

Equality is not Akin to Sameness: Women in the Military
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Abstract

Equality is not Akin to Sameness: Women in the Military, by MAJ Laura Hamilton, 49 pages.

Despite the fact that women have participated on both the periphery and the front lines of combat since war has existed, how to integrate women into the US military seems new. Women have led and succeeded in war, though their accomplishments are far less known than their male counterparts. The history of women in the US military is twofold: that of the civil feminist movement for women's rights such as the right to vote, and the slower movement of women's access to all roles in the military as full martial citizens. Understanding that history and its similarities to racial integration in the military provides insight into current perceptions of women and men as the "same" in the military. Consequently, women's role in the military should be based on military standards and skills required during combat, and not women's rights. It is the luxury of a nation not facing annihilation to continue gender roles for men and women in civil and military societies. Notwithstanding positive progress for women in the military, policymakers are swayed by social discussion and sentiment rather than quantitative data regarding women in the military. The social taboo of acknowledging men and women differ physiologically actually hinders progress for women as equal members of the military. Recognizing that men and women are different facilitates the dialogue that women are not just smaller men, a discussion vital to increasing the effectiveness of women soldiers and the military's overall readiness.

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Abbreviations

ACLU	American Civil Rights Union
ADC	Aid to Dependent Children
ADTF	Army Diversity Task Force
ANA	American Nurses Association
AVF	All Volunteer Force
BMI	Body Mass Index
HQDA	Headquarters Department of the Army
MCWR	Marine Corps Women's Reserve
NACGN	National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses
POWs	Prisoners of War
ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corps
SWAT	Special Weapons and Tactics
WAAC	Women's Army Auxiliary Corps
WASPs	Women Airforce Service Pilots
WEF	World Economic Forum
USMA	United States Military Academy

Introduction

They are fighting, and they're dying together, and the time has come for our policies to recognize that reality. We are making our military stronger, and we are making America stronger.

— Former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta

Feminism is not about making women stronger; women are already strong; it is about changing the way the world perceives that strength.

— G.D. Anderson, Australian feminist, and activist

On June 25, 1876, LTC George Armstrong Custer's Seventh Cavalry Regiment was pinned down and overwhelmed by a coalition of Native American fighters.¹ The Seventh Cavalry charged into a valley to attack what Custer believed was a conquerable foe. He and his men raced into the valley of Little Bighorn to destroy a village of Sioux, Northern Cheyenne, and Arapaho tribes. The Sioux and their allies had refused to comply with the US Bureau of Indian Affairs' order to relinquish their lands and homes.² This demand resulted from an unprecedented number of whites invading the area as a response to the discovery of gold and silver in the Black Hills.³ Desperate to hold on to their lands, the Plains tribes clashed with the US Army in bloody battles for seven months before the Battle of Little Bighorn.⁴ During these battles, countless Native American men, women, and children died.

The Battle of Little Bighorn is legendary in US history. This single event is one of the most researched and written about battles, particularly in the US Indian Wars. However, the exact circumstances surrounding Custer's death during the attack are unknown. What is known, however, is that Custer and the Seventh Cavalry engaged in fierce combat. At their demise, they

¹ Michael A. Sievers, "The Literature of the Little Bighorn: A Centennial Historiography," *Journal of the Southwest* 18, no. 2, Arizona and the West (Summer 1976): 149.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 149.

were outnumbered and surrounded.⁵ Whether he charged into an ambush or was simply out-manuevered, Custer made a series of poor tactical choices and ultimately lost.⁶

Custer was not only well trained, having graduated in 1861 from United States Military Academy (USMA), but was also battle-tested in the American Civil and American Indian Wars.⁷ He was formidable both in planning and the execution of those plans. Nevertheless, the Native Americans defeated him. Custer was knocked off his horse during his infamous last stand, and killed.⁸ He was likely knocked from his horse by a blunt object such as club, and not a gunshot.⁹ This action required close combat and significant strength associated with the Native American warriors from popularized depictions in movies and TV shows. These warriors are often the quintessential male warrior with strong, lean muscles expertly riding horses while wielding weapons. Custer, however, was knocked off his horse by a woman who did not fit this stereotype.¹⁰

Less is known of the Native Americans who defeated him than is about Custer or the battle itself. Native Americans did not reveal the person who delivered the fatal blow to Custer was a woman until 2005.¹¹ Her name was Buffalo Calf Road who impressively adapted her strengths as a woman to fit the requirements for combat. Nothing is known about her life before the US Indian Wars. She was married to a fellow fighter and the mother of two children.¹² The Cheyenne expected women to be reserved and respectful toward men.¹³ Much like contemporary

⁵ Sievers, "The Literature of the Little Bighorn," 150.

⁶ Ibid., 158.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Rosemary Agonito and Joseph Agonito, "Resurrecting History's Forgotten Women: A Case Study from the Cheyenne Indians," *Frontiers: A Journal of Woman's Studies* 6, no. 3 (1981): 8–16.

⁹ Ibid., 9.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid., 14.

¹² Ibid., 15.

¹³ Ibid., 14.

roles for women, a Cheyenne woman was restricted to the domestic sphere of wife, mother, and household.¹⁴ As the need for self-defense increased, so did women's skills in warring activities such as marksmanship and horse riding.¹⁵

Buffalo Calf Road's contribution to war is not unique, and neither is her exclusion from history. Women have participated on both the periphery and the front lines of combat since its existence. Women's history in the military comprises both the history of the civil feminist movement, as well as the movement for women's full integration into the military. The military soundly sets performance standards on combat requirements and not on social movements or equal rights. It is the luxury of a nation not facing annihilation to continue gender roles for men and women in civil and military societies.

Diversity requires dispersing power, and as such, women's expanded roles in the military now grant them recognition as heroes and the potential to serve in the highest leadership roles in the military. These leadership roles are typically reserved for those who have served in combat arms.¹⁶ Despite positive progress for women in the military, social discussions sway policymakers rather than quantitative data regarding women in the military. The social taboo of acknowledging men and women differ physiologically hinders progress for women as equal members of the military. Understanding that men and women are different allows the discussion that women are not just smaller men, recognizing this is vital to increasing the effectiveness of women Soldiers and the military's overall readiness.

¹⁴ Agonito and Agonito, "Resurrecting History's Forgotten Women."14.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Kristy N. Kamarck, *Women in Combat: Issues for Congress* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, December 13, 2016), accessed April 4, 2020, 1, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R42075.pdf>. Then-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta rescinded the Department of Defense (DOD) policies preventing women's assignments to units below brigade-level, where the unit's primary mission was to engage directly in ground combat. This policy barred women from serving in infantry, artillery, armor, combat engineers, and special operations units of battalion size or smaller. Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter ordered the military to open all combat positions to women with no exceptions on December 3, 2015.

Women continue to make progress in expanding the roles in which they can serve in the US military. Women now serve in all military specialties, including in combat. They also command at the highest ranks, a feat not accomplished until GEN Ann Dunwoody became the first woman Lieutenant General in 2005 and then General in 2008. Despite this continual progress, the discussions on how to most effectively employ women in the US Army exclude their physiological differences from men altogether. The exclusion is not malicious, but rather a reflection of the paradigm in society that equality is akin to sameness in genders.¹⁷

In 2013, the US Congress repealed the Exclusionary Act, allowing women to serve in combat arms branches such as infantry, armor, and special forces for the first time in US history.¹⁸ Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta set in motion the arduous task of integrating women into all aspects of the US military.¹⁹ Doing so allowed women to serve as full martial citizens alongside men and recognized women's ability and desire to serve in the military, fight in combat and be heroes. As a result, the first women graduated from the mentally and physically elite US Army Ranger School in 2015. These monumental victories welcomed by women, men, and activists groups like the American Civil Rights Union (ACLU) omitted from the national conversation a crucial fact: men and women are distinct physiologically and psychologically.

The discussion on how men and women differ is essential to the integration of women in the combat arms in the US Army. Women are integrating into an established culture, and as a result, that culture will need to recognize the dissimilarities and change with integration. Change is not synonymous with a reduction in combat efficacy or readiness. On the contrary, open and honest recognition of gender contrasts will enhance holistic training and assessments as well as combat effectiveness.

¹⁷ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 10. A paradigm is a set of ideas or standards that are accepted and become considered what is normal by a group or society.

¹⁸ Kamarck, *Women in Combat*, 2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

Women have honorably performed military roles in health care, support, logistics, and combat arms as nurses, soldiers, journalists, diplomats, and spies.²⁰ Historical records show some women even disguised themselves as men to fight for their country in the American Revolutionary and Civil Wars but were discharged once others discovered their gender.²¹ Women continued to support men at war in acceptable ways, such as caring for wounded and preparing meals. However, a significant shift in this paradigm happened in 1917. During what is considered by some scholars as the first global conflict, the first woman enlisted in the US military not as a nurse but as a navy sailor during World War I.²² Societal changes, advocacy, and awareness are slowly reducing the effect of gender that influences women's ability to compete for responsibility and rank in the military.²³

While societal changes have occurred in the last century, the idea of "separate spheres" for men and women was prevalent before the 20th century.²⁴ The idea of public versus private spheres has a long history, some of which can even be traced back to 17th century Puritan America. However, Jurgen Habermas, a German professor of sociology, has been the leading contemporary influence on defining separate spheres.²⁵ The public sphere is one in which people exchange ideas, conduct business transactions, and where people gather outside the private realm

²⁰ Cheryl Brown Travis and Jacquelyn W. White, eds., *APA Handbook of the Psychology of Women*, 1st ed. (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2017), 34.

