positions in previously male only

⁶ Ibid.

jobs to women, but female soldiers constantly fought for full use of their talents. When the Army went to war, female soldiers deployed alongside men, where increasingly the line between combat and combat support jobs was blurred. The percentage of female soldiers in the Army grew from less than one percent in 1972 to thirteen percent by 1994.⁷ During the same time, the positions opened to women went from less than ten percent to more than sixty-seventy percent.⁸ To achieve this expansion while officially keeping women out of combat, the Army continuously modified its combat exclusion policies. Instead of keeping women from the combat zone, which in Vietnam was the entire country, the Army began to define “combat” as soldier’s specific role at or close to actual fighting. For the Army, combat was about protecting a space and a role for men only. Each time women successfully pushed into new combat related positions, the Army moved the goalposts. With each modification, Army leaders narrowed the definition of combat. This meant that over time, the Army excluded women from fewer positions, trained them as soldiers, developed them as leaders and integrated them into more units deploying to war during military operations. By 1994, women successfully pressured the Army to open some direct combat “fighting” roles to women, paving the way for the complete integration of women in 2016.

Yet, because of the Army’s warfighting mission, and its traditions to mold men in a warrior culture that reinforced sexist attitudes and hostility towards women, the integration of

⁷ L. Martin Kaplan, *Department of the Army Historical Summary Fiscal Year, 1994*, ed. Cheryl Morai-Young (Washington DC: Center of Military History, 1994), 44-45. By 2016, their proportion had risen to 14.6 percent. In August 2016, the total number of active duty members of the Army was 470,820 with 68841 women. Department of Defense, “DOD Personnel, Workforce Reports and Publications,” DMDC, undated, https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp (accessed September 4, 2016).

⁸ Kaplan, “*Department of the Army Historical Summary.*”

women into Army did not produce radical change in all aspects of the institution. In fact, while many barriers fell, some men fought against women's integration and some of the institutional impediments to women's advancement became more rigid and impervious to change. Most notably, throughout the period of my study, the Army never adequately addressed sexual harassment or assault, even as its reported incidence rose dramatically. Wading through a masculine culture that branded female soldiers as whores or lesbians, women emphasized their competence, proficiency, and reliability on the job to surmount an often unwelcoming culture.

The Army is the focus of this study rather than other branches of the military because it had the greatest number of women within its ranks, offered them the broadest diversity of jobs, and deployed the largest percentage of women to war. Ironically, the Army was initially the least gender integrated of all the military services because it was the only branch with a segregated women's corps.⁹ And the Army's combat exclusion policies for women were the most complicated of all service branches. Congress exempted the Army from the 1948 law prohibiting women from combat missions on ships and planes; instead, legislators allowed the Army to establish its own rules to keep women out of combat. But the Army did not define combat until 1978, and even after that point, its meaning was malleable, so female soldiers' roles remained fluid. This study begins in 1964 when Wacs successfully gained access to work in Vietnam, the first instance that the Army's meaning of combat was challenged and altered to provide room for the inclusion of women. My examination ends in 1994, the final time that the Army and Department of Defense officially redefined combat as an exclusion for women.

⁹ Major General Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution*, 2nd ed. (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1992), 121.

Historiography

Scholarship on servicewomen has been scattered among a variety of fields with most of the literature emerging since the 1980s. In addition to historians, the topic has engaged scholars in fields such as sociology, political science, law and feminist theory. Sociologists have explored the nature of relations between the military and the larger society and studied military culture, including sexual harassment and rape.¹⁰ Feminist theorists have scrutinized how the hegemonic masculinity of the military has served to limit women's roles in war.¹¹ Political scientists have measured the success and failure of policies affecting servicewomen, especially as they relate to combat restrictions, and they have exposed how political power reinforced gender inequality in the service branches by considering male soldiers more valuable than women.¹² These studies have revealed the tension for women operating in a masculine military culture by examining the

¹⁰ Melissa S. Herbert, *Camouflage Isn't Only for Combat: Gender, Sexuality, and Women in the Military* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1998); Judith Hicks Stiehm, *Arms and the Enlisted Woman* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1989).

¹¹ Ilene Rose Feinman, *Citizenship Rites: Feminist Soldiers and Feminist Anti-Militarists* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 2. Some of the most significant feminist scholarship on servicewomen are: Susan Jeffords, *The Remasculinization of America: Gender and the Vietnam War* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); Cynthia H. Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You?: The Militarisation of Women's Lives* (Boston, Mass: South End Press, 1983); idem, *Nimo's War, Emma's War: Making Feminist Sense of the Iraq War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Jean B. Elshtain and Sheila Tobias, *Women, Militarism, and War: Essays in History, Politics, and Social Theory* (Savage, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1990); Laura Sjoberg and Sandra Via, *Gender, War, and Militarism: Feminist Perspectives* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2010).

¹² Francine D'Amico and Laurie Weinstein eds., *Gender Camouflage: Women and the U.S. Military* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 4; Melissa T. Brown, *Enlisting Masculinity the Construction of Gender in U.S. Military Recruiting Advertising During the All-Volunteer Force* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Mary Fainsod Katzenstein and Judith Reppy, eds. *Beyond Zero Tolerance: Discrimination in Military Culture* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999). Sara Zeigler and Gregory G. Gunderson, *Moving Beyond G.I. Jane: Women and the U.S. Military* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002).

gender limitations. Many of these works focus on the polarizing debate over whether or not women could or should be in combat roles.¹³ Historical method is essential to explaining how the Army's definition of combat changed significantly over thirty years, gradually expanding women's work roles and opportunities for leadership.

Historical studies have not taken on the full sweep of these changes. Most focused on servicewomen's roles during World War II, and the study of nurses during the Vietnam War.¹⁴ The Korean War and especially the post-Vietnam eras have received less emphasis, even though these were the periods in which the most women soldiers served on a permanent basis.¹⁵ The historical survey works that explore these decades tend to focus on questions of citizenship, equality, and sexuality.¹⁶ While such studies have adeptly analyzed the legal limitations

¹³ Lorry Fenner and Marie de Young, *Women in Combat: Civic Duty or Military Liability* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2001); Laura Miller, *Feminism and the Exclusion of Army Women from Combat* (Cambridge, Mass: John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Harvard University, 1995); Paige Whaley Eager, *Waging Gendered Wars: U.S. Military Women in Afghanistan and Iraq* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2014); Martha McSally, "Women in Combat: Is the Current Policy Obsolete?" *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy* 14 (2007): 1011–1059.

¹⁴ Barbara Brooks, *G.I. Nightingales: The Army Nurse Corps in World War II* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1996); Elizabeth Norman, *We Band of Angels: The Untold Story of American Nurses Trapped in Bataan by the Japanese* (New York: Random House, 1999); idem, *Women at War: The Story of 50 Military Nurses Who Served in Vietnam* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990); Kara Dixon Vuic, *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010). Mary Sarnecky, *A History of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).

¹⁵ Linda Witt et al., *A Defense Weapon Known to Be of Value": Servicewomen of the Korean War Era* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 2005); Peter Soderbergh, *Women Marines: The World War II Era* (Westport, Conn., Praeger Publishers, 1992).

¹⁶ Major contributions by historians: Linda Grant De Pauw, *Battle Cries and Lullabies: Women in War from Prehistory to the Present* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998); Margaret Conrad Devilbiss, *Women and Military Service. A History, Analysis, and Overview of Key Issues* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1990); D'Ann

servicewomen have faced in battling sexual abuse and restrictions on gay rights, none have focused on military women's working lives.¹⁷ Since the 1970s, when emphasis on "New Military History" moved studies beyond military leaders, battles, weapons and tactics, military historians have incorporated cultural and social themes into their work.¹⁸ Yet despite increased attention to race, class and ethnicity at the center, gender analysis has been scarce, most works center on black men's integration.¹⁹ The few extant studies examine power inequalities within the military

Campbell, *Women at War with America: Private Lives in a Patriotic Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984); Elaine Tyler May, "War and Peace: Fanning the Home Fires" in idem, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Margaret R. Higonnet, *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1987); Leisa Meyer, *Creating G.I. Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps during World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998); Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

¹⁷ Jonathan P. Tomes and Michael I. Spak, "Practical Problems with Modifying the Military Justice System to Better Handle Sexual Assault Cases," *Wisconsin Journal of Law, Gender & Society* 29, no. 3 (2007): 377-408; Kathi Westcott and Rebecca Sawyer, "Silent Sacrifices: The Impact of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' on Lesbian and Gay Military Families," *Duke Journal of Gender Law and Policy* 14, no. 1121 (2007): 1121-1139; Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: Free Press, 1990); Kate Dyer, *Gays in Uniform: The Pentagon's Secret Reports* (Boston: Alyson Publications, 1990).

¹⁸ Robert M. Citino, "Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction," *The American Historical Review* 112, no. 4 (2007):1070-1071.

¹⁹ Morris J. MacGregor, *Integration of the Armed Forces, 1940-1965* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1981); Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Christopher Paul Moore, *Fighting for America: Black Soldiers—The Unsung Heroes of World War II* (New York: One World, 2005); Alexander Bielakowski, *African American Troops in World War II* (Oxford: Osprey Publishers, 2007); Historian Todd J. Moyer, with a focus on Civil Rights, addressed African Americans and race in *Freedom Flyers: The Tuskegee Airmen of World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010). African American Studies scholars have also contributed to the historiography on race. Maggi M. Morehouse incorporates gender and race in *Fighting in the Jim Crow Army: Black Men and Women Remember World War II* (Lanham, MD: Rowham & Littlefield, 2000).

culture, or among relationships between men and civilian women during war, with scant analysis of women in active military roles.²⁰

Historians who study women and work have not considered how the military has served as a crucial site of late twentieth century women's labor and activism, where women and their allies pressed for and won equal access to education, training, jobs, parenthood, promotions, leadership roles and military benefits.²¹ As Joan Acker has noted, gender permeates every part of a workplace. Organizations have structured their leadership, jobs, and policies based on assumptions about proper roles for men and women.²² Further, men have used sexual harassment as a means to keep the gender hierarchy in line.²³ Historian Nancy MacLean has shown how feminist activists of the 1970s used Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to claim access to all

²⁰ Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5. (1986): 1057. Some military historians have looked at women in the military as part of a broader study of men or a comparison such as David R. Segal and H. Wallace Sinaiko in *Life in the Rank and File: Enlisted Men and Women in the Armed Forces of the United States, Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom* (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, 1986). More often, historians have looked at war and women's role outside the battlefield. Elizabeth D. Leonard, *Yankee Women: Gender Battles in the Civil War* (New York, 1994); Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996).

²¹ William H. Chafe, *The Paradox of Change: American Women in the 20th Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Dorothy Sue Cobble, *The Other Women's Movement: Workplace Justice and Social Rights in Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004); Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Liz Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

²² Joan Acker, "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations," *Gender & Society*. 4, no. 2 (1990):146-148.

²³ Further, Acker noted that Rosabeth Moss Kanter's work, *Men and Women of the Corporation*, identified "structure, not gender" as the predominant reason for discriminatory practices against women within an organization. Acker, 143; Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Men and Women of the Corporation* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

jobs for women and seek redress from discrimination and harassment.²⁴ Because Congress and the courts have viewed soldiering as a separate status from civilian employment, they have provided the military services with wide latitude to enact policies allowing legal discrimination based on many factors, including gender and sexuality.²⁵ As a result, Congress exempted the military from Title VII, so women in the military could not utilize this law to challenge gender discrimination. Despite this handicap, together with their allies, female soldiers successfully exerted pressure on legislatures and courts for change. Along with advocacy groups, female soldiers moved the discussion about sexual abuse out from the shadows of their Army units and into Congress, demanding accountability from their leadership. This study will examine the series of alliances that formed with servicewomen at various points such as with a Presidential civilian advisory group, the American Civil Liberties Union, National Organization for Women, Lambda Legal Defense Fund, veteran's organizations and others. However, much more work is needed to explore the dynamics and shortcomings of these partnerships for women in the military.²⁶

Black women's enlistment in the Army has been on the rise since 1970, providing access to marketable skills, education benefits, key leadership roles, command over men, and career

²⁴ MacLean, 36, 81, 103.

²⁵ Melissa Wells-Petry, *Exclusion: Homosexuals and the Right to Serve* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1993), 5-6.

²⁶ For analysis on how feminist alliances form, fall apart, influence change and navigate complexities of race, class and gender, see Janet R. Jakobsen, *Working Alliances and the Politics of Difference Diversity and Feminist Ethics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998). Very little scholarship has been written about any of the military advocacy groups for military women. There have been a few articles and studies on DACOWITS: Alice V. Bradford, "A Study of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services" (master's thesis, Naval Post Graduate School, 1964); Judith Lawrence Bellafaire, "Public Service Role Models: The First Women of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services," *Armed Forces and Society* 32 (2006): 424-436.

opportunities with retirement benefits not available to them in the civilian workplace.²⁷ By 1994, black women comprised forty-four percent all female soldiers.²⁸ While scholars have explored the significant barriers black women have faced in the Army, I examine how they benefitted from the Army's hierarchy and merit based advancement into senior leadership positions of the enlisted ranks. Ultimately, black women's integration into leadership altered the Army's power structure that had once been completely male and white.²⁹ Though I do note contributions of Hispanic, Asian and other minority women, more scholarship on groups who represent a much smaller percentage of the Army workforce is necessary to fully understand the Army's laudable but distinctive diversity, as well as the unique challenges faced by all minority women.

Historical studies of sexuality in the military culture have revealed how women and gay men negotiated an often hostile landscape.³⁰ Leisa Meyer shows how laws and policies during

²⁷ James Dao, "Black Women Enlisting at Higher Rates in US Military," *New York Times*, Dec 22, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/23/us/black-women-enlist-at-higher-rates-in-us-military.html?_r=0 (accessed June 14, 2016). For work on African American women, see Brenda L. Moore, "African American Women in the U.S. Military," *Armed Forces and Society* 17, no. 3 (1991): 365; "A Time to Reassess: The Intersection of Race and Class," *Critical Studies on Security*, 1, no. 2 (2013): 246-248. Little research has been conducted on Hispanics in the military, see Mady W. Segal, Meridith Hill Thanner, and David R. Segal, "Hispanic and African American Men and Women in the U.S. Military: Trends in Representation," *Race, Gender and Class* 14, No. 3-4 (2007): 48-64; Jennifer Hickes Lundquist, "Ethnic and Gender Satisfaction in the Military: The Effect of a Meritocratic Institution," *American Sociological Review* 73, no. 3 (2008): 477-496.

²⁸ Michelle M. Yore and Paul J. Amoroso, *The Demographic Profile of U.S. Army Active Duty Women 1980-1994 Using the Total Army Injury and Health Outcomes Database* (Ft. Belvoir: Defense Technical Information Center, 1997), A-2, 74, <http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA329338> (accessed May 15, 2014).

²⁹ Moore, "African American Women in the U.S. Military," 365; Moore, "A Time to Reassess," 246-248.

³⁰ Allan Berube, *Coming Out Under Fire: History of Gay Men and Women in World War Two* (New York: Free Press, 1990); Leisa Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*. Other works addressing sexuality in the military are: Margot Canaday, *The Straight State*; Francine D'Amico, "Race-ing and Gendering the Military Closet," in *Gay Rights, Military Wrongs: Political Perspectives on*

WWII limited women's work opportunities and constructed a repressive normative sexual identity for female soldiers that was white and heterosexual, but chaste.³¹ Allan Berube's study of homosexuality in the military during World War II explores how gay men and women navigated an intolerant military culture. He argues that war mobilization facilitated the emergence of a gay consciousness and helped homosexuals emerge from isolation, which led to the gay rights movement.³² Only during World War II, women posed minimal threat to men's status as soldiers because the Army denied them permanent standing. In the mid-1970s, I examine a Women's Army Corps in decline, losing authority and supervision over female soldiers as they integrated into formerly male only positions and began to challenge the Army's constraints on their sexuality.

By century's end, the military's policy towards homosexuals became more nuanced, differentiating between status (or orientation) and actual homosexual conduct, while the policies regulating heterosexual relationships in the workplace became more restrictive. From the 1960s to the 1980s, servicewomen seized the opportunity to reject a gendered identity as Wacs. Women embraced their place in the Army as soldiers who deserved the same rights and privileges granted to noncombatant men. More liberal attitudes towards homosexuality provided room for gay and

Lesbians and Gays in the Military, ed. Craig A. Rimmerman (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc, 1996), 3-46; Steve Estes, *Ask and Tell: Gay and Lesbian Veterans Speak Out* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); Nathaniel Frank, *Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2009); Charles Moskos, "From Citizen Army to Social Laboratory," *The Wilson Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (Winter 1993): 83-95; Melissa Major Wells-Petry, *Exclusion: Homosexuals and the Right to Serve*.

³¹ Meyer, 6.

³² Berube, 256.

lesbian soldiers to fight for inclusion and protest automatic discharges.³³ As women's integration accelerated, the boundaries of what servicemembers and military leaders considered acceptable behavior and comportment for women shifted. For example, women began to wear fatigues and fire weapons. At the same time, workplace relationships also changed with playful banter, jokes, innuendos and sexual liaisons between male and female soldiers becoming more commonplace. In the 1990s, when female soldiers explicitly demanded greater sexual freedoms, military officials drew a line and implemented more restrictive fraternization policies.³⁴ As sexual harassment emerged as a prime feminist issue, liberalizing and widening options for women's integration involved regulating and policing heterosexual relationships. Paradoxically, these contestations over sexuality and equality provided an opening for homosexuals to successfully pressure the Army, Congress and the courts to prohibit discrimination against homosexuals who concealed their identity. In 1993, the Department of Defense's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue" policy permitted homosexuals the right to serve the military.³⁵ Although the policy required gay women and men to remain "in the closet" it was a significant advancement over previous policies when the military sought out and barred homosexuals from service.

Sexual harassment, assault and rape have been persistent challenges for women in the Army, and its leadership has failed to adequately address and resolve these issues. Since males

³³ Dana M. Britton and Christine L. Williams "'Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue: Military Policy and the Construction of Heterosexual Masculinity,'" *Journal of Homosexuality* 30, no. 1 (1995): 7.

³⁴ Jeffrey P. Whitman, "Women, Sex and the Military," *Public Affairs Quarterly* 12, no. 4 (October 1998): 454; Also see Major Kevin H. Carter, "Fraternization," *Military Law Review* 113 (Summer 1986): 61; *United States v. Blake*, 35 M.J. 539 (A.C.M.R. 1992).

³⁵ Cynthia Enloe, "Combat: The Zone of Women's Liberation?" *The Progressive*, January 24, 2013, <http://www.progressive.org/combat-the-zone-of-women-and-liberation> (accessed on June 3, 2014).

resented women's integration, some scholars have argued that women joining the military services "enter hostile territory."³⁶ Others contend that the integration of women into the military has failed because of the continuing problems with sexual harassment and its rape culture.³⁷ In, *Honor Betrayed: Sexual Abuse in the Military*, Mic Hunter maintained that the military must change its culture to stem the incidents of rape by improving leadership accountability, ending victim blaming, and moving legal remedies out of the hands of commanders.³⁸ Here I argue that military leadership consistently condoned discrimination and sexual abuse against women, a view supported by more recent reports exposing a climate of intimidation and fear of reprisal when women reported abuse directly through the chain of command.³⁹ While my study ends in 1994 before several high profile incidents of rape, harassment and abuse came to light that forced the Army to address these issues with a higher sense of urgency, the earlier period is rife with

³⁶ Francine D'Amico and Laurie Lee Weinstein, *Gender Camouflage: Women and the U.S. Military*, 5.

³⁷ Christine L. Williams and Kirsten Dellinger, *Gender and Sexuality in the Workplace* (Bingley, UK: Emerald, 2010).

³⁸ Mic Hunter, *Honor Betrayed: Sexual Abuse in America's Military* (Fort Lee, N.J.: Barricade Books, 2007), 235-246.

³⁹ For literature examining military rape during war, see Gina Marie Weaver, *Ideologies of Forgetting: Rape in the Vietnam War* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010); Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975). For a discussion on how placing criminal investigations in the hands of military commanders has been problematic for resolving cases of sexual assault, see Elizabeth Hillman, "Front and Center: Sexual Violence in U.S. Military Law," *Politics & Society* 37, no. 1 (2007): 101-129; Jonathan P Tomes, and Michael I. Spak, "Practical Problems with Modifying the Military Justice System to Better Handle Sexual Assault Cases," *Wisconsin Journal of Law, Gender & Society* 29, no. 3 (2014): 377-408. For women's risk of rape during their military service, see Ann G. Sadler, Brenda M. Booth, Brian L. Cook, and Bradley N. Doebbeling, "Factors Associated with Women's Risk of Rape in the Military Environment," *American Journal of Industrial Medicine* 43, no. 3 (2003): 262-273.

incidents that had been publicized, but Army leadership ignored their widespread implications.⁴⁰

A measure of the intractability over time lies in the leadership's continued mishandling of the issue right until today. Military sexual trauma remains the most daunting obstacle facing servicewomen, even while deployed to war.⁴¹

Yet many women soldiers who faced hostility and discrimination still had great pride in their contribution to the military. In addition to gaining access to leadership roles, education benefits, marketable skills, and a chance to travel, financial security and even retirement, many female soldiers viewed the Army as a place where they belonged. They actively pressed to improve their conditions. Women pushed their leadership to address the abuse by affiliating with women's rights organization, forming their own support groups as veterans, informing the media and testifying before Congress. While sexual abuse has permeated all levels of the Army, focusing exclusively on these problems leads us to overlook the opportunities the Army provided many women to achieve goals not available to them in the civilian workforce. Indeed, it is quite possible that the persistence of rape and the Army's refusal to remedy the problem is integrally linked to the huge gains that women have made in recent years. This is the one of the central paradoxes of the recent history of women's work in the Army.

⁴⁰ See Epilogue for analysis of the Army's 1996 Aberdeen Proving Grounds sexual assault scandal. Lieutenant Commander J. Richard Chema, "Arresting Tailhook: The Prosecution of Sexual Harassment in the Military," (master's thesis, The Judge Advocate General's School, U. S. Army, 41st Judge Advocate Officer Graduate Course, April, 1993), 9-10.

⁴¹ Some scholars view the "Feres doctrine" as an obstacle for military reform with respect to sexual harassment and sexual assault. In 1950, *Feres v. United States*, the Supreme Court ruled that active duty servicemembers and their families are prohibited from suing the military for injuries incurred due to negligence. For a discussion on how to remedy this issue with respect to sexual harassment, see Robin Rogers, "A Proposal for Combatting Sexual Discrimination in the Military: Amendment of Title VII," *California Law Review* 78, no. 1 (1990): 165.

Lastly, scholars have long debated the question of whether or not women should be in combat and how combat exclusion policies marginalized women, treating them as subordinate to men and as second class citizens.⁴² Cynthia Enloe argued that because the Army's prohibition on women in combat permitted male co-workers to marginalize female soldier's presence, servicewomen were allowed to "serve in the military, but can never be permitted to *be* the military."⁴³ To be a soldier meant to be able to fight, and this realm was reserved for men, while the Army controlled and exploited women to justify men's status.⁴⁴ In contrast, I argue that women were active participants in the process of reshaping the gendered identity of a soldier and the meaning of combat. As women integrated combat related spaces, their advocacy to become full participants forced the Army to consistently redefine combat, transforming what it meant to be a soldier and a leader. With each advance, women forced the Army to move the goalposts, narrowing the meaning of combat. Initially, the Army excluded women from leadership and all combat arms, combat support and combat service positions to keep them off the battlefield. Then under pressure in the 1970s, the Army trained and equipped women to work and lead in some combat support and combat service jobs on the battlefield. Later in the 1980s, additional women's activism opened jobs in forward support areas near the fighting zone including some artillery positions, while other female soldiers fought and led troops. Ultimately, women were performing so many roles on the frontlines of the battlefield that the Army's restrictions made little sense. By

⁴² Rosemarie Skaine, *Women at War: Gender Issues of Americans in Combat* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1999); Erin Solaro, *Women in the Line of Fire: What You Should Know About Women in the Military* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 200); Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You*, 10.

⁴³ Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You*, 15, 138-140.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

the 1990s many men, from the Army's senior leadership to commanders and soldiers at the unit level, had been persuaded that women were essential to the success of the military mission. They helped to guide and include women in broader occupational fields, including some related to combat. In 1994, women successfully won the right to perform in "direct combat roles" on aircraft, opening the path for their full integration into all realms of the military in 2016. The lifting of gender-based restrictions on all combat jobs represented the Army's official acknowledgement of how women had radically transformed the workplace.

Women's Military Service Prior to Vietnam

Until 1948, the Army utilized women in support roles as an auxiliary force during war, but never included them as part of the regular army, and in no way involved them in peacetime operations. Since the Revolution, women have served with the military but until World War II, they were largely confined to nursing. Over 400,000 women served in World War II, the majority in the newly-created Women's Army Corps (WAC). WAC was not a part of the permanent Army and military leadership considered women's service temporary and envisioned them serving mainly in administrative positions.⁴⁵ During World War II, Congress directed the Army to keep women from any type of tactical combat training and prohibited them from working in duties that required weapons.⁴⁶ Many women performed administrative jobs at the Headquarters for the Army in Europe, while others worked in similar positions throughout the Pacific, North Africa,

⁴⁵ Lory Manning, *Women in the Military: Where They Stand* (Washington, DC: WREI, 2013).

⁴⁶ In spite of this directive against weapons, the Women's Corps Director permitted women to carry weapons in some duties as couriers, but prohibited them being photographed with any weapons. Mattie Treadwell, *The Women's Army Corps, United States Army in World War II: Special Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2 (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1954), 14.

China and the Middle East.⁴⁷ A small number of Wacs operated in Headquarter units in the forward echelon “twelve to thirty five miles behind” combat troops.⁴⁸ Wacs in war theaters sometimes faced strafing and primitive living conditions, but the Army did not consider them to be in an actual combat zone because of their location in rear areas.⁴⁹ Even though over two hundred military nurses died on active duty during World War II, including sixteen from enemy fire and the remainder from accidents and illness, the public’s perception was that the Army kept female soldiers out of harm’s way.⁵⁰ There was no public debate over whether these women had served “in combat.”

In 1948, due to their successful war service and because of military labor needs to prepare for quick mobilization in the event of a new conflict, Congress made the women’s corps a permanent branch of the Army.⁵¹ The Women’s Armed Services Integration Act of 1948 established the Women’s Army Corps (WAC) to create a small “nucleus of women...organized for immediate expansion in case of a national emergency.”⁵² The corps was formed as a separate

⁴⁷ During World War II, there were numerous theaters where Wacs deployed. Most were in Europe, but others were assigned to the Pacific, North Africa and the Mediterranean theaters. For detailed understanding of where women were assigned and the conditions they faced. Treadwell, 360-489.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 367.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 367, 387.

⁵⁰ There are conflicting reports on how many women died on active duty during World War II. The numbers vary between 200 and 543. Deaths include enemy fire, illness, accidents and natural causes. Eighty-five nurses were prisoners of war. The numbers cited are from Lory Manning, *Women in the Military: Where They Stand*, 8th ed. (Washington, DC: WREI, 2013).

⁵¹ Bettie J. Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1990), 35-61.

⁵² General W.S. Paul stated that WAC would, “Provide a nucleus of women in the Regular Army organized for immediate expansion in case of a national emergency.” Morden, 22; Holm, 119.

and distinct organization of the Army under women's management. Women received the same base-pay, health care, opportunities for retirement, and access to GI education benefits as men. Yet, unlike male soldiers who were assigned to a particular branch of the Army depending on their job, all women were members of the WAC regardless of their occupation. Yet in the same year that President Truman's 1948 Executive Order 9981 prohibited racial discrimination in the military workplace, the separate legislation for women codified gender discrimination into law.⁵³

In the immediate postwar period, the Army treated women differently from men in a number of ways. In addition to being segregated in a separate Corps, women faced more restrictions than men did when it came to joining the military. While women who had children under the age of eighteen could not join the Army, male service members with dependent children faced no such restriction. Women under the age of twenty-one required parental consent to join, while eighteen was the age of consent for men. Servicewomen's husbands did not automatically have the same privileges that wives of military men enjoyed as dependents. Instead, housing, commissary privileges, health care, and other benefits were denied to the civilian spouses of military women unless they could prove their husbands were unable to work due to disability or other reasons that prevented them from heading their household.⁵⁴ The Integration Act also permitted the discharge of women without any stated cause, a stipulation that did not exist for men.

⁵³ Jon E. Taylor, *Freedom to Serve Truman, Civil Rights, and Executive Order 9981* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

⁵⁴ Full Committee Hearings on *House Resolution 498, H.R. 5344, H.R. 5870, H.R. 4490, S. 1799, H.R. 4508, S. 1641, Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948*, June 2, 1948, pp. 6958-6966, ProQuest Congressional (80 H1173-A.48). See Morden, 48-60, for a discussion of these restrictions.

In keeping with the tradition for a male only managed Army, legislators structured the 1948 law to prevent well-qualified and experienced women from holding senior command positions that would give them authority and responsibility to develop military plans and lead soldiers in military operations. While a few legislators believed women were entitled to the same ranks as men, Secretary of Defense James Forrestal argued that, “We still adhere to the concept that combat, combat support and direction of our operating forces are responsibilities for male officers. We do not expect them to occupy a combat support mission.”⁵⁵ The Army assigned Wac officers with expertise in their occupational field to higher levels of responsibilities, but their duties were often “not commensurate with their rank.”⁵⁶ What scholars have called a legal “brass ceiling” on career opportunities limited women officers to the lowest five ranks, prohibited women officers from commanding men and forced them to retire at a younger age than the males in their cohort.⁵⁷ Women were not allowed to advance beyond the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, excepting the singular head of each women’s service. Even then, she had to relinquish her rank upon completion of her assignment, or retire. A General’s rank represented clout and power, but the Congressional exclusion of Wac officers from these “flag” officer grades (O-7 to O-10) meant

⁵⁵ Public Law 80-625, *Women’s Armed Service Integration Act* of 1948, 62 Stat., 356, June 12, 1948.

⁵⁶ House Subcommittee No. 1, *Consideration of H.R. 5894, to Amend Title 10, 32, and 37, United States Code, to Remove Restrictions on the Careers of Female Officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, and for Other Purposes*, April 20, 1967, p. 384, ProQuest Congressional (90 H2335-0.7).

⁵⁷ A number of scholars have referred to a “brass” ceiling for women. The first such instances were works reporting on women’s limitations in policing. Keith Strandberg, "Breaking Through the 'Brass' Ceiling," *Law Enforcement Technology* 27, no. 6 (2000): 76-82; Dorothy M. Shultz, *Breaking the Brass Ceiling Women Police Chiefs and Their Paths to the Top* (ABC-CLIO, 2004). The first work to mention “brass ceilings” for military women was: Darlene Marie Iskra, “Breaking through the "Brass" Ceiling: Elite Military Women's Strategies for Success,” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2007) accessed at <http://hdl.handle.net/1903/7734>.

that even the most experienced female officers were unlikely to have any major influence in military policy beyond that of women's service.⁵⁸ Surrounded by more than five thousand permanent male Army Colonels and hundreds of flag officers, the lone WAC Colonel held limited power.⁵⁹

Congress made sure that women did not directly take a promotion slot from a male officer by excluding Wacs from Army wide promotions, intentionally obstructed Wac officers' career paths.⁶⁰ While some Congressmen argued that women should have access to the same ranks as men, most agreed that since legislation mandated only a finite number of soldiers for each rank, women's promotions restricted opportunities for men.⁶¹ WAC leaders agreed with their reasoning. In 1948, WAC Director Hallaren argued that a "separate but equal" list for women was beneficial.⁶² In her view, direct competition with men would have disadvantaged Wacs by forcing competition with soldiers who had combat training, command experience and

⁵⁸ Holm, 123.

⁵⁹ Department of Defense, "Military Personnel on Active Duty by Grade in Which Serving, 1967," https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/dwp/dwp_reports.jsp (accessed June 4, 2014).

⁶⁰ The ten Grades for Army officers are O-1 to O-10 (O-1:1st Lieutenant, O-2: 2nd Lieutenant, O-3: Captain, O-4: Major, O-5: Lieutenant Colonel, O-6: Colonel, O-7: Brigadier General, O-8: Major General, O-9: Lieutenant General, O-10: General).

⁶¹ Thomas Overton Brooks (D-LA) argued against restricting women's ranks. House Committee on Armed Services, *Full Committee Hearings on House Resolution 498, H.R. 5344, H.R. 5870, H.R. 4490, S. 1799, H.R. 4508, S. 1641*, March 23, 1948, p. 5832, ProQuest Congressional (80 H1173-A.48).

⁶² Hearings Before the United States House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee No. 3, *Organization and Mobilization (Armed Services) Subcommittee Hearings on S. 1641, To Establish the Women's Army Corps in the Regular Army, To Authorize the Enlistment and Appointment of Women in the Regular Navy and Marine Corps and the Naval and Marine Corps Reserve, and for Other Purposes*, 80th Cong., 2nd sess., Feb. 18, 23, 25, 27, Mar. 2, 3, 1948, p. 5648, ProQuest Congressional (80 H1173-A.41).

eligibility for the highest ranks.⁶³ During World War II, the Army did not separate promotions lists, often to the detriment of women. For example, early in Mildred Bailey's military career, her commander informed her that she deserve a promotion, but noted that "as long as there is a male first lieutenant on this post, I will not give that slot to you."⁶⁴ The law additionally limited the total number of WAC promotion slots above the rank of Major by allowing women only ten percent of officers positions at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.⁶⁵ That meant that only about seven or eight Wacs could be promoted to this rank.⁶⁶ As a result of these restrictions, and because many Wacs worked and competed with other women officers within the same few occupational fields, opportunities for senior positions within their own "line" in the Women's Army Corps were scarce. These restrictions severely crippled the ability of many women officers to earn a pension because promotions were contingent on time limits required by law, and the lack of slots for advancement meant time would expire before they had reached twenty years in service to retire.⁶⁷

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Brigadier General Mildred Bailey, interview by Eric Elliott, May 26, 1999, WVHP 0084, Mildred Inez C. Bailey Collection, Betty H. Carter Women Veterans Historical Project, Martha Blakeney Hodges Special Collections and University Archives, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, NC (hereafter cited as UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project).

⁶⁵ Holm, 123.

⁶⁶ The average number of officers in WAC between 1951 and 1966 was less than 800 women. So the ten percent cap only made only seven or eight slots available for the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. For statistical data on the strength of women in the Army, see Morden, 409-420.

⁶⁷ The majority of officers were commissioned as Reserve officers with a cap of twenty years for mandatory retirement. For Majors commissioned in the Regular Army, their retirement was after twenty-five years. See discussion in Senate, Armed Services Committee, *Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1947*, *Armed Services Committee*, Senate, 80th Cong., 1st sess., July 2, 9, 15, 1947, p. 56-57, ProQuest Congressional (80 S832-1).

The 1948 law significantly limited the type of jobs that servicewomen could perform. By prohibiting women in the Navy and Air Force from serving on aircraft or ships engaged in military combat operations, the law prevented women from pursuing important paths for career development available to men. Since ground combat was not exclusively fought from any one type of platform (as was the situation for the Air Force and Navy), Army and WAC leaders argued against establishing the same type of restriction for their forces.⁶⁸ However, the Army still significantly curtailed women's opportunities. The legislation restricted women from making up more than two percent of the entire military, what General Jeanne Holm considered a "token" force.⁶⁹ One result of this dearth of servicewomen was that it left many women isolated in the workplace, limiting their chances to network with other women. Finally, the Army assigned servicewomen work in mainly traditional fields or even traditional duties in non-traditional fields. For example, the Army allocated Jane Brister, the first female Army Russian linguist, to mainly administrative tasks, but she desired work requiring with "more intellectual [challenges]...something I could get my teeth into," like a military attaché at an embassy.⁷⁰ By 1965, ninety-three percent of all enlisted women worked in clerical, administrative or health care

⁶⁸ As described by Colonel Mary A. Halleren and General John Dahlquist in, *Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1947*, 88-89.

⁶⁹ The number of women in the military services rarely exceeded one percent. Jeanne Holm served in the Women's Army Corps before the establishment of the Air Force in 1947, when she transferred into the Air Force, which was established as a separate service branch in 1947. Holm became the Director of Women in the Air Force between 1965 and 1973. Holm, 185.

⁷⁰ Jane Gail Brister interview by Eric Elliot, November 5, 1999, Jane Gail Brister Collection, WV0115, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project; Jane Gail Brister Collection, box 1, WV0115, "Photographic Ghosts of Pebble Beach" file, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

occupations.⁷¹ It would take the Vietnam War and the rise of the women's movement, the end of the draft, and women's advocacy for full participation in the Army workplace to significantly alter these conditions.

Author's Military Background

In the summer of 1980, this author spent her 18th birthday in basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. I enlisted for six years. Unlike the Army, by the 1980s, women in the Air Force had access to most jobs with the exception of flying on combat missions. In my line of work, that meant that female airmen could not attain flight status, the most prestigious work in our field that benefitted men for promotions. Because they were considered combat missions, the Air Force excluded women from flying reconnaissance missions on the RC-135. In 1986, a few months after I completed my service, the Air Force opened up this job to women.⁷² Beth Powell, one of the senior ranking women I worked with in Germany became one of the earliest female airmen to acquire flight status for this type of work.

During my time in the Air Force, I had male and female supervisors who were role models and mentors, providing me with support while pushing me to tackle new challenges. I never thought I experienced overt sexism because they provided me with opportunities to advance and championed my promotions. However, having the benefit of research and years of reflection on this issue, my perspective has changed. Sexual jokes and lewd conversations in my unit reflected a culture that demeaned women. Pregnant women in my unit endured especially difficult treatment, enduring harassing complaints about their lightened workloads and extra

⁷¹ Holm, 184.

⁷² M.C. Devilbiss, *Women and Military Service: A History, Analysis, and Overview of Key Issues* (Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala: Air University Press, 1990), 21.

leave. Mothers requesting time off for child care related issues often resulted in complaints about their special treatment. In one incident at our unit in Germany that I did not witness, a female sergeant was egregiously targeted. During a unit fund raising event, and against her wishes, she was auctioned off and sold to the highest bidder for “some service she could perform.” A male sergeant intervened to prevent her from having to actually spend time with the winner.⁷³ Sexual harassment was rampant. In my own experience, all incidents occurred during off duty time, consisting mainly of verbal harassment such as cat calls and pressure to date. It would be impossible to calculate the number of times I was asked if I had a boyfriend or why I was not married.

My understanding of the prevalence of sexual assault and rape in the military at that time was limited and naïve. However, I soon learned how the Hyde amendment prohibiting government funded abortions forced one of my friends to seek care from the German health care system.⁷⁴ It was only decades later I learned her pregnancy had been the result of an unreported rape. My friend felt she had no safe space to tell anyone, even privately, and it never crossed my mind that her pregnancy could be the result from a violent assault. In only one instance did I personally endure a tense situation that could have resulted in a sexual assault. When a drunk male sergeant physically dragged me away from my friends at an NCO club, insisting that I join him at a more private setting, I was able to alert my friends. They quickly intervened to take

⁷³ Email correspondence with Beth Powell in authors possession.

⁷⁴ The Hyde Amendment first passed in 1976 as a rider to government appropriations bill in response to the Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortions. Legislators have continued to pass the rider every year since, sometimes with changes. In 1978, the Department of Defense was included, restricting servicewomen’s access to government funded abortions for the first time since 1970. Heather Boonstra, “Off Base: The U.S. Military’s Ban on Privately Funded Abortions,” *Guttmacher Policy Review* 13, no. 3 (Summer 2010): 2-4.

sergeant home. I thought about filing a report, but after learning he was the sergeant in charge of the military police on base, that seemed like an invitation for trouble and unwelcome scrutiny into my life, which I avoided at all costs. In retrospect, filing a report would have been appropriate, if only to try and prevent him from accosting other women.

One reason I avoided scrutiny is that I am a lesbian, an identity I came to terms with in the Air Force and had to shield from public view during my enlistment. A few months into my first year, while training as a Russian linguist, I joined the post's basketball team as a way to meet people and socialize. One evening while walking home after practice with a woman on my team, she handed me a business card, advising that I might need it because there was a "witch-hunt" on the post. The card contained an attorney's contact information. I was unfamiliar with the term "witch-hunt," and even more perplexed why I might need to contact a lawyer. My friend informed me that the military was investigating homosexuals on the post and warned me to be careful. I handed her back the card and told her I was not a homosexual, she gave me a long serious look, but took back the card and we continued to our barracks in silence. The conversation left me distressed. When I answered "no" to the question, "have you ever engaged in homosexual activity" on my enlistment papers, I struggled with the reality that I might be a lesbian, but I was not sure and had never discussed this with anyone in the military or engaged in any relationship since enlisting. Several months later, even after learning that the aforementioned investigation resulted in the discharge of seven sailors at the school, I embraced my sexuality and gradually entered the military's homosexual subculture.⁷⁵ I dated men to avoid the constant questions about why I did not have a boyfriend. Some of my lesbian friends married to protect themselves against investigations. I was never called in for questioning, but some of my friends were investigated for

⁷⁵ "Sailors Investigated for Homosexuality," *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, October 22, 1980, Newspaper.com (accessed June 9, 2016).

homosexuality and lost their jobs or were kicked out. My fear of being discovered as a lesbian prevented me from reenlisting, and after I served my six years, I left with an honorable discharge.

While my experiences in the Air Force are not included in the chapters of this dissertation, my military service has helped me to interpret evidence of the challenges that women faced as they entered a male-dominated world. Perhaps most crucially, however, my experiences have allowed me to recognize when the primary sources reveal how women benefited from military service. My familiarity with the military's language, rank, hierarchy, and culture also significantly benefit my research since many of the primary documents use technical military language. Throughout, I have aimed to conduct my research with the utmost integrity, recognizing the biases of all sources, including my own memory.

The research for this dissertation is grounded in the voices of military women. In addition to more than forty oral histories that I conducted with female soldiers, I examined over a dozen transcripts from other archives. With the exception of one interview, Cheryl Brown, I did not know any of the women interviewed when I served in the military. Because of the limitations of oral histories (they present only a fraction of a woman's experience in the military and they depend on often unreliable memories), I have researched extensively in other primary and secondary sources. These include military and government documents, court cases, reports and studies produced by the military, newspapers and magazines, congressional records, memoirs, and diaries.

This dissertation begins with the Vietnam Era, with the first chapter exploring how women's efforts to expand their roles during the War exposed them to new hazards such as mortar attacks from guerilla insurgents. Vietnam was a significant turning point that exposed the Army's flawed training and preparation of women for war deployments. Chapter Two explores how new alliances between female soldiers, legislators, women's groups, civil rights

organizations, feminists, and veteran's associations pressured the Army to lift promotion ceilings, open training programs to women, and enroll them in formerly male only West Point Military Academy. The integration of women into regular Army units and pressure for women's workplace equality compelled the Department of Defense to dismantle the Women's Army Corps in 1978.

Chapter Three reveals the significance of the integration of women into all levels of the Army's organizational hierarchy. I show how women's obtainment of positions in the operational Army alongside men forced the Army to define combat for the first time. In spite of men's fierce resistance, male and female soldiers began to share the same risks and hardships in the field, and worked in together in direct combat environments, radically changing women's function in the Army and reshaping work experiences for all soldiers.

Chapter Four examines the integration of female soldiers into leadership positions where they gained authority and command power in formerly male dominated fields. By the early 1990s, significant numbers of women made crucial decisions about strategy and military tactics and led men in combat. At the same time, significant numbers of women went to the battlefield, ultimately leading the Army to approve women's assignment in some direct combat positions by 1994.

CHAPTER II

WACS FIGHT FOR INCLUSION IN THE VIETNAM WAR, 1964-1973

“It’s where you’ve got to be,” recalled Dorothy “Dot” Rechel, a member of the Women’s Army Corps (WAC) on why she volunteered for duty during the Vietnam War.¹ Despite resistance from WAC and Army leadership, many servicewomen sought to serve alongside male noncombatants. As a result of their pressure to serve, between 1965 and 1973, the Army assigned about seven hundred members of the Women’s Army Corps (Wacs) to Vietnam. Once deployed to the combat zone, WAC leadership attempted to project a feminine image of female soldiers by issuing directives to keep women in skirts and heels, enforcing a nightly curfew, housing them in segregated units, constricting their job opportunities, and prohibiting Wacs from carrying weapons. Women challenged all of these policies, resulting in a transformation of feminine norms for Wacs. While most members of WAC served in clerical and administrative duties, many made efforts to find challenging work that stimulated their intellect, allowing them to reach the full potential of their skills. In many cases they sought work that got them outside of offices and into jeeps and helicopters. Regardless of where they worked, Wacs often faced sexist attitudes and hostility on and off duty with inadequate policies in place to address these issues. In Vietnam (as later in Iraq and Afghanistan) there were no safe zones, so Wacs frequently climbed in bunkers to wait out mortar and artillery attacks, and many women felt vulnerable without proper equipment,

¹ Dorothy Rechel, interview by Eric Elliott, January 22, 2001, WV0196, Dorothy Jane Rechel Papers, Betty H. Carter Women Veterans Historical Project, Martha Blakeney Hodges Special Collections and University Archives, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (hereafter cited as Dorothy Rechel interview and archive cited as UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project).

training and weaponry to defend themselves. The war ultimately exposed the Army's flawed training and inadequate preparation of female soldiers for deployment in a combat zone.

Before the end of the Vietnam conflict, women's shared experiences with noncombatant male soldiers in the combat zone led Wacs to pressure their leadership for expanded work opportunities and proper preparation for war, forcing the Army to begin closing the gender-training gap. Women sought autonomy and independence from the Women's Corps' gender restrictive policies that hindered their freedom of movement both on and off the job. Their collective experiences and pressure for changes led the Army to implement new policies that began to better prepare women for work in a combat zone. For the first time since the integration of women into the regular military, many male Army commanders in Vietnam loosened rules and training policies, equipping Wacs with fatigues and boots, and offered women soldiers weapons training. In many ways, the shared experiences between men and women in Vietnam helped legitimize female soldiers' place in the Army. Their work contested the traditional view that jobs in the combat zone were only for men. For many Wacs, Vietnam broadened their experiences and led them to seek military careers.

Vietnam era women were not the first generation of Wacs that demanded increased work opportunities, but their push occurred at a time when society was more accepting of women's changing work roles. Some scholars examining women's roles during wartime have concluded that their status has been only temporary, and that their main work purpose was distinct from men in gendered roles. Margaret Higonnet explained that during World War II, men and women's roles existed on two different strands of a "double helix." Regardless of the job, men's work was

valued and significant, while women's work was always less significant and subordinate to men.² Historian Kara Dixon Vuic, who studied the Army Nurse Corps during Vietnam, revealed that nurses worked in an environment where "social norms were changing, legal discriminations against women were being lifted, and women were demanding change."³ Vuic argued that even in the traditional field of nursing, gender roles transformed during the Vietnam War. In the same way, members of WAC in Vietnam actively pressed for new opportunities because their expectations for military roles were moving beyond gender norms. There is limited scholarship on Wacs in Vietnam, but some literature has acknowledged that after nurses, Wacs were the largest group of military women in the warzone. However, little has been done to complicate the working experiences of Wacs in Vietnam. Some scholars have examined the sexual politics of gender in Vietnam. Heather Marie Stur argued that American Cold War policies shaped ideologies about race and gender that filtered down among relations between American men and American and Vietnamese women.⁴ Her work investigated how contradictions of this gender ideology were exposed in spaces outside of where actual fighting took place.⁵ While servicewomen were not Stur's primary focus, she noted that by just being present in the male

² Margaret Higonnet and Patrice Higonnet, "The Double Helix," in *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars*, ed., Margaret Higonnet (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1987), 44-58.

³ Kara Dixon Vuic, "'I'm Afraid We're Going to Have to Just Change Our Ways': Marriage, Motherhood, and Pregnancy in the Army Nurse Corps During the Vietnam War," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 32, no. 4, (2007): 997. Vuic's complete work on this topic is *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, University Press, 2010).

⁴ Heather Marie Stur, *Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam War Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 5-10.

dominated war zone, “military women in Vietnam played a bigger role than their numbers imply.”⁶ Stur contrasted the media’s sexualized portrayals of female soldiers as beautiful and fragile against the reality of the danger they faced from both rocket attacks and sexual harassment.⁷ My work in this chapter intends to build on Stur and Vuic’s research by examining the work spaces in Vietnam where servicewomen pressed the Army to equalize policy standards between male and female noncombatant soldiers. This study also examines leisure spaces and female soldiers’ conflicts with the WAC policies. While it is important to recognize how women’s experiences were different from male soldiers, Wacs shared experiences with men were equally significant. They were not pushing for total inclusion into the Army, and did not consider themselves as equals to men in the infantry or other combat positions. It was not the intention of Wacs to advance gender equality in Vietnam in all areas of work, but women pushed for changes in the noncombatant fields where they worked with men on a daily basis. Vietnam was a turning point for women’s integration into the Army. Despite obstacles of integrating in the war zone, individual Wacs believed they should be on an equal standing with their male noncombatant cohorts in Vietnam. Collectively, women challenged their leadership on issues that reflected Wacs’ fundamental disagreement over their identity and utilization as soldiers.

The United States’ involvement in Vietnam emerged in the 1950s out of President Harry Truman’s Cold War containment policy after World War II to prevent the spread of communism. While political rhetoric encouraged all citizens to be wary of communism, the military made no real attempt to involve servicewomen in the war effort that followed.⁸ Between 1950 and 1953,

⁶ Ibid., 15.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Frank Logevall, *The Origins of the Vietnam War* (Harlow, England: Longman, 2001); Andrew A. Wiest, *The Vietnam War, 1956-1975* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Bettie J. Morden,

Truman provided France with financial support to reclaim Indochina from the communists. President Dwight D. Eisenhower's administration continued to support the anti-communist foreign policy and worked to prop up the newly created South Vietnamese government to help the process of nation building.⁹ In 1956, the United States formed a Military Assistance and Advisory Group (MAAG) to help the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) defend against a communist takeover of the south by supplying advisors and most of the weapons and military equipment.¹⁰ President John Kennedy, who supported the foreign policy of containment advocated by Presidents Truman and Eisenhower, increased the number of military advisors to MAAG in 1962. Unlike World War II or even the Korean War, neither the executive branch, Congress, nor the Department of Defense considered mobilizing large numbers of servicewomen for the war effort. Despite Congress' original intent to create a permanent corps for training and preparing women during times of war, military and civilian leadership ignored this option and relied on the male draft for its combat and noncombatant troops.

The first Wac sent to Vietnam reflected the Army's very restrictive female assignment policy that ordinary Wacs later fought against in order to participate in the war. During the initial buildup in Vietnam, one woman with specialized skills who worked outside of the Women's

The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978 (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1990), 223-24.

⁹ Christopher R. Fisher, "Nation Building and the Vietnam War," *Pacific Historical Review* 74, no. 3 (August 2005): 441-56.

¹⁰ The Vietnam advisory group of 1956 emerged from the provisional MAAG of Indochina that was set up in September of 1950 to provide military and economic aid. After the Geneva Accords of 1954 ended the fighting of the First Indochina War between the Viet Minh and France, the United States began training Vietnamese forces. It was the first major shift to nearly all military assistance. The specific advisory group separated entirely for Vietnam was in 1956. James Lawton Collins, *The Development and Training of the South Vietnamese Army, 1950-1972* (Washington: Dept. of the Army, 1975).

Corps in Army intelligence, went to Vietnam in 1962. "I've always been a woman among many men. I don't consider myself an oddity here, but I guess I am," remarked Major Anne Marie Doering upon her arrival in Saigon.¹¹ Her arrival coincided with five thousand male soldiers recently deployed to the country as "advisors," but Doering was not part of any effort to mobilize Wacs. Instead, her duty in Vietnam reflected the women's corps policies permitting singular, yet infrequent assignments for exceptionally qualified women with specialized skills to special duty in the larger Army.¹² In this case, Doering's Vietnamese upbringing and proficiency in six languages helped her secure a position as an intelligence staff officer at the newly formed Military Advisory Assistance Group (MAAG) in Vietnam.¹³ A World War II veteran, Doering had been born and raised by a French father and a German mother in French Indochina, but after her mother remarried an American, she moved to Texas as a teenager. Doering arrived in Vietnam before the war intensified, leaving in 1963 after a thirteen-month tour. Even though many women requested duty in Vietnam, WAC leaders did not permit another female soldier to work there until January of 1965 when the war expanded.¹⁴ Her assignment was representative of the Women's Corps' diminishing role and mission in mobilizing women for war.

¹¹ Beverly Deepe, "One Wac, 5000 Men," *The Ada (OK) Evening News*, June 21, 1962, Newspaper.com (accessed June 7, 2013). In 1956, the Army assigned a small number of nurses from the Army Nurses Corps (ANC) to the country, and they worked in pairs to train Vietnamese women for hospital work, but Major Doering was the first American servicewoman outside of the medical field to set foot in Vietnam.

¹² James E. Wise and Scott Baron, *Women at War: Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Conflicts* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2006), 111.

¹³ Doering was proficient in French, German, Vietnamese, English, Chinese and Japanese. From the unpublished papers of Anne Marie Doering, held by Ann Jamison, United States Army, "Officer Qualification Record for Anne Marie Doering," and "Record of Assignments," copies in possession of author; James E. Wise *Women at War*, 111-12.

¹⁴ On August 2 and August 4, 1964, two signal intelligence ships operating in the Gulf of Tonkin reportedly defended themselves from attack by North Vietnamese ships in international

The Vietnam War exposed how WAC and Army's assignment policies for women were different from World War II. Although inequities concerning draft deferments became controversial in 1966, conscription supplied the Army with sufficient male recruits to manage the war, so female soldiers' participation was not considered essential to fill positions in Vietnam.¹⁵ But Wacs were also kept out because there was no defined zone to keep women safe. Battle lines were different in Vietnam from what they had been during World War II and the Korean War, making military leadership reluctant to assign women to positions in Vietnam. In previous wars, well defined front lines and rear echelons generally separated combatants from noncombatants.

In contrast, in Vietnam the combat zone was anywhere the guerilla fighters took the battle, fighting took place everywhere, so there was no "rear echelon" for Wacs in this war. By exposing themselves to a new combat environment, women gained legitimacy in challenging their exclusion from the combat zone. Yet, their participation exposed weakness in the Women's Army Corps' policies to prepare, train, and equip women for work outside the confines of the maternalistic and protective environment. Some male commanders and WAC leaders in Vietnam

waters. These reported attacks, the second of which did not occur, influenced Congress to authorize President Johnson to use "any means necessary" to retaliate against North Vietnam and set the United States on a path that escalated the war. For a comprehensive analysis of this incident, see Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History* (New York: Penguin Group, 1991), 380-92. For transcripts on White House discussion of the incident, see John Prados, "LBJ Tapes on the Gulf of Tonkin Incident," in idem., *The White House Tapes: Eavesdropping on the President* (New York: The New Press, 2003).

¹⁵ For detailed analysis on the controversies surrounding the draft during the Vietnam War, see Michael S. Foley, *Confronting the War Machine: Draft Resistance During the Vietnam War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); George Q. Flynn, *Conscription and Democracy: The Draft in France, Great Britain, and the United States* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2002), 77; "It's Still a Man's War," *Wilmington Morning Star News*, December 1, 1965, p. 14, Google.com/newspapers (accessed on March 4, 2012).

recognized the weakness with women's preparation, making concessions to ensure the women had the materials and training required to cope with war conditions.

At the same time, due to the precedent established during the Korean War that had limited women's assignments in hostile areas, WAC leadership voiced their objection to Wacs serving in Vietnam. But they also disapproved because of their desire to protect female soldiers' feminine image. During the Korean conflict, the Army sent the majority of Wac support for the war to assignments in Japan, but only allocated a handful of female soldiers to Korea for special assignment.¹⁶ This outcome was primarily the result of recruiting failures during the Korean war when the Department of Defense initially promised, then failed to send a WAC detachment into the country.¹⁷ Following the precedent established during Korea, where the war was fought largely without utilizing Wacs "in-country," the Army initially assigned the bulk of female soldiers' support for Vietnam to the Pacific WAC detachments in Hawaii, Japan, Korea, and Okinawa, but not into the combat zone.¹⁸

The Women Army Corps' rules and regulations for Wacs were also constrained by traditional ideas about femininity. WAC leadership feared that placing women in a combat zone might project a negative image about the corps to the public.¹⁹ They were especially reluctant to

¹⁶ During the Korean conflict, a Wac officer, Alice Parrish was assigned to train the ROK servicewomen to be police officers. Others were sent individually on special assignments. There were some requests for WAC detachments, but none ever formed in Korea, just Japan. Female enlistments were not meeting the expected quota. Morden, 221, 248.

¹⁷ Morden, 106. See Morden, Chapter IV for analysis of Wacs during the Korean war.

¹⁸ During Vietnam, the Army sent 44 Wac officers and 229 enlisted women to the Pacific Theater to support the Vietnam effort before any Wacs were sent to Vietnam. At its height in January of 1970, there were 20 officers and 139 enlisted women in the warzone with an additional 54 officers and 393 enlisted women in the Pacific area. Morden, 248.

¹⁹ "Suitable" and appropriate jobs were always in the forefront of WAC Directors minds. In 1953, Director Galloway rejected seventy of the MOS categories that had initially been

assign women in Vietnam because they recalled the harmful damage done to the image of female soldiers during World War II, when “slander campaigns” portrayed and maligned members of women’s corps as immoral lesbians, whores or prostitutes.²⁰ Their memories of a failed recruiting effort to mobilize women during the Korean conflict reinforced fears that the public’s perception of women working in a combat zone would lead to questions about the soldiers’ femininity and thus damage the reputation of the corps.²¹ Director Elizabeth Hoisington argued that “mom’s didn’t want [their daughters] soldiering.”²² To combat the negative attitudes, Hoisington emphasized that the Women’s Army Corps of the 1960s was a place where women could enhance their femininity. In 1968, at the height of the war, she told parents to “give me your daughters, and I’ll give you back young women who’ll be the best wives in the block, girls who know how to wield irons expertly, polish shoes until they look like glass, make wrinkle-free beds; girls who have neatness drilled into them.”²³

approved for Wacs because they would not meet the proper standards for the utilization of women. Some of the recommended jobs were in artillery and others may have involved combat training. Morden, 156.

²⁰ Mattie Treadwell, *The Women's Army Corps*, United States Army in World War II: Special Studies, vol. 8, no. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1954), 206-13; Morden, 10-12.

²¹ Morden, 10-12; For analysis on how the slander campaign affected the construction of female soldier’s identity as white, chaste and educated women during and after World War II, see Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

²² Mary Neth, “Today’s WAC: ‘She’ll Be the Best Wife On Her Block,’” *European Stars and Stripes*, January 16, 1968, Section C, p. 16 (hereafter *European Stars and Stripes* cited as ES&S).

²³ Ibid.

Many military leaders believed that the only military women suitable for service in the Vietnam war environment were nurses.²⁴ With nursing considered a caregiving occupation, nurses' roles aligned more closely with America's cultural construction of women's traditional responsibilities in the workforce. Since nurses were doing work that most men did not perform, their presence was less of a threat to male soldiers and more accepted. In 1965, one columnist described how men "easily comprehended" women's nursing work in Vietnam, but found Wacs and other servicewomen "exotic," regardless of the positions they occupied.²⁵ Even President Lyndon Johnson ignored media pressure to utilize servicewomen for many of the office jobs available in Vietnam. In January of 1966, the media questioned Johnson about servicewomen who were "distressed because they are not being called upon to serve in Vietnam," asking him why more were not allowed to serve in order "to relieve men who could be in the combat area."²⁶ Johnson took the issue up with his Secretary of Defense, explaining to Robert McNamara that the press was starting to hound him about the lack of women soldiers in Vietnam. "There ain't nothing but nurses. [They] say that you won't let any of the WACs go, or any of the WAVES go, or any of the rest of them. You reckon' we can sprinkle any of them out there?"²⁷ McNamara

²⁴ Nurse, however, did face resentment from male soldiers for their presence in the war zone. For comprehensive analysis of the Army Nurse Corps experience in Vietnam, see Kara Dixon Vuic, *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War*.

²⁵ Inez Robb, "Robb's Corner," *Reading (PA) Eagle*, May 11, 1965, Google.com/newspapers (accessed October 3, 2013).

²⁶ Ibid; Lyndon B. Johnson: "The President's News Conference," January 13, 1966. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=28094> (accessed October 3, 2013).

²⁷ Telephone Conversation Between President Johnson and Secretary of Defense McNamara, Washington, Jan. 17, 1966 in David C. Humphrey, ed., *Foreign Relations of the United States 1964-1968, IV* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998), 78-79.

informed Johnson (erroneously) that he had not received any requests from military leadership, remarking that sending women to war would not improve military operations, but require a lot of “special quarters and special handling.”²⁸ Further, McNamara added that sending servicewomen to Vietnam would irritate civilian and military wives who would become suspicious of “what their husbands are doing.”²⁹ Johnson agreed that McNamara should not “stir it up.”³⁰

Wacs Lobby for Noncombat Assignments in Vietnam

Nevertheless, women stirred things up themselves by pushing against WAC leadership, the Army, and civilian leadership for opportunities to work in Vietnam. Unlike men, all women had volunteered for the Army, but they filled noncombatant positions, none were drafted. Consequently, few Wacs were actively involved in the GI antiwar movement. In 1972, one group trying to recruit women for anti-war activities noted, “There is nothing really relating to anti-imperialist consciousness among Wacs,” consequently, they were unlikely to participate in any “mass movement” against the war.³¹ Other anti-war activists observed that many Wacs had “a

²⁸ Ibid. Army Commanders sent their first request to use Wacs in Vietnam to the Pentagon over a year earlier, in November of 1964. Morden, 242.

²⁹ Conversation between Johnson and McNamara, Jan 17, 1966 in *Foreign Relations of the United States 1964-1968*.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ “Fort Bragg Women’s Collective,” *G.I. News and Discussion Bulletin*, Issue 11 (March 1972): 9-10, “GI Press Collection,” Wisconsin Historical Society Digital Archive, Madison, WI. Research on anti-war Wacs is limited. While the underground GI anti-war presses included some servicewomen, only three publications were dedicated to women’s only issues: *Women Hold Up Half the Sky*, *Women’s Voices*, and *Whack!* Military women active in the underground newspapers mainly complained about the military’s sexism, lesbian baiting and sexual harassment. Barbara L. Tischler, “Breaking Ranks: GI Antiwar Newspapers and the Culture of Protest,” *Vietnam Generation 2*, no. 1 article 4, (1990): 20-50, <http://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1051&context=vietnamgeneration> (accessed June 5, 2015).

really valid fear of rocking the boat,” and were reluctant to trust the outside organizers.³² For Wacs, pressing the Army for assignments in Vietnam seemed appropriate since the country was at war. Many women felt undervalued as the Army sent their male noncombatant coworkers to fill office jobs in Vietnam while ignoring women’s skills.³³ Pressure built as the media amplified women’s growing resolve to serve. One former World War II Wac, now serving in the Air Force complained, “I served in Normandy and Italy, I can sure as hell serve in Vietnam.”³⁴ In 1966, the *Washington Post* reported, “Scarcely a dozen Wacs have wangled duty in Vietnam... Many have volunteered; others would be willing to go.”³⁵ The *Post* noted that one Wac officer protested that “women are fighting in the jungles with the Vietcong. Yet we [American women] aren’t allowed to dirty our dainty hands.”³⁶ The reporter concluded, “These Wac officers ... speak for a growing number of servicewomen who feel they have been left out of the Vietnam emergency.”³⁷

Individually, Wacs motivated to be a part of the war began to challenge Army and WAC leaders on their restrictions from serving in Vietnam. “Why in the world aren’t they sending women to Vietnam?” wondered Major Audrey “Ann” Fisher when the war began to escalate in

³² “Anniston Women’s Project,” *G.I. News and Discussion Bulletin*, Issue 4 (April 1971): 1-4, “GI Press Collection,” Wisconsin Historical Society Digital Archive, Madison, WI.

³³ Major General Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution*, 2d ed. (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1992), 209.

³⁴ Holm, 210.

³⁵ Jack Anderson, “Should We Send Our Women Soldiers to Vietnam?” *Parade Magazine*, January, 1966, p. 1, Newspaper.com (accessed May 5, 2013).

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

1965.³⁸ Wacs who petitioned to work in Vietnam were motivated to serve in the war zone for a variety of reasons. Many women wanted to reach their full potential, do challenging work, enhance their careers and participate as fully as possible, and that meant getting close to the war. Many Wacs had an adventurous spirit and wanted a job where there was “action.” Fisher enlisted in WAC because she had “itchy feet” and hoped to see the world.³⁹ Some Wacs reported having a sense of patriotism or obligation as a soldier to do something meaningful that motivated them to want to serve in Vietnam. Evelyn Delgado volunteered because she was “an American” who loved her country and “there was a job to do.”⁴⁰ Linda Earls believed that it was her patriotic duty to get to Vietnam. “If there was a war going on, I had to be there.”⁴¹ Others sought financial incentives with combat pay and tax exemptions while deployed to Vietnam.⁴² Staff Sergeant Merle Hicks volunteered for Vietnam to have the “opportunity to lay aside a nice nest egg”.⁴³

Some women who volunteered for Vietnam had already decided they were going to make the Army a career and believed that serving in the warzone would help with promotions. Dorothy Rechel acknowledged that, “nobody likes a war, but boy, it's an opportunity for the careerist. It's

³⁸ Audrey Ann Fisher interview by Eric Elliot, December 18, 2000, WV0153, Audrey Ann Fisher Papers, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project (hereafter cited as Ann Fisher interview).

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Sheila Moran, “Soldiers in Skirts Increasing in Vietnam,” *ES&S*, May 7, 1967, 8.

⁴¹ Mary Wicoff, “Book Details Woman’s Life in Vietnam,” *Commercial News (Danville, IL)*, November 12, 2012, Newspaper.com (accessed on November 5, 2013).

⁴² “Records Show 5,000 Women Got Combat Pay,” *The Daily Times-News (Burlington, NC)*, September 15, 1974, Newspaper.com (accessed July 8, 2013).

⁴³ Bob Umpheress, “Couple Re-Up Together in Germany,” *ES&S*, March 4, 1971, 8.

the only war we had.”⁴⁴ Michelle Steiner understood that volunteering for Vietnam was “considered a ticket to be punched for your career progression.”⁴⁵ Other less seasoned Wacs were encouraged by supervisors to volunteer so the assignment could improve their chances for promotion. Janie Miller had only been a Wac for a few years when her supervisor advised her that an assignment in Vietnam would benefit her career.⁴⁶ One major advocate for increasing the role of Wacs in Vietnam was Lieutenant Colonel Shirley Heinz, one of the first two women graduates from the Army War College, and head of WAC Career Management branch during this period. She put pressure on other WAC and Army leaders to assign more women to Vietnam.⁴⁷

Other Wacs volunteered to express their commitment as dedicated soldiers or because they had essential skills and wanted to prove they were as capable as male noncombatants. Evelyn “Pat” Foote volunteered to go to Vietnam because she assumed she had an obligation as a soldier to serve in the war zone.⁴⁸ Foote believed that male soldiers in the 1960s viewed military women as second-class citizens because, “we didn’t do what they did, we didn’t serve where they

⁴⁴ Dorothy Rechel interview.

⁴⁵ Michelle Steiner Interview by Laura M. Caulkins at Texas Tech on March 9, 2004, The Vietnam Center and Archive, Texas Tech University, <http://www.virtual.vietnam.ttu.edu> (accessed October 13, 2013).

⁴⁶ Donna Lowery, *Women Vietnam Veterans Our Untold Stories* (Bloomington, IN, Authorhouse, 2015), 6066, e-book on Amazon.

⁴⁷ Morden, 249; “Vietnam: Another First for Wacs,” *Women’s Army Corps Journal III*, no. 1, (Jan-Mar 1972), Marion C. Crawford, WAC NCO’s file, box 138, Vietnam folder, U.S. Army Women’s Museum, Fort Lee, VA (hereafter the Women’s Museum at Fort Lee cited as Fort Lee Archives).

⁴⁸ Interview with Pat Foote by Colonel Mary A. Maier, USA, 1993 for the U.S. Army Military History Institute, “Evelyn Patricia Foote Papers,” UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project (hereafter cited as Pat Foote interview with Maier).

did,” but women still received the same pay and benefits.⁴⁹ She found this an untenable position and believed that Wacs were professionals and just as obligated as men were to work to Vietnam. Sandy Olson confessed that she hoped to better understand what was happening in Vietnam by going there in person, “I wanted to get involved.”⁵⁰ Pinkie Houser was “dead set on going to Vietnam” because she did not feel she was doing enough for her country as a company clerk at Fort Knox, she wanted to contribute her skills to the war effort.⁵¹ Doris “Lucky” Allen admitted, “One of the reasons I wanted to go is I’m a soldier and this is war” and in some sense, “I wanted to go be a pioneer, I guess.” She believed working in Vietnam made more of a difference than other assignments because as a “soldier you may as well be where the action is.”⁵² By action, women did not expect to join the fighting; instead, Wacs desired to participate in the war effort to the full capability of their skills in noncombatant roles in Vietnam.⁵³

Many Wacs volunteered more than once. Florence Dunn tried to get an assignment as soon as she enlisted in 1965 and was finally successful six years later.⁵⁴ Pat Foote volunteered in

⁴⁹ “Pat Foote: Retired U.S. Army Brigade Veteran, Getting to Vietnam,” AOL, Maker’s Video, <http://www.makers.com/pat-foote/moments/getting-vietnam> (accessed November 3, 2013).

⁵⁰ Kathy Woestendiek, “Woman Lieutenant Colonel Maintains Femininity,” *Evening (Annapolis) Capital*, May 24, 1972, p. 12, Newspaper.com (accessed June 8, 2013).

⁵¹ Kathryn Marshall, *In the Combat Zone: An Oral History of American Women in Vietnam, 1966-1975* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1987), 37.

⁵² Doris Allen interview by Laura Calkins in Lubbock, Texas, May 11, June 7, 2004, OHO408, “Doris ‘Lucki’ I. Allen Collection,” The Vietnam Archive Oral History Project, Texas Tech University. <http://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/virtualarchive/items.php?item=OH0408> (hereafter cited as Doris Allen interview).

⁵³ Even media reports of women in the military made note that “Women enjoy the benefits with few of the dangers that servicemen face, “Women in Uniform,” *Ebony*, December 1962, p. 63.

⁵⁴ Lowery, 9004.

both 1965 and 1966 by sending her request to the office of the Director of WAC, but twice Colonel Hoisington's office turned her down.⁵⁵ Doris Allen was disappointed when the Army did not choose her as part of the first batch of women deployed to the war. She continued to press for an assignment until she succeeded in 1967.⁵⁶ Ada Morales volunteered three times for Vietnam and was never accepted.⁵⁷ Lucie Rivera-O'Ferrall volunteered five times before she finally landed in the war zone.⁵⁸ By 1967, WAC Director, Colonel Elizabeth Hoisington admitted that the "waiting list [for Vietnam volunteers] is crammed."⁵⁹ A year later, she noted that "we have so many volunteers for Vietnam, we just can't send them all."⁶⁰ But the Army had only sent one hundred and fifty Wacs to the country, less than one percent of all the troops; with the demand for soldiers growing and women clamoring to serve, one reporter recognized that the small numbers of Wacs in Vietnam were "anemic."⁶¹

Meanwhile, Wacs found ways to work around leadership roadblocks by completing advanced training in other Army branches, enlisting friends to help, and signing reenlistment

⁵⁵ Pat Foote interview with Carmichael; Pat Foote interview with Maier.

⁵⁶ Doris Allen interview.

⁵⁷ Ada L. Mercado-Morales interview, February 28, 1989, "NCO Museum Oral History," Edited by Pat Rhodes, U.S. Army Sergeant Major Academy, Biggs Field, Fort Bliss, Texas, Combined Arms Digital Research Library, <http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15040coll2/id/7433/rec/8>.

⁵⁸ Lowery, 7306.

⁵⁹ "Wacs Prepare to Lend a Helping Hand in Vietnam," *The Times Tri-City (Florence) Daily*, November 18, 1967, Google.com/newspapers (accessed June 12, 2013).

⁶⁰ Neth, "Today's WAC: 'She'll Be the Best Wife On Her Block.'"

⁶¹ Tom Tiede, "Servicemen Want Wacs in Vietnam," *The (Freemont) Argus*, January 9, 1967, 10, Newspaper.com (accessed June 12, 2013).

contracts to get an assignment to Vietnam. Some recognized they could gain entry by volunteering for work in the Adjutant General Corps, an Army branch supporting the war effort with administration and personnel management positions.⁶² Pat Foote believed that if she attended the Adjutant General's leadership course, they would "send her to Vietnam in a heartbeat" in order to get their money's worth out of her.⁶³ She was right; soon after graduating, the Adjutant General's personnel office assigned her to Vietnam in January of 1967.⁶⁴ Sherian Cadoria attended the same class as Foote, and when she volunteered for Vietnam after the course ended, the Adjutant General also sent her to the combat zone.⁶⁵ Foote worked in public relations with the press, and Cadoria worked escorting VIPs around the country.

Some Wacs used their network of friends to obtain an assignment, while others tried to guarantee duty in the war zone by reenlisting specifically for Vietnam as their station of choice. Linda McClenahan joined WAC in 1968 to "learn the truth" about Vietnam after witnessing an anti-war protest, but also because she "wanted to do something that matters."⁶⁶ When the women's corps told her that all Wac positions were filled and it would take years for her to get to Vietnam, McClenahan contacted a friend who arranged Army assignments and she soon had her papers to go to Vietnam.⁶⁷ Other Wacs reenlisted for the purpose of getting to Vietnam. Earls

⁶² Morden, 129.

⁶³ Foote, AOL, Maker's Video; Pat Foote interview with Maier.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Pat Foote interview with Maier.

⁶⁶ Mary Kathryn Barbier, Glenn Robins, and Andrew A. Wiest, *America and the Vietnam War Re-Examining the Culture and History of a Generation* (London: Routledge, 2010), 84; Stur, 130.

⁶⁷ Marshall, 37; Stur, 131; Tom Patten, "Attitudes", *NamNews*, November 11, 1987, 39-42, Women in Vietnam, <http://www.illyria.com/women/vnwnamvet2.html> (accessed on June 4,

volunteered for Vietnam when she reenlisted, but there were no “slots” or jobs available. She sought a duty assignment in California, and after a short time at her new post, successfully made another request for a job in Vietnam.⁶⁸

A significant number of black women pressed for inclusion in Vietnam. While it took until 1950 before the Army ended segregated basic training and quotas for black soldiers, the military was one of the places where black women could achieve pay equity, learn a skill, earn money for education, receive promotional opportunities and attain the security of a pension.⁶⁹ Dolores Barrett, who enlisted in 1959, felt like a “token” black woman in many of her early Army jobs, but maintained that opportunities were improving.⁷⁰ “You might call me brainwashed, you might call me a lifer, but the Women’s Army Corps offers a lot.”⁷¹ Grendel Howard saved \$17,000 from her three tours in Vietnam, and received two promotions.⁷² In 1960, the percentage of black Wacs in the Women’s corps was thirteen percent and by 1972, their percentage had increased to eighteen percent.⁷³ The proportion of black women continued to rise throughout the

2014]; Linda S. Earls, *Vietnam I'm Going!: Letters from a Young WAC in Vietnam to Her Mother* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Corp, 2012), 18.

⁶⁹ The Army quota for black men and women was ten percent. Morden, 87.

⁷⁰ Lowery, 8740.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² “Sisters in Arms,” *Ebony*, March 1994, 122.

⁷³ In 1960, there were a total of 9,053 women in WAC. Of those, 1183 were black (28 officers, 1155 enlisted). In 1972 when statistics were again gathered, there were 2453 black women out of 13269 total Wacs (52 enlisted, 5 warrant officers and 2396 enlisted) Morden, 409-10, 415.

1970s.⁷⁴ Although the Army failed to keep statistics on African Americans serving between 1961 and 1971, some scholars have estimated that as many as seventy-five black Wacs worked in Vietnam, about ten percent of the female soldiers.⁷⁵ Some Vietnam veterans recall an even higher ratio of black women at the WAC detachment. According to Linda McClenahan, between 1969 and 1970, black women outnumbered white women by a ratio of three to two during her tour at Long Binh.⁷⁶ These numbers are significant because they reflect how for the first time, WAC assigned black women liberally to the combat zone, while at the same time revealing how the Army had been an important source for black women's employment before the end of the draft in 1973.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Most of these gains were in the enlisted ranks. The percentage of female black officers remained at about five percent from 1972 until 1977, when it increased to nine percent. See Morden, 409-10, 415 for statistical data.

