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ENLISTING MASCULINITY:  
GENDER AND THE RECRUITMENT OF THE ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE

by

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written under the direction of

Leela Fernandes

and approved by

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## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Enlisting Masculinity: Gender and the Recruitment of the All-Volunteer Force

By MELISSA TRACEY BROWN

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This dissertation explores how the US military branches have coped with the problem of recruiting a volunteer force in a period when masculinity, a key ideological underpinning of military service, was widely perceived to be in crisis. The central questions of this dissertation are: when the military appeals to potential recruits, does it present service in masculine terms, and if so, in what forms? How do recruiting materials construct gender as they create ideas about soldiering? Do the four service branches, each with its own history, institutional culture, and specific personnel needs, deploy gender in their recruiting materials in significantly different ways? In order to answer these questions, I collected recruiting advertisements published by the four armed forces in several magazines between 1970 and 2003 and analyzed them using an interpretive textual approach. The print ad sample was supplemented with television commercials, recruiting websites, and media coverage of recruiting.

The dissertation finds that the military branches have presented several versions of masculinity, including both transformed models that are gaining dominance in the civilian sector and traditional warrior forms. While the Marines rely exclusively on a

traditional model, the Army, Navy, and Air Force also draw on various strands of masculinity that are in circulation in the wider culture, including professional/managerial forms, masculinity tied to mastery of technology, and hybrid masculinity which combines toughness and aggression with compassion and egalitarianism. The military's use of particular models of masculinity can reinforce their status and help to make them socially dominant, especially within the groups targeted. In the recruiting ads, women are offered some access to characteristics and experiences generally associated with men, but the representations make it clear that men are the primary audience and the desired target. The approach to representing women taken by each service differs, but combat and warriorhood are associated exclusively with men. The dissertation ends with a brief study of military recruiting in Great Britain, to raise the issue of whether the American approach is unique to our military institutions and gender system or whether volunteer militaries in other states deploy constructions of gender in similar ways.

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Parts of the case study of Great Britain in Chapter Seven were previously published as “‘Be the Best’: Military Recruiting and the Cultural Construction of Soldiering in Great Britain,” in *GSC Quarterly*, Number 5 (Summer 2002).

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## Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

In early 1999, the US Air Force was gearing up for Operation *Allied Force*. The United States had warned Serb leader Slobodan Milošević that if ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians didn't cease, he faced bombing by NATO forces. While serving Air Force pilots were on the verge of combat, American TV stations were showing a recruiting commercial for the Air Force. (Facing recruiting shortfalls, the Air Force was paying for television airtime for the first time in its history.) The ad's focus on personal growth and fulfillment—young people were asking themselves what or who they wanted to be—was entirely disconnected from the impending military action by the Air Force. The commercial's portrayals seemed far removed from the traditional masculine ideal of the warrior. The strong, heroic fighters of a World War II-era recruiting poster wouldn't recognize the kids in the Air Force commercial as brothers in arms. In the preceding decades, gender had become a contentious issue for the US military, and the military branches have struggled with the question of how to depict themselves, particularly as the military has faced recurrent recruiting problems.

Military service has strong historical ties to masculinity and the transformation of boys into men. In the early 1970s, in the period when the US military was making the transition to an all-volunteer force (AVF), masculinity was widely considered to be in crisis. Key elements of this crisis were: the challenges to men's roles and male privileges by the women's movement; the loss of good-paying, blue-collar industrial jobs that gave working-class men status, economic independence, and the ability to support a family; and the loss of the Vietnam War. So, at the very moment when the military needed to begin finding ways to entice young people, and mainly young *men*, into military service,

a key ideological component of the concept of military service, masculinity, was in a state of flux. The central question this dissertation is asking, then, is in the era of the AVF, with masculinity apparently in crisis, is masculinity the underlying basis of appeals for military service and if so, what forms does it take? In a period when traditional masculinities have been discredited, and when women have gained importance as a source of labor for the military, a military institution faces a choice: it can move away from masculinity in its attempts to recruit, or it can re-forged and reinforce the link between the military and masculinity, to show that the military still confers masculinity despite the presence of women or to assert that the military is a refuge for a traditional form of masculinity that is being challenged in other parts of society.

This question is important to understanding how the crisis of masculinity is being resolved and what form or forms of masculinity are becoming dominant in American culture. Because the military has been closely tied both to masculinity and to citizenship, this issue also reflects on questions of gender equity and whether citizenship is still tied to masculinity through soldiering. In addition, it reveals how the relationship between masculinity and the military is evolving—whether it is becoming weaker, or stronger, or simply changing. Joshua Goldstein (2001) has argued that war has created gender—it has led to cultural distinctions between men and women—as much as gender has created war. If that's the case, then anyone interested in either the subject of gender or the subject of war—including how and why wars start, the relationship between war and society, and how wars can be prevented or contained—should be concerned with the relationship between masculinity and militaries.

There is a great quantity of both academic and popular literature on the links

between masculinity and the military. It includes feminist, non-feminist, and explicitly anti-feminist versions.<sup>1</sup> Much of the literature that talks about the military and masculinity seems to see the military as a monolith. Much of it also tends to conceptualize masculinity too simplistically as either present or absent. A lot of feminist literature on the military seems to assume that the military is still intimately tied with masculinity, and that the masculinity in question is a macho, warrior spirit, involving the denigration of women and connected to the abuse and harassment of women in the military (as well as some women outside of it). Much anti-feminist literature assumes that feminists are destroying the military and that the military, perhaps with the exception of the Marine Corps, has gone soft and politically correct, and that the recruiting materials produced by the services reflect an ethos of gender equality. To get a better grip on how the masculinity crisis and flux in gender roles are affecting the military requires both a more nuanced understanding of masculinity and a more careful look at the military as a set of interconnected institutions.

While scholars, activists, and political commentators concerned with the relationship between gender and military service may talk about “the military,” the military as a single entity does very little recruiting. It is the individual services, the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines,<sup>2</sup> which recruit. The inception of the AVF created something of an experiment. There are a variety of ways that a military institution could

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<sup>1</sup> By “feminist” I mean both the academic literature that uses gender as a category of analysis and academic and non-academic literature that seeks to improve the lives of women and, in some cases, to expand the opportunities for women in the military.

<sup>2</sup> Technically, the Marine Corp is a part of the Navy and not a separate branch of the service. However, the Marine Corps recruits as a separate branch, and so it will be treated as one for the purposes of this dissertation.

respond to the crisis in masculinity. There are four different services, each of which needs to appeal to young men or young people, and each of which faces similar external constraints, such as level of funding for military pay or national unemployment rate. Do the four branches respond to the given situation in the same way, or does each generate its own models of masculinity as it develops its public image? What is the relationship between aspects of the institutions, such as their histories, cultures, purposes, demographics, and their personnel needs, and the specific constructions of gender they produce or privilege? (How do these institutions differ from each other, and what do those differences mean for how they construct gender?)

This rest of this introductory chapter will expand on issues raised thus far and lay out the plan of the dissertation and its argument, which, in brief, is that masculinity *is* still a foundation of the appeals made by the military, with each branch deploying various constructions of masculinity that serve its particular personnel needs and culture.<sup>3</sup> Some military watchers would claim that over the course of the AVF, the service branches other than the Marines have pursued a recruiting strategy that focuses only on economic benefits, that they try to appeal to women at the expense of men, that the ads are carefully gender-balanced, and that masculinity is not part of the pitch. Based on an examination of recruiting advertisements, this dissertation for the most part rejects these claims. The Marine Corps does stand apart from the other branches in relying almost exclusively on a traditional, warrior form of masculinity, though other branches have also utilized that form to some degree. The Army, Navy, and Air Force draw on various strands of masculinity that are in circulation in the wider culture, emphasizing those that they

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<sup>3</sup> The concept of masculinity will be defined and discussed in Chapter Two.

believe will resonate best at a given time for a particular role, tailoring their appeals to the groups they most want to attract. The civilianized but still masculine offers made by the branches have included adventure and challenge—a modern analogue to the frontier masculinity which allowed a man to test his physical and mental abilities; economic independence and breadwinner status; dominance and mastery through technology; and hybrid masculinity which combines egalitarianism and compassion with strength and power. The latter two sets of masculine traits have been growing in prominence during this “crisis” period, and the military’s use of them reinforces their status and helps to make them socially dominant. The military branches, especially the Army, sometimes link militaristic imagery and the promise of success in the civilian economic world, blending masculine forms and creating a bridge between older forms of masculinity with which soldiering had previously been associated and newer forms gaining prominence in the wider culture. On the level of representation, recruiting materials do give women some access to these roles and characteristics that are associated with men and masculinity, but they do so in such a tokenized way that the associations with manhood and masculinity are retained. Representations of military service also include pockets of warrior masculinity, mainly associated with direct combat, that are fully male and that preserve a more traditional masculine form.