²¹ Eugenia L Weiss and Carl Andrew Castro, *American Military Life in the 21st Century: Social, Cultural, and Economic Issues and Trends* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2019), 26.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Berta Hernández-Truyol, "Out of the Shadows: Traversing the Imaginary of Sameness, Difference, and Relationalism - A Human Rights Proposal," *UF Law Faculty Publications* (Spring 2002), accessed March 24, 2020, 111, <https://scholarship.law.ufl.edu/facultypub/530>.

²⁵ Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1991), 1–2. Use of the terms "public sphere" and "private sphere" delineate between activities and events socially accepted as open to all, "public sphere" or exclusive, "private sphere." Socially, men dominated the public sphere, while women maintained the private household sphere.

to dictate societal norms.²⁶ The private sphere, particularly at the time of Habermas' works in the 1960s, was seen as the woman's sphere. This domain was the private overseeing of the household and was separate from other circles such as society, government, or economy.²⁷ Although the boundary between the two spheres is fluid, it is typically more rigid for women and people of color, as explained in the historical case studies below.

These contrasting images are deeply embedded in American society. Based on the idea of separate spheres, white men made laws about public matters such as governance well into the twentieth century.²⁸ As a result, women were viewed as objects to be cared for and protected by men. There was no pretense that American society sought equality as a desirable goal. In its place, society accepted gendered inequality, much like racial inequality. However, since Congress lifted the ban on women serving in combat arms in 2015, the US military has looked to balance opportunities between men and women. The aim in the military is twofold; it must conduct business in accordance with the new laws allowing women to serve in all specialties while not risking combat effectiveness. Women are required to meet the physical demands of combat especially if serving in combat arms and special forces where Soldiers' abilities are similar to elite athletes.²⁹

There is much discussion in academic and professional forums on the legitimacy of women serving in combat. The military's foremost concern is combat effectiveness and women's ability to meet universal combat requirements. A vital component of this concern is research on

²⁶ Ashley Crossman, "What's the Difference Between Private and Public Spheres in Sociology?," *ThoughtCo*, last modified August 31, 2019, accessed October 3, 2019, <https://www.thoughtco.com/private-and-public-spheres-3026464>.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Hernández-Truyol, "Out of the Shadows," 117.

²⁹ Thomas S. Szayna et al., *Considerations for Integrating Women into Closed Occupations in U.S. Special Operations Forces* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2016), accessed March 20, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/10.7249/j.ctt19rmdv, 47.

men's and women's physical and athletic capabilities and differences. The typical legislative, local, and military response is that if women are to serve in the same jobs as men in the US military, women should train, think, and act like men who meet the physical requirements for combat. This monograph will add to the contemporary debates regarding women in combat that men and women are distinct, and those differences should change the military's culture concerning how men and women train and fight to maximize results from both genders.

James Rosenau asserts that to think critically regarding a particular phenomenon, in this case women serving effectively in combat arms, a researcher must ask open-ended rather than pointed questions.³⁰ Instead of asking how much weight can the average woman deadlift or how fast she can run, ask the best ways to maximize the physical abilities of women. Is the exclusion of considering of physiological differences between the genders harmful to combat effectiveness and readiness in the US Army? What are the issues with integrating a new demographic into a traditional culture if it changes the existing culture? The US Army would benefit from further research on these questions.

Similar to sports, the military is historically an institution inextricably tied to masculinity.³¹ Military service is constructed as strength and aggression and is therefore incompatible with the US socialization of femininity.³² Therefore, historically women who enter the military often are viewed as *persona non grata*.³³ The influence of internalized, socialized beliefs in military settings is problematic for women because of the discrepancy between the stereotyped attributes associated with women and the characteristics required for effective military performance. Combat is physically and psychologically demanding. Women who now

³⁰ James N Rosenau, *The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy* (New York; London: Free Press; Collier-Macmillan, 1971), 24.

³¹ Travis and White, *APA Handbook of the Psychology of Women*, 1st ed. 34.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, 35.

serve in a completely open military must do so without acknowledging any differences than men. The US military has righted the wrong of access to martial citizenship to women. However, an attempted correction has been to misattribute equality akin to sameness. Women cannot fully integrate into military culture until their differences are understood.

Women in War: A History

This discussion surrounding women's full integration in the US military is multifaceted. The first point of discussion is the history of women's rights as both citizens and members of the military. Central to women's rights, particularly the right to serve, is World War I, as it represented a world on the brink of existential crisis. As with men, women were compelled to serve and fight for their nation. Nonetheless, by the end of the war, American women who served in the armed services were expected to return home and take up the traditional roles they once occupied, as were men. Moreover, new laws introduced into the US legislative system denied women veterans' awards and bonuses.³⁴ Illinois Republican Representative John McKenzie introduced a bill “that excluded all women except military nurses from collecting the bonus... awarded to veterans of World War I.”³⁵ McKenzie’s proposed bill questioned and negated women’s military acts. It also inserted the word “male” in front of veterans in the original bill, purposefully denying women’s veteran status.³⁶ McKenzie believed these women served on active duty and received a salary for their work and therefore made more money serving than in their entire lives, which deemed them ineligible for veterans’ bonuses.³⁷

³⁴ Emerald M. Archer, *Women, Warfare and Representation: American Servicewomen in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, An Imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., 2017), 23.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Weiss and Castro, *American Military Life in the 21st Century*, 23. Effective January 1, 2016, the policy changed and women were allowed to serve in more than 14,000 assignments involving direct combat, which previously excluded women.

Significant progress for women's veterans' rights changed when Edith Nourse Rogers was elected to Congress to replace her husband after his death in 1925. Rogers shared her husband's passion for politics and traveled abroad with him in 1917. Her experience abroad demonstrated how vital women's participation in the First World War was to the victory. Despite this, she saw firsthand that gender discrimination left women without safeguards in case they were injured while serving. Likewise, women were not provided veterans' benefits after their service. Rogers spearheaded legislation to fight for financial compensation for women who had suffered health problems as a result of war service. These issues, among others, inspired Rogers to introduce a House bill (HR 4906) on May 28, 1941 which established the Women's Auxiliary Air Corps (WAAC).³⁸

Although women have fought in wars for centuries, significant woman-esteem in the US military started with the inception of the WAAC by Rogers, as well as the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) during World War II. Women in both those services contributed monumentally to military operations and the success of the war. Although often relegated to administrative roles, these women also served directly in combat but were later denied full recognition for their service. More specifically, WAAC soldiers were not entitled to the same pay as their male counterparts and had no benefits for dependents or military rank.³⁹ Coupled with denial of equal salary, while WASPs flew nearly every type of aircraft in the Army's inventory during combat, including fighters and B-29 bombers, they did not receive military status while acting no differently than any man on active duty.⁴⁰ After the war, several former WASPs received Air Force commissions but not military pilot ratings. Despite being granted retroactive veteran status in 1977 for their undertakings in war-time military missions, requests for burial at

³⁸ Weiss and Castro, *American Military Life in the 21st Century*, 25–26.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

Arlington National Cemetery were not officially allowed until 2016.⁴¹ Before 2016, the policy allowed a WASP to be buried at Arlington only if she had been married to a military veteran man who was also buried there.⁴² Regardless, the US Air Force was more progressive than other military branches. The Air Force's radical viewpoint toward women may be because aviation itself was innovative and emerging in the 1940s. The WASPs integrated into a masculine environment and their early involvement in aviation "directly questioned the purportedly natural and expected status of men within the military by serving in one of the most desired roles (piloting in noncombat jobs)."⁴³ WASPs found empowerment as they experienced jobs that were top secret and risky; their participation in the Air Force was necessary, and their skills as aviators were in high demand in this new era of technological development.⁴⁴

Despite the WASPs' experience, shifting attitudes and beliefs in the military due to women's integration continued to encourage and reinforce traditional gender roles. Women's entrance in the military sphere challenged existing traditions of private and public spheres. Because women did not naturally fit within the customs of the military, they were forced to adopt the values and rules of military life. The services made some adjustments to accommodate (e.g., policies unique to women). However, it fell to women to adhere to gender-role expectations in order to survive the experience in a male-dominated environment.⁴⁵ It is of particular importance to stress that the story of women's integration into the Armed Forces closely parallels the integration of African Americans into the American military, discussed in a subsequent section.⁴⁶ As mentioned previously, the US Army and the US Navy moved forward, creating a permanent

⁴¹ Weiss and Castro, *American Military Life in the 21st Century*, 27.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

Women's Reserve in March 1946.⁴⁷ The US Marine Corps, the smallest service, and the most known for its masculinity did not want to integrate women into the Corps permanently. BG Gerald C. Thomas, US Marine Corps Director of Plans and Policies, said, "The opinion generally held by the Marine Corps is that women have no proper function in the regular service in peacetime. The American tradition is that a woman's place is in the home. Women do not take kindly to military regimentation. During the war, they have accepted the regulations-imposed headache."⁴⁸

