From WACs to Rangers
Women in the U.S. Military since World War II

William A. Taylor

Abstract: This article examines women's participation in U.S. military service from World War II to the present. It argues that there have been five major milestones that have expanded opportunities for women within military service and that these momentous changes have revealed a dichotomy in causation between national need based on personnel shortages and the pursuit of equal opportunity. As a result, this article contributes to an informed understanding of the dynamic and contested nature of military service.

Keywords: All-Volunteer Force, Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, DACOWITS, draft, equal opportunity, military occupational specialty, MOS, military service, national need, Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Selective Service System, Women's Armed Services Integration Act

It had been a grueling journey, but they had made it to graduation day. The summer air was heavy, humid, and stale, but it could not stifle the anticipation that they felt. As the ceremony commenced, First Lieutenants Kristen Griest and Shaye Haver proudly reflected on their graduation from U.S. Army Ranger School at Fort Benning, Georgia. These two Army officers were West

William A. Taylor is an award-winning associate professor of security studies and previous department chair in the Kay Bailey Hutchison Center for Security Studies at Angelo State University in San Angelo, TX. Taylor is the author of three books: *Contemporary Security Issues in Africa* (2018); *Military Service and American Democracy: From World War II to the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars* (2016); and *Every Citizen a Soldier: The Campaign for Universal Military Training after World War II* (2014), which won the Crader Family Book Prize Honorable Mention in 2015. Taylor has won 14 national fellowships and research grants and won the 2016 Angelo State University President's Award for Faculty Excellence in Research/Creative Endeavor and the 2016 Texas Tech University System Chancellor's Council Distinguished Research Award.

MCU Journal Special Issue
2018
www.usmcu.edu/mcupress
https://doi.org/10.21140/mcuj.2018si04

Point graduates; Griest served as a military police officer and Haver flew Boeing AH-64 Apache attack helicopters. Griest and Haver also were among the first women to attend the intense infantry combat tactics course, which the Army had previously restricted to males. On 21 August 2015, after two months of exhausting road marches, demanding obstacle courses, and extreme physical training through woodland, mountain, and swamp terrain, they became the first two women to complete the school and earn the distinctive, respected, and coveted Ranger tabs to wear on their uniforms. It was an immense personal achievement, but it also marked a new era for women in the U.S. military.[1]

Women have served in the U.S. military for a long time and with much distinction.[2] Roughly 34,500 American women served during World War I. Of these, 22,000 women served in the Army Nurse Corps and 12,500 females served as secretaries, radio electricians, translators, draftsmen, and camouflage designers.[3] Approximately 350,000 women served in the U.S. military during World War II in a variety of capacities. Because of the large influx of women, the Armed Services created new organizations to manage their service within the larger, male-dominated military. In 1941, the Army established the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), and in 1943 changed the name to the Women's Army Corps (WAC); contemporary observers colloquially referred to women in this organization as WACs.[4] In 1941, the Navy established Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES), and two years later the Coast Guard established the U.S. Coast Guard Women's Reserve (SPARs), an acronym created from combination of the first letters of the group's Latin motto, *Semper Paratus*, and its English translation, "Always Ready."[5] In 1943, the Marines created the Marine Corps Women's Reserve and eventually used the broad term *Women in the Marines*, and females serving in the Army Air Corps first served as Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs), which later became part of an organization unimaginatively called Women in the Air Force (WAF) once that Service became independent in 1947.[6]

The 350,000 women who served in the U.S. military during World War II represented approximately 2.3 percent of the total American force, an important but temporary duty in the minds of most Americans, including some of these women.[7] As a result, their service freed men to fight a two-front war, and that global conflict dramatically altered the perception and reality of women in the U.S. military in new ways. Women had served before, but the U.S. military had not utilized women in such large numbers and doing so spurred the creation of separate organizations with attendant heightened visibility of women's roles. Even with seismic shifts due to military necessity, personnel policy still relegated women to an auxiliary status that was by definition not permanent. Women's service within these auxiliary branches ended six months after the cessation of hostilities.

As World War II demonstrated, even though women have served in the U.S. military in large numbers and with great merit, the policies that have governed their service often limited their full participation and denied them equal opportunities to serve in combat arms and thus advance to the higher ranks.[8] Since World War II, there have been enormous changes for women in the U.S. military, evidenced by the stark contrast between women serving as WACs in World War II to women now qualified to serve as U.S. Army Rangers and the ultimate milestone that all military occupations, including combat specialties (also known as MOSs), are now open to women. These opportunities for women in the U.S. military have emerged through a series of initiatives that transformed policies regulating their service. This article explores the major milestones for women in the U.S. military from their inclusion as permanent members of the military in 1948 to the opening of combat specialties to women in 2015. Throughout this period, women have found more openings and become a larger proportion of the U.S. military, increasing from roughly 2 percent during World War II to approximately 15 percent in 2017.[9]

We examine five specific milestones—the Women's Armed Services Integration Act (1948), the creation of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS, 1951), the advent of the All-Volunteer Force (1973), the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces (1992), and the opening of combat occupations and units to women (2015)—spanning seven decades that have fundamentally altered the nature of service for women as well as the U.S. military itself. This history exposes an important dichotomy regarding opportunities for women, especially the balance between national need versus access to one of the few aspects of service dominated primarily by men. Moreover, these five changes in policy have demonstrated that the modern moment emerged because of both internal and external forces.

In looking at these policies together, it becomes clear that military necessity and national need opened the door for greater participation of women, a foundation that civilians built upon to expand opportunities for female servicemembers. The first three milestones—the Women's Armed Services Integration Act, the creation of the DACOWITS, and the advent of the All-Volunteer Force—demonstrate national need and reveal that the military fought broader social norms of the Cold War era regarding women's roles in the workplace. At the same time that American society defined women's roles in terms of Cold War domesticity, confining women to the duty of mother or wife in image if not reality, the military sought to increase their responsibilities. Albeit for pragmatic motives, the military needed greater female participation in the military even while it was still overwhelmingly biased in favor of service by men.

Recruiting more women to fill the ranks for the military—as clerks, tech-

nicians, and medical personnel—became the most significant indicator, and driver, of change. The last two milestones—the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces and the opening of combat occupations and units to women—demonstrated a far different dynamic. Policy makers extended the scope of women's assignment for political purposes based on the meaning of citizenship, often in concert with the social expectations of a large segment of Americans. Ensuring that women had equal opportunities within military service became a paramount factor for some, while still hotly contested among others who openly question the issue of combat effectiveness. The last and current generations of Americans generally accept increased involvement of women in other sectors, and leaders adjusted certain aspects of policy and service to ensure commensurate changes for women in the Services.

Consequently, a stark contrast emerged. While both periods witnessed dramatic redefinitions in context of their social milieus, they did so in distinct ways. The first three milestones focused on national need and how women could fill roles to meet it, while the period of the last two milestones hinged on the meaning of full citizenship by expanding opportunities for women to ensure equality of access. As a result, women in the U.S. military evolved from serving in auxiliary units, such as the WACs during WWII, to qualifying for and seeking positions in combat units, such as the Army Rangers in 2015. Soon thereafter, civilian leaders opened all military assignments to women in most of the Services.