### The Study of Military Recruitment

The military is an important site of analysis, and it probably gets less attention from political scientists than it deserves. International Relations scholars are concerned with the military and its role in national defense, and some political theorists examine it

in relation to questions of civic obligation and the relationship between the individual and the state. As Chapter Two's discussion of the relationship between masculinity and military service will show, the military is particularly important to scholars of gender, because of its importance as site for the creation and propagation of ideas about gender, as well as its position at the nexus of gender and citizenship. The military is a key institution in American society; it performs important national security functions internationally, carrying out foreign policy and projecting force, and it also performs various domestic functions, such as providing jobs, skills training, and economic stimulus, socializing young people (mainly young men), Americanizing immigrant groups, and standing as a national symbol and a source of national identity. Cynthia Enloe (1996) argues that the United States has what some commentators would call "a 'militarized' concept of national loyalty and identity" because in the US the military occupies "a special place in the public realm, somehow more intimately bound to patriotism, to the fate and dignity of the nation than, for example, public hospitals or even the national legislature" (261). The military is an embodiment of state power—when the state projects military force, it is generally, in one way or another, literally projecting the bodies of its soldiers—a physical representative of the state *and* a symbolic representative of the people.<sup>4</sup>

Within the broader topic of the military, recruiting is a potentially productive area of study that has received little consideration from political scientists but that can reveal a

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<sup>4</sup> Chapter Two will continue the discussion of the ties between the military and the nation in the US in relation to citizenship. More broadly, however, since the American and French Revolutions and Napoleon's development of the mass army, wars could be fought by national armies in the name of the people. As a result, "the male soldier hero is one of the main symbols of the nation" (Dudink, 2002:153). Also, see Hagemann (1997) on the forging of the link between the nation and its military.

great deal about the interrelationship between society and the military. Recruitment is one of the military's most public faces. It is an attempt to legitimate service in the eyes of the public, offering up reasons to serve and potential ideological bases for military culture. Recruiting images attempt to produce general support for military service and to build a positive image of the armed forces to domestic society at large. The images of service in recruiting materials are meant to appeal to potential recruits, as well as to those in a position to influence them, including parents, teachers, siblings, coaches, guidance counselors, and other members of the recruit's community. The images of soldiering presented in recruiting materials are created by military institutions for consumption by the general public. The military generates other images of soldiering, but these are mainly internal, for consumption by military personnel themselves, or directed at policymakers. (Though recruiting materials do also offer reinforcement to current service members—for instance, Marines watching movies at a theater near their base are certain to cheer when a Marine recruiting commercial is shown before the movie.) Recruiting materials reflect an idea of what the military is for, what service members do, and who should serve. Recruitment involves overt image-making and an attempt to sell particular pictures of military service, making it an especially fruitful site to study the construction of gender by the military.

Recruiting materials draw a picture of the military that is meant to appeal to the self-image of potential recruits, and they may not provide a highly accurate view of military life. The sailor who was attracted to the Navy by ads with fighter jets taking off from the deck of an aircraft carrier is more likely to spend his days swabbing decks than piloting jets. Recruiting also does not necessarily reflect the way a service understands

itself. A military branch may choose to deploy images of itself that don't fully comport with that branch's self-understandings in order to appeal to potential recruits and get them in the door<sup>5</sup>—those recruits can be socialized into the service during training. Recruiting materials, however, must in some way ring true to their audience, even if the image provided isn't a perfect reflection of reality. They also must resonate with the audience and its preconceptions of military service, gender roles, and America's national identity and role in the world. While the images can shape and alter perceptions, they must also play off of preexisting ideas and in some way reflect what the audience *wants* to be true of its military. Recruiting reveals the public's changing attitudes about the relationship between service and gender and about what forms of masculinity hold social dominance, at the same time that the branches themselves create associations between soldiering and particular versions of masculinity and so produce understandings of gender. The military has been an arbiter of masculinity, but in the era of the volunteer force, it must in some measure reflect back civilian trends to civilian society, building on ideas from the civilian world as it constructs concepts of service, re-circulating public attitudes in altered and re-constructed forms. This occurs at two levels; each branch wants to create a favorable impression of the service to the general public, and it also needs to attract particular segments of the population (such as risk-takers or the technologically skilled) and must attempt to appeal to their desires and perceptions.

Recruiting is an effort to shape the image of the service member in the public

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, the "Army of One" campaign emphasized the soldier as an individual, even though the Army depends on unit cohesion and teamwork. The Army wanted to recruit a young demographic that—based on other representations of Army life—feared it would lose its individuality in the Army (Dao, 2001). The Army needed to counter those fears before it could sell potential recruits on Army life.

imagination. On the one hand, it must reflect back what the public, or particular sectors of it, wants to see, which is why the branches use advertising firms, attitude surveys, and focus groups. However, each branch also faces choices about how it presents itself and each wants to shape the ideal in ways that conform to its perceived notion of what is best or most functional for that military branch.<sup>6</sup> All of the branches use research on the youth market, all of them target a similar, but not identical, audience (despite some differences, they're all looking for people in roughly the same age range without felony convictions and preferably with high school diplomas), all of them do so in the same economic and social national context, and all of them are military institutions, but the messages developed by each branch differ, so it can't simply be the case that each service follows the research on social trends. Each branch cultivates its own distinct image, and each deploys constructions of gender in its own way as part of that project. There is no given way to appeal to a high school graduate with computer skills, and when a military institution does so by showing him he can have adventures as a world traveler, by talking about economic security, by calling on his patriotism, or by linking his computer use to advanced weaponry and control of the battlefield, it is making a claim about the meaning of military service and tapping into particular forms of masculinity circulating in the

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<sup>6</sup> One potential question in examining recruitment materials is whether we can think of the ads as being created by the military branches or whether the images in the ads are dreamed up by civilians without much connection to and possibly even in opposition to the military officers and their service cultures and self-conceptions. While Department of Defense (DOD) civilians and advertisers play a large role in military recruiting, their influence shouldn't be overestimated. There is interaction between DOD civilians and the branches, but the civilians don't totally control the process; along with cooperation, there is a struggle among the Pentagon, the branches, the advertising agencies, and even, occasionally, Congress, about the image of each service. At the beginning of the AVF, when the branches were less experienced with recruiting, I think the civilians were more likely to win the battles, but since then the branches have gotten more savvy. For instance, when Gen. Charles Krulak became Commandant of the Marine Corps in 1995, he decided to pull all advertising and re-shape the Corps' message based on his reading of the Pentagon's polling of young people (Freedburg, 1999).

culture as the most salient.

Recruiting materials may only be a small factor in any individual's decision to enlist. Personal selling by recruiting personnel—the recruiter sitting down with a prospect and talking with him or her about the military—is a key factor in most recruits' decision to actually sign service contracts (Hanssens and Levien, 1983). Individual recruiters will have particular quotas that they need to fill, say a certain number of high school graduates or doctors, and they will make pitches that they try to tailor to the individuals they need to recruit. The recruiters do so, however, within the context of the larger institutional image that each service projects, and it is not the actions of individual recruiters that I am studying, but the national recruiting campaigns that seek to reach large swaths of the population and which more broadly shape the public image of the service.

This study of the gendering of military service in recruiting materials fills a gap in the literature. The subject hasn't received direct attention in either the gender studies/feminist literature on the military or in the political science literature on military service. In addition to the literature on the connections between masculinity and military service (which will be further discussed in the next chapter, and includes Barrett, 1996; Braudy, 2003; Cohn, 1998; Connell, 1985, 1995; Elshtain, 1987; Enloe, 1983, 1989, 1993, 2000; Goldstein, 2001; Herbert, 1998; Higate, 2003; Morgan, 1994), there is a large body of literature on the relationship between women and the military (including Binkin and Bach, 1977; Chapkis, 1981; D'Amico and Weinstein, 1999; De Pauw, 1998; Enloe, 1983; Francke, 1997; Goldman, 1982; Herbert, 1998; Holm, 1992; Katzenstein and Reppy, 1999; Rustad, 1982; Rogan, 1982; Schneider, 1992; Skaine, 1999; Stiehm,

1981, 1989, 1996; Weinstein and White, 1997; Zimmerman, 1995). But in all of this analysis of the gendering of military service, there is a lack of attention to recruiting materials. There are two works that directly address the question of how recruiters manipulate ideas about gender, and both do so in a limited way. Megens and Wings (1981) provide a brief analysis of the recruiting materials of several NATO countries, and in *Does Khaki Become You?* Cynthia Enloe's (1983) groundbreaking book on women and military systems, a chapter on women soldiers includes a short discussion of how recruiters attempt to appeal to women and what attracts women to the military. Both of these point to recruiting materials as a productive site of analysis.

