

AIR WAR COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

DIVERSITY IN THE AIR FORCE:
FAIRNESS AND REPRESENTATION OF BLACK AIRMEN

by

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Biography

Chief Master Sergeant Lavor A. Kirkpatrick enlisted in 1998 as a Geospatial Intelligence Analyst. He has worked at the squadron, operation center, MAJCOM, and HAF levels. Chief Kirkpatrick has operational experience in Operations Allied Force, Northern Watch, Southern Watch, Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, New Dawn, and Odyssey Dawn. He Professional Military Education background includes, Airmen Leadership School, Non-Commissioned Officer Academy (NCOA), Senior NCOA, and officer Intermediate Developmental Education as a graduate of the Air Force Legislative Fellowship. Chief Kirkpatrick holds two Community College of the Air Force degrees, a bachelors in Management Sciences from Park University, and Graduate certificates from Notre Dame and Georgetown Universities'. Recently, he served as the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Secretary of the Air Force Legislative Liaison Directorate at Headquarters Air Force and served as a special legislative advisor to the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force.

Abstract

Former President Obama's 2008 election as the nation's first African-American President symbolized progress in society toward overcoming years of minority repression that marred the American spirit. His administration placed tremendous value on diversity in all of its forms. Early on, they sought to place a premium on diversity credentials by hiring or appointing as many minorities, women, and LGBT members to key government positions possible. Within the Air Force, he appointed the first openly gay service undersecretary, The Honorable Eric Fanning, who later went on to become the Secretary of the Army. Later, President Obama selected The Honorable Deborah Lee James to serve as the Secretary of the Air Force (SecAF), the second female SecAF in Air Force history. President Obama's decision to end the controversial Don't Ask Don't Tell policy ended formal discrimination in the armed forces based on sexuality. While all of these efforts were underway America was changing African-American communities grew fed up with perceived injustice from the justice system. Tamir Rice, Philando Castille, and Michael Brown's deaths at the hands' law enforcement spurred the Black Lives Matter movement. A byproduct of this controversial movement was that police and law enforcement were villainized and eventually came under attack themselves. Then counter-protest movements like Blue Lives Matter and All Lives Matter began to emerge to lend a voice to other minority groups that felt unheard. The protest and counter-protest momentum carried through the 2016 Presidential Election where many pundits expected former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to defeat billionaire tycoon Donald Trump to become the nation's first female president. President Trump's surprising win, courtesy of the 'silent majority,' inspired many

women to protest the new presidents rhetoric related to women. The day following his inauguration marked the largest women's single day protest in U.S. History. In the year that followed, women have galvanized their political energy into a "#METOO" movement that has used social media to out sexual harassers and sexual predators from positions of power in media and politics. This campaign has put the predatory practices of many powerful men on notice and expressed that there is no statute of limitations in the court of public opinion. The last ten years have seen each of these minority groups coalesce around various perceived injustices. Military leaders must recognize that these societal challenges impact the force and its diversity. This paper discusses the importance of equipping commanders and Senior enlisted leaders with education and policies that support a diverse Air Force. Leaders must understand the fairness and representation are key tenants of diversity. Therefore, underrepresentation of minorities and women at senior military ranks indicates a larger problem. Current Air Force attempts to address diversity concerns, but it is heavily biased towards gender equality efforts and makes little effort toward retaining minority servicemembers. This paper challenges leaders to think strategically while acting tactically in their organizations to best grow and retain a truly diverse force.

Introduction

The World's Greatest Air Force – Powered by Airmen, Fueled by Innovation is the U.S. Air Force's vision statement. The Air Force vision supports the Air Force's Mission Statement which is to Fly, Fight, and Win, in Air, Space, and Cyberspace¹. Airmen are central to the vision and mission of the Air Force. Air Force vision says, "One of our Air Force's greatest strengths is its ability to recruit, develop, and retain innovative patriots with strong character, a belief in respect for others, and a commitment to high standards and our core values of *Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do.*"² Air Force Commanders and Senior Enlisted Leaders (SELs) understand that America has entrusted them with its sons and daughters the nation's most precious resource to accomplish the nation's most essential need security. Commanders shoulder the burden of leading the force towards near-term credibility and legitimacy as well as long-term vitality, viability, and survival.³ Challenges in this environment are evolving and so must leaders' thinking evolve to keep pace or stay ahead. Credibility and legitimacy are threatened when and if the organization loses touch with the rapidly changing world. Long-term survival of the force is threatened if credibility and legitimacy grow too weak. Therefore, a credible and legitimate force must be at the forefront of strategic leaders' minds.