Women's Armed Services Integration Act

On 3 June 1948, Congress passed the Women's Armed Services Integration Act; President Harry S. Truman signed it into law on 12 June 1948.[10] The law had positive and negative impacts on opportunities for women in the U.S. military. During the First and Second World Wars, women on the home front and in the military functioned as a reserve labor force, allowing them to defy social norms for the good of the war effort. The 1948 law, however, transitioned women from auxiliary to permanent service but also constrained their opportunities. The law placed a ceiling of 2 percent on the number of women who could serve and restricted the highest rank that those women could attain to lieutenant colonel or commander in both active duty and Reserve forces. The act allowed a woman to serve as a colonel or captain if she was the director of the Women's Army Corps or WAVES, but that rank was only temporary and tied to that specific assignment. Once she left the billet, she returned to her previous rank.

Thus, Congress and President Truman made a change in military demographics without making women equal to men in access to billets or ranks.[11] Four days after Truman signed the law, WAVES director Captain Joy Bright Hancock, head of WAC Colonel Mary Hallaren, director of Women in the

Marines Major Julia E. Hamblet, and director of WAF Lieutenant Colonel Geraldine May held a joint press conference and outlined adjustments wrought by the new law. Colonel Hallaren fielded questions and cautioned that even though the new law would make women's role in the American military permanent, assignments for women would remain much the same. When asked if women would now serve in such new roles as pilots, she indicated, "No pilots for the moment."[12]

A series of enlistment ceremonies for women occurred throughout summer and fall of 1948, marking their transition into permanent service. General Omar N. Bradley, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, administered the oath of enlistment to Technician Third Grade Vietta M. Bates of Camden, New Jersey, making Bates the first enlisted women to serve in the regular Army.[13] Numerous enlistment ceremonies occurred for the other Services, which for the optimistic seemed full of promise to women denied permanent billets.[14] "The lure of foreign travel, all expenses paid, steady work, and no more inflation worries, is inspiring thousands of young women all over the country in a new rush to the colors," Josephine Ripley reported for the *Christian Science Monitor*. In an era when most women were supposed to be considering motherhood as their main social role, Ripley noted that the new law "opened up a brand new, lifetime career for women."[15]

Nona Brown, a reporter for the *New York Times*, explained the impact of the legislation: "When 412 young military recruits started hupping and saluting in three new training schools this fall, something new was definitely added to the American way of life. These recruits were women—girls, really—the first in the nation's history to sign up for three-year hitches in the regular military services."[16] The three schools included the Great Lakes Naval Training Station near Chicago, the Army's Camp Lee in Virginia, and Lackland Air Force Base (now Joint Base San Antonio), Texas. After their training, women were able to serve in the military as a career, rather than solely as short-term emergency reserves. Clearly, despite social norms, women responded to the changes as did the military by making room for them at the various training camps.

The Creation of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services

The creation of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, or DACOWITS, was another major milestone regarding women in the U.S. military. George C. Marshall, secretary of defense in 1951, created DACOWITS.[17] Marshall explained, "For some time I have felt the desirability of establishing in my office a policy advisory committee of leading American women to furnish guidance to the Department of Defense on problems relating to women in the Services."[18] To implement his policy vision, Marshall chose his close friend and

confidant, Anna M. Rosenberg, assistant secretary of defense for manpower and reserve affairs. Marshall boasted that Rosenberg "keenly desires that such a committee be established and the committee would work with her in the accomplishment of its objectives." He added that the committee would "perform a distinct and much needed service to the Department and the nation."[19] Likewise, Rosenberg was a staunch supporter of Marshall on a range of personnel issues, including women in the U.S. military and universal military training, among many others.[20]

Once he formed the committee and she took the lead with it, Marshall and Rosenberg appointed 50 prominent women to serve annually as members, and the group held approximately four meetings per year, providing oversight and guidance on the entire spectrum of issues impacting women in the U.S. military. The establishment of DACOWITS resulted in women in American military service receiving attention from senior policy makers and the many renowned members that filled the committee's ranks every year thereafter.[21] The 1948 Women's Armed Services Integration Act and the 1950 outbreak of the Korean War undoubtedly triggered DACOWITS, as the former heightened the role of women in the U.S. military even as it constrained the number of women allowed to serve and the ranks that they could attain, while the latter strained total available military personnel, leading to arguments at that time that increased recruiting of women would allow more men to fight on the Korean Peninsula. As a result, policy makers considered the role of women in American military service in a way previously ignored.

A little more than one year later, Mary I. Barber, DACOWITS member and well-known food consultant from Battle Creek, Michigan, reflected on the committee's first year in a lecture given to the 35th Annual Meeting of the American Dietetic Association in the Minneapolis Municipal Auditorium. Discussing DACOWITS and explaining that the group's members "represent fields of interest of especial [*sic*] value in studying the needs of women who have answered the call to military service," Barber articulated the group's goals as well as its interpretation at that time of women in the U.S. military. As the Korean War raged, much of their discourse centered on recruiting women into the military to allow more men to serve on the front lines. Barber divulged, "Mrs. Rosenberg has indicated that unless women volunteer for military service, men will have to be recalled for the second or even third time."[22] It is instructive to remember that policy makers such as Marshall and Rosenberg were responsible for military personnel in its totality, including men and women. Rosenberg related women in the U.S. military directly to men because there was an overall requirement for personnel: she argued that every woman who served in the military would release a man who could then report to commanders in Korea. Wartime requirements drove attention

toward military service by women and forced leaders to consider policy revisions as a result.

Barber also articulated both "hurdles" and "advantages" of women in the U.S. military. The hurdles included "lack of prestige (this is rapidly changing)," the "belief that [a] women's place is in the home (young girls often get more supervision in service than in the home)," "objection to regimentation (no more than in summer camps and boarding schools)," "living conditions in some installations (one job of the committee is to inspect, report and recommend on this subject)," "career opportunities (greater than many civilian jobs for high school girls)," and "objections of men in the family and of boy friends [*sic*]." The advantages encompassed a variety of differing motivations, which included:

> [a] chance for continuing education at college level . . . training for a career in one of many fields . . . [a] healthful life . . . [the] opportunity for leadership . . . good pay with medical and dental care . . . challenging work . . . patriotic service, [and the] chance to share the sacrifice being made by the young men of our country.[23]

Barber's lengthy exposition illustrated the positives and negatives confronting women in the U.S. military, as perceived by some observers at that time.