Political science is concerned with issues of citizenship and obligation in relation to the AVF, including questions of who serves and whether the make-up of the forces should correspond to the make-up of society. In America, there is political competition over who should serve and what service means—whether women or gays (and in the past, African Americans) have a right to fight, whether service should be an obligation or a choice, and whether military service is a job like any other or categorically different from civilian occupations. The images that the military branches put forward in recruiting materials implicitly take a position in these debates through the kinds of people they show and the ways in which they show them. However, political scientists haven't paid much attention to recruiting, leaving it mainly to military "manpower" analysts, economists, and sociologists, and even sociologists don't focus on the specific *content* of the appeals that are being made to potential recruits. The scholarship on recruiting which is done in these other fields generally focuses on such issues as how much money should be spent, recruiting standards (education and test score requirements) and the quality of

recruits, the propensity of various demographic segment to enlist, the size of potential cohorts of recruits, the likely future needs of the military and whether a volunteer force can meet them, the potential of women to serve manpower needs, the role of the Reserves, and similar kinds of manpower analysis. Some of the work that addresses these issues includes Canby (1972), which looks ahead to the needs of the coming volunteer force, Fredland, et al. (1996), which reviews twenty years of the AVF, Keeley (1978), which examines the five years of the AVF and compares it to Great Britain's volunteer forces, and Margiotta, et al. (1983), which critiques the AVF and questions its ability to meet future military needs. Scholars have focused on who is to be recruited, including the race and gender make-up of the forces. They do not, however, discuss ways in which appeals and recruitment materials have been gendered or racialized, through the particular images of service they utilize.

There are some studies of why people decide to join or to stay in the military—whether they are generally motivated by economic concerns or by normative factors, such as patriotism or family tradition. One representative example would be Faris (1984), which is based on surveys that ask for the respondents' opinions of the military and service, with questions about pay expectations, benefits, and whether what the military does is important or necessary. The surveys don't ask about recruiting materials and whether particular representations of military roles were appealing. (And they certainly don't talk about how particular conceptions of service may be linked to ideas about masculinity, although they may separate out respondents' answers based on social categories like race and gender.) There are also studies (such as Hanssens and Levien, 1983) which examine the effect of advertising, in terms of whether it generates leads or

results in actual signed contracts; such studies might examine spending on different forms of media and the impact of advertising versus environmental factors and factors having to do with recruiters (size of the recruiting force, motivational effect of quotas, etc.). The content of the advertising isn't considered relevant. These studies may be useful for budgeting decisions, (though they might be even more useful if they did consider advertising content and which images of service did the best job of attracting recruits), but they don't reveal anything about the meanings produced by the ads and the various conceptions of military service that they communicate.

The recruiting crisis of the late 1990s led to a spate of material on recruiting, mainly in the form of journalistic coverage and articles in military publications. There was widespread concern over the military's ability to recruit in a context in which service is simply one economic option among many, young people feel no obligation and have low propensity to enlist, and fewer people have personal contact with anyone directly involved in the military. Recruiting and the civil-military gap became the subject of symposia<sup>7</sup> and congressional hearings.<sup>8</sup> The concern over recruiting in this period, as will be discussed in Chapter Two, often did frame the issue in terms of gender and masculinity. Some blamed the recruiting shortfalls on a de-masculinization of the military and an erosion of its culture and traditions by the inclusion of women; they

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<sup>7</sup> For example, "Citizens and Soldiers: Citizenship, Culture, and Military Service" October 2000, sponsored by the Institute for the Study of Economic Culture and the Center for International Relations, both of Boston University, and the Ethics and Public Policy Center of Washington, DC. Select papers from the conference were published in the Summer, 2001 issue of *Parameters: Journal of the US Army War College*.

<sup>8</sup> *Hearing on Sustaining the All Volunteer Force and Reserve Component Overview*, Hearings on National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001—HR 4205 and Oversight of Previously Authorized Programs Before the Committee on Armed Services House of Representatives, Military Personnel Subcommittee, 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> session, March 17, 2000.

called for the Army, Navy, and Air Force to emulate the Marine Corps, which was meeting its recruiting quotas and which projected a masculine, warrior image (Bonat, 1999; Keene, 1999; Smart, 2000; Strother, 1999). These articles, however, tended more toward editorializing than scholarly study. The authors often seemed to be making assumptions about how the various military branches were presenting themselves without actually looking at recruiting materials, except, perhaps, for a single ad or TV commercial.<sup>9</sup> They are most interesting not for what they have to say about recruiting materials, but for the anxieties they reveal about the status of masculinity in society and the desire both for the military to retain its connection to masculinity and for warrior forms of masculinity to be more dominant in the larger culture.

The late-'90s debates about recruiting and the calls for the other services to act more like the Marines seem to take the view that there is one truly masculine approach, as exemplified by the Marines, and that the other services have all decided to forgo appeals to masculinity. I argue that recruiting materials utilize a variety of constructions of masculinity and male gender roles. Various inducements to service may have their roots in competing versions of masculinity—in different ways to be a man. In addition to the more traditional (or more recognizable) guns and toughness version of masculinity that each of the services has at one time or another used, recruiting materials have also featured learning a good trade which will allow economic independence, physical adventure and excitement, and technological prowess, which entails both mastery and

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<sup>9</sup>For example, Strother (1999) makes reference to the Navy's "women-in-charge" ads. As Chapter Four will show, this is a highly inaccurate characterization of Navy recruiting ads. Similarly, Bonat (2000) takes aim at a single ad—the only one in my Navy print ad sample that featured a woman—and uses it to criticize the Navy's approach.

control over sophisticated machinery and success in the civilian world. Each of these motivations for joining the military is tied to a masculine role.

### Central Questions

So, as I noted at the beginning of this chapter, the fundamental question that this dissertation asks is: when the military appeals to potential recruits, does it present service in masculine terms, and if so, what form or forms does that masculinity take? More broadly, how do recruiting materials construct gender as they create ideas about soldiering? This section of the chapter will elaborate on a few of the issues that underlie these two questions. The first of these is the nature of military occupations. Many military jobs have come to depend more on technical skill than on physical strength, and with advances in technology, many jobs are specialized and similar to civilian occupations. Such jobs are more readily opened to women, although any jobs outside traditionally feminine areas like nursing are still going to be done by more men than women; they also don't automatically have the clear association to masculinity that combat jobs do. The military branches can create appeals that try to masculinize non-combat jobs by associating them with warrior-hood and combat, emphasizing their links to weaponry and defense; they can draw on various civilian forms of masculinity, particularly those that link technology to notions of dominance and control; or they can try not to impute any gender association at all to military careers. The military branches can also choose to highlight their specifically martial aspects and play down the civilianized facets of service. And of course any branch can use different approaches at different times or in different contexts. By examining recruiting over the course of the

volunteer force's thirty-year history, I can examine how the recruiting strategies of each branch have developed and whether they have been consistent over time, or how they have changed.