⁷⁵ Holm, 210.

⁷⁶ McClenahan estimated that the ratio at Long Binh was sixty black women to forty white women, which is 3:2. Stur, 139.

⁷⁷ During World War II, military leaders were reluctant to send black women overseas. Eventually, pressure from black leaders forced the Army to send a detachment of black women to England, Treadwell, 589-601. For extensive analysis of this detachment's experience, see Brenda L. Moore, *To Serve My Country, to Serve My Race: The Story of the Only African American WACS Stationed Overseas During World War II* (New York: New York University Press, 1996). Most recent scholarship on black women's increase focuses on their significant increase in numbers with the end of the draft and the rise of the All-Volunteer Army. Mady Eschsler Segal, Meredith Hill Thanner, and David R Segal, "Hispanic and African American Men and Women in the U.S. Military: Trends in Representation, *Race, Gender & Class* 14, no. 3/4 (2007): 48; Beth L. Bailey, *America's Army Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2009), 219. For a comprehensive sociological study on African American women in the Army, see Brenda L. Moore, and Schuyler C. Webb, "Perceptions of Equal Opportunity Among Women and Minority Army Personnel," *Sociological Inquiry* 70, no. 2 (2000): 215-239. Moore's research on the integrations of black women in all of the military services, see Brenda L. Moore, "African-American Women in the U.S. Military," *Armed Forces and Society* 17, no. 3 (1992): 363.

While many women soldiers in Vietnam volunteered for the assignment, many Wacs receiving orders had not offered to go.⁷⁸ Due to concerns about their image, the Women's Army Corps was very selective about the women who would be part of the first detachment in Vietnam, so the Director and her staff picked the women they thought would best represent the corps. Marion Crawford, the first WAC First Sergeant assigned to Vietnam, recalled that as many as seventy of the eighty-two women in the initial detachment in 1967 were appointed and were not originally volunteers.⁷⁹ In interviews at the time, Hoisington verified that while some women had not volunteered, "no one is objecting to the assignment. They're flattered to be invited."⁸⁰ Many were, but in fact not every Wac receiving orders was pleased. For example, Colonel Claudette Bowen, maintained that she was "surprised and dismayed."⁸¹ Florence Woolard was shocked and displeased to receive orders to Vietnam.⁸² When WAC assigned Susie Stephens McArthur as part

⁷⁸ Numerous newspaper reports stated that all servicewomen in Vietnam were volunteers. SSgt Frank Madison, "Long Binh Wacs Provide a Study in Women's Lib," *Stars and Stripes, Pacific Edition*, November 5, 1971, 8. In 1976, an Army report on women erroneously stated that "throughout the Vietnam conflict, only WAC volunteers were sent," Eugene A. Fox, *Final Report of the Women in the Army Study Group* (Washington: U.S. Dept. of the Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, 1976), 2-B-1. All Wacs were volunteers for the Army, but did not necessarily volunteer for the Vietnam assignments.

⁷⁹ Crawford reported that twelve of the initial enlisted detachment of E-4 Wacs were volunteers and "70 had agreed to serve." There were five additional members of the leadership of the detachment, bringing the total to 87. "Vietnam: Another First for Wacs," *Wac Journal* III, no. 1 (Jan-Mar 197): 9, box 138, Vietnam folder, Fort Lee Archives.

⁸⁰ "More Wacs Headed for Vietnam," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, January 16, 1967 (hereafter *Pacific Stars and Stripes* cited as *PS&S*).

⁸¹ Judith Bellafaire and Mercedes Graf, *Women Doctors in War* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2009), 147.

⁸² Lowery, 1269.

of the initial detachment, she was preparing to get married and “didn’t want to go.”⁸³ At the same time, she was proud the Women’s Army Corps “handpicked” her as a member of the group sent for the first women’s detachment and so she put her “engagement on hold” and shipped out.⁸⁴

Women’s pressure to participate was not successful until the war escalated and military leaders began to request a few Wacs based on gendered and sexist notions of women’s capabilities. Even so, these requests were minimal, with the first one coming in 1964 from leadership at the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) Headquarters, who responded to an appeal from the South Vietnamese government to help rebuild a women’s unit.⁸⁵ Brigadier General Ben Sternberg, the personnel officer in Vietnam, requested two Wacs to train and advise women for the Vietnamese Women’s Armed Forces Corps (WAFC), noting that they should be “intelligent...beautiful...and able to type.”⁸⁶ The first two women assigned to WAFC trained Vietnamese women in a corps modeled after the Women’s Army Corps in the United States.⁸⁷ Arriving in January of 1965, Major Kathleen Wilkes helped develop policies for the new corps on “recruiting, training and management,” while Sergeant First Class Betty Adams developed

⁸³ Susie Stevens McArthur, interview by Hermann Trojanowski, February 8, 2001, WV0199, Susie McArthur Papers, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project (hereafter cited as Susie McArthur interview).

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ MACV merged with MAAG in 1964.

⁸⁶ Morden, 242.

⁸⁷ Other NCOs assigned to WAFC between 1966 and 1973 were Master Sergeants Jane Salzobryt, Mary Phillips, Evelyn Ford, Mary J Hinton and Sylvia Berardini. The officers were Lieutenant Colonels Judith Bennett, Francis V. Chaffin, Lorraine A. Rossi, Ann B. Smith, Joyce E. Eslick, and Majors Charlotte Hall, Rosemary Davis, Catherine A. Brazkovich. Morden, 243. Pat Foote noted that these two WAFC positions were acceptable to Colonel Hoisington because they fit the mold of “WAC positions.” Pat Foote interview with Maier.

women recruits' skills in drill, military customs, first aid and some weapons familiarization.⁸⁸ After graduating, the South Vietnamese Army assigned the women work as secretaries, clerks, accountants, typists, medical personnel, interpreters and welfare workers.⁸⁹

Military officials emphasized that the initial Wac assignments were undertaken for a narrow and unique purpose, but escalating hostilities and pressure from Wacs demanding a right to serve in Vietnam helped convince the Army to increase the number of female soldiers. The Army's need for soldiers increased after Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution in 1964.⁹⁰ In 1965, General Westmoreland requested the first large group of Wacs for special assignments to fill fifteen enlisted clerical duties and twelve officers to provide administrative support at MACV Headquarters in Saigon.⁹¹ They would help manage the bureaucratic "paper war" in Vietnam.⁹² MACV was the joint services command in Saigon for the United States Department of Defense with responsibility for all advisory and combat troops. At its height, over

⁸⁸ Morden, 242. Sergeant J. T. Fry, "A Helping Hand from the Girls," *PS&S*, May 18, 1968, p. 9; Edwin Q. White, "Girls in Green Fight Their War," *PS&S*, July 31, 1968, p. 9.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* For analysis on the work of women in WAFC, see Heather Marie Stur, *Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam War Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

⁹⁰ Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution on August 7, 1964. The resolution stated in part, "That the Congress approves and supports the determination of the President, as Commander in Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression." Tonkin Gulf Resolution; Public Law 88-408, 88th Congress, August 7, 1964; "Transcript of Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (1964)," General Records of the United States Government; Record Group 11; National Archives, <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=98&page=transcript> (accessed June 13, 2013).

⁹¹ Morden, 243.

⁹² Holm, 209.

three thousand military and civilian personnel worked for the command.⁹³ The first Wacs arrived at MACV in December of 1965. Besides clerk-typist and stenographer duties for enlisted women, the Army assigned Wac officers to work in personnel, administration, public information, intelligence, logistics, plans and training, and military justice.⁹⁴ The Army assigned a small number of the women to work at its new command headquarters, the United States Army Republic of Vietnam (USARV). Wacs at MACV and USARV headquarters, like the women who trained female Vietnamese soldiers, were initially housed in hotels or buildings in the city of Saigon where they faced occasional shelling and rocket attack.⁹⁵

In spite of a growing need for the labor of more soldiers, even when they began to utilize women, the Army assigned Wacs sparingly to Vietnam. In January 1966, the *Washington Post* reported, “despite the demand for more manpower in Vietnam, the Armed Forces aren’t bothering to recruit women up to their authorized strength of 2% women power.”⁹⁶ The Pentagon leadership insisted that female soldiers did not belong in Vietnam because the majority of the jobs required

⁹³ Robert E. Lester, editor, “A Guide to the Records to Military Assistance Command Vietnam: Part 1, The War in Vietnam 1954-1973,” MACV Historical Office Documentary Collection, Library of the U.S. Army Military History Institute Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, xiv. The general staff offices were designated with “J” for joint and were assigned, J1-Personnel, J2 -Intelligence, J3-Operations, J4-Logistics, J5-Plans, and J6-Communications-Electronics. Some additional specialty branches where women could be assigned included, “the offices of the comptroller, judge advocate, provost marshal, chaplain, surgeon, adjutant general, inspector general, and headquarters commandant, as well as a large public information establishment.”

⁹⁴ Morden, 244.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ Jack Anderson, “Should We Send Our Women Soldiers to Vietnam?” The two percent limit refers to the cap on the number of enlisted women allowed to be in the military. In 1948 with the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act, servicewomen were limited to less than two percent of the total of all members on the military.

there were not “‘psychologically and sociologically’ suitable” for women soldiers.⁹⁷ Because of guerilla warfare and the reach of modern weapons, the Department of Defense designated the entire country as a combat zone. While there were many clerks, typists, and office workers in Vietnam, the setting in Vietnam made all jobs inappropriate for Wacs. Any man at a desk job could potentially pick up a weapon to fight, but not women since they were prohibited from combat. Many male commanders were more comfortable working with men from the draft.⁹⁸

In 1966, although some men believed female soldiers in Vietnam would present a new burden, continuing military demands and the willingness of Wacs to serve resulted in the Army’s first assignment of an entire detachment of women into a combat zone since World War II.⁹⁹ General Jean E. Engler requested a detachment of around fifty women to work in clerical and administrative duties at the USARV headquarters.¹⁰⁰ Wacs worked a variety of jobs in noncombat support for one of six staff commands: personnel, intelligence, operations, logistics, plans and communications. Military personnel assigned to USARV assisted all of the combat support units

⁹⁷ Jack Anderson, “Should We Send Our Women Soldiers to Vietnam?”

⁹⁸ Holm, 160.

⁹⁹ It has commonly been reported that Vietnam was the first time a WAC detachment was sent into the combat zone. During World War II Wac detachments were formed in the European Theater and served with the Army Air Force. Another detachment worked at the Allied Supreme Headquarters in France and Germany. There was also a detachment in the Pacific Theater. Another group was in Burma with the Army Air Force. Treadwell, 19. While women were not technically considered in a combat zone, because they were behind the lines of battle, they were operating in the forward area called the communications zone. Technically, this was not the combat zone during World War II. It remains a debatable technicality.

¹⁰⁰ Between 1965 and 1973, female soldiers served under three major command environments during the war. The Army assigned Wacs to work with the Vietnamese Women’s Armed Forces Corps (WAFC), United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), and United States Army in Vietnam (USARV). MAAG, where the first Wac, Doering was assigned, later became MACV. Morden, 242-45.

in Vietnam. While some male officers had originally been opposed to a WAC detachment because they believed the women would require extra protection and thus extra resources to accommodate them, General Engler argued that the risks were not “great enough to exclude the Wacs.”¹⁰¹ Because of WAC policy, the larger contingent required separate housing along with a core group of seasoned female soldiers to command and supervise the women. The initial housing for this detachment was located inside the military compound at Tan Son Nhut, so they were not as exposed and vulnerable to enemy bombardment as were the Wacs living at hotels in Saigon.¹⁰² The guards around the perimeter, however, were men because women were not permitted to use weapons. In 1967, when USARV moved to Long Binh, the WAC detachment moved with them and women lived in their own separate compound inside a heavily fortified encampment.¹⁰³ But some women noted that the barbed wire and guard shack was to keep the male soldiers from entering the compound.¹⁰⁴

Sexism and Harassment in Vietnam

In the 1960s, Wacs were less than one percent of the Army, but in Vietnam, female soldiers were an even smaller percentage, which meant that it was impossible for Wacs, either on duty or off duty, to escape being under a magnifying glass. Including nurses, only about one in three hundred soldiers in Vietnam were women.¹⁰⁵ In 1965, there were only eleven Wacs in

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 245.

¹⁰² Ibid., 244-245.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 245.

¹⁰⁴ Linda McClenahan in Keith Walker, *A Piece of My Heart: The Stories of Twenty-Six American Women Who Served in Vietnam* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1990), 19; Christine Almanza in Lowery, *Women Vietnam Veterans Our Untold Stories*, 4487.

¹⁰⁵ Tom Tiede, “The Girls Seem Eager for Vietnam,” *The Victoria (TX) Advocate*, October 30, 1967, 4, Google.com/newspapers (accessed March 4, 2012).

Vietnam, and the MACV WAC detachment's peak in 1970 comprised of just 20 officers and 139 enlisted women.¹⁰⁶ The environment of feeling alone in a fishbowl began as soon as they boarded their plane to Vietnam and noted they were the only woman among all the servicemen.¹⁰⁷ Once they arrived at work, most Wacs were either the sole woman in an office or part of a very noticeable minority of women in a room full of men. For Christine Almanza, working in a roomful of men was "intimidating."¹⁰⁸ As the only woman and lowest ranking officer in her intelligence unit, Phyllis Egermeier experienced a "lonely war" because the men never accepted her as an equal because she was a woman.¹⁰⁹ Linda McClenahan tried to capture the complicated and often intense relationship between men and women in Vietnam on and off duty. McClenahan worked as a communications specialist for the First Signal Brigade at Long Binh, the only woman out of about forty and fifty men on her shift.¹¹⁰ She received a lot of attention for being the only woman and "it was always sort of that fine line between flattering popularity and sexual harassment."¹¹¹ Women could not escape being a minority in a sea of men. Varina Albers complained that she felt uncomfortable when she would go out to relax at a club because "1,000

¹⁰⁶ Morden, 248.

¹⁰⁷ Many Wacs noted being the only woman on the plane ride to Vietnam in their interviews and recollections, letters and diaries including: Donna Lowery, Joyce Harker, Donna J. Dear, Tanya Murphy, Sonia Gonzalez Mendez, Frances Ann Earle, Karen Irene Offutt, Shirley Ohta, Audrey Bergstresser, Betty Russell, Sherian Cadoria, Linda Pritchard, Linda Barnes. See Lowery, *Women Vietnam Veterans Our Untold Stories*.

¹⁰⁸ Lowery, 4497.

¹⁰⁹ Lowery, 6488.

¹¹⁰ Barbier, *America and the Vietnam War Re-Examining the Culture*, 86.

¹¹¹ Walker, *A Piece of My Heart*, 23.

men are staring at me.”¹¹² Glenda Jones admitted that she “could do without” the constant attention from men.¹¹³

Sexist attitudes, hostile behavior and assaults challenged Wacs’ efforts to stand on equal footing with men. Instead of being accepted as professional and competent coworkers, some Wacs complained that many men thought Wacs “were sent to Vietnam to service them.”¹¹⁴ Linda Pritchard explained that when they left the WAC detachment, men often yelled “obscene things” at them and behaved as if Wacs were the “property” of male soldiers.¹¹⁵ Christine Almanza’s male co-workers voiced their frustration of having to work with women.¹¹⁶ Faye Conaway thought that the men in her unit “went out of their way to make life unpleasant for me.”¹¹⁷ She described going to the WAC company commander to try and resolve her situation, but after talking to her and “crying her eyes out,” decided “everything was going to be all right.”¹¹⁸ A number of Wacs posed for “pinup” pictures for the base newsletter. Karen Offutt reluctantly agreed to have risqué pictures taken and published by the *MACV Observer* as the month’s “Bunker Buddy” and later felt embarrassed by the episode.¹¹⁹

¹¹² Jurate Kazickas, “Wacs in Vietnam: 1st Women Put in Combat Zone,” *Progress Index (Petersburg)*, July 21, 1968, p. 18, Newspaper.com (accessed March 6, 2013).

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Linda Pritchard quoted in Lowery, *Women Vietnam Veterans Our Untold Stories* 2224.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 4498.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 2273.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 2276.

¹¹⁹ Lowery, 6441-42.

Terms and legal language for sexual harassment did not exist until after the Vietnam era, and the Department of Defense did not issue their own definition for sexual harassment until 1980.¹²⁰ While women's groups had long been concerned about issues of sexual harassment, it was not until 1975 that a term was coined to identify the behavior.¹²¹ Further, it took until 1979 to identify a legal connection of sexual harassment in the workplace with violations of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibition on sex discrimination, so women had little legal recourse to address the matter.¹²² Many women remarked that they did not believe they had been sexually harassed, while others were silent about their treatment for many years.¹²³ Deborah Gano, who was nineteen at the time, kept silent and explained later that she has "learned to deal with it over the years."¹²⁴ Others reported being "teased," but not harassed.¹²⁵ While no data exists for Wacs, later surveys by the Veterans administration reflected that about half the nurses in Vietnam had experienced sexual harassment.¹²⁶ It is not unreasonable to conclude that Wacs endured the same level of behavior.

¹²⁰ WREI, "Women in the Military Sexual Harassment Chronology," <http://www.wrei.org/WomeninMilitary.htm> (accessed June 20, 2006); Jana L. Pershing, "Why Women Don't Report Sexual Harassment: A Case Study of an Elite Military Institution," *Gender Issues* 21, no. 4 (2003): 3-30.

¹²¹ Carrie N. Baker, *The Women's Movement Against Sexual Harassment* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 99.

¹²³ Ann Fisher interview; Dorothy Rechel interview.

¹²⁴ Lowery, 8367.

¹²⁵ Lowery, 4674.

¹²⁶ Dr. Mic Hunter, *Honor Betrayed: Sexual Abuse in America's Military* (Fort Lee, NJ: Barricade Press, 2007), 155.

The experience of being a black Wac was complicated not only by gender, but race. In 1955, Clotilde Bowen became the first African American female physician in the Army. While stationed in Vietnam between 1970 and 1971, Bowen was the highest-ranking black female and only black female doctor in the Army. She described her experience as “rough...Many assume you are weak and inferior, not very capable. At best, you are patronized. At worst, there is just outright discrimination.”¹²⁷ Bowen believed the Army rejected her request to pursue a Psychiatry degree because she was a woman, so she left active duty in 1959 to earn it as a civilian, but stayed in the Reserves and returned to active duty in 1967.¹²⁸ She admitted that the Army was working to integrate blacks, but was “still uptight about women.”¹²⁹ Yet, Bowen admitted that her high rank had its privileges and insulated her from some of the issues faced by lower ranking Wacs. “When you’re a colonel, discrimination is much less of a problem in the military. Even black, female colonels rate salutes in this man’s Army.”¹³⁰

Lower ranking black Wacs had a more difficult road to navigate in order to find respect from men on the job in Vietnam. Sexism and racism intersected. For example, in addition to being the only Wac, Doris ‘Lucki’ Allen worked as the only black woman in an Intelligence unit. Allen recalled that, “Being black. Being a woman. Being a WAC. Being in intelligence. Black.

¹²⁷ Michael Parks, “Colonel Bowen Calls Army More Uptight Over Her Sex Than Her Race,” *Baltimore Sun*, March 23, 1971, box 242, WCH-182 Discrimination (1971-1973) folder, Fort Lee Archives.

¹²⁸ Bellafaire, *Women Doctors in War*, 135.

¹²⁹ Parks, “Colonel Bowen Calls Army More Uptight Over Her Sex Than Her Race.”

¹³⁰ Ibid. While in Vietnam talking with a reporter in 1969, another high ranking black Wac, Major Clara Chris Johnson reported more issues with gender than race in the Army, but said that in Vietnam, she faced no obstacles from men in the workplace. Lowery, 5293.

Woman. Very Tough.”¹³¹ Despite holding a position as a senior intelligence analyst, some soldiers in her unit “did not believe a woman should be doing ‘a man’s job’” and even less so in Vietnam.¹³² Her biggest regret was that MACV leadership failed to take action on one of her intelligence reports that warned of a large scale attack.¹³³ It turned out that Allen’s analysis of seized enemy documents had uncovered North Vietnamese activity that eventually resulted in the 1968 Tet offensive, but her superiors disregarded her report. She thought that if she had “been a man maybe they would have listened.”¹³⁴ Instead, “They weren’t prepared for me. They didn’t know how to look beyond the WAC, black woman in military intelligence.”¹³⁵

There is sparse documentation about the rape of military women in Vietnam. While there is growing scholarship recently on rape of servicewomen and servicemen in the military, there are few studies and limited analysis for the Vietnam era.¹³⁶ Between 1965 and 1973, the Army sent eighty-six cases of rape related crimes to court martial. Of these cases, there were fifty convictions.¹³⁷ While the majority of these incidents involved violence against civilian women,

¹³¹ Walker, 252.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Doris Allen Interview with Austin Bunn, in The Vietnam Archive Oral History Project, “Unarmed and Under Fire: An Oral History of Female Vietnam Veterans,” *Salon*, November 11, 1999, http://www.salon.com/1999/11/11/women_4/ (accessed on June 4, 2013).

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Doris Allen quoted in “Unarmed and Under Fire.”

¹³⁶ For analysis on rape and sexual assault of Vietnamese women during the Vietnam war see Gina Marie Weaver, *Ideologies of Forgetting Rape in the Vietnam War* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010).

¹³⁷ Scholars argue that these numbers do not reflect of the extent of sexual violence during the war. Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975), 98-99.

surveys of female Vietnam veterans suggest a high number of sexual assaults that went unreported.¹³⁸ Few Wacs reported rape because of the stigma and shaming.¹³⁹ One Wac, Linda McClenahan, who reported being raped during her tour in Vietnam learned that the male perpetrators involved were not prosecuted because their commanding officer refused to cooperate with the investigation.¹⁴⁰ Many decades after the war, the stigma persisted. A number of Vietnam veterans I interviewed acknowledged being raped in Vietnam, but did not want to include these accounts in their official transcripts.

Relationships between male and female soldiers were not only complicated by the vast numbers difference between men and women, they were also compounded by traditional views on appropriate men and women's work. In 1966, Ester Van Wagoner Tufty, a correspondent working as a member of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), interviewed men with hiring authority in Vietnam to determine if they wanted or had requested to use Wacs.¹⁴¹ Tufty reported that male officers wanted "more Wacs in

¹³⁸ Veterans Administration surveys revealed that three percent of women serving prior to the Vietnam era reported sexual assault compared with twenty-nine percent during the Vietnam era. These figures do not necessarily mean there were less incidents of rape or sexual trauma during earlier eras, they only reflect self-reporting ratios. Anne G. Sadler et al., "Health-Related Consequences of Physical and Sexual Violence: Women in the Military," *Obstetrics and Gynecology* 96, no. 3 (2000): 474. See also Madeline Morris, "By Force of Arms: Rape, War, and Military Culture," *Duke Law Journal* 45, (1995): 651-781.

¹³⁹ Brownmiller, 32.

¹⁴⁰ Lowery, 8367.

¹⁴¹ DACOWITS was an advisory committee established in 1951 by the Secretary of Defense and tasked to provide advice and recommendations to the Assistant Secretary of Defense about policies that concerned women in the Armed Forces. The committee was formed during the Korean War and one of its original goals was to help increase recruiting of women for the military by increasing public awareness and emphasizing the need for servicewomen and linking service to women's role as citizens. Alice Virginia Bradford, "A Study of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services," (master's thesis, Boston University, 1964); Bradford, 2.

Vietnam.”¹⁴² Yet part of the reason they wanted women in their offices was because some men resented male soldiers who held desk jobs, believing they were shirking their duty and should be in combat. One soldier complained, that he “got so damn sick of walking into military offices and seeing several dozen hulking soldiers sitting in stenographers’ chairs, typing letters and spilling ink eradicators on their jungle fatigues.”¹⁴³ In other cases, men resented women taking desk jobs away from male soldiers who might be forced into combat operations.¹⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Norma Jean Thelen hoped her job in the combat zone meant a man could stay out of Vietnam altogether.¹⁴⁵

Some of the tension between male and female soldiers was due to issues of power as many Wacs outranked the men in their workplace. The Women’s Army Corps required at least the minimum rank of E-4 before sending a Wac to the combat zone, but the Army assigned all ranks of men to Vietnam, and many male soldiers were at the lowest rungs. While women had no command authority over men, because of their higher rank they were often assigned as supervisors in offices, which some men resented.¹⁴⁶ The military’s official newspaper, *Stars and Stripes*, reported that “women are actually the bosses in quite a few offices.”¹⁴⁷ Lucie Rivera-O’Ferrall and Patricia Sepulveda both supervised many lower ranking enlisted men who were initially unhappy to have a Wac in charge, yet both women eventually earned male soldiers’

¹⁴² Ester Van Wagoner Tufty, “Women Serve in Combat Area,” *The Owosso (MI) Argus Press*, October 26, 1966, Google.com/newspaper (accessed on January 5, 2013).

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Lowery, 5990.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Frank Madison, “Long Binh Provide Study in Women’s Lib.”

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

respect after proving their ability and skills.¹⁴⁸ Male soldiers' acceptance or resentment to the integration of Wacs into Vietnam units was often influenced by a soldier's rank or attitudes predominant in their unit. Brenda Burk recalled that all it took to take care of one problem male soldier was for the other men, who respected her role, to have a private talk with him about his behavior.¹⁴⁹ Similarly, Foote, the only woman out of sixty-two people working in an office that handled public relations, faced two non-commissioned officers who told their superiors "they would be court martialed before they would take orders from a woman."¹⁵⁰ In time, by showing them she was capable in her job, Foote worked to soothe their animosity and "within a couple of months we were the best of friends."¹⁵¹

In spite of the many obstacles of working in a male-dominated combat environment, Wacs' shared sense of hardship with male noncombatants provided them with an important sense of legitimacy as soldiers, and while it was not always easy being isolated from other women, many Wacs enjoyed working alongside male soldiers. Many women depicted their relationship with men in their unit as brothers looking out for their sisters. McClenahan noted that males and females "worked [together], we rode on buses, walked on the street together, the few clubs that were there we went together."¹⁵² McClenahan believed that even though some male soldiers might have wanted Wacs to "fill in as mother, sister, sweetheart, [and] confidante" most men

¹⁴⁸ Lowery, 7325, 7722.

¹⁴⁹ Frank Madison, "Long Binh Provide Study in Women's Lib."

¹⁵⁰ Pat Foote Vietnam Diary, Pat Foote Papers, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Stur, 123.

were “like brothers” and male coworkers could be very protective of women with men from other units.¹⁵³ Norma Holson, one of only six female soldiers in a small classified compound on Tan Son Nhut airbase, observed that she was treated with “respect and dignity” by her male cohorts.¹⁵⁴ Linda Earls reported to her mother that she worked with all men, mostly officers and enjoyed working with them.¹⁵⁵ Susie McArthur admitted that Vietnam “was the first time that I had worked with males,” and “found it to be very, very rewarding.” She was proud of “being the best” at her job among male soldiers.¹⁵⁶ Mary Nicholls worked in an office with “a great group of men,” and kept in contact with them for many years after her Vietnam tour.¹⁵⁷ Pinkie Houser worked as a secretary in an engineering unit with thirty male officers and two enlisted women, both black Wacs. She preferred working with men.¹⁵⁸

A number of Wacs described how many male soldiers’ behavior and attitudes changed after they received some exposure and experience working with women in their units; many came around to accepting them in their work areas in Vietnam. For example, in spite of the initial skepticism to her intelligence reports, Doris Allen was encouraged that MACV commanders took action the next time she reported a large attack. After proving herself as competent, Allen found that the men she worked with “took care of me pretty well. They wouldn’t let anything happen to

¹⁵³ Walker, 23.

¹⁵⁴ Lowery, 8011.

¹⁵⁵ Earls, 62.

¹⁵⁶ Susie McArthur interview.

¹⁵⁷ Lowery, 4458-9.

¹⁵⁸ Marshall, 45.

me.”¹⁵⁹ She earned three Bronze Stars for her work as an intelligence analyst in Vietnam and medals reinforced a soldier’s value. She explained that later in her career while training soldiers in interrogation techniques, when men failed to listen to her she made it a point to make noise with her Vietnam decorations because “they respected the medals, not me.”¹⁶⁰ WAC detachment First Sergeant, Marion Crawford, recalled that after Wacs helped improve efficiency, some Army officers who previously were opposed to having women in their units, “were now scrambling trying to have women assigned.”¹⁶¹

Wacs Seek Work that Values their Talents and Skills

Prior to 1973, the Army limited job opportunities for Wacs throughout the Army, not just in Vietnam. Until 1965, every position in the Army was gender coded as either male or female.¹⁶² However, in order to open positions to women, unit commanders had to make specific requests for jobs they considered acceptable for Wacs. Since most male commanders preferred men, many did not designate positions for women in their units.¹⁶³ Most jobs in the military were traditionally filled by men, so even when positions for women were made available, most commanders still favored filling those jobs with male soldiers.¹⁶⁴ As a result, women’s participation in the Army was restricted by the gender coding system that privileged men for all

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ “Vietnam: Another First for Wacs,” *Women’s Army Corps Journal* III, no. 1 (Jan-Mar 1972), 10, box 138, Vietnam folder, Fort Lee Archives.

¹⁶² Morden, 185-92.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 192.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

jobs and designated Wacs to mainly traditional women's work. In 1962, ninety-five percent of Wacs worked in administrative or medical jobs.¹⁶⁵ In 1965, the Army initiated a new system that allowed positions in ten major occupations to be interchangeable between men and women, but between 1966 and 1972, little had changed. Over ninety percent of enlisted women and seventy-five percent of officers remained concentrated in these two fields. Still, the overwhelming majority of jobs considered traditional women's work were filled by men because there were very few women available; Wacs were less than two percent of the overall force structure. Male commanders were not demanding Wacs to join their units because they were perfectly content to use men, even as clerks, typist and other administrative work.¹⁶⁶ The same was true for commanders in Vietnam.

Once in Vietnam, Wacs challenged the meaning of what it meant to do traditional or suitable women's work in a combat zone. As requests for Wacs increased, the Women's Army Corps insisted to Army Command in Saigon that female soldiers could only work in "appropriate jobs," yet the type of work considered suitable for women was complicated.¹⁶⁷ While the Army described them as "Good Girl Fridays" "smiling and filing" to help with backlogged paperwork, even seemingly traditional female jobs like clerk-typist or administrative assistant often appeared out of place at Army job sites in a war zone because the vast majority of all administrative jobs

¹⁶⁵ United States, *Report of the Inter-Service Working Group on Utilization of Utilization of Women in the Armed Services* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 1966), 11; Morden, 192.

¹⁶⁶ By June 1966, the new system increased the number of available WAC and male integrated enlisted positions from 6,500 to 20,500. *Inter-Service Working Group Report*, 10-11; Morden, 196.

¹⁶⁷ "Should We Send Our Women Soldiers to Vietnam?"

were filled by men.¹⁶⁸ And in Vietnam, even in office jobs, soldiers were subject to mortar attacks, enemy infiltration of the base and frequent runs to a bunker for cover.

Further, Wacs pushed the Army for more challenging and interesting work that placed them in even more atypical environments and brought them even closer to the war. A Vietnam assignment resulted in work experiences for female soldiers in ways that regular Army duty assignments could not compare. Some Wacs with clerical responsibilities worked in the field or took to the skies for their work. For example, Pinkie Houser, whose job involved preparing and filing classified paperwork, flew on helicopters for part of her job.¹⁶⁹ Journalism and public relations positions were jobs that often transported Wacs in helicopters, trucks and jeeps outside the confines of the office and came into contact with soldiers in the field. Specialist Grendel Alice Howard worked as an administrative assistant, but her duties meant that she often traveled to small units to interview, photograph and write stories about combat soldiers for publication.¹⁷⁰ Others Wacs had new opportunities based on the type of unit they were assigned. Joan Pekulik worked in a division with male pilots, which allowed her the chance to “fly all over Vietnam.”¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ “It’s Still a Man’s War in Vietnam.” See also Ester Van Wagoner Tufty, “Women Serve in Combat Area,” *The Owosso-Argus Press*, October 26, 1966, Google.com/newspaper (accessed March 4, 2013); Tom Tiede, “WACS Serving in Vietnam, Mostly Behind Typewriters,” *The (Cape Girardeau) Southeast Missourian*, October 27, 1967, Google.com/newspaper (accessed June 12, 2013).

¹⁶⁹ Karen Zeinert, *The Valiant Women of the Vietnam War* (Brookfield, Conn: Millbrook Press, 2000), 27.

¹⁷⁰ Judith Bellafaire, “Volunteering For Risk: Black Military Women Overseas During the Wars in Korea and Vietnam,” *History & Collections: History Archive, Women in Military Service for America Memorial*, 2006, <http://www.womensmemorial.org/Education/BWOHistory.html> (accessed June 12, 2013).

¹⁷¹ Lowery, 6525.

The Army commonly placed soldiers in jobs based on immediate need, not always on the individual's authorized military occupational specialty (MOS). Therefore, some Wacs performed work in Vietnam outside the scope of their official training, but the Department of Defense and Army did not properly classify the type of job they performed in official reports.¹⁷² As a result, Wacs acquired many new undocumented skills and worked in unconventional jobs in Vietnam, but there is no accurate record of their work history. For example, Pinkie Houser's occupational specialty was personnel sergeant, but the billet that she was assigned "didn't have anything to do" with the work that she performed in Vietnam.¹⁷³ Although she did some typing, Houser also worked out of helicopters to assist with classified surveys, and as the official driver for her commander, drove a jeep to transport him around the base.¹⁷⁴ Priscilla Mosby began her tour in Vietnam as a stenographer, but learned that the Army was looking for singers to help entertain troops that the USO could not reach. Experience singing gospel for churches in Louisiana helped get her the job as the lead singer of a nine-piece band called *Phase Three*. While her job as an entertainer was not a new role for African American women in the Army, Mosby's travels for eight months from the Mekong Delta to the border of North Vietnam was unconventional for a Wac.¹⁷⁵

Many women enjoyed being out in the field away from the office setting as they put on flak jackets, flew in helicopters over hostile territory, held top-secret clearances and labored

¹⁷² The 1976 Report declared that "enlisted women were throughout the period of service in the RNV only assigned in clerical administrative and secretarial duties." Eugene A. Fox, *Final Report of the Women in the Army Study Group*, 2-B-2.

¹⁷³ Marshall, 39.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ "Unarmed and Under Fire."

alongside men with their fatigue sleeves rolled up. Since the Army did not always assign Wacs to a specific job before they arrived, sometimes women had a chance to lobby for the work they desired or found compelling.¹⁷⁶ Lee Wilson's experience was one shared by many other Wacs who wanted to get away from traditional office work. When Wilson arrived in Vietnam in 1968, she turned down the first two jobs she was offered. The first involved making coffee and emptying the trash and the second job offer was not any better, so she took an assignment in the Engineering department, which seemed more appealing. Wilson started out "just typing everything," but eventually "wormed" her way into a position as the sergeant major's "left hand girl" in the Engineering headquarters.¹⁷⁷ The sergeant "taught me how to do things that most women weren't supposed to be doing," such as flying in helicopters to map out blueprints or photographing engineering projects.¹⁷⁸

One main reason why women volunteered to serve in Vietnam was because they had high expectations for their own contributions in the war effort, so many constantly pushed for work that challenged their skills and talents. All women in WAC were volunteers, none were drafted and the standards for women to join WAC were much higher than for male soldiers. The Army required high school diplomas for all enlisted women, but many also had college credits or degrees.¹⁷⁹ The policy for women's enrollment in the military required them to score in the top

¹⁷⁶ The same system was used for all Army personnel, male and female, coming into Vietnam. James Westheider, *Fighting in Vietnam: The Experiences of the U.S. Soldier* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2011), 77-80.

¹⁷⁷ Lee Wilson, interview by author, February 17, 2010, WV0449, "Lee Wilson Papers," UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project (hereafter cited as Lee Wilson interview).

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Morden, 278.

brackets of the mental categories, so many women found some of the menial work in Vietnam tedious and boring.¹⁸⁰ Women did not ask to fight the enemy or be in combat, but they wanted respect from their supervisors and male co-workers for doing the tough jobs and working long hours in noncombatant roles. Betty Reid described how even in her office work, “I have been taxed to the extent of my capabilities,” which made her Vietnam experience rewarding.¹⁸¹ By 1967, Director Hoisington explained, “the jobs we have in Vietnam are interchangeable... Either men or women can and do handle them depending on who is available.”¹⁸² Sometimes that meant that women were placed in traditional female jobs even though they were qualified for more skilled work. When Joan Barnes arrived in Vietnam as a quartermaster, she was initially assigned to a field unit. However, the Army prevented Wacs from working in these units because they were considered more dangerous, so her commander placed her in an administrative job back at Long Binh.¹⁸³ After advocating for six months to work in a job where she had experience and skills, the Army assigned Barnes a position as a supply officer, becoming one of the first women to work in an aviation brigade.¹⁸⁴

Eager to learn skills that brought them new opportunities in the workplace, many women found male supervisors were more willing to bend rules and make changes than WAC leadership. Lee Wilson volunteered for many extra duties and when told that she lacked the talent or knowledge to do the task, she responded that she would learn, and her supervisors often provided

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 281.

¹⁸¹ Holm, 214.

¹⁸² “The Girls Seem Eager for Vietnam.”

¹⁸³ Lowery, 3623.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 3629.

her a chance to pick up new skills.¹⁸⁵ Many of these extra duties and even regular duty assignments were hidden from the protective female leadership. Wilson, her sergeant major and the colonel in charge of her work kept the WAC detachment company commander in the dark about Wilson's responsibilities that involved flying in helicopters. According to Wilson, the detachment commander did not believe that women should perform untraditional work roles, because she represented "old school" or a different generation from most of the young Wacs deployed to Vietnam.¹⁸⁶ Yet, Wilson believed that the men she worked with "saw that we [women] could do more" and believed that her male superiors supported her work. She was encouraged that once Wacs showed men they could successfully undertake new roles, men embraced them and thought, "You know, hey, these girls over here, they're pretty smart."¹⁸⁷

Wacs in Vietnam expanded their skills and increased their responsibilities by pushing for new challenges that were outside traditional norms for women. For example, Sherian Cadoria was the first woman assigned to Cam Rahn Bay airbase as an administrative assistance for the Provost Marshall Corps. Cadoria was one of the few Wacs serving with the law enforcement branch of the Army. After a year working with the military police, Cadoria applied for a different position as a protocol officer at the Qui Nhon Support Command.¹⁸⁸ A protocol officer acted as a liaison between distinguished visitors and the Army and was responsible for escorting them around the country. The commanding officer insisted that Cadoria would never work for him "because you

¹⁸⁵ Lee Wilson interview.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ "Major Cadoria, 1st Wac Stationed in Northern S, Vietnam," *The Pittsburgh Courier*, 30 Nov 1968, p. 11, Newspaper.com (accessed June 3, 2013).

women can't do the job."¹⁸⁹ Instead of accepting his rejection, Cadoria asserted that she had all the qualifications for the job. When the commander contended that women were not capable of performing the heavy duty lifting required for the job, Cadoria retorted, "I wish someone had told me that when I was just a little child and carrying 100 pound sacks of cotton."¹⁹⁰ Another General who learned of the Colonel's refusal to accept Cadoria had learned of her qualifications and selected her for a protocol officer position in his office.¹⁹¹

Wacs assigned as public information officers were some of the most informed of all soldiers as they traveled extensively throughout Vietnam and had access to official and unofficial Army reports. After working in the Pentagon, the Army assigned Gloria "Sandy" Olson as a staff officer for General Creighton Abrams, the commander of MACV in 1968. Major Olson's title was that of a staff officer, a title that evokes notions of working a desk job.¹⁹² Olson's job, however, took her all over Vietnam to capture pictures and find stories to publish about the activities of the combat troops.¹⁹³ During her travels to remote units for her job, Army soldiers fitted her with over a hundred pounds of protective gear for safety until she could barely walk. While flying with combat soldiers as they traveled to and from battles, she logged over one hundred and twenty-seven flights over hostile territory. Three of those flight encountered enemy

¹⁸⁹ "Women Officer Carried Weight to General's Rank," *Atlanta Constitution*, September 1985, box 595, Sherian Cadoria file, Ft. Lee Archives.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ "From Louisiana to Washington D.C.," *Pentagram*, March 16, 1989, box 595, Sherian Cadoria file, Fort Lee Archives.

¹⁹² Kathy Woestendiek, "Woman Lieutenant Colonel Maintains Femininity."

¹⁹³ Ibid.

fire.¹⁹⁴ As a result of her critical work, her male supervisors submitted her for an Air Medal and Bronze Star, both of which were awarded to her in 1969.¹⁹⁵

Not all women in Vietnam successfully transferred into better assignments. Linda Earls was happy to be in Vietnam, but thought that getting a job she liked would make her time in Vietnam even better. She told her mother that she was “determined that somebody is going to get me out of this office” because “I just despise sitting behind a typewriter all day.”¹⁹⁶ Wanting a position as a chopper pilot or on a medevac helicopter, but understanding these types of roles were off limits to women, Earls asked her WAC detachment commander to help her find a job where she could advance. While Earls never got the jobs she hoped for, she became a platoon leader in the WAC detachment, and then later the barracks Sergeant.¹⁹⁷ In these positions, Earls learned not only how to conduct uniform and room inspections, but also how to handle drunk Wacs in the middle of mortar and artillery attacks.¹⁹⁸ The experience motivated her to work towards becoming a First Sergeant, the rank she held when she retired in 1988 after 24 years in the Army.¹⁹⁹

Even with some success at attaining challenging and interesting work, male resistance to having women in their units limited the types of jobs and positions made available to most Wacs.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Morden, 254; “Gloria A. S. Olson: Bronze Star Medal Service, Vietnam Award,” Vietnam War Honors, <http://www.vietnamwarhonors.com/index.php?page=directory&rec=14391> (accessed May 3, 2013).

¹⁹⁶ Earls, 246.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 253.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 294.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

In one case, Pat Foote sought a staff officer position at USARV with the backing of a lieutenant colonel who recommended her for the job, but the Assistant Chief of Staff would not accept her because she had not yet graduated from the Army's Command and General Staff Course, a near impossibility for women.²⁰⁰ Although the Army allowed four Wacs a year to attend a shortened associate course at the college, they did not permit Wacs entry to the regular forty-eight week course until 1968.²⁰¹

The vast majority of males in Vietnam served in noncombatant roles and not in combat specialties, so Wacs job duties and hours were often indistinguishable from their male co-workers. Many Wacs recounted the grueling work schedule in Vietnam. Pinkie Houser recalled that they worked twelve hour shifts or longer.²⁰² Linda Earls told her mother about the long work days and weeks.²⁰³ Dot Rechel recalled that the hours were long, but believed MACV and USARV leadership sometimes pushed noncombatants to work longer hours than necessary because they felt guilty about fighting the war from the "luxury" of an office.²⁰⁴ Even so, for over eight years, female soldiers in Vietnam labored together with male soldiers in an intense, demanding workplace in the midst of a war that often erupted all around them.²⁰⁵

²⁰⁰ Evelyn Patricia "Pat" Foote interview with Beth Carmichael, August 8, 2006, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project (hereafter cited as Pat Foote interview with Carmichael).

²⁰¹ Morden, 126.

²⁰² Marshall, 39.

²⁰³ Earls, 60.

²⁰⁴ Interview with Dorothy Rechel and Ann Fisher by author, November 10, 2013, "addendum," UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project (hereafter cited as Rechel and Fisher interview addendum with author).

²⁰⁵ During World War II, Wacs worked overseas in combat theaters. Over half worked as typists and clerks, while 22 percent served in the field of communications work. Only 8 percent were working in nontraditional jobs. Judith Bellafaire, *The Women's Army Corps: A*

A key part of the environment for Wacs stationed in Vietnam was that their experience in the combat zone took place alongside men, validating a sense of workplace adversity that was common for all soldiers. The shared sense of hardship helped to legitimize the value of women's labor in the eyes of Army leadership. Once women were working side by side with men, Wacs performed the same duties, worked the same hours and began to receive the same recognition for their work, and respect as legitimate soldiers. According to Carol Bruckerhoff, Wacs' work was "no different than what our male counterparts experienced" in Vietnam.²⁰⁶ Sherian Cadoria explained how her job as a protocol officer meant she "went on the road and I did everything a man would do. I traveled all over Vietnam."²⁰⁷ She eventually served thirty months, nearly three full tours in Vietnam. Respect and admiration from the Army's male leadership was evident when they submitted and approved Cadoria for an Air Medal and three Bronze Stars.²⁰⁸ Many Wacs in Vietnam expected an equal status in the Army because they viewed themselves as devoted and loyal soldiers working in hostile territory, where they worked the same long hours and received the identical hazardous duty pay as their male co-workers.

Some women felt obligated to do more to prove themselves as equals on the job. Two Specialists, Donna Giordani and Glenda Griggs, who worked as air traffic controllers at Sanford airfield and Headshed Heli-port in Long Binh, believed they should make up for not having to

Commemoration of World War II Service (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1993), 22, http://www.history.army.mil/html/books/072/72-15/CMH_Pub_72-15.pdf (accessed June 7, 2014).

²⁰⁶ Lowery, 5053.

²⁰⁷ "From Cotton Fields to the Pentagon," *Pentagram*, March 6, 1986, Cadoria file, Ft. Lee Archives.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

pull the same guard duty that was required of male soldiers. Guard duty required weapons training, which WAC leadership prohibited women from obtaining. As a result, they both “sought out extra duties to compensate for what they thought was an unfair advantage.”²⁰⁹ Their commander recognized their work by awarding them each a Bronze Star. He remarked that they were “exceeded in their professional competence as air traffic controllers by no one.”²¹⁰

Wacs Defy Women’s Corps Protectionist Policies

Army and WAC leadership was divided on how to support women soldiers in Vietnam, and by 1969, this tension led to the Army policy changes that recognized women had received inadequate training, equipment and preparation for working in a war zone. The leadership of the Women’s Army Corps at the Pentagon emphasized protectionist policies with close supervision of women and assignments in traditional work and attire to project a feminine image. Yet many male and female leaders in Vietnam supported Wacs’ desire for more flexible policies. Two of the most controversial issues that revealed the divide between the women in Vietnam and their leaders in the United States involved the clothing and equipment the Army assigned to women soldiers. Most Wacs rebelled against their Director’s insistence that they wear skirts and many women insisted that they receive the same skills and training as men did to protect themselves in the combat zone.

The head of the women’s corps, Hoisington, directed Wacs to wear the summer green Army cord uniform, but the women in Vietnam protested. The Director did not want women to wear fatigues or boots, fearing such attire would project a masculine image for women and that

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Letter from General Jack W. Hemingway to Brigadier General Elizabeth Hoisington (undated) attached to photograph, box 331, Fort Lee Archives.

concerned parents would associate ‘pants wearing daughters’ with inappropriate job conditions, resulting in a drop in recruitment.²¹¹ Hoisington did not want to “spoil their image or standing as women.”²¹² Yet, such attire was utterly inappropriate in Vietnam, and not having the proper field equipment for work in a tropical climate made work conditions intolerable. Upon arrival, Wacs disembarked from the plane into a humid, dusty and grimy environment, often having to run for the bunkers “wearing heels, hose and a cute little suit.”²¹³ The standard uniform, originally issued in 1959, consisted of a close-fitting two-piece green and white striped polyester and cotton blouse and skirt that women wore with nylons and pumps. Wacs requested to wear the same military gear and uniforms worn by the men in Vietnam, the standard uniform for all male soldiers was fatigues and combat boots.

Even when WAC leadership changed in 1971, the policy forbidding Wacs from wearing fatigues did not. General Inez Bailey succeeded Hoisington as WAC Director and agreed that Wacs’ uniforms had to project a feminine image more than it had to be functional for work. Dorothy Rechel worked in the Army’s Training and Doctrine command, and part of the mission was preparing women for the new fields of work they were entering. Rechel recalled instead of allowing women to wear appropriate work clothes, Bailey “was worried about her ascots, jabots, as you know, and that god-awful green polyester summer thing.”²¹⁴ By worrying about the

²¹¹ Stur, 113.

²¹² Quoted in Kimberly Laina Heikkila, “G.I. Gender: Vietnam Era Women and U.S. Citizenship,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 2002), 93.

²¹³ Cherin C. Poovey, “Women in Combat?” *Wake Forest Magazine*, February 13, 2013, <http://magazine.wfu.edu/2013/02/13/women-in-combat/> (accessed November 21, 2013).

²¹⁴ Dorothy Rechel interview.

feminine image instead of the job, women were “not ready to work when they get there.”²¹⁵ Betty Morden, who worked with the WAC directors, described WAC leaders as the biggest obstacles to women’s advancement because they often felt that “changes that appeared to make women look like men meant a decline, not an improvement, in the status of women.”²¹⁶

Many women resented not being able to wear comfortable fatigues and simply ignored their leadership or found ways around the policy. Some simply bought men’s fatigues in the local PX and had alterations made so they would fit properly. Ann Fisher borrowed fatigues from Army nurses, who had been provided with fatigues as part of their job.²¹⁷ The WAC detachment commander, Joanne Murphy, wrote the Director long letters describing how wearing a skirt would be “unladylike” while getting out of jeeps and helicopters or diving for cover during a bombardment.²¹⁸ Another detachment commander, Nancy Jurgevich, admitted that she “disagreed with the Director” regarding uniforms and sent her own formal uniforms back to the United States.²¹⁹ Wacs insisted they retained their femininity even in fatigues, and thought that if others “can’t see that we’re ladies, then they need glasses.”²²⁰ Even male leaders understood the need for women to wear fatigues. In 1967, when the WAC detachment moved to Long Binh, the USARV commander, against the WAC director’s wishes, authorized women a choice between wearing

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Morden, 233.

²¹⁷ Rechel and Fisher interview addendum with author.

²¹⁸ Stur, 114.

²¹⁹ Lowery, 5188-89.

²²⁰ Stur, 115.

fatigues or the green cord uniform and most of the Wacs selected fatigues.²²¹ Linda Earls, like many other Wacs, was excited to have a more relaxed dress code and wrote to her mother that she was “going to love being able to wear fatigues to work every day.”²²²

By 1969, after nearly four years of Wac resistance, the Army changed the official policy for women’s work uniforms. But by then, WAC leaders in Vietnam unofficially had already given into the women’s demands. In 1967, hoping not to get “hanged,” the detachment commander, Peggy Ready, looked the other way when her supply sergeant acquired women’s fatigues by trading goods for them with other units in Vietnam.²²³ Dot Rechel, who arrived in Vietnam during the 1968 Tet offensive recalled that the detachment supply officer assigned her set of fatigues and boots as soon as she arrived.²²⁴ After the Tet Offensive when many Wacs faced enemy attack, and suffered “scrapes and bruises diving for cover from incoming artillery fire,” many women wore fatigues even more frequently.²²⁵ Finally, in 1969, Wacs no longer had to bargain and trade for uniforms when the Army officially issued fatigues and boots to women when they arrived in Vietnam.²²⁶ The new utility uniforms for Wacs were suitable for the humid climate and consisted of lightweight olive green shirts and pants and a baseball style hat.²²⁷ The

²²¹ Morden, 247.

²²² Earls, 21, 33.

²²³ Lowery, 1616.

²²⁴ Dorothy Rechel interview.

²²⁵ Morden, 251.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*, 437-439.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 472, 481.

WAC Director's official policy for skirts and dress pumps, however, was never officially rescinded during the war.

Wacs Shared Experiences with Noncombatant Men

A tour in Vietnam exposed women to many of the weapons, tools and language of war, with which most Wacs had limited knowledge, experience and familiarity, providing a shared experience with male co-workers. For many of the Wacs working in Vietnam, transportation by helicopter provided women with their only chance to perceive the war outside of the military compound. Some Wacs traveled in helicopters as a routine part of their job, exposing them to enemy fire. One male Army lawyer recalled how some WAC military judges trekked "above and through many insecure areas in order to accomplish their mission...the risks were great enough to evoke concern."²²⁸ But helicopters were the most accessible transportation vehicle for jobs that required travel because they were fast and relatively safe. Lee Wilson spent much of her time on helicopters taking classified pictures for engineers who inspected war damages from the images to assess the rebuilding of bridges or repairing of water purification systems.²²⁹ Pat Foote often flew in helicopters all over Vietnam for her job. Foote described "hanging out of a door of a Huey helicopter, hooked in with web seating, sitting beside the gunner" and when "you saw a target below, you engaged. So we would break off our trip long enough to take care of whatever's down

²²⁸ Letter from Major General George S. Prugh to Mr. Robert D. Herres, Chairman, Presidential Commission on Women in the Armed Services, 22 September 1992, Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, "Records Relating to Polls and Surveys of Public and Military Attitudes: 1992 Survey of Flag and General Officers," RG 220 Records of Temporary Commissions, Committees and Boards, box 3, NN3-220-93-006, National Archives Building, College Park, MD.

²²⁹ Lee Wilson interview.

there and continue on our way.”²³⁰ Their exposure to helicopters over the war zone provided women a shared experience with male noncombatants.

The combat zone did not vanish for Wacs after work; instead, it was always present and interwoven into their daily lives, as it was for male soldiers in Vietnam as well. Many Wacs spent their limited free time in Vietnam traveling over hostile territory in armed helicopters, aircraft with rockets, and jeeps mounted with weapons. Yet for some female soldiers, the risks of being in a combat zone brought them exhilarating experiences. Linda Earls’ description of her first day off from work captures the thrill experienced by many Wacs as male soldiers used the tools of war to accompany women around Vietnam. When Linda Earls finally got a break from work during her third week in Vietnam, she took her first ride on a Huey helicopter with Special Forces soldiers who had invited her to a beach party. Earls “had an outside seat right next to the machine gun and gunner” on her way to the beach. Once on the ground, she rode in a jeep with “guns mounted on them too” and took a joy ride in a fixed wing aircraft with a pilot who tried to impress her by shooting a rocket into the water.²³¹ The men presented Earls and other women at the party with jungle fatigues, which were not issued to Wacs. That night, Earls wrote home to express her disbelief and joy from the day’s adventure. “I just couldn’t believe it was me doing all that...I do feel real special being here and it will be even better when I get back and can say, I was in Vietnam.”²³²

In Vietnam, noncombatants were not safe behind a protected line of battle and this danger exposed how female soldiers had arrived unprepared, ill equipped and poorly trained for the

²³⁰ Pat Foote interview with Carmichael.

²³¹ Earls, 93.

²³² *Ibid.*, 80, 94.

combat environment. Wacs and male noncombatants spent time in bunkers, taking cover from rocket and mortar attacks because guerilla warfare in Vietnam meant that no area in the country was safe. For example, when Linda McClenahan arrived in Vietnam, she almost immediately experienced a bombardment. "I said to the Captain, 'I don't understand this...aren't we behind the lines here?' and the Captain said, 'Lady, this is Vietnam...there is no behind-the-lines here.'"²³³ Clotilde Bowen recalled that she was welcomed into the country by a "hail of gunfire, rockets, mortar round and unbearable heat."²³⁴ She continued to face enemy fire while she traveled in airplanes, helicopters, and vehicles to check on units under her authority in Vietnam.²³⁵ Due to these conditions, Wacs still receive combat pay in Vietnam.²³⁶ In previous wars, hazardous duty pay had been limited to soldiers serving in frontline units, but during Vietnam, the entire country was designated a combat zone, so anyone in the region, including noncombatants received this special pay.²³⁷

Many Wacs believed their Vietnam experience proved their worth. In Vietnam, there were no clear battle lines and weaponry had advanced in ways that made all noncombatants vulnerable to persistent enemy fire. In "noncombat" spaces, female soldiers' work setting was

²³³ Sarah A. Larsen and Jennifer M. Miller, *Wisconsin Vietnam War Stories: Our Veterans Remember* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2010), 199.

²³⁴ Bellafaire, *Women Doctors in War*, 147.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 147.

²³⁶ "Records Show 5,000 Women Got Combat Pay."

²³⁷ During Vietnam, the change in combat pay shifted from what was a narrow definition of a combat unit's "hazards and hardships" to a much broader interpretation that included wide geographic areas where there was a risk of hostile fire. In doing so, combat pay expanded beyond infantrymen and others on the frontline of battle. Brandon R. Gould and Stanley A. Horowitz, *History of Combat Pay* (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analysis, 2011), iv; <http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA555526> (accessed on March 30, 2016).

virtually indistinguishable from their male coworkers. Donna Kay Van Deventer noted that she took great pride in being a “part of that time and place” in Vietnam where women proved their value through their service.²³⁸ Linda Earls’ letters home reflected the view of many other Wacs when she noted in her correspondence from Vietnam, “I have always wondered how I would act under fire and this has shown me that I can stay calm and do anything I have to do.”²³⁹ Precilla Wilkewitz agreed that Wacs’ work in Vietnam “proved their mettle.”²⁴⁰

Most Wacs did not witness the terrible suffering of wounded and dying combat soldiers that many Army nurses faced daily, nor did female soldiers face the enemy in the same way that combat soldiers experienced the horror of battle. However, Wacs were not immune from the misery of war, but experiences were more analogous with male noncombatants. They suffered from the loss of friends, visited with dying and injured soldiers, worried about mortar and rocket attacks, and spent countless hours in bunkers. Grendel Howard believes that “War creates an intense camaraderie among people — mostly because everybody is scared to death.”²⁴¹ She adds, “And, of course, Vietnam was a war with no battle lines. Everybody was subject to be blown up no matter where you were, so that kept the adrenaline pumping. You were on a constant high.”²⁴² Linda Earls wrote to her Mother about how Wacs watched the war from their barracks. “They really had a war the other morning right after I got to work and could watch out the window. Our jets bombed a place about four miles from post and we could watch them fly in, drop the bombs

²³⁸ Lowery, 1964.

²³⁹ Earls, 656.

²⁴⁰ Lowery, 99.

²⁴¹ “Sisters in Arms,” *Ebony*.

²⁴² *Ibid*.

and then go straight up out of there.”²⁴³ In spite of the normalcy of the bombing at Long Binh, casualties changed the tone of Earls’ letters and she expressed unquestionable fear after a very intense bombing that killed soldiers on her base.²⁴⁴

With incoming mortar attacks, enemy infiltration onto their base, and suspicion of Vietnamese workers on the post collaborating with the Viet Cong, many Wacs felt vulnerable in Vietnam without a means to protect themselves. One of the ironies of the Vietnam era for female soldiers was that the Women’s Army Corps stopped providing weapons training for its female recruits in 1963 because the Army believed women were not strong enough to handle the new M-14 rifle.²⁴⁵ During the war, instead of putting the female soldiers through valuable field training like bivouacs or weapons qualifications as was done for the Wacs of World War II, WAC taught women how to apply makeup and highlight their femininity.²⁴⁶ Director Hoisington’s policies against Wacs carrying arms or learning how to handle an M-16 or other weapons was due to her focus on protecting the feminine image of members of her corps. The issue of Wacs carrying and training with weapons or preparing for a war environment was another area of disagreement between WAC directors, the Army leadership, and women soldiers.

²⁴³ Earls, 81.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 636-639.

²⁴⁵ Morden, 282. The date that weapons familiarization ended for officer and enlisted women’s training was July 1, 1963, when the Army switched from using the M-1 carbine to the M-14 rifle, a pound heaver and deemed too heavy for women to handle. It was not until July of 1974 that voluntary weapons training was reinstated. The following July, weapons training for women became mandatory. “Significant Dates in the History of the Women’s Army Corps,” Vietnam file, Fort Lee Archives.

²⁴⁶ Anderson, “Should We Send Our Women Soldiers to Vietnam?”

In Hoisington's view, weapons' training "was not a popular course" for women and she decided to replace it in 1963 with something "a bit more ladylike" so "now in its place, we teach good grooming."²⁴⁷ In a 1967 letter addressed to the WAC staff advisor for the Pacific region, Hoisington worried about "unfavorable publicity" if the Army provided women with weapons training.²⁴⁸ She was especially concerned that parents, who complained to her about their daughters' assignments to Vietnam, would have increased "disfavor [toward WAC] by introducing the subject of weapons."²⁴⁹ Even after Wacs were deployed to Vietnam, the Director continued to oppose weapons training because she was worried about the image it would project to the public and feared it would interfere with recruiting efforts. Besides, she added mothers "didn't like the idea of their daughter's toting guns."²⁵⁰

Many of those daughters who became Wacs took exception to their inadequate training. Deborah Gano, like many women, had to run to the bunker during the constant rocket attacks and decried the lack of combat training for Wacs.²⁵¹ Joyce Harker was "always annoyed that we had male soldiers to guard the area instead of issuing us weapons to guard ourselves."²⁵² During Josephine Solis' first night in Vietnam, she recognized that her fear during a bombardment was because she had never received weapons training from WAC to learn how to defend herself.²⁵³

²⁴⁷ Neth, "Today's WAC: 'She'll Be the Best Wife On Her Block.'"

²⁴⁸ Holm, 211, 228.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 211.

²⁵⁰ Neth, "Today's WAC: 'She'll Be the Best Wife On Her Block.'"

²⁵¹ Lowery, 8350.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid., 7794.

Linda Earls complained to her mother that the mortar attacks were making her feel anxious and vulnerable. She believed “every girl here should at least be weapons qualified. I’d feel a whole lot safer if I had something to fight with.”²⁵⁴ According to Precilla “Pat” Lowry, instead of protection, “all we had was a prayer.”²⁵⁵

Wacs began to look for ways to protect themselves. Some female soldiers signed up for self-defense classes or weapons training offered outside official Army channels.²⁵⁶ Sherian Cadoria learned how to shoot with the military police when she worked in the Provost Marshall’s office in Vietnam.²⁵⁷ Some, however, simply ignored WAC policy banning them from carrying weapons. Lee Wilson was not particularly frightened by the shelling of her base, because she grew up with guns and spent most of her free time at a skeet range with other men from her unit. However, “upset that I couldn’t carry a weapon myself,” she eventually acquired a sawed off shotgun.²⁵⁸ A WAC Staff advisor informed Mary Hootman, a Warrant Officer working for the 525th Military Intelligence Group that she was prohibited from carrying a weapon. However, since the command policy for MACV was “that all officers carry a pistol and rifle,” Hootman continued to take her .45 caliber pistol and a .30 caliber rifle along with her. She recalled that she and her command “all had a good laugh” about her defiance.²⁵⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Judith

²⁵⁴ Earls, 639.

²⁵⁵ Lowery, 3811.

²⁵⁶ Anderson, “Should We Send Our Women Soldiers to Vietnam?”

²⁵⁷ Lowery, 1910.

²⁵⁸ Lee Wilson interview.

²⁵⁹ Mary “Chief” L. Hootman, “Vietnam Memory Book, 1999,” box 136, Vietnam File, Fort Lee Archives.

Bennett, an advisor to the Vietnamese women's corps carried a .38 pistol when she traveled.²⁶⁰ Cadoria, Clotilde Bowen and Pat Foote often flew in helicopters all over Vietnam and wore flak jackets and carried pistols with them on their flights.²⁶¹ The Army later promoted both Cadoria and Foote to the rank of General, so their willful violation of the policy against carrying weapons did not hinder their careers.

Although many Wacs wanted to protect themselves and carry a weapon, they understood they were noncombatants, so it was not their job to fight the enemy. Wilson argued, "women don't belong in direct combat" because "the man will always try to protect you."²⁶² Many Wacs at the time agreed with her opinion. On one helicopter trip to a forward firebase near the Cambodian border, Pat Foote, who was unarmed at the time, wondered to herself, "What in the name of God was I doing there."²⁶³ Foote looked around at the well-armed combat soldiers on the flight and believed she did not belong on this mission. "I just decided it was ridiculous for us [women] to be there, we were nothing but liabilities should an attack begin."²⁶⁴ She felt that the Army had failed to provide her with proper training and weaponry to be an asset in the field.

In February 1968, the Vietnamese Tet Offensive exposed how all work areas in Vietnam were potential battlefields, forcing the Army to recognize that most women were inadequately trained and unprepared to take actions to defend their units. During Tet, when the Viet Cong

²⁶⁰ "Corsicana Wac Stationed at Saigon Post," *Corsicana Daily Sun*, 24 March, 1966, p. 26, Newspaper.com (accessed March 4, 2013); Bellafaire, 147.

²⁶¹ "From Louisiana to Washington D.C.," *Pentagram*, 12, box 138, Cadoria file; Pat Foote interview with Maier.

²⁶² Lee Wilson interview.

²⁶³ Pat Foote interview with Maier.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

infiltrated and attacked the headquarter posts where nearly all the women were unarmed and defenseless, a male platoon protected the WAC detachment.²⁶⁵ WAC detachment commander, Captain Joanne Murphy recalled “a deafening explosion went off at the ammo dump. Glass, gravel and dust were flying. We couldn't see for more than a few yards.”²⁶⁶ Clearly the Army's intention of keeping Wacs out of harm's way was not realistic. Some Wacs did have weapons during the Tet Offensive. During the initial hours of the attack in 1968, Mary Van Ette Bender, a counter intelligence Wac who was armed with a carbine and handgun, guarded the third floor of the Meyerkord hotel in Saigon where she and others were housed.²⁶⁷ Marie Knasiak returned fire with her personal weapon as she came under small arms fire during Tet while on her way to work in Saigon.²⁶⁸ Most Wacs, however, were unarmed.

The Tet Offensive made it clear to the Army that the absence of a clear front line in Vietnam exposed Wacs to enemy attacks regardless of their geographic location or the type of job they held during their tour. After Tet, the Army began to offer Wacs informal weapons training. It began with rudimentary weapons training and then expanded to voluntary lessons on firing a .45 and M-16.²⁶⁹ Later weapons classes gave them experience on firing an M-14 and familiarity handling an M-40 grenade launcher and M-70 machine gun.²⁷⁰ By 1974, all Wacs in the Army

²⁶⁵ Lowery, 4908.

²⁶⁶ Morden, 251.

²⁶⁷ Lowery, 3528.

²⁶⁸ Ibid., 4077.

²⁶⁹ Earls, 729.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 797. There are several pictures of Wacs in Vietnam firing weapons during familiarization training, include an M79 Grenade launcher. “Weapons Familiarization, February 1971 picture,” box 138, Wac Staff Advisors: Vietnam folder, Fort Lee Archives.

were offered voluntary weapons training in basic training and in July of 1975 the training became mandatory. By 1976, every Wac completed the same weapons training as male soldiers in basic training and followed up with additional skills at the unit level depending on what was required for their job.²⁷¹

Wacs could not avoid witnessing some of the worst aspects of the war and these experiences shaped their sense of being legitimate soldiers alongside their male cohorts. Pinkie Houser remembered smelling burning human flesh, an odor that came from an incinerator by the hospital that destroyed amputated arms and legs.²⁷² She talked with wounded soldiers in the hospital and saw “bodies that were not recognizable.”²⁷³ She grieved for two men in her office who died when the Vietcong shot down their helicopter. Houser had survivor’s guilt because she had worked in the office instead going with on the mission that day.²⁷⁴ Linda McClenahan witnessed one of her male friends lose his life when he stepped on a landmine on their way home after a party they attended after he went into the bushes to use the bathroom.²⁷⁵ She felt responsible for his death because if she had not been with him, he may not have worried about privacy and would not have wandered off the road. McClenahan never left the base again, except when she went on leave and to catch her flight home.²⁷⁶ Pricilla Mosby was headed back to base after performing a show with her band, *Phase Three* one evening, when she was caught in sniper

²⁷¹ ODWAC Notes, “Office of the Director,” April, 1977, box 412, Fort Lee Archives.

²⁷² Marshall, 40.

²⁷³ Ibid., 39.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 42-43.

²⁷⁵ Walker, 25.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

fire.²⁷⁷ Her male security escort handed her a .45 to protect herself from the Vietcong while he left to remove the threat. She survived, but a sniper killed her friend.²⁷⁸

Since the Army prohibited Wacs from infantry, armor and artillery units that engaged in offensive battles, servicewomen's status remained low in comparison to that of male combat soldier's. But in the work space outside of combat arms specialties, the Army was gradually beginning to legitimize female soldiers' work as embodying a typical noncombatant soldier's performance. Wacs in Vietnam put themselves on the line just like their male co-workers. Linda Earls acknowledged the pride of service in the combat zone.²⁷⁹ She told her mother, "You're going to have something not too many people do when I get back—a daughter who has gone through combat. Out of all the women in the world a very small number even get in the Army and out of them even a smaller number ever come over here."²⁸⁰ Wacs' experiences working under hostile fire, regardless of where they deployed or the type of job they held during their tour, enhanced their status as respected soldiers, amplified their voices, and gave them confidence as soldiers.

Wac Experience in Vietnam Lead to Careers

One of the lasting effects from the Vietnam War was that a large percentage of women who served in Vietnam made the Army a career. During World War II, a career in the military

²⁷⁷ The band selected the name 'Phase Three' because of its significance to combat soldiers. Soldiers believed there were four phases of war before you die. Phase three was when you were out in the field and you are "hanging on, you may make it and you may not." Westheider, 94.

²⁷⁸ "Unarmed and Under Fire."

²⁷⁹ Earls, 80.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

was not possible for women. At that time, women could only join the Army as part of a temporary force for the duration of the war. The military recruited women during the war in order to “replace a man for combat.”²⁸¹ Since many office jobs and support work were done away from fighting areas, utilizing women meant that the Army could place them in noncombatant jobs that previously would have gone to men, freeing more male soldiers for combat positions. Women worked in many different jobs, but most Wacs served as telephone operators, stenographers, clerks, and typists.²⁸² As a result of this status, women soldiers did not envision a career in the military nor seek military experience to improve chances for better civilian jobs. Once the war ended, nearly all the women returned home to traditional roles.

The Vietnam war was different not only because the nature of war had changed, but also because female soldier’s expectations for work in the Army was transforming. By the Vietnam War, some Wacs had been in the Army long enough to aspire for careers at a time when working women were pushing against traditional stereotypes, altering their expectations for work from previous generations of female soldiers. Members of the Women’s Army Corps considered themselves permanent soldiers obligated to serve in the same capacity as male noncombatant soldiers and so women pushed against protective policies. But their time in Vietnam also distinguished them from the majority of Wacs who did not serve in Vietnam—theirs was an extraordinary and unique experience for women in the Army. They sought challenging work to earn respect and prove they belonged in the Army.

²⁸¹ Frank Waldrop, “Patriotism is 10,000 Wacs in a Variety of Duties,” *PS&S*, September 28, 1967.

²⁸² Treadwell, 390-92, 767.

Envisioning careers in the military, many Wacs used their service in Vietnam to enhance opportunities for promotions, assignments, training and careers. Sherian Cadoria viewed her tour in Vietnam as a part of “a journey to success” during her career.²⁸³ Donna Lowery never intended to make the military a career until she gained experience and responsibilities in Vietnam that revealed hidden leadership qualities.²⁸⁴ For Elaine Palmer, it took some time before she experienced another tour like Vietnam where she would again “feel worthy, qualified, included and acknowledged.”²⁸⁵ Similarly, Marilyn Roth said she felt like she was doing “something important” and even after a career, “never [again] felt such camaraderie.”²⁸⁶ Mary Kathleen Bailey believed her war experience “had a positive effect” on her career.²⁸⁷ Cadoria, Lowery, Palmer, Roth, Bailey and many other Wacs carried their Vietnam experiences with them throughout their careers. Having endured tremendous adversity, worked demanding hours and witnessed great suffering, they began to hold greater expectations for future roles in the Army.

The Army and Women’s Army Corps did not keep a record of the women who served in Vietnam, but evidence from the registry of deceased women veterans reveals that eighty-eight of

²⁸³ Sherian Cadoria quoted in Terry L. Jones, “BR Riverfront Ceremony Honors Vietnam Veterans,” *The Advocate (Baton Rouge, LA)*, March 24, 2013, http://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/article_6c1c006a-0289-545e-a689-1209d0f0075d.html (accessed May 5, 2015).

²⁸⁴ Lowery, 2303.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 4159.

²⁸⁶ Ron Steinman, *Women in Vietnam: The Oral History* (Westport, CT: Hutton Electronic Publishing, 2005), 226.

²⁸⁷ Lowery, 9674.

the one hundred and sixty-five Wacs in the registry retired from the Army.²⁸⁸ These numbers reflect that fifty-three percent of female Wacs who have since died, were careerists.²⁸⁹ The advantage for career female soldiers was the knowledge and experience they brought with them to their next assignment. Ann Fisher, who became the first Wac officer to serve at USARV, believed that her service in Vietnam “made her career.”²⁹⁰ Dot Rechel, who had received a Bronze Star, admitted that recognition from medals and service in Vietnam also helped with promotions because, “in the military, your resume is your uniform.”²⁹¹ Rechel, who retired as a Sergeant Major, explained that women who served in Vietnam had a “leg up on other female soldiers” because their unique experience in the combat zone gave them a shared history with male Vietnam veterans. In her view:

You speak the language of Vietnam. You know the units, the lingo, the acronyms and the jargon that goes along with the assignment to a combat zone. You know where the LZ’s were, the ammunition depot at Long Binh, you could talk about where you were during Tet or other offensives. You described your bunker or facilities and work environment. You could describe the USO events and the 6 to 7 day workweeks with 12 to 14 hour days.²⁹²

²⁸⁸ Vietnam Women Veterans, “A Virtual Cemetery” created by Marsha Holder, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=vcsr&GSob=c&GSvcid=286660&> (accessed June 5, 2014).

²⁸⁹ These figures were tabulated by comparing information at the virtual cemetery with both Donna Lowery’s collection of veterans in *Women Vietnam Veterans: Our Untold Stories* and the WAC Vietnam Memorial Book in the Vietnam File at Fort Lee Archives.

²⁹⁰ Rechel and Fisher interview addendum with author.

²⁹¹ Dorothy Rechel Interview.

²⁹² Dorothy Rechel Interview.

Many black Wacs serving in Vietnam made the military a career, rose through the ranks over decades and became role models and mentors for future generations of black women serving in the Army. Serving multiple tours in Vietnam, provided them with seniority and increased levels of responsibility. Staff Sergeant Edith “Effie” Efferson was selected as a member of the initial leadership cadre at the WAC detachment in Vietnam, reflecting a high regard for the roles that black women were beginning to occupy in the corps.²⁹³ Efferson joined the Army in 1952, served three tours in Vietnam and stayed in the Army for twenty years until she eventually retired as a Sergeant First Class. Sherian Cadoria was the first woman assigned to Cam Rahn Bay airbase and served in Vietnam thirty-three months.²⁹⁴ Cadoria spent thirty years in the Army, retiring as a Brigadier General. Doris “Lucki” Allen served three consecutive tours as an intelligence analyst and retired as a Chief Warrant Officer in 1980 after thirty years of service. Susie Stephens McArthur reenlisted in Vietnam and decided that she would make the Army her career.²⁹⁵ She retired in 1991 as a Sergeant Major after twenty-six years in the Army.

Before the war was over, women had begun to transform not only their image, but also their role in the Army’s workplace. Widespread sexism, illustrated by General Sternberg’s request that the first Wac selected to work in Vietnam be “intelligent, an extrovert and beautiful,” alongside Wacs’ assignments in traditional roles reinforced a stereotypical image of a female

²⁹³ The initial WAC cadre in Vietnam included Captain Peggy E. Ready (commander), First Sergeant Marion Crawford, Sergeant First Class Betty J. Benson (administrative NCO), Staff Sergeant Edith “Effie” Efferson (supply sergeant), Private First Class Rhynell Stoabs (company clerk). Morden, 246.

²⁹⁴ “From Louisiana to Washington D.C.,” *Pentagram*, Cadoria File.

²⁹⁵ Susie McArthur interview.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

soldier.²⁹⁶ Yet, Wacs' efforts to get to Vietnam ultimately led the Army to position a detachment of women soldiers inside a designated combat zone, exposing them routinely to direct enemy fire. When Wacs began working in Vietnam, many fought to share the full value of their knowledge and proficiencies, others sought out new skills. Army leaders incorporated women into many different types of jobs alongside men in fields where many female soldiers had not previously worked, such as logistics, supply, signals, intelligence, counterintelligence, aviation, and engineering. As a result, separate work spaces for men and women became more complicated. With increasing national focus on issues of equality, the Army's workplace policies that limited women's roles were magnified, compelling military leadership to give more prominence to female soldiers' concerns. Whether they worked in an office or held jobs where they rode in jeeps, trucks or flew in helicopters over hostile territory, Wacs became part of the Vietnam fraternity of soldiers. According to Dot Rechel, they had "solidarity" with each other.²⁹⁷

Wacs' success in getting to the combat zone forced the Army to revise its policies for training, outfitting, preparing and managing male and female noncombatants. Most scholarship on servicewomen has concentrated on how difficult it has been for women to integrate into a masculine military culture, and many works emphasize the gender limitations for women. Those barriers were real. In addition, Wac Directors imposed protectionist policies, but they failed to recognize how Women's Army Corps was not isolated from the undercurrents of change in the culture. Many members of their corps were from a new generation of women, emerging in a period of social tension over feminist assertions of equality and rights, demanding new answers to gender limitations. In Vietnam, that meant Wacs expected and began to demand the same

²⁹⁶ Morden, 242.