A key challenge has been the information revolution of the Information Age. Social media has flattened the strategic communications process and removed the filters that once existed in society. The growing speed of information and the removal of filters has brought about a revival of dialogues about injustice, sexism, and racism in American society. From the "#METOO" movement to "Black Lives Matter" these dialogues have led to credibility and legitimacy questions rising about America's once-sacred institutions. Leaders within the Air

Force cannot simply observe the unrest in society and believe that the military is immune to society's concerns. Strategic Air Force leaders must understand that internal organizational activities have external societal impacts and external environment will have an internal organizational impact. Commanders and SELs should recognize the importance of guarding against internal or external forces that adversely impact the Air Force's credibility or legitimacy. As fissures of race and gender discrimination issues increasingly polarize American society military leaders must be skilled at maintaining harmony within the force and between the force and society. Secretary of Defense Mattis once said, "In this age, I don't care how tactically or operationally brilliant you are, if you cannot create harmony on the battlefield based on trust across service lines, across coalition lines, across civilian/military lines, you really need to go home, because your leadership in today's age is obsolete."⁴ Obsolete leaders are those commanders and SELs that are incapable of creating harmony because they do not understand or value diversity. The implications of diversity ignorant leadership can allow strife to permeate the military ranks and exacerbate a civilian-military divide as trust erodes between military members and between the military and the society it defends.

The Air Force cannot shy away from addressing diversity concerns. The force of the future is being recruited, accessed, developed, and promoted today. As Air Force leaders look towards 2030 and beyond, it is critical that the service builds the foundation to have the most lethal and capable fighting force for the future. Technology alone will not solve tomorrow's wicked problems. Innovative Airman is the key to air power of the future. Tomorrow's force must not be crippled with disharmony and internal social strife. Tomorrow's force must also be the peoples' force. The American people ought to have a vested interest in the military and its activities not merely because as taxpayers they foot the bill but because it's their sons and

daughters that wear the uniform. Diversity policy should tackle internal strife through fair treatment programs, pursues a force that is representative of society through diversity initiatives and is led by leaders who have been developed to understand and value diversity.

DIVERSITY DEFINED

Executive Order (EO) 13583: "Our Nation derives strength from the diversity of its population and its commitment to equal opportunity for all."

—45th President of the United States, Barack Obama⁵

The Department of Defense' Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan (2012) defines diversity this way: All the different characteristics and attributes of the DoD's Total Force, which are consistent with our core values, integral to overall readiness and mission accomplishment, and reflective of the nation we serve.⁶ Subordinate to DOD guidance the Air Force released its instruction to define diversity. Air Force Instruction 36-7001 (AFI, 2012) defines diversity as A composite of individual characteristics, experiences, and abilities consistent with the Air Force Core Values and the Air Force Mission. Air Force diversity includes but is not limited to: personal life experiences, geographic background, socioeconomic background, cultural knowledge, educational background, work background, language abilities, physical abilities, philosophical/spiritual perspectives, age, race, ethnicity, and gender.⁷ The breadth of this definition affords broad and often confusing interpretations of the concept. Therefore, strategic leaders must be equipped with a clear and concise 'commanders intent' on which to base their understanding of diversity. This essay will explain that Air Force diversity policy rests on two mutually supportive principles: fairness and representation.