Another underlying issue is that of women's place in the military's gendering of service. The armed forces have struggled with the question of how to attract and utilize women while still keeping core military functions, namely combat, exclusively male, and how to integrate women without disrupting the association between military service and masculinity that might draw in men. The military needs to find ways to attract women recruits without alienating young men, who are still the main focus of recruiting efforts. This dissertation will examine the approach each military branch takes toward recruiting women and how their attempts to appeal to women connect to the appeals to men. Recruiting advertisements may try to reassure potential recruits and their families that women in the military don't lose their femininity, even though they are joining an institution known for conferring masculinity and making men out of boys. They may also offer women equal opportunity, or the chance to have experiences and acquire traits that are typically associated with masculinity, like adventure, independence, and challenge. A military branch may also make no specific effort to reach out to women.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, each branch of the armed forces has its own history, institutional culture,

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<sup>10</sup> Jimmy Carter's Secretary of Defense Harold Brown ordered Navy commander Dr. Richard W. Hunter to undertake an analysis on the use of women to fill military manpower needs. According to Holm (1992), Hunter found that "the recruiting and advertising effort and expense that had to be put out in order to attract enough high quality men (i.e., high school graduates, upper mental categories) to meet the services' requirements for new recruits also attracted more women high school graduates, top mental categories, than the services planned to accept" (253). This implies that advertising meant to attract men to the military can also attract women, though I suspect the reverse isn't true. Women, who have been told the word "man" represents a generic human, may be used to looking to male models of behavior or paying attention to messages that aren't tailored to them.

and specific personnel needs. In the course of analyzing recruiting materials, the dissertation examines whether these differences lead the branches to utilize different constructions of masculinity or to deploy gender in their recruiting materials in significantly different ways. The differences among the services will be drawn out in greater detail in the coming chapters, but a few key characteristics of their recruiting needs can be described here. The Army is the largest service and it requires the largest number of recruits each year. Both the Navy and the Air Force need a large percentage of their recruits to fill technical positions, meaning that they need service members who will stay in the service long enough to justify the expense of training them and who have high mental aptitude scores. The Air Force needs the fewest recruits each year, and it is in the best position of any of the services to utilize the labor of women. The Marine Corps is the smallest service, but they need a large number of recruits relative to their size. The Marines consciously keep their turnover high because their leadership is much smaller than the other services' and their need for career members much lower. The Marines have the largest proportion of combat-oriented jobs (the Navy, of which the Marine Corps is technically a part, provides much of their support services) and therefore the least number of women, both proportionally and in absolute terms. The size of the military has changed over the course of the AVF, dropping from around 2.3 million on active duty to around 1.4 million after the post-Cold War drawdown, and there have been some shifts in the size of the forces in relation to each. To give a sense of the relative needs of each of the services, last year the Army needed 80,000 recruits, the Navy 36,656, the Marines 32,301, and the Air Force 30,750 (Shanker, 2006). At that time, the Army had about 500,000 active-duty personnel, the Navy 350,000, the Marines 180,000,

and the Air Force 349,000.

### The Military Branches as Institutions and the Discipline of Political Science

The dissertation grows out the feminist literature on gender and the military, further explored in Chapter Two, but in approaching the topic by looking at the military as four institutions with their own histories and functions, the dissertation also relates to the “new institutionalism” literature in political science (see Peters, 1999) and the historical variant of institutionalism in particular. Unlike rational choice variants which view institutions mainly as the strategic context within which individuals attempt to maximize their self-interest, historical institutionalists argue that goals themselves are shaped by institutions and preferences are socially and politically constructed (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992:7-8). Scholars associated with historical institutionalism reject functionalist explanations that see institutions as rationally designed to meet people’s needs and instead “emphasize institutions as the product of concrete temporal processes and political struggles” (Thelen, 2004:26). They examine the interaction of institutions and political processes over time (Thelen and Steinmo, 1992:16). One scholar who has applied this approach to the US military is Mary Fainsod Katzenstein (1998), who examined how feminist activists worked to change the military from within; she compared their activism to that practiced by feminists within the Catholic Church and showed how the different institutional environments led to different forms of activism.

Most historical institutionalist work is done within the field of comparative politics, by scholars who examine the differing institutional contexts of different states. In the period after the Cold War ended so abruptly, the field of international relations

became more open to discussions of institutions and ideas and to alternatives to the two main approaches to research, realism/neo-realism and liberalism/neo-liberalism.<sup>11</sup> A 1996 volume edited by Peter J. Katzenstein led the way in applying institutionalism to national security and international regimes. It took seriously both institutions and issues of identity and culture as relevant to security studies. The authors in Katzenstein's volume concentrate on "two underattended determinants of national security policy: the cultural-institutional context of policy on the one hand and the constructed identity of states, governments, and other political actors on the other" (4). They show how institutions, in their historical and cultural specificity, provide the context for action by state and non-state actors and how the norms those institutions construct impact identities in politically meaningful ways, all in an area of study in which distribution of material power is often taken as the sole relevant variable. International relations has been interested in military power, but an institutional approach would advocate looking more closely at the particularities of military institutions.

This dissertation does not examine traditional political processes or policy outcomes of the type generally studied by scholars associated with historical institutionalism. It does examine the military as a set of institutions, ones that, among other functions, serve as a national symbol. These military institutions take an active role in attempting to shape the public's perceptions of them, and they utilize and manipulate ideas about gender identity as they create images of themselves. The concern for issues of identity links this dissertation to the constructivist literature in international relations.

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<sup>11</sup> Outlines of these two analytic perspectives and their impact on the field of international relations have been rehearsed in many places. For a discussion that places them in contrast to cultural-institutionalist approaches, see the "Introduction" in Katzenstein, 1996.

Within the mainstream of international relations, scholars have become concerned with national identity in areas where ethnic conflict has emerged in the post-Cold War period—areas where national identity is considered by those scholars to be some kind of problem to be dealt with. Such scholars have not studied US national identity.

Constructivist scholars—a group in which Katzenstein could be included, as well as being an institutionalist—are interested in national identity more broadly, arguing that in *all* states, identity (which is part of what makes a state a state, bounding it off from other entities) is key to the definition of the national interest and to state action.

The term “constructivism” encompasses a diverse group with varying relations to positivist social science. Although there are differences among constructivist scholars and schools of thought, in general, all constructivists, according to Locher and Prügl (2001), share:

An ontology: a way to depict the world. Constructivists describe the world not as one that is, but as one that is in the process of becoming... Taking their clues from sociology, constructivists argue that international life is social: international relations are constructed when people talk, follow rules and norms, are guided by world views or institutions, perform rituals, and engage in various social practices. The constructivist focus of inquiry therefore is social phenomena, such as norms, rules, institutions, language, or productions. (114)

This ontology, this recognition that international relations are not built upon an objective, given reality but on human understandings “allows constructivists to account for aspects of world politics that neorealism and neoliberalism obscure” including “the constitution of international agents. No longer are sovereign states and other international agents considered as given and preexisting entities, but national interests, state identities, social movements, and transnational networks appear in need of explanation” (ibid.).

Constructivist scholars have begun to examine state identities and the importance of those

identities to conceptions of the national interest and to state actions (in addition to Katzenstein, 1996, see Fierke and Jorgensen, 2001; Lapid and Kratochwil, 1996; Kubálková, et al., 1998; Ruggie, 1998; Wendt, 1999).

Feminist scholars have argued that the construction of gender is central to the construction of nations, but constructivists, for the most part, have not integrated an analysis of gender into their work on national identity and national interests. Locher and Prügl point out that while “[c]onstructivists have focused on the importance of understanding state identities in order to explain national interests and state practices...their treatments of identity rarely explain why states adopt one identity over another or how identity construction proceeds” (2001: 123). Locher and Prügl also note that constructivists often ignore the importance that power plays in the processes of social construction and identity formation, and that in addition, “constructivists tend to consider gender subtexts in IR as marginal to explanations of most phenomena that interest them and gender politics outside the realm of power politics” (116). They suggest that feminist constructivists may be able to provide better, fuller explanations of political phenomena:

The emphasis in this feminist work [feminist analyses of nationalism] is less on identity as an explanatory variable than on the process of identification, on the way in which identity formation evokes gendered power, on the way in which gender is structurally pervasive in all practices and discourses. Thus, what is at stake is not a moral claim to ‘be nicer to women’ but an ontological and epistemological claim about what power is about and how power works. By ignoring gender, constructivists miss a key element of this picture. (123-4)

My work will show how a key national institution manipulates ideas about gender in order to augment its own power and public support. Unlike most constructivists, I am not working broadly at the level of national identity formation, though the concluding chapter points out how military recruiting materials may contribute to and reflect Americans’

self-image. My work does, however, examine attempts by the military—which has a major role to play in US national identity—to create its image and influence public understandings of it. As such, like other feminist constructivist scholarship, my work will apply a gendered analysis to a politically important set of social practices—the constructions of soldiering produced by military institutions that attempt to influence understandings of the military, and it will examine an ongoing process, something that is contested and reiterated.