²⁹⁷ Dorothy Rechel interview.

training, equipment and clothing that male noncombatants received. By the end of the Vietnam conflict, all these circumstances began to change. Female soldiers had arrived for work in Vietnam dressed in their green cord uniform and pumps, and were unprepared to confront an enemy because they lacked any weapons training. However, because of Wacs' demands, by the end of the war the Army outfitted servicewomen in fatigues and boots, and provided many with M-16 or small arms weapons training to help women defend themselves from enemy attack. Many Wacs began and ended their work in Vietnam behind typewriters, but those positions also involved fear from enemy attacks, and many hours spent in bunkers during mortar bombardments. Other Wacs sought out work that put many of them on helicopters, and in flak jackets with a pistol at their side.

The Army workplace was changing, and use of female soldiers in Vietnam helped accelerate this transformation. Wacs wanted to be active participants in the most consequential event of their lifetime, so they pushed to get to the war. One lesson about servicewomen's roles in Vietnam was that the Army had not equipped or properly trained female soldiers, and that had to change. That meant the Army outfitted female soldiers with gear for combat, including boots, weapons, and helmets. Assigning Wacs to a combat zone now necessitated field and weapons training. Yet, the significance of the war went beyond fatigues and carrying weapons. Women's aspirations for careers and promotions mattered. Women demanded that the Army make full use of their skills and talents, asserting their right to be viewed as equals with male noncombatants. The war was the first time that large numbers of Wacs openly dissented from or rejected the protective WAC policies, exposing weakness for continuing the segregated corps, showing that the value of a separate Women's Corps had diminished. The Vietnam War was the last time that Wacs were sent to a combat zone as part of their own separate corps. By 1978, WAC was disbanded and women entered the regular Army. Other changes in the 1970s would lead the

Army to standardize many policies for all soldiers, which included giving female soldiers authority to command men as well as women. The all-volunteer force, gender integrated basic training, weapons training, increased opportunities for advanced leadership, and opening up West Point and the ROTC to women, are all part of the legacy of change that began during the Vietnam era.

CHAPTER III
ALLIANCES FORCE CHANGE: THE ERA, THE VOLUNTEER ARMY,
AND THE END OF WAC, 1967-1978

By 1973 when the last of the Wacs left Vietnam, the Equal Rights Amendment was quickly gaining momentum, with more than half of the states ratifying the measure. Gender equality issues were making headlines, but Wacs still faced many constraints on their service. Women were barely two percent of Army personnel and the Women's Army Corps remained a segregated branch of the Army. Unlike men, the Army constructed Wacs' identity by their gender, not by their job.¹ Wacs distinct identity in the Army was visible by the emblem that all women wore on their uniform, the Pallas Athene; male soldiers wore the insignia of the corps associated with their occupational specialty.² The Army refused to admit women into ROTC or

¹ Women could only be assigned permanently to the Women's Army Corps, but they could be detailed to any of the Army's branches except for Air Defense Artillery, Armor, Field Artillery, and Infantry. United States, *Personnel Procurement: Appointment of Commissioned Officers in the Regular Army*, AR 601-100 C7 (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 1966).

² Male soldiers traditionally wore the insignia for the occupational corps in which they were assigned, such as the Infantry, Signal Corps, Intelligence Corps, Adjutant General Corps, Transportation Corps and other specific branches of the Army. In 1942, the Quartermaster Corps was tasked with designing a uniform and all its accessories for the new Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC), selecting Pallas Athene. "A goddess associated with an impressive variety of womanly virtues and no vices either womanly or godlike. She was the goddess of handicrafts, wise in industries of peace and arts of war, also the goddess of storms and battle, who led through victory to peace and prosperity." The insignia was retained in 1948 when the corps became a permanent part of the Army. Mattie Treadwell, *The Women's Army Corps*, United States Army in World War II: Special Studies, vol. 8, no. 2 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1954), 39.

West Point military academy, limited their attendance at professional development schools, concentrated them in clerical, medical and administrative jobs, and prohibited them from commanding men. White women dominated their leadership as well as the officer and enlisted ranks. Excepting for the WAC Director's position, Congressional legislation restricted women's advancement to Lieutenant Colonel, and placed Wacs on separate promotion lists from male soldiers. Confined to the women's corps, an all-women chain of command managed and administered housing, assignments, training and discipline for Wacs. Female soldiers participated in a gender-segregated basic training without weapons and combat training. The Army processed women for discharge if they became pregnant and refused to provide them with the same financial support for dependent spouses that men received.³

By 1978, all this and more had changed. Wacs no longer belonged to a separate unequal branch of the Army; instead, they were soldiers under the same management and military authority as men. The Pallas Athene was retired and all soldiers, regardless of gender, wore the insignia of their corps' occupational field. Most Army recruits participated in mixed gender units during basic combat training, where male and female drill instructors taught all soldiers the same skills. Promotion ceilings were lifted. Women soldiers' numbers had quadrupled and were rising rapidly. Black women enlisted in numbers disproportionate to their presence in the civilian population, making up over twenty-five percent of the women in the Army.⁴ Ninety-two percent of job specialties were open to women and recruiters actively sought females for nontraditional

³ Major General Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution*, 2d ed. (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1992), 121-22.

⁴ Bettie J. Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1990), 415. In 1978 there were 14,688 black women in the Army out of 56,841 female soldiers.

work roles.⁵ Army regulations permitted women to stay in the military if they became pregnant or had children, and married soldiers automatically received benefits and entitlements for their dependents regardless of gender. West Point military academy and ROTC trained women alongside men. Women occupied high-ranking leadership positions, commanded men and attended professional military courses and senior service colleges.

Scholars typically attribute these shifts to the end of the draft and pressure from Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) supporters in the early 1970s.⁶ Yet in fact, the process of improving female soldiers' equality began earlier. In 1967 legislators, women's groups, civil rights organizations, veteran associations and female soldiers forced Congress to enact Public Law 90-130, providing women access to the highest officer ranks and removing the ceiling placed on servicewomen's numbers. These changes created a solid foothold for expanding women's military roles.

⁵ "Traditional women's skills are in the medical and administrative career management fields; less traditional are automatic data processing, supply and service, recruitment and retention, public affairs, audiovisual, food service, law enforcement, and military intelligence; nontraditional are the specialties in the remaining twenty-one enlisted career management fields. At the end of this fiscal year [1978], 43 percent of enlisted women in the active Army were in traditional women's skills, 24 percent were in less traditional fields, and 34 percent were in nontraditional specialties." United States and Karl E. Cocke, *Department of the Army Historical Summary. Fiscal Year 1978* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1980), 78-79, <http://www.history.army.mil/books/DAHSUM/1978/ch05.htm> (accessed June 14 2014).

⁶ Some of the scholarship that has credited the AVF for the advancement of women in the military are: Aline O. Quester, and Curtis L. Gilroy, "Women and Minorities in America's Volunteer Military," *Contemporary Economic Policy*. 20, No. 2 (2002): 111-121. Several excellent studies have examined the origins and formation of the All Voluntary Force to replace the draft. Two of the most comprehensive works are Beth L. Bailey, *America's Army Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2009), and Bernard Rostker, *I Want You! The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2006).

Scholars have correctly pointed out that the shift to an all-volunteer force in 1973 disrupted the Army's steady labor supply and resulted in the opening of many more jobs for women.⁷ However, many others have argued that even with increased numbers and new positions, the combat exclusion laws and policies restricted women's roles and advancement in the military.⁸ Yet, what both sides of this debate miss is that during the process of expanding women's roles into **noncombat** positions, the Army altered its meaning of combat. Based on the Army's view that women would not work in positions that mobilized for war, even most non-fighting roles had been off limits to women. After the end of the draft, Army policymakers narrowed the category of male-only jobs, training, and education to make more positions available to women. Some former "combat related" jobs opened in occupational fields such as aviation, military police, engineering, transportation, mechanics, logistics and even artillery. As a result, Wacs began working with men in the part of the Army that deployed to war. All women began serving in branches outside of the women's corps and competed with men for promotions. Many sought and received command assignments to lead troops. In order to make some institutions appear more acceptable for women, the Army modified its portrayal of West Point military academy and the Reserve Officer Training Corps as organizations that developed professional leaders, lessening the focus on combat leadership.

⁷ Bailey, 136; Holm, 260.

⁸ Erin Solaro, *Women in the Line of Fire* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2006), 145; Lucinda Joy Peach, "Gender Ideology in the Ethics of Women in Combat," in *It's Our Military Too: Women and the U.S. Military*, ed. Judith Hicks Stiehm (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 175.

Officers Join Allies in Battle for Equal Promotion Opportunities

In 1967 after a decade long struggle, a coalition of legislators, women's groups, civil rights organizations, veteran associations and female soldiers secured the passage of Public Law 90-130 (PL 90-130), which for the first time provided women access to the Army's highest officer ranks, and removed the ceiling on the maximum numbers of servicewomen. By dismantling key parts of legal gender discrimination that had been in place for two decades, PL 90-130 cleared the path for workplace changes that accelerated in the 1970s when the draft ended and the women's movement pressed for equal treatment. However, the Army insisted that women would not engage with weapons in combat, so Congress and military leaders continued to consider women's roles as subordinate and unequal to men's roles. Few on either side of the issue expected women to lead men or serve in key senior leadership positions. Still, these changes provided servicewomen with a springboard from which to expand into more noncombatant positions and leadership roles in the new volunteer army after 1973. These later influences led Congress and the military to approve admission of women to military academies, the Army to open new occupations to Wacs, and the Department of Defense to allow parenthood for servicewomen.

In order to understand how passage of PL 90-130 established a substantial shift in military and political leaders' thinking about servicewomen's roles, it is necessary to review the law that had been in place for nearly twenty years.⁹ Whereas President Truman's 1948 Executive Order 9981 prohibited racial discrimination in the military workplace, separate legislation for the

⁹ The initial proposal for the Women's Integration Act was introduced to Congress in July of 1946, but did not become law until two years later. Morden, 42-43.

1948 Women's integration Act (Public Law 625) codified gender discrimination into law.¹⁰

Legislators intended the law to create a small "nucleus of women in the Regular Army organized for immediate expansion in case of a national emergency," but one that would keep them in a separate and distinct organization under women's management.¹¹ Instead of opening all noncombat jobs to women, Congress instructed the Army to "explore the job fields to which the aptitudes and skills of women were adaptable" or where they were "more suited than men."¹² These limitation on numbers and jobs signified that Wacs' presence in the Army workplace was fundamentally different from the male norm, and women who joined the military from the late 1940s to the 1970s faced significant legal and policy restraints on the conditions of their employment.

Legislators constructed the 1948 law with workplace limitations in order to straddle the line between the need for women in military jobs, and cultural mores that largely restricted white

¹⁰ On July 26, 1948, Truman ordered racial desegregation in the military with Executive Order 9981: "It is hereby declared to be the policy of the President that there shall be equality of treatment and opportunity for all persons in the armed services without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin." Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, "Executive Orders: Harry S. Truman, 1945-1953," <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/9981.htm> (accessed June 23, 2014).

¹¹ Morden, 22. General W.S. Paul stated that WAC would, "Provide a nucleus of women in the Regular Army organized for immediate expansion in case of a national emergency." General Paul testified that a five percent cap would have been suitable, but since women had not exceeded two percent during World War II, Congress settled on that limitation. United States, Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, *Subcommittee Hearings on S. 1641, Establish the Women's Army Corps in the Regular Army, to Authorize the Enlistment and Appointment of Women in the Regular Navy and Marine Corps and the Naval and Marine Corps Reserve, and for Other Purposes*, 80th Cong., 2nd sess., Feb. 18, 23, 25, 27, Mar. 2, 3, 1948, p. 5609, 5622 (hereafter cited as 1948 House Hearings, *Establish the Women's Army Corps*). ProQuest Congressional (80 H1173-A.41).

¹² United States, Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, *Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1947*, 80th Cong., 1st sess., S. 1103, July 2, 9, 15, 1947, p. 4 (hereafter cited as 1947 Senate Hearing, *Women's Integration*), ProQuest Congressional (80 S832-1).

women's roles to clerical, administrative and service work. Unlike male soldiers who were assigned to a particular branch of the Army depending on their job field, all women were members of the WAC regardless of their occupation. But the Army's culture is rooted in a tradition of having separate corps that define a soldier's work within the army, such as the Engineering Corps, Medical Corps, Ordnance Corps, Quartermaster Corps and Signal Corps. By giving them a job identity within the Army, the corps generated pride for soldiers. By contrast, the creation of the Women's Army Corps (WAC), was significantly different because its identity was based solely on gender, regardless of occupation.

The Army also treated women differently from men in other ways. Women under the age of 21 required parental consent to join, while 18 was the age of consent for men. The statute permitted the Secretary of the Army to dismiss any servicewoman for pregnancy or having dependent children under the age of eighteen in their home.¹³ Even the treatment of spouses was unequal. Women could marry once they finished training, but the Army required them to be single when they signed up.¹⁴ Unless servicewomen could prove their husbands were unable to work due to disability or other reasons that prevented them from heading their household, they

¹³ Public Law 80-625, *Women's Armed Service Integration Act of 1948*, 62 Stat., 356-375. Analysis of the purpose for each section of the bill was explained during the Committee hearings for the law. Colonel Hallaren explained that the arbitrary dismissal of women was included for the specific purpose of using an administrative discharge for women who became pregnant. 1947 Senate Hearing, *Women's Integration*, 97-98.

¹⁴ Morden, 118, 236; "Somebody Special," 1964 WAC Recruiting Brochure, WV0002 Women Veterans General Printed Materials and Video Recordings Collection, Recruiting Materials, Betty H. Carter Women Veterans Historical Project, Martha Blakeney Hodges Special Collections and University Archives, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, NC. (hereafter cited as UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project).

were denied housing, commissary privileges, health care, and other benefits automatically provided to wives.¹⁵

Since war has been a male dominated undertaking, legislators were careful to structure Public Law 625 in a way that prevented female officers from occupying positions of power or command over men. What scholars have called a legal “brass ceiling” on career opportunities not only prohibited women officers from commanding men, it also limited women officers to the lowest five ranks.¹⁶ Legislators intentionally obstructed Wac officers’ career paths when they prevented women from competing with men for promotions.¹⁷ WAC leaders originally agreed with this restriction because they viewed women’s career progression on a different path than those of male soldiers. In 1948, WAC Director Hallaren argued that a “separate but equal” list for women was beneficial.¹⁸ In her view, direct competition with men would have disadvantaged Wacs by forcing competition with male soldiers who had combat training, command experience and eligibility for the highest ranks.¹⁹

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ A number of scholars have referred to a “brass” ceiling for women. The first such instances were works reporting on women’s limitations in policing. Keith Strandberg, "Breaking Through the 'Brass' Ceiling," in *Law Enforcement Technology*, 27, no 6 (2000): 76-82; Dorothy M. Shultz, *Breaking the Brass Ceiling Women Police Chiefs and Their Paths to the Top* (West Port, CT: Praeger, 2004). The first work to mention “brass ceilings” for military women was Darlene Marie Iskra in *Breaking through the "Brass" Ceiling: Elite Military Women's Strategies for Success* (College Park, MD: University of Maryland, 2007), <http://hdl.handle.net/1903/7734> (accessed June 14, 2013).

¹⁷ The ten Grades for Army officers are O-1 to O-10 (O-1:1st Lieutenant, O-2: 2nd Lieutenant, O-3: Captain, O-4: Major, O-5: Lieutenant Colonel, O-6: Colonel, O-7: Brigadier General, O-8: Major General, O-9: Lieutenant General, O-10: General).

¹⁸ 1948 House Hearings, *Establish the Women’s Army Corps*, 5648.

¹⁹ Ibid. Air Force women were integrated into the promotion system with men since the very beginning of that service branch. Studies revealed that competition with men in the Air

Congressional restrictions on Wacs' officer ranks meant that they were denied senior leadership positions, crippling career opportunities at the same point in tenure where male officers advanced to higher positions. Male officers could compete for promotions up to the rank of a four star General (O-10), but the highest permanent rank that Wacs could attain was Lieutenant Colonel (O-5). The WAC Director was entitled to the temporary rank of Colonel (O-6), but she had to relinquish that rank upon completion of the assignment, or retire if she was eligible.²⁰ For that reason, the Army demoted two of the WAC Directors when they finished their assignments as head of the women's service, but had not yet earned enough years to retire.²¹

These policies even established different age and tenure rules for women. The highest ranking male officers could retire at age sixty-two or after thirty-five years of service, whichever was later.²² Congress established mandatory retirement for the highest ranking women officers at

Force **did** hinder their promotion rates for the very reasons that Director Hallaren feared. Holm, 202.

²⁰ Jeanne Holm cites eight instances where women service directors had to go back down in rank and serve additional years to accumulate enough time in service to retire. Holm, 194. Colonel Milligan was reappointed for an additional 2 years as Director to allow her to retire after reaching twenty years' service. Morden, 169-172. Once they were eligible for retirement, they could retire at the highest rank they held. Testimony by Army leaders during PL-130 revealed several instances when men who were Colonels, which "were the proper grade for the position", replaced female Lieutenant Colonels who rotated out of their job. United States, Senate, Armed Services Committee, *Savings Allotments, Female Officer Promotions, Ryukyu Islands 90th Cong., 1st sess.*, Oct. 19, 1967, p. 42, ProQuest Congressional (90 S1853-1).

²¹ Mary Hallaren in 1953 and Irene Galloway in 1957. Holm, 194.

²² Male Generals with three and four stars (the highest ranks for men) The Personnel Act of 1947 required retirement after 5 years in grade or thirty-five years of service, whichever was later up to the age of 62. The Secretary of the Army had the discretion to select them to stay in the service until age 64. I did not include the five-star rank of General of the Army because few men have earned a rank, only four in the Army during World War II (George Marshall, Douglas McArthur, Omar Bradley, Dwight Eisenhower). Once earned, the individual does not retire, but remains on active duty for life. The rank was retired in 1981 upon the death of the last man holding that rank, Omar Bradley.

thirty years of service, but few women were eligible for these ranks.²³ Since female officers began their careers in their mid-20s, most retired at or before 55. WAC Majors had to retire after twenty-five years, which usually meant by the time they were fifty-three. Female warrant officers (WO) had to retire at twenty years or age fifty-five, while male WO could retire at age sixty-two.²⁴

In keeping with the tradition for a male only managed Army, legislators structured the 1948 law to prevent well-qualified and experienced women from holding senior command positions that would give them authority and responsibility to develop military plans and lead soldiers in military operations. The Army assigned Wac officers with expertise in their occupational field to higher levels of responsibilities, but their duties were often “not commensurate with their rank.”²⁵ For example, Hortense Boutell, who managed a billion dollar budget, worked as a Lieutenant Colonel for the last sixteen years of her career, but her

²³ Morden, 133-34. Thirty years was the maximum for men and women in the rank of Colonel, but only one woman could hold that rank---and only on a temporary basis while serving as Director of WAC. For the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, the statutory male officers’ age of retirement was 62 or 28 years, while the maximum time for women was after thirty years. However, Lt. Col was the top rank for all women except the Director. Men could be promoted up to O-10, so they had a greater chance to compete for promotions for a longer period overall. Female Majors had to retire after twenty-five years, most by age 53. Men had two chances to be promoted to Major and had to retire if not selected. Female Warrant officers had to retire after 20 years, usually by 55, while male warrant officers retired at 62. Because of the limitations in rank, Congress at times provided women with more years to retire. 1947 Senate Hearing, *Women’s Integration*, 55-56; Morden, 133; Holm, 123. For detailed analysis on how the retirement structure limited women in other services, see Morden, 56-61.

²⁴ Morden, 134.

²⁵ United States, House, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee No. 1, *Consideration of H.R. 5894, to Amend Title 10, 32, and 37, United States Code, to Remove Restrictions on the Careers of Female Officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, and for Other Purposes*, April 20, 1967, p. 41, ProQuest Congressional (90 H2335-0.7).

responsibilities would have earned her general stars if she had been a male soldier.²⁶ A general's rank represented clout and power, but the Congressional exclusion of Wac officers from these "flag" officer grades (O-7 to O-10) meant that even the most experienced female officers were unlikely to have any major influence in military policy beyond that of women's service. Surrounded by more than five thousand permanent male Army Colonels and hundreds of flag officers, the lone WAC Colonel, holding a temporary rank, held limited power.²⁷

Since female officers would only be needed for leadership positions within the Women's Army Corps, Congress put a limit on the number of positions available to women by restricting Lieutenant Colonels to ten percent of all WAC officers.²⁸ The Army allowed fourteen percent of men to the same rank and eight percent to become Colonels.²⁹ By the 1960s, an increasing number of women accumulated the necessary time in service (about sixteen to twenty years) to be eligible for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, but the ten percent cap created a bottleneck above the rank of Major for qualified Wacs.³⁰ A promotion only became possible if a woman retired, opening up the rank for another Wac, and most had not served long enough to retire. As a result of these restrictions and because many Wacs worked and competed with other women officers

²⁶ Morden, 182.

²⁷ Department of Defense, "Military Personnel on Active Duty by Grade in Which Serving, 1967."

²⁸ Morden, 42, 109; 1947 Senate Hearing, *Women's Integration*, 58. The Navy's restrictions were especially onerous for women. For detailed analysis of the effect on women in the Navy, see Susan H. Godson, *Serving Proudly: A History of Women in the U.S. Navy* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2001). Complicating the matter was that the majority of officers were on active duty but in the Reserve, not Regular Army and they had a mandatory retirement of twenty years.

²⁹ Treadwell, 746.

³⁰ Holm, 123.

within the same occupational fields, opportunities for senior positions within their own Women's Army Corp "line" were scarce. The law restricting officer promotions discriminated against women regardless of their workplace skills and experience, with the result that many women officers simply left the Army early because they could not advance in rank.³¹ In 1953, there were 1109 female officers, 53 warrant officers and 8760 enlisted women in the Women's Army Corps. By 1965, those numbers had fallen to 743 officers, 23 warrant officers and 8520 enlisted women.³²

By the mid-1950s, WAC leaders recognized that the 1948 restrictions led to a drain on experienced and talented female officers and made a military career commitment difficult, so they began a long battle to fight these provisions.³³ Twice during her tenure, Director Mary Milligan Rasmussen (1957-1962) had argued that an uncomplicated policy change would be effective to permit an increase in the number of female Colonels, but in each instance, the acting Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DSCPER) contended that Army policy could not use internal regulations to overturn Congressional law.³⁴ In 1963, using the same reasoning, a

³¹ Other reasons Morden outlined for female officers leaving WAC was the "male bias against women in the services," daily regimentation, restricted personal choices in work clothes, assignment restrictions and long hours. Morden, 134.

³² Morden, 134; "Women in the Army Comparative Statistics by War," US Women's Army Corps Museum, Fort Lee, VA (hereafter cited as Fort Lee Archives), http://www.awm.lee.army.mil/pdfs_docs/Women%20in%20the%20Army%20Comparative%20Statistics.pdf, (accessed on June 3, 2014).

³³ The three Directors during this period were Colonel Mary Milligan Rasmussen (1957-1962) Colonel Emily C. Gorman (1962-1966) and General Elizabeth Hoisington (1966-1971). Morden, 182.

³⁴ Rasmussen's 1961 report (based on her 1958 work) was titled, "Positions that may be staffed by Colonels, WAC." She believed up to fifteen temporary colonels could be selected by promoting three each year until that limit was reached. Her position was bolstered by referring to a 1956 JAG (Judge Advocate General) study that came to the conclusion that temporary colonel positions in WAC were not prohibited by the 1948 Integration Act. The DCSPER between 1961

different DCSPER (Lieutenant General James L. Richardson), denied a request from the next WAC Director, Emily Gorman, to increase the number of WAC Colonels from one to three with corresponding increases for Lieutenant Colonel and some of the senior enlisted ranks.³⁵

Top performing Wacs held noteworthy and high-level positions without appropriate rank based on the 1948 restrictions that privileged men because they were eligible for combat. Jane Brister's career spanned from World War II until her retirement in 1965. Brister received specialized training as an intelligence officer and was the first Wac to receive Russian language training with plum assignments at the Pentagon, West Point and overseas.³⁶ She was one of only two military women that worked for the Defense Intelligence Agency in the 1960s.³⁷ In spite of Brister's extensive knowledge, skills and experience, she had been stuck in the rank of Major for many years due to the promotion restriction caps. Brister felt she never lived up to her potential. In an oral history interview, she remarked:

I know why I never came up to my expectations of myself. It's either because in my time they weren't sending WAC officers to Command General Staff or to Fort Leavenworth or to even any of the advanced schools, just the sheer lack of language hold on what—the army's real mission is to fight, it's combat, it's guns, and it's troop movements.³⁸

and 1965 was LT. General Russell Vittrup. The previous DCSPER (1958-1961) was LT Gen James F. Collins. Morden, 181-82.

³⁵ Morden, 206-208.

³⁶ Jane Brister interview by Paul Zarbock, "World War II Through the Eyes of Cape Fear," Cape Fear Museum, University of North Carolina at Wilmington, NC, http://library.uncw.edu/capefearww2/voices/jane_brister111.html (accessed on May 14, 2014).

³⁷ "LTC Yvonne Pateman, a member of the WASPs and the Air Force was the other women to work at DIA. Before Equal Opportunity: Women at DIA, 1061-1978," DIA History Office, Defense Intelligence Community, March 31, 2014, <http://www.dia.mil/News/Articles/tabid/3092/Article/8517/before-equal-opportunity-women-at-dia-1961-1978.aspx>.

³⁸ Jane Brister interview by Eric Elliott, November 5, 1999, WV0115, Jane Gail Brister Papers, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

Between 1962 and 1965, several male Army Generals also attempted to promote women under their command who were working at assignments that exceeded their capped pay grade of Lieutenant Colonel.³⁹ In the case of Hortense Boutell, her knowledge, skill, training and experience might have resulted in a general's rank if she had been a man. Instead, the Army even denied her a promotion to Colonel because she was a woman. While many of Boutell's "firsts" were atypical, the restrictions on her career advancement were representative of many Wacs' experiences during the 1960s. Boutell was among the first women sworn as officers in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in 1942, and she rose quickly through the ranks.⁴⁰ She was part of the initial group of Wac officers promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 1951.⁴¹ In 1955, Boutell was the first and only woman (until 1973) to attend and graduate from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, a military school that groomed officers for senior leadership in national defense assignments. In 1957, she became the first female officer to specialize in logistics.⁴² By 1962, Lieutenant Colonel Boutell was the chief administrator of the Army's Logistic Program Branch, which meant she was responsible for a budget exceeding a billion dollars, but she was unable to move up further in rank because of the gender-based law that limited the WAC to one temporary Colonel.⁴³ She considered the restriction a "concrete ceiling" and retired at age 53 in

³⁹ Lt. Gen. Robert W. Colglazier was thwarted by the DSCPERS when he attempted to promote Hortense M. Boutell to Colonel in 1962, right in the middle of the committee's work. In 1965, General Hugh Harris's attempt to promote Elizabeth Hoisington was also denied. Morden, 182, 207.

⁴⁰ Morden, 126.

⁴¹ "Romance Out for First WAAC Officer to Be," *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 8, 1942, p. 2, Newspaper.com (accessed May 4, 2013).

⁴² Morden, 126-27.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 182.

1966, having held the rank of Lieutenant Colonel for sixteen years.⁴⁴ As he had done with WAC Directors' requests, the DCSPERS cited the 1948 law and refused to consider the male General's appeal for an exception.⁴⁵

DACOWITS and PSCW Coalition

While Wacs and a few male officers were pressing for change from within the military, women labor activists outside the military pushed for executive and legislative action resulting in reforms and attention to women's issues that affected both civilian and military employment. In 1961, responding to growing pressure from women's groups to address issues of discrimination, President John Kennedy's executive order established the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW).⁴⁶ One reason the President supported the PCSW was to show that he was committed to working on improving the lives of women, but without the rancor associated with the fight over the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).⁴⁷ The commission was directed to make recommendations to the President about improving women's lives in seven key areas, with

⁴⁴ Matt Schudel, "Hortense M. Boutell; Groundbreaking Army Officer," *Washington Post*, August 2, 2006. ProQuest.

⁴⁵ Morden documents the denial of these promotion requests for two Wacs, Boutrell and Elizabeth Hoisington. Morden, 182, 207.

⁴⁶ Cynthia Harrison described how Peterson used the Commission as a means to take away the discord over the ERA and "devise and alternative program to improve women's status." Cynthia Ellen Harrison, *On Account of Sex: The Politics of Women's Issues, 1945-1968* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 120.

⁴⁷ Esther Peterson, Director of the women's bureau under Kennedy feared the repeal of protectionist legislation. For detailed analysis on how the PCSW undermined pro ERA supporters in the early 1960s, see Cynthia Harrison, *On Account of Sex*. Esther E. Peterson, interview by Ronald J. Grele, May 18, 1966, no. 1, John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program, <http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset-Viewer/Archives/JFKOH-EEP-02.aspx> (accessed on May 3, 2014).

federal employment the main focus for military women.⁴⁸ The twenty-six committee members came from women's organizations, business, government, labor, and education.

The Presidential Commission on the Status of Women generated immediate and substantial influence for servicewomen when examining federal employment practices and legal treatment of women because it characterized the military as a workplace. That the PCSW was interested in the military was not surprising because some members and administrators of PCSW had military connections advocating for servicewomen's issues, ultimately creating a coalition. Members of PCSW networked with the civilian all-women's advisory group for the Department of Defense, the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services or DACOWITS.⁴⁹ President Eisenhower established DACOWITS during the Korean conflict in 1951 to help improve public perceptions of servicewomen in order to increase their recruitment into the military. After the war, the group's added responsibility was to study issues about women in the

⁴⁸ The other six areas of focus were private employment, protective labor legislation, civil and political rights, education, home and community, and social insurance and taxes. "Report on Progress in 1965 and the Status of Women," *Second Annual Report of the Interdepartmental Committee and Citizen's Advisory Commission on the Status of Women* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare Office of Education, 1965).

⁴⁹ On August 11, 1951, The Secretary of Defense established the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) in order help recruit more women into the services during the Korean War by promoting military service as an acceptable and appropriate job or career for women. Morden, 74. For detailed history of DACOWITS, see Alice V. Bradford, "A Study of the Defense Advisory Committee On Women in the Services," (master's thesis, Boston University, 1964); Judith Youngman, "Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services," in *Gender Camouflage: Women and the U.S. Military*, eds., Francine D'Amico and Laurie Weinstein (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 169-175; Judith Lawrence Bellafaire, "Public Service Role Models: The First Women of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services," *Armed Forces & Society* 32 (April 2006): 424-436.

military and keep the Defense Department apprised of these issues.⁵⁰ President Kennedy appointed two women to the PCSW who had been original members of DACOWITS.⁵¹

In 1963, PCSW's final report, "American Women," established recommendations to remove gender inequality at work, but even more significant for military women was the growing collaboration between members of PCSW and DACOWITS.⁵² Heading the subcommittee investigation of federal employment, former DACOWITS member, Margaret Hickey ensured that members worked with the military advisory committee to recommend removal of promotion restrictions for female officers.⁵³ Three former and one active DACOWITS' member served on subcommittees and two members of the PCSW administrative staff were WAC officers with personal knowledge about the Army's promotion barriers for women.⁵⁴ As chair for the War

⁵⁰ Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, "Charter, Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, <http://dacowits.defense.gov/About/Charter/> (accessed November 4, 2013).

⁵¹ Margaret Hickey and Dorothy Height. United States, *American Women Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1963). Dorothy Height was the President of the National Council of Negro Women and the only African American appointed to the PCSW. Margaret Hickey at the time of her appointment was an editor at the *Ladies Home Journal*, but had been a past President for the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs.

⁵² Harrison, 119-120.

⁵³ Tanya Roth, "Public Law 90-130," in *An Encyclopedia of American Women at War from the Home Front to the Battlefields*, ed. Lisa Tendrich Frank (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2013), 453.

⁵⁴ Jeanne Noble (1960-62), Kerins Florence Murray (1952-56), Ester Lloyd Jones (1951-54) and Helen Schleman (1951-54). Two WAC officers were Colonel Irene Galloway and Lieutenant Colonel Hortense Boutell. In 1957 when Galloway's term as WAC Director ended, the law forced her to return to the grade of Lieutenant Colonel. Boutell was one of the first women promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, but since the law prohibited her from attaining any more promotions, she had been stuck at this rank since 1951. Galloway had just retired in October of 1961 when she was recalled from retirement in 1962 at her former rank of Colonel to serve on the staff for this committee. Morden, 183; "The President's Commission on the Status of Women—50 years Later," Schlesinger Library, Radcliff Institute for Advanced Studies, Harvard

Manpower Commission during World War II, Hickey understood the complexities of integrating women into government service, including the military.⁵⁵ Hickey and two other DACOWITS members sat on the subcommittee that investigated federal employment policies and practices, and they included women in the military as part of their analysis.⁵⁶ Historian Cynthia Harrison described the committee's work as an "omnibus approach to matters affecting women's lives."⁵⁷

With their collective experience and relationships with government service, the alliance between the members of DACOWITS and PCSW effectively pressured the government to support equality for female officers' promotions. Robert McNamara, the Secretary of Defense, initially rejected the 1960 DACOWITS' recommendation to eliminate discriminatory promotion and retirement laws for servicewomen as part of a bill that the Defense Department wrote and sponsored.⁵⁸ In June 1962, Nona Quarles, DACOWITS chair and Carlisle P. Runge, the Assistant Secretary of Defense, presented their opposing views on the proposed legislation to the PCSW committee.⁵⁹ Ultimately, PCSW supported DACOWITS' proposition to eliminate the restrictions,

University, October 18, 2013, <http://www.radcliffe.harvard.edu/schlesinger-library> (accessed August 7 2014); "Farewell Set Here for Colonel Galloway," *The Anniston Star*, October 14, 1961, p. 13, Newspapers.com (accessed on August 7, 2014).

⁵⁵ Margaret A Hickey papers, State Historical Collection of Missouri, <http://shs.umsystem.edu/stlouis/manuscripts/s0236.pdf> (accessed May 3, 2014).

⁵⁶ Ester Lloyd Jones and Jeanne Noble. Tanya Lee Roth, "Battling for Equality Sexual Integration in the U.S. Military, 1945-1978," (PhD diss., Washington University, 2011), 228.

⁵⁷ Harrison, 109.

⁵⁸ Morden, 183, 184. Esther Peterson's oral history revealed that the most resistance she had from all of the government departments was the Army and Department of Defense because "I suppose they knew that we'd be going after some of their old time-honored traditions." She also signaled out Dorothy Height and Mrs. Roosevelt for having the commission include an investigation of black women.

⁵⁹ Morden, 183. Morden mistakenly placed the date of the meeting as 7 November 1962 when in actuality, the meeting took place in June 1962.

presenting this position as part of their preliminary recommendations to President Kennedy. The President backed the promotion for women officers, and forced McNamara to reverse his stance.⁶⁰ In July 1962, McNamara wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt, the chair of the PCSW committee, to indicate that the Defense department would support the elimination of women officer restrictions.⁶¹ The DOD amended their bill to include the DACOWITS proposal in 1963. The battle to gain Department of Defense support for women's promotions was largely won, and the fight shifted to Congress.⁶²

In 1965, as these battles were being waged, President Johnson outright ignored the law that limited the WAC to one temporary Colonel posting when he promoted his most senior personal secretary and longtime friend, Mary Juanita Roberts.⁶³ Johnson's actions required Senate

⁶⁰ McNamara later served on the Interdepartmental Committee on the Status of Women (1964-1965) to help provide guidance to meet the goals of the PCSW. "Report on Progress in 1965 and the Status of Women," *Second Annual Report of the Interdepartmental Committee and Citizen's Advisory Commission on the Status of Women* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare Office of Education, 1965).

⁶¹ McNamara quoted in Morden: "In response to the adoption of the resolution, the Administration has approved the recommended action and the Department of Defense will now take the necessary steps to modify the proposed legislation." Morden, 183.

⁶² United States, *American Women Report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women, 1963* (Washington. D.C.: G.P.O., 1963), 53. The amendment failed to pass at this time because it was attached to a controversial bill that would change the structure of officer promotions in the military. The 1960 Bolte Commission report attempted to revise differing officer standards for the separate services established in 1947. It hoped to standardize career management among service branches, but the services resisted several of the provisions, which included enacting a single promotion list, enforcing "up or out." The women's promotion bill had originally been attached to this bill. The bill eventually was dropped in 1966. Many of the changes for the standardization of service promotions became the Defense Management Personnel Act (DOPMA), which passed Congress in 1980. Morden, 184.

⁶³ Morden, 208. Juanita Roberts met and became friends with LBJ and Lady Bird Johnson in 1938. She began working for him in 1953. Juanita Roberts interview by Joe B. Frantz, October 16, 1969, transcript, AC 84-19, Interview III, LBJ Presidential Library Oral Histories,

confirmation and Roberts' promotion received the support of the Senate. Many Senators had worked closely with Roberts who was a reservist in the Army Congressional Command and Operation's Group, an exclusive Army reserve unit established in 1956 for members and staff on Congressional Hill.⁶⁴ Roberts was a "charter member" of the group and formed a friendship with Senator Strom Thurmond (R-SC), who was a Major General in the Army Reserve and headed the reserve unit.⁶⁵

The WAC Director and DACOWITS members recognized this moment as a valuable opening to press Congress to repeal or amend the 1948 Women's Armed Services Integration

LBJ Presidential Library, <http://transition.lbjlibrary.org/items/show/70948> (accessed August 01, 2014).

⁶⁴ Juanita Roberts interview by Joe B. Frantz, August 29, 1969, transcript, AC 84-18, Interview II, LBJ Presidential Library Oral Histories, LBJ Presidential Library, <http://transition.lbjlibrary.org/items/show/70947> (accessed August 01, 2014).

⁶⁵ Ibid. Roberts noted in her 1969 oral history that there were seven senators and twenty-two members of the House in her Reserve unit. Among them was Senator Strom Thurmond. She stayed in the Reserves until 1960 when Thurmond suggested to then Vice President elect Johnson, that he was entitled to military aides. Johnson then called Roberts to active duty in February of 1961 where she remained until her retirement. On active duty, Roberts could acquire years toward a military pension. Later, when Johnson's time in the White House was ending, Thurmond supported the President's (failed) plan to pass a private bill that would combine Roberts' federal and military service to give her enough years to retire and continue her secretarial work at the Presidential library. According to Roberts, Thurmond supported a private bill to allow Roberts to combine her military (15 years) and civil service (10 years) in order to retire when LBJ finished his Presidency and follow him back to Texas for work with the Presidential library. The plan was thwarted by Senator Richard Russell (D-GA), who was upset that LBJ had not appointed a judge he supported. Instead, Roberts stayed in the military until she had accumulated twenty years. Juanita Roberts Interview Number IV, pp. 21-22; Juanita Roberts interview II p. 24, 25; and Juanita Roberts Interview II, pp. 24-25, LBJ Presidential Library Oral Histories, LBJ Presidential Library. Other congressional members in Roberts' Reserve unit were listed in a newspaper article. See Seth Cantor, "Legislator-Soldiers "Rough It" in the Pacific," *The Pittsburgh Press*, December 9, 1964, p. 5, Google.com/newspapers (accessed August 1, 2014).

Act.⁶⁶ WAC Director Emily Gorman fully supported Roberts' promotion because it vindicated repeated attempts by the women's corps leadership to increase the number of WAC Colonels. Gorman used Roberts' promotion to frame a request for six new Colonel billets for women with substantial responsibility. After weaving through Army bureaucracy, Gorman finally convinced the new DSCPER, Lt. General James Woolnough, to support her request, but he also recommended that she present a proposal to Congress to remove the officer restrictions.⁶⁷

Meanwhile, in 1966, after learning that the Army denied many women entry into military service while drafting large numbers of men for Vietnam, DACOWITS leadership argued that rejecting women volunteers because of the two percent personnel cap while conscripting men was a waste of resources.⁶⁸ DACOWITS worked with the WAC Director's office to recommend that the Department of Defense seek congressional approval to remove the promotion caps and numbers restriction for all women that limited them to two percent of the military. The group pressed the Department of Defense to evaluate the feasibility of increasing the numbers of women

⁶⁶ Morden, 208. Comprehensive analysis of the Congressional debate over the Women's Integration Act can be found in Morden, 39-56 and in E. Ann Allen's dissertation, "The WAC Mission: The Testing Time from Korea to Vietnam," (PhD diss., University of South Carolina, 1986).

⁶⁷ Morden, 208-209. Although the DCSPERS initially denied the full request based on the current law, he approved giving the Commandant of the WAC training center a "spot promotion," which was a promotion based on merit in the line of duty. When the proposal arrived on his desk, General Creighton W. Abrams, the Army's Vice Chief of Staff sided with Gorman and approved five of the six slots for WAC Colonels. However, once the request arrived at the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) office, it met legal resistance. In JAG's view, only Congress or the President could allow for additional Colonel positions. A few weeks after the JAG decision, Colonel Gorman spoke with Lt. General James Woolnough, the new DSCPER. Lieutenant General James Woolnough served as DSCPER from October 1965 to July 1967. In 1965, the JAG decided that the "promotion of WAC officers to the grade of temporary colonel was not prohibited or limited by the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948." However, the DSCPERs at that time did not agree with this view and left the matter unresolved. Morden, 182, 208-210.

⁶⁸ Holm, 190.

in the military.⁶⁹ DOD studied the issue, and in 1967 agreed to lift the cap.⁷⁰ But the resulting boost of 6,500 was modest in comparison to the 1966 “Study on Utilization of Women in the Armed Services,” recommendation for more than double that number.⁷¹

DACOWITS also focused on Congress in 1965, instructing its members to lobby individual Congressmen and Senators for a separate stand-alone bill that would remove female officer restrictions.⁷² According to WAC historian Bettie Morden, “members of the DACOWITS, representatives of veteran’s organizations and women’s clubs, former directors of the women’s services and other servicewomen had begun to bombard members of Congress with requests for legislation to remove the inequities.”⁷³ Jeannie Holm, then Director of the Women in the Air Force, described how active duty members wrote “thousands of letters to members of Congress,” while retired veterans lobbied their representatives in person.⁷⁴ The strategy yielded progress. In

⁶⁹ Morden, 222.

⁷⁰ Holm, 191. “There is a disturbing paradox in this circumstance: Women willing to volunteer for military duty exist in far greater numbers than the services will accommodate, but at the same time there are undoubtedly military tasks suitable for women which are being filled by men who have to be involuntarily inducted.” DACOWITS statement in: Burke Marshall, “In Pursuit of Equity: Who Serves When Not All Serve?” *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Selective Service* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967).

⁷¹ A joint services committee to study on utilization of women in the military had been set up after the 1966 meeting between DACOWITS and Deputy Secretary of Defense (Cyrus Vance) and Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (Thomas D. Morris). They recommended an increase of 73% (20k to 35k) for women in all services by 1968, and further increases to reach the maximum cap on women in the military by 1971. Holm, 190-91; United States, *Report of the Inter-Service Working Group on Utilization of Women in the Armed Services* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 1966).

⁷² Morden, 210.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Holm, 199, 200.

the House of Representatives, Otis Pike (D-NY) embraced the removal of restrictions and in March of 1966, introduced a standalone bill, H.R. 14208 to provide women with equal promotion opportunities.⁷⁵ Senator Strom Thurmond (R-SC), who had supported Juanita Roberts' promotion, agreed to "correct the existing discriminatory provisions of the law affecting military women officers."⁷⁶ In 1967, he introduced his own bill in the Senate to remove female officer restrictions. Thurmond, an ardent segregationist, supported the ERA, but women's roles in the military at the time were not a threat to male power and leadership, instead legislators focused on providing women with advancement based on "merit and performance" for women's work.⁷⁷

Congressional hearings between 1966 and 1967 revealed limited opposition to the removal of the restrictions; instead, witness testimony and legislators' statements reflected an understanding that women's roles had changed since 1948. Most recognized that rank, promotion and retirement limitations prevented talented female workers from achieving their full potential.⁷⁸ Concerns about women's equal treatment in the workplace were not new to Congress, but their widespread denunciation of disparate treatment of women in the military was unprecedented. Historian Nancy MacLean has shown how Congress's inclusion of "sex" in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 created a new legal basis to protect women from discrimination in the

⁷⁵ Ibid., 211.

⁷⁶ Ibid; Mabel Pollitzer, Interview by Constance Myers, June 16, 1974, transcript, Interview G-0047-2. Southern Oral History Program Collection (#4007) in the Southern Oral History Program Collection, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, <http://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/G-0047-2/G-0047-2.html> (accessed June 3, 2014).

⁷⁷ 1967 Senate Armed Services Hearing, *Female Officer Promotions*, 41.

⁷⁸ Jeanne Holm noted that the hearings were "unexpectedly brief and devoid of controversy." Holm, 199.

workplace.⁷⁹ However, based on traditional deference to the military to run its own affairs, Congress excluded active duty military personnel from the law, so legislators' willingness to address gender discrimination was significant.⁸⁰ During an Armed Services subcommittee hearing on the removal of promotion restrictions, Otis Pike recognized the "longstanding inequity" for women that had unfairly been made "binding."⁸¹ The chairman of the subcommittee, Representative Phillip Philbin (D-MA), asserted that the new bill, H.R. 16000 "was designed to assure that a woman officer filling an important billet is not denied a promotion just because she is a woman."⁸² Representative Richard Schweiker (R-PA), a longtime supporter and cosponsor of the (at that time stalled) Equal Rights Amendment, argued that the legislation "merely removes limits on women's advancements that may have looked like reasonable long-range objectives in 1947 but act like shackles in 1966."⁸³ The remarks by House members on the Armed Services

⁷⁹ Nancy MacLean, *Freedom is Not Enough: The Opening of the American Workplace* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 120-125.

⁸⁰ "Active-duty military personnel are not covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, or the implementing government wide equal employment opportunity and affirmative action regulations and guidelines of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. However, the Secretary of Defense has established a separate equal opportunity program with similar requirements for these personnel." General Accounting Office, *Military Equal Opportunity: Certain Trends in Racial and Gender Data May Warrant Further Analysis* (Ft. Belvoir: Defense Technical Information Center, 1995), 2.

⁸¹ Pike's bill was replaced by H.R. 16000, which had been introduced by Chairman L. Mendel Rivers of the House Armed Services Committee as a proposal that consolidated the different versions presented by the services. Morden, 211.; United States, House, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee No. 1, *Consideration of S. 3500, to Authorize the President to Advance Maj. Gen. Robert Wesley Colglazier, Jr., to the Grade of Lieutenant General: And H.R. 16000, to Amend Titles 10, 32, and 37, United States Code, to Remove Restrictions on the Careers of Female Officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, and for Other Purposes* (hereafter cited as 1966 House Subcommittee, *To Remove Restrictions*), 89th Cong., 2nd sess., September 21, 1966, 11040, ProQuest Congressional (89 H2238-0.14).

⁸² *Ibid.*, 11039

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 11042.

Committee revealed that some male congressmen recognized the need to support women's equal work opportunity, even in a nontraditional profession like the military.

In addition to DACOWITS support, testimony revealed a partnership of men and women, civilians and veterans, and active duty troops to support greater opportunity for servicewomen within the confines of established and traditional jobs. The Director of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) noted that "artificial [promotion] barriers" for women were unfair.⁸⁴ Military leaders testified in support of the legislation and emphasized how the discriminatory law was detrimental not only to women, but to the Armed Services. Retired Major General Earl F. Cook, representing the Association of the US Army, a veteran's association, had been working to overturn the female officer restrictions. Cook maintained that the "arbitrary restrictions," prevented women from attaining the rank they merited.⁸⁵ His organization believed that many high-ranking women were retiring because the limitations on advancement had an "adverse effect on morale" for servicewomen who otherwise deserved a promotion.⁸⁶ Colonel John Carlton, the executive director for the Reserve Officer Association argued that women in the military should have the opportunity to "contribute substantially to national defense" without having to retire prematurely due to "artificial restrictions."⁸⁷

The Senate Armed Services committee had little objection to the law when they took up the matter the following year (with a renamed House bill, H.R. 5894) because like House

⁸⁴ Lawrence Speiser testimony in 1967 Senate Armed Services Hearing, *Female Officer Promotions*, 46.

⁸⁵ 1966 House Subcommittee, *To Remove Restrictions*, 11062.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 11068.

members, Senators understood that women's careers would still be different from male soldiers. They were not concerned about permitting female officers' advancement in what they considered women's work. The bill did not change the separate promotions lists for men and women in the Army. Legislators wanted women to be eligible for the top grades in their traditional fields of work, but they did expect or desire them to have the same experiences or potential as male officers. The committee noted, "It is recognized that a male officer in arriving at the point where he may be considered for general and flag rank passes through a crucible to which the woman officer is not subjected—such as combat, long tours at sea, and other dangers and isolations."⁸⁸ Congress specifically noted that the bill would not equalize all roles for men and women, and clearly intended to keep them out of combat.⁸⁹ Instead, in 1967, greater opportunity for military women meant placing more women in noncombatant fields deemed suitable for women. President Johnson signed the law on November 8, 1967.⁹⁰

While the passage of Public Law 90-130 in 1967 did not yet provide military women and men with equal status and benefits, the potential for female career developments had grown tremendously. When all percentage caps for rank were lifted, twice as many new grades were available for female officers. The law inspired other policy measures for women's equal treatment. Weeks after the official signing, the Army Chief of Staff demanded inclusion of the

⁸⁸ United States, House, Committee on Armed Services, *To Remove Promotion Restrictions on Women in the Armed Forces, and for Other Purposes: Report (to Accompany H.R. 16000)*, 89th Cong., 2nd sess., October 5, 1966, 5-6, ProQuest Congressional (12713-7).

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁹⁰ Morden, 214.

first two “eligible and qualified” Wac officers for attendance at the Army War College.⁹¹ While enlisted Wacs had not been subject to promotion caps, none had achieved the highest enlisted rank of Command Sergeant Major until 1968 after PL 90-130 passed.⁹² The Army equalized women and men’s separation and retirement policies. Advocates for the legislation that produced PL 90-130 could not have predicted the scale or speed of the workplace transformation to come with an All-Volunteer Force and the battle for the Equal Rights Amendment, but their effort constructed a fundamental cornerstone on which to build significant change.

A Monumental Shift for Wacs with the ERA and AVF

The public debate over the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) exposed tensions between legislators, the Army’s civilian and military leadership, and WAC’s directors. And perhaps most significantly, the controversy fueled servicewomen’s resentment over discriminatory protectionist policies that had little or nothing to do with combat. In 1972, after almost fifty years spent avoiding the issue, Congress reacted to forceful pressure from feminist lobbying groups, strong public support, and Presidential backing by voting in favor of the Equal Rights Amendment by 354-24 in the House and 84-8 in the Senate.⁹³ The supporters’ goal was to eliminate the different set of legal standards that existed for men and women, and provide all citizens with the same

⁹¹ Harold K. Johnson was the Army’s Chief of Staff between 1964 and 1968. The Army War College was one of the military’s senior service colleges that prepared high ranking officers for senior leadership positions. *Ibid.*, 221.

⁹² In 1968, the Army promoted Yzetta L. Nelson to the rank of Command Sergeant Major. Morden, 343.

⁹³ The ERA was originally proposed to Congress in 1923 and reintroduced every year until its final passage, but was never voted on in the House until 1971. Jane Mansbridge, *Why We Lost the ERA* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1986), 8-11.

legal protections under the law. Opponents of the measure focused the public debate (in part) on whether or not women would be drafted or forced into combat roles.⁹⁴

Scholars have often focused on how fears about conscripting women or forcing women into combat contributed to the ERA's ultimate defeat.⁹⁵ Some accurately described how women's military combat restrictions limited their upward mobility for promotions, provided unequal training opportunities, kept numbers artificially low, and pushed women out of the military earlier than men.⁹⁶ Researchers have depicted combat exclusions as relegating women to second-class status in the military.⁹⁷ Yet in spite of the ERA failure, the fight over the amendment brought

⁹⁴ Phyllis Schlafly's STOP ERA campaign emphasized the ERA as a threat to women's traditional roles and emphasized that equality meant women would be forced into military as combatants. The organization also emphasized that women faced loss of privileges, uncertainty about abortion (especially after *Roe v. Wade*), lack of spousal support, homosexual marriage, and breakdown of the family. See Donald T. Critchlow, *Phyllis Schlafly and Grassroots Conservatism: A Woman's Crusade* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005). In 1971, Schlafly's group was emboldened by a report from Yale that focused on how the ERA might be interpreted and included the role of women with respect to military service. The STOP ERA and anti-ERA legislators used some of the language in this report to argue that women would be forced into the military and combat jobs. The authors of the Yale study argued that the ERA would result in "a radical restructuring of the military's view of women," that included drafting women and potentially placing a small number of them in combat units where they might have to fight the enemy. See Barbara A. Brown, Thomas I. Emerson, Gail Falk, and Ann E. Freedman, "The Equal Rights Amendment: A Constitutional Basis for Equal Rights for Women," *The Yale Law Journal* 80, no. 5 (1971): 871-985.

⁹⁵ Allison L. Held, Sheryl L. Herndon and Danielle M. Stager, "The Equal Rights Amendment: Why the ERA Remains Legally Viable and Properly Before the States," *William and Mary Journal of Women and the Law* Vol. 1, Issue 3, Article 5, (1997): 116-117. See also Rosemarie Skaine, *Women at War: Gender Issues of Americans in Combat* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1999).

⁹⁶ Lorry Fenner and Marie de Young, *Women in Combat: Civic Duty or Military Liability* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2001); Linda Bird Francke, *Ground Zero: The Gender Wars in the Military* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997).

⁹⁷ Ilene Rose Feinman, *Citizenship Rites: Feminist Soldiers and Feminist Antimilitarist* (New York: New York University Press, 2000); Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998); Claire R. Snyder, "The Citizen-Soldier Tradition and Gender Integration of the U.S. Military," *Armed*

gains for women in the military. Most ordinary female soldiers were not focused on the debate over combat, but began to use the feminist movement's tools of litigation and lobbying legislators to press for full inclusion as noncombatant soldiers. Emboldened women took advantage of the ERA's spotlight to press for equality in military education, fair treatment to have families, and dependency benefits. Scholars have generally underestimated the broad scope of these changes in the military.⁹⁸

The public debate over the ERA revealed that there was “not a clear understanding about the impact” of the amendment, especially with respect to military obligations for women.⁹⁹ As a result, those opposed argued that women would be forced into conscription and combat, reframing equality as detrimental for women. Supporters responded by clarifying why women's military service was necessary, a defensive posture that made the idea of women in combat perspective seem more valid and frightening.¹⁰⁰ Jean Witter, a National Organization for Women

Forces & Society 29, no. 2 (Winter 2003): 185-204; M.C. Devilbiss, *Women and Military Service A History, Analysis, and Overview of Key Issues* (Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala: Air University Press, 1990).

⁹⁸ Scholars have ascribed the defeat of the ERA in part because Phyllis Schlafly's STOP ERA message that ratification would lead to drafting of women and placing them in combat roles. Donald G. Mathews and Jane Sherron De Hart, *Sex, Gender, and the Politics of ERA: A State and the Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 225. Jane Mansbridge argued that future initiatives to pass the ERA should include amendments that would place restrictions on its “application for the military, abortion,” and other controversial issue. Jane Mansbridge, *Why We Lost the ERA* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1986), 4. The military changes from the ERA are in part: women enrolled in ROTC, military and service academies, equal enlistment and discharge standards, female soldiers as mothers, work in most Army occupations, offensive weapons and combat training, the end of WAC and women moved into regular Army units.

⁹⁹ Renee Feinberg, *The Equal Rights Amendment: An Annotated Bibliography of the Issues, 1976-1985* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 16.

¹⁰⁰ When ERA supporters focused on the issue of conscription and combat for women, they strengthened the perception that the ERA was centered around these issues. My views on framing and response to the ERA has been influenced by George Lakoff's work. George Lakoff,

(NOW) member, acknowledged that her group was opposed to war, but argued that “as long as citizens are drafted, all citizens should be subject to the draft, women equal with men.”¹⁰¹ The near unanimous agreement that the ERA’s ratification would make women eligible for military conscription was troubling to opponents, but vigorous debate on whether or not that meant women would be forced into combat intensified that fear.¹⁰² Still, there was no clear definition or agreement on what combat represented for women. Congressional testimony during the ERA hearings underscored combat’s malleable meaning, ranging from soldiers being present in a war zone, to facing a risk of capture or death, to carrying a rifle on the battlefield or firing a weapon. Senator Marlow Cook (R-KY), who supported the amendment argued that “a lady sitting at a computer at a missile site” could be considered a combat role.¹⁰³ ERA opponent, Senator John Stennis (R-MS) warned that passage of the amendment would mean seeing “women being taken prison in combat” with “unthinkable consequences.”¹⁰⁴ But some legislators argued that women already faced hazards because, “today’s warfare is not confined to the battlefields and is no

Don’t Think of an Elephant: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate (White River Junction: VT, Chelsea Green Publishing Company, 1990).

¹⁰¹ Statement by Jean Witter, Chairman of the Equal Rights Amendment Committee, NOW in United States, Senate, Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments, Committee of the Judiciary, *The “Equal Rights” Amendment: on S.J. Res. 61 to Amend the Constitution So as to Provide Equal Rights for Men and Women,* 91st Cong., 2nd sess., May 5-7, p. 57, ProQuest Congressional (70-S521-350).

¹⁰² United States, House, Subcommittee no. 4 on Judiciary House of Representatives, *Equal Rights for Men and Women 1971*, 309, ProQuest Congressional (71-H521-3).

¹⁰³ Morigene Holcomb, *Equal Rights Amendment: Selected Floor Debate and Votes* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 1974), CRS-10.

¹⁰⁴ Senator John Stennis quoted in Holcomb, *Equal Rights Amendment: Selected Floor Debates*, CRS-6.

respector of sex.”¹⁰⁵ In fact, Senator Birch Bayh (D-IN) noted that there were already nurses, “Wacs, Waves, and Wafs in combat service,” in Vietnam.¹⁰⁶ The unclear definition of combat and what it meant for women helped to undermine the ratification of the ERA.¹⁰⁷

Yet by highlighting women’s military service, the ERA debates exposed discriminatory policies that kept women from most military jobs and many benefits, accelerating the push for integration. Prior to the 1970s, the courts, Congress, and civilian leaders had granted military leaders a wide latitude in dealing with the utilization of its troops. Thus, the Army restricted women from many jobs, dismissed pregnant soldiers, and denied them access to training and dependency benefits that were available to all male soldiers. In 1972, enlisted Wacs could only work in 140 of the 482 Military Occupational Specialties and female officers could only work in 177 of the 365 specialties.¹⁰⁸ While the public spotlight centered on combat, the real issue for many servicewomen was the fight for the same workplace benefits as men and access to the majority of Army jobs, which were in support, not combat.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Marguerite Rawlings quoted in House Subcommittee Hearing, *Equal Rights for Men and Women 1971*, 309.

¹⁰⁶ Senator Birch Bayh Jr. (D-IN) revealed that the military assigned less than one percent of draft qualified males to a combat unit, and eligibility of capable women would make their numbers even smaller. Sen. Bayh quoted in Holcomb, *Equal Rights Amendment: Selected Floor Debate*, CRS-10. Waves refer to women in the Navy, Wafs refer to women in the Air Force.

¹⁰⁷ Donald G. Mathews and Jane S. DeHart, *Sex, Gender, and the Politics of ERA: A State and the Nation* (USA: Oxford University Press, 1990), vii-xv, 3-54. Mathews and DeHart maintained that ERA supporters did not have the state support or organization required to ratify the amendment. Nor did ERA supporters adequately address or understand the concerns of anti-Era groups who argued that women’s future social roles would be uncertain.

¹⁰⁸ "The Equal Rights Amendment and the Military," *The Yale Law Journal* 82, no. 7 (1973): 1547-548.

¹⁰⁹ Jeanne Holm quoted in prepared statement for United States, House, Committee on Education and Labor, Special Subcommittee Hearing, *Education: Discrimination Against Women, Sect. 805 of H.R. 16098*, 91st Cong., 2nd sess., July 1 and 31, 1970, p. 993, ProQuest

Meanwhile, the end the draft unintentionally helped women's efforts to occupy positions formerly reserved for men.¹¹⁰ In February 1970, the Gates Commission, appointed to examine the feasibility of ending conscription, announced support for an All-Volunteer force (AVF) and Congress agreed to the plan, setting 1973 as the last year for the draft.¹¹¹ But policymakers noticed that the rate of males volunteering for military service dropped significantly, creating a "sense of urgency" within the Department of Defense to expand opportunities for women.¹¹² In 1972, the Secretary of the Army acknowledged the labor shortfall, announcing it would double the number of women to help close the manpower gap.¹¹³ In doing so, the Army opened all job specialties to women excepting just forty-eight occupations that involved "combat, close combat support, hazardous duty, or unusual strenuous demands."¹¹⁴ Yet Army leaders recognized their

Congressional (71-H341-1). Brigadier General Jeanne Holm was the director of the Women in the Air Force between 1965-1973.

¹¹⁰ Nixon promised an end to the draft during his Presidential campaign in 1968. Rostker, 4.

¹¹¹ Two of the most comprehensive examinations of the end of the draft and origins of the All-Volunteer Force are Rostker, *I Want You!*, and Beth L. Bailey, *America's Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force*. Other analysis on the volunteer army include: Robert K. Griffith Jr., *The U.S. Army's Transition to the All-Volunteer Force, 1968-1974* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1997); Richard W. Stewart, ed., "Rebuilding the Army: Vietnam to Desert Storm," in *American Military History, Vol. 2, idem* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2010), 373-411.

¹¹² Morden, 266.

¹¹³ Griffith, 192; Rostker, 202; United States, Central All Volunteer Task Force, *Utilization of Military Women: A Report of Increased Utilization of Military Women, FY 1973-1977* (Springfield, VA: National Technical Information Service, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1972), 8-10.

¹¹⁴ Griffith, 193; Charles Hillinger, "'Military Lib'—Servicewomen Gain Objectives," *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, September 11, 1972, p. 11. In 1972, enlisted women could only work in 140 of the 482 Military Occupational Specialties and female officers could only work in 177 of the 365 specialties. "The Equal Rights Amendment and the Military," *The Yale Law Journal* 82, no. 7 (1973): 1533-57.

ultimate goal was to supplement male labor for military jobs in an all-volunteer force. But employing large numbers of women now required them to express a commitment to workplace equality. Thus, another stated objective was to “improve the Army’s image as a pioneer and leader in equal opportunity and the ‘women’s liberation movement’ to place the Army in a stronger recruiting position in competition with our sister services.”¹¹⁵

WAC leadership resisted integration into the regular Army, fearing it would compromise the special status afforded military women in the segregated corps.¹¹⁶ But rapid integration also threatened WAC’s management authority and strict supervisory control over female soldiers.¹¹⁷ The new WAC Director, Inez Bailey, adhered closely to Hoisington’s view of the women’s corps. She did not want female soldiers to be “masculinized,” by having the same duties and responsibilities as male soldiers.¹¹⁸ She resisted the ERA and reforms supported by feminists, legislators and many female soldiers. Bailey fought against enrolling women in military academies and ROTC, praised combat restrictions, argued against military mothers and any efforts to equalize entry standards for men and women.¹¹⁹ Compared to men’s enlistment standards, WAC required higher levels of education, imposed stricter age limits, and placed

¹¹⁵ Griffith, 193.

¹¹⁶ Morden, 232.

¹¹⁷ Morden, 264. The DOD plan was to increase the WAC to 23,800 women from the 1972 amount of enlisted 12,349 and officers 4422. (DOD Figures of Female Active Duty Military Personnel 1945 thru the Present, 1995)
<http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/M01/fy95/SMS219R.html>.

¹¹⁸ “New Day in Military,” *Grand Prairie Daily News*, April 18, 1973, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016).

¹¹⁹ Morden, 257.

restrictions on dependents. In 1973, Bailey remarked that the women's corps should not have to "drop our standards" to the lower level requirements the Army used to enlist men.¹²⁰

WAC leadership's opposition to the ERA frustrated legislators who were seeking to expand women's military roles. In a 1971-1972 House Armed Services Committee hearing, committee chair Otis G. Pike opened the session by outlining some of the ways the Army and other services discriminated against servicewomen at work: "For example, in the Army, women can be a cook but not a baker. She can take still photographs, but not movies. She is told she can both bake and take movies in times of national emergency."¹²¹ Bailey defended the restrictions, arguing that she did "not feel that our women are excluded by design from any occupation in the Army which they are capable of performing."¹²²

Bailey's resisted widespread expansion because, like previous Directors, she supported the original mission of the Women's Army Corps to retain a small highly qualified elite group of women. Bailey wanted to keep the "women only" training to protect the status quo and the traditions of the women's corps. Representative Samuel Stratton (D-NY) tried to overcome the Director's resistance to mixed gender housing in the barracks by describing how many colleges, even his own alma mater, were going to co-educational dorms.¹²³ But Bailey countered by insisting that the social issue of women's equality was irrelevant to her job.¹²⁴ "My responsibility

¹²⁰ Karen Peterson, "The 'New' Army Wacs," *Democrat and Chronicle (Rochester, NY)*, October 10, 1974, 1C, Newspaper.com (accessed on May 24, 2014).

¹²¹ United States, House, Committee on Armed Services, *Subcommittee on the Utilization of Manpower in the Military*, 92nd Cong., 1st and 2nd sess., October 13, 16 and November 4, 9, 1971 and March 6, 1972, p. 12439, ProQuest Congressional (72-H201-24).

¹²² *Ibid.*, 12445.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 12496.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

is to the women inside the Army and their welfare and not to promote women's rights outside the Army."¹²⁵ Stratton pushed to get Bailey to admit that her role as the head of the WAC was to expand opportunities for all women, but the General was adamant that she was only responsible for women within the corps.¹²⁶ At the close of the hearings, Chairman Pike revealed his bewilderment that legislators were willing to help eliminate many discriminatory practices that most of the Directors seemed willing to retain.¹²⁷

Bailey, like many other Wacs, believed servicewomen led the way for gender equality, and she rankled at the suggestion that feminists were responsible for changes that benefitted military women. Upon accession to her post as Director in 1971, she responded to a media question about the influence of the women's movement on the Army by responding, "We've been women's lib since 1942."¹²⁸ In her view, Wacs succeeded because of their own ability, skills and hard work, the women's movement had very little to do with their achievements. While Bailey recognized the movement "helped bring about some of these changes faster," she believed that women in the Army had more opportunity than civilian women.¹²⁹ But according to Bailey, the

¹²⁵ Ibid., 12497.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 12496.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 12503. "I have the ugly feeling today that Mr. Stratton and I want to "hep" [sic] you more than you want to be "hepped [sic]."

¹²⁸ "We've Been Women's Lib since 1942! Says the WAC's new Woman General," *The Lowell Sun*, September 27, 1971, p. 4, Newspapers.com (accessed June 3, 2014).

¹²⁹ Margie Carlin, "New Army Woos Women by Expanding Horizons," *The Pittsburg Press*, August 24, 1972, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016); "Sex Barriers Falling in Army," *Asbury Park Press*, June 6, 1975, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016).

expansion of jobs, promotions and privileges in the Army “wasn’t due to the women’s liberation movement,” it happened after decades of hard work from Wacs.¹³⁰

Many rank and file Wacs agreed that the Army led the way for women’s workplace rights, but did not necessarily claim any identity as feminists because a connection to the movement seemed irrelevant to gains they had already made. Doris Caldwell believed that by proving their value in a men’s world and earning equal benefits, women in the military “were the ones that started women’s lib.”¹³¹ Brenda Formo, an Army officer who served between 1969 and 1993, believed feminist perspectives about equality in the workplace were disconnected from women’s military experiences. Evoking her long experience in a predominantly male workplace in comparison to the leaders of the women’s movement, she remarked, “Have they ever served in the Army for twenty-four years?”¹³² In her view, women’s successes were the result of proving themselves to men on the job.¹³³ “I’m not trying to be first or fight for women’s lib; I’m just trying to do my job,” remarked Delores Walker, one of the first women to command an all male company.¹³⁴ Clotilde Bowen, who admitted experiencing racism and sexism, still believed the

¹³⁰ “WAC Commander Relishes Her Job,” *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, October 7, 1971, Newspaper.com (accessed on March 24, 2016); Susan Fogg, “A General with Dimples? That’s the Modern Army,” *The (Mitchell, SD) Daily Republic*, August 28, 1971, Newspaper.com (accessed April 2, 2016).

¹³¹ Paula Musto, “She’s in the Army Now,” *Democrat and Chronicle (Rochester, NY)*, September 5, 1973, p. 28, Newspaper.com (accessed June 3, 2014).

¹³² Brenda Formo interview by author, April 16, 2009, WV0460, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Don Walker, “First Woman Leads Ft. Campbell Unit,” August 18, 1975, *The (Louisville) Courier-Journal*, August 18, 1975, p. 31, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016).

military was ahead of the civilian world. “The Army promotes you on the basis of quality and years of service. It doesn’t matter if you are male or female.”¹³⁵ Other Wacs viewed equal pay as synonymous with the movement’s goals, and therefore unnecessary for their objectives.¹³⁶

Responding to a journalist’s inquiry about sex discrimination, one Wac officer retorted, “We don’t have women’s lib to contend with because we already have equal pay.”¹³⁷ Wacs had always worked in a nontraditional profession and pushed for new opportunities, so many servicewomen resisted giving any credit to feminists whose main goal to them appeared to be one that female soldiers had received for twenty nine years—equal pay.

Yet some Army women viewed the feminist movement as a crucial part of Wacs’ struggle for equality in the military. In some cases, fighting for equal rights brought individual gains, other times the Army discharged Wacs deemed “troublemakers.”¹³⁸ For instance, Michelle

¹³⁵ Michael Parks, “Colonel Bowen Calls Army More Uptight Over Her Sex Than Her Race,” *Baltimore Sun*, March 23, 1971, box 242, WCH-182 Discrimination (1971-1973) folder, Fort Lee Archives.

¹³⁶ The National Organization advocated “equal pay for equal work,” and this message was prominent in many newspaper articles in the 1970s. “Mrs. Engleman Tells Calument Homemakers About Women’s Lib,” *The (Appleton, WI) Post Crescent*, April 27, 1971, Newspaper.com (accessed March 26, 2016); James L. Overton, “Restruct Work Ethic, NOW Leader Urges,” *The Tennessean*, May 28, 1974, Newspaper.com (accessed March 26, 2016); Natalie Traylor, “Women Vital Part of the Convention,” *The Anniston Star*, July 16, 1972, Newspaper.com (accessed March 26, 2016); “Women Reject Lib Claim of Discrimination,” *The (Hazelton, PA) Standard-Speaker*, September 28, 1971, Newspaper.com (accessed March 26, 2016).

¹³⁷ “A Wac is a Soldier, but a Lady First,” *Tucson Daily Citizen*, May 6, 1972, p. 17. Many Wacs rejected the label “women’s libber.” See “U.S. Army Field Training Includes Two Women,” *The (Benton Harbor, MI) News-Palladium*, November 3, 1973, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016); “Nina Re-Enlists During Free-Fall Sky Dive,” *Detroit Free Press*, November 20, 1972, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016); George Dullea, “First Woman Joins Army Chaplaincy,” *The (Louisville) Courier Journal*, August 21, 1974, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016).

¹³⁸ Michelle De Bussy, “Wac Got a UD,” *The Bond*, April 19, 1971, p. 8, “GI Press Collection,” Wisconsin Historical Society,

De Bussy argued that when she stood up for her rights, the Army labeled her a “women’s lib advocate,” discharging her with less than honorable terms.¹³⁹ But another soldier who self-identified as a lesbian feminist, found value in her job as a “race relations-equal opportunity specialist.”¹⁴⁰ Despite hiding her sexuality, she argued that by being a “live crusader’ inside the Army, she could transform soldiers’ attitudes about sexism and racism.¹⁴¹ Donna Krukar considered visibility of the movement essential to motivating women to pursue new jobs and careers, and that bled over into the Army.¹⁴² Some pushed to access new fields. Sherian Cadoria, who in 1985 became the first woman Brigadier General in the Military Police Corps, recalled that when she requested Airborne training early in her career, WAC leaders responded, “Ladies don’t do that.”¹⁴³ Yet she continued to seek out the most difficult jobs, “that no other military woman had held. Jobs that were reserved for men” and ones where she took “knocks, bangs, bruises, insults and rejections along the way.”¹⁴⁴

<http://content.wisconsinhistory.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15932coll8/id/39819> (accessed June 5, 2015).

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ “From a Lesbian Soldier,” *Lesbian Connection*, (July 1977): 13, Independent Voices Archive, <http://voices.revealdigital.com/cgi-bin/independentvoices> (accessed June 5, 2015).

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Gertrude Lucy, “*The WAC Wants You*,” *Post Standard (Syracuse)*, May 13, 1974, Newspaper.com (accessed February 9, 2014); Charles Hillinger, “Women’s Lib Enters Ranks of U.S. Armed Forces,” *Asbury Park Press*, September 17, 1972, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016).

¹⁴³ “From Louisiana to Washington D.C.,” *Pentagram*, March 16, 1989, box 595, Sherian Cadoria file, Fort Lee Archives.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

Some black women identified institutional race discrimination, not gender, as their main barrier to mobility, good assignments and advancement in the Army. “The black woman doesn’t really have a place in women’s lib because she is still being held back along by her race,” declared one black Wac during a 1971 forum on women’s rights.¹⁴⁵ In the late 1960s and early 1970s, black male soldiers protested not only being drafted into the Army for Vietnam, but housing conditions, lack of advancement, menial work, disproportionate punishment, poor assignments, dearth of black leaders and prohibitions on expressions of black identity.¹⁴⁶ These issues were interconnected with the civil rights movement and many of the same themes rang true for black Wacs. In 1971, one protest at Fort Meade, Maryland involved about fifty black Wacs, some supporters of a civil rights group called “Brothers and Sisters for Equality.”¹⁴⁷ The Wacs complained about unfair treatment both on and off base, and staged a protest. The military police arrested ten participants when the group failed to disburse, clubbing two Wacs to the ground.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ “An Experiment in Rapping at Bien Hoa,” *PS&S*, February 10, 1971, p. 27.

¹⁴⁶ Beth Bailey analyzes this racial tension on military posts during Vietnam. Bailey, 111-116. Many newspapers described the protests and riots that erupted on military bases around the world at this time. For example, see Thomas A. Johnson, “Clashes Increasing in West Germany,” *San Antonio Express*, November 28, 1970, Newspaper.com (accessed May 14, 2014).

¹⁴⁷ Stuart H. Loory, “Army is Trying to Fire 6 Militant Black Wacs,” *The Philadelphia Enquirer*, June 2, 1971, Newspaper.com (accessed March 14, 2014).

¹⁴⁸ “Black Wacs March,” *GI News and Discussion Bulletin*, No. 5, May 1971, p. 32, GI Press Collection, Wisconsin Historical Society Digital Archives.

The Army later discharged six Wacs they considered instigators.¹⁴⁹ The women contended that the Army had singled them out for exposing racial issues on the post.¹⁵⁰

Black Wacs fight for equality within the Army offers further evidence of the mutually reinforcing relationship between civil rights and feminism in the 1970s.¹⁵¹ Another incident at Fort McClellan in Alabama underscored many black Wacs' discontent with both male and female leadership. The fort was the largest posting of Wacs in the Army because it contained both the WAC basic training course for women and WAC training facilities, including a clerical school.¹⁵² But it also housed and trained about 3,000 men at the Army infantry and chemical training divisions.¹⁵³ In 1971, a large group of Wacs, who were training as clerks, took part in a three-day protest at Fort McClellan. The protest grew out of black women's frustration that the Army assigned them to menial work details, provided them with only unskilled jobs, but they also

¹⁴⁹“Black Wacs Protest Bias,” *The New Pittsburgh Courier*, June 26, 1971, Newspaper.com (accessed March 31, 2016). My research was unable to identify the total number of black Wacs involved in this incident, it was not widely reported except in the African American press. One newspaper reported that charges were dropped for two Wacs, one received non-judicial punishment, the other three were facing discharge proceedings. “Civil Rights at Issue, Lawyer Says,” *Morning Herald (Hagerstown, MD)*, June 2, 1971, Newspaper.com (accessed April 6, 2016).