DACOWITS focused on these important issues. The group sought to outline challenges and opportunities for women in the U.S. military and to promulgate ways to overcome them. As a result, the group continued "to create public acceptance of and respect for women in uniform, to improve the quality of enlistees by careful screening, to inspect installations where service women are on duty, to make constructive recommendations regarding their health and nutrition, education, career training, recreation, and housing. An over-all [*sic*] recruitment drive is a continuing project." The committee provided relentless emphasis, analysis, and oversight on improving the experience of women in the U.S. military and highlighting prospects for progress. As a result, policy makers at the highest levels increasingly noticed DACOWITS's work specifically and women in the U.S. military generally:

> Tangible recognition of Women in the Armed Services was evidenced by a commemorative stamp issued on September 11[, 1952,] with an impressive ceremony at the White House. Most of the largest and many smaller women's organizations are cooperating with our Committee. Public opinion polls show that attitudes are changing and improving toward Women in the Armed Services. Material has been prepared—leaflets, movies, television and radio programs, to keep people informed and alert on the subject.[24]

DACOWITS, as demonstrated by the commemorative stamp and White House ceremony, facilitated many activities promoting women in American military service.

DACOWITS's major accomplishment was its steadfast public-relations campaign to promote women in the U.S. military and persistent policy oversight to advocate equal opportunities for them. Of course, many policy makers at this time held paternalistic attitudes and linked the issue of women in the U.S. military with their support of their male counterparts. Barber argued, "The Korean situation shows no sign of being brought to an end. Women are needed to release men from duty in this country, for duty overseas."[25] For policy makers at that time, there was a direct and tangible connection between women and men in the American military. Those in charge of military personnel policy had to fill specific personnel requirements. Therefore, they argued that having more women in the U.S. military, although predominantly in support functions stateside, freed men to fill other military positions, primarily combat assignments overseas. Military leaders teamed the two in a practical, albeit patronizing, way. Yet this fit the culture of the time and allowed women, who supported or disagreed with gendered roles, to have access to military service.

The Women's Armed Services Integration Act in 1948 and the creation of DACOWITS in 1951 portended a partial shift toward integrating women into the American military. Progress for those who sought it, unfortunately, stalled for the following two decades, because the presence of the draft during the Cold War satiated the demand for additional personnel. When shortages of personnel occurred, Lewis B. Hershey, director of the Selective Service System, simply increased the quota during draft calls. Women continued to serve in the U.S. military during this time at roughly 2 percent of the total force. Approximately 48,700 women served during the Korean War, and females filled many positions in the United States during the Vietnam War when there was a shortage of men to fill these positions—7,500 women served in Vietnam, primarily as nurses.[26] World War II had greatly expanded the role of women in the U.S. military in a reserve capacity, but afterward the draft dominated the early Cold War environment, which alleviated the shortage of personnel and therefore diminished the perceived need among military policy makers for additional personnel, including women. As a result, the draft also limited changes to military personnel policy to recruit women in larger numbers. The transition to the All-Volunteer Force, or AVF, removed the pressure-relief valve of the draft and prompted military leaders to search for additional recruits. As a result, women in the U.S. military received heightened attention once again.

Advent of the All-Volunteer Force

Opportunities for women in the U.S. military fundamentally changed with the

transition to the AVF. On 17 October 1968, then-presidential candidate Richard M. Nixon made a campaign pledge to end the draft. "I say it's time we took a new look at the draft—at the question of permanent conscription in a free society," he vowed. "If we find we can reasonably meet our peacetime manpower needs by other means—then we should prepare for the day when the draft can be phased out of American life."[27] Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird later identified this revelation as the beginning of the end for the draft. To Nixon, the main challenge concerning military service in a democracy was determining the best method to keep and maintain force levels. He publicly questioned how such a goal could be accomplished with the draft and concluded that voluntary recruitment was the superlative option. Therefore, who served and how they did so became prominent questions related to American military service.

Nixon hoped to leverage his promise to end the draft to appeal to young voters in the 1968 presidential election.[28] The draft had become increasingly unpopular due to a range of reasons. "A variety of student and other deferments had undermined confidence in the fairness of the draft system," admitted Laird. "For seven long years, from age 19 to 26, young men endured the uncertainty of an inequitable draft system which selected a few among the many who were subject to it. This prolonged term of uncertainty made it extremely difficult for them to plan for their education, career, and family." This situation meant that not everyone served but that there was great uncertainty for all because of the lingering exposure to draft calls for seven years. In addition to uncertainty, inconsistency cast a dark shadow. One significant problem with the draft was the widely perceived inequity of deferments. "The chance of being drafted varied by state and local community, and by one's economic status," Laird conceded. "Many young men entered college solely to avoid the draft, and their interaction with the educational community was often unsatisfactory. Those who could not afford college were drafted and felt the sting of discrimination."[29] Thus, the draft impacted Americans quite differently. If a young man had the means to go to college, then the draft receded in impact for him. If not, then he was much more likely to receive a draft notice and perhaps feel the economically based discriminatory nature of the draft system.[30] Additionally, local variations created inequalities based on geographical location because the system was not standardized nationally.

In addition to uncertainty and inconsistency, the military increasingly used the draft to meet the heightened mobilization demands of the Vietnam War, making the draft more important for increasing manpower than previously during the early Cold War. Laird explained this new emphasis on increasing manpower due to the Vietnam War: "In the years preceding this Administration, draft calls were increased to supply manpower for the massive build-up of troops in Vietnam." This correlation with the Vietnam War's manpower re-

quirements were reflected in the fact that personnel needs skyrocketed due to the Vietnam War, and so too did draft calls. This dynamic accentuated uncertainty and inconsistency, thereby making the draft increasingly unpopular. A brief survey of draft calls during this time proves the point. In 1964, the draft called 108,000 men to compulsory military service. The following year, that number more than doubled to 233,000 draftees. In 1966, draft calls skyrocketed to 365,000 soldiers. In 1967, draft calls temporarily dipped to 219,000 but spiked again the following year to 299,000 men. In addition to draftees, the Selective Service System also produced draft-motivated volunteers, individuals who volunteered to retain control over their military service and assignment. According to Laird, "In addition to those drafted, more than half of the young men enlisting in military service did so because of the draft, not because they are true volunteers." This caused "thousands more [men to] enlist . . . in the Guard and Reserve because they perceived these organizations to be without a mission, undeployable, and a safe haven from the draft and the war in Vietnam."[31] The draft, essentially, ensured that the Department of Defense (DOD) had all the men it needed for an unpopular war, keeping women's participation low and almost invisible to the American public.

For Nixon and Laird, the solution to ending the draft meant converting the military to a voluntary force made up of American citizens. For the AVF to be viable, however, military leaders needed to make military service increasingly attractive to potential recruits and expand opportunities for underrepresented groups, especially women. Laird ensured that "we are determined that the All-Volunteer Force shall have broad appeal to young men and women of all racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds." Moreover, he noted that the DOD had also reinforced the message that this meant drawing potential recruits from both sexes by emphasizing "equality of opportunity for all uniformed members."[32] To accomplish the transition to the AVF, Nixon and Laird shifted focus toward equality of opportunity within military service, resulting in an action and reaction cycle. Critics unfairly contended that the AVF would be either all African American, all poor, or both. In response, the DOD sought to ensure that the AVF was representative of American society, as Laird's language above articulated.