BG Thomas' statement reflected society's belief that women belonged in the private sphere, and integration into the public sphere would be disastrous. The ineffectiveness of the Integration Act of 1948 further validated women's role in the private sphere. The act did not fulfill its promise of generating real growth in the women's programs. Instead, women's participation in the Armed Forces degenerated during the Vietnam Era. The US military focused on infusing the concept of martial elitism into the force structure, thereby applying double standards to women and preserving femininity among military women to an obsessive degree, adversely affecting women's participation in the Armed Forces.⁴⁹ These commitments expressed women's exclusion within the military, where messages conveyed that women were tolerated rather than accepted in the institution.⁵⁰ Military men tolerated women because of the scarcity of volunteers, but women's utilization in this period was not enough to question or change the dominant paradigm of the all-male military. The source of resistance may be that actual inclusion would require reframing and rethinking long-accepted norms of identity behavior, which are hard to change with any speed under ideal conditions.⁵¹ In 1965, 30,600 women filled the ranks of the

⁴⁷ Weiss and Castro, *American Military Life in the 21st Century*, 40.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁵⁰ Archer, *Women, Warfare and Representation*, 42.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 43.

line services, which was a smaller representation of women than was in the Korean War. Rather than consider recruiting women to fill its ranks in these initial years, the military relied on the draft to provide more men.⁵²

Although the US military made strategic changes like relying on the draft to combat threats, American society also confronted ideas related to second-wave feminism in the 1960s.⁵³ The feminist movement gained some traction but did very little to bring awareness to women's involvement in the military because the movement was more focused on broader social issues. As mentioned earlier, there were two significant themes of discrimination in the 1960s: the application of double standards, or martial elitism to women; and preserving women's traditional femininity.⁵⁴ Women were subject to higher standards than to their male counterparts in the mid to late 1960s. Services did not attempt to meet the two percent of women's recruitment authorized by law. They continued to express the importance of higher standards for women, claiming it mitigated personnel problems later.⁵⁵ This argument intended to alleviate concerns of recruits not fit to serve in the military, but conversely, was never applied to male recruits. The Department of Defense chose to authorize the enlistment of approximately 300,000 males with low aptitude scores before they considered growing women's numbers.⁵⁶ This represented a continuation in policy, as unrealistically high educational standards also applied to women during World War II. While this inequality was frustrating, most women were placed in jobs that did not require skills

⁵² Archer, *Women, Warfare and Representation*, 43.

⁵³ Sally Ann Drucker, "Betty Friedan: The Three Waves of Feminism - Ohio Humanities," Blog, *Ohio Humanities*, last modified April 27, 2018, accessed April 3, 2020, <http://www.ohiohumanities.org/betty-friedan-the-three-waves-of-feminism/>. Three waves divide Feminist history. The first wave, occurring in the 19th and early 20th centuries, was mainly concerned with women's right to vote. The second wave, at its height in the 1960s and 1970s, refers to the women's liberation movement for equal legal and social rights. The third wave, beginning in the 1990s, refers to a continuation of and a reaction to second-wave feminism.

⁵⁴ Archer, *Women, Warfare and Representation*, 43.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 44.

afforded to them through higher education. As a result, women assigned to lower aptitude positions experienced boredom, job dissatisfaction, and low morale, undercutting retention of women in the military.

This same elitism transcended education and applied to beauty standards. The most attractive women were allowed to fill the ranks of all service branches, and standards of beauty remained paramount in each service. A 1964 study on expanding the Marine Corps Women's Reserve (MCWR) concluded that quality must be privileged over quantity. The study also reported that "in accordance with the commandant's desires, women must be attractive as well as useful."⁵⁷ For the Air Force, "physical appearance became the chief criterion in the selection process. Each applicant was required to pose for four photographs: front, side, back, and full face."⁵⁸ Civil rights leaders falsely assumed the photographs taken of female recruits were used to determine race. Instead, the commander of the Recruiting Service judged the photos to ensure compliance with beauty standards.⁵⁹

Along with Civil Rights causing social upheaval, the US implemented a draft to fill wartime personnel shortages. Women's roles in the military were intimately connected to the fate of the draft. In 1967, Burke Marshall, the Chairman of the President's Commission on the Selective Service, directly referenced this connection when he reported:

Particularly at a time when manpower demands are high, such as the present, there is a disturbing paradox in this circumstance. In essence, women willing to volunteer for military duty in far higher 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.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Archer, *Women, Warfare and Representation*, 43.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 44–45.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

Women's roles and responsibilities in all military branches eventually expanded due to the aggressive opposition to conscription. Approximately 7,500 servicewomen served in Vietnam.⁶¹ Although women once again served in various roles in the military during Vietnam, most were again shunned and denied full integration socially. Nurses, however, were the exception. Perhaps because civilian nurses were usually women, military nurses were seen and revered as heroic, while other servicewomen were not.⁶²

The transition to the post-Vietnam era military focused on recruiting and building an All-Volunteer Force (AVF). Socially, women sought economic equality simultaneously as the military needed to increase volunteer recruits. This combination of forces triggered a transformation that started in December 1974, when women were approved to serve in all jobs designated as noncombat. President Jimmy Carter, who advocated the inclusion of women in the armed services, stated:

My decision to register women is a recognition of the reality that both women and men are working members of our society. It confirms the societal idea that women are now providing all types of skills in every profession. The military should be no exception. There is no distinction possible, based on ability or performance, that would allow me to exclude women from an obligation to register.⁶³

The issue of how to integrate and utilize women in the armed forces continued into the next presidential administration. Army representatives testified before the Senate Armed Services Manpower Subcommittee before the Reagan presidency had time to assess the workforce issues faced by the military and draw up plans for buildup. In the testimony, they stated that the US Army would reduce the number of women they recruited until they fully understood how integration influenced combat effectiveness.⁶⁴ Army field commanders felt that women were a distraction to service members. Commanders executed the reduction in women recruits and

⁶¹ Archer, *Women, Warfare and Representation*, 45.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 46.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

retention based on this hunch from Army field commanders. There was no formal approach to test this claim that women negatively affected the US Army's readiness.⁶⁵

As a result of this resistance, during the First Gulf War, women in the Air Force were not permitted to fly fighter planes, but they could and did fly tankers that refueled the fighters over Iraq in contested enemy airspace. Female Army pilots, excluded from piloting heavily armed attack helicopters, flew soldiers and supplies in the first assault wave fifty miles into Iraq aboard more vulnerable, lightly armed helicopters. Navy women pilots could not be in the cockpits of fighter aircraft, but flew helicopters from ships across heavily mined waters.⁶⁶ The military took additional measures to control the number of women who served. For example, the USMA Admissions Office set a goal for the percentage of women in each class. For many years, that goal was between fourteen and twenty percent of the admitted class, and women constituted around sixteen to seventeen percent of each matriculated class.⁶⁷ The United States Military Academy has expanded that goal to above twenty percent so that the percentage of female graduates would be closer to the percentage of women serving in the Army officer corps—which explains the increase to twenty-two percent in 2014. Nevertheless, as USMA's board of visitors has noted, this assures that its “demographic future will replicate the army's demographic past at best.”⁶⁸

Why Women Fight

The second point of discussion, which is closely related to women becoming full martial citizens, is women's motivations to fight. Most of the reasons women choose to participate in war are not unlike those of men: honor, national pride, and self-defense. Moreover, most of the

⁶⁵ Archer, *Women, Warfare and Representation*, 51.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

examples of women in war throughout history are rarely known or discussed, and they prove that women in war are not unique to contemporary militaries.

Historical examples of women fighters throughout histories and cultures offer models of how women have participated in what is considered a masculine space. Reviewing such cases help illustrate why women have curtailed the obstacles to fighting in wars and even led armies in them. These real-life women warriors evoke a multifaceted response. By and large, history has left women out of the canon of warfare — with some women warriors deliberately written out of history. For instance, the Soviet government explicitly instructed Russia's squadrons of highly decorated female fighter pilots not to speak of their wartime experiences after their contributions in World War II. The authors of military history, such as John Keegan's claimed that

Warfare is the one human activity from which women, with the most insignificant exceptions, have always and everywhere stood apart. Women have followed the drum, nursed the wounded, tended the held and herded the flocks when the man of the family has followed his lead, have dug the trenches for men to defend and labored in the workshops to send them their weapons. Women, however, do not fight and they never, in any military sense, fight men.⁶⁹

Conversely, women do fight for a myriad of reasons, and though most center around defense, the idea that women do not fight wars is another example of women's exclusion from the public sphere.