¹⁵⁰ “Civil Rights at Issue, Lawyer Says.”

¹⁵¹ Serena Mayeri, *Reasoning from Race Feminism, Law, and the Civil Rights Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2011), 5; Brenda L. Moore, “African American Women in the U.S. Military,” *Armed Forces and Society* 17, no. 3 (1991): 363-384. M.C. Devilbiss rightly situates black women in a predominantly male and white organization. She argued that since the military can legally discriminate (in part) based on gender, advocating for their rights based on racial issues might be the best strategy. Devilbiss, 55-56.

¹⁵² Denise P. Messick, *Historic Context Study: World War II and Cold War Era Buildings and Structures, Fort McClellan, Calhoun County, Alabama* (Mobile, AL: US Army Corps of Engineers, 2000).

¹⁵³ Ibid.

objected to discriminatory policies that prohibited them from wearing Afro hairstyles or playing music at the clubs appealing to their preferences of entertainers.¹⁵⁴ Protesters complained that the Army was treating them unfairly, promoted them slowly, and that they were routinely disrespected by white soldiers.¹⁵⁵ The melee began when a fight erupted between black and white soldiers on a weekend night. In the aftermath, black soldiers spent the next two days organizing, marching and demanding a meeting with the post commander.¹⁵⁶ After a contentious meeting with Commander Colonel William McKean to air racial grievances broke down, he ordered them to disperse. When the group of male and female soldiers refused to return to work and began to march through the installation, McKean ordered mass arrests for all blacks on the post assembled in groups.¹⁵⁷ Sixty-eight black female soldiers were arrested and jailed.¹⁵⁸ Although none were charged with a crime, the Army discharged nine women, transferred forty-six to different assignments, returned eleven to clerk training, and two others were identified as not having

¹⁵⁴ Beverly Bradford and Norman Brown, "McClellan Protesters Are Jailed," *The Anniston Star*, November 16, 1971, Newspaper.com (accessed March 25, 2016). 347 Wacs were enrolled in the school and 21 percent of these women were black. Morden, 349.

¹⁵⁵ Beverly Bradford, "His Acquittal Was Unexpected by Pfc. Jenkins," *The Anniston Star*, January 16, 1972, Newspaper.com, (accessed March 30, 2016). David Cortwright, "Black GI Resistance During the Vietnam War," *Vietnam Generation* 2, no. 1, Article 5 (1990), <http://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/vietnamgeneration/vol2/iss1/5>; Barbara L. Tischler, "Breaking Ranks: GI Antiwar Newspapers and the Culture of Protest," *Vietnam Generation* 2, no. 1, Article 4 (1990), <http://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/vietnamgeneration/vol2/iss1/4>.

¹⁵⁶ Morden, 347-349.

¹⁵⁷ Frank Denton, "Trial Judge Supports Mass Arrests at Fort," *The Anniston Star*, December 22, 1971, Newspaper.com (accessed March 30, 2016).

¹⁵⁸ Beverly Bradford, "His Acquittal Was Unexpected."

participated and quickly released from detention.¹⁵⁹ One underground GI Press newsletter reported that the women were not prosecuted due to the Army's "fear of bad publicity."¹⁶⁰

WAC and Army leaders had been unresponsive to the black students' grievances about discrimination, and reporting on the incident reflected mistrust on both sides. One Wac involved in the protest remarked that "some whites just don't care what happens to blacks."¹⁶¹ McKean promised to investigate complaints, but still insisted that the Army was "fully integrated, and everyone is treated alike."¹⁶² However, an underground GI press article portrayed Colonel McKean as disrespectful towards the black female soldiers involved, blaming the protest on "emotional, radical and militant" Wacs.¹⁶³ In other mainstream newspaper reports and interviews, WAC leadership argued that female black soldiers' limited opportunities stemmed from their inadequate qualifications for more skilled work.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁹ Morden, 348; For details on the reporting of the incident, see "13 Black Wacs are Released," *The Anniston Star*, November 19, 1971, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016). Sixty enlisted male black soldiers who joined the women in protest of racial policies at the post were also arrested, seven were court martialed and three were convicted.

¹⁶⁰ "Get That Nigger," *Great Speckled Bird* 5, no. 1, (January 10, 1972): 9, Georgia State University Digital Collection, <http://digitalcollections.library.gsu.edu/cdm/ref/collection/GSB/id/4005> (accessed June 12, 2013).

¹⁶¹ Beverly Bradford, "Why the Racial Trouble Erupted at Fort McClellan," *The Anniston Star*, December 1, 1971, Newspaper.com (accessed March 30, 2016).

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ "Get that Nigger."

¹⁶⁴ Ann Fisher, the commander of the WAC Training Battalion at the time of the protest described her involvement with the protesters. Fisher and Rechel amended interview with author.

The installation commanders at Fort Meade and Fort McClellan initiated reforms by establishing new race relations mediators to address grievances.¹⁶⁵ In 1971, the military's response to these and other protests throughout the country was to set up the Defense Race Relations Institute that implemented new training to "promote racial harmony."¹⁶⁶ But instead of confronting actual institutional racism grievances of black soldiers, the Army addressed soldiers' attitudes and behavior. Although there were no further major black Wac protests on military bases, black women continued to face punishment over their hairstyle and attempts to address racial grievances.¹⁶⁷

But some black soldiers noted that discrimination in the civilian world was "no worse, no better than the military," in fact, some women found significant advantages to military service.¹⁶⁸ One black Wac felt that the Army had "liberated" her from discrimination.¹⁶⁹ Others appreciated military benefits for families. In 1972, Edith Efferson and Grendel Howard, the first two single Army women permitted to adopt children, noted that the Army provided housing, child care, and medical benefits for their children.¹⁷⁰ Efferson found these advantages made life easier for single

¹⁶⁵ "Fort Meade Names Bias Negotiator," *The (Frederick, MD) News*, June 23, 1971, Newspaper.com; Bradford, "Why the Racial Trouble erupted at Fort McClellan."

¹⁶⁶ John W. Shaw, Peter G. Nordlie, and Richard M. Shapiro, *Strategies for Improving Race Relations the Anglo-American Experience* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1987), 77-78.

¹⁶⁷ "Outlandish Hairstyle Earns Enlisted Woman a Court-Martial," *The (Alexandria, LA) Town Talk*, January 30, 1975, p. 2, Newspaper.com. "Wac Fights Back," *Omega Press*, July 4, 1972, "GI Press Collection," Wisconsin Historical Society.

¹⁶⁸ Beverly Bradford, "Why the Racial Trouble erupted at Fort McClellan."

¹⁶⁹ "An Experiment in Rapping at Bien Hoa."

¹⁷⁰ Kristin Goff, "Wac Bucks Military Tradition," *The Childress (TX) Index*, December 17, 1972, p. 13, Newspaper.com (accessed May 3, 2013).

black women than what was possible in the civilian world.¹⁷¹ In spite of obstacles for racial equality, black women increasingly sought Army service. Between 1972 and 1978, the proportion of black Wacs rose from sixteen to twenty-five percent.¹⁷²

As the Army significantly increased women's numbers within its ranks, the looming possibility of the passage of the ERA pushed senior leadership to institute their own reforms. Legislators had previously excluded the military service academies and military service branches from laws directed at eliminating sex discrimination, but the effects of the likely passage of the ERA were unknown.¹⁷³ So the Army implemented some changes even before the ERA passed through Congress. In 1970, in recognition of the responsibilities required to transition to an All-Volunteer force, the Army appointed Elizabeth Hoisington, the WAC Director as its first female General.¹⁷⁴ Even Hoisington argued it was important to "let the Armed Forces, not Congress, to decide" about any changes on policies for women.¹⁷⁵ The Secretary of the Army also wanted to get ahead of changes that could be imposed from the outside if the ERA was successful, so he

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² The numbers in 1972 were 2,453 blacks out of 14,688 total Wacs. In 1978, those numbers increased to 13,269 black women out of 52,996 women in the Army. More dismal was the percentage of black officers. In 1972, less than half a percent of Wac officers were black (52 out of 901), and by 1978, that number had only increased to one percent, (264 out of 2,636). Overall black population was between eleven to twelve percent at this time. Morden, 410-415.

¹⁷³ United States, Senate, Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments, Committee of the Judiciary, *The "Equal Rights" Amendment: on S.J. Res. 61 and S.J. Res. 231 Proposing and Amendment to the Constitution of the United States Relative to Equal Rights for Men and Women*, 91st Cong., 2nd sess., September 9-11, and 15, 1970, p. 2-3, ProQuest Congressional (70-S521-38).

¹⁷⁴ Morden, 232.

¹⁷⁵ Judi Davis, "Her Old Army Has Changed," *The Akron Beacon Journal*, February 17, 1972, p. 26, Newspaper.com (accessed June 4, 2013).

appointed Wac Colonel Bettie Morden as chair of a committee to make recommendations for reform.¹⁷⁶ The Committee conservatively recommended the continuation of separate housing, pregnancy discharge, and combat exclusion policies for women.¹⁷⁷ Further, they determined that promotion lists, basic training, and enlistment standards would remain sex segregated. The group recommended only two changes: enrollment of women into West Point Military Academy and assignment of women officers to branches outside of the Women's Army Corps.¹⁷⁸

The DSCPERS, Lieutenant General Bernard W. Rogers rejected the idea of opening West Point to women, but insisted on integrated basic training and defensive weapons lessons for female soldiers, with the expectation that the Army would eventually disband the Women's Army Corps.¹⁷⁹ In 1973, Rogers ordered the Army to implement a series of gradual changes for gender integration, called "the Plateau Plan" in order to quiet external pressure from women's groups and legislators that demanded immediate equality for parenting and military academies.¹⁸⁰ The Director of WAC fought vigorously against any changes that would lower the enlistment standards of women, or permit pregnancy or parenthood for its members.¹⁸¹ Hoisington eventually lost these battles, but in the meantime, the Army's push for expanded integration of women moved quickly.

¹⁷⁶ "Report of the Committee to Study the Proposed Equal Rights Amendment," Morden, 299-300.

¹⁷⁷ Morden, 300.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 303.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 302-306.

Faced with a significant labor shortage, the Army unofficially narrowed the meaning of “combat” in ways that were beneficial to women’s military job opportunities. First, the Army opened many new fields in combat-related roles to women that the Army had previously limited to male soldiers. By the end of 1973, women commanded men, and worked as helicopter pilots, military police officers, munitions technicians, tank repairers and ordnance operators. Roger’s plans included other immediate reforms: equalizing noncombatant training and education opportunities for women and men, and eliminating different re-enlistment and separation standards.”¹⁸² The plan still excluded women from “physical combat in conventional or unconventional units,” and “assignments which preclude privacy in the field.”¹⁸³ Nonetheless, these reforms resulted in significant changes for women. In 1966, only thirty-five percent of all Army job fields were open to women. By 1978, they could access ninety-two percent of all occupations. Consequently, whereas in 1972, over sixty percent of Wacs served in the administration and clerical occupational field, by 1976, that number was cut nearly in half to thirty-two percent. Other occupational fields quickly yielded significant gains. The proportion of Wacs in communication and intelligence jobs increased from two percent to fourteen percent, in supply they went from 1.1 percent to ten percent and in electrical and mechanical field, the increase was from 0.1 percent to four percent.¹⁸⁴ Even more crucial was that the overall number of Wacs had tripled in less than five years, from less than 17, 000 to nearly 53,000 by 1977.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸² Ibid., 301.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Richard W. Hunter, *Use of Women in the Military* (Washington: Assistant Secretary of Defense & Manpower Reserve Affairs and Logistics, 1977), 13.

¹⁸⁵ The actual numbers were from 16,771 in 1972 to 52,959 in 1977. See Morden Appendix.

Integration into male jobs did not come without obstacles. One Wac described how “the doors are open, but it takes a push.”¹⁸⁶ At Fort Campbell Kentucky, where Wacs drove trucks, repaired weapons, policed the post, and completed jump school, many women complained that they were not being accepted by the men. Even though she was qualified, one male commander prohibited a Wac from operating a heavy duty truck for six months.¹⁸⁷ Another woman’s commander banned her from going on patrols, even though these were part of her military policing duties.¹⁸⁸ Linda Bird complained that she had to “work more than 100% - more than a man to prove” herself.¹⁸⁹ Winning respect was difficult. The first female commander at Fort Campbell admitted that it was tough for male soldiers under her supervision “to forget I’m a woman” and view her as their superior officer.¹⁹⁰ Another Wac officer at Fort Ord lamented that a male officer refused to address her by her rank of Captain.¹⁹¹ Some Wacs found that men expected women to work as secretaries, not managers.¹⁹² One male soldier worried that when fights occurred on base, female MPs would not be able to support him.¹⁹³ Other institutional

¹⁸⁶ Jack E. Swift, “Old Army Attitudes Die Hard,” *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, February 24, 1974, Newspaper.com (accessed March 25, 2016).

¹⁸⁷ Don Walker, “Command-her,” *The (Louisville) Courier Journal*, August 18, 1975, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016).

¹⁸⁸ Jack E. Swift, “Old Army Attitudes Die Hard.”

¹⁸⁹ Don Walker, “Command-her.”

¹⁹⁰ Don Walker, “First Woman Leads Ft. Campbell Unit,” *The (Louisville) Courier Journal*, August 18, 1975, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016).

¹⁹¹ Kenneth Schultz, “More Jobs Open to Women in Voluntary Army,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, August 10, 1973, Newspaper.com (accessed March 25, 2016).

¹⁹² Evan Bracken, “Women at Wainwright, Eielson Work in Various and Different Jobs,” *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*, July 2, 1977, Newspaper.com (accessed March 25, 2016).

¹⁹³ Ibid.

obstacles stood in women's way. Rogers' proposal did not allow pregnant women to serve, and he left the higher enlistment standards for female soldiers.¹⁹⁴ Additionally, Army leadership deliberately set aside controversial decisions about woman's access to West Point and the sustainability of the Women's Army Corp.¹⁹⁵

The Fight to Open the Military Academies and ROTC

Beginning in 1971, a push for women's admission to the military academies brought together many of the same groups and tactics that had worked to pass PL 90-130. But this time, NOW and male family members of servicewomen joined forces with DACOWITS and legislators. Using suits, lobbying, and by attracting media attention, this coalition forced the military to change their policies. Yet the debate also reframed the reasoning behind the special programs to train military officers. By integrating women into West Point and ROTC, advocates for reform rejected the view that these institutions existed solely to develop combat leaders; instead, they emphasized the military's need for a professional officer corps in all aspects of military operations, including noncombat roles.

Scholars have often overlooked the male supporting cast behind the fight to open military academies to women. Although many men opposed women in the military and a substantial number mounted vigorous opposition to their inclusion in the academies, others made significant contributions to facilitate integration. Around the same time but independent of each other, two seventeen year old women, Barbara Jo Brimmer and Valerie Schoen, decided to apply to the

¹⁹⁴ Morden, 301.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 301-302.

United States Naval Academy, which up until that time had been an all-male institution.¹⁹⁶

Brimmer was encouraged to attend by a male friend who was a cadet at the Naval academy.¹⁹⁷

Kenneth Brimmer was an Annapolis graduate and retired Navy commander with initial skepticism, but he quickly became a fierce champion of his daughter and her goal for an academy education. In fact, he highlighted the need for reform during media interviews by insisting that, “women did not even have the right to vote” when he graduated in 1920 and that “a lot of old traditions have been broken,” since he had been a cadet.¹⁹⁸ Schoen’s brother thought women should try to break into the academies, gathering the information necessary for her packet. In his view, “a military education was the best” that Schoen could receive.¹⁹⁹

The male legislators nominating Schoen and Brimmer did so in the context of the social and political battle to expand women’s rights in the workplace. Senator Javits (R-NY), who had previously sponsored the first women pages in the Senate, admitted that he had not thought of integrating the military academies until he received the letter from Brimmer.²⁰⁰ Representative Jack McDonald (R-MI) believed Schoen was a worthy candidate to support.²⁰¹ Ironically, Schoen

¹⁹⁶ Stephen E. Frantzic, *Citizen Democracy: Political Activists in a Cynical Age* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 128-131. The idea of a women’s military academy was briefly mentioned by a civilian aide to the Secretary of the Army in 1972, but it was quickly dismissed. Morden, 319.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Frantzich, 130; “Girl Set to Break Navy Tradition,” *The (Wisconsin Rapids) Daily Tribune*, February 2, 1972, p. 9, Newspaper.com (accessed July 8, 2014).

¹⁹⁹ Frantzich, 131.

²⁰⁰ “Sen. Javits Fires Salvo Aimed at Annapolis’ Men-Only Tradition,” *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, December 13, 1971, p. 17, Newspaper.com (accessed July 8, 2014).

²⁰¹ Brimmer’s male friend, who attended the academy in Annapolis, unwittingly challenged Brimmer to apply with the observation, “If you were a boy, you could be going here.” Brimmer also wrote to Vice President Agnew and President Nixon. Both of Brimmer’s male

sent a letter to congresswomen Martha Griffiths (D-MI), who led the push for the Equal Rights Amendment in Congress. Griffiths turned Schoen down, replying that because of the military's prohibition against women cadets, "I can't do anything, "but good luck."²⁰² In January 1972, Javits and McDonald nominated the women for admission to the Naval Academy.²⁰³ Javits' declared, "There is no longer any logical or legal basis for this kind of discrimination."²⁰⁴ If the Navy refused to admit their female candidates in class for the fall, both men promised to introduce legislation to legalize women's right to enroll.²⁰⁵

Emphasizing women's combat exclusion, Secretary of the Navy, John Chafee, refused to accept the legislators' female nominations. Chafee argued that the law prohibiting women from combat vessels meant that he could not accept women into the Navy academy because they

senators, Sen. Javits and Sen. James Buckley (R-NY) replied to her request with application packets. Valerie Schoen sent inquires to her state Senators and Congressmen, both Senators declined to support her because women were not accepted at the academies. "Girl Set to Break Navy Tradition," *The (Wisconsin Rapids) Daily Tribune*, February 2, 1972, p. 9, Newspaper.com, (accessed July 8, 2014); "Girl, 18, Nominated for Annapolis," *The Holland Evening Sentinel*, January 19, 1972, p. 6, Newspaper.com (accessed July 8, 2014); Frantzich, 108, 128, 130-31.

²⁰² Frantzich, 108.

²⁰³ Barbara's mother had also served as a WAVE during World War II. Charles Hanley, "Midshipman Very Well Distributed," *The (Saint Joseph, MI) Herald Press*, Feb 2, 1972, p. 1, Newspaper.com (accessed July 8, 2014).

²⁰⁴ "New York Coed Nominated to Naval Academy," *The Cumberland News*, January 25, 1972, Newspaper.com (accessed June 3, 2014).

²⁰⁵ Janet Staihar, "A Navy's Tradition in Peril: Girl named for Annapolis," *The Spokesman Review*, January 24, 1972, p. 1, Googlenewspaper.com (accessed June 3, 2014); "Navy to Welcome Women in College ROTC but Not at Service Academy," *The (Danville) Register*, February 9, 1972, p. 2, Newspaper.com (accessed June 3, 2014). There were other women who applied to the Naval academy, but had not attained the support of a Congressman or Senator. Genevieve Waselewski applied in 1949, Mary Ann Bonalsky in 1956. Michael H. Gelfand, *Sea Change at Annapolis: The United States Naval Academy, 1949-2000* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 111-112.

would be unable to fulfill an academy requirement to work at sea after graduation.²⁰⁶ However, he attempted to defuse the issue by opening the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs to women.²⁰⁷ Chafee admitted that, “It seems only fair that women coming to us should have the advantage of a college scholarship just like our men.”²⁰⁸ One NOW member viewed opening ROTC to women as “tokenism” and “evidence of discrimination.”²⁰⁹

Up to this point, the Army, like the Navy, had refused women’s participation in ROTC. Director Bailey had initially supported this exclusion, but the momentum had shifted. In early 1972, after the Navy opened up their ROTC program, Bailey testified to Congress that the WAC-run OCS (Officer Candidate School) supplied sufficient numbers of qualified women, so ROTC programs for women were not necessary.²¹⁰ Yet, Bailey worried that other service’s acceptance of women in ROTC programs would result in competition with the Army for female officer candidates. The Air Force had begun to accept women into ROTC in 1969 and now the Navy had opened up their program to women.²¹¹ So Bailey informed Congress that the Army would run a test program.²¹² The Army ROTC experiment with two hundred women at limited colleges was a

²⁰⁶ Jim Willse, “Navy Decision Irks Women Libbers,” *The San Bernardino County Sun*, February 10, 1972, p. 27, Newspaper.com (accessed June 3, 2014).

²⁰⁷ “Navy to Welcome Women in College ROTC.”

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Jim Willse, “Navy Decision Irks Women Libbers.”

²¹⁰ United States, House, Committee on Armed Services, *Special Subcommittee on the Utilization of Manpower in the Military*, 92nd Cong., 1st and 2nd sess., Oct 13, 26, Nov. 4, 19, 1971; March 6, 1972 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. G.P.O., 1972), 12496.

²¹¹ Morden, 287.

²¹² 1971-1972 House Hearing, *Utilization of Manpower*, 12496.

success.²¹³ In fact, the program became so popular with women that by May 1973, the Secretary of the Army made ROTC for women available at all participating colleges and universities.²¹⁴ The success of the program and competition with others services vying for female recruits led the Army to eliminate the direct officer commission program for the Women's Army Corps. By 1976, all women participated in officer training alongside men.²¹⁵

Scholars of women's military service have overlooked the significance of ROTC programs that provided women with steady access to leadership training and helped improve women's competition for military college scholarships.²¹⁶ ROTC programs were established by Congress in 1916 to establish military instruction at colleges and universities in order to have a ready supply of officers available for active duty. These changes revolutionized training for the Army's female officers by including them as professionals and legitimizing their presence in the military culture. Their opening created a crack in the male dominated officer training programs, which helped undermine military resistance to women's admission in the academies.

More men gained their military commissions through ROTC training than any other program, and as soon as the doors to ROTC opened to women, they followed suit.²¹⁷ For example, in 1970, of the more than 58,000 males officers entering the military, 24,000 came from

²¹³ Morden, 288.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 366.

²¹⁶ Scholarship on the integration of women into ROTC is sparse. The only detailed analysis found in my research is a chapter in Michael Neiberg's work tracing the history of women's involvement as auxiliary units in ROTC programs to their full scale enrollment in ROTC as cadets. Michael S. Neiberg, *Making Citizen-Soldiers: ROTC and the Ideology of American Military Service* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000), chapter 6.

²¹⁷ Morden, 286.

ROTC and 2,300 from military academies.²¹⁸ By 1978, there were 15,256 women enrolled in Army ROTC programs, one quarter of all ROTC students.²¹⁹ While the push to integrate the academies received much of the public spotlight, the ROTC programs were the workhorse and helped prepare many future female military leaders. Some of the early female ROTC graduates ultimately became flag officers, the highest ranks in the Army.²²⁰ Even today, female ROTC graduates continue to be a source for the Army's military leadership, outpacing graduates of West Point Military Academy.²²¹

²¹⁸ Richard E. Meyer, "ROTC: Sagging Campus Military Symbol," *The Paris News*, June 28, 1970, Newspaper.com (accessed March 31, 2016). The Armed Forces other main method of producing officers has been through each service's Officer Training Schools.

²¹⁹ Morden, 288.

²²⁰ My research has identified sixteen female flag officers that attended in the 1970s and 1980s. Following are the women in order of their ROTC University, graduation date, and their initial and latest flag officer promotion dates in parenthesis: Gen. Ann Dunwoody, State University of New York 1975 (2001/2008), LG Kathleen M. Gainey, Old Dominion University 1978 (2001/2008), MG Gina S. Farrisee, University of Richmond 1978 (2001/2008), LG Susan Lawrence, Campbell University 1979 (2007/201), BG Colleen McGuire, University of Montana 1979 (2008), LG Patricia E. McQuiston, University of Akron 1980 (2005/2012), LG Karen Dyson, Southwest Missouri State University 1980 (2008/2014), MG Gwen Bingham, University of Alabama 1981(2011/2013), LG Mary A. Legere, University of New Hampshire 1982 (2006/2012), BG Robin Akin, University of Tennessee 1982 (2010), MG Susan A. Davidson, New Mexico Military Institute 1983 (2012/2014), BG Peggy Combs, Syracuse University 1985 (2012), BG Tammy Smith, University of Oregon 1986 (2012), BG Laura Richardson, Metropolitan State College 1986 (2012), BG Patricia Jones, Rutgers University 1987 (2014), BG Suzanne Vares-Lum, University of Hawaii at Manoa 1988 (2016). General Sherian Cadoria (1985) who graduated in 1972 graduate from Southern Mississippi did not attend ROTC, but a WAC precursor to ROTC called College Junior that gave her the rank of Corporal and allowed her to experience the Army for four weeks during her Junior year. It initiated her interest in WAC, and led to her commission upon graduation. Lavarius Cotton Digest, "Brigadier General Sherian Grace Cadoria," *The Southern Digest*, (February 25, 2015), http://www.southerndigest.com/culture/article_d33a3110-bd08-11e4-b1b8-b37198a7c6cc.html The College Junior Program lasted from 1956-1965. Morden, 502.

²²¹ The first female West Point graduate to become a general was Rebecca Halstead in 2004, who graduated in 1981. After Halstead, I have identified only six additional West Point graduates that have attained flag officer rank in the Army: Anne McDonald, USMA 1980 (2000), Kristin K. French, USMA 1986 (2006), Camille M. Nichols, USMA 1981 (2008), Margaret W.

The ROTC path for women officers failed to address gender discrimination in the academies, so in 1973, Virginia Dondy, a lawyer with the Center for Women Policy Studies, filed a class action lawsuit against the Secretary of Defense.²²² DACOWITS, military women and NOW allied on behalf of the women, but the WAC leadership continued to oppose their admission. The military's main argument against admitting women was based on their view that the Army, Navy and Air Force trained academy graduates to be combat leaders. Since Congress prohibited women, they reasoned they did not belong in the academies.²²³ In 1972, Director Hoisington agreed, stating that because "West Point trains for combat," any woman admitted would take away "a slot that could be filled by a man."²²⁴ In June 1974, the court decided that with women's option to attend ROTC, the Congressional prohibition against women on combat ships and planes, along with the service academies' mission to train combat officers were sufficient reasons to reject the women's suit.²²⁵ Dondy appealed the ruling.

As the suit was winding its way through the judicial system, WAC leaders initially stood on the opposite side of legislators, DACOWITS, and feminists. Except for the Director of Women in the Air Force, all of leaders of women's services insisted in a congressional hearing that there was no need for women academy graduates because they had an abundant supply of

Burcham, USMA 1982 (2012) and Dana Holland, USMA 1990 (2015). One graduate, Nadja West, 1982 USMA 1982 (2000) became a flag officer in the Army Medical Corps.

²²² Michael Gelfand, *Sea Change at Annapolis: The United States Naval Academy, 1949-2000* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 119.

²²³ Quote from Howard Patton in Karlyn Baker, "Hope to Open Academy Doors to Women," *The Des Moines Register*, November 24, 1973, Newspaper.com (accessed March 20, 2016).

²²⁴ Judi Davis, "Her Old Army Has Changed."

²²⁵ Gelfand, 122.

women officers from the months long Officer Candidate School (OCS).²²⁶ In response, Samuel Stratton, a member of the Navy Reserve, informed WAVES Director, Captain Quigley that “the world is changing” and the Navy’s slow steps towards women’s equality were not enough.²²⁷ Representative Patricia Schroeder (D-CO), a co-sponsor of one of the bills, reminded the military that the House’s passage of the ERA was evidence that Congress made “a very clear statement” that sex discrimination was no longer permissible.²²⁸ Representative Bill Frenzel (R-MN) reinforced Schroeder’s argument by stating that “The point of equity is that if we really intend to open up opportunity for women in our armed services, and I do, we can’t only open the broom closets; we must open even the inner sanctum, the academies.”²²⁹

DACOWITS recommended not only opening the military academies, but admitting at least one hundred women to each separate branch.²³⁰ Members of NOW called for Presidential action to change the law.²³¹ Active duty women had to tread a fine line to avoid controversy. In

²²⁶ United States, House, Committee on Armed Services, *Hearings Before the Special Subcommittee on the Utilization of Manpower in the Military*, 92nd Congress, 1st and 2nd Sessions, Nov. 4, 19, 1971; Mar. 6, 1972, p. 12495-6. ProQuest Congressional (72-H201-24).

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 12495.

²²⁸ United States, Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee No. 2, *Hearings on H.R. 9832, To Eliminate Discrimination Based on Sex with Respect to the Appointment and Admission of Persons to the Service Academies and H.R. 10705, H.R. 11267, H.R. 11268, H.R. 11711, and H.R. 13729, to Insure that each Admission to the Service Academies Shall be Made Without Regard to a Candidate's Sex, Race, Color, or Religious Beliefs* (hereafter cited as 1974 House Hearing, *To Eliminate Discrimination Based on Sex*), 93rd Cong., 2nd sess., p. 22, ProQuest Congressional (75-H201-29)

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 58.

²³⁰ Marguerite Sullivan, “Service Academy Besieged: Women Want Attendance,” *Clovis News-Journal*, July 21, 1974, p. 28, Newspaper.com (accessed June 8, 2013).

²³¹ Jim Willse, “Navy Decision Irks Women Libbers.”

1974, Grace King testified at the 1974 Armed Services Committee Hearing on the military academies, but was fired from her command. King had been a Reserve WAC officer since 1953 and admitted that she “made lots of enemies” with her public support of opening the academies.²³² Her commanding officer noted in her negative fitness report that she engaged in “sensationalism concerning women in the Army doing jobs.”²³³ Grace admitted that she and her commanding officer’s disagreements became a “political power struggle,” but that her focus was “to try and open up every single job in the military to women that they’re capable of doing—and they’re capable of doing all of them.”²³⁴ Five months after she appealed her dismissal, she was reinstated and her commanding officer was replaced.²³⁵ King’s experience exposed how publicly advocating for women’s rights in the military could subject military women to retaliation. Very few were willing to take that risk. But by 1973, even WAC Director Bailey, who only a year earlier had testified against the enrollment of women, grudgingly supported the cause.²³⁶ This sea shift in attitudes occurred because political pressure for women’s equality helped reshape discourse on women’s work. Regardless of gender, supporting a policy that provided qualified candidates access to jobs, education and training now seemed reasonable

²³² Margaret Sherf, “WAC Fired: Outspoken or Defiant?” *The High Point Enterprise*, September 1, 1975, p. 1, Newspaper.com (accessed April 8, 2016).

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ “Army Reinstates Wac Feminist,” *The (Long Beach) Independent*, January 30, 1976, p. 11, Newspaper.com (accessed June 14, 2014).

²³⁶ “Fremont Among Women Accepted for West Point,” *The (Fremont, CA) Argus*, March 6, 1976, Newspaper.com (accessed April 8, 2016).

By 1974, increasing numbers of women applied for admission to all of the academies with growing Congressional support from both parties. Legislators nominated dozens of young women and introduced six separate bills, prohibiting sex as a disqualifier for admission.²³⁷ Representative Pierre Samuel du Pont (R-DE) maintained that excluding women from the academies was “ridiculous, wasteful and anachronistic” because the military deserved the most qualified candidates, regardless of gender.²³⁸ While some legislators argued that allowing women admission did not violate the prohibition on combat, many legislators who were willing to let women in the academies were worried that their constituents would interpret a yes vote as allowing women in combat.²³⁹ Consequently, Stratton used statistics from a General Accounting Office (GAO) report to refute claims that all academy men ended up as combat leaders.²⁴⁰ The report revealed that about ten percent of the male graduates never entered any combat field, leaving plenty of opportunity for women to serve in Army noncombat leadership positions upon

²³⁷ In 1972 and 1973 there are many instances of women applying to the Navy and Air Force academies, but not for the Army. By 1974, women began to apply to West Point. “Girl in Nominated to Military Academy,” *Ironwood (MI) Daily Globe*, January 12, 1974, Newspaper.com (accessed June 12, 2014). By 1975, West Point had 1350 requests for admission and had accepted 134 applications. James Feron, “Fashion if not Tradition, Ready for Women Cadets at West Point,” *New York Times*, November 21, 1975, ProQuest.

²³⁸ 1974 House Hearing, *To Eliminate Discrimination Based on Sex*, 52.

²³⁹ “I this we still have to remember that 85 percent of Army officer positions are noncombat oriented.” Rep. Patricia Schroeder quoted in 1974 House Hearings, *To Eliminate Discrimination Based on Sex*, 24; “Women as Cadets in Academies Seen,” *Cumberland Evening Times*, May 21, 1975, Newspaper.com (accessed June 14, 2014); “Fight for Coed Academies Won’t Include Combat Bid,” *The (Appleton, WI) Post-Crescent*, May 7, 1975, Newspaper.com (accessed June 14, 2014).

²⁴⁰ “I suppose the logical mission of the ROTC program is to train for noncombat because after all, women now make up 10 percent of ROTC enrollment.” Quote by General William Knowlton in 1974 House Hearing, *To Eliminate Discrimination Based on Sex*, 22.

graduation.²⁴¹ In 1975, Stratton gave political cover to legislators who were on the fence about voting for the measure by placing the issue as an amendment to a major military appropriations bill, PL 94-106. The measure passed with overwhelming support.²⁴² President Gerald Ford signed the bill on October 7, 1975.²⁴³

In 1976, the Army's West Point Military Academy welcomed 118 women out of 1,145 total cadets.²⁴⁴ After four years, sixty-two of those women graduated, and more than half of them were assigned to combat related specialties in artillery, aviation, signal and engineering.²⁴⁵ Their experiences, along with women ROTC graduates, would prove crucial in establishing women as leaders in the combat support and combat service support units.

Suing for the Right to Families

Immersed in the language of civil rights and empowered by the women's movement, a new generation of women joining the Army in the 1960s and 1970 held growing expectations that part of workplace equality meant the right to have a family. Servicewomen clashed with the

²⁴¹ Morden, 321.

²⁴² Marguerite Sullivan, "Service Academy Besieged."

²⁴³ "Two Defense Bills Totaling \$34.6 Billion Signed by Ford," *New York Times*, October 9, 1975, ProQuest.

²⁴⁴ Scholars and women from the class of 1980 have described the initial period of integration. Lance Janda, *Stronger Than Custom: West Point and the Admission of Women* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002); Carol Barkalow with Andrea Raab, *In the Men's House: An Inside Account of Life in the Army by One of West Point's First Female Graduates* (New York: Berkeley Books, 1992). Other works detail the experiences and challenges of graduates that subsequently followed. Donna M. McAleer, *Porcelain on Steel: Women of West Point's Long Gray Line* (Jacksonville, Florida: Fortis Publishing, 2010); Gail O'Sullivan Dwyer and Harley B. Patrick, *Tough as Nails: One Woman's Journey Through West Point* (Ashland, OR: Hellgate Press, 2009).

²⁴⁵ James Feron, "Women Cadets Seek Combat," *The (Greenwood, SC) Index-Journal*, February 11, 1980, p. 15, Newspaper.com (accessed June 9, 2014).

conservative WAC leadership, who strongly opposed mothers in uniform and pregnant soldiers. Since 1948, Army regulations prohibited parenthood for Wacs based on the view that a woman with children had a primary responsibility for her family, not work. Wac leaders believed mothers should not deploy with their units, so they rejected motherhood, and pregnancy became an automatic discharge.²⁴⁶ In 1948, WAC Director Hallaren had noted during the hearing to create a permanent women's corps that, "if twenty years from now, the public thinking is quite different and the situation for women is different," the Army could alter their policies to allow mothers in uniform.²⁴⁷ It took twenty years, the women's movement, servicewomen's pressure and legislators' recognition of the growing need for women in the military to push the Army to gradually modify their policies.²⁴⁸

As early as 1966, a Joint Services study on the utilization of women suggested that all military branches could allow servicewomen limited rights as parents. The group recommended the retention of married women who turned out to be pregnant within two years of retirement, had "become parents by adoption, gained step-children through marriage, or volunteered to be foster parents for children under the age of eighteen."²⁴⁹ But most of the women directors refused to

²⁴⁶ Morden, 140.

²⁴⁷ Committee on Armed Services, *Subcommittee Hearings on S. 1641, Establish the Women's Army Corps in the Regular Army, to Authorize the Enlistment and Appointment of Women in the Regular Navy and Marine Corps and the Naval and Marine Corps Reserve, and for Other Purposes*, 88th Cong., 2nd sess., Feb. 18, 23, 25, 27, Mar. 2, 3, 1948, p. 5666, ProQuest Congressional (80 H1173-A.41).

²⁴⁸ Holm, 300-301.

²⁴⁹ United States, *Report of the Inter-Service Working Group on Utilization of Women in the Armed Services* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Defense, 1966), 126.

budge.²⁵⁰ In 1971, Director Hoisington argued that by becoming pregnant, a servicewoman “deliberately incapacitates herself” from work by choice, negating any charge of gender discrimination.²⁵¹ Hoisington had even harsher views about unmarried pregnant women. She found them unsuitable for service because she assumed that an unwed-mother indicated “disciplinary or adjustment problems.”²⁵² But Hoisington and other WAC leaders also resisted challenges to the policy based on the view that pregnant soldiers would undermine servicewomen’s carefully constructed image of sexual morality and respectability. The WAC Directors formed a firewall against any change in the pregnancy policy.

Yet many legislators began to support mothers in uniform. When the military required additional personnel for the Vietnam War, some recognized that a prohibition on working mothers led to a loss of skilled workers. In 1967, during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing over female officer promotions, Senator Inouye grilled the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Brigadier General William Berg on why the services discriminated against women by preventing them from pursuing the “normal and natural life of raising children” while in uniform.²⁵³ Inouye asked Berg:

I notice that women who hold very important positions in government, for example, or in private industry, and if they do become pregnant, they are off for about two or three months and they get back to work again. Why isn’t that possible for women members in uniform to do the same thing?²⁵⁴

²⁵⁰ The Director of Women in the Air Force, Jeanne Holm headed the *Inter-Service Working Group* and supported the recommendations. Holm, 293-296.

²⁵¹ Morden, 238.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 236.

²⁵³ 1967 Senate Armed Services Hearing, *Female Officer Promotions*, 45.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

Berg who appeared stumped by the query replied, “I don’t know.”²⁵⁵ But many pregnant women wanted to stay in the Army, and some women even gave up rights to their children to serve. In 1968, Barbara Oswald turned over custody of her five children to relatives in order to enlist.²⁵⁶

In the 1970s, servicewomen began to call on the American Civil Liberties Union and the National Organization for Women to help them sue the military for equal treatment. Nurses were the first to secure an opening in the pregnancy policy.²⁵⁷ Unlike WAC, which involuntarily discharged all women who became pregnant or became mothers, in 1964 the nursing corps began allowing some nurses with children a waiver to remain in the reserve corps.²⁵⁸ In the late 1960s the Army Nurse Corps (ANC) began to provide waivers for all nurses on a case-by-case basis.²⁵⁹ Major Lorraine Johnson, who joined the ANC as a reserve nurse in 1958, became pregnant ten years later. Johnson who was married, requested but was denied a waiver. In September 1970, when the ANC processed her for a discharge, Johnson filed a lawsuit to challenge her discharge and won a temporary injunction. A few months later, worried that the courts would force them to accept all pregnant women, the Army dropped its appeal to Johnson’s injunction, providing her with a waiver to stay in the Army Nurse Corps.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Oswald was able to regain custody of her children when the policy changed in 1972. “Specialist Has Five Children,” *The Manhattan (KS) Mercury*, June 6, 1972, Newspaper.com (accessed March 25, 2016).

²⁵⁷ For a comprehensive analysis on the pregnancy policy history for the ANC, see Kara Dixon Vuic’s work, *Officer, Nurse, Woman: The Army Nurse Corps in the Vietnam War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 123-135.

²⁵⁸ The children’s ages had to be between 15 and 18. Vuic, 124.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 126.

Meanwhile, servicewomen's challenges to its discriminatory provisions continued to flood the services as the ACLU and the National Organization of Women (NOW) successfully filed suits against the military's motherhood policies. To push for change, they sought to attract media coverage to publicize how the military treated fathers and mothers differently. One important court challenge was that of Captain Susan Struck, a single Air Force Nurse who became pregnant in Vietnam in 1970, and requested a waiver to stay in the service because she intended to give the baby up for adoption.²⁶¹ Struck's superiors told her that the only way she could remain on active duty was to get an abortion; otherwise Struck had to leave the service, put the baby up for adoption and apply for readmission.²⁶² Struck hired the ACLU and they appealed the case, winning a temporary stay for her to remain on duty while the case made its way to the Supreme Court. In 1972, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, at that time a lawyer for the Women's Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union, helped represent Struck and filed a brief in the case. Ginsburg argued that discharging pregnant women was a violation of the Fifth Amendment right to equal protection, as well as a violation of Struck's right to privacy in the conduct of her personal life, prohibiting her free exercise of religion.²⁶³ The Supreme Court never heard the verbal argument because Solicitor General Erwin Griswold recognized the weakness in the case, convincing Air Force leadership to permit Struck, who had given up her child for adoption, to remain in the military.²⁶⁴ Griswold also recommended that the Air Force alter their discharge policy,

²⁶¹ Neil S. Siegel and Reva B. Siegel, "Struck by Stereotype: Ruth Bader Ginsburg on Pregnancy Discrimination as Sex Discrimination," *Duke Law Journal* 59, no. 4 (2012): 776-77.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 773-97; Holm, 297-301.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 777.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 777-78; Holm, 299.

which they agreed to do.²⁶⁵ Struck's successful fight put pressure on other service branches to offer waivers to pregnant women.

The Secretary of Defense forced a review of all pregnancy policies after the Struck case, which affected Women's Army Corps. Despite Director Bailey's argument that the military was not a "side-job" for women with a family, the Army implemented a service wide policy change for pregnant married women.²⁶⁶ For the first time, married Wacs could request a waiver to stay in the military if they became pregnant. In order to qualify, the soldier's commander was required to confirm that having a child would not interfere with the woman's work or "result in neglect of the child."²⁶⁷ The policy change was intended in part to avoid litigation.²⁶⁸

Cracks in the Army firewall against pregnancy and family rights were beginning to emerge, but the policy was applied inconsistently and did not apply to all women equally. Some married women could enlist if they had children while others were rejected, and the Army excluded all single women from the waiver policy. Bailey argued that if a married Wac "showed us a reasonable plan for child care... we are delighted to have her," but a "pregnant single woman is not permitted to stay on active duty."²⁶⁹ But WAC did not make pregnant women entirely welcome, female soldiers were required to provide their own civilian maternity clothes when they

²⁶⁵ Siegel, "Struck by Stereotype," 777-78.

²⁶⁶ Morden, 235-36.

²⁶⁷ "The Army Decides Its Married Women Can Have Children," *New York Times*, April 21, 1971, ProQuest.

²⁶⁸ Morden, 238.

²⁶⁹ Jean Lamm, "Doubling of Wacs Seen by General," *The Indianapolis Star*, May 3, 1973, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016).

could no longer fit into their uniforms.²⁷⁰ Recruiters and soldiers were often uncertain of the proper policy. For example, in 1971 an enlisted single Wac deserted, moving to Canada with her two children after learning that her recruiter had misled her about the Army's actual policy on motherhood.²⁷¹ Yet with the waiver process in place, the discharge rate for pregnancy had been cut almost in half since 1969, only about seven percent of Wacs voluntarily and involuntarily left the military due to pregnancy in the early 1970s.²⁷²

In April 1971, after fielding complaints from servicewomen, legislators, and feminists that the pregnancy policy discriminated against single women, but not single male fathers, the Army made additional adjustments.²⁷³ Director Bailey continued to argue that unmarried women would become a burden on Army because they required "security, protection, and entitlements."²⁷⁴ But the new policy allowed single women the possibility to obtain waivers for pregnancy and to adopt children. However, unlike married Wacs or male soldiers, the Army required single women to "provide a written explanation of how she intended to support and care for the child and the name of the person who would care for her child" while deployed.²⁷⁵ But even then, not all single women were treated the same, WAC commanders held power to

²⁷⁰ Morden, 304.

²⁷¹ After a few years, she turned herself in and won amnesty. "First WAC Deserter Wins Amnesty," *Oakland Tribune*, September 28, 1974, Newspaper.com (accessed March 24, 2016).

²⁷² The rate of pregnancy discharges for enlisted women in 1969 was 13.7 percent and the rate for 1973 was 7.1 percent. Morden, 304.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 235.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 305.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 304.

disapprove the waiver.²⁷⁶ For example, in 1971 the Army refused to provide Chief Warrant Officer Mary Bender with a waiver when she became pregnant during her tour in Vietnam, but hoped to stay in the Army as a single mother.²⁷⁷ Yet in the same year, Sergeant First Class Grendel Howard, a 38-year-old divorcee, adopted a child with the Army's consent.²⁷⁸ An unwed pregnant soldier appeared to be more egregious than a single woman adopting a child. The unpredictability may have also reflected the wide-ranging attitudes within Wac leadership about mothers in the Army. According to Jeanne Holm, denials were "subject to the biases and whims" of commanders making the decisions.²⁷⁹

Meanwhile, servicewomen continued to use the courts to press for additional family rights. The law establishing the women's corps explicitly discriminated against married women with dependent spouses. Servicewomen did not automatically receive medical and dental benefits, housing allowances, or dependency income for their husbands that all married male soldiers were automatically entitled to receive for their spouses. Military women had consistently pushed back against this unequal treatment, resenting the need to prove they provided more than half of their husband's financial support. Even the Army and some legislators supported

²⁷⁶ By 1973, the military services approved the majority of waiver requests. Depending on the service, approvals rates ranged from sixty to eighty-six percent. Holm did not break down the figures by service, but noted that the "Army resisted to the bitter end." Holm, 300.

²⁷⁷ Michael Robert Patterson, "Mary V. Bender, Chief Warrant Officer, United States Army," Arlington National Cemetery Website, <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/mybender.htm> (accessed June 4, 2014). Eight married Wacs in Vietnam became pregnant and were discharged. The numbers for enlisted Wacs is unknown, but at least five were discharged between 1967-1968. Morden, 252.

²⁷⁸ "Mother is a Sergeant," *Ebony* 29, no. 12 (October 1974): 156.

²⁷⁹ Holm, 292.

overturning this law, but none of the attempts were successful.²⁸⁰ But in 1973, Sharron Frontiero's timely class action suit reached the Supreme Court at the height of the women's movement. Her lawsuit contended that it was unlawful for the military to deny her husband the same benefits provided military wives. Lawyers from the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Women's Rights Project of the ACLU presented oral arguments on behalf of Frontiero that pressured the court to end the discriminatory policy.²⁸¹ In *Frontiero v Richardson*, the court ruled that the military's policy was unconstitutional because women were entitled to due process, and declared that they could not be treated differently from men on issues of pay and benefits.²⁸² The case brought visibility to other discriminatory practices against women and highlighted how military families were changing. *Frontiero v Richardson* created pressure for the military to resolve issues of gender discrimination internally before court rulings overturned more policies.²⁸³

²⁸⁰ Between 1968 and 1973, legislators introduced eleven bills. Representative Martha Griffiths introduced several bills into her subcommittees in the House to equalize dependency standards. Morden, 276; Holm, 290.

²⁸¹ Ruth Bader Ginsburg played a leading role in this case. Serena Mayeri, "When the Trouble Started: The Story of *Frontiero v. Richardson*," in *Women and the Law Stories*, eds., Elizabeth Schneider and Stephanie M. Wildman (New York: Foundation Press/Thomson Reuters, 2011).

²⁸² Frontiero was an officer in the Air Force, whose husband did not work, but was attending college on the GI Bill. Frontiero applied for housing, medical and dental benefits for him as a dependent spouse, but her application was denied since she did not technically provide more than half of his support because of his veteran's stipend, so she filed a class action suit. Ruth Bader Ginsberg joined this case on behalf of the Women's Right's Project and commented that this ruling "means that in the eyes of the law the man is no longer the sole breadwinner of the family." Francene M. Engel, "Sharron Frontiero," in *100 Americans Making Constitutional History: A Biographical History*, ed., Melvin I. Urofsky (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2004), 70-72.

²⁸³ Vuic, 115.

The threat of ongoing lawsuits, concerns about the ERA's ratification and the expansion of women into the military ultimately incited the Defense Department to announce they would "eliminate all laws and regulations which make an unnecessary distinction in the treatment of men and women," including the issue of pregnancy.²⁸⁴ In 1973, based on the reasoning that officers had the economic means and mental capacity to care for children, the Army permitted all Wac officers the option to become mothers without a waiver, but single and married enlisted women still faced scrutiny.²⁸⁵ Consequently, the Army's policy for pregnancy and motherhood was still very complex and confusing. Some women could stay in if they were pregnant and others could not, and the policy left some Wacs in limbo. Since many working women outside the military managed to have families, some Wacs believed that excluding enlisted women made no sense.²⁸⁶ In one instance, Private Jimmie Chappell's commander turned down her waiver request, so she complained to her legislators, pleading for a chance to be a mother in the Army even if that meant going "on leave with or without pay."²⁸⁷ Unsuccessful, Chappell heard rumors that leadership in Germany was "more lenient" towards mothers, so she and her husband requested and received a transfer.²⁸⁸ The strategy worked, allowing Chappell and her husband to become parents.

²⁸⁴ Morden, 305.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 306.

²⁸⁶ Holly Grossl, "The Joys of Motherhood are Mixed," *European Stars and Stripes*, August 8, 1974, p. 4.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁸ Grossl, "The Joys of Motherhood."

Finally, despite opposition from the WAC Director and Secretary of the Army, in 1974 the Secretary of Defense issued a directive for all services to include single women in the waiver policy.²⁸⁹ Director Bailey protested that single pregnant women would only remain in the Army for “security, protection, and the entitlements,” while the Army Secretary worried that pregnant woman would inhibit military efficiency with limited mobility to move to new assignments.²⁹⁰ In 1975, the Department of Defense went even further by directing all of the services to eliminate automatic discharge for pregnancies.²⁹¹ Director Bailey had lost her battle, but acknowledged the change by admitting, “We’re just trying harder now to adjust our regulations to a woman’s family needs. Before, they weren’t often considered.”²⁹² But for many women, the policy had some too late. By 1976, the military had involuntarily discharged at least seven thousand pregnant women.²⁹³ The Second Circuit Court of the U.S Court of Appeals settled the issue in *Crawford v. Cushman*, ruling that the discharge of pregnant military women violated their 5th amendment right to equal protection and due process.²⁹⁴ The 1976 ruling applied to all services. By 1977, the Army

²⁸⁹ Morden, 305.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 306-308.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 309.

²⁹² Karen Peterson, “The ‘New’ Army Wacs.”

²⁹³ By 1968, 25 percent of women who left the Army did so because they were pregnant and another 4 percent did so because of marriage. Morden, 227. The 7,000 figure is mentioned in the bill introduced, but not passed, by Representative McKinney (D- Georgia), “H.R.5447 -- Women Discharged from the Military Due to Pregnancy Relief Act of 2002” from the Library of Congress, Bill Text, 107th Congress (2001-2002), Congress.gov (accessed June 4, 2014).

²⁹⁴ Donald I. Marlin, "Reviewability and Constitutionality of Military Pregnancy Discharge (*Crawford v. Cushman*)," *St. John's Law Review* 51, Article 8 (1977): 2, <http://scholarship.law.stjohns.edu/lawreview/vol51/iss2/8> (accessed June 4, 2014).

began providing six to eight weeks of paid postpartum leave for women, the following year it issued maternity uniforms.²⁹⁵

The End of WAC

When it comes to the military, we think of debates over the ERA being about combat. In fact, the ERA debate reshaped many other aspects of military policy, transforming the military from an institution that openly discriminated, to one that had more “family friendly” and women friendly policies than most other employers in the nation.²⁹⁶ The debate over the ERA shone a spotlight on problems of unequal treatment within the Army, ranging from prohibition on women’s participation in the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) and West Point Military Academy, to policies that discriminated against mothers and women’s families. By the end of the 1970s, the Army permitted pregnant and working mothers a chance to serve. Wacs’ access to jobs, training, and education programs once reserved for males had greatly expanded.

These changes left the Women’s Army Corps as an outlier in the movement to bring equality to women in the workplace. In 1975, the House Armed Services Committee passed an amendment recommending the WAC’s abolishment, explaining “that having a separate corps is a vestige of the time when women were not treated equally and ... such a corps is inconsistent with the insistence on equal treatment.”²⁹⁷ The bill did not pass, but in June, the Secretary of the Army requested that Congress proceed with its disestablishment.²⁹⁸ By 1977, all Wacs had integrated

²⁹⁵ Morden, 308, 309. The Army policy for paternity leave was established in 2009 and provides a married man ten days paid leave after the birth or adoption of a child.

²⁹⁶ Morden, 298.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 318.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

into regular Army units and out of WAC detachments. The Army reconfigured a coed barracks and closed all WAC schools and training centers.²⁹⁹ WAC leadership struggled to keep a place for a senior woman advisor to help women integrate, but Director Mary E. Clarke did not keep her position. Congress abolished the office of the Director in April 20, 1978.³⁰⁰ Six months later, President Jimmy Carter signed the bill that terminated the Women's Army Corps.³⁰¹ Overnight, 58,000 Wacs became soldiers, the Pallas Athene was permanently retired, and the Women's Army Corps vanished.

The disestablishment of the corps transformed the primary role of women in the Army to a much greater level of equivalency with male soldiers. Significant workplace change could occur, because now women had the opportunity to serve a full career with no barriers to promotion in nearly every field, excepting combat arms. Challenging soldiers to accept women's integration, Secretary of the Army, Clifford Alexander advised, "The myths about what women can and cannot do need to be overcome and overcome now. The myth-creators, nay-sayers, and foot draggers are out of touch with reality."³⁰² Yet even with the support of the head of the Army, new challenges were on the horizon.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 390.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 398.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² "A Step up for Gen. Clarke," *Pacific Stars & Stripes*, April 30, 1978, p. 2.

CHAPTER IV

“THEY ARE GOING TO BE ON THE BATTLEFIELD, NO DOUBT ABOUT IT”: FEMALE SOLDIERS JOIN OPERATIONAL UNITS, 1974-1988

By 1977, even before its de-establishment, the Women’s Army Corps was becoming a distant memory. The end of WAC leadership meant the end of strict and protective female leadership as women entered male-dominated fields. Incidents of sexual harassment increased as male soldiers resisted their integration. Men held all senior positions of power and pushed back against the inclusion of large numbers of women in combat related units. Further, gender integration happened only in certain occupational fields and units. The vast majority of women served in the institutional Army, the component remaining largely in the United States that recruited, trained, equipped and supported the troops going to war.¹ The operational Army, which had the most jobs and prepared for combat and deployed to war remained almost exclusively male.²

In the late 1980s, a monumental change began to take shape as increasing numbers of women gained positions in the operational Army. By 1988, women made up 10.3 percent of the

¹ The numbers of women in nontraditional jobs increased from 1.2 percent in 1972 to 22.4 percent in 1978, but nearly 80 percent were still in traditional jobs. Morden, 281.

² In 1978, women had only integrated into five percent of combat support and combat service support positions. United States, and Karl E. Cocke, *Department of the Army Historical Summary: Fiscal Year 1978* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army), <http://www.history.army.mil/books/DAHSUM/1978/> (accessed October 4, 2013).

Army, and ninety percent of job fields were open to women.³ In order to open up these positions, the Army had to define combat in a way that made it clear that only some members of the operational Army— “combat arms,” engaged in actual fighting.⁴ The rest of the operational Army, “combat support” and “combat service,” worked in roles supporting the fighting troops. The Army policies made certain that while soldiers in support and service positions might enter the battlefield, they did not engage in frontline fighting. Women could hold these combat-related roles, but the fighting force remained limited to men. Despite the restrictions on their participation in “combat,” the opening up of these jobs in the operational Army fostered a remarkable transformation in men and women’s workforce experiences.⁵

By the 1980s, women worked alongside men repairing tanks, jumping out of airplanes, driving trucks, loading missiles, firing grenade launchers and machine guns, standing guard on perimeter fences, and piloting helicopters. They participated in field training exercises side by side with men, set up tents, filled sandbags, deployed into theaters of war and gained access to the battlefield where they worked side by side with noncombatant male soldiers. Despite combat exclusion rules that limited women’s participation, and notwithstanding pervasive sexual harassment, the Army’s work environment contained space for women to form bonds with men

³ Mary French, “Women in ADA,” *Air Defense Artillery* (September/October 1988): 38. In 1972, only about a quarter of all occupations in the Army were open to women. “ODWAC Notes, Office of the Director of the Women’s Army Corps” April, 1977, box 412, ODWAC file, U.S. Army Women’s Museum, Fort Lee, VA (hereafter cited as Fort Lee Archives).

⁴ The “operational” Army is also referred to as the “expeditionary” force. John H. Brinkerhoff, *The Institutional Army, FY1975-FY2002* (Institute for Defense Analyses, Alexandria, VA, 2002) <http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?&verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA408606> (accessed October 2, 2014).

⁵ Regina Titunik, “The First Wave: Gender Integration and Military Culture,” *Peace Research Abstracts* 38, no. 2 (2001): 241.

as they worked and trained together in their units. Soldiers had more opportunities to date and marry but some personal relationships between men and women undermined fraternization traditions that had kept ranks separate, leading the Army to develop more restrictive policies. At the same time, the sexual freedom and social movements of the era created space for lesbians to assert their rights to serve openly. So rapid was this change, so significant were the consequences, that by 1980, Army leadership began to push back against the changes. But the genie was out of the bottle. There was no going back. The Army needed women.

Scholarship on servicewomen's integration in the military has often emphasized women's lack of opportunities due to their exclusion from the combat arms occupations (infantry, armor, artillery, combat engineering and Special Forces).⁶ Yet focusing on combat exclusions misses the importance of women's integration into operational units, which reshaped the Army experience for male and female soldiers. Some argue that many men have not recognized women as legitimate soldiers because the Army prohibited them from working in operations and jobs directly related to the service's chief mission during war—direct offensive combat.⁷ Others emphasize how combat exclusions policies hindered women's career development and reinforced the perception of their inferiority, treating them as second-class citizens.⁸ A few have argued that combat exclusions intensified instances of sexual assault and rape.⁹ Scholarship has revealed that

⁶ Judith Stiehm, *Arms and the Enlisted Woman* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989).

⁷ Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You? The Militarization of Women's Lives* (Winchester, MA: Pandora Press, 1988).

⁸ Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998); Ilene Rose Feinman, *Citizenship Rites: Feminist Soldier and Feminist Antimilitarists* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

⁹ Judith Wagner Decew, "The Combat Exclusion and the Role of Women in the Military," *Hypatia* 10, no. 1, (Winter, 1995): 71.

the initial transition period of women into all operational units was difficult and chaotic for many female soldiers because of the strong resentment and resistance from many men in male dominated units.¹⁰ While these interpretations effectively outline the limitations and hostility that military women faced, my exploration of the entire Army workplace offers a more complete and balanced understanding of both the challenges and opportunities women faced as they integrated operational units.

Gender integration in male-dominated noncombatant fields and operational units significantly transformed the Army workplace because it gave men a chance to see women as team players in their units. Regina Titunik argued that contradictions in military culture both hindered and facilitated women's opportunities, yet she noted that the positive aspects of gender integration have received much less analysis.¹¹ The military's identity with masculinity fostered backlash and hostility as women moved into the male sphere, but at the same time, the Army's "meritocracy" that had aided African American men's integration, also allowed women to make gains.¹² Building on Titunik's work, this chapter argues that the Army itself is more complex than just the combat arms units that engage in fighting. While all men have technically been eligible for direct combat roles, in reality, most have worked in noncombatant support roles without ever

¹⁰ Michael Rustad examined women in the Army in Germany between 1975 and 1978. Michael Rustad, *Women in Khaki* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982) and Dorothy and Carl Schneider interviewed 300 women in all services between 1984-1985 in Dorothy Schneider and Carl J. Schneider, *Sound Off! American Military Women Speak Out* (New York: Dutton, 1988); Helen Rogan, *Mixed Company: Women in the Modern Army* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1981.) Judith Stiehm, a political scientist provides a comprehensive evaluation of the experiences of enlisted women from all services branches. Judith Stiehm, *Arms and the Enlisted Woman*.

¹¹ Regina Titunik, "The First Wave: Gender Integration and Military Culture," 241.

¹² *Ibid.*

firing a weapon at the enemy.¹³ This chapter contends that in spite of the combat exclusion rule, sexism, and gender discrimination, the Army's shifting definition of combat provided space for female soldiers to push for and successfully build careers in noncombat roles within operational units. A significant part of reshaping the military work culture was that Army leaders persistently and purposefully trained female soldiers in mixed gender units for military operations that increasingly placed them in contact with enemy forces. Bonds between soldiers' form based on a sense of shared identity, not explicitly as warriors, but as military police, engineers, mechanics, and the myriad of other occupations in the military.

From Institutional to Operation Units

In order to appreciate the profound transformations that ensued when women moved into combat support and combat service support units in the operational Army, it is crucial to examine the job assignment prohibitions that had kept most men from working with women, especially at the smaller unit levels where many soldiers form a shared sense of identity and cohesive bonds. In 1948, when the Women's Army Corps was permanently established, Congress provided the Secretary of the Army with the authority to determine how to assign women to non-combat jobs.¹⁴ But Congress never defined what combat meant. Before the end of WAC, the Army developed a coding system that identified jobs and units suitable for women. By 1965, each position was designated either for a man, for a woman or as interchangeable.¹⁵ But coding also

¹³ In 1971, 19.5 percent of men were in the combat arms, which included infantry, artillery, armor, engineers, aviation. *Department of the Army Historical Summary: Fiscal year 1971* (Washington: Center of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1971), <http://www.history.army.mil/books/DAHSUM/1971/> (accessed October 4, 2013).

¹⁴ *The Secretary of the Army*, U.S. Code Title 10, Subtitle B, Part I § 3013(g).

¹⁵ Morden, 224-26.

depended on the particular type of unit where the position belonged—operational units that deployed to war and institutional units that did not deploy.¹⁶ Non-deployable jobs provided infrastructure and noncombatant service support positions that sustained the troops that went to war. Soldiers working in these non-deployable institutional units largely remained at bases in the United States providing administrative and logistical care of troops as well as recruiting, training, equipping, instructing or providing medical care for soldiers at Army installations, schools and hospitals.¹⁷ Until 1973, nearly all women worked as part of institutional units, only 185 out of 482 military occupational specialties were open to them but most worked in administration, clerical or medical jobs.¹⁸ In 1973, 434 of 482 occupations opened to women.¹⁹ Operational troops sent to

¹⁶ There are numerous historical terms for these two categories: In early American history, the Institutional Army was the “staff” while the Operational Army was the “line.” The acronyms used to differentiate between these two types of organizations are TDA (institutional) and TOE (operational). These designations come from the Department of Defense’s method of categorizing the mission for units, the Table of Organization and Equipment (TOE) units or operational units, and Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) or institutional units. The coding system was originally for enlisted personnel, but by 1970, it included commissioned and warrant officers. Morden, 196; “History of Tables of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) Units,” U.S. Army Center of Military History, <http://www.history.army.mil/html/forcestruc/tda-ip.html> (accessed June 4, 2014).

¹⁷ There are instances where an institutional unit might deploy, but the structure of these two organizations are set up for different Army missions. United States, General Accounting Office, Force Structure, *Army Support Forces Can Meet Two-Conflict Strategy with Some Risks: Report to Congressional Committees* (Washington, DC: The Office, 1997), 2.

¹⁸ Morden, 185; Eugene A. Fox, *A Final Report of the Women in the Army Study Group*, (Washington: U.S. Dept. of the Army, 1976), 5-2 (hereafter cited as *1976 WITA Study*).

¹⁹ “The View From Here,” January 1974, Office of the Director, Women’s Army Corps, box 412, Wac Advisor Notes File, Fort Lee Archives.

war had traditionally been comprised only of men because these positions were considered related to combat.²⁰

Yet much of the work in operational troops had little to do with fighting in combat. While those who held positions in the infantry, armor, artillery, and special forces—the combat arms—worked in tactical field units that deployed during times of war and participated in the fighting force, they were the only ones who had a primary mission to attack the enemy. But the operational Army included many non-fighting positions in other service branches as cooks, clerks, and administrators along with military police, pilots, linguists, mechanics, truck drivers. The combat support units included aviation, chemical, engineering, military intelligence, signals, and military police branches of the Army. The combat service support units included transportation, quartermaster, finance, civil affairs and adjutant general.²¹ Some Army branches had overlapping missions that put them in several different categories. For instance, pilots could be in combat arms if they flew attack aircraft, but were in combat support units if they ferried troops and supplies. Military police worked in combat support if they deployed to war, but other police officers worked in combat service units when they were assigned to military installations to patrol bases and manage traffic.

²⁰ Operational units did show some open positions for women, but few women were assigned to these slots because of the possibility of combat related deployment. Morden, 185, 195.

²¹ The Combat Service Support Units are: Adjutant General, Medical, Chaplain, Civil Affairs, Finance, Judge Advocate General, Ordnance, Quartermaster and Transportation. Combat Support units are: Military Intelligence, Aviation, Engineer, Chemical, Military Police, and Signal. There is some overlap. Aviation, Chemical and Engineering can be in any of the categories in the operational Army. Other Army branches are in both combat support and combat service depending on the unit's primary mission. For example, the military police can be both combat support and combat service support. Department of the Army Pamphlet, 10-1, *Organization of the United States Army* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, 1994) 50-51, http://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/10_Series_Collection_1.html (accessed October 5, 2014).

After the end of the draft, the Army opened all but thirty-five of its occupations to women in order to move them into combat support and combat service units.²² By 1981, women made up more than nine percent of the Army, an increase from less than two percent in 1972. Since policing was emerging as a new occupation for women in the civilian workplace, the Military Police Corps (MP Corps) was a particularly promising occupational choice for women.²³ But the Army had excluded women from policing until after the end of the draft.²⁴ Even Director Hoisington had argued that “few women are interested, and it would cost too much to train.”²⁵ Yet many women desired to work in law enforcement and were frustrated by their inability to get jobs on police forces in the civilian world. Once the field was opened up for women in the Army, some believed that by acquiring skills in the Army, they could obtain policing work in their local communities after their military service ended.²⁶

²² 1976 WITA Study, 5-3.

²³ In 1971, only 39 percent of all Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) were open to Wacs in the Army, nearly all in institutional units. In 1973, the Army technically opened most noncombatant fields (423 of 475 MOS) to women after the end of the draft, but they could not permanently join regular Army units until the Women’s Army Corps was dissolved in 1978. Central All Volunteer Task Force, *Utilization of Military Women, 1973-1977* (National Technical Information Service, U.S. Department of Commerce, December 1972), 25.

²⁴ Some women were trained as criminal investigators and worked in MP offices as administrators, typists or clerks, but none had been assigned to the occupational specialty for police officers (95B), since the end of WWII. Even then, female police generally only handled issues with Wacs. In addition to the Military Police Corps, a number of the Army Corps have both institutional and operational roles: Aviation, Engineer, Chemical, and Signal. Morden, 271.

²⁵ Hoisington also believed few women desired to become mechanics. Judi Davis, “Her Old Army Has Changed,” *The Akron Beacon Journal*, February 17, 1972, p. 26, Newspaper.com (June 4, 2013).

²⁶ Evans Witt, “Woman Officer Earns Respect of Males,” *The Bee (Danville, VA)*, March 14, 1974, p. 19, Newspaper.com (accessed June 7, 2013).

Women recognized that the Military Police Corps had one of the Army's more effective processes for women's integration into previously all male units because they standardized the training and opportunities for men and women, placing women on an equal footing. At the same time, the MP Corps progressively increased the proportion of available positions for female soldiers in MP units. It was a gradualist approach, but inclusive. Just like some of the other Army branches, the military police had multiple responsibilities, and some of those duties were in the institutional Army, while others were in the operational Army. The institutional elements were in units where MPs performed as police officers on a military base, they did not deploy during wartime. Operational MP units trained in the field, deploying as combat support units to protect transportation conveyances during military operations, guard prisoners and provide other combat related duties during war.

In 1973, the MP Corps began its gender integration by establishing a test program to train two dozen enlisted women in a limited number of roles as military police officers.²⁷ All but three passed the course, a first step for women's movement into MP units. At the same time, since police needed to carry pistols on duty, the Army required female MP recruits to qualify on weapons.²⁸ At first, the Army only assigned female MPs to institutional units where they performed "cop" duties—patrol, traffic control, accident investigation, and other general policing operations. After a successful trial period of about six months, Army leadership permitted women

²⁷ Morden, 271.

²⁸ One difference from the male MPs was that female soldiers used a .38 caliber instead of the .45 as their official firearm. Beginning in July, 1975 all Wacs were required to qualify on the M-16 weapon. Morden, 270-71, 282.

to move into combat support operations.²⁹ By 1977, female MPs made up 6.11 percent of policing and could be found in Army police units worldwide.³⁰

As operational units opened up, women desired skills in other nontraditional fields, with the same motivation to work in jobs that had been off limits to them in the civilian sector. One Wac explained that “talented women just don’t want to be Army career secretaries,” they desired more opportunities.³¹ Donna Barr Tabor worried about being stuck in a boring job in a small town with no perceivable future and “wanted to do something that women don’t do all the time. I mean it was the seventies and women’s lib and all that.”³² Catherine Courney joined to learn the mechanics trade.³³ Pam Widenhofer learned skills in Army construction because the job was “much more enjoyable than waiting tables or doing office work or sales work.”³⁴ Because the Aviation Corps comprised of a small elite group with highly technical and marketable skills, so some women sought out training as pilots.³⁵ In 1973, the Army opened up noncombatant aviation

²⁹ Karl E. Cocke and Rae T. Panella, *Department of the Army Historical Summary: Fiscal year 1977* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Dept. of the Army), <http://www.history.army.mil/books/dahsum/1977/ch05.htm>.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ John Filiatreau, “Combat Women,” *The (Louisville) Courier Journal*, July 18, 1974, p. 20, Newspaper.com (May 5, 2013).

³² Donna Barr Tabor, interview with author, May 12, 2011, WV0521, Betty H. Carter Women Veterans Historical Project, Martha Blakeney Hodges Special Collections and University Archives, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, NC, US (hereafter cited as Donna Tabor interview with author and Archive cited as UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project).

³³ Charlene Nevada, “Army’s No Lark to Female Recruits,” *The Akron Beacon*, March 2, 1980, Newspaper.com (accessed October 3, 2014).

³⁴ Pam Widenhofer quoted in “WAC History Makers” *Women’s Army Corps Journal*, Vol. VI, (July-Dec 1975): 12, box 242, U.S. Army Women’s Museum, Fort Lee, VA.

³⁵ Sherry Ricchiardi, “Shape Up Ms.(ter), You’re in the Army Now!” *The Des Moines Register*, November 21, 1976, Newspaper.com (accessed October 2, 2014).

to women and some jumped at the chance to fly. The Army prohibited them from combat units, but they could transport supplies and people, and perform medical evacuations. Susan Schoeck signed up as a pilot because she felt her position as a schoolteacher was “too tame.”³⁶ Other women who wanted work outside the office seized the opportunity. Janis J. Zeimet joined because she was “not the kind of person who (could) just sit behind a desk.”³⁷ Not all nontraditional fields filled that quickly, some women resisted. Joan Knysh enlisted in hopes of joining the medical field, but the Army had no openings when she applied, so the recruiter assigned her a job as a mechanic. Knysh was “leery” and felt unqualified for the role, but she embraced the chance at “different and exciting [work]...that no other woman was doing.”³⁸

Many Black women found the Army an appealing choice, and in about a decade their proportion as a percentage of all women in the Army had doubled. In 1974, they made up 20.7 percent of all women in the Army, in 1979 the percentage had increase to 34.5 percent and by 1984, they made up 42 percent of all female soldiers.³⁹ Including all minority women, non-white outnumbered white female soldiers in 1985.⁴⁰ By 1988, black women were three times more

³⁶ George Korda, “She Flies Choppers for the Army,” *PS&S*, July 17, 1976.

³⁷ Bill Powell, “Miss with a Mission...Woman Has No Desire to Be Different,” *The (Louisville) Courier Journal and Times*, August 15, 1976, Newspaper.com.

³⁸ Joan Knysh quoted in Bob Cullen and Barbara Deck, “Lady Mechanics Leads the GIs,” *Women’s Army Corps Journal*, Vol. VI (July-Dec 1975): 14, box 242, Fort Lee Archives.

³⁹ Brenda Moore, “African American Women in the U.S. Military,” *Armed Forces & Society* 17, no. 3, (1991): 363; “Black Women in the Military,” *Black Enterprise*, (April 1986): 43.

⁴⁰ Mary Ellen McCalla et al. *Description of Officers and Enlisted Personnel in the U.S. Armed Forces, 1985: A Report Based on the 1985 DoD Survey of Officer and Enlisted Personnel* (Arlington, VA: Defense Manpower Data Center, 1986).

likely to join the Army than any other female demographic.⁴¹ Black women's overrepresentation in the Army compared to their civilian numbers has been a matter of both a "push" away from low income, low status jobs in the civilian world, and a "pull" into the military for equal pay, health and education benefits, and the ability to earn a skill.⁴² Brenda Moore's scholarship depicts the Army's concentration of black women in lower skill jobs, which in her analysis did not necessarily translate to great jobs in the civilian workforce.⁴³ Many enlisted black women entered the Army with lower test scores than white and Asian women, so they were clustered in many of combat service support jobs in supply and transportation, but underrepresented in more technical skills.⁴⁴ Black female soldiers were more likely to have been married and have dependents than white, Asians or Hispanics, reflecting an economic necessity to join the Army for stability and security.⁴⁵

Sexual Harassment, Hostility and Rape

Many of the first Wacs integrating into operational units faced resentment and hostility from male soldiers during training, but most women believed that once they proved they could do the job, their work environment improved. Female MPs believed that going through the same

⁴¹ White women enlisted at a rate of 1.3 per 1000 women, Hispanic women at 1.0 per 1000 and black women at 3.7 of 1000. Brenda Moore, "African American Women in the U.S. Military," 363.

⁴² Nicholas C. McBride, "Blacks Expand Roles in the Military, 40 Years After Integration," *Christian Science Monitor*, July 21, 1988, <http://www.csmonitor.com/1988/0721/aint.html> (accessed March 21, 2014).

⁴³ Brenda Moore, "African American Women in the U.S. Military," 363.

⁴⁴ Harold W. Cheatham, and Susan R Seem, "Occupation Equity: A Black and White Portrait of Women in the United States Military," *Review of Black Political Economy* 19, no. 1 (1990): 65.

⁴⁵ Moore, "African American Women in the U.S. Military," 370.

military police training as men helped bolster their status as soldiers. Sheila Payne, an early graduate at MP school described how women “crawled on the ground, ate sawdust and got cuts and bruises” alongside their male cohorts.⁴⁶ Payne believed that female soldiers’ willingness to do the same work as men, meant that their male cohorts could see that women handled challenges without fear.⁴⁷ By the end of training, she noted, “just about all of the men said they would be willing to pull patrol duty with us.”⁴⁸ Transitioning from training to units was another step in the process of integration. Once on the job, Carla Umland found that many of her male cohorts still did not take her seriously. She gained their respect after proving her skills by attaining proficiency in weapons, becoming an expert shooter, and using her strength to throw male co-workers to the ground during self-defense training.⁴⁹

Breaking into any new field was not easy, but some fields with very limited numbers of women were especially difficult for women. Since the overall numbers of pilot positions in the Army were low compared to jobs in other occupations, women pilots were an especially small and distinct minority. In 1976, there were only sixteen female Army pilots scattered at different locations, often isolated from other women, with their visibility magnified.⁵⁰ Like female MP

⁴⁶ Michael O. Wester, “West Texan Becomes One of First Women in Military Police Forces,” *The Brownsville (TX) Herald*, February 8, 1974, Newspaper.com (accessed October 2, 2014).

⁴⁷ Ibid. Payne was in a 1973 class with 147 soldiers including three women. Payne and two male soldiers received top honors.

⁴⁸ Randy Riggs, “Former City Woman Now Army MP,” *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, November 15, 1973, Newspaper.com (accessed October 4, 2014).

⁴⁹ Kenneth Schultz, “Wac Making Headway in Equal Rights Struggle,” *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, August 12, 1973, Newspaper.com (accessed October 2, 2014).