The first pillar of diversity is fairness. Fair is, "marked by impartiality and honesty: free from self-interest, prejudice, or favoritism."⁸ Fairness is extraordinarily difficult to enforce in a

large complex organization comprised of a diverse population. There are many mechanisms and processes in place to battle unfair treatment or discrimination. Members of the Air Force are subject to non-judicial punishment under the Uniformed Code of Military Justice for showing difference or favoritism in treatment based on an individual's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical/mental disability according to law.⁹ The Air Force employs the Inspector General (IG), Equal Employment Opportunity Office (EEO), supervisors, and commanders as vehicles to provide members opportunities to address concerns of discrimination. However, these efforts are only as effective as the policies that underpin the institution. Former President Obama understood this fact when he tasked his cabinet to lift the Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT) policy to allow lesbian and gay members to serve in the armed forces openly. Policies like DADT and prohibitions on women in combat roles institutionalized unfairness in the armed forces. As leaders of the organization commanders and SELs must review existing policies to identify outdated practices that are inconsistent with American values. Every level of leadership is responsible to critically review their own organization to root out potentially discriminatory cultural or policy norms. The most obvious and most troubling litmus test is to observe the organization in search of 'balanced' demographic representation.

The second pillar of diversity is representation. The question of 'balanced' representation is complex and is usually the most contentious aspect of diversity. First, representation fits into diversity but does not define diversity. Second, fairness and representation are not the same; the two concepts are not synonymous. Consider that African-Americans account for 12 percent of the U.S. population. Should they account for 12 percent of the military? What about women, should they make up 51 percent of U.S. armed forces?¹⁰ Obviously, equal representation is not realistic. Representation and fairness should be

considered together as a mutually supportive concept. Fairness addresses discriminatory culture or unfair practices of the institution. Representation addresses the demographic composition of the institution. Lack of balanced representation could be symptomatic of an unfair institution, but this is not always the case. A demographic imbalance could also breed unfair treatment to 'outsiders' as the organization grows more and more homogenous. Furthermore, perceived or actual unfair organizations will struggle to recruit and retain members of affected demographic groups. Air Force recruiting, promotion, and retention trends must be considered in context.

DEMOGRAPHICS MATTER

The demographic composition of the Air Force can have an impact on civil-military relations. Civil-mil affairs expert Peter Feaver explains that "because the military must face enemies, it must have coercive power, the ability to force its will on others. But coercive power often gives it the capability to enforce its will on the community that created it."¹¹ Militaries that do not reflect the society they serve may be subject to additional suspicion from the government or the people. Ethnically homogenous militaries that do not reflect the people they serve can be very dangerous. For instance, the Rwandan Genocide of 1994 is an extreme example of the military and government mobilizing its' ethnic homogeny to carry out violence against the people they should have been protecting.¹² Another example is President Museveni of Uganda who has coup proofed his regime by establishing a presidential guard comprised of his ethnic tribesman. Museveni provides disproportionate benefits to his ethnic group to secure their loyalty to protect him from the rest of his military.¹³ Manipulation of military demographics is one way that civilian leaders' can exercise control over the military.

Civil-military affairs theorist Sam Huntington's argues that a professional officer core and subordination of the military to civilian rule is key to a balanced civ-mil relationship.¹⁴

Huntington's discussion of a professional force largely ignored the demographic makeup of the force. Rival theorists Janowitz and Moskos later evaluated the All-volunteer force in the 1970s and determined there was an 'overrepresentation' of blacks in the military which could lead to civ-mil relations issues.¹⁵ They feared that a military overrepresented by blacks would be difficult for the government to control among other concerns we will address later in this essay. Thus, they argued for policy strategies to counter the trend towards 'too many blacks' fighting America's wars. The fact that demographic representation is important to civil-military relations in America is inescapable. For this reason, the President, Congress, and community leaders express interest in the demographic composition of the U.S. Military.

Each year since 1974 the Department of Defense (DOD) provides a report that describes the demographic characteristics of U.S. military personnel. The goal of the *Population Representation in the Military Services (Pop Rep)* report is to provide a comprehensive and reliable data on military personnel for policy-makers, the media, and the general public.¹⁶ Policymakers have used this data to implement new, evaluate existing, or remove outdated policies, like DADT. In 2015, the DOD's released its most recent study which highlighted key trends in gender and race demographics among the officer and enlisted force which raised the policy question. Is the Air Force diverse?