The first example that shatters the idea that women do not fight is that of Tomyris, the warrior queen of what is now Kazakhstan. She demonstrates that women are capable of leading armies ruthlessly in the name of defense and revenge. In 530 BCE, Cyrus ruled Persia, the most significant land empire of that time.⁷⁰ For Tomyris and her culture, the steppes of Scythia, women fought on horseback alongside their men, held property in their own names, and enjoyed considerable sexual freedom.⁷¹ They also had a tradition of woman rulers. Cyrus wanted to claim

⁶⁹ Pamela D. Toler, *Women Warriors: An Unexpected History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2019), 4.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

Scythia as part of his empire, and would not concede diplomatically to a woman ruler.⁷² During a battle, Cyrus took Tomyris' son as a prisoner of war.⁷³ Her son killed himself in order to deny Cyrus the ability to use his capture against his mother as a bargaining tool.⁷⁴ When she learned of her son's death, Tomyris led the remainder of her army against the Persians in a battle so bloody that Herodotus was unable to imagine the scale of atrocities. Tomyris fought with the ferocity of any man. She and her army did not bother to take prisoners; they killed everyone in their path, from camp followers to Cyrus himself. When the battle ended, Tomyris and her soldiers searched through the dead until they found Cyrus's corpse. They hacked off his head, and plunged it into a wineskin filled with blood, reportedly drained from Persian soldier. Tomyris proclaimed her decapitated enemy could drink his fill.⁷⁵ After that, she used the Cyrus' skull as a goblet.⁷⁶

Boudica's rebellion against Roman invaders in 61 CE is another example of a mother waging war to protect or avenge their children.⁷⁷ The rebellion lasted only a few months but came close to driving the Roman Empire out of Britain.⁷⁸ Roman soldiers seized Boudica's property when she was widowed, leaving her and her family without financial support.⁷⁹ When she publicly protested against Romans seizing her dead husband's property, Roman soldiers publicly beat her and forced her to watch as they raped her daughters.⁸⁰ She went on to lead an army of rebels against the Romans in combat.⁸¹ She and her army lost, but not before nearly

⁷² Toler, *Women Warriors*, 24.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 25.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 32.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 33.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid., 34.

forcing the Romans out of Britain and committing violent acts of war including crucifying enemy sympathizers.⁸²

In addition to fighting for defense or protecting children, women also chose to fight in wars as a family tradition. On September 17, 1806, Nadezhda Durova disguised herself as a man, sneaked out of her parents' home, and joined the Russian cavalry.⁸³ She wanted the freedom and adventure of military life, exemplified by her father. She served in the Napoleonic Wars and was the first woman to receive the Cross of St. George military decoration given to soldiers, sailors, and noncommissioned officers in the Russian imperial army for acts of "undaunted courage."⁸⁴

Women fighting in wars is not exclusively ancient. Lemdha Pachen was born in 1933 in the Kham province of Tibet as the only child of the chieftain.⁸⁵ She became a Buddhist nun to escape an arranged marriage.⁸⁶ In 1951, the Chinese invaded Tibet and started committing atrocities against Tibetans.⁸⁷ Pachen's father soon began training her to fight in the wake of an existential crisis.⁸⁸ In 1959 she led 600 resistance fighters as their chieftain against the Chinese. She was captured in 1960 and spent twenty-one years in Chinese prisons before her release in 1981.⁸⁹ She followed her father's military tradition out of necessity, but the relationship between father and daughter plays an important role today in the creation of modern warrior daughters.

That relationship is evident when examining generations of families serving in the US Army and graduating from USMA. The Academy's annual Register of Graduates and Former Cadets records families in the genealogical succession tables. The genealogical succession table

⁸² Toler, *Women Warriors*, 34.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 55.

in the 2010 Register lists every graduate from 1802 to 2010 who was a direct relative of another USMA graduate. Women first appeared in the Register in the class of 1980.⁹⁰ Only sixty-two of those 119 women enrolled graduated. Of those sixty-two women, five were daughters of former USMA graduates.⁹¹ Every graduating class after 1980 included women who are the daughters, granddaughters, nieces, sisters and one great-great-granddaughter of former cadets. In 2007, a new tradition began, which included two women whose two parents are both USMA graduates.⁹²

Despite having fought officially in air, naval, and ground security patrols for more than twenty years starting in the Persian Gulf War, American servicewomen were denied combat recognition until legislative exclusions were overturned in 2013. Despite the repeal of the ground combat exclusion policy in 2013, the military has made deliberate efforts to implement that change, and the opposition to women fighting in combat has not disappeared. Despite the dissenting opinions, the first women completed Ranger School, the US Army's elite infantry training program, in October 2015, and more have continued to graduate since. Six women of the 82nd Airborne Division earned Expert Infantryman Badge in January 2018. Other branches of the military have also seen progress, including the first woman to complete Marine Corps infantry officer training in September 2017.

African American Women in the Private and Public Spheres in 20th Century America

In order to understand the connection between integrating both African Americans and women into the US military, one must first examine the racialized gender norms associated with 19th and 20th century American society. As noted above, the private and public spheres distinguished who should and should not be involved in certain daily activities. These divisions

⁹⁰ Toler, *Women Warriors*, 55.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

also impacted women along racialized lines. In the 1930s, the ideas of masculinity and femininity in these two spheres shaped ideas about race and the liberal welfare state.⁹³ Specifically, intellectuals, civil rights activists, and Hollywood films embedded the social frameworks and mindsets about motherhood. The ideas about motherhood and the private sphere were used by the popular press and political leaders to construct meanings of citizenship for all women regardless of race.⁹⁴ The tenets of motherhood were racially divided in the 19th century. White motherhood was based on divisions: motherhood versus work, home versus workplace, private versus public, and of course, female versus male. Women who worked, who were abolitionists, or who were reformers were seen as “bad.” More accurately, these women were seen as dangerous, unwomanly, and unmotherly because they had abandoned the private sphere.⁹⁵ Women were dangerous, immoral, unwomanly, and unmaternal if they attempted any level of life in the public sphere. Women were criticized and labeled as bad mothers based on their behavior outside the home. Women became suspects because they wielded too much power in the private sphere as mothers. To be a good woman was akin to being a good mother. Therefore, all women were subject to this social construct whether they had children or not.⁹⁶

Critiques of women abolitionists, temperance reformers, suffragists, prostitutes, and other working women continued. However, African American women began to challenge laws and social attitudes that limited women's right to property, education, and professions during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.⁹⁷ Long before the New Deal reforms of the 1930s, white and black women joined religious associations and clubs to initiate social reform. They fought for

⁹³ Ruth Feldstein, *Motherhood in Black and White: Race and Sex in American Liberalism, 1930-1965* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 6.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁹⁷ Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 13.

temperance, educational opportunity, suffrage, and a variety of gender-related issues during the latter decades of the 19th century.⁹⁸ They made significant progress between 1890 and 1920. For example, the number of all women with professional degrees rose by 226 percent.⁹⁹

In the early twentieth century, white women were trained by businesses and factories as typists, clerks, telephone operators, and technicians. Women flooded these business fields in World War I, that the Army had difficulty finding skilled men to fill these secretarial roles.¹⁰⁰ As war approached, the army took steps to incorporate more competent women into the effort. On October 8, 1917, GEN John J. Pershing requested 100 women to work as telephone operators. He also requested they wear military uniforms. Congress approved his request, with the exception that the women were civilian contract employees and did not have military status.¹⁰¹ A nurse was the only role women held in the military with any recognition. After the Armistice of November 11, 1918, the US Army abandoned all proposals for a women's corps.¹⁰²

However, American women of both races continued to fight for full recognition as citizens. In 1920, the same year women earned the right to vote with the Nineteenth Amendment, Secretary of War Newton Baker created the position of Director of Women's Relations within the G-1 (personnel and administration) of the General Staff.¹⁰³ The first director quit within a year from frustration. Anita Phipps was the second person to hold the position. She continued in the role until 1931 when the new Chief of Staff, Douglas MacArthur, terminated the position. He considered her duties to be of no military value.¹⁰⁴ In an effort to help women gain support to

⁹⁸ Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent*, 13.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Elna Hilliard Grahn, *In the Company of WACs* (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 1993), xiii.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, xiii.

serve in the military, MAJ Everett Hughes, an officer on the G-1 Division General Staff, created his plan for a women's corps in 1928.¹⁰⁵ His plan established key issues for white women, including their military status. Though MAJ Hughes' plan was progressive, the idea of a women's corps was dismissed.¹⁰⁶

Women continued to demand they be able to contribute to the nation's defense. After the passage of the Selective Service Act in September 1940, the demands became more persuasive. Support for their cause grew in number and status. Among those who supported the formation of women's corps was Eleanor Roosevelt.¹⁰⁷ Nurses received full military rank in 1944, a year after the WAAC had become the Women's Corps (WAC), with full Army status and rank.¹⁰⁸

Meanwhile, African American women struggled to gain recognition, with very little support of their cause. In 1932, the New Deal policies commingled the meanings of family with citizenship. The New Deal laid the foundation for politicians to determine what kinds of families and citizens the federal government should assist, and on what basis they should receive assistance.¹⁰⁹ Gender and race drove the concept of families. The critical construct of families was women acted as mothers, and men as husbands, fathers, and citizens.¹¹⁰ Masculine and feminine images come into focus in the Social Security Act of 1935 and related legislation.¹¹¹ Discussions of race among New Dealers also produced gendered conceptions of citizenship and family. Understanding New Deal's social security legislation and racial politics in relation to each

¹⁰⁵ Grahn, *In the Company of WACs*, xiv.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, xv.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, xiv.