⁵⁰ Molly Parrish, “She’s Whirling into History,” *Colorado Springs Gazette-Telegraph*, December 5, 1976, p. 13, Newspaper.com (accessed May 31, 2016). In 1993, there were 327 women aviators. Jessica Saunders, “Women Train as Attack Helicopter Pilots,” *The Indiana*

trailblazers in a man's world, during these early years most of the women did not report problems with their male co-workers. Marsha Bagby noted that some male pilots in her unit complained that she "did not belong," and warned they would not fly with her.⁵¹ Yet, she felt that most men accepted her after realizing that she worked hard and could do the job.⁵² One male co-worker close to retirement confessed that after working with Bagby, he felt confident that women could effectively replace him as a pilot.⁵³

While many oral histories and early media reports on women's integration emphasized success in gaining men's respect, scholars have described how trailblazing women were often hesitant to make waves. One work examining pioneering female police officers revealed they may have been hesitant to be overly critical of their experiences. Most did not want to be labeled as complainers; but in addition, their job meant dealing with criminals, so they needed their cohorts to have their back.⁵⁴ Consequently, many faced harassment, but often downplayed the extent of the obstacles in their way. The first females integrating into military policing reflected a similar pattern in minimizing or rationalizing male harassment. Dixie Thompson, one of just three

Gazette, May 13, 1993, Newspapers.com (accessed March 21, 2016). By 2013, there were still a small number of women, just 513. Rowan Scarborough, "She Has the Right Stuff," *The Washington Times*, Washington, DC, March 25, 2013, <http://www.washingtontimes.com> (accessed March 21, 2016).

⁵¹ "Don't Kid This Helo Pilot, She's Heard This Joke Before," *PS&S*, August 3, 1977.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Research of civilian female police officers found evidence that women who were harassed tried to handle issues on their own so they would not be labeled as "troublemakers." My research reveal that these conclusions can be applied to women in the military as they integrated male units. James Gruber and Phoebe Morgan, *In the Company of Men: Male Dominance and Sexual Harassment* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2005), 210.

women assigned to an MP unit in Germany, admitted female soldiers were “really harassed.”⁵⁵ But in her view, the harassment was not based on gender, rather it was a reflection of men wanting to make sure “we could take the kind of abuse” common in policing.⁵⁶ Thompson felt that new male MPs received similar hazing for the job. Another female MP brushed off harassment from male soldiers as “the cop stigma,” more than her being a female.⁵⁷

A legal understanding of workplace remedies for harassment did not emerge until after 1979, and the Defense Department did not define sexual harassment or create a policy to deter troops from engaging in such behavior until 1981, so women had little recourse for complaints.⁵⁸ As more jobs opened up to women, sexual harassment became increasingly widespread. Many male soldiers openly questioned women’s capabilities, and male supervisor often undermined their efforts by assigning women to jobs outside their occupational specialty. One female soldier recalled complaining about the hostility she faced from a male soldier in her unit that was “making her life miserable,” only to have her commander assign her to a position as a secretary

⁵⁵ Ed Reavis, “Equality,” *Stars and Stripes, European Edition* (hereafter cited as *ES&S*), March 13, 1976, (accessed May 2, 2016).

⁵⁶ Ibid. Erin Solaro noted that military men do endure “testing” on the job, but she differentiates their treatment from persistent harassment of women on and off the job. Erin Solaro, *Women in the Line of Fire: What You Should Know About Women in the Military* (Emeryville, CA: Seal Press, 2006), 147-48.

⁵⁷ Barbara Fulenwider, “We Do the Same Job Men Do. . .,” *ES&S*, February 20, 1974.

⁵⁸ Catharine A. MacKinnon, *Sexual Harassment of Working Women: A Case of Sex Discrimination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979). Also see Reva B. Siegel, “A Short History of Sexual Harassment,” in Catherine MacKinnon and Reva B. Siegel eds. *Directions in Sexual Harassment Law*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004; Center of Military History, Karl E. Cocke and Christine O. Hardyman, *Department of the Army Historical Summary: Fiscal year 1981* (Washington: Center of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1981) <http://www.history.army.mil/books/DAHSUM/1981/ch05.htm#b3> (accessed June 3, 2013).

outside her occupational field.⁵⁹ Reprisal for grievances was a real threat in any job. Rona Reeber noted that “retaliation for filing a complaint. . . that’s how harassment really works.”⁶⁰ And being a first in any field mattered to women, because an individual woman’s failure was often viewed as a weakness for all women. As General Heidi Brown noted years later, when women are trailblazers in any field, “failure is not an option,” because failing means the door may be closed for all other woman.⁶¹

In-depth studies conducted during the early period of gender integration suggest that many women faced explicit discrimination, hostility and sexual harassment from male soldiers. In one incident, male leadership told women to get a sense of humor after complaining about condoms nailed to their barracks door.⁶² And many male soldiers crossed lines by touching women inappropriately. One female soldier explained that while it was “humiliating” to get “pats on the fanny” she could handle it by telling them to “shove off” and establish ground rules to prevent future transgressions.⁶³ Another noted that she would often shut down pinches and pats on her body by threatening to “file a harassment suit.”⁶⁴ While soldiers could not sue, they could

⁵⁹ Francine D’Amico, *Gender Camouflage: Women and the US Military* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1999) 98.

⁶⁰ PFC Rona F. Reeber, letter to editor, “How Harassment Really Works,” *ES&S*, July 1, 1980, p. 10.

⁶¹ Rachel Martin, “A Lonely Club For Women in Top Army Jobs,” *National Public Radio*, February 25, 2011, <http://www.npr.org/2011/02/25/134025084/a-lonely-club-for-women-in-top-army-jobs> (accessed October 4, 2013).

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Pauline Vicenti quoted in Donna Solyan, “Pats on the Fanny and ‘Threatened Men’,” *Pacific Stars and Stripes* (hereafter cited as *PS&S*), September 7, 1981.

⁶⁴ Sandra Cheatam quoted in Donna Solyan, “Pats on the Fanny and ‘Threatened Men’.”

file a complaint up the chain of their command. Studies revealed that male harassment of female soldiers was pervasive. A 1978 Army survey reported that forty-four percent of women experienced “prejudicial” behavior from men in their units.⁶⁵ Later studies asking servicewomen if they had “experienced harassment” revealed high percentages of unwelcome behavior.⁶⁶ In 1981, an Army-wide survey revealed that forty-eight percent of female soldiers experienced harassment during their service. By the end of the decade, the Department of Defense found that all services continued to have a “significant problem” with harassment.⁶⁷

Many commanders failed to prevent abuse, and Army-wide prosecution of sexual harassment was minimal, but some men viewed any enforcement against sexist language as too heavy-handed. Some men wondered “who is going to draw the line” for determining what cases of harassment would be enforced.⁶⁸ “If I call somebody ‘honey’ that’s not sexual harassment, but that’s what it’s coming to,” complained a male soldier.⁶⁹ It was not until 1980 that the Army prosecuted its first case of verbal sexual harassment when a male private was found guilty of threatening to expose a female soldier’s private pictures if she refused sex.⁷⁰ But this case made

⁶⁵ LTC Billy G. Keyes, ed., *Evaluation of Women in the Army: Final Report*,” (United States Army Administration Center: United States Army, 1978), A-4-2-12 (hereafter cited as *1978 EWITA Final Report*).

⁶⁶ Joseph Owen, “Many Soldiers Express Doubts About Their Future in Uniform,” *ES&S*, December 12, 1992, p. 2.

⁶⁷ Joseph Owen, “Many Soldiers Express Doubts”; United States, House, Committee on Armed Services, *Sexual Harassment of Military Women and Improving the Military Complaint System*, 103rd Cong., 2nd sess., March 9, 1994, (Washington: U.S. G.P.O., 1994), 75.

⁶⁸ “GIs Divided on Taylor Sentence,” *PS&S*, April 12, 1980, p. 7.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ “Soldier Guilty of Sex Harassment,” *PS&S*, March 8, 1980, p. 5.

little of the sexual extortion threat. Failure to stem the harassing behavior forced some women to leave the service. One woman who was publicly “insulted” and completely “ostracized” after refusing her supervisor’s demands for sex “couldn’t wait to get out.”⁷¹ Another asserted that she “would never look back” once she could leave the Army, she had grown weary of “catcalls” and being denied the “respect due to me as a person.”⁷²

Between 1975 and 1978, sociologist Michael Rustad studied and interviewed the first group of women assigned to Signal Corps in Germany, finding that that morale was very low because of harassment.⁷³ Half of the women he interviewed reported “sexual shakedowns,” where co-workers or supervisors would demand sex.⁷⁴ Regardless of whether a woman agreed to sexual encounters, they were caught in a catch-22. If rebuffed, men would accuse women of lesbianism. If women consented to a relationship, the men would label the woman a whore.⁷⁵ Women who were the “first” female soldiers to integrate male units felt very isolated, like they were “tokens” in their field.⁷⁶ And their presence not only threatened masculinity by moving into a privileged

⁷¹ D’Amico, 98.

⁷² Name withheld, letter to editor, “EW Says, ‘I Will Never Look Back,’” *ES&S*, November 6, 1980, p. 11.

⁷³ Michael Rustad argued that as the initial groups of women integrated into formerly all male units, their “heightened visibility,” meant they could not escape notice from day to day and just blend into a unit. Many times female soldiers were isolated by being the only or just one of a few women in their unit, exacerbating the attention and harassment they received from their male co-workers and supervisors. His work contains numerous examples of the sexism, harassment, unwanted attention and hostile work environment. Michael Rustad, *Women in Khaki* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982).

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 148-149.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 148-149, 154.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 144-146.

male space, but also disrupted the social culture of profane language, pin-up girls, and off color jokes.⁷⁷ Many men resented having to “clean up” their language around women, limiting their “freedom to be a man among men.”⁷⁸ When one female soldier complained about a male soldier’s “foul language,” he likened equality in the workplace with tolerance for the crude environment.⁷⁹ Many female soldiers were offended, but had little recourse, especially when senior male officers referred to them as “honey” or “baby,” or intimidated them by labelling them as either whores or dykes.⁸⁰ But others believed that they were not “any more harassed than they [were] in civilian life.”⁸¹

Some female soldiers felt they could handle individual acts of sexual harassment, more troublesome for them was institutional discrimination, Army double standards for physical requirements, and prohibitions that kept them from certain jobs.⁸² Some recognized that “as long as men [were] in positions of power and authority over women,” discrimination would continue.⁸³ Although women understood they were not “equal to men,” in physical strength, they argued that

⁷⁷ Ibid., 147.

⁷⁸ Dorothy and Carl J. Schneider, *Sound Off! American Military Women Speak Out* (New York, NY: E.P. Dutton, 1988), 37.

⁷⁹ Schneider, 44.

⁸⁰ Deborah Drouin, letter to editor, “Why Wacs Join,” *ES&S*, February 3, 1977, 12; Donna Solyan quoted in “Pats on the Fanny.”

⁸¹ Lt. Sandra Cigainer quoted in Sandra G. Boodman, “Women GIs Cite Sexual Harassment at Army Bases,” *The Washington Post*, January 29, 1980, ProQuest.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Unsigned, letter to editor, “Reader Says Equal Opportunity Must Start at the Top,” *ES&S*, December 4, 1984, p. 11.

most work in the Army did not require “muscle power.”⁸⁴ Yet most did not want preferential treatment. Women did not want to be treated differently, even for minor variations in uniform regulations. Many women argued that having to wearing their shirt outside instead of being tucked in, “serves only to further separate the female soldier from her male counterpart.”⁸⁵

The Army vigorously addressed racial strife, but paid minimal attention to sexism. One female soldier complained that while racial comments were not tolerated by Army leaders, “some people still feel free to tell jokes and make comments demeaning to women.”⁸⁶ Even the head of the Army’s equal opportunity program had to be persuaded to include courses that dealt with sexism. In 1976, Colonel Robert Dews thought that “courses would be diluted” if they included information about women’s issues and take away from the problem of racism.⁸⁷ Some women pushed back against discrimination and female stereotypes that characterized women as less capable than men. One female soldier began a “Woman Soldier’s Advisory Committee” arguing that male commanders did not really understand concerns of women.⁸⁸

Until the 1990s, Army leaders placed the burden of rape prevention on female soldiers, with little consideration for reducing rape and sexual assault with vigorous prosecution.⁸⁹ In 1975,

⁸⁴ Sgt. L.D. Browne, letter to editor, “Writer Says Equal Opportunity in the Army is a ‘Joke,’” *ES&S*, February 26, 1986, p. 11.

⁸⁵ 1st Lieutenant Stephanie Hoehne and 1st Lieutenant Carol A. Rogers, “Battle of Shirttails, Some Say It’s a Battle of Sexes,” *ES&S*, September 20, 1980, page p. 11.

⁸⁶ Evelyn D. Harris, “Toughest Human Relations Problem,” *Essayons “Let Us Try”*, August 21, 1992, A2.

⁸⁷ “Col. Supports Anti-Sexism Course,” *ES&S*, February 11, 1976.

⁸⁸ Merle Jacobson, “Army Sexism,” *ES&S*, November 28, 1977, p. 9.

⁸⁹ For a comprehensive review of scholarship and discussion on the issue of rape and sexual assault in the military, see Jessica A. Turchik and Susan M. Wilson, “Sexual Assault in the

the Army designed its first “anti-rape” program with prevention in mind. In fact, to emphasize this point, a spokeswoman for the program declared that “rape is better prevented than punished.”⁹⁰ By 1978, as part of this program, the Army required women to watch a video entitled, “He Loves Me Not.”⁹¹ In 1977, DACOWITS complimented the Army as having the “most superior” best rape prevention policy in the services, but the program was directed only at women, not men.⁹² The video encouraged women to report the crime to prevent the rapist from attacking other women.⁹³ A women’s symposium held in Germany in the late 1970s reported that most women felt that Army leadership failed to protect women from assaults, and inadequately handed reports when victims reported the crimes.⁹⁴ DACOWITS members concerned about violence against servicewomen, recommended “self-defense training” for women to the Department of Defense.⁹⁵ Even when cases did make it to military court, women faced scrutiny because resistance from the victim and force by the rapists was necessary to consider the offense

U.S. Military: A Review of the Literature and Recommendations for the Future," *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 15 (4) 2010: 267-277.

⁹⁰ “Army Starts Anti-Rape Program,” *PS&S*, August 11, 1975, p. 8.

⁹¹ Army Training Video, “He Loves Me Not,” Filmed in 1978, Rape Prevention-Part III: He Loves Me Not, Department of Defense. Department of the Army. Office of the Chief Signal Officer. YouTube video, 30:25, posted on November 20, 2015, <https://youtu.be/PY47W7JAbQs>.

⁹² DACOWITS History, “History and Accomplishments,” <http://dacowits.defense.gov/History/> (accessed July 24, 2013).

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ “VII Corps Women’s Symposium,” Janice Farringer Papers, WV0572, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

⁹⁵ John Hart, “Ombudsman for Women Hailed,” *ES&S*, November 16, 1976.

a crime.⁹⁶ Additionally, any “unchaste character of the alleged victim. . . lewd reputé, habits, ways of life, or associations” were admissible as evidence against the victim’s credibility.⁹⁷ For example, in 1980, the attorneys for one male Captain charged with adultery, conduct unbecoming an officer, and sexual blackmail, attacked the credibility of the female private testifying against him as a drug abuser whose veracity could not be trusted.⁹⁸

Female soldiers raped in the Army received little support and were often reluctant to report their attackers, sometimes because they were unknown, other times because they worked as coworkers and leadership in their unit. Fearing that they would be ignored or degraded, many women decided to do nothing. One woman was in Germany during an annual field exercise and assigned to an unfamiliar unit when a group of male soldiers approached her, explaining they were going to interrogate her as part of the field training. She went along but then the men announced they were “going to show her why women don’t belong in the military” and gang raped her.⁹⁹ Even though the soldier worked with the Army’s judicial system, she worried that if she reported the crime, the Army would kick her out of the service, so she “blocked it out,” telling herself that these men would not defeat her spirit. She wondered to herself, “is this what the Army really is?” The soldier endured long lasting consequences and post-traumatic stress disorder from the violent assault.¹⁰⁰ Another soldier was worried that her supervisor would

⁹⁶ Major Boyd B. Burkholder, response to letter to editor, “Questions About Rape Case Evidence,” *ES&S*, August 25, 1976, p. 12.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ “Army Captain is Sentenced in Sex Case,” *ES&S*, November 8, 1980, p. 4.

⁹⁹ Female Army veteran interview with author, anonymous no. 1, February 2014, Women Veterans Historical Project.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

retaliate after she had repeatedly turned down his sexual advances.¹⁰¹ When he directed her to work night guard duty by herself, an unusual request, she dreaded an assault, so she asked her boyfriend, another male soldier, to check on her later that night. As she had feared, the supervisor came out to the secluded guard shack, but her boyfriend interrupted his advances. Never comfortable around the sergeant, the female soldier continued to do what she could to avoid him while she was alone.¹⁰² Some commanders mistreated female soldiers who reported rapes and assault by ignoring their accounts. In one case, a woman's direct supervisor dismissed her account, commenting that she should have expected it since she did not wear a bra.¹⁰³ Another woman's commander told her a report of sexual assault would destroy the career of the male soldier; feeling unsupported, she agreed to keep quiet.¹⁰⁴ Other times, the Army permitted soldiers charged with rape or sexual assault to resign or be discharged without any punitive measures.¹⁰⁵ In 1984, Betty Buckmiller's perpetrators were convicted and sentenced to prison, but she wanted to hold the Army accountable and sued for damages from her rape.¹⁰⁶ The courts

¹⁰¹ Female Army veteran interview with author, anonymous no. 2, March 2015, Women Veterans Historical Project.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Linda Bird Francke, *Ground Zero: The Gender Wars in the Military* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 165.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ "Army Discharges 5 Soldiers in Sex Case," *ES&S*, October 10, 1992.

¹⁰⁶ "Raped Soldier Threatens Suit Against the Army," *The Des Moines Register*, January 12, 1984, p. 4, Newspaper.com (accessed June 4, 2013). Making this case especially controversial was that the woman was under confinement in her barracks awaiting a court-martial when she was attacked. Ultimately, the Army expelled her from the military with a less than honorable discharge for having been AWOL prior to her rape.

dismissed her lawsuit based on a 1950 Supreme Court decision that exempted the military from being held liable for injuries that were “incident to service.”¹⁰⁷

As the percentage of women in male units increased, the military overseas newspaper *Stars and Stripes* described the integration of women as shaking “the U.S. military establishment from top to bottom” and asked women about their treatment by their male cohorts.¹⁰⁸ Women’s main complaints included being disrespected by servicemen, feeling unappreciated for their work, and receiving constant harassment by male troops outside of work.¹⁰⁹ As integration continued into the 1980s, many female soldiers were exasperated with men who complained that women did not belong in the Army.¹¹⁰ While some of the most visible aspects of male misbehavior towards women improved on the job, overt sexism remained a major problem out of uniform. Yvette Angus felt that she rarely experienced sexual harassment in uniform because “she was in a good unit,” but being dressed in civilian attire was a different story.¹¹¹ Angus avoided going alone to the Army clubs on base because she could not simply relax, the men she encountered were looking for sex.¹¹² In her study on enlisted women, Judith Hicks Stiehm noted that women

¹⁰⁷ “Reservist Loses Suit Against U.S. Over Rape,” *New York Times*, September 30, 1984, ProQuest. In 1950, the Supreme Court ruled in *Feres v. United States* that active duty servicemembers and their families are prohibited from suing the military for injuries incurred due to negligence. Legal scholars view the “Feres doctrine” as an obstacle for reform with respect to sexual harassment and sexual assault. For a discussion on how to remedy this issue with respect to sexual harassment, see: Robin Rogers, “A Proposal for Combatting Sexual Discrimination in the Military: Amendment of Title VII,” *California Law Review* 78, no. 1 (1990): 165

¹⁰⁸ “A New Day and Age,” *ES&S*, January 12, 1977.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ Ray Rowden, “Women Play Essential Battlefield Role,” *ES&S*, August 29, 1984.

¹¹¹ Don Tate, “Be All That You Can Be,” *PS&S*, January 22, 1984, p. 12.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

experienced harassment at service clubs, dining halls, theaters and commissaries.¹¹³ In fact, one study showed that nearly half of male soldiers used the dining halls, but only fifteen percent of Army women.¹¹⁴ Rosemary Cameron described sexual harassment as rampant, when she joined in 1975. She stopped going to the dining facility and found it harrowing to walk through the post because “guys would be hanging out of buildings, whistling and catcalling.”¹¹⁵ Catcalling was a daily occurrence outside of work. One woman asked readers to think about how it felt to have twenty “enlisted men making comments on what they would like to do to various parts of your anatomy” while walking down a sidewalk.¹¹⁶ Another wrote that she felt like “new meat in a display case.”¹¹⁷

In the letters to the editor section of *Stars and Stripes* in the late 1970s and early 1980s servicewomen expressed their disappointment with the newspaper’s lack of coverage about sexual harassment and the preponderance of sexist articles. One described the articles as “cluttered with superficial stories” amplifying femininity at the expense of respect for women’s work. One woman sarcastically noted that male leader’s “congratulatory kiss,” for female soldiers’ awards and achievement deserved equal treatment, calling for enlisted women to begin to reciprocate with male officers.¹¹⁸ Many rejected stories that highlighted differences between

¹¹³ Stiehm, 150-54.

¹¹⁴ Stiehm, 150.

¹¹⁵ Tate, “Be all You Can Be.”

¹¹⁶ Unsigned letters to editor from Kaiserslautern and Mainz, Germany, “Meanwhile in the Barracks,” *ES&S*, January 20, 1980.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Sgt. Mary J. Thorson, letter to editor, “Congratulatory Kisses Uncalled For,” *ES&S*, November 3, 1975, 12.

male and female soldiers, demanding that the paper identify women as “soldiers” not female soldiers or lady soldiers.¹¹⁹ Failure of the editors recognition and reporting on the overwhelming “prejudice” against women “in every job assignment” was yet another complaint.¹²⁰ One wondered “why in the name of decency” the publication would continue to print bigoted articles unless it was to rile up its readership.¹²¹ More than one female soldier rankled at men unfairly maligning all women for the inadequacies of a single women in their unit.¹²²

Pregnant soldiers were a controversial topic for soldiers in the Army. Negative media portrayals of pregnant soldiers with headlines such as “Pregnancies Plague the U.S. Army,” and male soldier descriptions of pregnancy as an opportunity for women to be lazy and receive pay without working frustrated many women.¹²³ Some men criticized the Army for supplying free maternity uniforms to pregnant women.¹²⁴ Another man complained that Army regulations allowed “fat, sloppy and obviously undisciplined soldiers” to simply get pregnant to ignore

¹¹⁹ SPC4 Kelli Powell, letter to the editor, “Female Equality,” *ES&S*, September 10, 1974.

¹²⁰ PFC Kathryn A. Bunting, letter to editor, “In Support of Women in Service,” *ES&S*, July 19, 1978.

¹²¹ Spec. 4 Amy Heath, letter to editor, “...Stop Maligning the Enlisted Woman,” *ES&S*, January 25, 1976, 14.

¹²² Spec 4 Amy Heath and PFC Debbie Baldwin, letters to editor, *ES&S*, January 25, 1976.

¹²³ Many women displayed annoyance at the portrayal of pregnant soldiers in the military newspaper, *ES&S*; Spec. 4 Kathy Ahl, Joanne Caldwee, Linda Brewer, Spec. 5 Catherine A. Casey, letters to editor, “What They Think About Getting Over,” *ES&S*, August 14, 1976. However, some women argued against female soldiers having children in the services. Name withheld, letters to editor, “Why Army Maternity Uniforms?”, *ES&S*, November 6, 1980; Master Sergeant Jim Koenig, “Objects to Pregnancy Exemption,” *S&S*, August 19, 1983.

¹²⁴ Name withheld, letter to editor, “Why Army Maternity Uniforms,” *ES&S*, November 6, 1980, p. 11.

weight standards and remain in the service.¹²⁵ Even some women “had no sympathy for pregnant soldiers,” viewing them as a burden because they had light duty or had time off work before and after their child was born.¹²⁶ But many women defended pregnant soldiers, arguing that “it takes two to make a baby,” while others rejected the view that contraception should only be the responsibility of women while “sex is a male privilege”¹²⁷ Another woman asked those critical of pregnant soldiers to determine what “punishment” might then be appropriate for men who impregnate single soldiers.¹²⁸ Many women rejected the idea that they were “pampered” or given special privileges while pregnant, explaining that they were still required to perform physical training and participate in field activities.¹²⁹ Another simply noted that it was “a new day and age,” and that men should get used to the fact that females soldiers, pregnancy and all, “were here to stay.”¹³⁰

Male soldiers also used letters to the editor to vent their frustration about perceived reverse discrimination in the Army, viewing women’s integration into male jobs as detrimental to their military experience. Letters alleged that women did not pull their weight and received unfair advantages because of their gender. One male soldier believed he “had a right to be bitter,” when

¹²⁵ MSgt. Jim Koenig, letter to editor, “Objects to Pregnancy Exemption,” *ES&S*, August 19, 1983, p. 11.

¹²⁶ Spec 4 Rosalyn Albertson, letter to editor, “Rejects Complaint,” *ES&S*, March 10, 1980.

¹²⁷ Spec. 5 Karla Richardson, letter to editor, “Letters to Editor,” *ES&S*, June 8, 1983, 11; Heath, “...Stop Maligning the Enlisted Woman.”

¹²⁸ Spec. 4 Linda M. Thele, letter to editor, “Letters to Editor,” *ES&S*, June 8, 1983, p. 11.

¹²⁹ Spec. 5 Martha J. Perry and Spec. 4 Karen E. Chovanec, letter to editor, “Letters to Editor,” *ES&S*, June 8, 1983, p. 11.

¹³⁰ Barbara J. Dickey, letter to editor, “Letters to Editor,” *ES&S*, June 8, 1983, p. 11.

supervisors passed over enlisted men for promotion at the expense of Wacs, who, in his view, rarely worked as hard as men.¹³¹ The soldier argued that women were “emotionally and physically inferior,” only receiving promotions based on their looks or flirtatious relationships with their supervisors.¹³² A 1978 survey of troops revealed that seventy-seven percent of men felt that female soldiers in their unit received preferential treatment based on their gender.¹³³ A number criticized women for “receiving equal pay yet doing about half the work.”¹³⁴ Many men believed that women used their gender to get special treatment.¹³⁵ They believed many male supervisors let women off work for “headaches” during their menstrual cycle and never forced them to perform the heavy laborious work required of male soldiers.¹³⁶ And some male leaders admitted that they sent male soldiers to the field while permitting women stay behind in the offices during training.¹³⁷ Some men believed that women only needed to cry or “show a little leg” in order to be released from duty.¹³⁸ In response to an article reporting that some women lived in officers’ quarters due to a housing shortage, one man complained that both enlisted men

¹³¹ David A. Kussman, letter to editor, “Plaudits for Wacs Get his Dander Up,” *ES&S*, December 19, 1975, p. 12.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *1978 EWITA Final Report*, A-4-2-13.

¹³⁴ SPC4 Ben Patterson, letter to the editor, “Special Treatment,” *ES&S*, September 10, 1974.

¹³⁵ Staff Sgt. Harry W. Bell, letter to the editor, “Writer Angry Over ‘Sexual Harassment in Reverse,’” *ES&S*, August 15, 1983.

¹³⁶ Bill Walker, “Getting Over: Are Women Pampered?” *ES&S*, January 12, 1977, pp. 17-18; Kussman, “Plaudits for Wacs Get his Dander Up.”

¹³⁷ Walker, “Getting Over: Are Women Pampered?”

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

and officers resented “junior enlisted women getting a private room with a bath” when they should be living in the barracks with the other enlisted men.¹³⁹ Even minor differences were irritating, some complained that different hair length standards for male and female soldiers were unfair, as was the right of women to carry umbrellas in uniform while men simply got wet.¹⁴⁰

Between 1978 and 1979, a prolonged debate erupted in the letters to the editor in *Stars and Stripes* that involved men upset that some women wanted the newspaper to remove pinups from publication in the paper.¹⁴¹ One soldier lamented that pinups might be prohibited just like other “morale boosters” such as “stag nights.”¹⁴² Another argued that pinups were necessary to get men to read the paper, while one soldier argued that female critics should work on improving their own appearances.¹⁴³ Some women argued that if there were to be female pinups, for the sake of equality “male pinups” should be included.¹⁴⁴ One female argued that “semi-nude bodies and

¹³⁹ Captain Joseph F. Reigh and unsigned officer letters to the editor, “Special Treatment,” *ES&S*, September 10, 1974.

¹⁴⁰ Still Puzzled, letter to editor, “Hair Length,” *ES&S*, February 3, 1977, p. 11; Sgt. Jim Koenig, letter to editor, “Umbrella Coverage is for Women Only,” letter to editor, *ES&S*, July 13, 1982, p. 11.

¹⁴¹ Petty Officer 2nd Class Jean Y. Edgar and John D. Groff, letter to editor, “Readers Object to Pinups,” *PS&S*, October 28, 1978, p. 10.

¹⁴² An Old E-6, letter to editor, “But He’s Still for Them,” *PS&S*, December 21, 1978, p. 10.

¹⁴³ Master Gunnery Sergeant W.T. Garmon, letter to editor, “*PS&S* is for U.S. Forces,” *PS&S*, March 4, 1979, p. 10; Sgt. Steven N. Witkowski, letter to editor, “Support for Pinup Posters,” *PS&S*, December 3, 1978, p. 10.

¹⁴⁴ Sally A. McQuie, letter to editor, “She’s Fed Up with Pinups,” *PS&S*, March 4, 1979, p. 10; Sgt. Sandra K. Vincent, letter to editor, “She Say’s Print Pinup Boys Too,” *PS&S*, March 26, 1979, p. 10.

... bosoms” were immature and ended her subscription.¹⁴⁵ Other women objected to the pinups as exploitation of women, reminding the editor that women and family members were included in the paper’s readership.¹⁴⁶ The editor responded that “prudes” and others objecting to pinups were in the minority and did not understand the photos from the male troops’ point of view.¹⁴⁷ The pinups remained.

Yet some men’s letters expressed support for women’s integration and recognized the obstacles they faced. An enlisted male soldier in Germany acknowledged that most women “work even harder” than men to prove their worth.¹⁴⁸ He argued that similar percentages of men and women could be accused of not pulling their own weight, but only women were unfairly targeted.¹⁴⁹ Another argued that since single fathers were not publicly shamed about choosing to stay in the military, any critique of single mothers in uniform was a double standard.¹⁵⁰ One soldier retorted that women did not get pregnant “without the help of a man,” and further contended that many of those same male soldiers refuse to accept responsibilities as fathers and left women on their own, with no personal “price to pay.”¹⁵¹ A number of men argued that

¹⁴⁵ Mrs. Paula Stevenson-Whitley, letter to editor, “The Final Solution to Pinups,” *PS&S*, December 21, 1978, p. 10.

¹⁴⁶ Name Withheld by Request, letter to editor, “Revealing Poll on Pinups,” *PS&S*, March 17, 1979, p. 10.

¹⁴⁷ Vince Hottle, “Winners and Sinners,” *PS&S*, December 15, 1978, p. 7.

¹⁴⁸ Spec 5 Robert B. Heath, letter to the editor, “Prejudice Still Reigns Against Women in Army,” *ES&S*, January 25, 1976.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ Spec. 5 Richard E. Sweet, “A Toast to the ‘Dark Ages,’” *S&S*, October 15, 1975.

¹⁵¹ Heath, “Prejudice Still Reigns.”

women worked well in their units. Some MPs described women as “just as good as” men and considered them especially useful during “domestic disturbances” and in dealings with other female soldiers.¹⁵² Another MP in Germany wrote that “if a woman can put on that badge and weapon and do her job, then I’ll respect her as quickly as a man.”¹⁵³ One Sergeant First Class who worked in aviation and field artillery units with women commented that senior Army leaders and male soldiers only resented women because they were invading their workspaces, not because of any concern with their competence.¹⁵⁴ He maintained that his woman artillery commander was a better leader than his other six male commanders. The SFC, who served in Vietnam, pointed out that if women could succeed at their job, some men were “worried that their male bastion (field artillery) might not be as difficult as they had boasted.”¹⁵⁵

Most women handled discrimination they faced on an individual basis, not willing to report to their commanders for fear of retaliation. One of the most senior female NCO’s in the Army at the time, Karen Erickson, believed that female soldiers were “becoming more vocal” on a day to day basis and but were less willing to launch formal complaints about problems they encountered.¹⁵⁶ Roger Williams, an Equal Employment Opportunity NCO in the Army acknowledged that because those who filed formal complaints were ostracized in their units and scrutinized for even minor incidents with the heaviest possible discipline, the absence of sex

¹⁵² Barbara Fulenwider, “We Do the Same Job Men Do. . .,” *ES&S*, February 20, 1974.

¹⁵³ SSgt Steve Davis, “A Few Words from Army Men on the Subject of Army Women,” *PS&S*, October 4, 1981.

¹⁵⁴ SFC Mark Campbell, letter to editor, “In Defense of Women in Combat Roles,” *ES&S*, November 17, 1987, page 11.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Diana Valdez, “Sergeant Major Condemns Sexual Politics,” *PS&S*, August 31, 1984.

discrimination complaints did not mean there were not problems.¹⁵⁷ Little had changed since the integration of the first female MPs. Women who complained were branded troublemakers and this treatment undermined the chances of other women coming forward. But for a commander, not having complaints meant there were no sexism issues, which in turn made him appear to be a good leader that would advance through the ranks.¹⁵⁸ Too many complaints made a commander seem weak. Consequently, harassing and discriminatory behavior went unaddressed. Sexism had gone “underground” with less visible evidence, making cases harder to prove.¹⁵⁹ Some women agreed harassment or sexism had not declined, it only became “more subtle, more covert” than years prior.¹⁶⁰ One of the most discouraging examples of subtle discrimination was with performance evaluations. Men had leadership power over most women and used their evaluations as a way to undermine their advancement.¹⁶¹

Despite sexual discrimination and harassment, many women still felt a strong affinity for the Army. Helen Rogan explained that women in the military viewed issues of discrimination “differently from civilians.” In her view, most female soldiers genuinely appreciated the advantages the services provided to them such as equal pay, challenging jobs and education

¹⁵⁷ Mike Gose, “We’ve Gotten into Blaming (the victim), and Not the Supervisor,” *PS&S*, January 22, 1984; Linda Bird Francke notes that the military filled equal opportunity positions with enlisted personnel, provided them with only advisory status and no authority to take any action on complaints. The commanders retained power to make decisions. Francke, 175.

¹⁵⁸ Francke, 174.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ Charlie Bowden, “Harassment is Only Changing, NCO Says,” *ES&S*, November 6, 1986.

¹⁶¹ Lieutenant General Claudia Kennedy with Malcolm McConnell, *Generally Speaking* (New York: Warner Books, 2001), 132.

opportunities. They were “loyal” to the Army, and pushed for changes within the system, which they believed was rooted in an ethos of equal treatment and equal opportunity.¹⁶² While the Army may not have lived up to its mission, its expressed commitment to equal treatment was a significant step up from the “old boys network” many women would have faced at home.¹⁶³

Over time, many men came to appreciate women’s contributions. One male NCO admitted that he once considered the women’s detachment as the “Wac shack” where female soldiers were “easy to pick up—they were things to have fun with.”¹⁶⁴ But by 1977, the Sergeant First Class admitted his views had changed after consistently working with women, noting that females in the Army were simply part of the military team. In 1982, Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC) Charles Cramer declared, “It’s no longer a man’s world or a man’s Army.”¹⁶⁵ As women’s numbers increased to become a majority of his troops, he asserted that their performance was excellent, they had fewer “disciplinary issues,” and they were “part of a team.” They taught him that the way to handle women was to simply treat them as soldiers, no special treatment, but the same.¹⁶⁶ Male soldiers consistently argued against preferential treatment of

¹⁶² Rogan, 304-305. Sheila Caudle, “Women Believe Army Holding Them Back,” *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, September 18, 1983, Newspaper.com (accessed October 5, 2014).

¹⁶³ Cynthia Enloe cogently differed with Rogan by maintaining that because the military controlled and exploited women’s sexuality and roles, “women may serve the military, but they can never *be* permitted to be the military.” Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You? The Militarization of Women’s Lives* (Winchester, MA: Pandora Press, 1988), 15. Rosemarie Skaine described efforts to push for fairness for women in the military “military feminism.” Rosemarie Skaine, *Power and Gender: Issues in Sexual Dominance and Harassment* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1996), 47.

¹⁶⁴ SFC James Mudgett quoted in George Eberl, “The Male View,” *ES&S*, January 13, 1977, 13.

¹⁶⁵ SFC Charles Cramer, letters to editor, *ES&S*, “Views on the Effectiveness of Women in the Army,” March 11, 1982.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

women. Men wanted women to pull their own weight. But the issue was not only about fairness, it was about respect, and gaining respect was an ongoing process for women at each new station.

Women's Integration Transforms Definition of Fraternization

Women's integration into the military forced officials to define and change longstanding fraternization traditions by applying more restrictive policies between soldiers of all ranks. These policies limited soldiers' social freedom. And when officials classified coercive sexual relationships among soldiers of different ranks as fraternization, they obscured incidents of sexual violence. In the late 1970s, integration meant that daily relationships in the workplace became more sexually charged.¹⁶⁷ Men and women of all ranks dated and married each other. Adultery and divorce, which had always been present in the military, continued unabated, but now instead of involving soldiers and their wives, they began to include female co-workers. Previously, WAC leadership had policed its members' sexuality, trying to create an image of Wacs as sexually pure and virtuous.¹⁶⁸ Yet once WAC was dissolved, the Army did not establish any clear guidelines for acceptable workplace relationships between men and women. Because of the degree to which male and female soldiers openly flirted, engaged in sexual relations and married between ranks, policymakers considered women's integration as a threat to its core values: order and discipline, unit cohesion and respect for the hierarchy.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ For analysis on how fraternization became gendered, see Juanita Firestone, "Sexist Ideology and the Evaluation Criteria Used to Assess Women's Integration into the Army," *Population Research and Policy Review*, 3 (1984): 86-87.

¹⁶⁸ Leisa Meyer, *Creating G.I. Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps during World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 6.

¹⁶⁹ Quince C. Hopkins, "Rank Matters but Should Marriage? Adultery, Fraternization, and Honor in the Military," *UCLA Women's Law Journal* 9, no. 2 (1999): 205-206.

The Army had originally established fraternization customs during the American Revolution to preserve hierarchy, good order, and discipline in the ranks. Relying on a strict chain of command, soldiers had a duty to follow orders. Additionally, commanders could discipline soldiers for irresponsible off-duty behavior, and any officer could spot check any enlisted man for not following Army regulations. Because of this rank hierarchy, the burden fell on officers to avoid close personal relationships with enlisted men. Army customs prohibited officers from bestowing gifts and using their rank for personal gain with enlisted persons, or establishing close relationships that might interfere with the chain of command.¹⁷⁰ Most fraternization abuses involved officer getting drunk or gambling with enlisted men, engaging in prostitution, committing adultery with enlisted men's spouses, participating in homosexual acts and exploiting enlisted men's labor.¹⁷¹ In these cases, the Army charged officers with "conduct unbecoming an officer" or for behavior that was "prejudicial to good order and discipline."¹⁷²

Since there were no formal policies or legal codes for fraternization, the Army gave commanders broad discretion to determine which personal relationships caused disruption of morale and discipline within their units. Army leadership encouraged personal interactions between the ranks to promote bonding and unit cohesion if the interaction was not perceived as disruptive to the moral of the unit.¹⁷³ Yet, as women and men engaged in relationships, and with no clear guidelines about the limits of unacceptable bonding, all relationships had the potential to

¹⁷⁰ Gambling, drinking and lending money were also prohibited. Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Major Kevin H. Carter, "Fraternization," *Military Law Review* 113 (Summer 1986): 77-79.

¹⁷² Ibid., 77.

¹⁷³ Jeffrey P. Whitman, "Women, Sex and the Military," *Public Affairs Quarterly* 12:4 (October, 1998): 462-63.

create conflict. For example, Claudia Geniton recalled that when she married a soldier from her unit, the supervisor wrote them “really terrible” evaluations because he did not approve of their relationship.¹⁷⁴ The couple had been on good terms with her supervisor, so the action caught Geniton off-guard. Additionally, Geniton and her husband were both enlisted soldiers, and not in violation of fraternization customs that prohibited close personal relations between the officer and enlisted ranks.

As increasing numbers of male and female soldiers of all ranks established consensual sexual relationships, many justified their liaisons as private but normal behavior. Officers who dated enlisted soldiers initially faced the most scrutiny due to commanders’ worries that these relationships would result in favoritism or special treatment. One case reflecting tensions over officer-enlisted relationships involved Private James Johnson and Lieutenant Mary Lou Follett. In 1974, the Army reassigned Private Johnson to a different unit when they discovered that he was in a relationship and living with Lieutenant Follett.¹⁷⁵ Johnson’s commander pressured him to return to the barracks by cutting off his housing allowance.¹⁷⁶ Follett’s superiors warned her that the relationship might lead to her court martial for “conduct unbecoming an officer.”¹⁷⁷ When the couple hired a lawyer to protest their treatment, the commanding General of European Army replied that the disciplinary actions taken were appropriate and based on “proper military

¹⁷⁴ Claudia Butler Geniton interview by author, March 26, 2011, WVHP 0511, “Claudia Butler Geniton Papers,” UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

¹⁷⁵ “Girl Officer’s Private Affair Shocks Army,” *PS&S*, March 28, 1974. Lieutenant Follett was a nurse. Private Johnson was a soldier.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

considerations.”¹⁷⁸ Many soldiers believed the Army’s reaction to mixed rank relationships was unfair. In a 1974 letter to the editor of *Stars and Stripes*, a male soldier mocked the Army’s interference with relationships, ridiculing the view of fraternization as “un-pure” rank mixing that would surely lead to sergeant-captains and other “half breed” military babies.¹⁷⁹

Soldiers fought back by appealing up the chain of command, complaining to the Army’s Inspector General, and asking their legislators for support. Only a small number of fraternization charges resulted in criminal court martial charges; instead, most commanders used non-judicial punishment to address “improper” personal relationships.¹⁸⁰ Non-judicial punishment included reassignment, denied leave, letters of reprimand, rejection of promotions and awards, adverse evaluations, reduction in rank, blocked reenlistment and administrative separation.¹⁸¹ In 1978, when Captain Michael Jelinsky married an enlisted woman, his commanding officer relieved him of his command, denied him off post housing and assigned him to an inconsequential job.¹⁸² The

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Sgt. Ed O’Brien Jr, letter to editor, “Fraternization,” *ES&S*, May 3, 1974, p. 12.

¹⁸⁰ This work does not detail the history of challenges to court martials with respect to fraternization. For a detailed explanation of how military law evolved on this issue, see Richard T. Devereaux, “Fraternization in the United States Air Force” Development of a Policy Booklet,” (master’s thesis, Air Force Institute of Technology, 1988), 73-88. More research is needed to understand the important connection between fraternization, sexual harassment, assault and rape. One of the earliest suits brought by an officer challenging his fraternization conviction in a civilian court after the expansion of women into the Army was *Staton v. Froehlke* in 1975. In this case, the warrant officer was acquitted of rape, but appealed his fraternization conviction. He unsuccessfully argued that fraternization policy was too vague to be constitutional. Margaret A. McDevitt, “Wrongful Fraternization as an Offense Under the Uniform Code of Military Justice,” *Cleveland State Law Review*, 33 (1984-1985): 550-552, 569, 570, 575.

¹⁸¹ Major Kevin H. Cater, “Fraternization,” 107-114.

¹⁸² Jack Anderson, “An Army Love Story Gone Awry,” *The (Newburgh, NY) Evening News*, September 8, 1978, p. 6A, Googlenewspaper.com (accessed June 4, 2013).

IG denied Jelinsky's appeal for reinstatement based on the Army's view that his marriage to an enlisted woman would disrupt the morale in the unit when they attended mandatory military functions together.¹⁸³ Social hierarchy in the military mattered on and off the job.

Many soldiers found it very difficult to overcome the social and professional stigma associated with relationships between enlisted and officers. For instance, one mixed-rank couple who kept their dating relationship a secret found that even after marriage, both their officer and enlisted friends acted "aloof, very cool" towards them.¹⁸⁴ The commander discouraged the female officer from bringing her enlisted spouse to unit events.¹⁸⁵ Other women reported cases of harassment when they married male officers. "Trouble came from all sides," one lamented, with some enlisted soldiers believing she received special privileges, and officers discriminating against her as an enlisted officer's spouse.¹⁸⁶ Enlisted women were discouraged from joining organizations meant for the wives of male officers.¹⁸⁷ To avoid scrutiny and stigma, many officer-enlisted couples hid their relationships from their friends and coworkers. For example, one male officer noted that since he and his enlisted girlfriend did not work together, he did not technically

¹⁸³ Jack Anderson, "John Tunney and the '80 Olympics," *Ellensburg Daily Record*, October 5, 1978, p. 13, Googlenewspaper.com (accessed June 4, 2013).

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ "Military Mag Has a New Look," *PS&S*, May 31, 1978, p. 2.

¹⁸⁷ Margaret C. Harrell, "Gender and Class-Based Role Expectations for Army Spouses," in *Anthropology and the United States Military*, eds., Pamela R. Frese and Margaret C. Harrell (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 83-84.

need to “hide” their relationship.¹⁸⁸ But he did so because he worried that dating an enlisted woman might negatively affect his career.¹⁸⁹

In the late 1970s, with sexual liaisons, marriages, pregnancies, adultery and divorces among male and female soldiers on the rise, the Army studied the issue of fraternization and determined that women were responsible for distracting men from their work.¹⁹⁰ The 1978 *Evaluation of Women in the Army* (EWITA) concluded that fraternization was no longer just about the tradition of keeping enlisted from gaining social equity with officers, now fraternization included “socializing, dating, courting and marriage.”¹⁹¹ The report introduced a new term, “sex fraternization,” defined as “social interactions, real or perceived between male and female service members that promotes individual and/or group animosity, dissention or antagonism,” and threatened workplace efficiency.¹⁹² The authors speculated that men’s complaints about women using their femininity to gain advantages such as promotions, preferable assignments, and exclusion from hard work contained some truth.¹⁹³ They argued that some female soldiers’ propensity to flirt with their superiors led some Army leaders to make unwise decisions.¹⁹⁴ While

¹⁸⁸ Rick Wasser, “Fraternizing,” *ES&S*, June 9, 1979, p. 10.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ The EWITA report members consisted of male and female Army leadership, both senior enlisted and officers. They studied all of the previous reports issued by the Army in the 1970s. Its main purpose was to establish how many women could be integrated into each military occupation and unit. 1978 *EWITA Final Report*, I-1, I-2,

¹⁹¹ 1978 *EWITA Final Report*, 1-33.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, M-3, 2-100. The report further noted that sex fraternization encompassed using “sex to gain favorable advantage in job or be misguided or distracted by male advances.” *Ibid.*, 2-61.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 2-102.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

claiming that some men took advantage of young female soldiers for sex and noted that “widespread rape” might occur in “stressful situations,” the report’s overwhelming conclusion was that women’s growing presence in the Army created undue disruptions for men.¹⁹⁵

The *EWITA* report led the Secretary of the Army to establish the first written guidelines for Army fraternization.¹⁹⁶ The 1978 policy sought to prevent relationships between “service members of different ranks which involve or give the appearance of partiality, preferential treatment, or the improper use of rank or position for personal gain, are prejudicial to good order and discipline, and high unit moral.”¹⁹⁷ Female soldiers complained that they bore the brunt of persecutions under these rules.¹⁹⁸ When the Army investigated Lieutenant Mary Lou Follett for her relationship with an enlisted man, she complained that her superiors never investigated “married male officers dating or living with enlisted women.”¹⁹⁹ Fraternization included sexual

¹⁹⁵ Ibid. For detailed analysis on sexism displayed throughout the report, see Juanita Firestone, “Sexist Ideology and the Evaluation Criteria,” 77-95.

¹⁹⁶ Kevin H. Carter, “Fraternization,” 61. *United States v. Blake*, 35 M.J. 539 (A.C.M.R. 1992). “Specification alleging fraternization between Army 1SG and female NCO in his company was fatally defective where it failed to allege a violation of Army custom, which is an essential element.” U.S. Army, The Judge Advocate General’s School, *Criminal Law Deskbook, Volume II: Crimes and Defenses* (Winter 2011 – 2012), p. C-47, http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/Crim-Law-Deskbook-Winter_2011-2012_Vol-2.pdf (accessed June 4, 2016).

¹⁹⁷ “Sex Fraternization Curbed in the Army,” *New York Times*, December 5, 1978, ProQuest.

¹⁹⁸ “VII Corps Women’s Symposium,”¹² Janice Farringer Papers, WV0572, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

¹⁹⁹ “Girl Officer’s Private Affair Shocks Army.”

harassment, but when Private Laura Harro complained about her commander soliciting her for sex, “it was my word against a colonel’s” but he held the power, so nothing was done.²⁰⁰

While the fraternization policy’s main focus was to prevent heterosexual relationships between officers and enlisted soldiers in the same chain of command, it was “deliberately broad” enough to allow commanders discretion.²⁰¹ This meant that policies varied from commander to commander and unit to unit.²⁰² Some women felt the policies made little sense. For example, a junior enlisted woman in her thirties complained that she had more in common with the senior ranking members of her unit than with the younger junior ranking soldiers, but fraternization policies prevented her from establishing close relationships with enlisted men her age.²⁰³ “The policy has such huge gaps it leaves everything up to the commanding officer,” complained an enlisted woman.²⁰⁴ Off duty relationships should not be “the Army’s business.”²⁰⁵ DACOWITS members confirmed that many women desired more social freedom and complained that the policies were outdated and should be eliminated altogether.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁰ Eddie Fleming, “Sexual Extortion Victims ‘Scared’,” *ES&S*, July 21, 1982, p. 9.

²⁰¹ United States, House, Military Personnel Subcommittee on Armed Services, *Women in the Military*, 96th Cong., 1st Sess., November 13-16, 1979 and February 11, 1980, p. 112, ProQuest Congressional (81-H201-23); Captain Karen S. Davis, “Fraternization and the Enlisted Soldier” Some Considerations for the Defense,” *The Army Lawyer* (October 1985): 29-30.

²⁰² This resistance was not new, Leisa Meyer describes how male and female soldiers in WWII pushed back against the restrictions on socializing between officer and enlisted ranks. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 133-35.

²⁰³ Michelle McCormick, columnist, *ES&S*, December 11, 1981, p. 24.

²⁰⁴ “Sexual Harassment Widespread in Ranks of ‘This Man’s Army,’” *The Indianapolis Star*, February 3, 1980, Newspaper.com.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ William J. Bartmen, “Panel: Fraternization is a Growing Problem,” *PS&S*, March 6, 1989, p. 8.

Some women challenged the policies inconsistencies, winning some concessions and clarifications. For example, in 1980, after a commander reassigned an enlisted female soldier to a new post because she was dating an officer who did not command her, she complained to her congressman.²⁰⁷ The complaint landed on the desk of the Secretary of the Army, who concluded that the disciplinary action was not necessary since the relationship had not affected “discipline, authority or morale.”²⁰⁸ After this incident, the Army’s legal department clarified the directive. It maintained that “senior-subordinate” relationships were acceptable unless they involved “actual or perceived unfairness,” such as if a soldier used their rank for his or her own gain or if their actions reflected a direct influence on “discipline, authority or morale.”²⁰⁹ The clarification did not completely resolve the ambiguity of fraternization policies, but acknowledged that officer-enlisted relationships could be acceptable when they took place outside the chain of command.

The Army used fraternization rules to discipline and downplay sexual harassment and sexual assault, most notably at Army training centers. In 1980, female complaints about sexual coercion at Fort Dix and Fort McClellan resulted in the prosecution of over a dozen male soldiers, some of whom were charged with assault and sexual assault, but ultimately, the Army allowed them to resign.²¹⁰ In many other cases, discipline focused on instructors dating and socializing

²⁰⁷ Kevin H. Carter, “Fraternization,” 90-91.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 91.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ Michael Gordon and Rick Rafael, “Soldiers are Charged in Fort Sex Scandal, *The Anniston Star*, December 4, 1980, Newspaper.com (accessed June 18, 2014); “Dix Acts on Sex Charges,” *Courier Post (Camden)*, February 10 1980, Newspaper.com (accessed June 5, 2014); Three drill sergeants were allowed to resign at Fort McClellan. David H. Morrissey, “3 Drill Sergeants Allowed to Resign,” *The Anniston Star*, January 31, 1981, p. 1, Newspaper.com (accessed June 7, 2014).

with the enlisted women, but issues over abuse of power were minimized.²¹¹ Even though Army regulations forbade fraternization between trainees and trainers as early as 1980, the ban was ineffective.²¹² In many cases, by focusing on the violation of socialization rules, not sexual coercion, Army leaders frequently failed to address how men used their rank and position of authority for sexual assault and rape. Trainers often pressured new recruits for sex and retaliated against them if they refused. One woman testified that after refusing sex with one of the instructors, “the sergeant was always on my case about something.”²¹³ Also reducing the likelihood that female soldiers would come forward without fear of reprisal, the Army often disciplined women reporting abuse by charging them for infractions of Army regulations.²¹⁴

Ignoring the widespread misuse of power by the trainers, Army leadership’s response to these numerous incidents did not result in any large scale investigation of criminal behavior at all training centers.²¹⁵ Remarkably, in 1985, one Army official noted that fraternization violations were greatest at these training centers, but did not acknowledge the prevalence and potential for sexual assault and abuse.²¹⁶ Even after servicewomen testified at a congressional hearing in 1980

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² “In Today’s Army, It’s Joe and Jo,” *The Decatur Herald*, February 24, 1980, p. 33, Newspaper.com (October 3, 2014).

²¹³ “Dix Acts on Sex Charges.”

²¹⁴ Six women at Fort Knox received non-judicial punishment, but the Army did not release the type of disciplinary action, which according to an Army representative could have included “reduction in rank, restriction to barracks and loss of pay.” Morrisey, “3 Drill Sergeants.”

²¹⁵ The Army had investigations at other posts in 1980 (Fort Bragg, Fort Meade), but these were not at training centers, and involved charges of sexual harassment, not fraternization. “Other Forts Probed,” *Asbury Park Press*, February 11, 1980, p. B20, Newspaper.com.

²¹⁶ Dwight Trimmer, “Military Told to Define ‘Fraternization’,” *ES&S*, June 25, 1985.

about sexual assault and abuse at other Army installations, the Army remained tone deaf to widespread problems with sexual assault.²¹⁷ In 1988, the Army convicted eight male trainers for fraternization with women under their control at Fort Benning and Fort Sam Houston, demoting them in rank and levying fines.²¹⁸ The same year, the Army took the same type of disciplinary action against nearly fifty drill sergeants at Fort Dix for improper socialization with trainees, ten involving “gender-related abuse.”²¹⁹ The Army’s regular use of non-judicial punishment instead of filing sexual assault charges against trainers exposed the leaderships’ inability to view sexual coercion as a criminal offense. It was not until 1996, when the media’s focus on the sexual assault scandal at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds training center damaged the Army’s reputation, that its leadership seriously investigated the criminal behavior of instructors throughout the Army.²²⁰ Subsequent congressional investigations, and the Army’s Senior Review panel resulted in recognition that sexual harassment and assault were “confused” with fraternization. Consequently, the Department of Defense focused on restricting fraternization even further. In 1998, the DOD instructed all services to prohibit all intimate personal relationships between

²¹⁷ In 1979, Congresswomen Marjorie Holt (D-MD) requested a hearing on sexual assault after learning about the problems at some Army installations. While Holt seemed concerned about military leadership’s inaction on this matter, the men on her committee redirected their concerns to the women’s lack of resistance to assault, and to their failure to formally complain. For a detailed review of this hearing, see Francke, 164-175.

²¹⁸ “7 Benning Instructors Punished for Fraternization,” *ES&S*, December 22, 1988, p. 6; “Army Investigates Fraternization,” *The Galveston Daily News*, January 22, 1988, p. 8, Newspaper.com (accessed June 5, 2013).

²¹⁹ T.J. McCarthy, “Sophisticated Style for Drill Sergeants,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 20, 1988, p. 21-CH, Newspaper.com.

²²⁰ The incident led the Secretary of the Army to form a Sexual Harassment Panel to investigate all forms of sexual harassment, and sexual assault. This panel concluded its work in 1997. See Epilogue for details. United States, *The Secretary of the Army's Senior Review Panel Report on Sexual Harassment*, Vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Dept. of the Army, 1997), 8.

officers and soldiers.²²¹ Even so, these policies did little to address women's fear of retaliation if they reported abuse.²²²

In 1984, increasing concerns about fraternization between enlisted and officers led the Defense Department to add fraternization as a criminal offense under military law.²²³ For the first time, instead of administrative punishment, commanders could charge officers on criminal charges for inappropriate relations between enlisted and officers ranks through a court-martial process.²²⁴ The Secretary of the Army clarified that only relationships resulting in an "actual or clearly predictable impact" on good order and discipline in a unit would be considered fraternization.²²⁵ Some of the relationships between enlisted soldiers involved criminal conduct, but it was not until 1987 that the Army Court of Military Review decided that military courts could prosecute Non-Commissioned officers for crimes (NCOs) under fraternization rules.²²⁶

These changes transformed Army commanders' handling of some fraternization incidents from administrative punishment to the criminalization of relationships, expanding the reach of

²²¹ In 1999, based on the DOD directive, the Army forbade all relationships between enlisted and officers. Any couples in a relationship were directed to marry or end the relationship by March 1, 2000. "Listen Up: Fraternization," *Hot Topics: Current Issues for Army Leaders* (Fall 1999): 4-14.

²²² 1997 *Senior Review Panel Report on Sexual Harassment*, Vol. 1, p. E-9.

²²³ Most reports indicate that the Army's fraternization policies were the most lenient of all the service branches because they allowed close relationships between officers and enlisted personnel. Chuck Vinch, "Lawmakers Seek Review of Fraternization," *PS&S*, October 21, 1988, p. 15.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ Chuck Ninch, "Lawmakers Seek Review of Fraternization."

²²⁶ Captain Ronald D. Vogt, "Fraternization after Clarke," *Military Law Review* 114 (March 1989): 45.

fraternization abuses. Throughout the 1990s, soldiers of all ranks continued to date, marry, divorce and commit adultery with other service members in their chain of command. The new rules created additional stress for couples in even “acceptable” relationships. Some soldiers continued to hide their intimate relationships. For example, Warrant Officer Chely McAnich dated an officer from the same company, but not in the same chain of command, so the relationship was not forbidden under the fraternization rules. But McAnich explained that they kept it secret anyhow because they “didn’t want the soldiers [in their unit] to find out,” creating an uncomfortable situation at work for the couple that felt “weird.”²²⁷ Ann West, another Warrant Officer, worried that dating enlisted soldiers would be dangerous because they “would not be discreet,” but as a lesbian, she was prohibited from dating any women, so all intimate relationships were risky.²²⁸

The Paradox of Hidden Lesbians and the Fight for Military Gay Rights

During the Wac era, a hidden subculture of lesbians navigated cautiously through two different worlds, a masculine institution of men, and a women’s corps that presented its female soldiers as the model of femininity. Both worlds prohibited homosexuality. But for many, it was a “shadowy world” that could make you “crazy with paranoia.”²²⁹ Since disclosure of homosexuality often resulted in dishonorable discharge or even criminal prosecution and prison,

²²⁷ Chely McAnich interview by author, (hereafter cited as Chely McAnich interview), August 9, 2010, “Chely McAnich Papers,” UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

²²⁸ Anne K. West quoted in Winni S. Webber, *Lesbians in the Military Speak Out*, (Northboro, MA: Madwomen Press, 1993), 4.

²²⁹ Rebekah Miram Sutin in Webber, *Lesbians in the Military*,” 89; Bridget Wilson quoted in Jane Gross, “Gays Decry Treatment by Military,” *PS&S*, April 23, 1990.

the stakes were especially high for lesbian relationships.²³⁰ Still, lesbians sought out and engaged in sexual activity, taking “calculated” risks to avoid exposure and expulsion.²³¹ Lesbian soldiers were cautious about approaching other women and making friends. Some dated and flirted with men or lied about having boyfriends to deflect attention about their sexuality.²³² Many used vague gender-neutral language when discussing their personal life, avoiding he or she pronouns and used terms such as “roommate” or “friend.”²³³ Some married gay men to limit inspection of their personal lives, while others formed social circles outside of the military to “keep a low profile.”²³⁴

WAC leadership’s tolerance for discrete behavior created conditions for the establishment of a lesbian culture. While the corps discharged many lesbians, senior WAC officials feared that media coverage of mass lesbian expulsions would undermine the corps’ appeal and image, so they prohibited investigations intent on rooting out homosexuals.²³⁵ Instead, when lesbians were discovered, commanders often permitted officers to resign, and reassigned enlisted Wacs to different units, or discharged them for other violations such as alcoholism or

²³⁰ Tom King, “WACs Accuse Army of Irregulars,” *The Anniston Star*, October 28, 1968, Newspaper.com; Randy Shilts described the cases of Joann Newark, an Air Force officer who the military sent to prison over consensual lesbian sex. For details on Joann Newark case, see Randy Shilts, *Conduct Unbecoming: Gays and Lesbians in the U.S. Military* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993), 393-99, 419-20, 426, 436-37.

²³¹ Meyer, 146-47.

²³² Webber, 4, 96; Zsa Zsa Gershick, *Secret Service: Untold Stories of Lesbians in the Military* (Los Angeles: Alyson Books, 2005), 62-63; Mary Ann Humphrey, *My Country, My Right to Serve: Experiences of Gay Men and Women in the Military, World War II to the Present* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990), 103.

²³³ Gershick, 62-63.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Meyer, 159-60.

drugs.²³⁶ Between 1964 and 1978, the women's corps discharged an average of forty-seven lesbians a year for homosexuality.²³⁷ However, an average of 137 women received less than honorable discharges for other reasons. In all probability, some of these were for homosexuality, but by using a different discharge category, WAC kept lesbianism concealed.²³⁸

The surge of women into Army jobs in the early 1970s created new dynamics for sexual relationships just as the modern gay rights movement and feminism were emerging. For some female soldiers, these conditions provided motivation, as well as a platform and legal structure, to publicly break the invisibility of homosexuality. One of the tipping points for the modern gay rights movement was the Stonewall uprising in 1969, which greatly increased the visibility of homosexuals in society, but also helped inspire new advocacy groups for military rights.²³⁹ The ACLU's Legal in Service Project and NOW's Lesbian Task Force sprung out of civil rights and feminist organization. Some servicemembers, with the help of these organizations began to assert their rights as members of the military. By 1976, at least ten soldiers publicly challenged the Army policies in federal courts, many more servicemembers file lawsuits over the next two decades.²⁴⁰ Typically, soldiers accused of homosexuality sought out lawyers to disprove the

²³⁶ Ibid., 159-60, 164-65.

²³⁷ Morden, 413.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ For a detailed analysis on the rise of the gay rights movement, see Martin Duberman, *Stonewall* (New York: Penguin Press, 1994). For analysis on the emergence of gay rights activism before Stonewall, see John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities: The Making of a Homosexual Minority in the United States, 1940-1970* (Chicago, Illinois: The University Press of Chicago Press, 1983).

²⁴⁰ "Frontlines: Military Gays Fight Back," *Mother Jones* 1:4 (June 1976): 5-6; Melissa Wells-Petry, *Exclusion: Homosexual and The Right to Serve* (Washington, DC: 1993), 8. Wells-Petry's work analyzed why servicemembers' lawsuits were ultimately unsuccessful. Her analysis supported the ban.

charges. Now, for the first time, soldiers began to embrace their sexuality, and challenged the discriminatory policies.

In part, soldiers tried to win their cases based on the merit of their work, rejecting the claim that homosexuality made them unfit for service. Although most initially lost their cases, press releases by the ACLU and other groups brought media attention to servicemembers' causes, putting military gay rights in the public spotlight. In 1975, the ACLU's Military in Service Rights Project and Lambda Legal Defense Fund took up the case of a male Air Force Sergeant as an ideal candidate to push back against the military's anti-gay policies.²⁴¹ Leonard Matlovich's service record was impeccable, but his status as a decorated Vietnam veteran enhanced his military credibility. After his lawyers arranged an article in the *New York Times* for publicity, media outlets clamored to interview Matlovich.²⁴² The cover, declaring "I Am a Homosexual" increased gay visibility in the military.²⁴³ Inspired by his actions, more servicemen and servicewomen came out of the shadows to challenge the military's ban on homosexuals.

One of the most significant Army lesbian cases involved Miriam Ben-Shalom, whose litigation began in 1975 and stayed active until 1990. She argued that her identity as a lesbian was separate and distinct from actual homosexual conduct in the military, foreshadowing the "Don't

²⁴¹ Mike Hippler, *Matlovich: The Good Soldier* (Boston: Alyson Publications Inc., 1989), 38-38, 42-43; Richard Pacelle, "Seeking Another Forum," in *Gay Rights, Military Wrongs: Political Perspectives on Lesbians and Gays in the Military*, Craig A. Rimmerman (New York: Garland Pub, 1996), 205. The full name was Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, which was established in 1973.

²⁴² Hippler, 32-54, 61-62. The Matlovich *Time* cover published on September 8, 1975; Shilts, 227-28.

²⁴³ Shilts, 227.

Ask, Don't Tell" policy of the 1990s.²⁴⁴ In 1976, the Army discharged Ben-Shalom, but she continued her fight, and in 1980 became the first homosexual in the military to win a court reinstatement after a discharge for homosexuality.²⁴⁵ Matlovich won his case a few months later.²⁴⁶ However, the Army and Air Force refused to reinstate them both, only offering a monetary settlement. Matlovich accepted the settlement, but Ben-Shalom refused and continued her fight for fourteen years.²⁴⁷

After Ben-Shalom and Matlovich's historic wins for reinstatement into the military, the tide appeared to have turned in favor of gay rights, but a conservative movement was on the rise, and the election of President Ronald Reagan helped stall the momentum. The Department of Defense wanted to eliminate all loopholes for homosexuality that prevented courts from reversing

²⁴⁴ The Don't Ask, Don't Tell Policy was established during President Clinton's administration. In 1993, it established that a military member's identity or sexual orientation did not automatically disqualify him or her from military service. Instead, the prohibition shifted to actual homosexual conduct such as holding hands, kissing or actual sexual activity. However, the policy also prohibited homosexuals or bisexuals from same sex marriages or disclosing their identity as gays or lesbians because these actions were considered disruptive to the unit. David Burrelli, *Don't Ask, Don't Tell: The Law and Military Policy on Same-Sex Behavior* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2010).

²⁴⁵ Miriam Ben-Shalom, interviewed by Steve Estes, November 11, 2004, "Miriam Ben-Shalom Collection," (AFC/2001/001/43276), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as Ben-Shalom interview), <http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.43276> (accessed on March 31, 2013); Humphrey, 189; *Ben-Shalom v. Secretary of the Army*, 489 F.Supp. 964 (1980).

²⁴⁶ Matlovich won reinstatement in August, 1980. The courts combined Matlovich's case with Vernon Berg, a Navy sailor, who was also reinstated with the same ruling. Shilts, 362-64.

²⁴⁷ *Ben-Shalom v. Secretary of Army*, 807 F. 2d 982 (1986). Both the Air Force and the Navy refused to reinstate Matlovich and Berg. Both, like Ben-Shalom, were offered lump sums to end their cases without returning to the military. Both accepted these offers. In Matlovich's case, his attorney's worried that if they appealed, a conservative Supreme Court denial would set back the battle for gay rights. For details on their decisions, see Shilts, 363-66, 371; Ben-Shalom interview.

discharges, such as with Matlovich and Ben-Shalom. In 1981, Reagan's new Secretary of Defense eliminated the commander discretion that allowed for flexibility; instead, the DOD implemented a directive severely restricting its policy.²⁴⁸ Whereas the previous policy focused on homosexual acts, the new policy stated that "homosexuality is incompatible with military service."²⁴⁹ This meant that simply being a homosexual or having homosexual thoughts were enough for discharge. This amended policy, along with the growing stigma against homosexual men during the initial AIDs crisis stymied some of the momentum that soldiers had gained in the late 1970s.

Not all had been lost, challenges to the military's policy on homosexuality from the 1970s were still pending in the court system and other soldiers joined the battle.²⁵⁰ Ben-Shalom continued to fight the Army's refusal to follow the court's reinstatement ruling, but they ignored the ruling for more than seven years.²⁵¹ In 1987, the U.S. Court of Appeals forced the Army to finally reinstate Ben-Shalom, where she served another year until she was due for reenlistment and the Army rejected her reenlistment.²⁵² Ben-Shalom filed another suit, eventually losing when

²⁴⁸ Ben-Shalom interview.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ Maura Dolan, "Pastor Resolves Gay, God Conflict," *Los Angeles Times*, January 30, 1983, Newspaper.com. Dusty Pruitt joined the Army in 1971 serving on active duty until 1975 when she transferred into the Army Reserves; Carolyn Dusty Pruitt, interviewed by Steve Estes, January 12 2005, "Carolyn Dusty Pruitt Collection," (AFC/2001/001/43222) Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as Dusty Pruitt interview), <http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.43222> (accessed on March 31, 2013).

²⁵¹ Ben-Shalom interview.

²⁵² Shilts, 642.

the Supreme Court refused to hear her case in 1990s.²⁵³ On the other hand, Dusty Pruitt, who had begun her fight in 1983, initially lost, but won reinstatement on appeal in 1987, which became final a few years later when the Supreme Court upheld it without comment.²⁵⁴ These challenges set the foundation for the implementation of the 1993 “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” Policy, as well as its later repeal in 2010 that allowed homosexuals to serve openly.

The Army responded to legal suits by more actively investigating lesbians, particularly in units where soldiers fought the policy. Without the Women’s Army Corps’ leadership to discourage witch-hunts, the Army’s criminal investigators exploited the climate of sexism and sexual harassment in the military that fed off the homosexuality prohibition. Male “lesbian baiting” was an especially destructive form of sexual harassment.²⁵⁵ In Germany, some enlisted male soldiers even coined the name “Dykebusters” for their group, wearing shirts depicting the female symbols crossed out and openly joked about rooting out lesbians.²⁵⁶ All women were vulnerable when there were rumors of homosexuality at a base, leading some soldiers to make accusations to save their own careers.²⁵⁷ Others denied their lesbianism, or accused their former female lovers.²⁵⁸

²⁵³ Ben-Shalom interview; “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, Don’t Pursue Database,” A Project of the Robert Crown Law Library at Stanford Law School, <http://dont.law.stanford.edu/litigation/ben-shalom-v-marsh/> (accessed June 15, 2016).

²⁵⁴ Dusty Pruitt, interview; “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, Don’t Pursue Database.”

²⁵⁵ Webber, 52-53, 96.

²⁵⁶ Shilts, 496-97.

²⁵⁷ Webber, 24.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 24.

“Witch hunts” became increasingly common. Witch hunts were when Army investigators pressed female soldiers under investigation for additional names of suspected or known lesbians. Some investigations began for issues unrelated to homosexuality, often for drug use.²⁵⁹ Sometimes women supplied names as retribution for other slights.²⁶⁰ Other times women listed all the women they thought could be lesbians.²⁶¹ When such investigations began, lesbians typically cut off contact with each other, losing the bonds they forged in order to protect each other.²⁶² It was a brutal process that undermined trust and cohesion among women.

As the legal battles mounted, lesbians in the Army continued to socialize together, forming close knit bonds and trying to avoid investigations. In one example from the 1970s, a group of Army lesbians in California playing sports and traveling together were part of large underground “networks of gay service people.”²⁶³ One of the networks even had a name, the “Coalition of Gay Servicepeople,” and served as an entry point for many gay service members to secretly meet each other.²⁶⁴ Members of this group began referring to other homosexual servicemembers as “family,” a code word that spread through other informal networks of gays

²⁵⁹ Webber, 102; Gershick, 103.

²⁶⁰ Shilts, 200-201.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 493-95.

²⁶² Webber, 64.

²⁶³ Shilts, 291.

²⁶⁴ Air Force investigators discovered the initial group, and discharged more than thirty gay airmen, some on charges of homosexuality, others for drug use. See Shilts Chapter 30, “The Family.” See also, Steven Zeeland, *Sailors and Sexual Identity: Crossing the Line between "Straight" and "Gay" in the U.S. Navy* (New York: Haworth Press, 1995), 132; Cory Kilgannon, “At West Point, Hidden Gays Put in the Spotlight,” *The New York Times*, August 24, 2010, ProQuest.

and lesbians in the military.²⁶⁵ As late as 2010, homosexuals at West Point still used the question, “Are you Family?” to enable them to identify each other.²⁶⁶ Other prominent code words were the name of lesbian singers or references to the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival, cultural references that were off the radar of most straight soldiers.²⁶⁷ And lesbians frequently found that sports provided a conduit for meeting each other.²⁶⁸ Some men and women typically sought out gay bars, but they were often very dangerous for servicemen and servicewomen since the Army’s criminal investigation units and military police would carefully monitor the clientele of gay businesses.²⁶⁹

A lesbian soldier’s ability to participate in the gay subculture, while being targeted for expulsion, often depended on the loyalty and network of her friends, and a supportive command. Cheryl Brown noted, “everyone in my platoon knew I was gay.” She even brought her lesbian partner to her units’ social events.²⁷⁰ Yet for some, the constant threat of becoming a target

²⁶⁵ Shilts, 293. Homosexual code words were not exclusive to military service. For work on the secrecy of language for gays in New York, see George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Makings of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 187-92.

²⁶⁶ Corey Kilgannon “At West Point, Hidden Gays Put in the Spotlight.”

²⁶⁷ Cheryl Brown interview with author, (hereafter cited as Cheryl Brown interview) January 16, 2010, UNCG Veterans Historical Project; Brenda A. Vosbein interview by Steve Gatwick, July 2, 2005, “Brenda A. Vosbein Collection,” (AFC/2001/001/39017), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress <https://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/story/loc.natlib.afc2001001.39017/transcript?ID=mv0001> (accessed August 5, 2016).

²⁶⁸ Shilts, 317, 356, 388, 418, 560, 653; Webber, 78, 102; Gershick, 94; Cheryl Brown interview.

²⁶⁹ Cheryl Brown interview; Webber 94; Gershick, 99; Shilts, 1, Humphrey, 102-103, 131, 224.

²⁷⁰ A number of lesbians acknowledged bringing their lesbian partners to military events without any repercussions. Cheryl L. Brown interview; Brenda A. Vosbein interview.

proved too much to bear. Darlene Greenwalt, became “a basket case.”²⁷¹ Many turned to alcohol or drugs to null the anxiety that come from always having to “hide part of yourself.”²⁷² Keeping their sexuality a secret “came at a price.” It was “soul destroying to pretend all the time.”²⁷³

Ceiling Placed on Female Soldiers in Operational Units

While newspapers regularly reported that the military opened “all jobs not related to combat” to women, the reality was more complex.²⁷⁴ In fact, there were many noncombat jobs closed to female soldiers they might have otherwise filled. As women initially began to integrate into operational units, commanders decided where women could be assigned, but in 1974 Army leadership became concerned that too many enlisted women were working in jobs that would be close to the front lines during war, so it implemented a series of studies to develop a more comprehensive policy.²⁷⁵ The Assistant Secretary of the Army wanted to answer two questions. First, “how many enlisted women do we need” in each military occupation. Second, “how many enlisted women can a unit hold without degrading its ability to perform its mission?”²⁷⁶

By 1976, “The Women in the Army Study Group” (WITA) report evaluated these studies and established new guidelines for assigning Wacs. Part of the basis for evaluating where women

²⁷¹ Humphrey, 105.

²⁷² Webber, 73.

²⁷³ Ibid., 89; Humphrey, 61.

²⁷⁴ “Military Idea of Equality: Some Women Wonder if it’s a March Forward,” *New York Times*, April 18, 1973, ProQuest.

²⁷⁵ Binkin, 105. There were a series of step that led to the development of the new policies. One, a computer model calculated the maximum number of women in each MOS.