Air Force diversity stands on fairness and representation. The representative data found in the DOD reports help to identify trends that may signal discrimination or unfairness. Air Force trends reveal interesting patterns of accession, retention, and promotion for minorities and females across officer and enlisted ranks. For instance, the Air Force officer core representation of women through the continuum of service goes from 22 percent at accessions to nine percent at senior ranks, reflecting a 40 percent retention rate. By comparison, minorities go from 23

percent at accessions to eight percent at flag officer, reflecting a 34 percent retention rate. Although female officers have slightly stronger retention and promotion rates than minority officers there is little difference between these two groups across accessions, promotions, and retention metrics. However, on the enlisted side, minorities are accessed at 43 percent and promote 28 percent to Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt), the Air Force's top enlisted rank, reflecting a 65 percent retention rate. Females enlist at 19 percent and promote 15 percent to CMSgt, which reflects a 79 percent retention rate among females.¹⁷ Comparing race and gender trends reflects that there are different challenges for each demographic group. First, minority enlistment is high, but retention and promotion rates are low. Second, females are recruited at incredibly low rates but manage higher retention and promotion rates than minorities. Minority Airmen have different representation challenges than female Airmen.

RACE, RECRUITING, AND RETENTION

Too few Americans meet the eligibility requirements to serve in the military as officers. To commission as officers, individuals must meet age, citizenship, and health requirements and go through a commissioning program that requires the completion of a bachelor's degree. All demographic groups have the same requirements, but certain demographic groups meet the requirements at different rates. Rand reports, "Seventy-four percent of the white population age 18–34 does not meet the education requirement. After they are eliminated, an additional 1 percent of the white population is disqualified due to the citizenship requirement. An additional 11 percent do not meet the health requirements (body composition and medical eligibility)."¹⁸ The research team further argued, "...the remaining 14 percent of the white population is eligible to commission. African-Americans and Hispanics are much less likely than whites and other race/ethnicities to meet all the requirements. In large part, this is due to the fact that

members of these groups are less likely to have a college degree...Overall, whites and other race/ethnicities meet eligibility requirements at around three to four times the rate of African Americans and Hispanics.”¹⁹

Beyond there being fewer eligible minority candidates there are other reasons for the underrepresentation of minorities at higher ranks. In 2015 Line of the Air Force lieutenant colonel promotion board selected 1,027 white officers out of 1,416 eligible, for a 73.2 percent selection rate. Black majors were selected at a rate of 63.8 percent, far short of their white counterparts.²⁰ Former Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force General Larry Spencer, a black four-star general, says that slower promotions for minority officers can be attributed to support versus operational career fields.²¹ Additionally, A Rand study suggests that lower promotion rates among minority officers can be partly attributed to low minority attendance at the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA).²² USAFA is one of the most prestigious institutions of higher education in the U.S. and is ranked #41 among elite schools according to Forbes.²³ USAFA graduates’ enjoy accelerated promotions and premier jobs during their careers. Likewise, pilots or operational career fields tend to enjoy more opportunities than support officers. Consider that 25 of 40 three-stars and 8 of 11 four-star Air Force generals’ are pilots.²⁴ Low black representation among pilots and USAFA graduates contributes to fewer minority officers making it to Air Force senior ranks. Eligibility to serve, the commissioning source, and the career field are the drivers that affect black representation in the Air Force office corp.

"Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letter, the U.S., let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pocket, there is no power on earth that can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship." – Fredrick Douglass

Black minorities, in particular, have flocked to the military since America began to accept black soldiers during the Civil War. Today, minorities makeup 43 percent of all enlistees but only represent 27 percent of the U.S. population.²⁵ Overrepresentation at the point of accessions suggests a significant willingness of minorities to serve in the military. High enlistment rates among minorities, in particular blacks, is not new. Morris Janowitz' and Charles Moskos' *Racial Composition of the All-Volunteer Force* article penned two year's (1974) into the All-Volunteer force attempted to address concerns of the overrepresentation of blacks in the military. At the time of Janowitz' research 27 percent of U.S. Army enlistees were black when blacks made up 11 percent of the national population.²⁶ The concern was managing a force predominately comprised of minorities would be difficult and disproportionate combat deaths to minorities in times of war would exacerbate domestic racial tensions.²⁷ They warned against military policies that disproportionately attracted blacks into combat roles for fear of a public backlash in a time of war. Twenty years later, Segal and Naomi observed that between 1990 and 1980 black soldiers began to shift from combat to non-combat units.²⁸ They explained this as part of the interaction between the educational benefits and differential motivations for enlistment by mental aptitude category and by race. Their research found that, "enlistees of average mental aptitude are more likely to join for skill training, while above average enlistees join for educational benefits...black enlistees are more likely than whites to score in the average mental aptitude categories, and join the army to learn skills that are transferable to the civilian labor force."²⁹ This helps explain why high rates of blacks or minorities are attracted into the military, but few serve beyond their initial enlistment. Segal and Naomi's argument suggests that blacks are obtaining desired skills from the military and then leaving early to pursue other endeavors. However, the opposite argument could also be used to explain the lower retention

rates for minorities. If minorities were not given challenging or useful skills from the military then leaving early to pursue other opportunities may be the best alternative for the individual. Either way, the skills argument requires a deeper understanding of how the military matches recruits to career fields.

Job distribution at accessions sets the basis for future retention and promotion disparity during an Airmen's career, much as it does for officers. Operational airmen typically have higher skill levels, job satisfaction, and promotion rates. However, these highly skilled technical experts are very marketable to the civilian sector. Contractors or government civilian recruiters often woo skilled veterans away from the military with the promise of higher paying jobs. On the other hand, lower skilled, non-technical, support based career fields have higher retention rates partially because its workers are not as marketable to outside employers. High retention rates, slower promotions, disconnection to the warfighter spurs low morale and may result in discipline issues. A high concentration of minority airmen in these low morale career fields may help explain the disproportionate adjudication of discipline among black airmen. According to Protect Our Defenders (POD) 2017 report, "From 2006 to 2015, black airmen were 1.71 times (71%) more likely to face a court-martial or non-judicial punishment (NJP) than white airmen in an average year."³⁰ Airmen with NJP actions in their records are less competitive for promotion to senior ranks. Therefore, high retention rates, slow promotions, and disproportionate adjudication of NJP actions contribute to lower morale and has many minorities opting out earlier than their white counterparts.

Minorities already have low college attendance rates and lower ASVAB test scores than their white counterparts. Economist Charles Murray attempts to explain this phenomenon in his book *The Bell Curve* where he controversially draws the conclusion that African-American poor

performance on IQ tests is attributed to genetics.³¹ Continued poor performance among blacks on ASVAB and other assessments would appear to confirm his theory. However, later he explained that although the average score for blacks was lower than their white counterparts that the individual variance among the group varied to such a degree that the data negated any attempt to make broad conclusions about a particular race's IQ.³² He also argues that insulated neighborhoods that hoard wealth, access to good education, and power will naturally perform better on standardized tests than their counterparts in lower class neighborhoods regardless of race. Socioeconomic factors drive much of the disparity between blacks and whites regarding academic performance. Irrespective of race, poor performance academically is a consequence of class, wealth, and status. The current accessions, recruiting, and job placement processes for the Air Force relies heavily on educational or intellectual indicators of candidates which places minorities at a disadvantage.