Military leaders also recognized that in order to make the AVF sustainable, they would need to expand opportunities for women. Early in the transition, the DOD predicted that there would be significant shortfalls in male recruiting and identified increased female recruiting as one potential offset: "Current trends indicate that a series of vigorous actions must be taken to avoid enlisted shortages" by intensifying recruitment and making the current force better trained but also "by selectively replacing military men in jobs that can be performed as well and as economically by civilians and military women."[33] The

DOD pointed toward women as one way to offset the absence of male draftees after the advent of the AVF. Policy makers sought improved retention as one offset and increased opportunities for women in military service as another. Because their views often patronized women, and for the most part did not yet envision complete equality for them in American military service, they started a process that would continue. Laird explained to Nixon that

> many support-type jobs now filled by military men can be performed effectively and economically by civilians and military women. The expanded use of these alternate sources of manpower can reduce the requirement for male recruits.[34]

As a result, the transition to the AVF spurred military policy makers to increase the recruitment of women, albeit with the explicit intention of placing them into support functions. These policy makers argued that doing so served two important functions: it lessened the overall number of male recruits required in the absence of the draft, and it allowed more of those male recruits to serve in combat functions instead of support roles.

Using civilians and military women were two important factors to end the draft and maintain force levels, an approach that resulted in unintended consequences. One way to attract female recruits was to open up more military jobs for women. Doing so, however, provided additional pressure to open even more occupations, especially ones that many policy makers at that time did not envision ever opening, such as combat roles. Debates regarding military service prompted alterations in personnel policy in the 1970s. Demand for more people in military service during conflict forced consideration of the use of additional personnel from underutilized groups. These dynamics spurred expanded opportunity and future change. One part of Laird's plan to make the AVF feasible was to double the number of women in the U.S. military. Laird divulged the strategy to increase personnel:

> the Services . . . prepar[ed] plans which would nearly double the number of enlisted women in the Services from 31,000 to 59,000 by June 1977, with the addition of another 3,000 female officers. . . . These plans will be implemented to the extent they are effective and feasible.[35]

The adoption of the AVF created a significant shift toward expanded opportunity in American military service, probably far more than most envisioned at that time. This milestone, however, initiated the process of wider access to various military occupational specialties, which would gain momentum later.

As the AVF survived its initial trials, other efforts took center stage. In

1987, the DOD established a Task Force on Women in the Military "as a direct result of continuing concerns raised by the DACOWITS about the full integration of women in the armed forces."[36] The task force evaluated a range of issues related to women in the U.S. military, including attitudes toward women, combat exclusion policies, and career development, among others; combat exclusion policies were chief among them. Even with some progress in enlarging prospects for women, numerous barriers remained. In 1988, the General Accounting Office found that approximately one-half of all active duty military jobs were still closed to women.[37] These male-only occupations included both combat and noncombat positions. Even so, the task force interpreted its mission in a narrow sense: "The Task Force mission on this topic was to evaluate the impact of 'consistency in application' of exclusion statutes and policies rather than questioning the combat exclusion itself."[38] While events spurred military policy makers to ensure that the exclusion policies were uniform in implementation, it failed to generate a wholesale reconsideration at that time of their necessity, desirability, or even appropriateness.

In January 1988, the task force issued its final report and declared, "Total force readiness requires that all military members, male and female, have an opportunity to develop their talent to the fullest. Because women are a minority of people in uniform (about 10 percent), special efforts are essential to establish that opportunity."[39] Key among its recommendations, the task force urged Secretary of Defense Frank C. Carlucci to take bold action:

> Issue guidance to the Secretaries of the Military Departments on the definition of combat missions which excludes women from combat positions and units in each Service as required or implied by statutes. In addition, the guidance should state that noncombat units can be also closed to women on grounds of risk of exposure to direct combat, hostile fire, or capture, provided that the type, degree, and duration of risk is equal to or greater than that experienced by associated combat units (of similar land, sea or air type) in the same theaters of operation.[40]

The task force standardized combat exclusion policies across the military Services; it also reinforced them. As a result, the Department of Defense on 3 February 1988 adopted the "Risk Rule," which specified that

> risks of direct combat, exposure to hostile fire, or capture are proper criteria for closing non-combat positions or units to women, when the type, degree, and duration of such risks are equal to or greater than the combat units with which they are normally associated within a given theater of operations.[41]

Carlucci further specified that "if the risk of non-combat units or positions is less than comparable land, air or sea combat units with which they are associated, then they should be open to women."[42] Even though Carlucci's order standardized combat exclusions for women, many observers still praised it for opening numerous noncombat occupations. The *Washington Post* characterized the alteration as "an expansion of job opportunities for women in the Air Force and Marine Corps, including the assignment of female Marines to embassy guard duty."[43] Carlucci praised the Navy's prior efforts to make approximately 9,900 new occupations available to women and ordered the Air Force to allow women to serve in an additional 3,600 military assignments, including Red Horse (rapid engineer deployable heavy operational repair squadron engineers) and Mobile Aerial Port squadrons.

The Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces

The Persian Gulf War (1990–91) produced another opportunity for women to serve in the U.S. military.[44] The massive mobilization for this war refocused American society on military service, especially the issue of women in the U.S. military.[45] On 5 December 1991, President George H. W. Bush signed Public Law 102-190, also known as the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993. Part D, titled "Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces," included the establishment of a panel "to be known as the Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces." As a result, the Persian Gulf War influenced military personnel policy, especially regarding women. Prior to the war, there were restrictions on females serving on combatant ships; the commission's recommendations would eventually overturn this long-standing prohibition. The timing of this commission was no coincidence. As before, major military personnel policy changes often coincided with war.

Practical concerns dictated policy, and wars focused American society on military service, including opportunities and challenges. The Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces was no different. Its general duties were to "assess the laws and policies restricting the assignment of female service members" and "make findings on such matters." The commission evaluated assignment policies, specifically looking at expanding opportunity and the implications of such developments. Its members analyzed a wide range of considerations related to women in the military, including combat effectiveness, public attitudes, legal matters, the Selective Service System, required modifications to facilities, and such personnel issues as recruitment, retention, and promotion.[46] The commission had to submit its final report to President Bush no later than 15 November 1992, which he would then transmit to Congress by 15 December 1992.