²⁷⁶ Morden, 369-70.

could work depended on whether a female soldier could or should work in a particular job field, but the assignment policy for women was also determined the suitability and location of where units might be located on the battlefield. However, Army leadership did not want to open up every single noncombatant job in a “safe’ unit to women, they believed that some of these positions out of harm’s way should be reserved for men. But leadership was very worried that excessive numbers of women in any job specialty or unit would prove detrimental to military efficiency. As a consequence, WITA placed the majority of all positions off limits to women, including many noncombat jobs. In 1977, the Army authorized only 45,200 positions for female soldiers out of the 566,600 available jobs.²⁷⁷ 260,900 positions in combat arms were prohibited to women, but the rest (260,500) were noncombat jobs in combat support and service that were reserved for men.²⁷⁸

The major consequence of the new assignment policy was that it severely limited the proportion of female soldiers in the operational Army. In 1977, a Brookings Institute study concluded that if the Army only restricted jobs in the combat fields, it could open half of all noncombatant positions to enlisted women for a total of 285,000 jobs.²⁷⁹ Instead, the Army constructed a complicated assignment policy for women based on a traditional linear war, where

²⁷⁷ United States, and Richard W. Hunter, *Use of Women in the Military: Background Study* (Washington: Assistant Secretary of Defense, Manpower, Reserve Affairs and Logistics, 1977), 15.

²⁷⁸ These figures are based on the *Use of Women in the Military* study, but my understanding of how the Army restricted women from many noncombat positions that were reserved for men is based on Martin Binkin and Judith Hicks Stiehm’s analysis of the Army’s assignment policy. See Judith Hicks Stiehm, *Arms and the Enlisted Woman*, 156-157; Martin Binkin and Shirley J. Bach, *Women and the Military* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institute, 1977), 26-29.

²⁷⁹ Binkin, 105-106.

the safest areas were in units located at the rear of the battlefield, and units positioned closest to the fighting zone were at the most risk (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Linear Battlefield. Army units doing the fighting are closest to direct combat. Until the 1973, the Army did not assign women below the Corps and Rear Area.

Consequently, the Army closed off or limited positions for women based on this geographic sense of danger on the battlefield. One senior Army officer, General Donn Starry, rationalized: “the further forward you put the girls . . . the more these things become problems. That’s a man’s world.”²⁸⁰ This meant that even though the Army opened up training for more than ninety percent of all military occupational specialties (MOS) to women, it prohibited female

²⁸⁰ Donn A. Starry and Lewis Sorley, *Press On! Selected Works of General Donn A. Starry, Volume 2* (Ft. Belvoir: Defense Technical Information Center, 2009) <http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA507479>, 991.

soldiers, no matter how qualified, from working in that field if the unit would be operating from a dangerous location during wartime. Consequently, every combat unit was closed to women, even positions for clerks, cooks and other noncombatant work. But the Army also prevented or limited female soldiers' participation in many non-fighting operational units because of where they were located on the battlefield.²⁸¹

The WITA report also instituted unwritten "ceilings" on women's participation in operational units. Assuming that a preponderance of women in a particular unit or occupation would hurt the mission, commanders did not want to grow the numbers of women too quickly without evaluating the impact on Army preparedness.²⁸² Reflecting the persistent belief that "men can do better jobs than women," in 1975, the Army had conducted a study of operational unit integration in order to determine the proportion of women they could accept before "degrading" a unit's performance."²⁸³ So instead of just looking at the jobs that women could perform, the Army began to scrutinize every unit to determine if women belonged there and then further determined the number of Wacs that seemed appropriate in that unit.²⁸⁴ Members of the WITA report recommended making sure that "no unit is overloaded" with women.²⁸⁵

²⁸¹ The study revealed most of the Army's units were prohibited to women. *1976 WITA Study*, 5-6.

²⁸² The original system for coding jobs for women began in 1946 during World War II when jobs were coded as follows: A= enlisted women, E= enlisted men, O= male commissioned officer, L= female commissioned officer, W= male warrant. Until 1951, the job was also coded by race. Morden, 170; United States, and Richard W. Hunter, *Use of Women in the Military*, 2d, (Washington: Director, Resources and Requirements, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Manpower, Reserve Affairs and Logistics, 1978), 31.

²⁸³ *1976 WITA Study*, 1-6; Morden, 370. The 1975 report came from the Army's Training division titled "Wac Content in Units."

²⁸⁴ Assistant Secretary of the Army, David Lowe, quoted in Morden, 369.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Appendix B, B-9.

Since the Army viewed ground warfare as a place with distinct lines of fighting, battlefield location was a key factor in limiting women's jobs.²⁸⁶ The first step the Army took to prevent overloading units with female soldiers was to keep them out of certain locations. Behind the actual frontlines, units were situated on the battlefield based on the size of their organization, small units were the closest to the fighting. (see Figure 1).²⁸⁷ The closer a unit was to the line of frontline fighting, the more the Army restricted women's participation. For example, the Army prohibited women from assignments in combat support or combat service support units that deployed in front of the brigade rear boundary.

This meant that women could not serve in battalions, companies, platoons or squads (Figure 2). The WITA report concluded that a maximum of ten percent of positions could be allocated for women from the Division Rear to the Brigade (Figure 2). The report recommended that women's percentages could increase gradually up to a maximum of forty-five percent in units situated furthest from the frontline fighting zone (Figure 2).²⁸⁸

²⁸⁶ Judith Hick Stiehm described how military planners established goals for its use of women. They determined not only the positions in which women were prohibited from working, but also the jobs that would otherwise be technically open to women but were reserved for men not because of combat, but for rotation out of combat, promotion, housing limitations and special assignments in career progression. Judith Hicks Stiehm, *Arms and the Enlisted Woman*, 155-57.

²⁸⁷ 1-Forward Edge of the Battlefield, 2-Brigade Rear Boundary, 3-Division Rear Boundary, and 4-Corps Rear Boundary.

²⁸⁸ *1976 WITA Study*, 5-8. Estimated distances from the Forward Edge of the Battle Area (FEBA): Brigade Rear Boundary: 30-50 kilometers (km), Division Rear Boundary: 50-75 km, Corps Rear Boundary-50-150 km. Binkin, 28.

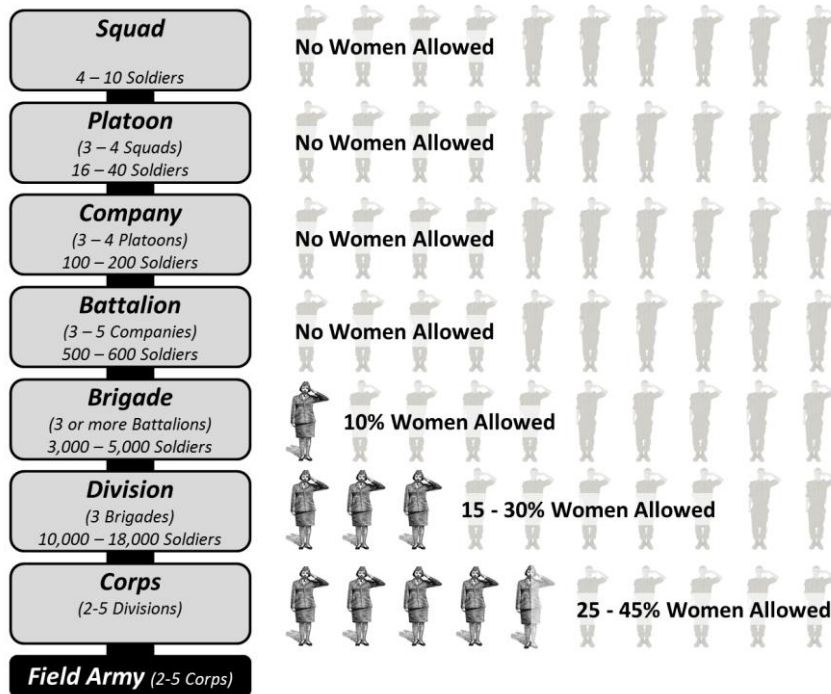


Figure 2. Restrictions on the Assignment of Female Soldiers. The maximum percentages of females permitted in combat support and combat service support units depending on where the Army regularly deployed them on the battlefield. Graph assembled from information in the *1976 WITA Study*.

Further limiting women’s participation in operational units, Army planners reserved spaces for male soldiers for “management” purposes.²⁸⁹ Since Congress set the limits for the total number of soldiers in the Army, Pentagon planners then allocate the distribution of troops in each unit by rank, position and indirectly by gender. Army leaders were concerned that the integration of too many women into operational units would slow or hinder the careers of men, so they took steps to keep promotion pathways open to male soldiers. First, the Army set aside 150,000 positions for men to preserve their opportunities for career enhancement such as in staff officer positions at the Pentagon or positions as students and instructors at the senior services

²⁸⁹ *1976 WITA Study*; Binkin, 29-30.

academies.²⁹⁰ Next, to provide men with guaranteed opportunities to advance, many positions were set aside based on the rank requirements for the job. Promotion opportunities were possible to predict because every position in the Army was identified by a MOS code. The code identified the occupation and rank required for the position. The Army assigned soldiers to units at their specific rank for a particular job when there was an opening. For example, a MP Company might have openings for three military police officers at the rank of Staff Sergeant and one at the rank of Sergeant First Class. Additionally, 23,000 “desk jobs” were reserved to provide relief for combat soldiers as they rotated out of the field.²⁹¹ The policy also kept a large reserve pool of noncombatants jobs open for men to ensure that commanders could rapidly replace combat arms soldiers potentially killed or wounded in future battles.²⁹² Lastly, the Army denied qualified female soldiers positions in some units because of the assignment’s remote geographic location. Consequently, even though ninety-one percent of all MOS fields were open to women, the Army closed many positions within a particular MOS based on where the unit would be on the battlefield. The result was a cap on the acceptable number of female soldiers in each MOS and unit.²⁹³ In 1977, the Army authorized only 45,200 positions for female soldiers out of the 566,600 available jobs.²⁹⁴

²⁹⁰ Stiehm, 156; Binkin, 29.

²⁹¹ Binkin, 29. Until 1978, women were prohibited from assignments below the brigade level. After 1978, “women were permitted anywhere on the battlefield “so long as the combat exclusion policy” was followed. The exclusion policy meant that women would not be assigned to the combat arms MOS’s (infantry, armor, cannon field artillery, combat engineers, and low altitude air defense artillery unions of battalion/squadron size or smaller or any MOS’s where they would be concentrated in those units. *1978 EWITA Final Report*, F-6.

²⁹² *1976 WITA Study; 1978 EWITA Final Report*, F-6.

²⁹³ *1976 WITA Study*, 4-2.

²⁹⁴ United States, and Richard W. Hunter, *Use of Women in the Military*, 15.

Many male field commanders supported the restrictions because they believed that a high percentage of female soldiers would decrease their unit's readiness for war.²⁹⁵ Between 1976 and 1977, two major studies evaluated mixed gender units in combat exercises in the United States and in Germany. One was a test in the United States, the other was a field exercise in Germany.²⁹⁶ The combat training exercises integrated a 10-35 percent mixture of female soldiers with men in maintenance, supply and transportation, signal, medical, and military police units.²⁹⁷ The studies concluded that women soldiers did not impair unit effectiveness during the exercise, and found that enlisted women could and did perform adequately for extended periods under field conditions. In the United States test, female soldiers "had no significant effect on the operational capability" of operational units.²⁹⁸ In Germany, evaluators concluded that "women in units observed had little or no adverse impact on unit effectiveness or mission accomplishment."²⁹⁹ The

²⁹⁵ Cecil D. Johnson, Bertha H. Cory, Roberta W. Day and Laurel W. Oliver, *Women Content in the Army - REFORGER 77 [REF WAC 77]* (Ft. Belvoir: Defense Technical Information Center, 1978), VI-17 (hereafter cited as *1978 Reforger Report*)

²⁹⁶ These test in the United States was called "Women Content in Units Force Development Test (MAXWAC)," and integrated between 0-35 percent women into units. The Germany exercise was the "Women Content in the Army, REFORGER (Return of Forces to Germany)," which evaluated up to 10 percent women in each unit. The MAXWAC exercise was conducted in two stages. The first stage in 1976 had women unit content between 0-15 percent, the second stage units six months later contained between 15-35 percent women. The REFORGER exercise was conducted over a month in September 1977 and involved women performing in ninety different occupations. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, *Women Content in Units Force Development Test:(MAX WAC)* (Arlington, VA: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, 1977), I-2 (hereafter cited as *1977 MaxWac Test*), A-1; *1978 Reforger Report*, cover page.

²⁹⁷ *1977 MaxWac Test*, II-3; *1978 Reforger Report*, IV-7.

²⁹⁸ *1977 MaxWac Test*, I-3.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, VI-7.

results revealed that women were highly proficient in both traditional and nontraditional specialties, but were not well-prepared for a field exercise or trained as well in the use of weapons or tactical skills as their male peers.³⁰⁰ One lesson learned from the exercises was that female soldiers (and many male soldiers) required more training for a combat environment in the field.³⁰¹ None of the female soldiers had gone through combat training because it had not yet been implemented, so Army leaders had expected this result.³⁰²

Concerns that that women were not receiving the required level of skills necessary to work in operational units pushed Army to test integrating basic combat training and close the field and weapons training gap between male and female noncombatant soldiers. Going slow, the Army first implemented two test phases. First they conducted a combat training test with handpicked mixed-gender units over a course of seven weeks.³⁰³ For the first time, women were required to perform “at the same skill level under the same conditions” as male soldiers.³⁰⁴ As in the other exercises, the evaluators concluded that women and men could perform well together, but women needed more vigorous physical training to keep up with the male soldiers.³⁰⁵ In 1977, they began the next phase by selecting the MP Corps to see if women could get up to men’s

³⁰⁰ *1977 MaxWac Test, IV-30; 1978 Reforger Report.*

³⁰¹ *1978 Reforger Report., IV-6; 1977 MaxWac Test, A-5, IV-29.*

³⁰² *1978 Reforger Report, VI-8.*

³⁰³ Anne Chapman, *Mixed-Gender Basic Training: The U.S. Army Experience* (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2008), 43.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 44.

standards during a regular basic training cycle.³⁰⁶ The Army selected the MPs since they had been used as a test case earlier for weapons training. At the same time, the Army began to require training for all women on grenade launchers, antitank weaponry, Claymore mines, hand grenades and the M-60 machine gun (the same weapons training provided to men).³⁰⁷ This training enabled women to qualify for guard duty and ensured they had skills to defend their unit from attack.³⁰⁸

In 1979, after a few years of success with integrated training in the MP Corps, mixed-gender basic combat training became the standard for all male and female recruits entering noncombat fields.³⁰⁹ The Army's integrated basic training program marked a significant moment for women's integration because it meant that women were finally on the same level playing field as men with respect to field and weapons training. Many believed this was critical for fostering a more equitable environment. One female soldier believed that coed training was "the first step to eliminate the separatist attitudes" because it gave men a chance to see that women could perform

³⁰⁶ In newspaper articles between 1973 and 1976, a number of Wacs asserted that they had endured the same training as men, but until 1977, there were a number of differences, especially with respect to combat training and weaponry. Most women, however, did have the same job training for their specific military occupation as their male cohorts.

³⁰⁷ Chapman, *Mixed-Gender Basic Training*, 43. One key difference for women between the MP Corps training and training at most other Army branches was that the Army initiated standardized and integrated basic combat training with their advanced individual training (AIT) that taught them military policing. This new system, called "one station unit training," kept men and women together in one group with the same drill instructors throughout their initial training until they relocated to their first assignment. Not all specialty fields had enough females to duplicate one station unit training, but the Signal Corps, which was integrating large numbers of women also followed this training system.

³⁰⁸ Morden, 281-82.

³⁰⁹ The mixed gender basic training ended in 1982 after a review by the Department of the Army during the Reagan administration. Chapman, 60.

well.³¹⁰ Colonel Shirley Heinz, who was part of the team that developed integrated basic training, believed that female soldiers “must do a total soldiering job—or there will not be real equality.”³¹¹ Without shared and equal responsibilities for all soldiers, Heinze believed that men would continue to complain about women receiving special treatment.³¹² After a few years of experience with coed training, some male drill sergeants believed that “the performance of both is better” with integrated training because male and female soldiers “motivate each other” to succeed.³¹³

Many female and male troops described training together and building camaraderie as long as they all received fair and equal treatment.³¹⁴ Some male commanders who felt that Wacs in earlier eras had been “babied” understood that assigning women to “pull their share of the load” avoided male resentment and grumbling that women were not working hard enough.³¹⁵ One argued that he “didn’t have enough people to afford” allowing women to have less responsibilities than men. Army leaders wanted to be able to use all the soldiers in their units to

³¹⁰ Specialist Casondra Brewster, letter to editor, “Healthy Competition,” *ES&S*, November 13, 1994.

³¹¹ Colonel Shirley Heinze quoted in Phyllis Battell, “Assignment America,” *The Terre Haute (IN) Tribune*, December 6, 1976, Newspaper.com (accessed June 13, 2014).

³¹² *Ibid.*

³¹³ “Co-Ed Basic Ends, But Some Say They’ll Miss It,” *ES&S*, October 31, 1982.

³¹⁴ Don Tate, “Be All that You Can Be,” *PS&S*, January 22, 1984.

³¹⁵ Captain Richard Murdoch quoted in Sherry Ricchiardi, “Shape Up Ms.(ter), You’re in the Army Now!” *The Des Moines Register*, November 21, 1976 Newspaper.com (accessed October 2, 2014). Men’s resentment over women not doing their own physical work has been documented in the Army, even as late as 2008. Stacie R. Furia, “Navigating the Boundaries” *Army Women in Training*, in *Gender and Sexuality in the Workplace*, eds., Christine Williams and Kirsten Dellinger (Bingley, UK: Emerald, 2010), 113. <http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=587940> (accessed June 21, 2014).

the fullest abilities. The fact men and women noncombat soldiers received identical training, enabled some men to trust in women's ability to fight.³¹⁶ But training and working with women also made men more competitive. One commander of a training school noted that his male engineers worked harder because they "do not like to be outdone" by the Wacs.³¹⁷

Wacs who had been in the women's corps for years without going through an integrated training process were at a disadvantage. Another drawback was that in 1974, Wac officers were required to choose an Army branch specialization outside of the women's corps and were then permanently detailed to that branch.³¹⁸ The Army determined that placing female officers in regular Army units before enlisted women would provide female soldiers with role models. However, many Wac officers' previous work concentrated on administrative jobs. They now moved into fields such as military intelligence, military police, signals corps and other combat support units without any preparation for the skills needed for the job.³¹⁹ While weapons training became mandatory upon reenlistment, some had never picked up a rifle and none had field combat training experience. These training shortcomings made a difference in male soldiers' negative perception of their capabilities as they integrated into formerly all-male operational units. But women took steps to make up these gaps. Some took classes to gain more knowledge

³¹⁶ Sgt. M. J. Chabot, letter to editor, "Brave Americans," *ES&S*, May 20, 1980.

³¹⁷ "Wacs Have a Way with Engineering," *PS&S*, February 22, 1975.

³¹⁸ Morden, 292.

³¹⁹ Evelyn Patricia "Pat" Foote interview with Beth Carmichael, August 8, 2006, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project (hereafter cited as Pat Foote interview with Carmichael).

about their fields, while others admitted to the men in their units that they needed help, and pressed male soldiers to teach them the skills they needed for the job.³²⁰

As the Army environment for women changed, it changed the identity of many Wacs. With women repairing tanks, jumping out of airplanes, driving trucks, fixing missiles, guarding the perimeter, and flying helicopters, they “became soldiers, not Wacs.”³²¹ Women began resisting even small roles considered “women’s work.” One female soldier, who joined in 1977 and worked in a transportation unit, was asked, but refused to make coffee or clean the bathrooms for the men.³²²

Many female soldiers found it liberating to wear pants and maternity clothes. Since Vietnam, Wacs had complained about inadequate field uniforms, and the movement into operational units brought new concerns about the need for suitable clothing.³²³ By 1976 the Army issued all female soldiers four sets of fatigues in basic training.³²⁴ Women could now even remove their fatigue top (showing only their t-shirt) for some PT and jobs requiring strenuous activity.³²⁵ Professional everyday wear also changed. In 1975, with female MPs complaining that they could not adequately chase suspects in skirts, nylons, and heels, the Army tested pantsuits

³²⁰ Ann Dunwoody with Tomago Collins, *A Higher Standard: Leadership Strategies from America’s First Female Four Star General* (Boston MA, Da Capo Press, 2015); Kennedy; Pritchett interview; Foote interview with Carmichael.

³²¹ James P. Sterba, “Army Women Now Serve in Many Once Male Only Jobs,” *New York Times*, May 4, 1975, p. 1, ProQuest.

³²² Female Army veteran interview with author, anonymous no. 2.

³²³ See Chapter Two on the issue of Wacs demanding fatigues.

³²⁴ Ann Fisher quoted in Pat Guy, “Women Take Army Roles,” *The Anniston Star*, September 11, 1976, Newspaper.com (accessed May 10, 2016).

³²⁵ Ibid.

for women and supplied them as part of their standard uniform issue a year later.³²⁶ In 1977, the pantsuit became normal issue for all Wacs.³²⁷ And in 1981, after years of complaints from soldiers having to wear civilian clothes during pregnancy, the Army issued its first maternity uniform.³²⁸ The outfit was a sleeveless tunic over a blouse and could be worn with either pants or a skirt.³²⁹

Women's integration into operational units introduced many new arenas for men and women to live and work with each other, including co-ed housing, mixed gender training, and mandatory weapons qualification. Prior to the introduction of co-ed housing, most women had a ten p.m. curfew and their own separate barracks. One non-commissioned officer (NCO) welcomed this change and pointed to the importance of shared quarters: "At least the Army has realized that women are soldiers" and living together is part of Army life. Deborah Becker explained: "Because 'we work with these guys all day and all night, . . . we've become pretty good friends.'"³³⁰ The Military Police Corps often charted the way in these areas. In 1974, the MPs were the first to test coed barracks, which increased the social interactions between men and

³²⁶ Barbara Fulenwider, "We Do the Same Job Men Do. . .," *ES&S*, February 20, 1974; "Eleven Test New Uniforms," *Las Cruces News-Sun*, August 3, 1975, Newspaper.com (accessed June 14, 2014); Kenneth Schultz, "Women's Army Given New Look," *The Brownsville (TX) Herald*, August 12, 1973, Newspaper.com (accessed June 4, 2014).

³²⁷ Morden, 491.

³²⁸ "AAFES Will Soon Carry Maternity Service Uniform," *ES&S*, September 6, 1980, p. 9. The Navy issued their maternity uniforms in 1977, the Air Force in 1978. "Navy Now has Uniform for Maternity," *S&S*, September 11, 1977; "U.S. Air Force Offers Maternity Uniform," *The Milwaukie Journal*, Milwaukie WI, June 29, 1978, Googlenewspaper.com (accessed on June 12, 2014).

³²⁹ "AAFES Will Soon Carry Maternity Service Uniform."

³³⁰ "Army Barracks Going Coed, Without Much Fanfare," *Arizona Republic*, Phoenix AZ, September 27, 1974, Newspaper.com (accessed June 4, 2014)

women and helped them get to know each other better.³³¹ Although they were required to respect each other's privacy and lived on separate floors, the integrated barracks offered significantly more opportunities for interacting outside of work.

Integration into combat support and combat service support positions provided women with confidence and pride that their abilities were comparable to men's. Female soldiers were firing weapons, pulling guard duty, jumping out of planes. Many became more vocal about their equal status with men. In 1976, one female soldier argued that the women were "as good as the men, and we know it."³³² Another woman criticized a commander in 1977, telling him that "I went to the field," when he praised all the men for their work, but ignored the female soldiers.³³³ Others felt that women pushed men during training since no male soldier wanted a female soldier to show him up. Even some of the Army's senior male leadership began to call for "the best person" to fill a job regardless of gender because "women soldiers are as good as men, that's solid."³³⁴

As female soldiers began to push up against the barriers for inclusion in combat operations, some pressed the Army to lift the combat restrictions. In 1976, one of the Army's first female helicopter pilots, Jennie Vallance, requested an assignment in the 2nd Cavalry Division combat unit to fly reconnaissance aircraft and join her pilot husband (who supported the move).

³³¹"Without Much Fanfare"; "Shhh. . .Coed Army Barracks Mark Anniversary," *The Anderson (IN) Herald*, October 2, 1974, Newspaper.com (accessed June 4, 2014).

³³² Sherry Ricchiardi, "We're as Good as The Men and We Know It," *The Des Moines Register*, November 21, 1976, Newspaper.com (accessed May 10, 2016).

³³³ "Women in the Military, Part 1: "A New Day and Age," *PS&S*, January 12, 1977.

³³⁴ Major General Stan McClellan (DSCPER) quoted in Pat Guy, "Women Take Army Roles," *The Anniston Star*, September 11, 1976, Newspaper.com (accessed May 10, 2016); Jay B. Lewis, "Women Use their Abilities to Build a Place in the Army," *PS&S*, March 15, 1978.

She had “become bored” flying patients in an ambulatory helicopter and wanted a more challenging duty.³³⁵ After receiving the “same flight training as male pilots,” she expected to be treated like an equal, “but the Army put me in a special category” and she threatened to sue the Army if she was denied.³³⁶ Declaring “I am not a female aviator I am an Army aviator,” she unsuccessfully filed a charge of dereliction of duty against her male commander for ignoring her request.³³⁷ When the Army denied her application on the grounds that policies prevented women from flying in “combat like” operations, Vallance resigned her commission, saying she refused to be a “second-class aviator.”³³⁸

The Army Defines Combat

Many in senior Army leadership and the Department of Defense still had doubts about using women in operational units, and sought to limit any significant expansion, but a change in Presidential administrations created momentum for new ways of thinking about women in the Army.³³⁹ In late 1977, multiple reports questioning how the Army should use (or not use) women in the Army were given to President James Carter’s newly appointed Secretary of the Army, Clifford Alexander. A former chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the first African American appointed as Army Secretary, Alexander came to this position with a

³³⁵ “Chopper Duties Boring to Pilot,” *The Tennessean*, April 5, 1976, Newspaper.com (accessed May 10, 2016).

³³⁶ Dan Synovec, “Women WO Pilot Asks Duty in Combat Unit,” *PS&S*, April 9, 1976.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*

³³⁸ *Ibid.*

³³⁹ Morden, 369-81.

strong commitment to opening up opportunities for women and minorities.³⁴⁰ He began to standardize policies that differentiated between male and female soldiers, equalizing all recruiting qualifications between men and women and issuing Army directives to make sure all “men and women would be equally deployable.”³⁴¹ With a push from DACOWITS, female soldiers and feminist organizations, he also set about defining combat.

As the WITA assignment policy left female soldiers underrepresented in many positions and in units where they were qualified to perform, the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), the National Organization for Women, Women’s Equity Action League and National Federation of business and Professional Women, and even the last WAC Director pressured Congress and the military for an interpretation of combat that would open up more opportunities. Even some civilian women in higher ranking positions in the Department of Defense “encouraged” these organizations to push DOD for change.³⁴² Clifford Alexander and the new Secretary of Defense, Harold Brown, were both receptive to these ideas.³⁴³

In 1977, Alexander issued the Army’s first official definition of combat in the “Combat Exclusion Policy.”³⁴⁴ The Army no longer tried to keep women away from a hazardous combat

³⁴⁰ Clifford Alexander interview with Michael Martin, “Clifford Alexander on State of Military, Barack Obama,” *NPR*, March 19, 2008, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=88562169> (accessed June 4, 2016).

³⁴¹ Morden, 378.

³⁴² Francke, 62.

³⁴³ Morden, 375, 379.

³⁴⁴ The Combat Exclusion Policy stated: “Women are authorized to serve in any officer or enlisted specialty except those listed below, at any organizational level, and in any unit of the Army, except in Infantry, Armor, Cannon Field Artillery, Combat Engineer, and Low Altitude Air Defense Artillery units of battalion, squadron or smaller size.” Morden, 384.

environment based on a battlefield location; instead, they tried only to restrict them from operating offensive weaponry against the enemy.³⁴⁵ The policy defined combat as: positions or units that engaged in “close combat” at the battalion level or lower (for the combat arms specialties). Close combat meant: “engaging an enemy with individual crew-served weapons while being exposed to direct enemy fire, a high probability of direct physical contact with the enemy’s personnel, or a substantial risk of capture.”³⁴⁶ Restrictions based on the location on the battlefield were minimized.³⁴⁷ The policy excluded female soldiers only from positions or units where soldiers would be active fighters using offensive weapons to attack the enemy in ways that might subject them to death or capture.³⁴⁸

The narrowed definition of combat was a monumental shift that opened up all but thirty-eight MOSs to women. It allowed women to work in operational units and occupations that put them closer to the frontline fighting. In earlier studies, some field commanders pushed for the capacity to assign women as “close to the battle zone as necessary to perform their noncombat duties.”³⁴⁹ Now they could assign female noncombatant soldiers anywhere on the battlefield. As a result, commanders could deploy women forward of the brigade rear boundary (Figure 1). One of the most controversial aspects of the policy was opening some artillery positions to women, a

³⁴⁵ 1978 EWITA Final Report, 1-3.

³⁴⁶ Skaine, 29.

³⁴⁷ United States, *Women in the Army Policy Review* (Washington, DC: Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Dept. of the Army, 1982), 4-4 (hereafter cited as *1982 Army Policy Review*).

³⁴⁸ United States and David J. Armor, *Report: Task Force on Women in the Military* (Washington, DC: Dept. of Defense, 1988), 15 (hereafter cited as *1988 DOD Task Force on Women*).

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

combat arms field. The policy opened positions in ammunition, missile defense, field artillery and air defense artillery to women, but only as support and maintenance, they were not allowed to aim or fire weaponry.³⁵⁰ Female soldiers could now guard prisoners, defuse bombs, and officers could work in all aviation positions except as attack and scout helicopter pilots.³⁵¹ Whereas in 1978, five percent of women were in combat support and combat service support units, by 1981, fifteen percent held such positions, tripling their numbers in only three years.³⁵²

Putting women to work in a field that fired weaponry broke new ground.³⁵³ In 1978, the Air Defense command tested thirteen female soldiers, yielding “phenomenal” results.³⁵⁴ By 1982, there were dozens of women assigned to surface to air missile sites in the mountains of North Korea, and near the East Germany border.³⁵⁵ These women worked with men in very small units comprised of about a dozen soldiers. With a small core group working at a remote location, soldiers build strong bonds with each other. In Korea, male and female soldiers called themselves

³⁵⁰ Morden, 382-383. “Army Reopens 13 Job Fields to Women,” *ES&S*, October 22, 1983.

³⁵¹ *Army Historical Summary*, 1978.

³⁵² Phillip W. Smith, “Women Closer to Battlefield Than Ever Before,” *The Indianapolis Star*, January 5, 1981, Newspaper.com (accessed June 5, 2014). In 1981, about 11,000 women out of the approximately 70,000 women in the Army were in operational units.

³⁵³ Morden, 346. The history of women in artillery is a series of on and off again. At the end of the draft in 1973 when no real guidelines had been established, one female officer completed a test of the advanced infantry training in 1973, but the Army quickly the field to women. The field did not open until 1977 after the combat exclusion policy. Then 1983 DCPC closed some field artillery position. In 1988 opened some back up again. French, “Women in ADA,” 29-39.

³⁵⁴ “Women Score High in Test as Artillery Persons,” *PS&S*, August 8, 1978.

³⁵⁵ Steve Davis, “‘Manning’ Hawk Sites Take a New Meaning,” *PS&S*, June 18, 1982; Ed Metzler, “Remote Mountain Site Keeps Ear to the Airwave,” *S&S*, December 2, 1982; Ray Rowden, “Women Carry Weight in Artillery,” *ES&S*, June 4, 1982.

“devil dogs” and exchanged mutual complaints about rough living conditions and shared workloads, which built trust.³⁵⁶ By 1988, with integration yielding such positive results, 506 enlisted women worked in Air Defense Artillery.³⁵⁷

As women moved quickly into new units that few had expected them to enter, their presence reordered the workplace for all soldiers. Receiving some of the most notoriety were female soldiers integrating the formerly all-male 82nd and 101st Airborne units. Airborne recruiters often sought potential candidates in training schools. In 1979, during the end of her schooling as a telephone lineman, Donna Tabor recalled that a representative from an airborne unit came to recruit and offered all the men trainees applications for jump school, but ignored Tabor. She asked for an application, was accepted and became one of the first women to pass airborne training.³⁵⁸ A few years later, upon completion of her officer training, Ellen Peebles joined some of her female friends and completed airborne school, earning her parachute badge. Displaying the badge on Peebles’ uniform was significant for her, it meant, “I’ve been there.”³⁵⁹ By 1980, about 290 women had “been there” to earn their wings.³⁶⁰ On the anniversary of the establishment of the Women’s Army Corps, 152 of them participated in a dramatic all women jump over Fort Bragg in North Carolina, reflecting women’s mastery of skills once attainable

³⁵⁶ Davis, “‘Manning’ Hawk Sites.”

³⁵⁷ French, “Women in ADA,” 38.

³⁵⁸ Donna Tabor interview with author.

³⁵⁹ Ellen R. Peebles interview with author, October 20, 2010, WV0502, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

³⁶⁰ “Army Women Complete First Mass Parachute Drop,” *The Kokomo (ID) Tribune*, May 15, 1980, p. 12, Newspaper.com (accessed June 5, 2014).

³⁶⁰ Donna Tabor interview with author.

only by men.³⁶¹ According to Ann Dunwoody, the first female to attain the rank of a four star general, the airborne training “opened doors” and without the skill, “her career would have been dramatically different.”³⁶²

While male soldiers often complained that women who earned specialty skills or passed difficult courses did not have to work as hard as men because they received preferential treatment, most women resented these criticisms. For example, when male soldiers tried to diminish the significance of Donna Tabor earning her parachute badge by asserting that Army trainers only let her pass because she was a woman, Tabor retorted that the Army did not “have special little pink planes that fly three feet above the ground for girls.”³⁶³ Other women similarly insisted they had received the identical training and performed the same “hard, dirty work” as men.³⁶⁴

Many women had to keep insisting on their value throughout their careers. Pat Foote reasoned that women started from scratch at each new assignment because, “when men hear there’s a woman coming, breaking up the old boy’s network,” they immediately believe that the only reason the Army assigned her their unit was to “fill a quota.”³⁶⁵ Yet for some women, once

³⁶¹ “Army Women Complete First Mass Parachute Drop.”

³⁶² Dunwoody, *A Higher Standard*, 77.

³⁶³ Donna Tabor interview with author.

³⁶⁴ Ray Rowden, “Women Carry Weight in Artillery,” *ES&S*, June 4, 1982.

³⁶⁵ Barbara Hutmacher MacLean, *I Can’t Do What? Voices of Pathfinding Women* (Ventura, CA: Pathfinder Publishing, 1997), 166.

they proved they were capable, men offered support and were willing to “look out” for female soldiers.³⁶⁶

Women who demanded assignments in male-only training that had previously excluded them often faced discrimination. In one of the most publicized incidents, Captain Kathleen Wilder wanted to join the Army’s Special Forces and wear the coveted “green beret,” so she researched the requirements and discovered the course did not explicitly exclude female officers. In 1980, after a year of submitting applications, the Army allowed her to take the course. After completing all stages, she thought she had passed, but on the afternoon of the graduation, the Special Forces commander informed her that she had not received a passing mark for the final field exercise involving guerilla tactics. Although one male cohort indicated that she failed to “pull her own weight,” some of the Allied officers participating alongside Wilder noted that “she did well, better than some of the men that graduated.”³⁶⁷ The Army even graduated some male officers who had not completed the course.³⁶⁸ Wilder fought back by accusing the Special Forces commander of sex discrimination and appealing the decision to higher command levels. Wilder won after an administrative hearing supported her claims and awarded her the “green beret,” and the right to wear the Special Forces tab on her uniform.³⁶⁹ Wilder went on to work in Special

³⁶⁶ Sandra Boodman, “How Far Will Army Equality Go?” *The Indianapolis Star*, February 4, 1980, Newspaper.com (accessed May 6, 2014).

³⁶⁷ “Woman Fails Attempt to Win Green Beret,” *Eugene Register Guard*, Eugene, OR, August 23, 1980, p. 12C, Googlnewspaper.com (accessed June 12, 2014).

³⁶⁸ Ibid.

³⁶⁹ General Starry approved awarding Wilder ASI-5G, which means she was eligible to wear the Special Forces tab on her shoulder, regardless of whether or not she served in a combat unit. In a letter to the Army Chief of Staff, General Donn Starry explained that “eight of nine allegations of discrimination were fully sustained; the ninth was partially sustained. General Starry report was significant because his record on supporting women in the military had been very conservative. He viewed women’s rapid expansion in the military as a reckless push for

Forces as a noncombatant in Military Intelligence, but never in a combat unit. And after Wilder, the Army shut off the loophole, never accepting another woman for Special Forces Training.³⁷⁰

The 1980s Backlash

In the 1980s, while the conservative Army leadership rolled back some of the policies that had promoted women's integration, they failed to undermine the fundamental change in the day to day work environment that had developed as male and female soldiers increasingly worked side by side in operational units. Although the Army's senior leadership ended mixed gender basic training and successfully crafted a new assignment policy for women that eliminated some previously open jobs, it failed to stop the overall expansion of female soldiers in male units. Nearly "everything that was distinctly WAC" including its corps and leadership had been dismantled.³⁷¹ Wacs had disappeared, now there were only female soldiers in the regular Army.

Army leadership, the DOD, and executive branch all struggled to create the perfect mix of women in jobs and units but they were operating in uncharted waters. No country had ever attempted to integrate women into the military with such complexity. Many male Army leaders

women's equality that did not consider their capabilities. "Redress Provided, Message to General E.C. Meyer, Army Chief of Staff, 20 February 1981," Starry et al., *Press On! Selected Works of General Donn A. Starry, Volume 2*.

³⁶⁹ The school closed applications to women after the controversy. Wilder's training for the Green Beret remains controversial and is a lightning rod for anti-feminist rhetoric in Special Forces forums today.

³⁷⁰ While the DCPC of 1983 specifically excluded women from Special Forces positions, I have been unable to locate any official documentation that Special Forces courses were prohibited to all women after Wilder's admission, but the absence of any other female candidate seems to indicate that this was the case. As of this writing (June 2016), even with all jobs open to women, no female soldier has yet entered Special Forces Training (although some have entered infantry school---they likely need to pass this test first).

³⁷¹ Morden, 406.

had served and fought in Vietnam, most were unyielding about the need to keep women from frontline fighting. There were real concerns about why women left the Army at much higher rates than men, or why such high percentages of female soldiers migrated from non-traditional to traditional MOS. The policy allowing pregnant soldiers and mothers in uniform was needed to attract and recruit women into the Army, but dealing with these issues was complicated by the necessity of keeping troops fit so they could be deployed rapidly.³⁷² Being a soldier in the Army was different than being a civilian at work, stability and readiness of personnel was important. The Army had expanded women's participation very quickly, often faster than the infrastructure of the military could support.³⁷³ Nobody thought expansion had been a smooth process.³⁷⁴ Rapid shifts in Army proposals to expand and then slow women's integration became the norm.

Since at least 1974, many in Army leadership had been searching for ways to stop or slow female soldiers' expansion into male dominated fields and units. Several Carter administration proposals emboldened them to further resist change. Harold Brown, President James Carter's Secretary of Defense, set a quota to double the number of women in the Army from 50,400 to 100,000 by 1982, but the Army wanted to "level off" at around 65,000.³⁷⁵ In addition, Secretary Brown requested, but failed to persuade Congress to remove all legal combat

³⁷² 1982 *Women in the Army Review*, 2-33, 2-35.

³⁷³ On housing, see Morden, 275-77. On uniforms, see Morden, 353-55, 367.

³⁷⁴ Scholarship the chaotic nature of the transition. See Holm; Binkin; Morden. Several female soldiers personally involved in the details of integration noted in their oral histories that the Army was unprepared for women's expansion. See Pat Foote interview; Dorothy Rechel, interview by Eric Elliott, January 22, 2001, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project; Audrey Ann Fisher interview by Eric Elliot, December 18, 2000, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

³⁷⁵ Morden, 375; 1982 *Women in the Army Review*, B-1.

restrictions for women.³⁷⁶ Finally, in 1980 President James Carter introduced a Selective Serve bill that would have included noncombatant women, but Congress excluded women when they passed the bill, largely due to public perceptions that it would force women into combat roles.³⁷⁷ After a suit challenged the law with discrimination towards males, the Supreme Court ruled in *Rostker v. Goldberg* that gender discrimination to prevent women from draft registration was constitutional.³⁷⁸ One scholar described this moment as a “shift in the legal winds” for the integration of women.³⁷⁹

In 1981, the same year as the *Rostker* ruling, there was also a shift in the political wind when President Ronald Reagan took office, giving many Army leaders hope they could convince the new administration to slow the expansion of women and close recently opened jobs in operational units. After Reagan was elected, and in spite of all the previous positive reports on women’s integration, the head of Army training called the Chief of Staff for the Army and requested a new review of women in the Army.³⁸⁰ Just a few months after Reagan’s election, the newly appointed Secretary of the Army froze the recruitment of women to evaluate how gender integration, especially issues associated with pregnancy, single mothers and women’s physical

³⁷⁶ Morden, 375.

³⁷⁷ President Carter explicitly stated that the draft would include women only in noncombat positions, but the rhetoric about the bill focused on women in combat roles. Bernard Rostker, *I Want You! The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2006), 442-444.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 444-46.

³⁷⁹ Chapman, 56.

³⁸⁰ Starry et al., 991.

limitations, affected combat efficiency and mission readiness.³⁸¹ This action kept women's numbers at their current levels. The next year, the Army announced the end of gender integrated basic training based on fears that women had undermined male soldiers' potential by not providing enough of a challenge for them as they trained together. But Reagan, who ran on the platform of making the military larger and stronger, was not entirely on the side of the Army generals. In August of 1982, Secretary of Defense, Casper Weinberger informed the Army and other service branches to "aggressively break down those remaining barriers" preventing women from "fullest use of the capabilities of women" in the military.³⁸² The generals were forced to lift the "womanpause" because the voluntary force required women, and they needed them in the operational Army.³⁸³

Senior Army leaders were stymied on the issue of expansion, but had an ace in their pocket to try and reduce integration into operational units. In 1948, Congress had authorized the Secretary of the Army to establish duty parameters for female soldiers' work, so they used this authority create a new assignment policy for women with the intent to close many of the integrated combat support jobs. Guided by a new study, policymakers argued that the Combat Exclusion Policy did not properly identify positions for which women were not suited and had a "disproportionately high female content in some units."³⁸⁴ Alexander's policy had opened one of

³⁸¹ Frank Carlucci was the Deputy, William Ringle, "Army Marking Time," *Democrat and Chronicle (Rochester, NY)*, November 1, 1981, p. 19, Newspaper.com (accessed June 14, 2014).

³⁸² Chapman, 60.

³⁸³ "Womanpause" was the term used to describe this Army freeze on recruiting women.

³⁸⁴ *1982 Army Policy Review*, 2-3.

the pillars of Army ground warfare, artillery, and they set out to close this field and some of the other combat support units open to women.

In 1982 the Army established a new assignment policy for women that replaced the 1977 combat exclusion rule, which at first expanded the definition of combat and restricted women's jobs.³⁸⁵ Previous coding systems had identified each position as male, female or interchangeable. The Direct Combat Probability Code (DCPC) examined each position in every unit to determine the likelihood that the person occupying that job would routinely engage in direct combat action. Every job was scrutinized according to its relationship to the duties, mission, tactical doctrine and battlefield location where the position or unit would experience direct combat fighting. A unit's location on the battlefield once again restricted jobs for women. The positions with the highest probability of combat were coded "P1." Women were excluded from all P1 positions. This action closed twenty-three MOS fields that had previously been open, affecting 1291 female soldiers.³⁸⁶ The Army now defined combat as "direct combat":

Engaging an enemy with individual or crew-served weapons while being exposed to direct enemy fire, a high probability of direct physical contact with the enemy, and a substantial risk of capture. Direct combat takes place while closing with the enemy by fire, maneuver, or shock effect in order to destroy or capture, or while repelling assault by fire, close combat, or counterattack.³⁸⁷

³⁸⁵ Some scholars argue that the Army DCPC "manipulated to cap the number of total females in the Army." Mark E. Porrett et al., "Women in Combat," (thesis, Haines Research Paper, USASMA Digital Library, 2005).

³⁸⁶ *Department of the Army Historical Summary: Fiscal Year 1983* (Washington: Center of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1983), <http://www.history.army.mil/books/DAHSUM/1983/> (accessed October 4, 2013); 1978 *Women in the Army Policy Review*, 5-9.

³⁸⁷ 1978 *Women in the Army Policy Review*, 7.

The DCPC closure brought the total number of prohibited MOSs to sixty-one.³⁸⁸ The new policy caused great anxiety to female soldiers who had only just recently entered these fields, the majority of them working in chemical, field artillery and engineering.³⁸⁹ They were forced out of their jobs. The Army established a six-year timeline to phase these women into other jobs as they came up for reenlistment.³⁹⁰ However, intense pressure from female soldiers and DACOWITS against these closures led to the reinstatement of thirteen of the job fields, including the chemical field. Still, the enlisted women in most field artillery positions were shut out.³⁹¹

Reflecting a constant refrain from many women in the military, one female soldier maintained that instead of the DCPC, “the Army should judge a person by their performance, not their sex.”³⁹² Service women were “angry” that opportunities were being limited and made their feelings known in the media.³⁹³ For instance, the limits on women’s jobs made Monika Olson “real mad” because the need for soldiers was great in many fields.³⁹⁴ It was more personal for

³⁸⁸ *Women in the Army Policy Review*, 5-6, 10. Some of the newly closed MOSs were Diver, Carpenter, Plumber, interior electrician, for a list of all the prohibited jobs.

³⁸⁹ The new MOS closed to women were: 13R, 16J, 17B, 17C, 51K, 51R, 52G, 54C, 82C, 23U, 26F, 26K, 45G, 51B, 54E, 62E, 62G, 62H, 62J, 67T, 67U, 82B. *1978 Women in the Army Policy Review*, 5-6.

³⁹⁰ *1978 Women in the Army Policy Review*, 5-9, 5-10; Diana Valdez, “Female GIs,” *S&S*, February 28, 1983.

³⁹¹ *Army Historical Summary 1983*. Those reinstated were the following MOS codes: 23U, 26F, 26K, 45G, 51B, 54E, 62E, 62G, 62H, 62J, 67T, 67U, 82B. “Army Reopens 13 Job Fields to Women,” *ES&S*, October 22, 1983.

³⁹² Spec. 4 Kimberly J. Fortune, letters to editor, “The Closing of High Risk Combat-MOS to Women,” *ES&S*, October 13, 1982.

³⁹³ Sheila Caudle, “Women Believe Army Holding Them Back,” *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, September 18, 1983, Newspaper.com (accessed May 6, 2014).

³⁹⁴ Ray Rowden, “Women Carry Weight in Artillery,” *ES&S*, June 4, 1982.

Sonja Smith who had been in charge of a missile unit in Germany, but now had a desk job and complained that the Army had removed her from a position that she had worked hard to attain.³⁹⁵ In 1985, under pressure from female soldiers and DACOWITS to make the Army adhere to a fair policy, the Secretary of Defense issued a new guideline on the Army's implementation of the DCPC. The Secretary directed that the new combat exclusion policy (DCPC) "should be interpreted to allow as many as possible career opportunities for women to be kept open."³⁹⁶ The Army policymakers acknowledged that the new policy "will not mean that women will never be in combat" because battlegrounds were unpredictable.³⁹⁷ Instead women would be on the battlefield and face danger, but the policy prohibited them from areas where "the most frequent and violent combat would occur."³⁹⁸ Ultimately, the DCPC meant that an additional eleven job fields and 159 operational units were off limits to women.³⁹⁹

While these closures prevented women from operating in about twelve percent of Army occupational specialties, many of the positions still opened placed them in operational units that went to war. The Army also left some gray areas in the new policy. While the DCPC continued to officially prohibit women from working in positions forward of the Brigade Rear boundary, the rule specified that the job would not "routinely" be assigned to that area (see Figure 1). But around the same time that the DCPC was developed, the Army created a new way to organize

³⁹⁵ Molly Moore, "Open Doors Don't Equal Equality: Combat Ban Symbolizes Limits to Female Advancement in Services," *Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., September 24, 1989. ProQuest.

³⁹⁶ *1988 DOD Task Force on Women*, 9.

³⁹⁷ *1978 Women in the Army Policy Review*, 10.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁹ *1988 DOD Task Force on Women*, 15.

support units that would move troops, supplies and equipment more quickly to combat units. The Army called this new organization “forward support battalions” or FSBs. These battalions were located in front of the brigade rear boundary and included soldiers working in transportation, medical, maintenance, and supply.⁴⁰⁰ The FSBs left a loophole for commanders to move female soldiers into this part of the battlefield if it became necessary.⁴⁰¹ Field commanders supported the use of women in the FSBs.⁴⁰² Female soldiers continued to operate as combat MPs, helicopter pilots, missile crewmembers, tank mechanics, truck drivers, psych operators, bomb specialist and drill sergeants. They set up and slept in tents on borders close to the DMZ in Korea and along East Germany’s Iron Curtain. They were proficient in weapons, tactical maneuvers, and worked in aviation and Air Defense artillery. In spite of the limitations on some jobs, women were now as equally prepared for an operational mission as noncombatant men were and would face the same risks with them when they deployed to war. Lieutenant Colonel Jeanne Hamilton described the differences for women in the Army since the WAC era as a “revolution.”⁴⁰³

Women Move to the Battlefield

In 1983 as the Army and Department of Defense (DOD) struggled to find a permanent and workable assignment policy for women, the United States conducted its first major military operation since the Vietnam war -- the invasion of Grenada, known as “Operation Urgent Fury.” The deployment of troops included over one hundred and seventy women who worked as military

⁴⁰⁰ GAO, *Combat Exclusion Laws for Women in the Military*, 1987, 9.

⁴⁰¹ General Ono quoted in 1990 *House Hearings on Women in the Military*, page 50.

⁴⁰² GAO, *Combat Exclusion*, 1987, 9.

⁴⁰³ Molly Moore, “Open Doors Don’t Equal Equality: Combat Ban Symbolizes Limits to Female Advancement in Services,” *Washington Post*, September 24, 1989, ProQuest.

police, helicopter pilots, interrogators, communication specialists, mechanics, aircrew, intelligence personnel and as health specialists.⁴⁰⁴ This was the first time that women had deployed as part of the operational Army in a military fighting mission and just like the most of the men, it was their first “combat experience.”⁴⁰⁵ None deployed as part of the invasion force, but like most soldiers, they came as support troops in the following days. They comprised about two percent of the overall forces deployed. Female soldiers wore the same battle dress uniforms, and carried the same M-16s as male soldiers. Female MPs were the largest group and most visible to the media because they operated checkpoints with their machine guns, patrolled in jeeps, and guarded prisoners. Two platoon leaders for the peacekeeping force on the island were women, reflecting that women now had authority and command positions over male dominated units. But the women also conducted interrogations with Cuban prisoners, detonated bombs, guarded the perimeter, flew troops in helicopters and operated heavy trucks.⁴⁰⁶ Four of the MPs female were caught in sniper fire on the runway along with the rest of their unit.⁴⁰⁷ These were all firsts for women in the Army, but it was not new for war to expose servicewomen to danger. The real significance was that female soldiers’ positions in operational units had made them integral to and part of combat maneuvers in forward areas. Inclusion of women in the operational Army of Grenada was unlike any other American military force in its history.

⁴⁰⁴ Chapman, 78.

⁴⁰⁵ Dan Sewell, “U.S. Women Soldiers Fight Own Battle in Grenada,” *ES&S*, December 2, 1983.

⁴⁰⁶ Ann Wright, “The Roles of U.S. Army Women in Grenada,” *Quarterly Report on Women and the Military* 2, (June 30, 1984): 103.

⁴⁰⁷ “Women Nearer to Combat Than Realized,” *PS&S*, August 28, 1985.

Yet complicating the deployment was some confusion by unit commanders about what women could or should actually do and where they could go on the battlefield. Some male commanders initially refused to deploy female soldier in their units, while others sent some back to the United States as soon as they realized women were on the island. In the latter case, when the head of the invasion force learned that four female MPs were in Grenada, he sent them back to their home base at Fort Bragg. But his superior, the head of the 18th Airborne Corps, promptly had them flown back to Grenada.⁴⁰⁸ Women left behind were “hopping mad” and fought up the chain of command for the right to deploy.⁴⁰⁹ Some, like Carole Znamiroski won their battle and deployed to the war zone.⁴¹⁰ Major Ann Wright, the highest ranking female for the mission asserted that “if you’re going to train a woman to do a job, then dammit, let them do it.”⁴¹¹ The media focus on women exposed the resentment that many male soldier’s felt about the disproportionate attention the women received; even the Army’s spokesman argued that “we’re trying to move away from talking about women soldiers.”⁴¹²

Yet talk about women in the military intensified. In 1984, concerned about the muddled treatment in deploying women to Grenada, DACOWITS asked the Department of Defense to issue a statement to all military commanders that ensured women would be “fully utilized in their

⁴⁰⁸ “Women in the U.S. Army, Still no Combat,” *Pharos-Tribune (Logansport IN)*, December 15, 1983, Newspaper.com (accessed May 4, 2014).

⁴⁰⁹ “Army Women Upset Over Non-Combat Role in Grenada,” *ES&S*, December 14, 1983.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹¹ “Army Women Upset Over Non-Combat Role in Grenada.”

⁴¹² *Ibid.*

operational roles” and to provide a more consistent policy across all the service branches for the application of combat exclusion policies.⁴¹³

At the same time, DACOWITS expressed dissatisfaction with the military’s attitude and lack of understanding about sexual harassment and demanded the DOD establish policies specifying that such abuse was “impermissible behavior.”⁴¹⁴ It had been pushing this issue since 1980 and now the Women’s Equity Action League joined the fight and their focus on these issues after Grenada intensified.⁴¹⁵ The Defense Department did not define sexual harassment or create a policy to deter troops from engaging in such behavior until 1981.⁴¹⁶ Reflecting senior leadership’s attitude that the problem was with the women, not men’s behavior, in 1980 the Army Deputy Chief of Staff asserted that the issue of sexual harassment was “overblown.”⁴¹⁷ He added that “soldiers are always harassed to some extent.”⁴¹⁸ Subsequently, female soldiers breaking into

⁴¹³ DACOWITS History of Recommendations, *Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services*, Spring Conference Reports 1984, <http://dacowits.defense.gov/ReportsMeetings/1984Spring.aspx>; DACOWITS History of Recommendations, *Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services*, Spring Conference Reports 1985, <http://dacowits.defense.gov/ReportsMeetings/1985Spring.aspx> (accessed April 5, 2012). (accessed April 5, 2012).

⁴¹⁴ DACOWITS History of Recommendations, *Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services*, Spring Conference Reports 1980, <http://dacowits.defense.gov/ReportsMeetings/1980Spring.aspx> (accessed April 5, 2012).

⁴¹⁵ See DACOWITS Recommendations, 1984-1988. Sheila Caudle, “Women Believe Army Holding Them Back,” *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, September 18, 1983 (accessed October 5, 2014); Gillian Haggerty, “Military Dismisses Sexual Bias as ‘That’s Life,’ Woman Says,” *The Palm Beach Post*, October 2, 1987, Newspaper.com (accessed October 5, 2014).

⁴¹⁶ Catharine MacKinnon, *Sexual Harassment of Working Women*. Also see Reva B. Siegel, “A Short History of Sexual Harassment,” in Catherine MacKinnon and Reva B. Siegel, *Directions in Sexual Harassment Law*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004; Cocke, *Army Historical Summary 1981*.

⁴¹⁷ “Sex Harassment ‘Overblown’ Vessey Says,” *PS&S*, April 14, 1980.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*

male units who wanted to stay in the Army felt like that they had to “ignore it or accept it as the norm after a while,” in order to be accepted.⁴¹⁹

In 1988, after a comprehensive review, the Secretary of Defense issued a number of directives to all of the service to take sexual harassment seriously and commit to the expansion of women’s jobs into operational units. Addressing sexual harassment, DOD implemented the first service-wide survey on the issue, called for more comprehensive training programs, and required all service branches to detail a formal process for the resolution of complaints.⁴²⁰ But even as late as 1996, the Army’s comprehensive study of sexual harassment revealed that most female soldiers tried to resolve the issues themselves and did not want to report to their commanders.⁴²¹ Often because they did not trust the system to protect them.⁴²² But the report also revealed a great chasm between what female and male soldiers considered harassing behavior.⁴²³

Regarding exclusionary policies, the task force revealed the military had never formally defined a “combat mission,” and discovered exclusion policies prohibiting women from some

⁴¹⁹ D’Amico, 112. A study of women’s integration into civilian police forces in Finland and the United States revealed that policewomen face higher levels of harassment on the job than many other women in the workforce. Gruber, 196, 203.

⁴²⁰ *1988 DOD Task Force on Women*, iii, iv.

⁴²¹ *1997 Senior Review Panel Report on Sexual Harassment*, Vol. 1, p. 17.

⁴²² Kennedy, 173.

⁴²³ For additional analysis on the failure of the military to adequately address sexual harassment see Sue Guenter-Schlesinger, “Persistence of Sexual Harassment: The Impact of Military Culture on Policy Implication,” in *Beyond Zero Tolerance: Discrimination in Military Culture*, eds., Mary Fainsod Katzenstein and Judith Reppy (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999), 195-212. For examination of how race and gender impact women of color in the military, see Gwendolyn M. Hall, “Intersectionality: A Necessary Consideration for Women of Color in the Military?” in *Beyond Zero Tolerance*, 143-161.

“noncombat positions or units not explicitly covered” by law.⁴²⁴ The DOD maintained that the services had interpreted Congress’s intent to limit women from jobs “too broadly,” and had not properly followed a 1985 directive to expand opportunities to women.⁴²⁵ For example, an Army commander complained that he could not send one of his female pilots to an assignment in El Salvador in 1985 because of the exclusion rule.⁴²⁶ Consequently, the Secretary attempted to standardize combat exclusion policies across the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corp by instituting rules that more closely linked the exclusions to actual combat fighting.⁴²⁷ The service branches were directed to review all noncombat units and positions that were currently closed to women and apply a new “Risk Rule.” The new policy directed the closure of women’s jobs in operational units only in cases where the “risk of exposure to direct combat, exposure to hostile fire, or capture...were equal to, or greater than that experienced by combat units” in the same locality.⁴²⁸ In addition, in order to avoid commanders from refusing to deploy women with their units, the Secretary of Defense made clear that women in noncombatant jobs would work in their units not only in peacetime, but while deployed at war.⁴²⁹

The new combat exclusion policy from the DOD, once again opened up more positions for women in the Army by narrowing the meaning of combat. The DOD specifically tasked the

⁴²⁴ *1988 DOD Task Force on Women*, 9.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.* The DOD direct was that the combat exclusion “should be interpreted to allow as many as possible career opportunities for women to be kept open.”

⁴²⁶ LTC Gary R Stevens quoted in Elaine Sciolino, “The Battle Line Shift on Women in Combat,” *PS&S*, February 4, 1990.

⁴²⁷ *1988 DOD Task Force on Women*, 10.

⁴²⁸ Chapman, 79.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*

Army to reconsider its definition of the battle area carefully and ensure women were not arbitrarily excluded from jobs.⁴³⁰ After applying the Risk Rule to the DCPC coding, the Army opened an additional 3,000 positions to female soldiers, including some artillery positions they had closed in 1983.⁴³¹ The Army even freed up some noncombat positions at the headquarters in combat arms units.⁴³²

By 1988, a sea change had occurred. When the Army deployed troops to the battle-zone, women went too. Although basic combat training was once again segregated, noncombatant men and women went through “exactly the same” programs.⁴³³ After basic, male and female soldiers sat side by side to learn the skills necessary for training in their occupational fields. Once assigned to their units, soldiers worked and lived together on a daily basis, often in the field. Some units spent many days and weeks in the field, while others only performed occasional field work, but all prepared for war. While women often faced significant resistance, by participating together on a daily basis with men in greater numbers in many new fields, their skills and talents became widely observable, which helped break down long held assertions that women should be limited to traditional gender work roles.⁴³⁴ In 1985, General Sherian Cadoria argued that “as

⁴³⁰ *1988 DOD Task Force on Women*, 15.

⁴³¹ *Department of the Army Historical Summary: Fiscal Year 1988* (Washington: Center of Military History, Dept. of the Army, 1988), <http://www.history.army.mil/books/DAHSUM/1988/> (accessed June 4, 2013). The Army actually opened 11,138 positions, 3,128 were for women on active duty, 6274 in the National Guard, and 1736 in the Army Reserve.

⁴³² *1988 Army Historical Summary*.

⁴³³ “Co-Ed Basic Ends, But Some Say They’ll Miss It,” *ES&S*, October 31, 1982.

⁴³⁴ For analysis on how women coped in nontraditional command positions, see Susan Kellett-Forsyth, “A Study of Female Commanders in the United States Army: Culture, Command and the Women Who Lead,” The University of Oklahoma, 2003, ProQuest (accessed March 19, 2015).

women work alongside of their male counterparts, they'll recognize that we have the ability and that we can do quality work.”⁴³⁵ By pushing not only for equal opportunity, but equal treatment, women reshaped the workplace for all soldiers.

⁴³⁵ “The General is a Lady,” *Ebony*, December 1985, p. 146, box 595, Sherian Cadoria file, Fort Lee Archives.

CHAPTER V

WOMEN'S PATH TO LEADERSHIP IN THE ARMY, 1974-1994

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Secretary of the Army attempted to finesse a definition of combat that allowed for the integration of limited numbers of female soldiers into operational units while keeping them out of direct offensive fighting. These definitions and policies were changed, not to protect women, but to prevent the public from considering women's work in the Army as combat roles. But these policies still placed women on the battlefield. In 1988 the Pentagon directed the Army and other services to continue the expansion of women's roles by opening up even more units and positions.¹ Although nearly all combat arms jobs and combat units remained closed, many women came closer to actual fighting by occupying jobs and units once off limits to them. Between 1989 and 1991, women's extensive participation in military deployments to war in Panama and the Persian Gulf involved female officers leading troops in combat, women taking and receiving enemy fire, being wounded, held prisoner, and killed by enemy forces. These experiences and pressure from advocacy groups led the Army and government to open up even more jobs closer to the fighting.

¹ The Army prohibited women from 48 percent of positions based on the combat exclusion rule and the Direct Combat Probability Code system. Rosemarie Skaine, *Women at War: Gender Issues of Americans in Combat* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1999), 65.

Many scholars have focused on how the Army's exclusion of women from combat arms positions in infantry, armor and artillery allowed these fields to remain entrenched in a "hyper masculinized sub-culture," undermining women's advancement, yet this view does not fully explain women's experiences and promotion opportunities in noncombatant fields that still often brought them onto or close the battle.² Despite the limitations and hazards of working in a male dominated environment, women carved out places for themselves in the Army, acquiring new skills, gaining education, securing pensions, and most importantly, claiming the right to leadership roles.³ Notably, with women increasingly commanding troops and leading soldiers in many operational units, the view of military leadership as an exclusively masculine trait began to change as female soldiers gained authority to enforce rules and standards based on their rank and

² Quote is from Regina Titunik, who argues that that the emphasis on hyper-masculinity in the military is *exaggerated*. Regina F. Titunik, "The Myth of the Macho Military," *Polity* 40, no. 2 (2008): 137-163. For more on masculinity in the military see Leora N. Rosen, Kathryn H. Knudson and Peggy Fancher, "Cohesion and the Culture of Hypermasculinity in U.S. Army Units," *Armed Forces & Society* 29, no. 3 (2003): 325-351. For hypermasculinity, see Donald L. Mosher and Mark Sirkin, "Measuring a Macho Personality Constellation," *Journal of Research in Personality* 18, no. 2 (1984): 150-163. Joan Aker's work on gender and the workplace emphasized how masculinity and the Army's organizational structure benefit men's careers by prohibiting opportunities to women and establishing power inequities. Joan Aker, "Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations," *Gender and Society* 4, no. 2 (1990): 139-158, and Joan Aker, "Inequality Regimes," *Gender & Society* 20, no. 4 (2006): 441-464; Lorry M. Fenner and Marie DeYoung, *Women in Combat: Civic Duty or Military Liability?* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2001).

³ Connie Brownson, "The Battle for Equivalency: Female US Marines Discuss Sexuality, Physical Fitness, and Military Leadership," *Armed Forces & Society* 40, no. 4 (2014): 765-788.

position.⁴ Women and men learned from each other and formed bonds as soldiers.⁵ By 1994 many male soldiers at all levels began to view women as essential to their mission.⁶

Along with the significant transformation of the Army's workplace that occurred with women's integration into operational units was the development, training and promotion of female soldiers into positions of authority, which upended the male-only leadership in most noncombat and some combat units in the Army. A substantial percentage of the leadership, especially in the enlisted ranks, were non-white women. Notably, with women increasingly commanding troops and leading soldiers in many operational units, the view of military leadership as an exclusively masculine trait began to change. Brenda Formo recalled that her commander was "terrified that he as having to deal with a woman being an instructor" at the accounting school.⁷ As female soldiers moved into leadership positions in operational units, women not only commanded and disciplined men, they also became responsible for military operations and preparing troops for war.

⁴ Recent sociological studies focusing on how women have influenced civilian management styles in previously male dominated work environments provide useful evidence to understand how the concept of leadership has evolved over the last four decades. Paula Dubeck and Dana Dunn argued that many business leaders have embraced a mixture of feminine and male characteristics. Paula Dubeck and Dana Dunn, *Workplace/Women's Place: An Anthology* Los Angeles (Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury Pub. Co, 1997).

⁵ Regina Titunik has argued that military cohesion is not only something that occurs in male units, but soldiers find common bonds regardless of gender because women embrace many aspects of military culture and ritual. Regina Titunik, "The First Wave: Gender Integration and Military Culture," *Peace Research Abstracts* 38, no. 2, (2001): 247-48.

⁶ Brownson, "The Battle for Equivalency," 765-88.

⁷ Brenda Formo interviewed by author, April 16, 2009, Brenda Terrell Formo Collection (hereafter cited as Brenda Formo interview), WV0460, Betty H. Carter Women Veterans Historical Project, Martha Blakeney Hodges Special Collections and University Archives, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, NC (hereafter cited as UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project).

The Path to Leadership

The Army's leadership has traditionally been a culture of men with shared experiences that one generation of officers and noncommissioned officers have exchanged with the next, but women could not command men, so they missed out on this type of personal interaction.⁸ In addition, the paths to leadership included professional development and managerial skills that the Army provided through its own schools.⁹ Until the 1970s, the Army systematically denied servicewomen opportunities to participate in established leadership training programs that were crucial for soldiers' advancement and promotion to high level positions as Colonels and Generals.¹⁰ The main reason servicewomen's leadership opportunities were limited was because the 1948 Women's Armed Services Integration Act codified institutional gender discrimination, specifically excluding women from positions of authority over men in the operational Army. Even though women had served in leadership positions in the Women's Army Corps, they worked primarily in women only units. The separate women's corps had its own leadership training courses, but none provided any advanced training to prepare for command assignments or graduate level education for officers that were available for men at some of the senior service

⁸ David E. Johnson, *Preparing Potential Senior Army Leaders for the Future: An Assessment of Leader Development Efforts in the Post-Cold War Era* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2002), 17.

⁹ These training programs included the senior service schools at the Army War College, Command and General Staff College, the Industrial College, as well as the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

¹⁰ Johnson, 17. The Army largely excluded women from its senior service colleges at the Army War College, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Armed Forces Staff College and Army Command and General Staff College where field grade officers (Major, Lieutenant Colonel, Colonel) prepared officers for high level positions and promotion to the general ranks in Army operations. See Morden for discussion on how a very limited number of Wacs attended truncated leadership courses. Bettie J. Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1990), 171, 220.

colleges.¹¹ Excluded from this culture, women lacked power, authority and legitimacy as leaders in the regular Army.

As discussed in Chapter Three, in the 1970s, female soldiers, DACOWITS, and other women's organizations pushed Congress and the Department of Defense for policy and law changes that established the foundation for female soldiers' integration into leadership positions.¹² First, in 1967, Congress removed the two percent cap on enlisted women and eliminated the female officer promotions restrictions that limited them to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, providing the first opportunities for the Army's leadership training.¹³ Next, in the 1970s, advocacy groups pushed open traditional male-only paths to Army commissions that had been denied to women, providing new pathways for careers.¹⁴ In 1977, the Army instituted an affirmative action program that required a review of promotion boards' decision making process when women's accessions to higher ranks numbers did not equal set goals.¹⁵ After the end of WAC in 1978, female officers began competing on an equal basis with men for advancement and began serving on promotion boards for all soldiers.¹⁶ Finally, in the 1970s, women not only

¹¹ Morden, 123-126.

¹² Chapter Three, 109-131.

¹³ In 1968, the first five WAC officers graduated from the Command and General Staff Course. In 1969, two WAC officers graduated from the Army War College. Between 1954 and 1972, the Women's Army Corps operated the WAC Officer Advanced Course to help prepare women to command (women) in the field grade ranks of Major and Lieutenant Colonel. Morden, 126, 221.

¹⁴ Reserve Officer Training Corps and the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Army, *Affirmative Action Plan*, AR 600-26, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1990), 8.

¹⁶ The Army integrated male and female officer promotion lists with the end of the WAC in 1978. Morden, 398.

attended professional service schools, they became faculty and instructors.¹⁷ By the early 1990s, even with combat restrictions that closed many units to women, female soldier's career progression in most Army fields became equivalent to many noncombatant men.¹⁸ By 1992, an Army study reported that female enlisted soldiers rise to the top three ranks had exceeded goals and the overall promotion rate average for all male soldiers.¹⁹ For officers, few women had been eligible for the top level promotions to the ranks of General, so the Army only tracked the field grade promotions to Major, Lieutenant Colonel, and Colonel, but they too exceeded goals and men's average promotion rate.²⁰ The report noted that men in combat arms were promoted much more quickly and often to higher ranks than any other fields, so this was a limiting factor for women due to their prohibition in combat arms.²¹

¹⁷ In 1976, the Army assigned ten women to staff at West Point Military Academy to prepare for the integration of female soldiers. General Pat Foote was the first female to serve as faculty at the Army War College in 1979. She graduated from the school in 1977. Morden, 24; Deb Cline, "Lt. Col Foote: She's Still 'the First and Only' Woman," *The Evening Sentinel* (Carlisle, PA), August 25, 1979, Newspaper.com (accessed June 7, 2014).

¹⁸ The Army did not separate race as a category for women, so the promotion rate statistics for African American, Hispanic and Asian women is unclear. Carol A. Robinson and Steven S. Prevette, *Disparities in Minority Promotion Rates: A Total Quality Approach* (Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, Patrick AFB FL, 1992), iv, 9, <http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?&verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA260133> (accessed on November 2, 2012).

¹⁹ Carol A. Robinson and Steven S. Prevette, *Disparities in Minority Promotion Rates*, iv, 11, E-4.

²⁰ In testimony to the Senate, Assistant Secretary of Defense, Christopher Jenn noted that women eligible to compete for the flag officer ranks were less than one half of one percent by 1991. United States, House, Armed Services Committee, Military Forces and Personnel Subcommittee, *Women in Combat*, 103rd Congress, 1st Sess., May 12, 806 (hereafter cited as 1993 House Hearing, *Women in Combat*), ProQuest Congressional (94-H201-8)

²¹ Assistant Secretary of Defense Christopher Jenn, quoted in 1993 House Hearing, *Women in Combat*, 806.

Women's Success at Securing Leadership Positions in the Late 20th Century

Change did not happen overnight because promotion system did not allow individuals to skip ranks; soldiers had to work their way through each successive promotion over the course of a twenty to thirty-year career to gain senior leadership positions.²² But once they entered operational units, women received a more equal chance than ever before in gaining equal status with men.²³ In one woman's view, the Army's promotion system gave all soldiers a chance to succeed because "everyone starts by doing the low jobs and works their way up."²⁴ A soldier could not be promoted until serving a specific amount of time at his or her current rank as well as a specific number of years in the Army. Competitive selection boards evaluated eligible soldiers within the same peer group, defined as soldiers who joined in the same year and work in the same occupation.²⁵ For example, a soldier had to spend about fifteen years in the Army before he or she

²² An individual with specific skills or education might begin their service at a higher grade, but once in, the soldier is required to go through every subsequent rank in the order of the pay grade. Enlisted Pay grades are E-1 to E-9, and officers' grades are O-1 thru O-10.

²³ For a discussion on how equal standards benefited the advancement of Blacks in the Army, see Charles C. Moskos and John S. Butler, *All That We Can Be: Black Leadership and Racial Integration the Army Way* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1996). For analysis on the military's culture provides a measurably positive experience for many minorities and women compared with employment in the civilian sector, see Jennifer Hicks Lundquist, "Ethnic and Gender Satisfaction in the Military: The Effect of a Meritocratic Institution," *American Sociological Review* 73, no. 3 (2008): 477-496.

²⁴ Dawn Fallick, "In Desert Storm, Black Women Erased Many Gender and Racial Barriers," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 27, 2002, Newspaper.com (June 12, 2014).

²⁵ Army Regulation (AR) 600-8-29, *Officer Promotions*, February 2005; Army Regulation (AR) 600-8-19, *Enlisted Promotions and Reductions*, December 2015. The only exception to these policies are that some "exceptional" soldiers are promoted ahead of their peers. See AR 600-8-29 "Below the Zone," and AR 600-8-19 "Secondary Zone."

was eligible for promotion to the senior ranks of Sergeant First Class or Lieutenant Colonel.²⁶ This method called “aging” took time, but provided a more level playing field for all soldiers in the same peer group to attain increasing levels of responsibility and authority over time. Claudia Kennedy’s rise through the ranks is typical of the process. She entered the Women’s Army Corps in 1969 as a 2nd Lieutenant, the lowest officer rank and became a Captain along with her peer group two years later.²⁷ But Kennedy, like her colleagues, had to serve about a decade in the Army before she was promoted to Major. After sixteen years of service, the Army selected Kennedy for the Lieutenant Colonel rank, and in 1993, her twenty-fourth year in the Army, she attained the rank of Brigadier General.²⁸ Women were still excluded from combat roles that benefited male soldiers for the most senior positions in the Army, and female soldiers still faced sexist commanders and hostile work environments. Yet because the Army based all soldiers’ performance evaluations on the same standards within their occupation, for the first time, women had a chance to rise in rank and compete for the same jobs and leadership positions with men serving in noncombatant roles.

Because the substantial increase of servicewomen did not occur until after the end of the draft in 1973, it took decades for sizeable numbers of women to progress through this system. In 1982, seventy-one percent of women in the military had less than five years of service, and

²⁶ United States, Congress, House of Representatives, Armed Services Committee *Hearing on “Women in the Military,”* 96th Congress, Sess. 1 & 2, November 13-16, 1979 and February 11, 1980, p. 20, ProQuest Congressional (81-H201-23).

²⁷ In the Army, some promotions do not require a selection board. Usually, all officers within a peer group are promoted automatically up to the rank of Captain. The promotion to 1st Lieutenant comes after 18 months and the promotion to Captain comes after about two years.

²⁸ Lieutenant General Claudia Kennedy with Malcolm McConnell, *Generally Speaking* (New York: Warner Books, 2001), 311.

ninety-five percent had served less than ten years.²⁹ Since most Wacs were locked out of combat support and combat service support units until the mid-1970s, many had not gained seniority in their operational fields even if they had longevity.³⁰ That meant that Wacs expecting a career in the women's corps now had to play catch up learning skills as military police, engineers, signals operators and other fields in the operational Army. As a result, by 1989, most of the gains for female officers were in the field grade ranks below Colonel, but they were substantial and reflected proportional representation based on their overall numbers in the Army.³¹

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, some women who had joined twenty or more years earlier during the WAC era and transferred into operational units had gained not only rank, but senior leadership roles. Many more began to make gains at levels that brought them into command assignments for combat support units. By 1986, three former Wacs wore the stars of a Brigadier General, two in the operational Army.³² General Sherian Cadoria worked as Director of

²⁹ United States, *Military Women in the Department of Defense* (Washington, DC: Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1983), 17. At the same time, 76 percent of men had less than ten years of service and 53 percent had less than five years, a gap of 19 percent for the ten years and 18 percent for five years.

³⁰ See Susan D. Hosek, et al., *Minority and Gender Differences in Career Progression* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001), 2, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1184.html (accessed June 4, 2013).