DIVERSITY POLICY

Diversity policy must not sacrifice fairness while pursuing demographic representation. Recently, the USAF initiated policies to get after diversity shortcomings. In March 2015, then Secretary of the Air Force (SecAF) Deborah Lee James announced nine diversity and inclusive (DI) initiatives: DI Requirements for Development Team (DT) Boards, Promotion Board of Memorandum of Instruction (MOI), Career Intermission Program (CIP), Identify Enlisted Airmen for Officer Training School (OTS), Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) Rated Height Screening Initiative, Use of Panels in Civilian Hiring, Increase Female Officer Applicant Pool, Post-Pregnancy Deployment Deferment, Career Path Tool (CPT) Transformation.³³ These nine initiatives reveal the overarching theme of SecAF's DI initiative. First, the DI requirement for DT will ask the teams to review their respective career field to identify barriers to the

success of minority groups. Second, the Promotion board MOI tasks board members look for indicators that officers can lead a diverse and inclusive force of the future. Third, the CIP enables a career intermission to allow airmen to start families, pursue education, or jobs not practical while on active duty. Fourth, identify enlisted Airmen for OTS will help increase the number of prior-enlisted officers in the force. Fifth, the ROTC Rates Height Screening Initiative will address an institutional barrier to female pilot accession through ROTC. Sixth, the use of Panels in Civilian Hiring will ensure that female and minority representation on hiring panels for civilians. Seventh, increasing the female officer candidate pool to raise the mix of candidates from 25% to 30%. Eighth, the Post-Pregnancy Deployment Deferment will protect female airmen quick deployments after childbirth. Finally, the CPT will increase mentorship options for service members by leveraging the MyVector web-based solution.

The SecAF's nine D&I initiatives reveal three major points of emphasis. First, three of the initiatives address the fair treatment of minorities and women in the Air Force. Requirements for DI boards, promotion board MOI, and the civilian hiring panels should help to find and fix in-service practices that unfairly treat these groups. Second, four of the nine initiatives target female Airmen. The CIP, ROTC height screening, increase female officer candidate pool, and the post-pregnancy deployment deferment are efforts designed specifically to address methods to increase the pool of women candidates while improving quality of service for female Airmen. The remaining two initiatives address experience-based diversity efforts by increasing prior-enlisted representation in officer corps, which may have the effect of increasing minority representation in the officer ranks, and expanding mentoring options to members through the CPTs. Seven of the nine initiatives directly or indirectly attempt to improve the continuum of service opportunities for female servicemembers. Only, three of the nine

indirectly target ethnic minority groups and the remaining two address other demographic diversity concerns. The SecAF's designated DI initiatives may move the needle on gender imbalance, but it will do little to address minority underrepresentation. There are no obvious policy actions that can be taken to address minority representation. Leadership is the solution. Commanders and SELs must be equipped with an understanding and desire to lead the force in a way that supports warfighting and diversity simultaneously. They must think and act differently.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Think Strategically:

Diversity education for commanders and SELs is vitally important. Leaders should be educated on the factors that drive demographic disparity in society and within the service. They must understand the strategic context of diversity issues that plague the Air Force. Second, strategic leaders must be taught the importance and value of supporting diversity initiatives. Some may simply avoid diversity issues altogether in the belief that these are problems don't affect their organization. The harm is that these leaders may underplay the importance of actively supporting the DI initiatives or even fail to fulfill their responsibilities. Third, commander and SELs must be given clear guidance on implementation that recognizes that diversity is a long-term challenge. Guidance should help well-intentioned leaders avoid the temptation of trying to fix diversity quickly. Tremendous damage can be done when short-term fixes are put in place with no thought to the second and third order effects of these decisions or policies. Strategic problems take strategic and tactical level actions to see progress. Commanders mustn't *speed* the process. For instance, some well-intentioned commanders may see the lack of minorities at the organization's staff meeting and attempt to fix that issue

immediately. The commander may use accelerated promotions or prioritized job selection for a 'token' over more qualified applicants to fill the self-imposed diversity quota on the organization. This approach sacrifices fairness for the sake of representation. Unfortunately, the 'affirmative action' hire may struggle in the position or at that rank due to lack of credibility with peers or simply being ill-equipped for the mission. Speeding is counterproductive. Lasting and effective diversity change takes patience. Ignoring it or planting the victory flag too early will hurt the Air Force's ability to recruit, retain, and promote the best possible Airman.