¹⁰⁹ Feldstein, *Motherhood in Black and White*, 33.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

other illuminates the inclusiveness as well as the limitations of New Deal liberalism and clarifies the role that ideas about motherhood and masculinity played in both.¹¹²

In 1932, Congress passed the Federal Economy Act. In it, section 213 prohibited any two members of one household from working for the civil service. Under this law, which remained in effect until 1937, over 1,000 married middle-class white women employees were eliminated from the civil service. This same legislature forced less-financially secure African American women to remain in the workforce. New Deal administrators in the south restricted federally funded work programs to whites, stipulating that African American women continue to work in lower-paying professions such as cotton pickers, laundresses, or other domestic positions.¹¹³

Not only did the Social Security Act regulate what professions women could or could not participate, but it also normalized them to images of women as good or bad mothers.¹¹⁴ A key example was the Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) program. ADC juxtaposed women as both virtuous and villains in their roles as mothers.¹¹⁵ The ADC intended to allow women to fulfill their natural pursuit to give their children the physical and affectionate guardianship necessary and to keep them from falling into social misfortune.¹¹⁶ Lawmakers saw the mother's role in society and family as a crucial one, and the federal government established program assistance to needy women with children to help the country as a whole.¹¹⁷ However, these programs ran on the assumption that to be a nurturing mother was the natural state for all women. Women were penalized if they did not fulfill this assumption. Good mothers worthy of ADC took shape against those that pertained to bad mothers. For example, Congress declared the moral character of

¹¹² Feldstein, *Motherhood in Black and White*, 33.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 34–35.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

potential recipients a basis for considering eligibility; numerous provisions rendered some kind of mothers more deserving than others. Under such guidelines, in the years between 1935 and 1939, widows were far more likely to receive ADC on behalf of their children than were divorced, deserted, or never-married women with needy children.¹¹⁸

Dividing white and black women into “good” and “bad” mothers expressed and resolved intertwined crises of liberalism and families in the 1930s. According to liberal discourse, a perceived crisis in masculinity and potentially dangerous women posed personal as well as social problems. Casting women as good or bad mothers was one means of resolving social disorder and affirming the possibility of progress—including racial progress—in the 1930s.¹¹⁹

Likewise, African American women who sought martial citizenship had multiple obstacles to overcome, particularly during World War II. In the 1940s, US Army African American nurses were not allowed to care for wounded and ill Americans. Instead, they were relegated to treating Nazi prisoners of war.¹²⁰ Between 1942 and 1946, there were 371,683 German Prisoners of War (POWs) in more than 600 camps throughout the US.¹²¹ African American nurses went through the same academic and medical training as white nurses and endured the same rigors of becoming army nurses. Most felt betrayed when they were not allowed to serve wounded American soldiers and found the relegation of tending to Nazi soldiers insulting.¹²²

African American women, in many ways, had more obstacles to overcome than even those of white women. African American women tried to enroll in the Red Cross in order to serve

¹¹⁸ Feldstein, *Motherhood in Black and White*, 35.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Alexis Clark, “The Army’s First Black Nurses Were Relegated to Caring for Nazi Prisoners of War,” *Smithsonian Magazine*, accessed April 3, 2020, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/armys-first-black-nurses-had-tend-to-german-prisoners-war-180969069/>.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

as Army Nurses in 1917. However, they were prohibited because the American Nurses Association banned African Americans from acquiring the required membership.¹²³ Only during the 1918 Flu Epidemic were some African American women called upon as nurses to assist in the disaster.¹²⁴

African American women were not allowed to serve as Army nurses again until World War II began. Wanting to serve their nation and earn a living, many women sought enlistment. The US Army, in need of more nurses, responded by rejecting these women based on their race and refused to appoint them into the Army Nurse Corps.¹²⁵ Since African American women were denied membership into the American Nurses Association (ANA) they formed The National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses (NACGN) in 1908. The NACGN fought against the discrimination of African American nurses in the Army Nurse Corps and won. However, the army implemented quota for black nurses. Only 300 African American women served in the Army Nurse Corps, compared to 40,000 white nurses.¹²⁶ The military was struggling with racism and segregation, even at a time of war.¹²⁷

African Americans were segregated on different installations than whites, performed maintenance and menial jobs during the war, were typically left out of officer meetings and social gatherings, and were required to eat in segregated dining facilities.¹²⁸ While African Americans performed these menial duties and suffered segregation, German POWs often had better social status than the African American women serving as their nurses. White residents, other US Army soldiers serving as guards and officers were friendly toward them.¹²⁹ German POWs received a

¹²³ Clark, "The Army's First Black Nurses Were Relegated to Caring for Nazi Prisoners of War."

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

respect that black maintainers, soldiers, and nurses did not based on the racial prejudice in America at the time. POW camps had African American train attendants serve them food and drinks and addressed them as "sir." White soldiers in the enemy army were superior to African American men and women service members during World War II.¹³⁰

After World War II, many nurses were discouraged from continuing service in the military due to racist practices akin to those African American men also faced. Only four African American officers and 121 enlisted continued to serve in the WAC after 1947.¹³¹ Like their male counterparts, African American women serving in the military integrated into training and occupations with President Truman's Executive Order in 1950.¹³² The formal end of segregation in America opened the gates to allow African American women to begin the arduous task of overcoming the remaining obstacles in societal norms and enter the public sphere.

African American Integration into the US Military

Integration into the US military of any new social population is one that requires significant change to the system. A perfect historical example is the integration of African American men into the US military. Reflection on race relations, as well as the formal organization of the social order in the desegregation process in the 1950s offers an example of changing the rigid structure of the US military. Codenamed Clear, a report on integration led to the official desegregation of the US Army by the 1950s. The transformation of an institution as big, established, and conservative as the Army proved quite dramatic.

Unlike women, who have been denied the right to fight openly in combat, a disproportionately high percentage of African American men in combat infantry units provided as evidence of discrimination and "genocide." Kimberly Phillips' *War! What is it Good For* analyzes

¹³⁰ Clark, "The Army's First Black Nurses Were Relegated to Caring for Nazi Prisoners of War."

¹³¹ Kathryn Sheldon, "History of Black Women," accessed April 3, 2020, <https://www.womensmemorial.org/history-of-black-women#4>.

¹³² Ibid.

the struggle for African Americans' right to fight in foreign wars as full citizens, particularly those post-World War II, such as Korea and Vietnam, while simultaneously struggling for equal rights as citizens domestically.¹³³ Phillips also examines African Americans' disproportionate participation in the military and battlefield while also fighting the protracted and fervent struggles for domestic economic and racial justice. Phillips' work on African Americans' struggles for full citizenship, including martial citizenship, indicates how such activism shaped the civil rights movement, the effects of which can still be seen in today's military.¹³⁴

African Americans believed white society was claiming to spread democracy while denying fundamental democratic rights to members of its society during the civil rights movement. America had an incompatible narrative of waging foreign wars to spread democracy while denying fundamental democratic rights to members of its society.¹³⁵ Particularly during the conscription methods for Korea and Vietnam, African American men felt forced into wars, none of which expanded their civil rights. Instead, the war made them "expendable" in their communities and on the battlefields.¹³⁶ African Americans were forced to accept the US government's enforcement of segregation when Congress passed the Selective Service and Training Act of 1940, which created an unequal system for men drafted without the right to refuse service.¹³⁷ This was compounded when President Franklin D. Roosevelt affirmed in October 1940 that although he supported blacks' participation in the Army, it was only in segregated labor battalions.¹³⁸ African Americans not only were mandated into military service when war-time needs required more men, but they were also relegated to serve in roles white men

¹³³ Kimberley L Phillips, *War! What Is It Good For?: Black Freedom Struggles and the U.S. Military from World War II to Iraq* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 4.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

found subservient. Comparable to women's integration into the US military, African Americans were assigned to units and roles by ignoring qualifications.¹³⁹

The Office of Wartime Information actively misrepresented African American involvement in wars by excluding them from coverage in their publications. Furthermore, it produced separate publications deemed "appropriate" for black audiences. These publications only portrayed African Americans' contributions in 'safe, non-threatening' contexts ranging from civilian defense meetings and scrap drives in Washington, DC to shipyards in Oakland, from classrooms at Bethune-Cookman college to defense assembly lines in New Britain, Connecticut."¹⁴⁰

African Americans mounted a vigorous and collective effort to own their narrative and counter the portrayal of themselves as limited citizens. They mass-produced and published positive and dignified images and conducted visits to private studios for individual and family portraits for display at large photographic exhibits within their communities.¹⁴¹ Additionally, newspapers, and magazines published these photographs and illustrations, increasing the audiences which viewed these positive images.¹⁴²

The start of the new decade did not provide much relief. Between 1950 and 1960, deindustrialization in the major industrial cities, such as Detroit, Chicago, and Cleveland, led to the disappearance of skilled and semi-skilled wage work. Black men found an army both averse to racial integration and desperate for their presence as combat laborers, a dramatic shift in its "Negro Policy." As the military shrank rapidly from 16 million in 1944 to 500,000 by 1947, black men continued to enlist in the army. Between August and December 1945, more than 140,000

¹³⁹ Phillips, *War! What Is It Good For?*, 23.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 29

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

African Americans enlisted, comprising two-thirds of the Army's estimated required troops.¹⁴³

African Americans who spoke out against American wars received fierce and mediate retaliation for stepping out of their “place” in American political discourses.¹⁴⁴

Like women's participation in American wars, African Americans have been fighting bravely alongside white men since the first wars of the nation's history. The need for soldiers during the Revolutionary War meant the need to recruit African Americans, despite a fear that arming them may allow them to turn against white slaveholders.¹⁴⁵ During the Civil War, African Americans served effectively. They died at a rate forty percent higher than white counterparts. When the war ended, those not discharged were forced to conduct duties that white soldiers refused.¹⁴⁶ During World War I, African Americans were mostly assigned to menial jobs, such as mess orderlies. World War II exasperated domestic racial tensions with high costs of maintaining segregated facilities and training posts. African American soldiers struggled against the continuing idea that they lacked the ability to quality soldiers, officers, and combat troops.¹⁴⁷ African American integration into the US Army, like women's integration, was a result of wartime personnel needs. They were officially recognized in the 1940s as acceptable candidates for military service. They were obligated into service with conscription. Eventually, President Harry Truman signed Executive Order 9981 in July 1948, which began the long process of official military integration. The task was arduous, spanning 2.67 million troops across 1,145 military installations.¹⁴⁸ Executive Order 9981 slowly took effect. The Korean War necessitated

¹⁴³ Phillips, *War! What Is It Good For?*, 116–117.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 230.