Robert T. Herres, a U.S. Air Force retired general, chaired the commission. Herres was a U.S. Naval Academy graduate but received his commission in the U.S. Air Force. Throughout his lengthy military career, he had served as commander of 8th Air Force; commander-in-chief of U.S. Space Command; and vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff when he retired after 36 years of military service. The commission's 15 members also included Major General Mary Elizabeth Clarke, U.S. Army (Retired), who had served as commandant of the Military Police Corps and Chemical Corps; commanded Fort McClellan, Alabama; and had been director of the Women's Army Corps. Like Herres, she had served in the military for more than 36 years. Charles C. Moskos, professor of sociology at Northwestern University, chairman of the Inter-University Seminar on Armed Forces and Society, and a former draftee, also served as a member.[47]

The commission conducted the most extensive research effort into women in the military in American history. Its members recounted that "research has included surveys of active duty military personnel and the general public, comments from over 3,000 retired Generals and Admirals, review of thousands of documents, and site visits to 31 military installations." The commission's activities and scope were vast. Its members examined an enormous amount in a relatively short period of time and produced an exhaustive study of policies regarding women in the U.S. military. The commission also surveyed all retired general and flag officers: "In September, the Commission approved and mailed a questionnaire to all 6,109 retired generals and admirals. More than 3,200 responded by October 8, the date the commission stopped tabulating answers." As a result, the commission obtained direct input from more than half of all retired generals and admirals in the United States and considered their collective judgment among a host of other data gathered.[48]

These surveys done by the commission indicated that the vast majority of general and flag officers at that time opposed allowing women in the military to serve in combat assignments. Herres and his colleagues revealed that "90 percent of those polled say they oppose assignments to infantry, while 76 percent and 71 percent oppose the assignment of women to combatant ships and combat aircraft, respectively." General and flag officers overwhelmingly resisted lifting any of the direct combat exclusions for women. It was interesting, however, that there was more opposition to combatant ships than fighter aircraft, given that the commission eventually would vote to lift the restriction on ships but not aircraft; the two positions were inverted. There was also divergence between age groups that presaged the potential for more change in the future: "The most recently retired flag officers (1990–1992) are less opposed to women in combat than the older retirees." This situation indicated that there was more acceptance for women serving in the armed forces as women continued to at-

tain more prominent roles and that there was a generational gap in the level of acceptance.[49]

There was a generational difference between older and younger general and flag officers. The younger officers had served with women in increased numbers in the AVF, whereas the older officers had served largely during the draft era, when women represented less than 2 percent of the military. The Persian Gulf War also seemed to be a watershed moment in perception in American society toward women in the U.S. military, although the actual results of the commission were not commensurate with this development, likely due to the timing of the final report between the end of the Bush administration and the beginning of the William J. "Bill" Clinton administration. In addition, fierce debate erupted at the start of the Clinton administration regarding open service by homosexuals in the military, shifting the public's attention. After exhaustive research, the commission revealed prominent military attitudes in the early 1990s toward service by females. Herres and his colleagues concluded, "It is apparent, that this unique military community opposed assigning women to combat specialties."[50] In the end, the commission voted against the retired flag officers' position on one of three counts—women were allowed on ships but were not able to serve aboard aircraft or in ground combat.

To conclude its work, the commission met from 1–3 November 1992 to vote on its final recommendations. Herres stated that "the Commission voted to uphold the current exclusions barring women from ground and air combat, and agreed that these exclusions be made law. However, in an historic ballot, the Commission also voted to open combat assignments, never before open to women, aboard some combatant ships." Commission members highlighted the following three votes as their most important legacy. By a vote of 10 to 2 with three abstentions, they urged "the Services [to] adopt gender-neutral assignment policies, providing for the possibility of involuntary assignment of any qualified personnel to any position open to them." By a vote of eight to seven, with zero abstentions, they approved the combat aircraft exclusion, while they repealed the combat ship exclusion by a vote of eight to six with one abstention.[51]

It is important to note that commission members held a wide divergence of views, unlike some previous presidential commissions that worked on military personnel policy. The President's Advisory Commission on Universal Training (19 December 1946–29 May 1947), which considered universal military training, or UMT; the President's National Advisory Commission on Selective Service (2 July 1966–February 1967), which examined equity in military service; and the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force (27 March 1969–20 February 1970), which investigated the transition to the AVF, all included supporters who unanimously recommended the proposed policy under consideration—UMT, the draft, or the AVF in each specific case. President

Bush's commission evidenced far greater diversity of views among the commission members; on the contentious votes, they almost evenly split.

On 15 November 1992, the commission submitted its final report to President Bush. According to Herres, "Our most important achievement, among others, is the clear identification of 17 major issues that need to be addressed by the Administration and Congress if we are to develop a comprehensive policy on the role of women in the military." Herres reiterated that

> even if there is disagreement with how we came down on some of these issues, I hope our nation's political leadership addresses each of them squarely and at least considers the rationale behind all of the Commission's recommendations. Their significance must not be overlooked.[52]

The commission submitted its final report to both President Bush and President-elect Clinton. Their recommendations came at a time of transition, however, occurring after Clinton's election victory but before he assumed office. This political timing muted the impact of the commission as the debate shifted almost immediately at Clinton's initiative to open military service by homosexuals, which would consume much of his administration's first six months in 1993 and eventually resulted in the compromise law colloquially referred to as Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

The commission's major recommendations were far-reaching:

> Repeal legislation that excludes the assignment of women to combatant ships;
>
> Exclude women from direct land combat and combat aircraft;
>
> Apply gender-neutral assignment policies to all positions open to both genders on a best-qualified basis;
>
> Maintain different standards for physical fitness and wellness for men and women, however, when physical strength and endurance are integral to job performance, physical standards should be established and both men and women must meet those same standards;
>
> Women would not be required to register for the draft.[53]

These major recommendations of the commission were a step forward, although incomplete and disjointed.

Members of the commission provided a thorough and vast investigation into military personnel policy regarding women, the largest of its kind in American history. It included a massive survey of both societal and military attitudes toward women in military service, public hearings with hundreds of expert

witnesses, and diverse input from thousands of Americans, military and civilian alike. Within the setting of the early 1990s, it explains why some of the conclusions seemed progressive while others were more conservative. For example, the commission voted to repeal the combat restriction for ships but not for aircraft, even though neither one evidenced the same heightened resistance as that against ground combat. Its members shied away from ground combat because there was not a consensus in American society for overturning this restriction at that time. Throughout their deliberations, Herres and his colleagues undertook the most extensive study of women in the military in U.S. history:

> The objective pursuit of facts included a comprehensive survey of active duty military personnel and the general public by The Roper Organization and review of thousands of documents. In addition, the Commission heard testimony from more than 300 witnesses: soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines of all ranks and in a wide variety of military specialties, as well as social, cultural and religious experts; over 11,000 American citizens sent statements or letters to the Commission.[54]

In other words, the military heard from Americans on their views of equality as well as from officers and their concerns about women in combat.