Commanders and SELs must understand that diversity is a civil-military relationship imperative. U.S. voters grow more disconnected from the military as fewer American neighborhoods are producing military recruits. In 2016, almost 40 percent of recruits came from just six states: California, Ohio, Texas, Florida, and Pennsylvania.³⁴ Those areas with a limited connection to the military or small veteran's populations will likely elect representatives that don't fully appreciate the military and its resource needs. Limited electorate influence could result in additional budget pressure as the services defend defense spending each year. Also, war termination grows can be challenging without significant pressure from elected officials who understand the military community. A homogenous military with little political influence may find itself in long wars in a resource-constrained environment with a government unable to raise taxes to pay national security bills or political will to terminate ongoing conflict.

Act Tactically:

Commanders and SELs are on the front lines of the Air Force's diversity campaign. There are tactical actions that can be executed to further diversity goals beyond supporting the D&I initiatives. Localized civil-military relations will help build a diverse force. Efforts by

commanders and SELs to extend the Air Force's reach into local communities is a key to diversity initiatives. First, commanders at the installation level should actively further Public-to-Public Partnerships (P3). These engagements not only improve the military mission at the installation but they also provide economic benefits, community relations, and environmental benefits to the local city.³⁵ Intentional engagement that builds a positive reputation of the Air Force in the local region is beneficial in recruiting high-quality candidates to military service. Second, Air Force leaders should encourage airmen to volunteer in the local communities. Much like P3 volunteerism helps to improve the reputation of Airmen in the local community. Activities like adopt-a-highway and Habitat for Humanity brings Airman out into the community to serve their neighbors. By serving in underprivileged areas, these activities help connect the Air Force to often underserved population groups hopefully inspiring future recruits into service. Third, leaders should take an active role in the transition assistance program (TAP) for their subordinates. Former Airmen who return to civilian life are ambassadors for military service in their communities. A positive transition experience can help encourage those members to reflect their military experience to the unaffected American public positively. Also, commanders and SELs can help inspire transitioning military members into public service jobs and careers, like Troops-to-Teachers. Troops-to-Teachers is a program that helps military servicemembers qualify and certify to become teachers at the K-12 grade level. Veteran's presence in classrooms across American can be a force multiplier by improving quality of education and serves to connect more youth to the military community. In aggregate, these efforts at the tactical level can have strategic impact. Increased veterans' representation in public service and education sectors can enable the Air Force to expand recruitment friendly areas while improving the quality and quantity of candidates.

CONCLUSION

Finally, Carl Von Clausewitz a Prussian war theorist's paradoxical trinity argues that war is a balance between government, the will of the people, and skill of the army. Tension or balance between these legs of the Trinity will determine the outcome of the war or campaign.³⁶ The diversity campaign's success hinges upon smart policy, support of people, and strong leadership much like the Trinity. Likewise, the diversity campaign will suffer if its trinity is imbalanced. Diversity initiatives that are based on flawed policy like DADT will hurt the services primary objective of building a diverse force. Or, if the policy is good, but the people do not support the policy, much like the race riots³⁷ that occurred within the military during the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s and 70s; the effort will fail to meet the objective. Then, if leadership is absent, indifferent, or doesn't understand how to lead the diversity campaign objective success will be nearly impossible. More broadly, diversity policy impacts national security and our nation's ability to wage war in three ways consistent with Clausewitz' paradoxical trinity. First, the U.S. government must take careful consideration of how it uses a diverse military. Soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen are sons and daughters of voters. A diverse force that is comprised of young people from all communities in America will have the political backing of the entire nation, not the shrinking demographic that currently joins the service.³⁸ Second, the will of the people is more likely to support a military that is comprised of volunteers from their communities and in some cases families. This should also have a restraining effect on government ambition as the will of people will demand their sons and daughters not be used to frivolous ventures. This effort is important to reverse the trend of fewer members of Congress having prior military experience than in years' past.³⁹ Finally, the skill of the army, in this case, the Air Force, will be enhanced because it will be powered by innovative

thinkers from every segment of American society and led by strategic leaders who understand how diversity makes the force stronger. A professionalized diverse Air Force, supported by the American people, and governed smartly is credible, legitimate, and poised to Fly, Fight, and Win today and tomorrow.



Notes

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