¹⁴⁵ Gregory M. Herek, Jared B. Jobe, and Ralph M. Carney, eds., *Out in Force: Sexual Orientation and the Military*, Worlds of desire (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 86.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 87.

¹⁴⁸ The President's Committee on Equal Opportunity in the Armed Forces, *Equality of Treatment & Opportunity for Negro Military Personnel Stationed within the United States* (Washington, DC, June 13, 1963).

more troops in a time of war, meaning the integration of African Americans into combat.¹⁴⁹

Project Clear, a study of the effects of desegregation on unit effectiveness of troops deployed in Korea, found no significant effects on task performance or unit effectiveness.¹⁵⁰

During Vietnam, African American men still suffered the results of racism and segregation. Race riots during the 1960s paved the way for more harmonious interracial relations in the US military.¹⁵¹ In the 1970s, with the abolition of the draft, the US military found itself needing to recruit numbers for the AVF, which required recruiting diverse populations to fill the ranks.¹⁵² The military took a new approach to how it did business in regards to recruiting, promotions, enlistments, and benefits in a genuine attempt to discard previous racist practices.

However, even today, African American men make up significantly less of the army than white men. In 1994, nearly fifty years after Executive Order 9981, only thirty percent of enlisted and nine percent of officers were African American.¹⁵³ Additionally, there was a significant drop between the ranks of major and lieutenant colonel, suggesting this was the highest rank African American officers could hope to achieve.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, it takes more than twenty years to see changes in policy regarding equal opportunity and inclusion in higher ranks, such as a general officer.¹⁵⁵ Almost sixty years after Executive Order 9981, in 2003, GEN Eric Shinseki made great efforts to ensure equal opportunity in the US Army. He directed the formation of the Commission on Officer Diversity and Advancement in the Army (CODA). The Army Diversity Office, established in 2006, was followed in February 2008 by the establishment of the Army

¹⁴⁹ Herek, Jobe, and Carney, *Out in Force*, 87.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁵¹ James Burk and Evelyn Espinoza, "Race Relations Within the US Military," *Annual Review of Sociology* 38 (2012): 402.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Herek, Jobe, and Carney, *Out in Force*, 91.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Diversity Task Force (ADTF). The ADTF submitted a report in 2008 that had four recommendations: establish a centralized Headquarters Department of the Army (HQDA) diversity staff that reports directly to the Army Leadership; establish a definition of Army diversity that serves all Army components; establish a new diversity vision that serves all Army components; and consolidate efforts of other assessments.¹⁵⁶

Despite racial integration, African American military service records still do not mirror other demographics such as white men. According to the 2016 Army Demographics Profile published by the Department of the Army, African Americans represent twenty-one percent of the overall army, only eleven percent of the officer corps, and between twenty-one and twenty-four percent of combat arms.¹⁵⁷ As aforementioned, combat arms branches are the principal channel for promotions and senior positions such as Chief of Staff and Sergeant Major of the Army. Of the forty-two active duty four-star generals in the military, only two are African American. Comparatively, only one is a woman. Moreover, African Americans are less likely to make the rank of a general officer as they do not represent branches that have traditionally been the breeding grounds from which general officers are selected.¹⁵⁸

Seventy-two years after racial integration, African American soldiers are still not comparable to white soldiers. Retired BG Remo Butler first added to the granularity of this discussion to which others, including COL Irving Smith III, continued.¹⁵⁹ Butler and Smith both suggest that African American officers do not receive the same quality of undergraduate military experience as white officers. Most African American officers commissioned through the Reserve

¹⁵⁶ Irving Smith III, “Why Black Officers Still Fail” (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, March 30, 2010), accessed April 3, 2020, <http://doi.apa.org/get-pe-doi.cfm?doi=10.1037/e538462013-005>.

¹⁵⁷ US Army, “Army Demographics: FY16 Army Profile,” *GoArmy.Com*, last modified 2016, accessed September 16, 2019, https://m.goarmy.com/content/dam/goarmy/downloaded_assets/pdfs/advocates-demographics.pdf.

¹⁵⁸ Smith III, “Why Black Officers Still Fail.”

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) units from historically black colleges and universities are not appropriately socialized to understand some of the idiosyncrasies of an institution dominated by white officers. African Americans commissioned through USMA, more often than not, perform better than their ROTC commissioned peers. Both Butler and Smith hypothesize these differences are not the level of education, but the level of professionalism of the officers serving at those institutions.¹⁶⁰

Additionally, they suggest that African Americans are not getting the type of mentorship that they needed to be successful in the Army.¹⁶¹ Since there are fewer senior African American officers, there are fewer to mentor junior African Americans officers and guide their military professional development.¹⁶² This is not to say only like-ethnic officers can be mentors. However, such mentors can better relate to junior African American officers and act as a mentor.¹⁶³ Similarly, if there were more senior women in the Army, more mentors with that specific experience, knowledge, and culture would be available to coach junior women serving.

How Men and Women Differ

Physiological differences between men and women are often dismissed. Acknowledging physiological distinctions between men and women is not the same as perpetuating social gender norms associated with femininity and masculinity. There is a real fear that those women who chose to serve in the military will lose their femininity or, conversely, that they will feminize the army and make it less effective, less aggressive, or just less in general.¹⁶⁴ After the last man was drafted into the army in 1972, the army recognized it needed women to fill its AVF ranks as it

¹⁶⁰ Smith III, "Why Black Officers Still Fail."

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Regina F. Titunik, "The Myth of the Macho Military," *Polity* 40, no. 2 (2008): 137–163.

had needed women during war to fill personnel shortages.¹⁶⁵ However, on average, women tend to be smaller, weigh less, and be physically weaker than men.¹⁶⁶ Nevertheless, women also, on average, tend to do better on aptitude tests and are less likely to require discipline.¹⁶⁷ Women also tend to achieve higher education degrees, surpassing the rate of men in 1991.¹⁶⁸

Arguments as to why women should not go to war are cemented in the accepted paradigms of what it means to be a woman and what it means to be a man. One example is pregnancy: woman brings about life, and therefore cannot end life, a requirement of war.¹⁶⁹ They must also be protected while pregnant and would reduce combat effectiveness if pregnant or get pregnant while participating in a war. Counter to the concerns about women reducing army readiness due to pregnancy, pregnancy rates before and during deployments are the same, and lower than the rates of civilians of the same age.¹⁷⁰ Although women have fewer deployments because of children than men, they also experience fewer disciplinary chapter losses than men.¹⁷¹

There is also the question of physical strength and endurance: the thought that women lack the physical strength or stamina for the job.¹⁷² This includes the ability to wear and operate in protective body armor, keeping up on a foot-march, carrying heavy machine guns and equipment into battle, or rescuing a fallen comrade. As women integrate all aspects of military service, there has been an increasing tendency to deny apparent differences between men and women to validate women's abilities, contributions, and equality in armed services. Menstruation,

¹⁶⁵ Myra J. Peterson, *Women in the United States Military*, Population Diversity and the U.S. Army (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 1999), JSTOR, accessed September 2, 2019, 100, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep12056.11>.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 101.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ Toler, *Women Warriors*, 8.

¹⁷⁰ Peterson, *Women in the United States Military*, 102.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² Toler, *Women Warriors*, 8.

pregnancy, and menopause are natural occurrences for women. Ignoring or dismissing these routine happenings of the female body as anomalies or disabilities is problematic as women integrate into the military culture and that culture not adapting to these new variables. It is imperative to address these, as well as other differences between the two sexes head-on.

Previous research has revealed that female soldiers suffer a higher proportion of musculoskeletal injuries compared to males. This includes a higher proportion of lower extremity, knee, and overuse injuries. Overuse injuries often results of training for physical activities incorrectly, not recognizing injury indicators, and not understanding how to train women differently than men based on their physiology. Simply stated, there are potential musculoskeletal, biomechanical, and physiological differences between male and female soldiers. These differences require implementing gender-specific training to mitigate injury risk and enhance performance. However, in addition to a physical variance between men and women that state women, on average, are not as physically strong as men, other research suggests women diverge from men psychologically and mentally, which may make women better decision-makers for specific situations.

Although it can be said that female soldiers, on average, possess less strength than male soldiers, a study of individual variability among strength characteristics revealed the top-performing women possess similar or better strength characteristics than the bottom performing men. This indicates a potential strength capability overlap. During extensive research on the subject, the US Army Medical Department found that although men are typically physically stronger than women, top-performing women are stronger than lower-performing men. More concisely, the top percentile of the strongest women performs higher physically than the lower percentile of men. This adds credence to the argument that women can and should serve in combat arms. Specifically, the top twenty-fifth percentile of women demonstrated greater shoulder strength than the bottom tenth percentile of men, as well as better knee and torso

strength than the bottom twenty-fifth percentile of men.¹⁷³ The top twenty-fifth percentile of women demonstrated greater ankle plantar dorsiflexion than the bottom fifty percent of men, and the top tenth percentile of women demonstrated higher ankle inversion and eversion strength than the bottom fifty percent of men.¹⁷⁴ These results stress the need to consider individuals based on physical strength and not on gender alone. Individual variability should be considered when assessing the capabilities of male and female soldiers to safely and successfully perform the tactical activities needed for specific roles in the military.