As the commission's work came to a close, Herres boasted, "Since its inception on March 17, 1992, the Commission has been studying the role of women in the military. The result has been the creation of an unprecedented, extensive repository of information that will be useful for policy-makers, historians, and students of the issue."[55] Indeed, with its work completed, the commission officially disbanded on 15 February 1993.[56]

Opening Ground Combat Occupations and Units to Women

As in the case of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, conflict has often focused American society's attention on military service, opportunities within it, and challenges to improve it. As the second decade of the twenty-first century dawned, the U.S. military found itself still involved in two major armed conflicts, and debate resurfaced regarding opening remaining combat occupations and units to women. One factor that heightened reconsideration was that the nature of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan provided evidence of little distinction between front lines and rear areas or combat assignments and support operations.[57] As a result, many observers argued that policies restricting women from combat assignments were increasingly anachronistic and irrelevant.[58] Regardless of one's specific MOS, male and female servicemembers often found themselves in combat even when military person-

nel policy officially categorized their specific assignments as noncombat. Partly in response, a series of significant changes occurred in less than a decade.[59] In a first, the DOD rescinded long-standing Navy prohibitions and allowed women to serve on submarines.[60] On 22 February 2010, Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates ordered the Navy to launch a phased plan to allow women to serve on submarines: first female officers and then women sailors would serve aboard submarines after appropriate training, which would take approximately one year to complete.[61] By December 2011, two dozen female officers assumed billets aboard the USS *Georgia* (SSGN 729) and USS *Wyoming* (SSBN 742), homeported at Kings Bay, Georgia, and the USS *Maine* (SSBN 741) and USS *Ohio* (SSGN 726), based in Bangor, Washington.[62] By August 2015, four female enlisted sailors began Basic Enlisted Submarine School in Groton, Connecticut. They would be the first of 38 female sailors who would serve aboard the USS *Michigan* (SSGN 727) upon completion of their training.[63]

A little more than one year after the Pentagon's decision to allow women to serve aboard submarines, another major change addressed opening combat occupations and units to women. On 15 March 2011, Lester L. Lyles, chair of the Military Leadership Diversity Commission, informed President Barack H. Obama, "While we find the promotion policies and practices of the Department of Defense and the Services to be fair, we find also that there are some barriers to improving demographic representation among military leaders."[64] The commission made 20 specific recommendations, ranging from simple definitions to annual reports. The most significant suggestion, however, related to women in the U.S. military. Lyles urged the "DoD and the Services [to] eliminate the 'combat exclusion policies' for women, including the removal of barriers and inconsistencies, to create a level playing field for all qualified servicemembers."[65] In response, in the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011, Congress mandated that

> the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretaries of the military departments, shall conduct a review of laws, policies, and regulations, including the collocation policy, that may restrict the service of female members of the Armed Forces to determine whether changes in such laws, policies, and regulations are needed to ensure that female members have equitable opportunities to compete and excel in the Armed Forces.[66]

Promotion processes within the military Services dictated a comprehensive reexamination of women in the U.S. military.

The Department of Defense immediately commenced the required review, and after nearly a year of exhaustive study prepared to act. In February 2012,

Jo Ann Rooney, acting undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, disclosed that the DOD intended to "eliminate the co-location exclusion from the 1994 policy," allow exceptions to policy that would assign women to open occupational specialties in battalions that engaged in direct combat, assess the relevance of the direct combat unit assignment prohibition for future policy decisions, and pursue the development of gender-neutral physical standards for occupational specialties closed due to separate and unequal gender-based physical requirements. As a result, the DOD eliminated the previous "Risk Rule" and made two major policy revisions affecting women in the U.S. military, eliminating the colocation prohibition and allowing women to serve in open MOSs with combat units at the battalion level.[67] The National Women's Law Center estimated that the first change unlocked 13,139 positions that were previously inaccessible to women in the Army and the second modification released 1,186 positions that beforehand the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps had restricted.[68]

On 24 January 2013, Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta and Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin E. Dempsey rescinded the 1994 Department of Defense assignment policy for women and required the military departments to submit by 15 May 2013 implementation plans for opening combat occupations and units to women and to integrate women into newly opened positions no later than 1 January 2016.[69] On 3 December 2015, Ashton B. Carter, the new secretary of defense, opened to women all combat roles within the U.S. military. "There will be no exceptions," Carter insisted. "They'll be allowed to drive tanks, fire mortars and lead infantry soldiers into combat. They'll be able to serve as Army Rangers and Green Berets, Navy SEALs, Marine Corps infantry, Air Force parajumpers and everything else that was previously open only to men."[70] Carter's order opened approximately 220,000 military assignments to women, erasing the last vestiges of gender-based assignment policies for women in the U.S. military.

Momentous change occurred quickly, and Kristen Griest again made history. On 27 April 2016, the U.S. Army Ranger and captain became the Army's first female infantry officer as she transferred to that combat arms specialty. As previously discussed at the outset of this essay, Griest had become one of the first females to complete Ranger School, a grueling two-month course that the Army previously had restricted to male soldiers.[71] Griest "hope[d] that with our performance in Ranger school we've been able to inform that decision as to what they can expect from women in the military," emphasizing that "w[omen] can handle things physically and mentally on the same level as men." Even though Griest blazed a trail, others immediately followed.

In spring 2016, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point approved 13 female cadets to enter the armor branch of the Army and 9 others entered the infantry, providing a career path for women that heretofore the Army had of-

ficially blocked.[72] First as a Ranger and then as an infantry officer, Griest had completed an immeasurable personal journey. She also personified the longer and broader journey of women in the U.S. military. From WACs in World War II to Rangers today, women in the U.S. military have served for a long time and with much distinction. There have been numerous hurdles in their path: military personnel policies often have restricted their numbers, ranks, and assignments, among many other obstacles. Over time, however, women in the U.S. military have persevered to challenge these inequalities, advocate for expanded opportunities, and serve with honor. As a result, they have ensured that the U.S. military is open to all who are willing and able to serve.

Notes

1. Dan Lamothe, "These Are the Army's First Female Ranger School Graduates," *Washington Post*, 18 August 2015.
2. The author acknowledges the assistance of Paul Brown at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) who provided expert guidance on Record Group (RG) 220 and RG 330 and assisted by deciphering the War Department decimal system as it related to women in the U.S. military. RG 220, Records of Temporary Committees, Commissions, and Boards, Records of the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, revealed insights into the contentious debates surrounding military personnel policies regarding women during the 1990s, including the impact of the Tailhook scandal, the repeal of the combat exclusion for warships, and the continuation of prohibitions for fighter aircraft and direct combat. This presidential commission was the largest effort in American history to research women in the U.S. military and provided robust context on this issue. RG 330 revealed the inner workings of military personnel policy within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, including understanding DACOWITS, and Anna M. Rosenberg's role as assistant secretary of defense (manpower and reserve affairs), both as the first female senior policy maker in the DOD generally and as the leader responsible for military personnel policy specifically, including women in the U.S. military.
3. On women in the U.S. military during World War I, see Lynn Dumenil, *The Second Line of Defense: American Women and World War I* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); and Lettie Gavin, *American Women in World War I: They Also Served* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1997).
4. On WACs, see Debra L. Winegarten, *Oveta Culp Hobby: Colonel, Cabinet Member, Philanthropist* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014); Ethel A. Starbird, *When Women First Wore Army Shoes: A First-Person Account of Service as a Member of the Women's Army Corps during World War II* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2010); and Mattie E. Treadwell, *The Women's Army Corps* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1954).
5. On WAVES, see Thomas J. Cutler, ed., *Women in the Navy: The History* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2015). Onlookers informally labeled women who served in this latter group as SPARs, a combination of the first letters of the group's Latin motto, *Semper Paratus*, and its English translation, "Always Ready." On SPARs, see C. Douglas Kroll, *A Coast Guardsman's History of the U.S. Coast Guard* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2010).
6. On Marine Corps Women's Reserve, see Peter A. Soderbergh, *Women Marines: The World War II Era* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1992); and *Marine Corps Women's Reserve in World War II* (Washington, DC: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps, 1968). On Women in the Air Force, see Ann B. Carl, *A WASP Among Eagles: A Woman Military Test Pilot in World War II* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1999); and Molly Merryman, *Clipped Wings: The Rise and Fall of the*

Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPS) of World War II (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

7. Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Services, "Transcript of Commission Meeting," 4 May 1992, box 1, folder Transcript—4–6 March 1992, Records of Temporary Committees, Commissions, and Boards, Records of the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Records Relating to Hearings, RG 220, NARA, 93–94.
8. On women in the U.S. military, see Gayle Tzemach Lemmon, *Ashley's War: The Untold Story of a Team of Women Soldiers on the Special Ops Battlefield* (New York: Harper, 2015); Tanya Biank, *Undaunted: The Real Story of America's Servicewomen in Today's Military* (New York: NAL Caliber, 2013); Kirsten Holmstedt, *Band of Sisters: American Women at War in Iraq* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2007); and Jeanne Holm, *Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution* (New York: Ballantine, 1982).
9. "See Women's Progress in the U.S. Military: Here's How Roles Are Opening Up for Women," TIME Labs, 8 September 2015.
10. "Women Get Place in U.S. Military: Truman Signs Bill Setting Up Permanent Units of Wacs, Wafs, Waves and Marines," *New York Times*, 13 June 1948.
11. Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, "Transcript of Open Meeting," 25 March 1992, box 1, folder Transcript—25–26 March 1992, Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Records Relating to Hearings, RG 220, NARA, 112–13.
12. "Three Armed Services to Bid for Recruits in Women Units," *Christian Science Monitor*, 17 June 1948.
13. "Swearing in First Enlisted Regular Army WAC," *New York Times*, 9 July 1948.
14. "Five Women Inducted into the Marines: First 'Lady Leathernecks' in Metropolitan Area Take Oath as Regulars," *New York Times*, 30 December 1948; "Swearing in WAC and WAF Recruits Here Yesterday," *New York Times*, 28 September 1948; and "First Enlisted Women Are Sworn in by Navy: Sullivan Hails Event as Service Milestone," *New York Times*, 8 July 1948.
15. Josephine Ripley, "Women to the Colors," *Christian Science Monitor*, 21 September 1948.
16. Nona Brown, "The Armed Forces Find Woman *Has* a Place," *New York Times*, 26 December 1948.
17. DACOWITS remains in service with much the same mission; see its website, accessed 30 May 2017, dacowits.defense.gov.
18. George C. Marshall to Myrtle Austin, 5 April 1951, box 1, folder Dean Myrtle Austin 1951, Records of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, RG 330, NARA, 1. Hereafter DACOWITS, RG 330, NARA.
19. George C. Marshall to Myrtle Austin, 5 April 1951, box 1, folder Dean Myrtle Austin 1951, DACOWITS, RG 330, NARA, 1.
20. On Rosenberg, see Anna K. Nelson, "Anna M. Rosenberg: An 'Honorary Man'," *Journal of Military History* 68, no. 1 (January 2004): 133–61, https://doi.org/10.1353/jmh.2003.0398. On Rosenberg's support of Marshall on UMT, see William A. Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy: From World War II to the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2016), 54–57.
21. For a list of members, see "Folder List for RG 330, A1-1040, DACOWITS Membership Records," 9 July 2002, box 1, folder RG 330 A1-1040 DACOWITS Membership Records Folder List, DACOWITS, RG 330, NARA.
22. Mary I. Barber, "Report on Advisory Defense Committee for Women in the Armed Services," 21 October 1952, box 1, folder Miss Mary I. Barber (deceased) 1951, DACOWITS, RG 330, NARA, 1.
23. Barber, "Report on Advisory Defense Committee for Women in the Armed Services," 2.
24. Barber, "Report on Advisory Defense Committee for Women in the Armed Services," 1.

25. Barber, "Report on Advisory Defense Committee for Women in the Armed Services," 3–4.
26. Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Services, "Transcript of Commission Meeting," 4 May 1992, box 1, folder Transcript—4–6 March 1992, Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Records Relating to Hearings, RG 220, NARA, 94–95. On women in the military during the Korean War, see Linda Witt et al., *"A Defense Weapon Known to Be of Value": Servicewomen of the Korean War Era* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2005); and Peter A. Soderbergh, *Women Marines in the Korean War Era* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994). On women in the military during the Vietnam War, see Heather Marie Stur, *Beyond Combat: Women and Gender in the Vietnam War Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); and Elizabeth M. Norman, *Women at War: The Story of Fifty Military Nurses Who Served in Vietnam* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990).
27. Melvin R. Laird, "Report to the President and the Chairmen of Armed Services Committees of the Senate and of the House of Representatives (P. L. 92-129): Progress in Ending the Draft and Achieving the All-Volunteer Force, Chapter 1-Background," August 1972, box A51, folder All-Volunteer Force—1971–1972, Melvin R. Laird Papers, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library, 1. Laird sent similar letters to the Honorable John Stennis, Chair, Senate Armed Services Committee (p. v) and the Honorable F. Edward Hébert, chair, House Armed Services Committee (p. vii).
28. On the 1968 election, see Michael Nelson, *Resilient America: Electing Nixon in 1968, Channeling Dissent, and Dividing Government* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2014); Lewis L. Gould, *1968: The Election that Changed America* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1993); and Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President, 1968* (New York: Atheneum House, 1969).
29. Laird, "Progress in Ending the Draft and Achieving the All-Volunteer Force," 1.
30. On class divisions and the Vietnam War, see Christian G. Appy, *Working-Class War: American Combat Soldiers and Vietnam* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993).
31. Laird, "Progress in Ending the Draft and Achieving the All-Volunteer Force," 1–2.
32. Laird, "Progress in Ending the Draft and Achieving the All-Volunteer Force," 26.
33. Laird, "Progress in Ending the Draft and Achieving the All-Volunteer Force," 31.
34. Laird, "Progress in Ending the Draft and Achieving the All-Volunteer Force," 33.
35. Laird, "Progress in Ending the Draft and Achieving the All-Volunteer Force," 31–33.
36. *Report: Task Force on Women in the Military* (Washington, DC: DOD, 1988), i–ii.
37. David R. Burrelli, *Women in the Armed Forces* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 1998), 2.
38. *Report: Task Force on Women in the Military*, 8.
39. *Report: Task Force on Women in the Military*, i.
40. *Report: Task Force on Women in the Military,* v.
41. Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, "Transcript of Open Meeting," 25 March 1992, box 1, folder Transcript—25–26 March 1992, Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Records Relating to Hearings, RG 220, NARA, Tab 7.
42. "Assignment Policies for Military Women: History and Status," National Women's Law Center, 28 March 2016.
43. "Military Widens Women's Job Horizons: Carlucci Orders Air Force and Marines to Expand Opportunities," *Washington Post*, 3 February 1988.
44. On the Persian Gulf War, see William Thomas Allison, *The Gulf War, 1990–91* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012); and Rick Atkinson, *Crusade: The Untold Story of the Persian Gulf War* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1993). On the Persian Gulf War and women in the U.S. military, see Rosemarie Skaine, *Women at War: Gender Issues of Americans in Combat* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland Publishing, 1999).
45. On heightened awareness of women in the military at that time, see Jon Nordheimer, "Women's Role in Combat: The War Resumes," *New York Times*, 26 May 1991; Nancy Benac, "Debate Persists over Women's Place in a War Zone," *Los Angeles Times*, 23 De-