### Methods

Having explained the central concerns of the dissertation and having situated it within the discipline of political science, this chapter will now describe the analytic methods that I applied to the recruiting advertisements in order to see how the service branches are constructing masculinity. I take an interpretive textual approach to the recruiting advertisements, which seeks to make explicit the meanings encoded in the published words and images. A number of political scientists from a variety of subfields have fruitfully used a textual/interpretive approach and examined cultural artifacts and visual representations. Anne Norton (1993) studies the “enactment of liberal ideas in popular culture” (1) and the concept of representation in daily life by examining and reading as texts such disparate objects and activities as written documents, theme parks, the lottery, survey results, shopping, sports, news, movies, television shows, advertisements, food, sports, and the presidency. Michael Rogin (1996) explores the creation of American national identity through the exclusion and displacement of African-Americans in popular culture. In an analysis of 19<sup>th</sup> century minstrel shows and

20<sup>th</sup> century Hollywood films, he argues that European immigrants used blackface performance to demonstrate their white, American identity and their assimilation. Lisa Wedeen (1999) provides a case study of Syria to illustrate the importance of symbols and language for the maintenance of power under authoritarian rule. The cult of personality around President Hafiz al-Asad, constructed in various public displays and spectacles, demands that Syrians exhibit allegiance and participate in various ritualized practices; Wedeen shows how even the attempts to express opposition in popular culture, including plays, films, cartoons, and jokes, operate within terms set by the official political culture and reinforce political obedience. Michael J. Shapiro (1997) examines the role that violence and war play in the construction of identity. Among other cultural creations, he analyzes literary texts, movies, representations of the invasion of Grenada and the Gulf War, and even a Marine recruiting commercial, as part of a critique of the conventional approach to studying war in the field of International Relations. All of these political scientists provide strong examples of how visual representations and cultural productions can serve as an important source of evidence in the study of politics and power relations.

Content analysis is the more frequently used method in the social sciences for examining qualitative data like documents and transcripts, and it attempts to categorize the discrete elements of the data by coding schemes—words or images are put into categories and counted (Silverman, 2003:348). While this technique can yield valuable insights, and in fact has revealed much about the differential ways that advertisers portray men and women, “the counting or quantification of isolated elements in a piece of content cannot tell us everything about how meaning is produced in the text nor how the audience understands what is after all a complex piece of signification—the whole is

often more than the sum of the parts” (Dyer, 1982:111). A textual approach makes use of semiotic and discourse-based analysis to examine how meaning is generated within a text.

According to the semiotic approach to communication studies, meaning is communicated through signs. A sign is something perceivable to the senses that refers to something other than itself, like a word, an image, or a gesture. It includes both the physical form itself, referred to as the signifier, and the associated mental concept, called the signified (Fiske, 1982:44). Basic systems of signs, called “codes” are shared by members of a community (ibid.:68). Signs communicate on the level of denotation, “the commonsense, obvious meaning of the sign” and connotation, “the interaction that occurs when the sign meets the feelings or emotions of the user and the values of his culture” (ibid.:90-91). Connotative values are generally specific to a culture, and “because connotation works on the subjective level, we are frequently not made consciously aware of it” and “it is often easy to read connotative values as denotative facts” (ibid.:92). Meaning is made within specific cultures, according to shared concepts, myths, and conventions. A semiotic analysis, which focuses on the social production of meaning, “can help us to make visible the ideological meanings which normally lie unacknowledged in communication. Ideological meanings are so persuasive because they do not draw attention to themselves, they give themselves the status of the taken for granted, the natural” (ibid.:153). Examining the connotations of signs and the conventions of codes makes the implicit meanings explicit.

Within cultural studies, the term “text” does not simply refer to written words on a page. A text can be any kind of cultural production or message, including a written

text, a television commercial, a dance, a boxing match, a uniform, etc. The key concept is that it is a thing which is “read”; in other words, the audience or receiver works to impute meaning to the text, whatever form it takes. Meaning is not simply transferred from producer to receiver. The receiver plays an active role in creating meaning.

According to Fiske:

[...]meanings are not located in the text itself. Reading is not akin to using a can opener to reveal the meaning in the message. Meanings are produced in the interactions between text and audience. It is a dynamic act in which both elements contribute equally. When the text and the audience are members of a tightly knit culture or subculture, the interaction is smooth and effortless; the connotations and myths upon which the text draws fit closely, if not exactly with those of the audience members. (ibid.:143)

Of course, many audiences may read a text, and their readings will vary according to how much the producers and consumers of a text share the same set of cultural referents and codes. A reader brings his or her social experiences and position and cultural framework to bear on his or her reading of a text. Any text can be read in a variety of ways, though “the text delineates the terrain within which meanings may be made and proffers some meanings more vigorously than others” (Fiske, 1987:16). A text is polysemic to the degree that it is open to a multiplicity of readings. Television shows and advertisements often attempt to appeal to a wide audience whose members occupy various positions within the social structure. Their success may depend upon how different audiences read various meanings into the same texts.

A reader’s understanding of a text is influenced by his or her readings and experiences of other texts. According to Fiske, “the theory of intertextuality proposes that any one text is necessarily read in relationship to others and that a range of textual knowledges is brought to bear upon it” (ibid.:108). Knowledge of other texts “pre-orient

the reader to exploit [...] polysemy by activating the text in certain ways, that is, by making some meanings rather than others. Studying a text's intertextual relations can provide us with valuable clues to the readings that a particular culture or subculture is likely to produce from it" (ibid.). In *Manly States: Masculinities, International Relations, and Gender Politics*, Charlotte Hooper uses a textual approach to examine editorial content and advertisements in the British financial newspaper *The Economist* as part of an analysis of masculine identities in the discipline and practice of international relations. She explains the importance of intertextuality as a tool for cultural analysis:

[...]through the endless repetition of certain symbols, images, and ideas, a complex visual language of advertising has developed over the last few decades, a sophisticated shorthand whereby whole strings of associations and carefully nuanced "stories" can be "read" from a single printed image or a few seconds of action on a TV screen, by an audience already tutored in the language of advertising through exposure to past advertisements. When white British television viewers see an image of a tropical palm-fringed beach (used regularly in a number of advertisements such as for Bounty chocolate and Martini vermouth) the associations automatically conjured up are of a paradise, glamorous wealth, escape from the crowds, and endless leisure. Such connotations are achieved through the constant repetition of such images and their relationship to a culture in which leisure travel to the tropics has been the preserve of the wealthy and leisured classes[...] All these meanings and associations are condensed into an image viewed on the television screen for only a few seconds. Meanings cannot be gleaned by examining a text in isolation. They can be understood only in the context of both the immediate intertextuality of media images and symbolic meanings and the wider cultural context or intertext. (Hooper, 2001:122-123)<sup>12</sup>

Producers of texts draw on, replicate, and adapt various symbols, images, and ideas that recur within a culture.

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<sup>12</sup> While a white British viewer may read the ad in the way that Hooper describes, she goes on to note that "Black British viewers with Caribbean roots may have a very different relationship to such an image: they may instead conjure up nostalgic feelings for 'home,' or they may associate the image with employment such as subsistence fishing or plantations labor, or perhaps even slavery itself" (Hooper, 2001:251 n.23). Subordinate groups may not read a text in the same way that members of a dominant group do, even though they are likely to recognize the codes and conventions shared by the dominant group.

As Hooper notes, advertisers do have a sophisticated visual language on which to draw, and members of a given culture are primed to understand advertisements in given ways, while the polysemic potential of ads may also allow various audiences to glean multiple meanings from them. Both the written copy and the images in advertising work to create meaning, although, according to Dyer, the images may be particularly important because:

Pictures are 'easier' to understand and have more impact than words, and they generally offer greater opportunity for the communication of excitement, mood and imagination. A picture is used to lead the eye to the written copy in magazine ads and commercials; language is often used merely to reinforce a photograph or filmed sequence. (1982:86)

While an analyst must pay attention to images generally, images of people carry particular weight in advertising:

In any analysis of ads we ought [...] to pay some attention to the way human actors communicate feelings, social meanings and values like power, authority, subordination, sexuality and so on. Facial expressions are of course very important, as are gestures, poses, body movement, size and the way people group themselves in particular situations. All these ways of communicating meaning non-verbally seem to be natural and spontaneous. But [...] expressive displays are conveyed and received according to learnt cultural traditions. Some expressions can be read and understood cross-culturally, but to understand fully the function and meaning of affective displays we need to refer to a particular context or social situation *within* a culture. In ads, because they need to communicate swiftly, unambiguously and economically, you will find that devices like facial expressions, poses and movement tend toward stylizations and generalization [...] tendencies which contribute toward the stereotyping of people (particularly with regard to their gender), activities and situations. Equally important as conveyors of meaning in ads are the clothes, hairstyles and accessories used by the actors; quite precise meanings can be attached to someone's overall appearance. (Ibid.:96-97)

In examining advertising, then, a key move is to de-naturalize the expressions, poses, and gestures and to highlight the clothing, situation, activities, and other aspects of how the actors' bodies are presented in order to make visible the social meanings and values they

represent. In addition to the messages communicated by the appearance, manner, and activity of the actors, props or objects and settings also communicate meaning. Meaning is further encoded by other visual elements, including focus, camera angle, lighting, color, cropping, use of close-ups, and special effects. The conventions of film use give particular connotations to the use of various photographic techniques. For instance, an ad for a fabric softener that featured a young mother and child was shot in soft focus and lit from behind with lighting that “gives a golden, warm hue to the scene” so that the ad overall “[emphasizes] softness and the scene exudes caring, warmth, mother love, etc” (ibid.:131).