For example, male soldiers demonstrated worse static balance than female soldiers. Balance plays a vital role in athletic and tactical tasks by providing a stable base of support and enhancing overall joint stability, especially with unstable surfaces.¹⁷⁵ Female soldiers may possess better balance because, on average, the center of gravity is lower than in male soldiers. However, previous research revealed that men possess better balance when the difficulty of the balance task increases, like during tasks involving dynamic postural stability.¹⁷⁶ Male soldiers demonstrated significantly higher anaerobic power and capacity. These characteristics are reflective of the ability to perform quick burst activity and to sustain that performance for a period of time. By participating in training targeting anaerobic components of fitness, female soldiers will be able to sprint faster and maintain a higher intensity longer.¹⁷⁷ Male soldiers also had higher maximum oxygen uptake and a higher lactate threshold in the current study.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷³ Jesse Mala et al., "(PDF) The Role of Strength and Power During Performance of High Intensity Military Tasks Under Heavy Load Carriage," last modified April 2015, accessed April 3, 2020, 5, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279308669_The_Role_of_Strength_and_Power_During_Performance_of_High_Intensity_Military_Tasks_Under_Heavy_Load_Carriage#page=14.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 6.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

Simply put, men tend to use a higher amount of oxygen during the physical excursion, as well as the ability to exercise for a longer duration of time before lactic acid begins to build in muscle than women. Previous research suggested that women may have reduced aerobic capacity for several reasons. These reasons include: women carry less fat-free mass and a more significant percentage of nonmetabolic (fat) tissue, have a lower oxygen-carrying capacity, and possess a decreased cardiac output compared to males.¹⁷⁹ While maximal oxygen uptake is mostly based on these factors, in addition to genetics and age, training and increasing ability can positively affect these factors.¹⁸⁰ Perhaps more importantly, the point at which the lactic threshold occurs is more readily influenced by training. Therefore, if the lactic threshold occurs at a higher percentage of maximal oxygen consumption, then an individual will be able to train at a higher intensity for a more extended period.¹⁸¹ Individuals who train to enhance lactic threshold may be able to perform physical activity longer and at a higher intensity, thereby potentially improving performance and maximizing operational readiness.¹⁸²

Understanding the importance of physical training, and the different start points for men and women should affect service culture in regards to physical strength and endurance. Though men and women most likely will still have varying strength and endurance results, overall, increasing cardiovascular fitness and anaerobic threshold may play a role in the mitigating onset of fatigue and reducing the risk of unintentional, musculoskeletal injuries.¹⁸³ The current study demonstrated that female soldiers are significantly different from male soldiers across a majority of physical, physiological, and musculoskeletal characteristics. Targeted training may be beneficial in order to address the sex-specific differences and to induce adaptations specific to job

¹⁷⁹ Mala et al., "The Role of Strength and Power During Performance," 3.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 9.

task requirements.¹⁸⁴ While both male and female Soldiers possess the capability to perform physically-demanding job requirements, on average female soldiers possessed lower strength, power, endurance, and worse body composition and biomechanics than male soldiers. Therefore, progressive, periodized programs designed to enhance these characteristics in female soldiers may increase the proportion of women capable of safely and successfully performing job tasks and reduce the sex disparity evidenced in the current study.¹⁸⁵

Mental capacity and judgment are an all-together harder aspect of military capability to quantify regardless of gender, and therefore chiefly broad-brushed.¹⁸⁶ Men and women do have distinct differences in brain function, specifically decision-making processes. Many daily decisions require men and women to make categorical decisions, the process of committing to a particular option from a discrete set of alternatives.¹⁸⁷ American psychologist Carol Gilligan found that while men linearly reach decisions, with individual autonomy as a foremost consideration, women relationally form their decisions in the context of the social institutions that are affected, including school and family.¹⁸⁸ Research suggests that gender may play a role in categorical decisions because men tend to organize the world into distinct categories, and women see things in terms of conditions and relationships.¹⁸⁹ Psychologists at the University of Warwick found that men were more likely to see an object as fully belonging or not belonging to a category, while women more often judged that objects only partially belonged. When asked

¹⁸⁴ Mala et al., “The Role of Strength and Power During Performance,” 3.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ilan Shrira, “Women More Likely Than Men to See Nuance When Making Decisions,” *Scientific American*, last modified September 20, 2011, accessed April 3, 2020, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/sex-roles-and-seeing-the-world-in-black-and-white/>.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Gabriel D. Donleavy, “No Man’s Land: Exploring the Space between Gilligan and Kohlberg,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 80, no. 4 (2008): 807–822. Carol Gilligan is an American psychologist known for her research and study on the morality and development of women and girls. She received her PhD in social psychology from Harvard University and works as an Applied Humanities and Psychology at the University of New York.

¹⁸⁹ Shrira, “Women More Likely Than Men to See Nuance When Making Decisions.”

how confident they were in their judgments, men and women were equally confident, suggesting that men and women perceive the world differently.¹⁹⁰

Some research suggests that men engage in more abstract thinking and use categories and generalizations. Conversely, women are more likely to use context-specific thinking, weighing the concrete situations and relationships. Psychologists use these differences to research and compare the moral reasoning of men and women. Men's moral judgments tend to be governed by abstract principles of justice, duty, and fairness that apply to all people and situations equally. Women's moral judgments tend to weigh specific relationships between people and circumstances, which is to say moral judgments are made through subjective feelings rather than abstract principles.

In addition to men and women's brain functioning in distinct ways, they also look and work differently on a neurological level as well.¹⁹¹ Most notably, women have menstrual cycles that are unlike any biological event for men. Therefore, menstrual cycles must be acknowledged and studied with regards to effects on physical and psychological effects on military performance. Neuroscientists at the University of California, Berkeley conducted a study on hormone fluctuations during a woman's menstrual cycle and the possible effects on the brain similarly to other substances such as caffeine, methamphetamines, and the attention drug Ritalin.¹⁹² The study shows that cognition is tied to women's estrogen levels in people, explaining why some women have better or worse cognitive abilities at varying points in their menstrual cycles.¹⁹³ Women with lower levels of estrogen struggled with complicated working memory tasks, such as repeating a series of five numbers in reverse order.¹⁹⁴ When the test was repeated during

¹⁹⁰ Shrira, "Women More Likely Than Men to See Nuance When Making Decisions."

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

ovulation, however, and when estrogen levels are highest (usually ten to twelve days after menstruation), these women fared markedly better, improving their performance by about ten percent. This may mean that caffeine, which triggers a dopamine release, and Ritalin-like drugs are less effective, or even detrimental, at certain times of the month for some women, when estrogen is spiking.¹⁹⁵ More broadly, this study illustrates that women's and men's brains, though equal in aptitude, are not the same.¹⁹⁶ Understanding that the differences exist may help the military fully integrate women into combat roles by mitigating or capitalizing on these differences as opposed to ignoring them.

How US Society and the Military See Women Today

Two unprecedented recent trends show how society is integrating women into the public sphere as well as accounting for the distinct differences between men and women. New laws ratified by Congress to better incorporate paid family and maternity leave as well as the military's change in focus towards women's equipment and integration into combat arms are two trends that recognize women's abilities as well as differences from men in chorus. As more women enter the public sphere and have jobs outside the home, more books, news articles, blogs, and social media posts have covered the topic. Books like Sheryl Sandberg's *Lean In* are increasingly popular and encourage women to break their personal and others' paradigms about working women. An entire industry of books, podcasts, and how-to videos and blogs has erupted with women's pursuit of the public sphere.

Understandably, this new movement to discuss working women and mothers is popular as it applies to more people. Moreover, women still face different challenges than men with careers in the public sphere and always will be based on differences in biology. The US laws on maternity policies are one of the drivers in which women are viewed in society. Congress

¹⁹⁵ Shrira, "Women More Likely Than Men to See Nuance When Making Decisions."

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

acknowledged this difference and passed Public Law 95-555 in 1978, which amended Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit sex discrimination on the basis of pregnancy.¹⁹⁷

However, in 1989, only thirty-three percent of women had access to unpaid maternity leave, and paid maternity leave was rarer still.¹⁹⁸ In 1993, the Family and Medical Leave Act became law, which protected employees' leave related to births or the care of family members with medical needs.¹⁹⁹ Three years later, fifty-two percent of nonprofit organizations, forty-nine percent of government agencies, and forty-six percent of education organizations offered some degree of paid maternity leave.²⁰⁰ Federal employees did not have access to paid leave for births, adoptions, or foster care until December 2019 when the Federal Employee Leave Act was approved as part of the National Defense Authorization Act.²⁰¹ This new law grants federal employees access to twelve weeks of paid family leave. Conversely, women serving the US Army were authorized twelve weeks of paid maternity leave in 2011 when the Army published Army Regulations 600-8-10, in which its maternity policy was covered. Furthermore, the Army updated its policy in 2019, allowing for primary caregivers to children, regardless of gender, to receive up to twelve weeks of family leave for birth, adoption, or foster care. Therefore, American policy and society are shifting how it views the integration of a private sphere event like a birth, as it pertains to the public sphere. Women will continue to be at the forefront of this paradigm shift based on their fight for equality while being biologically different from men.

History, in addition to new laws and regulations, shapes how women integrate effectively into the public sphere. Historical examples of women in combat disprove the idea that war is a

¹⁹⁷ “S.995 - 95th Congress (1977-1978): A Bill to Amend Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to Prohibit Sex Discrimination on the Basis of Pregnancy,” legislation, *Congress.Gov*, 1977/1978, accessed April 3, 2020, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/95th-congress/senate-bill/995>.