cember 1990; and Elaine Sciolino, "Battle Lines Are Shifting on Women in War," *New York Times*, 25 January 1990. Of course, this was the result of the invasion of Panama as well as the Persian Gulf War. On Panama, see Marlene Cimons, "Invasion of Panama Stirs Debate about Women in Combat," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 January 1990; and "160 Female Soldiers Joined Invasion," *Los Angeles Times*, 3 January 1990.

46. "Public Law 102-190," 5 December 1991, box 1, folder Statute—Public Law 102-190, Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Records Relating to the Commission's Establishment and Organization, RG 220, NARA, 1–3.
47. On the commissioners, see box 1, folder Biographies of Commissioners, Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Records Relating to the Commission's Establishment and Organization, RG 220, NARA. On Moskos, see Charles C. Moskos, John Allen Williams, and David R. Segal, eds., *The Postmodern Military: Armed Forces after the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Charles C. Moskos and John Sibley Butler, *All that We Can Be: Black Leadership and Racial Integration the Army Way* (New York: Basic Books, 1996); Charles C. Moskos, *A Call to Civic Service: National Service for Country and Community* (New York: Free Press, 1988); and Charles C. Moskos, *The American Enlisted Man* (New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 1970).
48. Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, "Commission Votes on Women in Combat: Some Surprises," 4 November 1992, box 1, folder Press Releases, Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Records Relating to Media Coverage, RG 220, NARA, 1.
49. Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, "Retired Flag Officers Say No to Women in Combat," 24 October 1992, box 1, folder Press Releases, Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Records Relating to Media Coverage, RG 220, NARA, 2.
50. "Retired Flag Officers Say No to Women in Combat," 1–2.
51. Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, "Commission Votes on Women in Combat: Some Surprises," 4 November 1992, box 1, folder Press Releases, Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Records Relating to Media Coverage, RG 220, NARA, 1.
52. Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, "Commission Transmits Report to the President," 16 November 1992, box 1, folder Press Releases, Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Records Relating to Media Coverage, RG 220, NARA, 1, hereafter "Commission Transmits Report to the President."
53. On Don't Ask, Don't Tell, see Alexander Nicholson, *Fighting to Serve: Behind the Scenes in the War to Repeal "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2012); Nathaniel Frank, *Unfriendly Fire: How the Gay Ban Undermines the Military and Weakens America* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2009); and Melissa Sheridan Embser-Herbert, *The U.S. Military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Policy: A Reference Handbook* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2007).
54. "Commission Transmits Report to the President," 2.
55. "Commission Transmits Report to the President," 1–2.
56. Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, "Commission Tenure Comes to a Close," 3 February 1993, box 1, folder Press Releases, Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, Records Relating to Media Coverage, RG 220, NARA, 1.
57. These wars also witnessed blurring between front lines and home fronts. On this important dynamic, see Lisa Ellen Silvestri, *Friended at the Front: Social Media in the American War Zone* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2015).
58. On counterinsurgency in Iraq, see William A. Taylor, "Culture and Complexity: Counterinsurgency in Iraq, 2003–11," in *A History of Counterinsurgency*, ed. Gregory Fremont-Barnes, 2 vols. (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2015), 363–89. On counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, see Duncan Anderson, "Afghanistan: The Graveyard of Counterinsurgency?," in *A History of Counterinsurgency*, 391–421. On the nexus between changing conditions of warfare and opening combat occupations and units to women, see Mark Thompson, "Sending Women to War: The Pen-

tagon Nears a Historic Decision on Equality at the Front Lines," *Time*, 14 December 2015, 52–55; and Ashley Nicolas, "What the Female Engagement Team Experience Can Teach Us about the Future of Women in Combat," *Military Review* 95, no. 2 (March/April 2015): 56–61.

59. For a chronology of events, see Megan Eckstein, "Timeline: Women in Combat Roles," *U.S. Naval Institute News*, 21 September 2015.
60. Kristy N. Kamarck, *Women in Combat: Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2015), 22.
61. "Ban on Women on Submarines Ends," *New York Times*, 24 February 2010; and Gordon Lubold, "Navy to Allow Women to Serve aboard Submarines," *Christian Science Monitor*, 23 February 2010.
62. Gordon Jackson, "Two Kings Bay Subs to Get Women Officers in 2011," *(Jacksonville) Florida Times-Union*, 22 October 2010.
63. Megan Eckstein, "First Four Enlisted Females Begin Submarine School Today, Ahead of USS *Michigan* Assignment," *U.S. Naval Institute News*, 24 August 2015.
64. Lester L. Lyles to Barack H. Obama, 15 March 2011, in Military Leadership Diversity Commission, "From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership for the 21st-Century, Final Report," iii–iv.
65. Military Leadership Diversity Commission, "From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity Leadership for the 21st-Century, Final Report," 127. For all 20 recommendations, see 125–30.
66. Kamarck, *Women in Combat*, 11.
67. *Report to Congress on the Review of Laws, Policies and Regulations Restricting the Service of Female Members in the U.S. Armed Forces* (Washington, DC: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, 2012), 15–16.
68. "Assignment Policies for Military Women: History and Status," National Women's Law Center, 28 March 2016, 10.
69. Leon E. Panetta and Martin E. Dempsey, "Memorandum for Secretaries of the Military Departments, Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Chiefs of the Military Services, Subject: Elimination of the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule," 24 January 2013.
70. Matthew Rosenberg and Dave Philipps, "Pentagon Opens All Combat Roles to Women: 'No Exceptions'," *New York Times*, 4 December 2015.
71. Lucy Schouten, "First Woman Enters Infantry as Army Moves Women into Combat Roles," *Christian Science Monitor*, 28 April 2016.
72. Katie Rogers, "Kristen Griest on Course to Become First Female Army Officer Trained to Lead Troops into Combat," *New York Times*, 28 April 2016.