Language, in advertising, carries a direct denotative meaning in its message about the product being sold. In addition to the literal meaning of the words on the page (or spoken in a commercial), language connotes meaning through tone, modes of address, style of language, and various forms of figurative language and rhetorical devices. In addition, language can serve to direct the reader’s understanding of the images:

All images are made up of a number of “floating” signs and subject to a variety of interpretations. The function of the linguistic message—caption, headline, copy, etc.—is to “anchor” the variety of possible meanings, inviting some interpretations rather than others and resolving ambiguity or contradictions in the image. (Ibid.:130)

A textual analysis will examine the interplay of words and images and how they work together to suggest preferred meanings to the reader.

This dissertation examines how each of the branches of the military sells itself to various audiences. It asks how the advertising materials produced by each branch portray military service and how they use ideas about gender, and masculinity in particular, in the process. In analyzing the visual and verbal elements of the advertisements and the

various potential meanings encoded in them, I will be examining the sorts of factors that Dyer describes, such as the appearance of actors, the activities they perform, objects featured, settings, use of photographic techniques, forms of language, rhetorical devices, etc. However, much of my focus will be on the gendering of the various factors (how these factors express ideas about masculinity and femininity) and on aspects that relate specifically to a military context. This would include the use of different types of uniforms; the types of military personnel featured; whether the activities being performed are combat-oriented (like driving a tank, jumping out of an aircraft, or holding weaponry), ceremonial (standing in formation, saluting), technical (operating computer equipment, sitting in front of a radar screen), leisure-oriented, or in another category; whether the settings are explicitly militaristic or seem civilian; the presentation of military hardware; images of civilian life and interaction between military personnel and civilians; descriptions of service life; the descriptions of members of the military branches; the descriptions of the benefits of service, both material and intangible, and so on. In addition to decoding the visual and linguistic elements of the advertisements, I will also put them in historical context. My analysis will show how these various factors communicate messages about what service means and how it relates to particular forms or aspects of masculinity.

### The Recruiting Advertisement Sample

I collected print advertisements that were published between July of 1970 (the beginning of fiscal year 1971 for the military) and December of 2003. The All-Volunteer Force was officially inaugurated in July 1973, but the VOLAR volunteer Army field

experiment began in fiscal year 1971 (Griffith, 1996), and by 1972, the Army, Navy, and Air Force were advertising in earnest in anticipation of the AVF. I collected advertisement for each of the four armed services, excluding ads for the reserves, ROTC, and the combined forces, from the magazines *Life*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Popular Mechanics*, for the entire sample period, and from *Seventeen* from 1994 through 2003.

I chose *Life*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Popular Mechanics* because, for most of the period of the All-Volunteer Force, this is where the services were placing their ads. *Life* was a general-interest publication with a broad readership that included both men and women and potential recruits and their parents. *Sports Illustrated* and *Popular Mechanics* both have a readership that is predominantly male (though women's interest in sports and sports magazines has grown over the period of the AVF), while *Popular Mechanics'* demographics are skewed toward a more working-class population. According to Time-Warner, the company that owns *Sports Illustrated*, the magazine, which is "America's leading sports publication, is read by 21 million adults each week, more than any other men's publication" ("Digital Bridges[...]," 2004). *Popular Mechanics* is a technology, science, and how-to/home building magazine that has called itself "The Must-Read Magazine for the Must-Know Man." Military hardware is a frequent subject of articles.

In the mid-1990s, the services began to advertise in a broader range of magazines, including *Rolling Stone*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *XXL* (a magazine about hip-hop music), and *Seventeen*, in order to better target the young demographic they need to reach. In order to see what ads the services were publishing specifically for the consumption of young women, and how and whether they differed from the ones published in magazines

aimed at men, I collected advertisements from *Seventeen* from 1994 through 2003.

My recruiting print ad sample is a sample in terms of my choice of sources, but I attempted to collect every ad published in those magazines during the period under study. Some ads may have been missed due to human error, and in addition, some ads are missing because of gaps in the collections of the libraries from which I collected the materials.<sup>13</sup> My sample consists of 296 different advertisements, most of which were published multiple times, including 143 for the Army, 63 for the Navy, 51 for the Air Force, and 39 for the Marine Corps. I supplemented the advertisements I found published in the magazines with descriptions of advertising in news articles and scholarly work on the All-Volunteer Force. I also analyze the Internet sites that each of the services have maintained since the late 1990s. Recruiting websites, which generally share themes with print ad campaigns, have grown in importance for the armed forces, because they are a preferred method of communication for the age group the services are trying to attract. They also allow the services to provide more content and information, they are easily updated, interactive, and cost-effective, and they provide the services with feedback about what types of approaches their visitors find most appealing, based on page hits and other data they can collect. In addition, I've gathered samples and descriptions of television advertising, though less systematically than the print material, to fill out the image crafted by each of the services.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> My sample lacks issues of *Popular Mechanics* from 1991 to 1994, and it is also missing intermittent issues of *Sports Illustrated* from the late 1980s. (Unsurprisingly, the annual *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue was usually missing from the libraries, both academic and public, that I visited.) In the case of *Life*, the magazine stopped publishing from 1973 to 1977, returning in 1978 as a monthly rather than a weekly publication, and it ceased publishing again in June 2000.

<sup>14</sup> Each of the services also produces other kinds of recruiting materials, like brochures, but these are viewed mainly by people who have expressed interest in the armed services by sending away for

### The Plan of the Dissertation

Chapter Two will provide historical and theoretical context for the examination of the recruiting advertisements. It will discuss the concept of masculinity, which is central to the dissertation, it will further explore the relationship among military service, masculinity, and citizenship, it will present a brief history of the All-Volunteer Force, and it will introduce some of the issues raised by the end of the draft. Each of the chapters after that will examine a branch of the armed forces and analyze its recruiting ads that appeared in my sample. In addition to providing some background material on the branch's recruiting practices and discussing the service culture, each chapter will also include a brief history of women's participation in that branch and a discussion of how women are portrayed or appealed to in the recruiting materials, to fill out the picture, mainly based on how each branch deploys masculinity, of how each branch genders military service.

Chapter Three examines Army advertising, which at times has deployed a traditional warrior masculinity, featuring weaponry and soldiers who test themselves, but which has also used other masculine models, like acquiring a good trade that will allow economic independence, learning discipline and self-confidence, and gaining technological prowess, which entails both mastery and control over sophisticated machinery and success in the civilian world. Army recruiting materials have forged links

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information or speaking to a recruiter. While many World War I and World War II recruiting posters are famous, with changes in advertising practices, during the period of the AVF, military recruiting posters are most likely to be hung inside recruitment offices and thus are most likely to be seen by people who have already walked through the recruiter's door, rather than by the general public. The focus of this research is recruitment advertisements that are aimed at the general public, through mass-circulation magazines.

between civilian careers and self-development and militaristic imagery like weaponry and camouflage. In addition to promising the excitement of military action, these ads bring together more traditional forms of military masculinity with newer, business-world forms of masculinity that are gaining prominence in the larger culture. The Army's versions of masculinity, even its warrior type, tend to be accessible, personified by smiling, relaxed "regular guys." In the Army, which needs the greatest number of recruits each year, manhood seems to be a goal within reach of the average young man.

Chapter Four shows that over the course of the AVF, Navy recruiting appeals have tended to shift back and forth between an emphasis on career and benefits and on adventure and challenge. Each of these sets of appeals, however, contains a masculine subtext, if not an overt association with manhood. The career and benefits theme was presented first in terms of masculine pride in work that is physically and mentally challenging—"good, hard work"—later shifting to an emphasis on professional careers, personal success, and exposure to cutting-edge technology, more closely aligning the Navy with the high-status careers of the information age and its emerging dominant models of masculinity. The Navy's other main approach is to highlight adventure, offering young men the excitement of life at sea and challenges that allow him to test and prove himself. In the 2000s, the offer of adventure became more explicitly militaristic, with ads that featured specifically martial forms of action and prominent displays of weaponry, layering a warrior masculinity on top of other kinds of appeals. The fact that the Navy began utilizing what could be considered traditional military masculinity recently in its history shows its lingering appeal and its continuing power to attract some sectors of the wider culture—despite the general displacement of traditional

masculinities—when other forms of masculinity may have failed them. The Navy is asserting that its commitment to masculinity hasn't weakened.