¹⁹⁸ Doug Guthrie and Louise Marie Roth, “The State, Courts, and Maternity Policies in U.S. Organizations: Specifying Institutional Mechanisms,” *American Sociological Review* 64, no. 1 (1999): 41.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.

²⁰¹ “S.995 - 95th Congress (1977-1978).”

purely masculine concept. Navigating the future for women in combat requires understanding women's role in history, and how to integrate women into combat effectively today based on women's physiological differences. The US military has started taking a rational look at these differences, and as a result, has recognized a gap in equipment such as helmets and body armor. Articles published by *Stars and Stripes* and the United States Army Acquisitions Support Center chronicle the work on female-specific equipment. Currently, both the US Marines and Army are researching designs for a new helmet harness that allows them to wear their hair in a bun more comfortably.²⁰² A significant yet seemingly small difference between men and women is hairstyles. Before the redesign, women struggled to see and function fully while wearing a helmet. The female-specific “H-Back” apparatus includes an opening for a bun.²⁰³ This redesign also includes improvements to retention straps to keep them from interfering with peripheral vision and cutting into earlobes.²⁰⁴

Additional body armor enhancements identified in the Marines’ report include smaller armor plates and an adjustable frame backpack to help female Marines shoulder heavy loads.²⁰⁵ New armor plates and carriers are about twenty-five percent lighter. They will also have contoured shoulders to accommodate a rifle stock better and will be one and one-half inches shorter at the waist so that women will have better mobility.²⁰⁶ A new backpack will feature an updated shoulder harness and hip belt designed to fit over the body armor.²⁰⁷ Multiple yoke sizes will allow wearers to modify the width of their shoulder straps to accommodate different body

²⁰² Rose L. Thayer, “New Bill Aims to Get Better-Fitting Equipment to Women in the Military - U.S. - Stripes,” *Stars and Stripes*, last modified December 4, 2019, accessed December 16, 2019, <https://www.stripes.com/news/us/new-bill-aims-to-get-better-fitting-equipment-to-women-in-the-military-1.609795>.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Ibid.

shapes.²⁰⁸ These redesigns are the result of research in the field, and recognition that men and women have significant physical differences. The one-pattern-fits-all was hindering women's ability to perform individual tasks properly.

Furthermore, The US Army Research Institute for Environmental Medicine in Natick, Massachusetts recently conducted a study of 133 women trainees and 229 women serving on active duty. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between height, weight, and Body Mass Index (BMI) measures and performance in Common Soldier Tasks.²⁰⁹ These tasks included a sandbag carry, move under fire, casualty drag, casualty evacuation, and a 6.4 km road march.²¹⁰ Researchers categorized the participants into four groups by body measurements. Female participants who are taller, heavier, and have a higher BMI performed better on common soldier tasks than smaller women.²¹¹ Women who fell in the quartiles for higher BMI did better on the ruck march, sandbag carry, casualty evacuation, and casualty drag.²¹² All of these events primarily require strength and power for successful performance. As important as the actual study, of additional importance, this study was reported on by the Army Times in March 2020, evidence that the dialogue about women's physiology and integration into combat arms is of considerable interest.

As women integrate into all facets of the military, one gender exclusion remains. As the law stands today, women are excluded from registering for the draft. Conversely, all men must register for the draft upon turning eighteen. This topic is fraught with controversy; moreover, Texas Federal Judge Gray Miller ruled the exclusion of women from the draft was

²⁰⁸ Thayer, "New Bill Aims to Get Better-Fitting Equipment to Women in the Military - U.S. - Stripes,"

²⁰⁹ Jan E. Redmond et al., "Relationship of Anthropometric Measures on Female Trainees' and Active Duty Soldiers' Performance of Common Soldiering Tasks," *Military Medicine* 185, no. 1 (January 7, 2020): 376.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid., 379.

²¹² Ibid.

unconstitutional in February 2020.²¹³ As women participate in the public sphere, they will also have to fully participate in all civic duties such as the draft. The draft is a means to reconstitute personnel shortages in combat arms branches such as infantry. The intent of drafted Soldiers to fight in combat arms is validation the military would benefit from researching and modifying for women's physiological and mental differences.

Conclusion

The debate over women and their participation in the public sphere is still in the limelight today. Although many American's participate in the discourse, the term public sphere is not one used often, but the idea prevails. The public sphere is shared space, outside that of the private sphere where group activities such as professional exchanges, education, government, and free flow of ideas occur in democratic societies.

In 2017, the World Economic Forum stated that the likelihood of global gender parity in economics and civil and legislative rights is still a long time away. It cited research showing that even a modest level of equality was still at least 170 years away.²¹⁴ Like race integration and desegregation in the US military, change inequality policies reflects more considerable social changes. The forum called this the "creeping delay," or the long interval of time between policy change and observable change.²¹⁵ Human nature is resistant to change, and humans seek to maintain the status quo or perpetuate current paradigms.

In order to integrate women successfully into combat roles in the US military, leaders and society need to address preconceived notions and myths about women in war. Currently, the two leading justifications hindering women's integration as combat-able is that women are a

²¹³ Matthew S. Schwartz, "Judge Rules Male-Only Draft Violates Constitution," *NPR.Org*, accessed April 3, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2019/02/25/697622930/judge-rules-male-only-draft-violates-constitution>.

²¹⁴ Megan Raum, "Warrior Women: 3,000 Years in the Fight," *Joint Force Quarterly*, no. 93, 3rd Quarter 2019; 51.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*

distraction to unit cohesion, as well as women are not as physically and mentally able to perform combat roles.²¹⁶ Even though the ban on women in combat was lifted in 2013 and the ban on women in combat arms was lifted in 2015, in September of 2018, James Mattis stated in a presentation to cadets at the Virginia Military Institute that, "The jury is still out on women serving in combat. The United States needs to decide whether females in close-quarters combat are a military strength or weakness...remember we incline to have this to all. However, we cannot do something that militarily doesn't make sense."²¹⁷ As previously discussed, women have been engaging successfully in combat since Tomyris in 530 BCE, and therefore women in combat make sense.

Conversely, at a Future of War Conference in Arizona that same year, then Army Vice Chief of Staff GEN James McConville stated on the army's progress with integrating women: "We have women in every single infantry, armor and artillery battalion and every single brigade combat team in the Army. There are currently 600 women in infantry and armor jobs. Ten women have graduated from Ranger School, which is our toughest school. We have a woman commanding an infantry company in the 82nd Airborne Division."²¹⁸ To GEN McConville's point, 2018 was a monumental year for women in the army. The first woman earned the elite sapper tab, and 22 women were serving as infantry and armor officers.²¹⁹

Moreover, there was a global movement to rescind women's exclusion in policies and include women in combat. By 2018, more than a dozen industrialized nations allowed women to serve in combat.²²⁰ Progressive countries such as Canada and Denmark passed total inclusion

²¹⁶ Raum, "Warrior Women," 53.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 51.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ *Ibid.* 52

laws for women in the military in the 1980s.²²¹ Australia began a five-year plan to integrate women serving as navy ordnance divers, as airfield and ground defense guards, as well as members of the infantry, artillery, and armor.²²² India also integrated women into the air force, which is now almost nine percent female.²²³ India also has several women serving as helicopter and fighter pilots.²²⁴ India deployed its first all-female elite Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team with expertise in explosives, urban warfare, and deadly martial arts in 2018.²²⁵ Israeli special forces have thirty-six women commandos who work in counterterrorism units and receive preparation by top global experts in weapons proficiencies and Krav Maga, which is a lethal martial arts.²²⁶

Ancient societies who had warring women amalgamated women's contributions in combat and did not deter women with negativity about their inclusion, nor impede their talents.²²⁷ Instead, these militaries ensured that women could succeed by developing weapons, equipment, and body armor built for women. They included them socially and did not burden them with the idea that they should fight like a man.²²⁸ Their contributions were unique and equally valuable. Training scenarios worked to their strengths, adapted techniques for their differences from men, and prepared them for war.²²⁹ These societies positioned women in situations to excel operationally.²³⁰ Only in relatively recent generations and societies have women been excluded

²²¹ Raum, "Warrior Women," 52.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid., 52-53.

²²⁷ Ibid., 53.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Ibid.

using the arguments that they do not match in range of physical size, shape, and ability of male counterparts.²³¹

Today, the formal barriers excluding women from military service are gone. However, an erroneous paradigm shift occurred equating men and women as the same. Military service is not only upheld as a public sphere, but also a masculine culture in which women are outsiders. This forces women to conform to this culture and reject the physiological and cultural differences in order to succeed. A woman is encouraged to be one of the guys, and not complain about everything from masculine culture, social isolation to ill-fitting equipment in order to prove they belong.

Women still face prejudice in society and the military. Failing to recognize this difference ignores the cultural boundaries women still face. Furthermore, it is essential to acknowledge that not only can women be of equal value in the military and combat, but men and women are also different, which is as important as their equality.

The negative cultural DNA about women in combat may continue after the legal barriers to integration lifted, much like those of African Americans. However, military leaders should consider learning about historical examples of female combatants to affect their own and other's attitudes regarding the myth that they have not been in combat. Additionally, the military paradigm that men and women service members are the same because combat is the same is a flawed model. As women integrate into US military culture, it will change based on their unique differences and abilities. In order for the military to evolve, it needs to embrace gender differences in order to exploit women's abilities better.

²³¹ Raum, "Warrior Women," 53.

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