³¹ In 1989, 10.8 percent of women made up the active duty Army. This was second only to the Air Force whose percentage was 13.6. The highest rank for female officers in all services at that time was Brigadier General, of which there were seven, which was only 1.3 percent of serving at that rank. The percentages for other ranks were 2.5 percent (365) for Colonel, 5.3 percent (1764) for LTC, 10 percent (5458) Major, 13.1 percent (14118) Captain, 15.2 percent (6518) 1LT, 15.2 percent (5240) 2LT. "Women in Uniform," *European Stars and Stripes* (hereafter cited as *ES&S*), April 17, 1990.

³² Cadoria attained her star in 1985 and Foote in 1986. Other female soldiers had become Brigadier Generals, but the Army promoted only the last three Wac Directors: Elizabeth Hoisington (1970), Mildred Bailey (1971), Mary Clarke (1975). Myrna Hennrich Williamson was the first non WAC Director to attain the rank of Brigadier General in 1984, but her assignment was part of the Institutional Army, running the Army's ROTC program at Fort Riley, Kansas. The

Manpower and Personnel in the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff where she advised the service branch leaders on the status of military operations and worldwide use and deployment of personnel.³³ General Pat Foote was assigned as the commander of a major military installation with over 16,000 soldiers at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.³⁴ Both senior level positions with responsibilities over large institutions were unthinkable for women before the opening of operational units. By 1993, five female generals held power similar to that of a CEO in a company with control over an organization at a more strategic level within the Army, making decisions about plans, personnel, and policy.³⁵ Six female colonels commanded brigades, an organizational level sustaining leadership through planning, monitoring battle operations and supporting 1500-3200 soldiers.³⁶ Many female Majors worked in staff advisor positions at the division level, analyzing potential enemy threats to prepare for war operations.³⁷ Thirty-one Lieutenant Colonels headed battalions with 300-1000 troops, a position where officers led and mentored commanders in the hierarchy below them.³⁸ Many female captains held direct

Army Nurse Corps leadership also became Brigadier Generals beginning with Anna Hays in 1970. Morden, 232, 257, 368, 427; "Woman Set to Get Star of a Brigadier General," *Rome News-Herald*, July 26, 1984, 2A, Google.com/newspapers (accessed June 3, 2014).

³³ "The General is a Lady," *Ebony*, December, 1985, p. 146, box 595, Sherian Cadoria file, U.S. Army Women's Museum, Fort Lee, VA (hereafter cited at Fort Lee Archive).

³⁴ Major General Mary Clarke, a former WAC Director was the first women to take command of a military institution. The Army assigned her to Fort McClellan, the former home of the Women's Army Corps. Morden, 395.

³⁵ 1993 House Hearing, *Women in Combat*, 2. Description of command level responsibilities are found in: Army Regulation (AR) 600-100, *Army Leadership*, March 2007, 3-4; Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 6-22, *Army Leadership*, August 2012.

³⁶ ADRP 6-22, *Army Leadership*, 4.

³⁷ 1993 House Hearing, *Women in Combat*, 21.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

leadership positions at the company level, responsible for developing teams and leading their troops in war.³⁹ Despite combat restrictions, female officers participated in preparing their soldiers for war operations, even in support roles.

Enlisted and commissioned officers rose through the ranks by performing first as leaders in small units and then gradually working their way up the ranks with increasing responsibility, special assignments and eventually greater accountability for more troops in larger organizations. For Army enlisted women, integration into operational units with men was the main driving force for their ascension into positions where they competed with men for promotional advancement.⁴⁰ Along the way, the Army selected a handful of female soldiers to attend military leadership schools and to serve in manager and staff positions that would provide them with experience to access the highest ranks. Marilyn Quagliotti, who entered the Army as a Wac in 1975 and retired in 2007 as a Major General provides an illustration of how this process worked for an officer. Quagliotti initially worked in her field as a signals officer, honing her leadership skills in small units as platoon officer, working as a General's aide and attending leadership school before taking her first Company command in 1980.⁴¹ The Army assigned her positions in both combat and combat support units, including infantry, airborne, and engineering, and selected her to attend

³⁹ United States, Department of Defense, *Utilization of American Military Women in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm: August 2, 1990, to April 11, 1991* (Washington, DC: Office of Secretary of Defense, 1991), 2 (hereafter cited as 1991 *Utilization of Women in Desert Storm*); AR 600-100, 3.

⁴⁰ Enlisted women's promotions had never been limited by law or policy in the same way that female officers' were obstructed, but the combat exclusion policies keeping them out of certain jobs and units was a factor in limiting their options.

⁴¹ United States, Senate, Committee on the Judiciary, "*Confirmation Hearings on Federal Appointments*," 112th Cong., 1st sess., April 13, May 4, May 24, 2011, pp. 1112, 1421, 1438, 1441, 1457, Hathitrust.org (accessed March 4, 2013).

the Army War College in 1987 to gain skills in military strategy and joint-services operations. None of these assignments were possible in the WAC era. Because Quagliotti's career prepared her for senior level positions, the Army selected her as battalion commander of a signals unit in the 1st Cavalry Division, the first woman to attain this role.⁴² After earning a Master's degree at the National War College in 1994, Quagliotti responsibilities and authority continued to increase over time, next as commander of a Signals Brigade in Panama before commanding all Signals units in the European theater in 2000, which supported military operations in Bosnia and Kosovo. In her final position, the Army selected her as the Vice Director of Operations for all communications throughout the Department of Defense in 2003.⁴³ According to Quagliotti, her career benefited from joining the Army as new opportunities for women opened up, but noted it was only possible because her superiors provided her with the same roles and responsibilities offered to male soldiers.⁴⁴

Navigating Sexual Harassment and the Male Dominated Culture

Although women's numbers in the Army increased from 1.2 percent in 1972 to 13 percent by 1994, they were still a minority with very few female role models; as a result, male leadership and co-worker's attitudes and behaviors shaped most female soldiers' experiences.⁴⁵ Women experienced a great deal of sexism and sexual harassment working in formerly male units

⁴² Robin M. Gregory, "Signal Corps Names Divisional Battalion Commander," *Army Communicator*, 16, Summer 1991: 26.

⁴³ 2011 Senate, "Confirmation Hearings on Federal Appointments."

⁴⁴ Gregory, "Signal Corps Names Divisional Battalion Commander."

⁴⁵ "Table 510. Department of Defense Personnel: 1960 to 2010," in National Security and Veteran Affairs, U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2012, 335, <https://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/12statab/defense.pdf> (accessed May 23, 2016).

because many men had doubts about women's abilities, both as soldiers and leaders.⁴⁶ One example of the sexist Army culture was the tradition of male briefers and instructors to mix pornographic or sexually suggestive slides with the educational slides to keep men's attention during briefings and training classes, and this behavior initially continued as women entered operational units.⁴⁷ When women complained, they were told to find their "sense of humor."⁴⁸ As more and more women integrated male-only units, this part of military culture began to dissipate and was virtually eliminated by the 1990s.⁴⁹ But in the early years of integration, some who had been in the women's corps lamented the loss of the WAC support system "where senior NCO's were available and visible to provide sensitivity and advice."⁵⁰ Often, hostility toward women manifested as discrimination in negative performance evaluations. A number of female leaders who managed to rise in the ranks noted that some male superiors rated them poorly, regardless of

⁴⁶ Eugene A. Fox, *Final Report of the Women in the Army Study Group*, (Washington: U.S. Dept. of the Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, 1976), A-4-2-3.

⁴⁷ Kennedy, 65. Many women veterans interviewed by this author from all service branches noted that pinups and pornography during briefings and training was a common practice in the 1970s and 1980s.

⁴⁸ Kennedy, 66.

⁴⁹ Kennedy, 67; "Bare Walls," *Pacific Stars and Stripes* (hereafter cited as *PS&S*), May 15, 1992, p. 13.

⁵⁰ Names withheld, letter to editor, "Lack of Sensitivity Toward Women," *ES&S*, August 28, 1981.

their proficiency.⁵¹ Others left the Army early because of harassment or lack of support.⁵²

Retaliation against female soldiers reporting harassment was common. One woman testified about being spat on, ridiculed and ostracized for reporting harassment, but her commander never acted on her complaint.⁵³

Many women learned to adjust to sexism in the Army. Some became “thick skinned” to ignore males’ demeaning attitudes about women.⁵⁴ Many tolerated inappropriate behaviors because as Claudia Kennedy stated, it was the “norm throughout the Army.”⁵⁵ But some women also adopted male rituals and behavior to try and fit into the male culture for acceptance. Many endured hazing rituals alongside male soldiers such as having the pins on their new rank or insignia punched directly into their arm or chest.⁵⁶ Maria Wayne noted that she accepted the

⁵¹ Ann Dunwoody with Tomago Collins, *A Higher Standard: Leadership Strategies from America’s First Female Four Star General* (Boston MA, Da Capo Press, 2015), 38; Kennedy, 135, Cynthia Pritchett, interviewed by Aron Monson, (hereinafter cited as Cynthia Pritchett interview) tape recording 3, November 1, 2011, USASMA Digital History files, United States Army Combined Arms Center, Combined Armed Research Digital Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; Linda Bray interviewed by author (hereafter cited as Linda Bray interview), October 19, 2008, Linda Bray Papers, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project; Maria Felger Wayne, interview by author, (hereinafter cited as Maria Wayne interview) October 14, 2010, Maria Felger Wayne Collection, WV0500, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project; Carol Barkalow and Andrea Raab, *In the Men’s House: An Inside Account of Life in the Army by One of West Point’s First Female Graduates* (New York: Poseidon Press, 1990), 187.

⁵² United States, *Evaluation of Women in the Army: Final Report (1978 EWITA Report)*, (Washington: Dept. of the Army, 1978), 12.

⁵³ United States, House, Armed Services Committee, *Sexual Harassment of Military Women and Improving the Military Complaint System*, 113th Cong., 2nd sess., March 9, 1994, p. 33-35, ProQuest Congressional (95-H201-7).

⁵⁴ Bob Cullen, “Border-Watch Fulda Invaded---By Women,” *S&S*, July 20, 1976.

⁵⁵ Kennedy, 175.

⁵⁶ Maria Wayne interview; Dunwoody, 86; Mary Fainsod Katzenstein and Judith Reppy, *Beyond Zero Tolerance: Discrimination in Military Culture* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 53.

pinning because, “if other people were doing it and they looked tough, I wanted to do it too.”⁵⁷ Cynthia Pritchett recalled that she “adopted some of the same bad habits that my male counterparts had” in order to be accepted.⁵⁸ Pritchett initially told “raunchy jokes about women,” because she wanted to belong and thought it might be the path to success.⁵⁹ Some pushed back. After nearly a decade in the Army, Rosemary Cameron anticipated some harassment at every assignment, so upon arrival to each new unit she let men know that that she “would not put up with little games,” about her abilities as a female soldier.⁶⁰ Others were more assertive. Dee McWilliams described one male leader she worked for as a “sleaze ball” who once propositioned her in his office by patting the front of his pants and informing her “there’s no padlock on this zipper.” McWilliams ended all further propositions by opening the door and repeated his exact phrase to all the soldiers gathered nearby, then walked away.⁶¹ While there have been no comprehensive studies on harassment experienced by female military leadership, a number of studies recognized that sexual harassment was “pervasive,” especially among the lower enlisted ranks, with officers and NCO reporting incidents at a lower rate.⁶²

⁵⁷ Maria Wayne interview.

⁵⁸ Cynthia Pritchett interview tape 1.

⁵⁹ Ibid.; “Women perseveres to be Sergeant Major,” *PS&S*, November 25, 1997.

⁶⁰ Don Tate, “For Staff Sergeant Rosemary Cameron,” *PS&S*, January 22, 1984, p. 13.

⁶¹ Shannon Huffman Poulson, “She’s Got Grit: Audacity and Confidence.”

⁶² Kennedy, 173. Three of the four women on the seven-member committee, Claudia Kennedy, Cynthia Pritchett and Pat Foote all joined in the WAC era and experienced the initial harassment of women who integrated into the operational Army. United States, *The Secretary of the Army’s Senior Review Panel Report on Sexual Harassment* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1997), 2.

Most enlisted and commissioned women described having to “prove themselves” as leaders in every new assignment due to the hostile reception they received upon arrival. Some Army studies claimed that “men accepted women in leadership roles when they demonstrated supervisory and physical competence” in their work.⁶³ One female crew chief at an attack helicopter unit in Germany said the ten soldiers in her all-male units were “skeptical” about her ability to do the heavy work required, once she showed she could do the job, “there were no more problems.”⁶⁴ But some men just did not want women in Army leadership. Ada Morales recalled that after more than twenty years in the Army, many of her male cohorts still “didn’t feel that the woman was capable of being a Sergeant Major.”⁶⁵ More than once, commanders told Morales they preferred a male soldier. Many men considered women in leadership not simply as officers, but as *female* officers and it was often women’s responsibility to “develop a good rapport” with senior leaders and regular troops to gain respect. Enlisted women experienced similar challenges. Yvette Augus struggled with an unruly group of men in her signals battalion in Korea and had to rely on the support of her male First Sergeant, who was well respected by the men, to help her with disciplinary issues in her unit.⁶⁶ Others were denied the chance to prove their worth. Claudia Kennedy related how after receiving an assignment to command a coveted Signals operations

⁶³ Morden, 374; Fox, *Final Report of the Women in the Army Study Group*, 10.

⁶⁴ Bob Hoyer, “Women Bust a Gut on the Job,” *ES&S*, July 20, 1982, p. 9.

⁶⁵ Transcript, Oral History Interview with SGM Ada L. Mercado-Morales (hereafter cited as Ada Mercado-Morales interview), February 27, 1989 edited by Pat Rhodes, NCO Museum Oral History, Combined Arms Research Library, Digital Library, https://server16040.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm4/item_viewer.php?CISOROOT=/p15040coll2&CISOPTR=7433&CISOBX=1&REC=6 (accessed on May 1, 2014).

⁶⁶ Don Tate, “A Women’s Place...in the Army,” *PS&S*, January 22, 1984.

battalion in Korea, another male officer asked her to swap assignments.⁶⁷ Yet after she refused, the officer successfully lobbied his superiors for the job, the Army sent Kennedy to a much less desirable support battalion.⁶⁸

The military's constant rotation of soldiers from one assignment to the next after two or three years was beneficial to many women who wanted to stay in the Army, but were facing harassment at their present assignment. The recognition that any hostile setting was not necessarily permanent helped many women persevere. Rotation in and out of units has been a regular part of military life, so in a relatively short time either a person who made life miserable for a soldier would move on to a new assignment, or the woman would depart. A common refrain for women facing harassment was to "wait it out," until they could get a new assignment. For example, in 1986, the Army sent Sergeant Major Susie McArthur to work in a battalion in Germany where the commander resented having a woman in charge, so he refused to talk to her.⁶⁹ McArthur held on until a new male commander arrived who supported her leadership.⁷⁰ Cynthia Pritchett worked for a unit attached to an infantry division whose leadership did not want a woman in charge of male troops and would not assign her to a role appropriate for her rank. However, in a short time, the leadership changed and assigned her to the First Sergeant position

⁶⁷ Kennedy, 115.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 116-119.

⁶⁹ Susie Stevens McArthur, interview by Hermann Trojanowski, (hereinafter cited as Susie McArthur interview), Susie Stevens McArthur Papers, February 8, 2001, WV0199, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

⁷⁰ McArthur interview, tape 1. Other women have complained that their male leadership often ignored them and refused to talk with them at all. Dorothy and Carl J. Schneider, *Sound Off! American Military Women Speak Out* (New York, NY: E.P. Dutton, 1988), 37, 45.

with command over the male troops.⁷¹ In Germany, as Carol Barkalow was struggling to work with her commander, she told herself to “just hold on” until her adversary left the unit a few months later.⁷²

Yet even while facing resentment and trying to navigate a dominant male culture, due to the nature of the military’s hierarchal rank structure, when women began securing positions of leadership and authority, male soldiers were compelled to follow their orders. The Army’s disciplined culture of deference for rank created a strong foundation for women to assert their authority and overcome male resistance. There was no question in the military about who outranked whom; the order of power was rigid. For instance, Yvette Augus was the only female officer in her Signal Corps battalion in Korea and while she sometimes had to compel male troops to salute her, Augus made clear that if a soldier failed to “show me the proper respect, I’ll lock his heels . . . make him show respect. My (male) commander will back me up. I know that.”⁷³ Pritchett, who attained leadership positions early in the operational Army was constantly tested by male soldiers who resisted having to take orders from a woman. According to Pritchett, women “took a lot of abuse.”⁷⁴ She explained to noncompliant male subordinates that any issue they had about her gender was their problem, not hers. Pritchett asserted her power by insisting that until the individual outranked her, “I’m in charge, we’re doing it my way.”⁷⁵ Testifying in Congress about the experiences of many female leaders, Captain Leah Patrick, who worked with

⁷¹ Cynthia Pritchett interview, Tape 3.

⁷² Barkalow, 185.

⁷³ Don Tate, “Be All that You Can Be,” *PS&S*, January 22, 1984.

⁷⁴ “Women Perseveres to be Sergeant Major,” *PS&S*, November 25, 1997.

⁷⁵ Cynthia Pritchett interview, Tape 2.

the Airborne Corps, explained that once you are in a position of authority, soldiers must “respond” to your orders, but once you treat them with “professionalism, they will follow your lead.”⁷⁶

Many women credited individual male mentors with helping guide them through their careers or smooth the path for them. For example, Chely McAnich credited a male soldier with “taking time to mentor and teach” her skills necessary to succeed in her job, later pushing her to apply for a Warrant Officer position.⁷⁷ In another case, Ann Dunwoody described how a Sergeant First Class became a mentor for her in 1976 when she became a platoon officer in a predominantly male maintenance company. The sergeant helped her become a “military leader” by including Dunwoody in the informal gatherings of leaders after hours, making her “feel part of the team.”⁷⁸ Because he already “commanded respect from his troops,” the sergeant’s support of Dunwoody translated into a “seamless and receptive” integration into the unit.⁷⁹ Many women leaders described men pushing them to pursue challenging roles. For instance, in 1978 Priscilla Locke’s battalion commander encouraged her to apply to the first class at West Point.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ United States, House, Armed Services Committee, Military Personnel and Compensation Subcommittee, *Women in the Military* (hereafter cited as 1990 House Hearing *Women in the Military*), 101st Congress, 2nd Sess., March 20, 1990, 86, ProQuest Congressional (90-H201-44).

⁷⁷ Chely McAnich, interview by author, August 9, 2010, WV0497, Chely McAnich Collection (hereinafter cited as Chely McAnich interview), UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

⁷⁸ Dunwoody, 38.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁸⁰ Priscilla Walker Locke, video interview with Mark Frankel, transcript, (hereinafter cited as Priscilla Locke video transcript), “Army Strong Exemplified: Breaking Barriers with the USMA of 1980,” The West Point Center for Oral History, May 5, 2015, <http://www.westpointcoh.org/interviews/army-strong-exemplified-breaking-barriers-with-the-usma-class-of-1980> (accessed on June 1, 2016).

Black Enlisted Women Rise in the Ranks to Leadership

Since start of the all-volunteer force, black women joined the Army in numbers disproportionate to their percentage in the civilian population, providing significant leadership opportunities. Like men and women of all race and ethnicities, many black women joined the Army in hopes of attaining financial security, others wished to learn a skill or receive Army benefits to acquire a college education. Yet by 1986, black women were three times more likely to join the Army than white women and twice as likely to reenlist.⁸¹ Brenda Moore noted during this surge that black women's civilian rate of unemployment was triple that of white women.⁸² By 1991, black women made up forty-nine percent of females in the Army. In fact, the total number of black female soldiers in the Army comprised half of all African American women serving in all branches of the military.⁸³ Sociologist Charles Moskos cited the Army's "good pay, training, education benefits and a chance to get away" from their current life circumstances as reasons black women sought out Army jobs.⁸⁴ For many black soldiers, the Army was "an avenue of upward mobility" that propelled them out of "low socioeconomic backgrounds."⁸⁵ One woman's reasoning for enlisting was economic, she wanted to escape dead end jobs and find economic

⁸¹ Clint Swift, "Increase in Black Women Soldiers," *S&S*, February 9, 1986.

⁸² Brenda Moore, "From Underrepresentation to Overrepresentation: African American Women," in Judith Stiehm, *It's Our Military, Too!: Women and the U.S. Military* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 128.

⁸³ Brenda Moore, "From Underrepresentation to Overrepresentation," 129.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Brenda Moore, "A Time to Reassess: The Intersection of Race and Class," *Critical Studies on Security*, 1, no. (August 1, 2013): 247.

security.⁸⁶ Another, Francine Fisher was a single mother and needed “a steady source of income,” but also a secure place to raise her children.⁸⁷ Some women like Priscilla Locke felt “destitute” before enlisting, but she found not only income stability in the Army, but the security of carrying a weapon for protection. Locke joined the Army in 1974 for many reasons, but one was to leave behind the violence erupting around her in Detroit.⁸⁸ Locke knew that service in the Army meant she would never have to return to her old life.⁸⁹ After becoming an officer a few years, Locke emphasized how her roots growing up in an impoverished neighborhood with high crime and few role models enabled her to connect with many soldiers from similar backgrounds.⁹⁰ A few years after her enlistment, Locke became an officer and went on to make the Army a career.⁹¹

One of the most striking aspects of black women’s service in the Army has been the disparate black leadership representation for women between the officer and enlisted ranks. By 1986, black women made up seventeen percent of female officers and forty-three percent of

⁸⁶ Anonymous interview no. 2 by author, March 6, 2015, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

⁸⁷ Francine Ann Fisher interview with author, October 8, 2012, Francine Ann Fisher, WV0539, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

⁸⁸ Priscilla Locke video transcript.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Brenda Moore, “A Time to Reassess,” 247. However, while black female officers (in all services) are more likely to stay in the military, they are less likely to be promoted. See Susan D. Hosek, Peter Tiemeyer, M. Rebecca Kilburn, Debra A. Strong, Selika Duckworth, Reginald Ray, “Minority and Gender Differences in Career Progression,” *RAND Corporation*, 2001. Accessed from http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1184.html. Harold W. Cheatham, and Susan R Seem, "Occupation Equity: A Black and White Portrait of Women in the United States Military," *Review of Black Political Economy*, 9, no. 1 (1990): 65.

enlisted women.⁹² While the percent of black female officers was high compared to their proportion of civilian population, it was still low compared to black women in the enlisted ranks. As a result, female soldiers had a racial imbalance across ranks, with a predominantly white leadership commanding black enlisted women.⁹³ Part of the reason for the smaller percentage of female officers originally stemmed from the military's requirement for commissioned officers to have a degree. Many blacks lacked a viable path to college until the 1970s and 1980s when the Army opened ROTC programs to women at colleges across the country, especially at historically black colleges where nearly half of all black commissions are earned.⁹⁴ By the 1990s, black female college graduates may have found other career paths more attractive than service in the Army. The relatively low percentage of female black commissioned officers compared to black representation of enlisted women in the Army requires additional research and scholarship that is beyond the scope of this work.

Black women encountered more obstacles in gaining seniority in the officer ranks, but their rise in the enlisted ranks was extensive. By the 1990s, they dominated the senior leadership ranks of female soldiers and their strong presence continues today. In 2013, black women outnumbered white women in the highest three enlisted ranks—sixty-three percent of Sergeant

⁹² Clint Swift, "Increase in Black Women Soldiers," S&S, February 9, 1986. RAND, *Minority and Gender Differences*, 29. This gap has remained largely unchanged, with similar percentages since 1977.

⁹³ Rand, *Minority and Gender Differences*, 2; Brenda Moore, "African American Women in the U.S. Military," *Armed Forces & Society*, Volume 17, No. 3, (1991): 363.

⁹⁴ Moskos did not differentiate between male and female percentages at HBCUs. Moskos, *A Success Story*; Ann McDaniel et al. "The Black Gender Gap in Educational Attainment: Historical Trends and Racial Comparisons," (presentation, The Population Center of the University of Texas, Austin, September 23, 2009), 10, 12-13, <http://www.columbia.edu/~tad61/Race%20Paper%2009232009.pdf> (accessed June 10, 2014).

Majors, fifty-six percent of First Sergeants, and forty-seven percent of all Sergeant First Class.⁹⁵ Many found that the Army's promotion system provided a more equitable chance for attaining leadership roles than jobs in the civilian marketplace.⁹⁶ Reenlisting at higher rates than any other gender, ethnic or racial group, many black women made careers out of the Army.⁹⁷ Susan Moore, who enlisted to escape poverty, achieved the rank of Command Sergeant Major. Moore described overcoming "racism and chauvinism" by not identifying either as black or female, but as a "professional soldier."⁹⁸ She credited the Army's coed training and centralized promotions system with "helping her climb the ladder" through the ranks. Susie McArthur, who enlisted in the WAC era during Vietnam, set as her goal to retire at the top enlisted rank and after twenty-six years. She reached her objective and was grateful for the "stability" Army life provided to her along with the benefits of a pension she had earned for retirement.⁹⁹ The high percentage has created a "black center" to the Army's female leadership in the enlisted ranks.¹⁰⁰ By the end of the century, that even limited numbers of black women commanded and disciplined large numbers of white soldiers in a largely male environment represented radical change in the Army workplace.

⁹⁵ Brenda Moore, "A Time to Reassess," 247.

⁹⁶ Dawn Fallick, "In Desert Storm, Black Women Erased Many Gender and Racial Barriers," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 27, 2002, Newspaper.com (accessed June 4, 2016).

⁹⁷ Brenda Moore, "From Underrepresentation to Overrepresentation," 123.

⁹⁸ Mike Mooney, "Army Overcoming Prejudices," *ES&S* February 1, 1986.

⁹⁹ Susie McArthur interview.

¹⁰⁰ Borrowing Charles Moskos term "black center" as he described the NCO ranks for male black enlisted in the 1980s. The same is true for black women in the enlisted ranks. Charles Moskos, "Success Story: Blacks in the Military," *The Atlantic Monthly*, May 1986.

Hidden Homosexuals Gain Right to Serve

Women's integration and servicewomen's push for equal treatment by "broadening narrow gender roles," along with increasing public acceptance of homosexuality spilled over into the battle for gay rights in the military.¹⁰¹ By the early 1990s, gay and lesbian soldiers, armed with legal support the ACLU, Lambda Legal Defense Fund, Human Rights Campaign, and Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN) won new victories, but suffered some bitter losses. Court battles from the 1970s and 1980s were still awaiting final rulings, Miriam Ben-Shalom and Dusty Pruitt's cases had wound their way to the Supreme Court, and a new Presidential candidate was promising to end the ban on gays in the military.

The momentum from the 1970s had slowed, but homosexual soldiers continued to fight for their right to serve. In 1990, the Supreme Court denied a hearing of Ben-Shalom's case, allowing the federal appeals court decision, which rejected her case for readmission, to stand.¹⁰² Ben-Shalom had a "deep sense of betrayal" about her mistreatment by the military, but also believed the "national [gay rights] organizations" had failed to adequately support her cause.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Diane Helene Miller, *Freedom to Differ: The Shaping of the Gay and Lesbian Struggle for Civil Rights*, (New York: New York University Press, 1998), 2, EBSCO.

¹⁰² Miriam Ben-Shalom, interviewed by Steve Estes, November 11, 2004, "Miriam Ben-Shalom Collection," (AFC/2001/001/43276), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as Ben-Shalom interview), <http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.43276> (accessed on March 31, 2013); *Ben-Shalom v. Marsh*, 703 F.Supp. 1372 (1989); *Ben-Shalom v. Stone*, 881 F.2d 454 (1989); *Ben-Shalom v. Stone*, 494 U.S. 1004 (1990).

¹⁰³ Ben-Shalom interview. Ben-Shalom argued that the gay rights organizations did not really understand the military, nor did they push for homosexual's free speech rights, which she believed was a core part of her case.

She went on to help form a new gay rights organization for veterans.¹⁰⁴ Pruitt, however, won a partial victory. In 1991, her federal appeal requesting reinstatement was sent back down to the district court for reconsideration, but the Army appealed to the Supreme Court.¹⁰⁵ In 1992, the Supreme Court again allowed the federal court's ruling to stand, which meant Pruitt could continue her fight.¹⁰⁶ But her lawyers viewed the lower court's judge as conservative, thus unlikely to readmit her back into the Army, so they delayed action.¹⁰⁷ Meanwhile, in 1992, a decorated Vietnam veteran, mother and Army nurse, Colonel Grethe Cammermeyer, filed suit against the Army on grounds that her discharge for lesbianism was unconstitutional.¹⁰⁸ Due to her exemplary record and status as the highest-ranking military officer discharged for homosexuality, Cammermeyer's case and others that soon followed acted as a lightning rod, reinvigorating gay rights activists.¹⁰⁹ Subsequently, the media began to publicize her case, including a prime-time

¹⁰⁴ Ben-Shalom interview. Her organization, founded in 1990, was initially called Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Veterans of America (GLBVA), but the new name since 1993 is the American Veterans for Equal Rights.

¹⁰⁵ *Pruitt v. Cheney*, 659 F. Supp. 625 (C.D. Cal. 1987); *Pruitt v. Weinberger*, 963 F.2d 1160 (1991).

¹⁰⁶ *Cheney et al. v. Pruitt*, 113 S.Ct. 655 (1992). Carolyn Dusty Pruitt, interviewed by Steve Estes, January 12 2005, "Carolyn Dusty Pruitt Collection," (AFC/2001/001/43222) Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress (hereafter cited as Dusty Pruitt interview), <http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.43222> (accessed on March 31, 2013).

¹⁰⁷ Dusty Pruitt interview.

¹⁰⁸ Cammermeyer was in the Army Nurse Corps between 1963 and 1968 until she became pregnant and had to leave the service. In 1972, once the Army Nurse Corps permitted mothers, she joined the Army Reserves and later the National Guard in Washington State. Cammermeyer only admitted to her lesbianism during a question related to an upgraded security clearance required for her impending promotion to head nurse of the National Guard in Washington.

¹⁰⁹ For detailed feminist analysis on the link between feminism and gay rights as it relates to the case of Cammermeyer, see Miller, *Freedom to Differ*, 83-138.

television movie produced by Barbra Streisand that featured Glen Close portraying Cammermeyer, bringing significant public awareness to the ban on gays in the military.¹¹⁰

Servicemembers continued lawsuits, the media's raised profile of gays in the military, and support from newly elected President Bill Clinton forced the Army and other service branches to modify their policies. But full acceptance of openly gay and lesbian military personnel was vigorously opposed by Congress and most military leaders.¹¹¹ The "Don't Ask, Don't Tell, Don't Pursue" (DADT) policy was the result, a compromise position that permitted homosexuals to serve, but hidden. Homosexuals, according to this statute, were no longer subject to discharge simply because of their sexual orientation. Instead, an individual had to engage in homosexual acts or make statements about their sexuality in order to be discharged.¹¹² President Clinton's goal was to ensure that all commanders treated homosexuals fairly in the workplace by looking at their behavior as they would do for heterosexuals, and not just their status as gays or lesbians. In 1994, Grethe Cammermeyer, who had been discharged in 1992, won reinstatement on appeal. The court ruled her discharge was based on discriminatory policies, and "there must never

¹¹⁰ David Dunlap, "TELEVISION: A Love Story, Not a Courtroom Drama," *New York Times*, February 5, 1995, ProQuest; Howard Rosenberg, "TELEVISION: 'Serving in Silence' Left Too Much Starch In," *Los Angeles Times*, February 6, 1995, ProQuest; Cindy Abel, "Hidden History Helped End 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'" *The Huffington Post*, February 2, 2016, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/cindy-abel/hidden-history-helped-end-dont-ask-dont-tell_b_5607289.html (accessed August 14, 2016).

¹¹¹ Bernard D. Rostker, *Sexual Orientation and U.S. Military Personnel Policy: An Update of RAND's 1993 Study* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2010), 42-44. Rostker's study is a detailed examination of homosexual policies in the military.

¹¹² David F. Burrelli, *Don't Ask, Don't Tell: The Law and Military Policy on Same-Sex Behavior* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2010), 6-10; United States, House, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Military Personnel and Compensation, *Gender Discrimination in the Military*, 102nd cong. 2nd sess., July 29-30, 1992, 1-3, ProQuest Congressional (93-H201-1).

be a ‘military exemption’ from the Constitution.”¹¹³ The court cited the previous rulings in favor of gay and lesbians’ retention in the military, such as Pruitt and Ben-Shalom.¹¹⁴ The Army appealed, but the courts refused to hear their case, allowing Cammermeyer to serve until her retirement in 1997.¹¹⁵ "Barriers are broken one case at a time, one person at a time," she remarked after her victory.¹¹⁶

Few gay activists were content with the new policy, continuing to push for full acceptance of open homosexuals in the military; nevertheless, the change was transformational because it provided new standing, and some limited freedom, for gays and lesbians in the military. Following the DADT policy, Pruitt, who continued to serve in the Army while her case was pending, recognized the landscape had changed, so a dozen years after her initial lawsuit, she settled with the Army and retired as a Major, receiving a full pension.¹¹⁷ However, unit commanders were still responsible for enforcement of the DADT policy and they continued to use their own discretion. For some commanders, sexual orientation alone or “status” as a

¹¹³ In part, the court ruled that the Pruitt case (allowing Pruitt to remain in the service) had precedent by affirming that a homosexual’s status was distinct from their conduct, providing no basis for discharge simply because they stated being gay or lesbian. *Cammermeyer v. Aspin*, 850 F.Supp. 910 (1994).

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* There were many other military cases involved in the struggle that led to Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell. See the Palm Center at <http://archive.palmcenter.org/research/dadt-documents>, and the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell, Don’t Pursue Database,” at Robert Crown Law Library at Stanford Law School accessed at <http://dont.law.stanford.edu/>. The Database contains legislation, litigation, statutes, regulations, and other valuable resources on this topic.

¹¹⁵ Lillian Faderman, *The Gay Revolution: The Story of the Struggle* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2015), 493-94.

¹¹⁶ Linda Matthews, “She Asks, She Tells,” *New York Times*, May 16, 1996, ProQuest.

¹¹⁷ Bettina Boxall, “After Twelve Years, Lesbian Gets Military Promotion,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 27, 1995, ProQuest.

homosexual was enough to trigger an investigation that led to their discharge and so the levels of discharge for homosexuality remained around the same levels that they had been before DADT was implemented.¹¹⁸ But the military argued that the majority of discharges were based on personnel that had “voluntarily elect[ed] to disclose their sexual orientation,” and were not then challenged upon dismissal.¹¹⁹ The battle was not won, but activists inside and outside the military had made gains.

Male and Female Soldiers Learn from Each Other

As women integrated into operational units, female leaders helped teach male leaders how to train female soldiers. In 1976, Claudia Ward a former Wac, developed a reference manual for male leaders in the Airborne Corps called, “Guide for Commanders and Supervisors of Women in the Army” that detailed how to handle cases of pregnancy, discipline, and uniform standards for women.¹²⁰ Many other women worked to help men with female soldiers’ integration into the operational Army. For instance, Cynthia Pritchett taught a male drill instructor to treat female soldiers like his own daughter, and to not let the few cases of women’s anxious tears influence the training.¹²¹ In 1977, Ada Morales was the only female at the Sergeant Major’s Academy with men who had never experienced working with women. Morales recalled many of

¹¹⁸ Burrelli, *Don't Ask, Don't Tell*, 12, 91.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹²⁰ “Command Wacs? Here’s Help for the CO,” *PS&S*, March 21, 1975; *Guide for Commanders and Supervisors of Women*, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, NC, WV-002, box 5, General Printed material, 1970s folder, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

¹²¹ Cynthia Pritchett interview, tape 1.

them came to her for advice about how to deal with women who began to join their units, and she shared as much as possible about her experiences in training and working with female soldiers.¹²²

In return, men often taught women necessary skills required for their jobs. In 1977, Pat Foote became the first female to command a mixed-gender Military Police Group. Foote admitted to her male staff that she did not “know the first thing about being an MP” but would rely on them to help her learn the intricacies of the corps.¹²³ Cynthia Pritchett, who had not gone through any combat training, wanted to become a better soldier. So she offered to tell her coworkers all that she knew about training female soldiers in exchange for lessons on “being an infantryman.”¹²⁴ Patricia Gregory knew little about building roads when she commanded a unit deployed to the Honduras in 1992, so she asked the male soldiers to help improve her engineering skills.¹²⁵ Maria Wayne’s First Sergeant taught her a valuable tip about acquiring new skills from enlisted soldiers without undermining her authority as an officer or by appearing uninformed. He advised Wayne to approach the most talented soldier in the unit with high praise about their expertise on the job, and then request that he perform the desired skill while she carefully observed the task.¹²⁶

¹²² Ada Mercado-Morales interview.

¹²³ Evelyn “Pat” Foote, interview by Beth Carmichael, (hereinafter cited as Pat Foote interview by Carmichael), August 8, 2006, Evelyn “Pat” Foote Papers, WV0360, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

¹²⁴ Cynthia Pritchett interview, tape 1.

¹²⁵ Patricia Gregory interview by author, February 5, 2011, Patricia Tew Gregory Collection, WV0506, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

¹²⁶ Maria Wayne interview.

Female leaders' integration into formerly male led units proved crucial in helping some female soldiers recognize and live up to their own potential. But these female leaders were also very tough on the women they commanded because they wanted to prove to men that women belonged in the Army. Many male commanders undervalued the type of work enlisted women could perform, often assigning them less physical labor than men or neglected pushing them to learn tactical skills necessary for the job. But when female leaders took charge of a unit and recognized that men had not required women to do all the work, they often forced women to perform. For example, Rosemary Cameron complained that some "guys are too easy on women," and will carry their gear or do their work for them.¹²⁷ Cameron described making women "stand on their own two feet," and do the work as soldiers or "get out" of the Army.¹²⁸ In another instance, when Priscilla Walker Locke arrived as commander of an Air Defense unit in Germany in the 1980s, the male leadership did not require women to perform heavy lifting of steel cables. Locke worked with the women to build their skills and strength, and in less than a month, they were performing the same tasks as the men.¹²⁹ Many female leaders worried that any individual woman's weakness or unwillingness to perform the same tasks as men would reflect poorly on all female soldiers. Early in her career at voluntary weapons training, Dee McWilliams took notice of a female officer who had been reluctant to fire the M-16 and pistols and convinced her to complete the training. McWilliams believed that even if one woman refused to participate, every single man would view all women as incompetent at shooting.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Don Tate, "For Staff Sergeant Rosemary Cameron."

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ 1990 House Hearing *Women in the Military*, 86.

¹³⁰ Shannon Huffman Poulson, "She's Got Grit: Audacity and Confidence," A Borderlife.com website,

Female Soldiers Press for Command

The hierarchal culture of the Army facilitated women's leadership; nevertheless, women sometimes still faced discrimination. Many who succeeded in rising through the ranks, at some point had to push back against sexist and racist treatment to achieve their rightful promotions. For instance, in 1989 Cynthia Pritchett arrived in Germany at the senior enlisted rank of E-7(P). The "P" meant she was on the E-8 promotion list and could work as a Sergeant First Class. She complained when her division commander assigned her to an E-4 position, which was the lowest junior enlisted non-commissioned officer rank. The battalion commander asked Pritchett to write down her list of "qualifications" for the position she hoped to fill, something that he would have never demanded from a man. After Pritchett indicated that she would be filing a complaint with the Inspector General of the Army, the battalion commander relented.¹³¹ Even when women had Army orders to work in leadership positions, some commanders gave them "the run-around," arguing that the position was already filled, or that the man in the position was not going to be reassigned.¹³² Recognizing they were not wanted and that interactions with the commander might be contentious, some women simply agreed to change their assignment.¹³³

Many female officers faced barriers accessing leadership positions they were qualified to fill and pushed their superiors and commanders to give them an opportunity. Even after Claudia Geniton complained to the Inspector General (IG), a male colonel refused to appoint Claudia

<http://aborderlife.com/gritprojectblog/Shesgotgritaudacityandconfidencemgdeemcwilliams>
(accessed August 2, 2016).

¹³¹ Cynthia Pritchett interview, tape 3.

¹³² Ades Morales interview.

¹³³ Ibid.

Geniton as a company commander in his unit because “he did not allow any women commanders.”¹³⁴ In another case, Cathy Hampton fought for an assignment in Germany with a Chemical Corps Company, but when she arrived, she learned that the commander had assigned her to a staff position outside of operations.¹³⁵ It took Hampton two years of applying for a job in her field before she gained a role as a commander in the 11th Chemical Company.¹³⁶ In 1988, Captain Linda Bray was “next in line” for the command of an MP Company, but her commanding officer wanted to put her in charge of a non-deployable unit that housed prisoners and place a male officer in charge of the operational position. Bray had to fight back through the chain of command on technical grounds before gaining command of the 988th MP Company with 205 soldiers.¹³⁷

Women Lead Troops at War in Panama

Women’s successful struggle to gain leadership roles exposed the military’s expanding reliance on women in operational units, now even leading men in battle. Captain Bray’s fight to command the MP company had lasting consequences for women in the Army. One year later, Bray’s company received orders to deploy to Panama as part of an increased military presence to depose its dictator, Manuel Noriega.¹³⁸ During the 1989 Panama invasion, female soldiers

¹³⁴ Claudia Butler Geniton interview by author, March 26, 2011, WVHP 0511, Claudia Butler Geniton Papers, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

¹³⁵ Cathy Hampton interview, undated, (hereinafter cited as Cathy Hampton interview), “Cathy Coyle Hampton Collection,” (AFC/2001/001/33085), Veterans History Project, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, <http://memory.loc.gov/diglib/vhp/bib/loc.natlib.afc2001001.33085> (accessed on 3/31/13).

¹³⁶ Cathy Hampton interview.

¹³⁷ Linda Bray interview.

¹³⁸ Ronald H. Cole, *Operation Just Cause: The Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Panama, January 1988-January 1990* (Washington, DC: Joint History Office, 288

“participated fully... firing machine guns, taking enemy prisoners and even leading troops into battle” under the same conditions as male noncombatants.¹³⁹ Michael Ryan, a reporter embedded with an MP company from Fort Bragg noted “that every fourth person—squad leader, machine gunner, private or file clerk—is a woman.”¹⁴⁰ Bray’s company deployed with four platoons that included twelve female enlisted and three female officers out of 123 soldiers.¹⁴¹

About a week after arriving in Panama, Bray learned that her company was assigned to seize one of the twenty-seven key targets in the opening moments of a military operation against Noriega’s forces.¹⁴² Before deploying, Bray made sure all of her troops recertified on their M-16s, practiced tactical maneuvers and received sufficient supplies.¹⁴³ In Panama on the eve of the invasion, Bray ordered two of her platoons, which included four women, to secure the assigned target, a military dog kennel. The other two platoons with some female soldiers supported an

Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1995), 1.
<http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA313465> (accessed on March 3, 2013); “Women in Uniform,” *PS&S*, April 17, 1990.

¹³⁹ Peter Copeland, Scripps Howard News Service, January 1, 1990 in Joan R. Vallance-Whitacre, “An Evaluation of the Media Coverage Concerning the Mission to Secure the Dog Kennel During the Panama Invasion on December 20, 1989,” (master’s thesis, Virginia Commonwealth University, 1990), Appendix E.

¹⁴⁰ Michael Ryan, “A Woman’s Place is at the Front,” *People*, Volume 33, no. 3, January 22, 1990.

¹⁴¹ Twelve of the women in Bray’s company saw combat, the other three were assigned to the forward headquarters. Linda Bray interview; Vallance-Whitacre, 85.

¹⁴² Linda Bray interview.

¹⁴³ Peter Copeland, a reporter in Panama, talked extensively with Bray and other military personnel during his assignment and learned that there were 27 key positions the military planned to attack to begin the offensive, Bray’s company was ultimately involved in three of those attacks. Linda Bray interview; Vallance-Whitacre, 78.

infantry unit.¹⁴⁴ She had scouted the kennel position days earlier and understood there might be enemy resistance and prepared her troops for an assault.¹⁴⁵ As the moment for the attack approached and her troops were preparing to strike the kennel position, Bray's soldiers working with the infantry had come under ambush and contacted her on the radio for guidance. Bray quickly directed them to use the radio frequency for the infantry commander for the support they needed.¹⁴⁶ Meanwhile, during the engagement with the kennel, the enemy began to escape and her troops called for back-up, so Bray rushed to the scene with other members of her company where she not only fired her weapon at the enemy, but also continued to lead her troops during a chaotic and dangerous operation in the middle of the night. Bray redirected lost soldiers, calmed agitated troops, established a secure perimeter and managed prisoners.¹⁴⁷ The company recovered weapons, stockpiles of ammunition and intelligence revealing the kennel had housed special operations forces. In the early morning, a female private captured an enemy soldier at gunpoint, and three dead Panamanians were later found in the woods near the kennel.¹⁴⁸

The Panama conflict revealed that female leadership had become routine in the operational Army. Captain Bray was not the only female leader in her MP company in Panama;

¹⁴⁴ Shawn Lorimer, "988th MPs Spend Christmas in Panama," *The Bayonet*, Jan-Dec 1990, 1; Vallance-Whitacre, 92; "Captain Linda Bray Becomes First Woman to Lead U.S. Soldiers into Combat" NBC Today Show, New York, NY: NBC Universal, 01/10/1990, from NBC Learn, <https://archives.nbclearn.com/portal/site/k-12/browse/?cuecard=50257> (accessed September 5, 2012). For more information on details about the invasion of Panama see: Ronald H. Cole, *Operation Just Cause: The Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Panama, January 1988-January 1990*.

¹⁴⁵ Vallance-Whitacre, 69.

¹⁴⁶ Linda Bray, unpublished memoir, copy in possession of author.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Vallance-Whitacre, 78,

two of Bray's four platoons were led by women and her company faced enemy fire at two other locations.¹⁴⁹ When a reporter later asked one of Bray's male soldiers his opinion about taking orders from a woman, Eric Jansen replied that Bray was the commanding officer and "that's it...she gives an order and you follow it."¹⁵⁰ According to a reporter who interviewed Bray's soldiers, they all expressed pride in their commander.¹⁵¹ One reporter assigned to Lieutenant Kimberley Thompson's unit observed her skill in protecting her troops.¹⁵² Thompson, who had led one of the platoons involved at the dog kennel assault later became responsible for "guarding all entrances to the Cuban Embassy" and repositioned her unit to a more protected spot when their position appeared vulnerable to snipers. According to the reporter, soon after the move, a great burst of enemy fire focused on the unit but Thompson's repositioning had provided them with cover, likely saving many lives.¹⁵³ Thompson performed well under pressure, and "her troops had a lot of confidence in her."¹⁵⁴ The reporter added, "If I were a parent back home...I'd want my son or daughter in the care of an officer like her."¹⁵⁵ When specialist Viola assumed a

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 92-93.

¹⁵⁰ Ring Wilson, "Women Led Troops into Battle: Captain's Platoon Took PDF Target," *Washington Post*, January 3, 1990, ProQuest.

¹⁵¹ Vallance-Whitacre, 79.

¹⁵² Bray unpublished memoir.

¹⁵³ Shawn Lorimer, "988th MPs Spend Christmas in Panama," *The Bayonet*, Jan-Dec 1990, 1; Fawn Vrazo, "Women Warriors: One MP's Action in Panama Has Fueled The Debate Over Sending Females to the Front. Trench Warfare is Ahead in Congress, While The Servicewomen Await Their Orders," *Philadelphia Enquirer*, January 12, 1990, http://articles.philly.com/1990-01-12/news/25908440_1_military-jobs-army-reservist-military-history (accessed January 15, 2016).

¹⁵⁴ Fawn Vrazo, "Women Warriors: One MP's Action in Panama Has Fueled the Debate."

¹⁵⁵ Lt. Shawn Lorimer quoted in Vrazo, "Women Warriors."

squad of eight, she remarked that they listened to her because “you follow whoever is over you, that’s the way it is in the Army.”¹⁵⁶ One soldier told reporters that the men who had questioned how the women would perform before the fighting broke out “don’t have any more doubts.”¹⁵⁷ Another reported that he would “trust [female soldiers] with my life.”¹⁵⁸

Panama was notable not only for females’ leadership, but also for their integration into almost all of the operations of the Army. Over 700 females worked alongside men transporting supplies and troops, driving and flying through enemy fire, capturing and guarding prisoners and shooting back at the enemy.¹⁵⁹ Besides the Military Police Corps, women served as members of infantry divisions and worked in airborne, signal, intelligence, medical, financial and special operations.¹⁶⁰ Female MPs took part in house to house searches for some of Noriega’s supporters and women led some of the searches.¹⁶¹ The Panama engagement was the first time women in the operational army received and returned fire.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁶ Wilson Ring, “Women on the Front Lines,” *Newsday (Long Island NY)*, December 29, 1990, Newspaper.com (accessed June 5, 2013).

¹⁵⁷ “Equality Reaches the Front Lines, Women Under Fire and Shooting Back in Panama Fighting,” *Daily Press (Newport News VA)*, December 29, 1989, Newspaper.com (accessed June 5, 2013).

¹⁵⁸ Ryan, “A Woman’s Place is at the Front.”

¹⁵⁹ There were about 700 female soldiers in Panama. There were also about 400 women from the Air Force, and 35 from the Navy and Marine Corps. Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993), 435. Fred Kaplan, “Panama Combat Revives Army’s Battle of Sexes,” *Boston Globe*, January 6, 1990, ProQuest.

¹⁶⁰ “Army and Air Force Women in Action in Panama,” *Minerva’s Bulletin Board*, III no. 1, March 30, 1990, 3, ProQuest.

¹⁶¹ Ryan, “A Woman’s Place is at the Front.”

¹⁶² In the 1983 Grenada invasion, women only deployed after the hostilities had commenced.

While the Army otherwise prohibited women from entering combat, some female soldiers engaged in gun battles, witnessed and inflicted casualties, and acted to protect civilians and about 150 came under enemy fire.¹⁶³ Some were afraid and unsure of how they would perform in battle, worried they would “freeze” or “run and hide,” yet there were no confirmed reports of women abandoning their duties under fire.¹⁶⁴ While no women were killed or wounded, some of their units suffered male casualties. When Lieutenant Colleen Watson’s MP platoon came under heavy fire while securing an urban intersection, one male soldier was killed and two male soldiers in her unit were injured.¹⁶⁵ Watson described how her unit was “caught in cross-fire” during a gun battle and that her gunner was “real close” to her when he was killed.¹⁶⁶ Private Felicia Featherstone was assigned to a different roadblock when an “armed mob” ran towards them and her unit, but the machine gunner’s weapon jammed as an enemy combatant took aim at them.¹⁶⁷ The Army had trained Featherstone to defend her unit so she fired back and wounded the

¹⁶³ Charles Moskos, “Army Women,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, August 1990, 71.

¹⁶⁴ Ryan, “A Woman’s Place is at the Front.”

¹⁶⁵ Watson was a Military Police officer from the 401st MP in Fort Hood, a different Company from Linda Bray. Caroline Nalepa, “Soldier’s Receive Hero’s Welcome,” *The Fort Hood Sentinel*, January 25, 1990, Newspaper.com (accessed June 4, 2014).

¹⁶⁶ Pamela Ward, “Active Duty at Last, Women Flex Muscle During Panama Invasion,” *Austin American Statesmen*, January 12, 1990, ProQuest.

¹⁶⁷ Charlotte Grimes, “Soldier from U. City Serving in Panama ‘Won’t Forget’ Attack,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, January 13, 1990, Newspaper.com (accessed June 12, 2014).

soldier.¹⁶⁸ In another incident, Featherstone ran into the street under sniper fire and “threw herself on top” of a civilian woman, then pulled her to safety.¹⁶⁹

Women aviators often flew under heavy enemy fire. The commander of two female Army Blackhawk helicopter pilots reported that he was “quite proud” of women’s performance after the soldiers “took a tremendous amount of (enemy) fire” transporting infantry troops to and from “hot” landing zones in the early hours of the war.¹⁷⁰ Warrant Officer Debra Mann’s helicopter was hit so hard that it had to be grounded and repaired before taking off again. Mann remarked that she was “only doing what she was trained” to do in Panama.¹⁷¹ While the helicopters did not have a combat mission, their crew had defensive weapons to counter any enemy fire. Lisa M. Kutschera, a flight platoon officer for an aviation battalion, described flying over the combat area with her door gunner’s weapons “locked and loaded” as she transported infantry troops into the “hot landing zones.”¹⁷² Kutschera recalled seeing the enemy’s tracer fire

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. There are some media reports that Featherstone shot the man at a great distance, 100-200 yards. John Gaps, “New Soldier Joins Invasion on Panama,” Photostory, Detroit Free Press, January 11, 1990, p. 68, Newspaper.com (accessed June 12, 2014).

¹⁶⁹ Vallance-Whitacre, 92.

¹⁷⁰ “Female Army Pilots Confirm Coming Under Fire in Panama,” *PS&S*, February 10, 1990.

¹⁷¹ “Panama Mission Shows Depth of Women in Combat,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 9, 1990, Newspaper.com (accessed June 17, 2014).

¹⁷² 1LT Lisa Kutschera’s interview with Major Robert K. Wright Jr., January 8, 1990, Fort Kobbe, Panama, “First Lieutenant Lisa Kutschera, Platoon Leader, 3d Platoon, Company A, 3d Battalion, 123d Aviation,” JCIT001, Operation Just Cause, Department of the Army, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, NC, (hereafter cited as Lisa Kutschera interview) <http://www.history.army.mil/html/documents/Panama/interviews/JC001.html> (accessed on 3/31/13).

lighting up the sky as she approached the drop off areas.¹⁷³ The Army awarded Kutschera and Mann the Air Medal with a decoration of valor for their “performance under fire.”¹⁷⁴

Except for isolated incidents, male commanders deployed their female troops with their units to the battlefield, yet not all operations ran smoothly during the invasion. There was some resistance to women’s participation and resentment of the media’s laudatory coverage of them. One commander in the 82nd Airborne, the same unit that had sent female MPs back from Grenada in 1983, refused to deploy one of his female intelligence analysts to Panama; instead he sent a male soldier with less experience.¹⁷⁵ The female soldier, Sergeant Rhonda Maskus, a Panamanian expert deeply engaged in planning for the military action filed a discrimination report against the Army for not articulating a “clear policy” for women’s deployments.¹⁷⁶ Maskus argued that she did not “join the Army to be a secretary” and wanted to make sure that in the future all women would be deployed with their units to do the job they were “trained to do.”¹⁷⁷ Some men were not sure about women’s expanded roles and one action involving women drivers came under intense media scrutiny. One soldier, apparently disgruntled about the attention women had received in Panama, tipped off reporters on a story about two female soldiers that had “refused orders” to go

¹⁷³ Lisa Kutschera interview.

¹⁷⁴ Caryl Newberry, another helicopter pilot performed supply missions under fire and received the Air Medal without the valor designation. Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Molly Moore, “Sex Discrimination Alleged in Invasion; Female Sergeant Charges Panama Orders Favored Less-Qualified Men,” *Washington Post*, January 10, 1990, ProQuest; “Army Linguist Complains She Belonged on Invasion Team,” *ES&S*, January 16, 1990.

¹⁷⁶ Molly Moore, “Sex Discrimination Alleged in Invasion.”

¹⁷⁷ “Army linguist Complains She Belonged on Invasion Team”; “Linda Led Her Troops into Battle...,” *Herald Sun (Melbourne, Australia)*, January 12, 1990, ProQuest.

on a scheduled mission.¹⁷⁸ Initially reports stated that the women had refused to drive under hostile fire, but it turned out that the women were fatigued after driving between nine and sixteen hours under sniper fire during the night of the initial assault.¹⁷⁹

The experiences of Bray and other female soldiers in Panama revealed that the battlefield was becoming a normal place for female soldiers. By the late 1980s, the Army had trained women in offensive battle tactics, assigned them to previously closed operational units and promoted them to key leadership positions, so they were prepared when they went to war. Women had become integral to and part of combat operations, with some assuming leadership roles. An Army spokesman admitted that, “we have a combat exclusion policy, but that doesn’t mean women are excluded from combat, they are going to face hostile fire and they are prepared for it.”¹⁸⁰ While some argued that the work of servicewomen did not amount to “combat” because they were not in the combat arms fields such as infantry, few claimed that they did not participate in battle. Members of Congress, the President, and the Secretary of Defense all came out in support of the roles that women played during the Panama conflict. President George Bush praised servicewomen’s performance in “combat situations.”¹⁸¹ Senator John Warren (R-VA) argued that women “had performed with extraordinary professional skills.”¹⁸² Panama was a

¹⁷⁸ Vallance-Whitacre, 127.

¹⁷⁹ Molly Moore, “Female Drivers Did Not Disobey Orders,” *Washington Post*, January 23, 1990, ProQuest.

¹⁸⁰ Paige Eversole quoted in “Women Take Combat Roles in Panama,” *ES&S*, December 30, 1989.

¹⁸¹ “The Noriega Case: Statement; Transcript of Bush News Conference on Noriega and Panama,” *New York Times*, January 6, 1990, ProQuest.

¹⁸² “Bush Praises Servicewomen for ‘Heroic’ Panama Combat,” *S&S*, January 6, 1990, 4.

“turning point” for the debate over women’s roles.¹⁸³ No one could now argue for the exclusion of women from the battlefield. The fight over women’s roles in the Army moved almost exclusively to whether or not they should be assigned in combat arms positions.

Army Resistance to Expanding Roles

After Panama, many began to ask whether the military should remove all combat restrictions for women, alarming Army leaders.¹⁸⁴ While the Army leadership had been proud to publicize women’s integration, they were not prepared for such a passionate and forceful push to end combat restrictions. Two months before the Panama invasion, DACOWITS requested the Department of Army to open all jobs for female soldiers during a four-year trial period.¹⁸⁵ After the invasion, Representative Patricia Schroeder (D-CO) cited the Bray incident as proof that women were already “in combat,” and pressed Congress to adopt the DACOWITS recommendations because the current policy was simply “fiction.”¹⁸⁶ Senior female military leaders got involved. General Pat Foote, argued that Army women were “sick and tired of being jerked around” by the combat job restrictions.¹⁸⁷ As the commanding general of Fort Belvoir in

¹⁸³ Marlene Cimon, “Women in Combat: Panama Stirs Debate,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 11, 1990, ProQuest.

¹⁸⁴ One scholar’s research revealed that over 50 editorials discussed Captain Bray’s role in the weeks following the first publication of her actions. Additionally, over forty newspaper articles and she was interviewed on television eight different times in a short period of time. Her role as the first woman in combat continues to generate media coverage when the topic turns to women in combat. Vallance-Whitacre, 21.

¹⁸⁵ DACOWITS Report, Fall 1989, <http://dacowits.defense.gov/Reports-Meetings/1989-Fall/> (accessed on June 4, 2013); Vallance-Whitacre, 111.

¹⁸⁶ Nolan Walters, “Combat for Army Women is Urged,” *The Akron Beacon Journal*, November 8, 1989, Newspaper.com (accessed March 12, 2013).

¹⁸⁷ Pat Foote Letter to General Carl E. Vuono, Army Chief of Staff, (undated, estimated December 1989), Evelyn P. Foote, MS517, box 19, Senior Officer Correspondence Folder, Wake Forest University, ZSR library, Wake Forest, NC.

1989, she held a top tier position in the Army and used her status to advocate for the removal of restrictions. In a letter to the Army's Chief of Staff, Foote asserted that, "if Army men were subject to the same type of discrimination, I wonder how many of them would make the Army their career?"¹⁸⁸

Army leaders quickly moved to push back against attempts to remove the combat restrictions.¹⁸⁹ Days after the initial news reports of women's accomplishments, the Department of Defense and Army leadership took steps to "tone down" the issue of women in combat in Panama.¹⁹⁰ A senior level officer at the Pentagon spoke with reporter John Broder and asked him to investigate the accuracy of the Bray story because something about it seemed "fishy."¹⁹¹ Next, a General at the Pentagon claimed that Bray had not been at the kennel at the moment of the attack, inferring that she did not actually lead troops in combat.¹⁹² Later Broder admitted that the Army "didn't want this one event to trigger a radical culture change...as well as an avalanche of legislation."¹⁹³ Calling the original account "grossly exaggerated," Broder wrote a piece in the

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ The Army's push back against any possible momentum gathering to remove restrictions is detailed in several documents. For interviews with key players involved in this issue, see Joan R. Vallance-Whitacre. For a summary of the steps taken by the Army to undermine the initial story, see chapter two, "Panama, The Press and Army Politics," in Linda Bird Francke, *Ground Zero: The Gender Wars in the Military* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997).

¹⁹⁰ Colonel Bill Mulvey quoted in Vallance-Whitacre, 134.

¹⁹¹ Vallance-Whitacre, 121.

¹⁹² Ibid., 67-69.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 122.

Los Angeles Times inferring that Bray had been untruthful and noted that she was under investigation by the Army.¹⁹⁴

The Army's reframing of Linda Bray's participation in Panama extended into Congressional hearings and newspaper op-eds in a deliberate attempt to sway public opinion away from the idea that women had been "in combat." Army leaders abruptly forbade female officers in Panama to talk with reporters.¹⁹⁵ Even though many male Army leaders privately agreed that Bray had led her troops and some argued that she had been in combat, they did not want the public to think that women were leading an infantry style charge against the enemy.¹⁹⁶ In the Army's view, having female soldiers defending themselves was fine, but any language that implied offensive ground combat action was dismissed.¹⁹⁷ In a Congressional hearing held three months after Panama, General Allen Ono publicly rejected the narrative that Bray led a combat mission; instead Ono testified that the hostilities were "incidental" and "not their main mission."¹⁹⁸ According to the head of media relations for the Army, "if we could keep it from being a women in combat story....then there really wasn't much of a story."¹⁹⁹

Despite, or perhaps more accurately, because of the media notoriety and public recognition of her actions, the Army privately took steps that undermined Bray's military service.

¹⁹⁴ John Broder, "Female's War Exploits Overblown, Army Says," *Los Angeles Times*, January 9, 1990, ProQuest.

¹⁹⁵ "Female Army Officers in Panama ordered Not to Talk to the Press," *ES&S*, January 9, 1990.

¹⁹⁶ Colonel Bill Mulvey quoted in Vallance-Whitacre, 144.

¹⁹⁷ General Ono quoted in 1990 House Hearing *Women in the Military*, 24.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ Vallance-Whitacre, 135.

Enduring what Bray termed “a category five media frenzy” ultimately damaged her career.²⁰⁰

Months later, the Army investigated Bray for alleged destruction of military property and cruelty to the dogs in the kennel. Next, her commander handed Bray a negative officer evaluation report (OER) for her performance, which effectively made her un-promotable.²⁰¹ Although the Army cleared her of all charges, Bray noted that “it became pretty rough to continue.”²⁰² In 1991, even though a senior male officer in her battalion encouraged her to appeal the unfair OER report, Bray resigned her commission when the Army gave her a medical discharge.²⁰³

Bray’s performance and leadership along with those of many other female soldiers during the Panama invasion motivated DACOWITS, NOW, female soldiers and legislators to press the Army and Pentagon to remove combat restrictions on jobs for women during a four-year test

²⁰⁰ Linda Bray quoted from “Linda Bray Profile,” MAKERS: The Largest Video Collection of Women’s Stories, <http://www.makers.com/linda-bray> (accessed June 14, 2014).

²⁰¹ The issue of how the media, Army and Department of Defense undermined and minimized Bray’s story is beyond the scope of this work, but some of the major issues were with how long the battle lasted, whether or not enemy were killed, and whether or not she was present when the battle occurred. Phillip Shabecoff, “The U.S. and Panama: Combat; Report of Women’s Role is Called into Question,” *New York Times*, January 8, 1990. Later, Bray was investigated and absolved of unnecessarily killing some of the dogs at the kennel. Bray interview with author; “Woman Hero in Panama is Now Bitter,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, June 30, 1991, Newspaper.com (accessed June 17, 2014). For specific and detailed analysis on this matter, see Ingrid J. Ruffin, “Woman, Warrior: The Story of Linda Bray and an Analysis of Female War Veterans in the American Media,” (master’s thesis, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 2009) and Joan R. Vallance-Whitacre, “An Evaluation of the Media Coverage Concerning the Mission to Secure the Dog Kennel During the Panama Invasion on December 20, 1989,” (Master’s Thesis, Virginia Commonwealth University, 1990).

²⁰² Linda Bray interview.

²⁰³ In retrospect, Bray noted that she was simply physically and mentally exhausted from the scrutiny and pressure, but had some regrets that she failed to fight back on the inaccurate evaluation. She wanted to remain in the Army. Bray’s medical discharged stemmed from serious damage done to her hips while on long marches carrying heavy rucksacks. Often unreported was that six months before her deployment to Panama, Bray had a double hip replacement surgery. Linda Bray interview.

period. During a House hearing shortly after Panama, Pat Schroeder testified that the decades long evaluation of servicewomen's work "in terms of their proximity to the battlefield" revealed that guerilla attacks and modern missiles made location irrelevant, all soldiers were subject to enemy attack.²⁰⁴ She noted that a CBS/*New York Times* poll taken after Panama revealed that seventy-two percent of the public supported the idea of women in combat.²⁰⁵ But Phyllis Schlafly, the champion of the STOP ERA movement who warned that equality meant women in combat, repeated the Army's mix of misleading and false talking points and began a campaign to push back against efforts to repeal combat exclusions.²⁰⁶ Schlafly had a new ally, Elaine Donnelly, a conservative former member of DACOWITS who was against women in non-traditional military roles.²⁰⁷ Donnelly had been active in the STOP ERA campaign and served on Schlafly's Eagle Forum. In 1990, Donnelly testified in Congress that Schroeder's bill would only "satisfy feminist ideologist goals," but hurt national security.²⁰⁸ The push back against establishing a four-year trial

²⁰⁴ 1990 House Hearing, *Women in the Military*, 3, 6.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 4; Francke, 71.

²⁰⁶ Shawn Vrazo, "Should She Fight? Front Lines Off-Limits to Women," *Detroit Free Press*, January 21, 1990, Newspaper.com (accessed June 13, 2014); Phyllis Schlafly, letter to editor, "Women Get the Boot on Combat Issue," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, January 20, 1990, Newspaper.com (accessed June 15, 2014).

²⁰⁷ President Reagan appointed Donnelly to DACOWITS 1984-86. President George H.W. Bush selected her as a member of the 1992 Presidential Commission on Women in the Military in the wake of the Persian Gulf War. Donnelly formed the Center for Military Readiness in 1993 in opposition to Gays in the Military and became one of the most well-known opponents of any expansion of women's roles in the military. "About Elaine Donnelly," Center for Military Readiness, <https://www.cmrlink.org/about-elaine-donnelly> (accessed March 12, 2013).

²⁰⁸ Elaine Donnelly written statement for House, Committee on Armed Services "Women in the Military, Extension of Remarks," September 11, 1990 to be included with 1990 House Hearing *Women in the Military*.

for women in combat was successful, Representative Schroeder's proposal failed to make it out of her committee after the chair, Representative Beverly B. Byron, (D-MD) opposed the plan.²⁰⁹

Persian Gulf War

Less than a year after Panama, the Department of Defense deployed over forty thousand servicewomen to the Persian Gulf War, intensifying the debate over the combat exclusions and leading to extensive reforms that opened some combat positions to women. In the summer of 1990, the President of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, invaded Kuwait over a border dispute; in response, President George H.W. Bush sent a half million troops to the region to deter Hussein from entering Saudi Arabia.²¹⁰ Within months, Bush formed a coalition of countries to push the Iraqis out of Kuwait. Female soldiers comprised about nine percent or 26,000 thousand of Army personnel deployed for the war, and they worked as MPs and ferried troops as they had in Panama, but there were also significant differences.²¹¹ The deployment reflected many of the ways that women's integration into operational units had transformed the Army.²¹² For the first

²⁰⁹ Dana Priest, "Women's Roles.,"; Michael F. Noone Jr., "Women in Combat: Changing the Rules," *Naval Law Review*, 39 (1990): 187-195.

²¹⁰ United States, *Women in the Military Deployment in the Persian Gulf War: Report to the Secretary of Defense* (hereafter cited as *1993 Report on Women in Persian Gulf War*) (Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office, 1993), 2, <http://archive.gao.gov/t2pbat5/149552.pdf> (accessed March 12, 2013).

²¹¹ United States, Senate, Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Manpower and Personnel, *Department of Defense Authorization for Appropriations for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993. . . on S. 1507*, (hereafter cited as *1991 Senate DOD Appropriations*) 102nd Cong., 1st sess., April 17, 24, May 15, Jun. 5, 18, 1991, p. 25, ProQuest Congressional (91-S201-24).

²¹² 1991 *Utilization of Women in Desert Storm*, 1.

time, significant numbers of women deployed to war and worked in “every facet of combat support,” but some women were wounded, others were killed and two were taken prisoner.²¹³

Women’s roles and participation during the Persian Gulf War reflected the success of female soldiers and their allies who had pressed, since the 1960s, for inclusion in the operational Army by insisting its leadership provide them with the same training, education, promotions and access to jobs as male noncombatants. The total number of female soldiers deployed was nearly twice the entire membership of the Women’s Army Corps in 1972.²¹⁴ During Vietnam, Wacs had gone to war without weapons wearing skirts and heels, but the Army sent female soldiers to the Gulf War with the same training and equipment as male noncombatants. Before 1975, pregnant women and mothers were discharged from the service, but in 1991, the Army sent thousands of mothers to war. Many female officers in Iraq were graduates of West Point Military Academy and ROTC colleges, only opened to women since the 1970s.²¹⁵ Because DACOWITS and others pushed for decades to expand women’s roles, female soldiers worked in hundreds of different jobs in combat support and combat service support units during their deployment.²¹⁶ While no women led troops in an assault on a fixed target, female soldiers made up twenty-five percent of the combat support units involved in the attack and traveled all over the battlefield, many behind

²¹³ Dana Priest, “War in the Gulf: War Put Women in Combat Roles,” *PS&S*, March 4, 1991.

²¹⁴ In 1972, the Women’s Army Corps totaled 13,269 women. Morden, 410.

²¹⁵ West Point Graduates Kimberly Field and Gillian Boice earned the Bronze Star in the war for their actions.

²¹⁶ United States, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War: Final Report to Congress* (Washington, DC: Dept. of Defense, 1992), 740.

enemy lines.²¹⁷ In some medical units near the fighting, women were half of the troops, something not possible when the Army put caps on the percentage of women in all units.²¹⁸ Affirmative action programs and black women's motivation to improve their status in life meant that forty-eight percent of women who deployed to the gulf were minorities and many female soldiers were single parents.²¹⁹

Women's work in combat support units during the war revealed how significantly female soldiers' roles had changed since the end of the draft, and how wide-ranging their integration had become for the operational Army. One officer described women's roles during the Gulf War as "doing damn near every job conceivable, except combat missions."²²⁰ The official report on women's participation revealed women working as "administrators, medical personnel, air traffic controllers, logisticians, engineer equipment mechanics, ammunition technicians, ordnance specialists, drivers, communicators, radio operators, law enforcement specialists and military

²¹⁷ Lieutenant Colonel Robert L. Maginnis, "The Future of Women in the Army," *Military Review* 72, no. 7 (July 1992): 21. There were no reports of female soldiers firing at the enemy, but five female Marines engaged the Iraqi forces in a firefight during the war. 1992 *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, 741; 1991 *Utilization of Women in Desert Storm*, Attachment 1.

²¹⁸ Molly Moore, "Women Face Combat Risk; Female GIs Close to Likely Battle Zones," *Washington Post*, September 11, 1990, Lexis Nexis.

²¹⁹ There were 16,104 single parents deployed to the war---no figures on the breakdown between men and women. Army figures on the number of single parents in the military at the time were 45,650 parents, of which 31,850 were men and 13,800 were women. Army parents married to other military were 51,849. The percentage of black women as a percentage of the women in the Army was forty-nine. 1991 Senate *DOD Appropriations*, 25; Congressional Daily Record, "Honoring Women Who Served in the Gulf War," 137th Congressional Record H 2002, Session 102-1, Volume 137, No. 149, pg. H2002, March 21, 1991, ProQuest Congressional.

²²⁰ Susan Baer, "Women at the Front War in the Gulf: Even in Support Roles, Females in the Gulf Could Still See Action," *Baltimore Sun*, February 25, 1991, p. 1D, ProQuest.

police.”²²¹ Many women held positions of leadership commanding platoons, companies, battalions and brigade level combat support and combat service support units.²²² Captain Valerie Rose, an intelligence officer, provided General Norman Schwarzkopf, the head of the operation, with daily briefings about Iraqi forces.²²³ These roles were unprecedented. The loophole in the Army’s 1983 policy allowing women into forward support battalions put many female soldiers close to the fighting in the air and on the ground in enemy territory for supplies, repairs and medical. Some women commanded air defense batteries that fired missiles, others led MP and transportation companies as part of forward support battalions that moved into enemy territory through mine laden fields.²²⁴ Major Marie Rossi led her aviation unit, which included men and women, in a helicopter combat assault at the start of the ground war into Iraq.²²⁵

Rank and file enlisted female soldiers worked in positions they had occupied for nearly two decades as they repaired tanks, drove trucks, dug bunkers, guarded prisoners and detonated bombs, but their performance in a “real world military operation” showed how normalized their presence had become.²²⁶ Many stood guard, and some flew supplies and troops through anti-

²²¹ 1991 *Utilization of Women in Desert Storm*, 2.

²²² United States and Robert T. Herres, *The Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces: Report to the President* (hereafter cited as Herres, 1992 *Presidential Commission*), November 15, 1992 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1992), 6.

²²³ Amy Eskind, “Women Soldiers Prisoners of Army Discrimination,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 28, 1991, pp. M2, M6, ProQuest.

²²⁴ Herres, 1992 *Presidential Commission*, 94.

²²⁵ Marie Elaine, “N.J. Pilot 1st Woman in Combat?” *Courier-Post* (Camden NJ), February 26, 1991, p. 4, Newspaper.com (accessed June 4, 2013); Steve Chambers, “Oradell Mourns Woman Killed in Copter Crash, *Ashbury Park (NJ) Press*, March 5, 1991, p. A6, Newspaper.com (accessed June 4, 2013).

²²⁶ 1991 *Utilization of Women in Desert Storm*, 2.

aircraft fire. Women flew in support of gathering military intelligence and conducted medical evacuations.²²⁷ Others working with mobile missiles in an infantry unit “were as close to the front as anybody.”²²⁸ They worked under the same conditions as the men in their units, usually “in the middle of nowhere,” with scuds flying overhead and listening to the artillery rounds headed towards the enemy.²²⁹ Women endured “generally austere and often harsh,” living and working conditions in sweltering heat, co-ed tents with virtually no privacy.²³⁰ Some women in the desert slept in trucks.²³¹ But most women lived the same as they had trained, sleeping in mixed gender tents and using the same showers and bathrooms as men. Carol Barkalow “lived in a tent with six men and one other woman, and none of us had any problem with this arrangement.”²³²

Women operated in close proximity to battles, but the women proved capable of handling the stress. Many female soldiers were “consistently exposed to combat risk” in the theater of war and twenty-two percent considered themselves in combat roles.²³³ They received the same “imminent danger pay” as men in their units.²³⁴ Many spent months living in the desert in

²²⁷ 1993 House Hearing, *Women in Combat*, 21.

²²⁸ Herres, *1992 Presidential Commission*, 94.

²²⁹ Cathy Hampton interview.

²³⁰ Laura B. Randolph, “The Untold Story of Black Women in the Gulf War,” *Ebony*, Volume 46:11, September 1991, p. 106; 1993 *Report on Women in Persian Gulf War*, 29.

²³¹ Cathy Hampton interview.

²³² Carol Barkalow, “Give Women a Place in Combat,” *St. Petersburg Times*, August 4, 1991, Newspaper.com (accessed June 5, 2014); Sgt. Charles S. May, letter to editor, “Female Soldiers Saluted,” *ES&S*, August 26, 1991, p. 12.

²³³ Maginnis, “The Future of Women in the Army,” 21; Herres, *1992 Presidential Commission*, p. C-50.

²³⁴ Dana Priest, “Women’s Roles Expanded in War,” *ES&S*, March 4, 1991, p. 5.

preparation for the offensive, and moved with their units as they crossed into Iraq under enemy fire.²³⁵ Four female cooks lived with their armored unit, at times making meals under chemical alerts wearing gas masks.²³⁶ Others flew as crewmembers over Iraq gathering intelligence on surveillance missions.²³⁷ One female MP in a unit escorting supply convoys through enemy territory found herself in a ditch surrounded by anti-tank mines.²³⁸ In some cases, women travelled in front of combat units that fired missiles toward the enemy over their heads.²³⁹ Colleen McAleer was providing communications for an armor unit when she witnessed a tank battle from a few hundred yards distance.²⁴⁰ A platoon leader, McAleer realized the eight trucks in her unit were too close to the target when air strikes were called in, so she quickly ordered the unit to move away less than a minute before the fighters attacked.²⁴¹ Traveling with an armored unit, Tangela Moore saw the “missiles...the dead men...the flares...the POWs.”²⁴² Cynthia Mosley, who commanded a support battalion providing combat troops with fuel, ammunition and water witnessed dead bodies scattered over the battlefield.²⁴³

²³⁵ Jon Nordheimer, “Women’s Roles in Combat: The War Resumes,” *New York Times*, May 26, 1991. ProQuest.