Chapter Five examines the recruiting practices of the Marines. While military institutions in general are tied to masculinity, the Marine Corps in particular, with its focus on combat, has been seen as force with the most macho and aggressive men. With the end of the draft and the challenges to traditional masculinity in the larger culture, the Corps didn't retreat from its association with masculinity, but sought to reinforce it. Over the course of the AVF, Marine Corps advertising has remained remarkably consistent. The Marine Corps emphasizes its elitism and sends the message that the Marines will demand that a recruit prove his worth, but once he has met the challenge, he'll be accepted into an exclusive brotherhood and be a part of a larger tradition. The Marines present a rite of passage into manhood. Marine Corps advertising isn't just masculine; it specifically presents a warrior masculinity. The Marines need to find young men who are more interested in combat jobs than in technical training, and the recruiting materials reflect that. Marine recruiting ads generally downplay benefits and economic incentives, so their appeals don't draw on models of masculinity tied to economic independence or mastery of technology. The Marines also have the strongest culture of any of the services, and they are concerned with finding recruits who are attracted to that culture and not just to military life in general.

Chapter Six examines the Air Force, which has developed appeals based on its technological and career-related strengths and has drawn on conceptions of masculinity that are not particularly martial or militaristic. Air Force recruiting has emphasized job training, and has specifically offered respect and advancement to blue-collar,

mechanically-inclined young men, reinforcing a working-class masculinity that values skilled labor and economic independence. The Air Force has also made advanced technology a central draw; through association with this technology, the Air Force offers the masculine rewards of mastery, dominance, and control. In recent years, the Air Force has offered recruits not direct physical excitement, as the other services tend to do, but the vicarious thrills of the video gamer, who has extreme experiences through the mediation of technology. The recruiting website emphasizes the Air Force's humanitarian role, painting humanitarian missions as dramatic and important in a way that seems to reflect Steve Niva's (1998) concept of "new world order" masculinity, which will be discussed in Chapter Two. The website also depicts a comfortable lifestyle with a balance between work and other aspects of life, like leisure or family. The Air Force is the most civilianized of the armed forces, offering a work environment that is similar to that of a civilian bureaucratic organization, albeit one that uses a lot of sophisticated technology, with both offices and technical work areas. The Air Force offers technology-related forms of masculinity that don't demand a complete transformation or a new identity and will allow the airman or officer to pass comfortably between and find status and opportunity in both the Air Force and civilian worlds.

The final chapter will draw broader conclusions from the results of each of the other chapters, including the finding that the four branches each generate their own models of masculinity, but with similarities and overlaps, drawing on a few key masculine models that are becoming dominant in the larger culture—professional/managerial forms, masculinity tied to mastery of technology, hybrid masculinity which combines toughness and aggression with compassion and

egalitarianism—as well as on the more traditional warrior form. As far as the question of what makes a branch choose to deploy a given model of masculinity at a particular time, my analysis suggests that there isn't a simple model of how the branches deploy constructions of gender that would allow us to predict with much certainty how each service would act in a given situation.<sup>15</sup> A combination of factors seems to drive the branches' choices. The national economy and military pay and benefits, which provide a common external environment for all of the services, seem to have an effect on how the branches advertise, although international events seem to have only a small impact. The institutional culture and specific personnel needs of each of the services certainly have a strong impact on the recruiting materials created by each branch, but other factors like youth survey results, ideas generated by advertising agencies, and political pressure play a role as well. However it is that the branches come up with formulations they come up with, these constructions of masculinity created in recruiting materials draw on the ideas about masculinity circulating in society that each branch thinks will be useful for its recruiting needs, and in choosing those constructions, arguably increases their significance, especially for the targeted subgroups.

The last chapter will also include some comparative material on recruiting in Great Britain, to discover whether what is happening in the United States is unique to our military and our gender system or whether the military services in other states facing similar changes, including the end of conscription and flux in gender roles, deploy constructions of gender in similar ways. I chose Great Britain for an initial comparison

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<sup>15</sup> Of course, the purpose of this dissertation is not to examine how military branches create their recruiting campaigns, but to look at the recruiting materials that they have produced to see how these materials gender military service.

because it has a lot in common with the United States culturally, including many shared ideas about military service and many similar military practices; the commonalities make it easier to identify the relevant similarities and differences in recruiting practices. The comparative discussion is meant to point to future research possibilities. I examine a briefer time period, mainly the decade of the 1990s, and I had less direct access to recruiting ads, so much of the analysis is based on samples of advertising and descriptions provided in news coverage. Even this preliminary examination yields interesting insights into how other states transitioning to volunteer forces (which has been a decided trend around the world and especially in Europe since the late 1990s) may construct the relationship between soldiering and masculinity and how military service relates to hegemonic forms of masculinity. Despite some important differences, the military services of both the US and Britain feature transformed versions of masculinity, linked to technological mastery and professionalism, alongside more traditional, warrior forms which are tied to combat soldiers and specifically the Marines

## Chapter 2: CONCEPTS AND CONTEXT: MASCULINITY, CITIZENSHIP, AND THE CREATION OF THE AVF

### The Construction of Masculinity

This dissertation examines the relationship between military recruiting and masculinity, so some discussion of the concept of masculinity (and hegemonic masculinity in particular), the relationship between masculinity and soldiering, and the so-called crisis of masculinity is in order. In the 1970s, the women's movement shed new light on masculinity, and it began to get attention both from those who sought to reform it in the hopes of liberating men and those who sought to protect it from the threat of feminism. In the 1980s, masculinity began to receive sustained scholarly attention in works such as *The Making of Masculinities: The New Men's Studies* (Brod, 1987) in ways that went beyond previous psychological studies of sex roles and that built on women's studies and feminist analyses of gender. Masculinity, very simply put, is the traits, behaviors, images, values, and interests associated with being a man within a given culture. It is not a natural consequence of male biology, but a set of socially-constructed practices.

In the Western philosophical tradition, meaning is made through difference and contrast. A positive definition depends on the negation or repression of something represented as its antithesis. Binary oppositions pair terms relationally. Many feminist theorists have pointed out that "masculine" and "feminine" are defined against each other and linked with other oppositional pairs, like hard/soft, culture/nature, rational/emotional, mind/body, strong/weak, public/private, active/passive, subject/object, independent/dependent, and so on. This way of making meaning both defines

masculinity and femininity as natural opposites and imputes value to masculine traits over feminine ones. Associations with masculinity or masculine traits can lend power in contexts that have no direct or overt relationship to men or women as men and women. As Joan W. Scott (1986) has shown, “gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power” (1067); meaning is established through difference, and references to sexual difference—to commonly accepted male/female binary oppositions—can encode a hierarchical relationship or indicate a distribution of power.<sup>1</sup>

Masculinity is defined relationally to femininity, and in a way that privileges men over women, but just as feminist scholars have come to talk about intersectionality, and the ways that gender is mutually constituted with other socially-important categories like race and class, understandings of masculinity have also become more complex. The concept of hegemonic masculinity, which is generally associated with R.W. Connell, has become highly influential in the past twenty years (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Connell (1987) argues that any given social order includes multiple concepts of masculinity, that some forms of masculinity will have social dominance over others, and that the form of masculinity that inhabits the hegemonic position is not a fixed type but is contestable and can change. Hegemonic masculinity is constructed in contrast to subordinate masculinities, such as those associated with gay or non-white men, as well as

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<sup>1</sup> Scott illustrates this point with the example of 19<sup>th</sup> century labor politics: “When middle-class reformers in France, for example, depicted workers in terms coded as feminine (subordinated, weak, sexually exploited like prostitutes), labor and socialist leaders replied by insisting on the masculine position of the working class (producers, strong, protectors of their women and children). The terms of this discourse were not explicitly about gender, but they relied on references to it, the gendered ‘coding’ of certain terms, to establish their meanings” (1073).

to femininity.<sup>2</sup> Hegemonic masculinity may not correspond with the everyday lives of a majority of men, but it will require men “to position themselves in relation to it” (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005:832) and it will “express widespread ideals, fantasies, and desires” (ibid.:838). Non-hegemonic forms of masculinity, “which may represent well-crafted responses to race/ethnic marginalization, physical disability, class inequality, or stigmatized sexuality” may be actively oppressed and discredited or they may be incorporated into the local gender order (ibid.:848). Hegemonic masculinity changes over time and may adaptively appropriate aspects of subordinate masculinities.