²³⁶ Dawn Fallick, “In Desert Storm, Black Women Erased Many Gender and Racial Barriers,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, February 27, 2002, Newspaper.com (accessed June 12, 2014).

²³⁷ Effie Bathen, “In the Gulf,” *ES&S*, March 6, 1991.

²³⁸ Randolph, “The Untold Story of Black Women in the Gulf War,” 102.

²³⁹ Cheryl McElroy, “Be Our Guest: Women Have Riddled Sexist Bonding Farce Throughout War History,” *ES&S*, August 23, 1992.

²⁴⁰ “Women in Combat: The Debate Goes on,” *ES&S*, August 28, 1991, p. 14.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ Randolph, “The Untold Story of Black Women in the Gulf War,” 101.

As had historically been the case, not all men supported women's inclusion in the war. Wartime conditions did not stop sexism, many women reported harassment or disparate treatment. Ann Dunwoody's Airborne unit commander ordered her to stay behind to manage the unit's soldiers being sent to the Gulf instead of working in her regular role that would have meant her deployment. Dunwoody did her job as ordered but when it was finished, she signed up for an open position to deploy and took herself to the warzone.²⁴⁴ The commander tried to send her back, but his superior intervened and placed her on a special assignment to help plan the airborne missions.²⁴⁵ The commander at a prisoner compound center in Saudi Arabia prohibited female MPs from guarding the POWs due to concerns that Muslim men would react negatively to women's authority.²⁴⁶ When three women in a military intelligence support battalion encountered an artillery unit, the men asked "what they were doing there" arguing that that as females, they should be "sent back" behind the lines.²⁴⁷

Harassment remained common. One study conducted after the war noted a great deal of verbal abuse and offensive language targeted at women.²⁴⁸ While less than sixteen women filed sexual harassment charges during the war, the numbers vastly underestimated the extent of the

²⁴⁴ Dunwoody, 98-99.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 100. According to Dunwoody, enroute to the Gulf, the Army had selected her for an early promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, so her new rank and job as a Quartermaster and "track record" at work insulated her from being sent back.

²⁴⁶ Eskind, "Women Soldiers Prisoners of Army Discrimination."

²⁴⁷ "Women in Combat, The Debate Goes On."

²⁴⁸ 1993 *Report on Women in Persian Gulf War*.

problem.²⁴⁹ Most women reported that their complaints would not be taken seriously. In 1992, a year after the Gulf War ended, a group of consultants sent to evaluate the effectiveness of the Army's Equal Opportunity Program determined that many charges of sexual harassment in the European Theater were merely "administrative problems" rather than actual mistreatment or abuse.²⁵⁰

The pervasiveness of sexual assaults revealed that Army leadership had not developed substantive or effective policies. In the immediate aftermath of the war, the Army "investigated eleven allegations of indecent assaults, seven cases of sodomy, two attempted rapes and one of adultery involving female personnel."²⁵¹ But many women did not report their rapes until months after their return from the war, and some did not report them for years or never did so at all. A 1992 Army report put the number of reported sexual assault cases at twenty-four. The majority of perpetrators in these cases involved higher ranking enlisted men, and they assaulted women in isolated locations, such as in the shower, on guard duty or in their quarters. One was raped at knifepoint.²⁵² Another female soldier who reported her rape was initially reprimanded by her command.²⁵³ Testifying before Congress, one female soldier recounted being raped at her first

²⁴⁹ Jeff Stein, "Heterosexuals, Not Gays, Posed Problem for Army in Gulf War," *ES&S*, November 25, 1992. The context of the reports about sexual harassment and sexual assault during the Gulf War coincided with numerous other issues in the news that may have forced the Army to finally take some action. For example, reports about the mistreatment of women in the Navy Tailhook scandal, the Clarence Thomas hearings, and news that Senator Packwood of Oregon was forced to resign after discovery that he had sexually harassed the women working for him.

²⁵⁰ Ray Rowden, "Army's Civil Rights Complaints caused by Red Tape, Panel Says," *ES&S*, February, 1992.

²⁵¹ Jon Nordheimer, "Women's Roles in Combat,"

²⁵² John Lancaster, "24 Women Assaulted on Gulf Duty," *Washington Post*, July 21, 1992.

²⁵³ "Crimes," *ES&S*, July 19, 1992.

duty assignment, then later harassed and abused in Saudi Arabia without any serious action by her commander. Instead, she was targeted for more abuse and threatened with disciplinary action before being pushed out of the Army.²⁵⁴ The Veterans Administration discovered from a survey of Gulf War veterans that eight percent of women reported “attempted or completed” assaults during their deployment.²⁵⁵

Still, many women reported feeling empowered by participating in the war and felt pride in their contribution as soldiers. They “pulled their own weight” and proved they could handle the stress.²⁵⁶ Reflecting on being the first woman leader to direct the destruction an enemy missile, Phoebe Jeter felt the experience gave her confidence to “do anything I want to do.”²⁵⁷ Another female soldier recognized the military “couldn’t have done it without us.”²⁵⁸ Some thought they brought “new perspective to solving problems” in the Army, and believed their success helped advance opportunities for civilian women.²⁵⁹

The experiences of sharing the hardships of war helped many men and women in noncombatant units recognize their roles as teammates, gaining mutual trust and respect for each

²⁵⁴ *Testimony on Sexual Assaults in the Military: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services*, United States Senate, 113 Congress, 1st Sess., March 13, 2013, <http://purl.fdlp.gov/GPO/gpo50576> (accessed March 5, 2013).

²⁵⁵ Jane Hoppen, “Women in the Military, Who’s Got your Back?” *Off Our Backs* 36, no. 2 (2006): 14-16.

²⁵⁶ 1992 *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War*, 743; Amy Eskin, “A Post-Gulf War Memorial Day, 1991 Arms and the Woman,” *Washington Post*, May 26, 1991.

²⁵⁷ Randolph, “The Untold Story of Black Women in the Gulf War,” 101.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 107.

²⁵⁹ “Viewpoint,” *Essayons “Let Us Try,”* Volume 5, No. 11, Section A, P. 2, March 20, 1992.

other as soldiers. Some soldiers experienced a “new kind of relationship between men and women” as they worked together through hardships and rugged conditions, treating each other with professionalism.²⁶⁰ Army surveys after the war reporting that ninety-six percent of male and female soldiers thought their unit’s performance was excellent, suggesting that women’s integration into operational units had been successful.²⁶¹ Women who never expected to be at war noted that the Army had prepared them well. Kelly McCormick viewed her work as part of a team, arguing that as her unit moved into Iraq, “it never crossed my mind that I shouldn’t be there or whether I was safe or not.”²⁶² Her commander agreed, “they weren’t women, they were soldiers” performing their jobs.²⁶³ One male First Sergeant called on men to “wake up” and recognize that women worked well and were in the Army to stay.²⁶⁴

Even some men who worked in combat arms fields wrote supportive letters to the editor of the *Stars and Stripes* about their experience working with women. Many female soldiers in forward support battalions traveled closely with some combat units to deliver supplies and experienced the same dangerous environment with real “bullets and bombs.”²⁶⁵ One combat arms soldier noted that women had earned his respect because they had “stood by him” during the war,

²⁶⁰ Carol Barkalow quoted in Ellen Goodman, “Women and War, Time Law Caught Up with Fact,” *The Baltimore Sun*, April 23, 1991, p. 7A, ProQuest; Edgar A. Still, “It’s Not a Man’s World Anymore,” *Essayons “Let Us Try”*, Public Affairs Office, Lebanon Publishing Company, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, Volume 5, No. 11, Section A, P. 2, March 20, 1992.

²⁶¹ Herres, *1992 Presidential Commission*, C-51.

²⁶² John Miller, “U.S. Women Earned Respect in Desert Gulf War,” *PS&S*, April 3, 1991.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁴ 1st Sergeant Alton Medcalf, letter to editor, “‘Priorities’ Letter Prompts Responses,” *ES&S*, October 29, 1990.

²⁶⁵ Charles S. May, letter to editor, “Female Soldiers Saluted.”

and he hoped that he had earned theirs as well.²⁶⁶ A platoon sergeant in an armored unit thought that “women were well qualified” and could handle being part of his tank team.²⁶⁷ Another believed that so long as women could do the job with the same standards as men, they should be allowed in combat related positions.²⁶⁸ An Airborne soldier felt that women were even capable of joining the Rangers, remarking that “if a woman can prove to me that she can lead men in combat, I would follow.”²⁶⁹ According to LTC Robert McGinnis, women’s performance during the war meant they had “earned the right to be equal partners in the Army.”²⁷⁰ In his view, the Army should allow women access to every military occupation, including the combat arms.²⁷¹

Yet pregnancy often created discord. Because the Army would not deploy pregnant women, many male and some female soldiers thought that women tried to get out of war duty by getting pregnant despite a military study after the war that disputed this claim.²⁷² One physician, noted that a “minority” of women at his remote location came in for pregnancy tests just before the ground war was scheduled to begin.²⁷³ Some men resented that women could use pregnancy as a means to officially get out of deployment, calling it “a privilege” not available for men.²⁷⁴

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ ‘Yes, No, Maybe, Say Male Warriors,’ *ES&S*, August 2, 1991.

²⁶⁸ Spec. Garrett C. Hart, letter to editor, “Where’s the Problem,” *ES&S*, June 21, 1991.

²⁶⁹ PFC J. R Wurts, letter to editor, “Women Can Be Grunts,” *ES&S*, April 28, 1991.

²⁷⁰ ‘Yes, No, Maybe, Say Male Warriors.’

²⁷¹ Ibid.

²⁷² Pregnancy rates in all services were the same before and during the war at 5.1 percent. 1991 *Utilization of Women in Desert Storm*, 6, 9.

²⁷³ Miller, “U.S Women.”

²⁷⁴ SSgt Anthony E. Greene, letter to editor, “Letter Prompts Responses.”

The Army's deployment of single mothers was controversial due to the high number of children left behind and because some women with young children refused to deploy. The pervasiveness of these incidents forced the Department of Defense to reform its policies for military parents. War deployments separated 32,000 children from their parents during the Gulf War.²⁷⁵ In all, single parents made up the majority of parents deployed to the war.²⁷⁶ While some single mothers tried to get out of their assignment, some with newborns just weeks old, most did not challenge their orders to deploy.²⁷⁷ After the war, the DOD recognized that sending mothers who had just given birth had created Congressional and public outcry, so it standardized all the service policies to only deploy mothers with newborns four months after delivery.²⁷⁸

Yet many soldiers were less forgiving towards the plight of mothers, and some noted that men with children also faced hardships during deployment. In letters to the editor of the *Stars and Stripes*, most soldiers maintained that all parents had volunteered for military service, which obligated them to deploy during war.²⁷⁹ Some noted that if a parent was unable to meet this

²⁷⁵ Herres, *1992 Presidential Commission*, 16. There were 5000 children from dual parent households. 16,000 soldiers deployed were single parents and 1200 military couples were deployed. *Honoring Women Who Served in the Persian Gulf War*, 137th Cong., 1st sess., H2002, *Congressional Record* 137, no. 49, (March 21, 1991): H 12287.

²⁷⁶ The Army sent 12,941 single parents and 1178 couples with children to the Gulf war. Eric Schmitt, "Stress Follows Troops Home from Gulf," *New York Times*, July 16, 1991; Janet Howells-Tierney, "Cheney's Stand on Exemptions for Military Parents Questioned," *ES&S*, January 16, 1991, p. 2.

²⁷⁷ Dana Priest, "Military Reluctant to Alter Rules," *Washington Post*, February 9, 1991.

²⁷⁸ In the new service-wide policy, new mothers were prohibited from deployment within 4 months of giving birth. The same policy applied to parents who had adopted a child. This policy was later changed to 6 months after delivery. *1991 Utilization of Women in Desert Storm*, 9.

²⁷⁹ *1991 Utilization of Women in Desert Storm*, 9; Kathy Cook, Maria Coppadage, Ana Crawford, letters to editor, "Letter Prompts Responses."

obligation, it was time for them to “get out of the military.”²⁸⁰ Some soldiers thought that giving preferences to mothers would be a double standard since it was equally sad to see “daddies kissing their babies goodbye too.”²⁸¹ In fact, the debate over deployed mothers during the war actually exposed that two-thirds of single parents in the military were men, highlighting the difficulties faced by all soldiers with children.²⁸²

By 1991, Pentagon leaders could no longer minimize the military’s essential need for women in combat operations or ignore that female soldiers had been wounded, taken prisoner, and killed regardless of any risk rule or combat exclusion policies. Twenty-one women were wounded in action during the Gulf war.²⁸³ Two women were taken prisoner. One, Melissa Rathburn-Nealy was a co-driver in a convoy for a transportation unit taking equipment to troops when her group missed a turn and ended up under attack by Iraqis. She and her male co-driver, both combat service support soldiers, were taken prisoner for thirty days. Fifteen women died, nine from accidents, one suicide and five were killed as a result of enemy fire.²⁸⁴ Three women were killed along with twenty-five men when a SCUD missile hit their barracks. Cindy Beaudoin a medical technician was killed by a land mine. Cheryl O’Brien, a female aviation mechanic in an

²⁸⁰ SSgt Anthony E. Greene, letter to editor, “Letter Prompts Responses.”

²⁸¹ Teresa Shafe, letter to editor, “Letter Prompts Responses.”

²⁸² Holm, 465. There were 67,000 single parents in the military and 47,000 dual parent couples, an astonishing demographic shift since the 1970s.

²⁸³ Maginnis, “The Future of Women in the Army,” 21.

²⁸⁴ 1991 *Utilization of Women in Desert Storm*, 8. The Army initially classified Cindy Beaudoin as having died as the result of an accident, but a few years later, her death was ruled a result of hostile action. Additionally, Kathleen Sherry died in Kuwait of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. My research has not been able to uncover any additional information about her death.

infantry division died with eight other soldiers when their helicopter was shot down.²⁸⁵ Major Rossi, who had garnered significant media attention for flying with the initial assault, crashed and died during bad weather on the last day of the war.²⁸⁶ These events showed that even in noncombatant jobs, women were at significant risk, as were male soldiers as well. The Persian Gulf War made it increasingly uncertain how the Army's combat exclusion policy was actually keeping women out of combat.

Narrowing Women's Restrictions to Direct Ground Combat

In 1991, capitalizing on women's experiences and performance during the war, DACOWITS, NOW and the Women's Resource and Education Institute, servicewomen, and other allies mobilized and successfully pushed for the repeal of the combat exclusion laws. These organizations argued that the military should choose the most qualified individual for every job, even if that meant putting women in combat arms positions.²⁸⁷ Becky Costantino, DACOWITS chair pointed out that women and men had long trained and worked together. The war showed they "weren't going to fall apart if they had to go two weeks without a shower and sleep in the sand."²⁸⁸ Female soldiers supported opening combat roles by arguing that in the war, "a lot of us were so close anyway that it didn't matter what the official policy was."²⁸⁹ Even the Pentagon's

²⁸⁵ Military, War Dead Honored," *The San Bernardino County Sun*, May 27, 1991, Newspaper.com (accessed March 4, 2013).

²⁸⁶ Holm, 460.

²⁸⁷ Shirley Sagawa and Nancy Duff Campbell, *Women in Combat* (Washington, DC: National Women's Law Center, 1992), 5.

²⁸⁸ Eric Schmitt, "Head of Army Sees Chance of Female Flyers in Combat," *New York Times*, June 2, 1991.

²⁸⁹ Staff Sergeant Brenda Wiegart, letter to editor, "Sex Shouldn't Be an Issue," *ES&S*, September 10, 1992, p. 14.

spokesman admitted that, “one of the lessons we’ve learned from Operation Desert Storm is the extent to which the nation accepted the significant role of women in military operations.”²⁹⁰ In a survey of female soldiers, over seventy percent believed that women should have the opportunity to volunteer for combat arms.²⁹¹

Representative Schroeder thought the softest target for repeal was the law against combat aviation, so she led the fight in the House of Representative not only with support from DACOWITS and other organization, but a new “cabal of women on the Hill,” who worked as staff in Congress.²⁹² With support from Les Aspin, the House Armed Services Committee chairman, Schroeder was able to offer an amendment into a boarder Appropriations Bill that passed only three months after the Gulf War ended.²⁹³ Senator John McCain (R-AZ), inspired by women’s performance in the Gulf War, pushed for Senate hearings to examine the combat exclusion laws, arguing that “the issue of what is ‘in combat’ and what is ‘not in combat’ has been blurred.”²⁹⁴ Other legislators agreed that the time had come to remove the legal restrictions. Arguing that the “face of war has changed,” Senator John Warren (R-VA) requested that Congress remove all combat exclusion laws for women and instead provide the Secretary of Defense and individual service branches with the authority to determine appropriate roles for

²⁹⁰ Pete Williams quoted in Molly Moore, “Women on the Battlefield: Gulf War Role Helps Bring Shift in Attitude,” *Washington Post*, June 16, 1991, ProQuest.

²⁹¹ Moskos survey in Herres, *1992 Presidential Commission*, p. D-5 (70 percent officers, 77 percent NCO, 75 percent enlisted women).

²⁹² For details on the female Congressional staff that pushed for the removal of the combat exclusion law, see Francke, 222.

²⁹³ Francke, 222-223.

²⁹⁴ John McCain quoted in *1991 Senate DOD Appropriations*, 62.

women.²⁹⁵ Secretary of State, Dick Cheney supported the change.²⁹⁶ But when Phyllis Schlafly mobilized opposition to the repeal and the Joint Chiefs of Staff testified against it, both McCain and Warren withdrew their support and the bill stalled.²⁹⁷

DACOWITS had learned from their earlier battles to form alliances.²⁹⁸ Many of these organizations included retired female veterans.²⁹⁹ They joined with senior military officers, WREI, NOW, ACLU, Women Military Aviators, former women pilots during WWII, the National Women's Law Center and the Federation of Business and Professional Women to mobilize in support of the repeal. They gained allies in Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and William Roth (R-DE) who pushed the issue to the floor of the Senate.³⁰⁰ Much like the fight to remove female officer rank restrictions in the 1960s but now with even more support, the alliance flooded Senators with "faxes, letters, and phone calls," in support of the repeal.³⁰¹ Forty male and female active duty pilots lobbied the Senators on their off duty time.³⁰² Senator Roth argued that

²⁹⁵ *1991 Senate DOD Appropriations*, 802.

²⁹⁶ Francke, 232-233.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 233.

²⁹⁸ The Women Military Aviators (WMA) formed in 1988 after a coalition of female pilots, WASPs from WWII, and the Women's Military Pilot Association that had formed in 1982. <http://www.womenmilitaryaviators.org/history-of-wma.html> (accessed June 7, 2016).

²⁹⁹ A detailed history on women's organization formed to support women in the military in the 1980s and 1990s are beyond the scope of this dissertation, but additional research would provide needed insight on how these groups formed and joined together to make policy changes. See Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military*, for analysis related to the fight to remove the combat exclusion laws.

³⁰⁰ Franke, 230-234.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 236.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 238.

the time had come to select “the most highly skilled and seasoned men and women on the job.”³⁰³ But the most persuasive argument came from Senator Nancy Kassenbaum (R-KS) who argued that removing the legal combat aviation restriction would only shift the decision to the respective services. She believed that the individual services should be the ones to decide “how women could best serve.”³⁰⁴ In November, the majority of legislators agreed and removed the legal restriction on aviation combat for women, granting authority to the Department of Defense. However, to appease opponents, they also established a Presidential Committee to study the all laws and policy assignments for women in the military, including the last legal barrier prohibiting women on combat vessels, and directed the panel to make appropriate recommendations to the President.³⁰⁵

Meanwhile, the Army worked to revamp its 1983 combat exclusion policy by redefining combat. Because the death of women during a SCUD attack in the Persian Gulf War had made it clear that all soldiers faced risk, even in rear areas, battlefield location was no longer recognized as what made a position considered combat. Instead, combat was determined by the primary actions the Army decided a unit performed in war.³⁰⁶ The new policy relied on the 1983 definition of direct combat:

³⁰³ Holm, 491.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., 502.

³⁰⁵ David F. Burrelli, *Women in Combat Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, 2012), 2. For a detailed analysis on the contentious debate in Congress over the repeal, see Linda Bird Francke, *Ground Zero: The Gender Wars in the Military* and Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military*.

³⁰⁶ Christopher R. Farley, *US Army Assignment Policy for Women: Relevancy in 21st Century Warfare*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College, 2009), 12, <http://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/u?p4013coll3.2423> (accessed March 5, 2013).

Engaging an enemy with individual or crew-served weapons while being exposed to direct enemy fire, a high probability of direct physical contact with the enemy, and a substantial risk of capture. Direct combat takes place while closing with the enemy by fire, maneuver, or shock effect in order to destroy or capture, or while repelling assault by fire, close combat, or counterattack.³⁰⁷

In order to minimize female soldiers' exposure to direct engagement with the enemy, unit type was still part of the policy. The exclusion policy stated that women were exempted from "positions or units at the battalion level or smaller which are assigned a routine mission to engage in direct combat, or which collocate routinely with units assigned to a direct combat mission."³⁰⁸ The collocating prohibition was meant to keep women from some Special Forces and cavalry aviation units that worked closely with infantry units in direct combat.³⁰⁹ In previous wars, such as Vietnam, support units attached to infantry units had to pick up arms to fight as enemy advanced.³¹⁰ Army policymakers wanted to prevent women from being in these positions in the future.

In 1992, the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces completed its report, but the members of the committee were deeply divided.³¹¹ The commissioners noted that the U.S. Army had never adequately defined what 'combat' meant, but acknowledged that the line between combat support and combat arms units had been blurred by

³⁰⁷ United States, *Women in the Army Policy Review* (Washington, DC: Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Dept. of the Army, 1982), 7.

³⁰⁸ Margaret C. Harrell, *Assessing the Assignment Policy for Army Women* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND National Defense Research Institute, 2007), xii.

³⁰⁹ 1993 House Hearing, *Women in Combat*.

³¹⁰ Excerpts from the commissioner's record, from November 3, 1992 meeting, 1993 House Hearing, *Women in Combat*.

³¹¹ Skaine, 27.

technology and weapons with extended range.³¹² The Joint Chiefs of Staff testified that “combat was an environment more than an event.”³¹³ Some members believed that arguing about the differences between combat and noncombat had become a “specious, irrelevant hair-splitting debate” that boiled down to whether or not a soldier was allowed to shoot back at the enemy.³¹⁴ “Some women did experience combat in Operation Desert Storm,” the report observed, especially in artillery, aviation and engineering.³¹⁵ Some witnesses emphasized that women had endured the same training as male soldiers and had shown they were just as prepared to fight during wartime.³¹⁶ The report noted that studies had determined that “men enjoyed working with women...acceptance was based on ability...a key ingredient in building cohesion within the unit or squadron.”³¹⁷ But not everyone wanted to open combat aircraft and combat aviation to women.³¹⁸ Ultimately most voted to prohibit combat aviation, ground combat and most seaborne combat.³¹⁹ However, mainly because women had already performed well in air defense, missile

³¹² Herres, *1992 Presidential Commission*, C-33.

³¹³ Skaine, 102.

³¹⁴ Herres, *1992 Presidential Commission*, 95.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*, C-40, 90-93.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 92, 94-95.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 85.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 89, 104-105.

³¹⁹ The vote was 8-7 in favor of keeping combat aircraft closed to women and 8-6 (one abstaining) to keep combat vessels closed. Ten members were in favor of keeping ground combat closed, but two abstained and five did not vote. *Ibid.*, C-27, C-29, C-33.

silos and other support units, the majority recommended allowing the assignment of women to some of these combat roles.³²⁰

Hundreds of the Generals supported women's entrance into some of these fields. While the vast majority of these former senior military leaders believed women should be prohibited from ground combat arms, others felt that female attack pilots were acceptable since air warfare was a different kind of combat.³²¹ In 1992, twenty-six percent of the senior Army leaders thought combat helicopters should be opened up.³²² Some even supported opening up other ground combat fields for women-- 23% for Artillery, 16% for Special forces, 15% for Combat engineering, 10% for Armor, 8% for Infantry.³²³ The more recent the era in which the general served, the more likely he was to support women in combat arms or to remove combat exclusions, suggesting that the more men worked with women, the greater their acceptance of expanding women's roles.³²⁴ While the report did not break the service era numbers down by service branch, forty-four percent of all officers who had retired between 1990-1992 supported removing the prohibition on bombers and fighters, while thirty-nine percent believed women

³²⁰ Ibid., C-22.

³²¹ MG Donald Lasher, letter dated 25 September 1992 addressed to Mr. Robert D. Herres, Chairman, Presidential Commission on Women in the Armed Services, 5 October 1992, Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, RG 220 Records of Temporary Commissions, Committees and Boards, "Records Relating to Polls and Surveys of Public and Military Attitudes: 1992 Survey of Flag and General Officers, box 3, NN3-220-93-006, National Archives Building, College Park, MD, (hereafter cited as PCWAS General Officer Survey).

³²² Combat aviation was divided into two categories, fighter/bomber in which 32% (423) approved removing restrictions for women and 68% opposed. For combat helicopters, Army generals 26% (350) approved. Herres, *1992 Presidential Commission*, D-8.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Most of the flag officers survey were men since few women had attained this rank.

should have access to attack helicopters.³²⁵ Even though the majority still thought women should not be in most combat arms fields, the supportive response from hundreds of senior military leaders to include women in any combat positions was a monumental shift from attitudes during the WAC era.³²⁶

Even more telling were the generals' written responses to the survey's questions about the role of women in operational units.³²⁷ Many of these officers had worked with women throughout their careers. Nearly a thousand wrote impassioned letters expressing their views. In 1973, some had opposed the integration, admitting that they wanted to "go slow" or were "initially apprehensive" because of worries that women might compromise the effectiveness of military operations.³²⁸ But by 1992, most admitted that women's integration had been positive, and they accepted servicewomen's necessary roles in combat support and combat service support

³²⁵ *1992 Presidential Commission*, D-9; "Summary of Responses of Flag Officers, Army," Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, PCWAS General Officer Survey; MG Bruce Jacobs Letter dated September 30, 1992 to Mr. Robert D. Herres, Chairman, PCWAS General Officer Survey; Flag officers who retired between 1990-1992 were twice as likely to support women in the combat arms fields as those who had retired pre-1960s. (Engineering 16% vs. 30%, Artillery 17% vs. 37%, Armor 9% vs. 24%, Infantry 8% vs. 17%). The only category where recent retirees were more opposed was in the Special Forces category with 31% of older retirees supporting women's integration and only 23% of the most recent retirees. This variance might be due to the different duties and mission required for special forces in more recent years compared to the older generation.

³²⁶ In each category surveyed, hundreds of flag officers supported women's integration into the combat arms jobs. The highest support was for fighter and bomber pilots with 906 officers. The lowest support was 293 officers agreeing to open up infantry to women. Summary of Responses of Flag Officers, PCWAS General Officer Survey.

³²⁷ There were 924 personal letters sent from flag officers from all services. The report did not break down the number by service branch, but I was able to review many of the letters from Army officers. *1992 Assignment of Women* report, D-11.

³²⁸ Letter from Major General G. Sparrow dated October 5, 1992 to Mr. Robert D. Herres, PCWAS General Officer Survey; Major General Stephen E. Nichols (hereafter cited as General Nichols letter) dated Sept 23, 1992 to Mr. Robert D. Herres, PCWAS General Officer Survey.

units.³²⁹ Very few male soldiers at any rank believed that a return to the WAC era was necessary; instead, there was overwhelming support for women in the operational Army outside of most ground combat arms jobs and units.³³⁰ Sixty-three percent believed women's integration was a success.³³¹ Many felt that women were a "tremendous resource," giving the Army a "wider pool" from which to select the best soldiers.³³² They acknowledged that the first women breaking into male units had endured tough times, but believed that their performance made the way easier for those following in that field.³³³ Some noted that as more female soldiers integrated a unit, it became more equal because fewer men tried to do work for women, allowing them to pull their own weight.³³⁴ Some believed that work in combat support roles not only enhanced the "self-esteem of women," it also fostered "greater respect for women of their capabilities by men."³³⁵

Others noted that some of the emphasis on equal opportunity for women, such as ROTC, also created new opportunities for men because the competition made better soldiers and improved the chances for ROTC trained officers to gain top level positions in the Army.³³⁶ Competition showed that some women could "outperform men" in nontraditional units such as

³²⁹ General Nichols letter.

³³⁰ MG Robert D Terry letter dated September 25, 1992 to Mr. Robert D. Herres, PCWAS General Officer Survey.

³³¹ *1992 Presidential Commission*, 115.

³³² General Nichols letter.

³³³ *Ibid.*

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ MG George P. Holm letter dated Sept 21, 1992 to Mr. Robert D. Herres, PCWAS General Officer Survey.

³³⁶ General Nichols letter.

engineering, intelligence, and logistics.³³⁷ Men learned from women’s detail in planning and “coordination of tasks.”³³⁸ Some men noted that they had learned from their own daughters’ positive experiences and opportunities in the Army.³³⁹ Even the chair of the committee, General Robert T. Herres, a former member of the Joint Chief of Staff, admitted the initial concerns that women’s integration into operational units would undermine their effectiveness had been wrong. Instead, “women performed admirably and cohesion improved rather than deteriorated.”³⁴⁰

In the early 1990s, President Bill Clinton opened more combat arms roles to women. In 1993, the Secretary of Defense Les Aspin directed all services to open combat aviation to women and called for the Army to examine expanding positions in artillery.³⁴¹ The result was the opening of 5,000 positions and eighty-six units at the battalion and company level in aviation.³⁴² For the first time, women could work in offensive combat positions such as attack helicopter pilots and long range reconnaissance scout pilots.

In 1993, Congress repealed the last remaining statute prohibiting women from combat on ships and in 1994, the Secretary of Defense directed the services to open all positions to women with the sole exception of jobs or units where the principal mission meant “direct combat on the

³³⁷ MG James H. Johnson letter dated September 25, 1992 to Mr. Robert D. Herres, PCWAS General Officer Survey; General Nichols letter.

³³⁸ General Nichols letter.

³³⁹ MG Kenneth C Leuer letter dated Sept 22, 1992 to Mr. Robert D. Herres, PCWAS General Officer Survey. The topic of multigenerational families in the service requires more research. Many women in the Army are from military families.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 86.

³⁴¹ Skaine, 67-68.

³⁴² The move opened up 62 company level and 24 battalion level units. 1993 *Women in Combat Hearing*, 21.

ground.”³⁴³ In 1994, This rule became known as the “Direct Ground Combat and Assignment Rule,” and it applied mainly to jobs in the infantry, armor, special forces and some artillery units. Despite support from the Secretary of the Army for opening some cavalry aviation and multiple launch rocket units, these positions also remained closed because of their proximity and close work with infantry units.³⁴⁴ This DOD policy remained unchanged until January of 2013.³⁴⁵

By 1994, the Army had opened 32,699 new positions to women and restarted mixed-gender basic training.³⁴⁶ Yet, 348,301 positions remained closed, about a third of all jobs in the Army, including all infantry and armor MOSs, some artillery units that worked closely with infantry, and other Special Forces and Ranger positions.³⁴⁷ Critics argued that policies still prohibited women from some units that did not engage in direct ground combat, but the changes were still groundbreaking.³⁴⁸ Female soldiers integrated brigade, company and platoon level units in the military police, engineering, and chemical units.³⁴⁹ After a ten-year hiatus, male and female

³⁴³ William V. Roth quote in 1991 Senate *DOD Appropriations*, 803. The vessel restriction in 10 USC Section 6015 was removed on November 30, 1993 with Public Law 103-160.

³⁴⁴ 1993 House Hearing, *Women in Combat*, 21.

³⁴⁵ Amaani Lyle, “Women in Service Review Rollout Due in 2016,” DOD News, Defense Media Activity, U.S. Department of Defense, <http://www.defense.gov/-News-Article-View/Article/603909> (accessed September 5, 2016).

³⁴⁶ The move opened up 62 company level and 24 battalion level units. 1993 House Hearing, *Women in Combat*, 21.

³⁴⁷ Skaine, 111-113. Additional positions closed included field artillery with cannon and MLRS, some SHORAD Air Defense Batteries, combat engineering and some radar platoons in Military Intelligence battalions.

³⁴⁸ Skaine, 112-114; Harrell, “Accessing the Assignment Policy,” 56-59.

³⁴⁹ Harrell, “Accessing the Assignment Policy,” 5.

soldiers learned to work with each other again during basic combat training. Women began to work as attack helicopter pilots, a job that required direct offensive fire at the enemy and had been unthinkable just a few years earlier. And with these new positions, women gained opportunities for promotion and leadership opportunities that had previously been closed to them.

Women were still excluded from about thirty percent of all positions, but they had made gains in many new positions that the Army had only recently considered as combat related. By 1994, women's integration into operational units meant leading men in combat operations, firing weapons at the enemy, flying troops and supplies through anti-aircraft fire, as well as being killed and captured by the enemy. In some career fields, women made up more than twenty percent of the personnel: chemical, ammunition, topographical engineering, aviation, signals intelligence—mainly combat support unit positions. In the combat service support units, female soldiers were heavily represented in supply and transportation.³⁵⁰ Army leadership recognized that “times had changed” and women needed to have the same training and preparation as men for war, and that they needed to work as a cohesive team from the beginning of their military service.³⁵¹ The Army maintained that only men could be part of direct ground combat fighting forces. Even so, as a result of their persistent pressure and determination to gain equal opportunity, women in the Army occupied some jobs directly fighting the enemy, female soldiers had become warriors.

³⁵⁰ In 2003, the percentages of women in each field were chemical 22%, ammunition 22%, topographical engineering 29%, aviation 25%, signals intelligence 27%, supply 34% and transportation 22%. Louis O. Henkel, *The Impact of Army Transformation on the Integration of Enlisted Women*, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2003), 5-9, <http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?&verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA415334>.

³⁵¹ Anne W. Chapman, *Mixed-Gender Basic Training: The U.S. Army Experience, 1973-2004* (Fort Monroe, VA: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, 2008), 89-90.

CHAPTER VI

EPILOGUE

In March 2005, Raven 42, a ten-unit American military police squad engaged in combat with approximately fifty Iraqi enemy insurgents who had ambushed a large convoy near the town of Salman Pak, Iraq. After a forty-five-minute firefight, with insurgents firing machine guns, rocket propelled grenades, and mortars, the battle ended and twenty-four insurgents were dead with nine wounded.¹ Despite being outnumbered five to one, all members of *Raven 42* survived, although two were wounded. One of the team's leaders was military police officer, Sergeant Leigh Ann Hester, who received the Silver Star for her courageous performance under fire.² According to the citation, she "maneuvered her team through the kill zone ... where she assaulted a trench line with grenades and M-203 rounds."³ Then, with her male squad leader, she

¹ Thomas A. Bruscino Jr., "Palm Sunday Ambush, 20 March 2005," in *In Contact! Case Studies from the Long War, Volume I*, ed. William G. Robertson (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006), 59, <http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/u/?p4013coll11,467> (accessed on February 16, 2012).

² In fact, eight of the ten squad members received awards for valor. There were two women and eight men in the squad. Staff Sgt. Timothy Nein initially received the Silver Star, but it was later upgraded to the Distinguished Service Cross. Sgt. Leigh Ann Hester and Spc. Jason Mike received the Silver Star. Three received the Bronze Stars with combat "V" for their actions: Spc. Ashley Pullen, Spc. William Haynes II and Spc. Casey Cooper. Two received the Army Commendation Medals with "V": Spc. Jessie Ordunez and Sgt. Dustin Morris. Bruscino, "Palm Sunday Ambush," 77.

³ "Hester, Leigh Ann," U.S. Army Awards of the Silver Star for Conspicuous Gallantry in Action in the Global War on Terrorism (2001 - Present), http://www.homeofheroes.com/valor/08_WOT/ss_GWOT/citations_USA-G.html (accessed February 16, 2012).

“engaged and eliminated three AIF (anti- Iraqi forces) with her M-4 rifle.”⁴ Because the squad had trained for an ambush, Staff Sergeant Timothy Nein, the unit’s leader explained that Hester automatically charged with him through trenches towards the enemy to engage with them in direct combat.⁵ Hester kept up with her male squad leader during the firefight. Nein explained that Hester was with him every step of the way and “would shoot over my right shoulder while I prepared the grenade to throw it, or I would be shooting while she threw a grenade.”⁶ Shrugging off the significance of being the first woman to receive the Silver Star for close quarter combat, Hester stated, “you know, it’s just something that happened one day, and I was trained to do what I did, and I did it.”⁷

Sergeant Hester’s actions to help repel an ambush during a firefight in Iraq underscored how women’s integration in the Army has come a long way since 1964, when the Army had no female military police officers, and WAC forbade its members to wear fatigues or participate in combat or weapons training. The Army established a women’s only corps not to train them as soldiers, but to use Wacs for office, medical, and administrative work in offices, never considering their deployment with operational units onto the battlefield. By 2005, it was routine for male and female MP soldiers to train together in combat support units in the field, receive the

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ SSGT Timothy F. Nein, interview with Dr. Tom Bruscano, June 28, 2006, USASMA Digital History files, United States Army Combined Arms Center, Combined Armed Research Digital Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, <http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4013coll13/id/220/rec/2> (accessed February 16, 2012).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Rachel Martin, “Silver Star Recipient a Reluctant Hero,” *NPR*, February 20, 2011, accessed at <http://www.npr.org/2011/02/22/133847765/silver-star-recipient-a-reluctant-hero> (accessed February 16, 2012).

same equipment, acquire the same skills, and do the same jobs when they went to war. By 1999, all Army women participated in gender integrated training with men in noncombat fields.⁸

Hester's actions revealed that the Army had prepared female MPs to fight, but she was not the only woman involved in the battle, two other women received Bronze Stars with valor for their roles. Specialist Ashley Pullen ran 300 feet across the field with hostile fire and provided lifesaving aide to a seriously wounded fellow soldier.⁹ The other, Specialist Jenny Beck, successfully dragged two men to safety when the vehicle in front of her was hit with enemy fire.¹⁰ She was a driver at the front of the convoy for the 1075th Transportation Company. By 2005, over two thousand women had received the Bronze Star for heroism during combat in Iraq and Afghanistan.¹¹ Nein, Hester, Pullen and other members of Raven 42 had trained together and planned for combat scenarios along the supply route. They credited their success in repelling the

⁸ John J. Corry, *Congressional Commission on Military Training and Gender-Related Issues: Final Report* (Arlington, VA: Government Publication, 1999). Men in combat arms trained separately from women.

⁹ Sharon Cohen, "Heroic in War, She's Tormented at Home," *Los Angeles Times*, December 24, 2006. ProQuest.

¹⁰ Specialist Jenny Beck was mobilized into the active regular Army command structure from the National Guard. This study has concentrated on women in the regular Army, but the utilization of women from the Army Reserve (AR) and Army National Guard (ANG) is a topic that begs for much deeper research and analysis. Scholarship on women's Reserve and Guard experiences at war is missing from the historiography. One RAND study, while not examining women's role in these units, examined the extensive use of the Army's Reserve and National Guard. Jacob Alex Klerman, *Rethinking the Reserves* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corp, 2008). By 2008, the percentages of ANG in Iraq and Afghanistan were 7 and 14 percent respectively, while AR units made up 4 percent in Iraq and 6 percent in Afghanistan. Michael Waterhouse and JoAnne O'Bryant, *National Guard Personnel and Deployments: Fact Sheet* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2008), CRS-3, CRS-4, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RS22451.pdf>.

¹¹ Helen Benedict, "The Nation: The Plight of Women Soldiers," *North Carolina Public Radio*, May 6, 2009 accessed on February 20, 2011, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=103844570> (accessed June 3, 2016).

ambush to the MP unit's leadership in preparing them for battle as well as the squad's commitment to work together as a team.¹² Like Linda Bray and her MP company in Panama more than twenty years earlier, women's integration into operational units put them onto the battlefield and into the fight.

These long wars revealed how women's integration into the operational Army had not only made their involvement in fighting more ordinary, it exposed the how female soldiers' level of risk for harm had become an expected consequence of their participation. Before these conflicts, only seven women in the Army had been killed by hostile action at war between 1980 and 1999.¹³ By the time the Department of Defense withdrew most of its military forces in 2015, over 300,000 servicewomen had deployed and participated in the conflicts. These were largely ground fought wars, so the greatest concentration of women used during the conflicts were in the Army's operational units, and female soldiers took the brunt of the women's casualties.¹⁴ One hundred and sixty women died in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, of these, one hundred and twenty five were female soldiers.¹⁵ The war left 1,010 servicewomen wounded in action, 861

¹² Bruscano, "Palm Sunday Ambush," 63.

¹³ No female soldiers died during hostilities before the Persian Gulf War in 1991. The seven killed include five from the Persian Gulf War in 1991, and two in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing. "Comparison of Military Personnel Strength and Manner of Death, Females – Army Worldwide U.S. Active Duty Military Deaths," in Washington Headquarters Services Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, Defense Manpower Data Center, Updated January 12, 1999, <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/Documents/WFT.pdf> (accessed February 8, 2016).

¹⁴ Andrew Tilghman, "All Combat Jobs Open to Women in the Military," *Military Times*, December 3, 2015, <http://www.militarytimes.com> (accessed February 8, 2016).

¹⁵ "U.S. Military Casualties, Operation Iraqi Freedom Wounded in Action-All" and "Operation Enduring Freedom: Wounded in Action-All," Defense Casualty Analysis System, Department of Defense, <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/casualties.xhtml> (accessed August 12, 2016).

served in the Army.¹⁶ Additionally, at least twenty-one women were amputees, most in the Military Police Corps, and countless more suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.¹⁷ In 2006, eight years before the drawdown of troops, one reporter noted that women's deaths "stirred no less — and no more — reaction at home than the nearly 2,900 male dead. The same can be said of the hundreds of wounded women."¹⁸

Even so, the members of Raven 42, like all female soldiers and most of the male soldiers serving in the wars, were in noncombatant roles, neither the Army, nor the DOD had changed their 1990s combat exclusions policies for women.¹⁹ One DOD backed study explained that while the policy explicitly prohibited women from positions and units whose "primary mission" was direct ground combat, the military rule did not mean that women could never work under these

¹⁶ "U.S. Military Casualties, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Military Deaths" and "Operation Enduring Freedom: Military Deaths," Defense Casualty Analysis System, Department of Defense, <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/casualties.xhtml> (accessed August 12, 2016).

¹⁷ JC Rivera, CA Krueger, and AE Johnson, "Female Combat Amputees Have Higher Rates of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Disability," *U.S. Army Medical Department Journal* 74-9, (April-June 2015), 64. The Veteran's Administration reported that 20 percent of women veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan were diagnosed with PTSD. "Traumatic Stress in Female Veterans," PTSD: National Center for PTSD, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/trauma/war/traumatic_stress_in_female_veterans.asp (accessed June 2, 2016).

¹⁸ Lizette Alvarez, "Jane, We Hardly Knew Ye Died," *New York Times*, September 24, 2006, ProQuest.

¹⁹ Some Congressmen argued that the Army violated the DOD and its own combat exclusion policies because it was assigning women to work with infantry, Special Forces and other ground combat units, but categorizing them as "attached" not "assigned" to the units. The Department of Defense authorized a study by RAND corporation to determine if violations were taking place. The report determined that while the exclusion policies were unclear in their definitions, the Army was properly following the "letter" of the policies. See Margaret C. Harrell, *Assessing the Assignment Policy for Army Women* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND National Defense Research Institute, 2007), 65.

conditions.²⁰ While the exclusion policy remained in place, several factors contributed to the high level of female casualties. The length of the conflicts, lasting more than a decade, contributed to the elevated casualty numbers, as did the reality that Army troops made up more than half of all the troops deployed.²¹ Women made up twenty percent of the personnel in some combat support units.²² But perhaps the most significant factor was that the enemy fought differently. Instead of battles where one side goes up against the other over a piece of territory, as was largely the situation during the Persian Gulf War in the 1990s, the enemy in Iraq and Afghanistan remained largely hidden. One of the most devastating methods the Iraqi and Afghani enemy exploited were hidden explosives planted along transportation routes. Called “improvised explosive devices” or IED, the mechanisms were either set off remotely or buried in the road, exploding when vehicles ran over the trigger. As a result, soldiers who routinely transported supplies and equipment, or guarded the route like Raven 42, were at risk of striking the hidden IEDs, and many did.²³ Quick hit and run ambushes with rocket propelled grenades were another frequent Iraqi and Afghani

²⁰ Laura L. Miller, *The Extent of Restrictions on the Service of Active-Component Military Women* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2012), 4.

²¹ By 2011, Army personnel had made up 54 percent of all deployed forces, and nearly 74 percent of the Army had served in the wars. Dave Baiocchi, *Measuring Army Deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2013), 3, 6, <http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=1365161> (accessed June 12, 2014).

²² Michele M. Putko and Douglas V. Johnson, *Women in Combat Compendium* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2008), <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS90358> (accessed June 2, 2012).

²³ Tina K. Morrison interview with author, March 12, 2014, Tina K. Morrison Papers, (hereinafter cited as Tina Morrison interview), WV0561, Betty H. Carter Women Veterans Historical Project, Martha Blakeney Hodges Special Collections and University Archives, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (hereafter cited as UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project); Christy Diaz interview with author, December 14, 2014, “Christy Diaz Papers,” WV0576, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project. Both Morrison and Diaz were in vehicles that ran over IEDs, but neither were injured.

tactic. There was no longer any forward or rear area, so soldiers moving along the road were at great risk. MPs became casualties as they patrolled roads, but because of the need to travel ground routes to move supplies or move to a new location, other women in many support occupations were at risk of ambush or IEDs. Natasha Schoonover spent thirteen months as a tractor trailer driver, transporting supplies throughout Iraq. She could not “remember ever going on any mission that we did not get hit, attacked, shot, in some way.”²⁴ She described having to hold the weapon out the window as she drove to be prepared to fire at the enemy, never feeling safe, but become numb to the routine.²⁵ Shoshana Johnson, a female soldier who was wounded and became a prisoner of war after her convey was ambushed, noted that she chose to be a “cook” in the Army to learn a skill, but never thought the military would send her to “hot spots around the world.”²⁶ Instead, she learned that no Army job was “safe” from combat.²⁷ So while the exclusion policy had not changed, the type of war had, even more so than during the Persian Gulf conflict.

Unlike Hester and female MPs who trained extensively with combat tactics, not all women felt they had been adequately prepared for deployment to Iraq and Afghanistan. Tina Morrison, a computer specialist deployed to Iraq “fresh out of training” with less than a year in the Army, and felt unprepared for the war environment.²⁸ It was not until she had arrived in

²⁴ Natasha Schoonover interview by author, February 4, 2013, (hereinafter cited as Natasha Schoonover interview) “Natasha Sudderth Schoonover Papers,” WV0544, UNCG Women Veterans Historical Project.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Shoshana Johnson with M.L. Doyle, *I’m Still Standing* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010), 11.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Tina Morrison interview.

Kuwait before heading into Iraq that the Army spent a few days training her “how to shoot from a vehicle.”²⁹ One reporter described women’s roles as “in the thick of it, hauling heavy equipment and expected to shoot and defend themselves and others from an enemy that is all around them.”³⁰ They are driving huge rigs down treacherous roads, frisking Iraqi women at dangerous checkpoints, handling gun turrets and personnel carriers and providing cover for other soldiers.”³¹ Shoshana Williams received weapons training before her deployment, but “nothing about battle tactics, what to do in case of an ambush, (or) how to really fight when and if the time came.”³² The time to fight came early for Williams.

In March 2003, one of the first tragedies of the war involving Williams’ unit led to an improvement of combat preparation for all soldiers, not just women. In the first few days of the war, a convoy from the 507th Maintenance Company followed the attacking U.S. forces to repair tanks and vehicles as they moved into Iraq but took a wrong turn and drove directly into a “torrent of fire.”³³ Eleven of the thirty-three soldiers were killed and seven captured, while the Marines helped the others escape from the attack.³⁴ The Iraqis captured three female soldiers, all in support roles. One Native American, Lori Piestewa, died of her injuries in captivity, the first

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ “Jane We Hardly Knew Ye Died.”

³¹ Ibid.

³² Kayla Williams with Michael E. Staub, *Love my Rifle More than You* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), 50.

³³ “Attack on the 507th Maintenance Company 23 March 2003, Al Nasiriyah, Iraq: Executive Summary,” U.S. Army Official Report on 507th Maintenance Co.: An Nasiriyah, Iraq, <https://www.metavr.com/casestudies/aar507ambush.pdf> (accessed February 16, 2012).

³⁴ Ibid.

women killed in the war. Piestewa had been a clerk for the maintenance unit and drove a truck in the convoy, and she was also a single mother.³⁵ Shoshana Johnson, a cook for the company, was a single mother and the first black female prisoner of war.³⁶ As in previous wars, mothers deployed and some were captured, wounded or killed with no public backlash.³⁷ While praising the efforts of the unit to defend themselves against the ambush, the Army recognized that it had not properly trained all soldiers for the new combat conditions in Iraq. In response, the Army Chief of Staff, General Eric K. Shinseki instituted a new “Warrior Ethos” to ensure that all soldiers learned and continued warfighting skills, including tactics, not only during basic training, but with their occupational training and in their units.³⁸ Troops deploying in later years were more prepared for the non-linear battlefield.

As long as the Army did not assign or collocate female soldiers with combat arms units, or units that worked closely with them, the exclusion policies permitted women to work anywhere on the battlefield, and commanders placed them in many new roles.³⁹ Some female

³⁵ Osha Gray Davidson, “A Wrong Turn in the Desert,” *Rolling Stone*, May 27, 2004.

³⁶ Johnson, 33-34.

³⁷ During the Persian Gulf War, POW Army surgeon Rhonda Cornum was a mother.

³⁸ Steven S. DeBusk, *Warrior Ethos Revisited: Implications for the Future* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2011), 12, <http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA543209> (accessed May 5, 2014).

³⁹ This policy is explained in Chapter Four, pp. 252-253. One additional change for the Army occurred in 2005 when the Army changed its organization to modular units, and much like they had done with forward support battalions in 1983, this change put more women closer to the actual fighting. Congress attempted to take women out of these units, but were unsuccessful. “Restrictions on Assignments of Military Women: A Brief History.” National Women’s Law Center, January 2014, http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/women_in_military_assignments_a_brief_history_revised_jan_2014.pdf (accessed June 21, 2014).

soldiers worked much closer with combat arms units than ever before when the Army selected some to work as translators, interrogators, or in newly created cultural engagement positions. The Army and Marine ground combat units came in close contact with the local citizens during the war to search houses, and to avoid offending the culture of the Muslim countries, the Pentagon thought it would be unacceptable for men to search women. As a result, the Army created a new role that ‘attached’ female soldiers to the infantry and other combat arms units. The term ‘attached’ was controversial to some in Congress because it seemed to skirt the exclusion policies, but a RAND study in 2007 argued that the Army followed the technical intent of the policies because the women were not assigned to the units and the missions routinely involved with “repelling the enemy’s assault.”⁴⁰ Defensive firing was permitted.

The Army used women in these new roles in a number of ways, and most times, the female soldiers volunteered for the duty outside of the secure area. Just like Wacs in Vietnam, many female soldiers wanted to participate in the war as much as possible, “have some stories to tell” and “see what was outside those gates.”⁴¹ The Army did not permanently assign women to positions in direct ground combat units, but placed with them with the units as part of their duties in the battlefield. By 2004, before deploying, some units began training female soldiers how to search local women that came into the secure camps, or encountered women out on patrols.⁴² Tina Morrison received this training, but once deployed, she declined to go out with a cavalry

⁴⁰ Harrell, 63-65. For a detailed description of the fight in Congress over the collocate issue, see “Restrictions on Assignments of Military Women: A Brief History.” National Women’s Law Center, January 2014, http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/women_in_military_assignments_a_brief_history_revised_jan_2014.pdf (accessed June 21, 2014).

⁴¹ Tina Morrison interview; Christy Diaz interview.

⁴² Tina Morrison interview.

unit because it meant working miserable hours, and she did not want to be the sole woman in a male group.⁴³ However, as a lower ranking soldier, the Army put Morrison on guard duty for the first six months of her deployment, but mortars flew over the tower.⁴⁴ When the unit later reassigned her computer duties, Morrison felt like a “sitting duck” during attacks and was bothered about “not getting any kind of experience out of this—I know I’m a soldier; let me be a soldier.”⁴⁵ So Morrison volunteered to go out with the men on every available patrol to help search Iraqi women.⁴⁶ When her supervisor ignored her request, she went over his head to the First Sergeant who agreed to take her out on convoys. Even though she had no official role during the missions, Morrison did help search some of the local citizens and felt that her role in the war was more meaningful.⁴⁷

The Army placed some women in more permanent roles in the field with male soldiers in ground combat units, and “lived as they did and faced the same dangers,” often earning the men’s respect through their work.⁴⁸ Kayla Williams was an Arab linguist who deployed with an airborne air assault division at the start of the war. The Army “attached” her with an infantry company to help translate between the soldiers and local citizen. In her view, the infantry units in Iraq treated her with more respect and professionalism than many other units because these soldiers

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Catherine Ross in the Opinion Pages, “Home Fires: Women’s Work,” *The New York Times*, February 15, 2010, <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/02/15/womens-work/?r=0> (accessed March 21, 2014).

understood the value of her work during war to help them accomplish their mission.⁴⁹ Another female soldier noted that she was “no princess, and didn’t expect to be treated like one.” She felt her leadership “treated (women) like any of the male soldiers” and expected all female soldiers to pull the same extra duties as men and “keep up whenever we had to reach a destination on foot.”⁵⁰ And many men working with women during the war admitted how seeing them in battle tested situations improved their respect for female soldiers’ skills. A Major commanding an aviation unit described his female drivers as “soldiers...one of us...tough as nails.”⁵¹ Another senior enlisted male leader believed the female intelligence officer working with his infantry unit noted, “I don’t want to sound like a male chauvinist jackass, but she was that smart and was immediately respected by the other guys for her knowledge and her know-how. [Her gender] really didn’t seem to matter.”⁵² Another male Major who had two women attached to his armor brigade was originally skeptical that women had the strength to work with his unit. However, after seeing one very small female soldier who normally worked as a medical technician pull a very large male soldier out of a burning armored vehicle while still firing at the enemy, he admitted that “it changed my opinion about where women ought to be in the fight...after this I just thought it

⁴⁹ Williams, 57, 123.

⁵⁰ Catherine Ross, “Home Fires.”

⁵¹ Major Eric Puls interview by LCDR Ethan Gibson, Part I, February 15, 2007, USASMA Digital History files, United States Army Combined Arms Center, Combined Armed Research Digital Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, <http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4013coll13/id/1015/rec/1> (accessed June 21, 2014).

⁵² CSM Darrin Bohn interview by Dr. Christopher K Ives, July 20, 2006, USASMA Digital History files, United States Army Combined Arms Center, Combined Armed Research Digital Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, <http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4013coll13/id/232/rec/1> (accessed June 21, 2014).

didn't really matter. When the chips are down, a good soldier is a good soldier and it doesn't really matter.⁵³ The major submitted the soldier for a Bronze Star for her actions, later regretting that he had not tried to write her up for a Silver Star. By 2005, over two thousand women had received the Bronze Star for heroism during combat in Iraq and Afghanistan.⁵⁴ At least 9,000 women have received Army Combat Action Badges for "actively engaging or being engaged by the enemy," and two have received Silver Stars for "gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States."⁵⁵

The wars reflected not only the level of integration that female soldiers had achieved in attaining senior leadership roles, but male support for them in high level positions. This meant women gained power, authority, influential connections and applied that leverage to influence change in the operational Army. In May of 2004, Lieutenant General (LTG) David Barno, the United States coalition commander for the war in Afghanistan, selected Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Cynthia Pritchett to serve as his top enlisted advisor.⁵⁶ Pritchett's role made her the

⁵³ Major Christopher L'Heureux in Mark Thompson, "American Amazons: Hiding in Plain-Jane Sight," *Time*, January 28, 2013, <http://nation.time.com/2013/01/28/american-amazons-hiding-in-plain-jane-sight/> (accessed June 21, 2014).

⁵⁴ Helen Benedict, "The Nation: The Plight of Women Soldiers," *North Carolina Public Radio*, May 6, 2009, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=103844570> (accessed February 20, 2011).

⁵⁵ Nora Bensahel et al., "Battlefields and Boardrooms; Women's Leadership in the Military and the Private Sector," *Center for New American Security*, January 2015, p. 9. The other Silver Star was earned by Monica Lyn Brown, an Army National Guard medic, who saved the lives of her fellow soldiers in Afghanistan during an ambush in 2007. Ann Scott Tyson, "Women Gains Silver Star, and Removal from Combat," *The Washington Post*, May 1, 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com> (accessed on June 5, 2014).

⁵⁶ Pritchett joined the Army in 1973. Christopher N. Koontz, *Enduring Voices: Oral Histories of the U.S. Army Experience in Afghanistan, 2003-2005* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2008), 15, 48.

Army's senior enlisted soldier in Afghanistan where she advised LTG Barno on the needs of over twenty thousand American and coalition troops in Afghanistan.⁵⁷ Soon after CSM Pritchett was selected to her position, General Rebecca Halstead was appointed the Commanding General for 3rd Corps Support Command in Iraq. In 2005, Halstead became responsible for overall combat logistical support in Iraq at more than fifty bases for over 250,000 soldiers and civilians, and controlled the supply, maintenance, transportation, and distribution of nearly everything that troops in Iraq used during the course of their day.⁵⁸ The suggestion that any male commander would assign women to crucial leadership positions in a theater of war was unthinkable when Halstead and Pritchett first joined the Army in the 1970s. It seemed improbable even twenty years later during the Persian Gulf War. Yet when the United States went to war in Afghanistan in 2001 and into Iraq in 2003, career female soldiers who had entered the service in the 1970s were at the pinnacle of their careers in many combat support and combat service support units. Due to their rank and experience, the Army assigned many women to key leadership positions in the war zones. The selection of female soldiers to key leadership positions with tremendous wartime responsibilities that the Army entrusted to women like CSM Pritchett and General Halstead

⁵⁷ Jessica Obermeyer, "Ground-breaking senior NCO shares her experiences," [WWW.ARMY.MIL](http://www.army.mil/article/13849/ground-breaking-senior-nco-shares-her-experiences/), November 3, 2008. <http://www.army.mil/article/13849/ground-breaking-senior-nco-shares-her-experiences/> (accessed June 1, 2013). Pritchett was asked by the succeeding commander, Army Lt. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry, to stay on for a second tour. Command Sergeant Major (Ret.) Cynthia Pritchett, interview by Aaron Monson, digital, November 1, 2010, USASMA (United States Army Sergeant Majors Academy) Digital Library, Combined Arms Research Digital Library, Tape 2, <http://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15040coll2/id/7209>.

⁵⁸ Nancy Montgomery, "One of a Kind Leadership Runs Support Command," *Stars and Stripes*, April 16, 2006, <http://www.stripes.com/news/one-of-a-kind-leadership-runs-support-command-in-iraq-1.47753> (accessed May 19, 2013).

demonstrated the significant transformation in Army leadership for enlisted and officer ranks over the last thirty years.

Female soldiers rise through the ranks shifted the power dynamics of the Army's organization to reflect that leadership was no longer exclusively male, but these roles did not come without challenges. Many of the problems that had been issues throughout women's integration remained, such as challenges to their authority. For example, in spite of her higher rank, one young female NCO in Iraq had to remind men that she was in charge, not the other male soldier in the room.⁵⁹ Another female commander of a MP Company in Afghanistan explained that "there's a "whoa" and everything gets quiet" when you walk in the room as a female commander, but you are not allowed to fail."⁶⁰ But some women in leadership did fail, some creating a miserable environment for the female soldiers under their charge. Kayla William worked under two ineffective female enlisted leaders in Iraq, one so "incompetent" she worried that men in her unit would consider all female soldiers as unworthy leaders.⁶¹ Although today servicewomen are underrepresented in the senior leadership ranks, and women still face roadblocks to some of the key leadership positions, after thirty years, the ground had significantly shifted. CSM Pritchett, General Halstead, and a new generation of female soldiers were able to push through "brass" ceilings that had once seemed impenetrable because servicewomen that preceded them had been chipping away at those obstacles for decades.

⁵⁹ Williams, 89, 259.

⁶⁰ Major Ann Dunscombe interview by Jenna Fike, October 14, 2009, USASMA Digital History files, United States Army Combined Arms Center, Combined Armed Research Digital Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, <http://cgsc.cdmhost.com/cdm/ref/collection/p4013coll13/id/1615> (accessed May 21, 2013).

⁶¹ Williams, 269.

In the decades before the end of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Army policies to end sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape in the military have been inadequate. Congressional testimony in 2004 revealed that in just the previous eighteen months, over 112 incidents of sexual misconduct had been reported in the war zone.⁶² Army training to prevent sexual harassment and assault had become routine for soldiers by the 1990s, but when a 1994 scandal at the Army's Aberdeen Proving Grounds revealed that instructors "coerced or sexually assaulted" the female trainees under their leadership and command, it renewed the Army's focus.⁶³ During a Senate hearing to examine these incidents, Senator Dirk Kempthorne (R-ID) remarked that the Army's "zero tolerance" stand had not resulted in "meaningful policies" that prevented the abuse.⁶⁴ But other legislators found the Army's push to integrate women into male units responsible for creating "atmosphere" for these incidents.⁶⁵ The Army leadership pushed back, arguing that that rape and assault were not acceptable under any conditions, calling the matter a leadership failure and describing a new investigation to get at the heart of the problem.⁶⁶ However, the following year new scandals emerged soon after the Army announced the panel appointed to head the

⁶² These figures were for all services. Lynette Clemetson, "Officer Testifies of Her Two Sexual Assaults in the Army," *New York Times*, April 1, 2004, ProQuest.

⁶³ Mary Fainsod Katzenstein and Judith Reppy, *Beyond Zero Tolerance: Discrimination in Military Culture* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 60. For analysis on why military law as written are inadequate to address sexual crimes, see Elizabeth Hillman, "Front and Center: Sexual Violence in U.S. Military Law," *Politics & Society* 37, no. 1(2009): 101-129.

⁶⁴ United States, Senate, Armed Services Committee, "Army Sexual Harassment Incidents at Aberdeen Proving Ground and Sexual Harassment Policies Within the Department of Defense," 105th Cong., 1st sess., February 4, 1997, 2, ProQuest Congressional (97-S201-15).

⁶⁵ Senator Dan Coats (R-IN) quoted in 1997 Senate Hearing, *Army Sexual Harassment*, 38-40.

⁶⁶ General Dennis Reimer quoted in 1997 Senate Hearing, *Army Sexual Harassment*, 39.

investigation. In fact, when the Army assigned the Army's top senior enlisted leader, William McKinney, to the panel to investigate the climate of sexual harassment and abuse in the aftermath of Aberdeen, female soldiers came forward to accuse McKinney of harassment, rape and sexual misconduct. As a result, he was taken off the panel and court-martialed, but found guilty only of obstruction of justice, reduced in rank and allowed to retire with full benefits.⁶⁷

The 1997 Sexual Harassment panel, which (among others) included Cynthia Pritchett, Claudia Kennedy, and was co-chaired by General Pat Foote, tried but failed to find a lasting solution to the issue of sexual harassment, abuse and rape. All three of these female soldiers began their careers in the Wac era, had gained senior leadership positions during their service in the operational Army, and understood the hostility and abuse women faced. At the conclusion of their study, they noted that when female soldiers made complaints, sexual harassment was condoned, while racial discrimination was handled much more severely.⁶⁸ Some rank and file female soldiers complained that leadership never related to their grievance because "they were so distant...yes, they're educated, and yes, they understand, but they are so out of reach from us—from the enlisted" to explain the problems they were facing both in and out of their workplaces.⁶⁹ The panel concluded that leadership had failed female soldiers and recommended a "mechanism to hold commanders accountable," better training for all soldiers and a much more responsive reporting system.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ David Stout, "Full Pension is Backed for Former Top Soldier," *The New York Times*, May 12, 1998, ProQuest.

⁶⁸ United States, *The Secretary of the Army's Senior Review Panel Report on Sexual Harassment* (Washington, DC: Dept. of the Army, 1997), 61.

⁶⁹ Natasha Schoonover interview.

⁷⁰ 1997 *Senior Review Panel Report*, 3.

Yet these recommendations failed to achieve the desired results. The Army's focus on actions after the fact minimized the difficulty female soldiers felt in being comfortable enough to report these crimes. In fact, several years later, Claudia Kennedy, then the highest ranking female officer in the Army, and the first woman to attain the rank of Lieutenant General, unintentionally exposed the complexity of the issues that she and her panel had attempted to resolve with reporting. Just months before she was selected to serve as a member of the panel, General Kennedy was sexually assaulted by another male General.⁷¹ Yet, Kennedy did not report because the Army was in the middle of the Aberdeen scandal, and she knew that "it would be an embarrassment" for the Army in a time of "damage control."⁷² She never expected to run into the assaulter again. However, three years later, she learned that the Army was promoting the male officer to a position as the Deputy Inspector General of the Army, and in this capacity, he would have oversight of all sexual conduct by officers in the Army.⁷³ As a result, she reported her assault, the offender was not promoted, and Kennedy was made a target of ridicule by some in the media, received hate mail and retired soon after.⁷⁴ While the Army found her story credible, the fact that even the highest ranking female officer in the military did not immediately report the criminal activity against her, exposed how its culture required, but failed, at far-reaching change.

By 2012, the continuing allegations of sexual misconduct revealed that Army policies failed at reigning in widespread problems, with not only sexual harassment, but also assault and

⁷¹ Lieutenant General Claudia Kennedy with Malcolm McConnell, *Generally Speaking* (New York: Warner Books, 2001), 166.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 167.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 187.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 190-203.

rape. Female soldiers continued to testify to Congress about rape and assaults, regardless of where they were assigned, but also in the warzone. The enduring reluctance of Army leaders to solve issues of sexual harassment, assault and rape reveals how lack of resolve by military leadership (that prides itself on a disciplined force) results in undisciplined troops who have not taken this issue seriously. According to Brigadier General John S. Brown, one major obstacle has been that the Army's male leadership never took ownership of the problem of sexual assault or rape because "they did not think much about it."⁷⁵ The responsibility given to commanders to deal with issues of discrimination also provided them with broad discretion to deal with complaints. Reports of sexual harassment, however, reflected negatively on their leadership within their unit, so commanders had ample incentive to downplay the problem, so there has been limited progress in eliminating the military culture of sexual harassment and abuse.⁷⁶ In one example, Kayla Williams was deployed to a remote site in Iraq, when one man in her unit approached her on guard duty and tried to force himself on her, but she was able to prevent any assault, and he apologized. Williams felt that she needed to report him, but understood that filing a report would be "risky" to her and that the men in the unit would take his side, and besides her, they were all men. In the end, she discussed the incident with her supervisor, asking him to deal with it unofficially and the perpetrator was reassigned. Nevertheless, she was harassed about it by other soldiers and called a "whore," so she withdrew emotionally from the unit.⁷⁷ Even an

⁷⁵ John S. Brown, "What Aunt Elizabeth Would Have Said, (Views of Elizabeth P. Hoisington on Sexual Assault in the Military)," *Army*, 63, no. 8 (2103): 71.

⁷⁶ Rachel N. Lipari and Anita R. Lancaster, Defense Manpower Data Center, DMDC Report No. 2003-26, *Armed Forces 2002 Sexual Harassment Survey* (Arlington, Virginia: Department of Defense, 2003), vii.

⁷⁷ Williams, 207-215.

informal complaint led men who once treated her well to dismiss her as “a bitch or a slut.”⁷⁸ The Army’s policies direct all commanders to strictly enforce incidents of harassment, but these directives have failed to alter the incidents of harassment in the Army.

In 2013, the Secretary of Defense focused on how to better implement reporting of sexual assault and abuse, so he directed all services to set up new reporting systems that included advocates for the victims and mechanisms to transfer or reassign the alleged perpetrator.⁷⁹ In 2014, the Army established Special Victims’ Counsel or SVC in 53 locations worldwide to provide victims with “legal advice and representation” in cases of rape or assault.⁸⁰ While these measure address some of the issues that women endure by not being supported, they do not address female soldier’s reluctance to report incidents in the first place. They have great fear of retaliation. As some women noted, “when it comes to day to day life, your team is what counts.”⁸¹ “Everything is intimately bound up with the people on your team.”⁸² For good or for ill. You have to trust them, but they can also make your life a struggle. For some female soldiers, taking a hit for the team overrode other considerations.⁸³ One of the Army’s core values is based on unit

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 214.

⁷⁹ Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel Memorandum to the Secretaries of all Military Departments, “Sexual Assault and Prevention Response,” August 14, 2013, http://www.sapr.mil/public/docs/reports/FY14_POTUS/FY14_DoD_Report_to_POTUS_SecDef_Initiatives.pdf (accessed August 6, 2016).

⁸⁰ “SHARP: Special Victim Counsel Program,” The Official Focus of the U.S. Army, December 2, 2013, https://www.army.mil/standto/archive_2013-12-02 (accessed June 23, 2016).

⁸¹ Williams, 57.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 58.

⁸³ Natasha Schoonover interview.

cohesion. As a result, sexual harassment disrupts the unit regardless of whether or not it was reported.

Since the 1980s, DACOWITS pressed the Department of Defense for realistic solutions in solving the crisis of sexual assault and rape, aware that there had been relatively no success in combatting soldiers' criminal behavior. Their 2001 surveys reflected that most servicewomen gave the military "low marks" on the effectiveness of policies to prevent sexual abuse.⁸⁴ With the support of DACOWITS, in 2013 Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), introduced legislation to remove sexual assault and rape cases from the chain of command, placing authority with trained legal experts in the military justice system. However, for three consecutive years, Gillibrand's bill has been blocked in the Senate by legislators fearful of taking any authority away from military commanders.⁸⁵ As in earlier eras, coalitions and alliances continue to form to fight for servicewomen. DACOWITS, the Women's Resource and Education Institute (WREI), and the National Women's Law continue to work for the end of sexual harassment, rape and assault, but new groups have joined in recent years. Female veterans formed the Service Women's Action Network (SWAN), Alliance for National Defense, and the Human Rights Campaign also joined the battle against Military Sexual Trauma.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ "Sexual Assault and Harassment in the Military," Presented to the Members of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), September, 22-23, 2011, p. 8.

⁸⁵ "Military Justice Improvement Act: DACOWITS Hearing," at Kirsten Gillibrand United States Senator for New York, September 27, 2013, <http://www.gillibrand.senate.gov/mjia/dacowits> (accessed August 3, 2016); Tumulty, "Senate Vote Blocked on Gillibrand's Military Sex Assault Proposal," LOHUD, *The Journal News*, June 14, 2016, <http://www.lohud.com/story/news/2016/06/14/senate-vote-blocked-gillibrands-military-sex-assault-proposal/85869282/> (accessed August 3, 2016).

⁸⁶ ACLU, "The ACLU's Work to End Discrimination in the Armed Forces," ACLU Military Fact Sheet, April 2013, <https://www.aclu.org/other/aclus-work-end-discrimination-armed-forces?redirect=aclus-work-end-discrimination-armed-forces> (accessed June 21, 2014).

More successful were advocacy groups in repealing the 1993 Defense Department's DADT policy and federal law. Women in the military, along with a broad coalition including the ACLU, Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, Lambda Legal Defense Fund, and the Human Rights Campaign worked aggressively with suits and lobbying legislators for the repeal. Whereas a 1993 study of military personnel found that most believed openly serving gays and lesbians would disrupt units, by 2010, most accepted them.⁸⁷ Especially egregious, and in apparent disregard for the policy, was that between 1993 and 2008, the military discharged more than 13,000 military members on the basis of homosexuality.⁸⁸ In 2010, based in part on gays and lesbian's exemplary wartime service and pressure from service members and advocacy groups, Congress repealed the federal law. By 2011, the Department of Defense removed the policy, permitting homosexuals to serve openly in the military. Today, gays and lesbians can serve openly in the military, but this would not have been possible without homosexual soldiers suing for reinstatement since the 1970s. Both Dusty Pruitt and Miriam Ben-Shalom's appeals were active until the 1990s, just before the implementation of DADT. They, along with other service men and women, laid the foundation for success. Subsequent public relations efforts gained media attention and increased public support for their rights. Additionally, court litigation and pressure on Congress from advocacy groups.

In 1987, General Pat Foote, a long-time advocate for the expansion of women's roles, including combat roles, noted that "any battlefield of the future will be so fluid, there will be no

⁸⁷ National Defense Research Institute, *Sexual Orientation and U.S. Military Personnel Policy: An Update of RAND's 1993 Study* (Santa Monica: Rand Corp, 2010), 253.

⁸⁸ James Dao, "Discharged for Being Gay, Veterans Seek to Reenlist," *New York Times*, September 4, 2011, ProQuest.

safe place anywhere, which will force a moment of truth for all the services.”⁸⁹ She made this comment before any female soldier had ever fired a weapon during hostilities. The moment of truth came after female soldiers proved themselves in combat support roles in Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2012, backed by the ACLU and SWAN, four female soldiers, veterans of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and a separate group of four female law students both filed suit against the Secretary of Defense for admittance to combat arms jobs and units.⁹⁰ Three months later, Secretary Leon Panetta rescinded the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule, instructing all branches of the military to develop plans to open all “jobs, units, and schools,” to women within thirty days.⁹¹ The Army and other services opened new positions to women in stages.

In 2016, the Secretary of the Defense announced that all jobs in the military, including ground combat, were available to women.⁹² With the exclusion policies removed, the Army no

⁸⁹ Janet Howells-Tierney, “Women’s Advancements in Military Hailed by General,” *European Stars & Stripes*, March 12, 1987.

⁹⁰ “Legal Challenge Filed Against Policy Excluding Women from Combat,” November 27, 2012, ACLU, <https://www.aclu.org/news/legal-challenge-filed-against-policy-excluding-women-combat> (accessed August 3, 2016); James Dao, “Servicewomen File Suit Over Direct Combat Ban,” *New York Times*, November 27, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed August 5, 2016). The backstory on how and why the female soldiers decided to sue can be found at: Brian McNeil, “After Challenging Military Ban on Women in Combat, Molly Pitcher Project’s Dreams Are Realized,” May 15, 2013, The University of Virginia School of Law, http://www.law.virginia.edu/html/news/2013_spr/pitcher_update.htm (accessed August 5, 2016).

⁹¹ “Department of Defense Opens all Military Combat Jobs to Women with No Exceptions,” American Civil Liberties Union, December 3, 2015, <https://www.aclu.org/news/department-defense-opens-all-military-combat-jobs-women-no-exceptions> (accessed August 5, 2016).

⁹² There were a series of steps that the DOD and Army took before implementing these changes. First, the Army removed the collocate language from its policy in 2012. The DOD rescinded the Direct Combat Definition and Assignment Rule in 2013. Between 2013 and 2016, the Army began setting gender neutral standards for all positions. David F. Burrelli, *Women in Combat: Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2011) 8-9.

longer defined “combat roles” as the exclusive domain of men; instead, “combat” became a place for all soldiers. In the 1970s, most women had very few female mentors as they entered male-dominated units, making it extremely difficult for them find role models for success as a female soldier. By contrast, in 2016, the Army prioritized integrating a leadership cadre of female officers and enlisted in combat arms jobs. For example, in April 2016, Kirsten Griest, one of the first two women to pass the Rangers’ course, became the first female infantry officer.⁹³ In subsequent months, when the Army assigned junior ranking female soldiers to combat jobs and units, the Army already had women’s leadership in place. Still, history suggests that the women integrating all levels of combat arms jobs will face many challenges. While they will have male allies, some men will resent their presence and challenge their leadership. Women soldier’s entrance into combat arms did not end the process of integrating women into the Army. It began a new era.

⁹³ Dan Lamothe, “Army’s First Female Infantry Officer is Capt. Kristen Griest, Ranger School Graduate,” *Washington Post*, April 27, 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com> (accessed August 4, 2016).

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