### *Military Masculinities*

Masculinity has strong connections to war-fighting and to militaries, which are commonly perceived as institutions which confer masculinity and create men out of boys. According to R.W. Connell, “violence on the largest possible scale is the purpose of the military; and no arena has been more important for the definition of hegemonic masculinity in European/American culture” (1995: 201). Morgan (1994) describes the specific masculine qualities that the military represents:

Of all the sites where masculinities are constructed, reproduced, and deployed, those associated with war and the military are some of the most direct. Despite far-reaching political, social, and technological changes, the warrior still seems to be a key symbol of masculinity. In statues, heroic paintings, comic books, and popular films the gendered connotations are inescapable. The stance, the facial expressions, and the weapons clearly connote aggression, courage, a capacity for violence, and sometimes, a willingness for sacrifice. The uniform absorbs

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<sup>2</sup> Connell uses the term “emphasized femininity” to refer to the most socially dominant ideal of femininity. He avoids the term “hegemonic femininity” because it would imply an equivalence between hegemonic masculinity and hegemonic femininity instead of recognizing the unequal status of the two in the gender order.

individualities into a generalized and timeless masculinity while also connoting a control of emotion and a subordination to a larger rationality. (165-166)

Militaries have historically depended on female labor for a wide range of necessary support work, but with very few exceptions, men have been the combatants. The citizen-soldier ideal, as initially theorized by Niccolo Machievelli, depended on masculine *virtu* vanquishing feminine *fortuna* (Pitkin, 1984). Several scholars (including Burke, 1999 and Francke, 1997) have documented the gendered nature of US military training, which has depended on violent hazing and the denigration of women and femininity. The connection between masculinity and war or the military has been traced out in particular historical contexts in America such as the Civil War (Dubbert, 1979), the Victorian age (Mrozek, 1987), and World War II (Jarvis, 2004). Braudy (2003) more broadly examines the changing perceptions of war and of masculinity and their interrelationship from the European knights of the Middle Ages to the terrorists of September 11, 2001. The relationship between soldiering and masculinity has been explored and discussed by feminists who want to expose and de-naturalize the relationship, revealing how that relationship has been constructed (Cohn, 1998; DePauw, 1998; Elshtain, 1987; Enloe, 1983, 1989, 1993, 2000; Goldstein, 2001; Herbert, 1998; Higate, 2003; Stiehm, 1989) and by other scholars and activists who take that relationship as natural and given (Gutmann, 2000; Marlowe, 1983; Mitchell, 1998; van Creveld, 2000). In theory and in practice, war-making has been the province of men, and a source of masculinity.

Americans' attitudes toward their armed forces have varied over the years, through war and peace and through conscription and volunteer forces. Throughout it all, and even in periods when military service has not served as a rite of passage for most males, the military has set a standard for masculinity. While Americans haven't wanted

to send their sons to the US Army for much of American history, they have still supported their local military organizations and militias. These militias, which were of questionable military utility, still, I would argue, performed masculinizing functions, allowing men to get together occasionally to put on uniforms and march or go out in the woods with their guns and feel themselves to be serving as protectors of the community. Even when only a small number of men served in either the regular forces or the militia, men's relationship to the military was celebrated in parades and civic festivals. For much of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, political parties routinely staged militaristic spectacles, with companies of uniformed men parading to martial music, in order to generate men's enthusiasm for upcoming elections (Baker, 1984; Snyder, 1999). Men often pursue a vicarious relationship with the military, consuming pop-culture representations of the military in the form of movies, video games, novels, and popular histories on a massive scale, while their sons continue to play with a variety of war-themed toys. America has a large and diverse culture, with room for many localized gender orders. In the absence of conscription, the military's impact on masculine norms may be felt most strongly in particular locations and subcultures that are courted most directly by the various branches, while the military continues to affect the general culture and its notions of gender more broadly.

Militaries have historically been associated with masculinity, but what constitutes military masculinity changes with time and context, with new military roles and advances in technology, as well as with major political, economic, and social changes in the societies of which militaries are a part. Because constructions of soldiering and constructions of gender are interrelated, the recent inclusion of women in the military in

larger numbers and in expanding roles makes the link between military service and masculinity more complex. According to David H. J. Morgan:

the changes in the military and the changes in the gender order are mutually dependent. Changes in the military and the conduct of war have an effect on dominant images of embodied masculinities. Changes in the gender order, for example, in the widespread employment of women, in their turn have an effect on how the military is conceived and constructed. (1994:179-180).

With the end of the draft and the inception of the all-volunteer force in 1973, the US military became dependent on women to fill at least some portion of its “manpower” needs. This need, along with political pressure and legal challenges, has forced military leaders to open up more job categories to women. Before the end of the draft, women made up less than two percent of the US military. As of September 2005, women made up 14% of the Army (70,454 out of 492,728), 14% of the Navy (52,381 out of 362,941), 19.5% of the Air Force (69,151 out of 353,696), and 6% of the Marine Corps (10,963 out of 180,029). Women comprise almost 15%, roughly 203,000 service members, of an active duty force of just under 1.4 million. For so many women to be official members of an army (recognized as soldiers), and to be so when the state is not under a severe, direct military threat to its very existence, is historically uncommon. The presence of so many women has forced changes in military life, and it challenges the military’s ability to confer masculinity on all of its members.

Masculine military cultures must also contend with changes in military functions. With the end of the Cold War, Western militaries have become more involved in “operations other than war.” US military actions over the past fifteen years have included peacekeeping missions, humanitarian aid, drug interdiction, and efforts to

control ethnic cleansers.<sup>3</sup> Historian Linda Grant De Pauw points out that “In 1993, the army’s basic operations manual, 100-5, introduced a separate chapter on ‘operations other than war,’ and began production of a special manual on peace operations. In March 1995, the National Military Strategy, the Pentagon’s basic policy statement, added sustaining peace to the roles of American troops” (1998; 299). Changing military functions may change what types of masculinity are associated with soldiering. The idea of soldiers who “kill people and break things” may be dysfunctional for a military that is attempting to keep rival factions from violating a cease-fire agreement or training a national police force. Evolving international norms about how militaries should behave and growing concern for human rights may also serve to alter the forms of masculinity that militaries encourage. (A masculine sexualization of violence in military training can be problematic not only if sexual harassment of female fellow soldiers comes to be seen as unacceptable, but also if rape of enemy women violates new ideas about rape as a war crime, or if rape of local women is seen as an impediment to peacekeeping and post-war reconstruction.) Changing military roles and the inclusion of women don’t mean that the military is becoming “emasculated” or ungendered; it means that military masculinities alter and new forms become dominant.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, different military roles can produce multiple forms of masculinity

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<sup>3</sup> Note that while this set of missions was a change in terms of the military’s immediate Cold War history, and so a change in military culture from its Cold War version would be in order, this type of task is not entirely new to the US military. Historically, the US military has engaged in a range of non-combat activities, including: surveying and exploring the American West, thus opening it to settlement; scientific research; exploration and surveying in Central and South America; building economic infrastructure, including roadways, canals, and bridges; promoting public health; and governing colonies. For a discussion of the US military’s non-combat roles, see Huntington, 1993.

<sup>4</sup> The Cold War itself saw a shift in the type of military professional that came to dominate the officer corps, from the combat leader to the managerial technician (Janowitz, 1960). This change presumably also involved some alterations of masculine styles embodied by officers.

within a single military (Barrett, 1996; Enloe, 1988; Higate, 2003; Morgan, 1994). Barrett shows how officers in the US Navy attempt to draw on different strands of hegemonic masculinity to validate themselves. While officers in general talked about discipline, perseverance and toughness, naval aviators focused on their risk-taking behavior, and surface warfare officers emphasized their endurance of hardship and their abilities to perform under pressure. Supply officers, who have lower status because their specialty is in the realm of support, not combat, and who are often denigrated as un-masculine by those in combat positions, try to frame their work as masculine in terms of their need to exhibit technical rationality and competence and their likelihood of achieving financial success in the civilian world. Connell (1985) outlines three forms of masculinity that have formed the basis of military organization. The first two interconnected forms—“physically violent but subordinate to orders on the one hand, dominating and organizationally competent on the other”—have been augmented by an increasingly important third type: “the professionalized, calculative rationality of the technical specialist” (Connell, 1985:9). This typology recognizes that not just masculinity but specifically military masculinity may take a variety of forms. Of course, the concepts that serve the functioning organization and those that are sold to potential members are not necessarily the same, and the three categories do not transfer neatly to the forms of masculinity used in military recruiting.

Many commentators (such as Leo, 2001; Smart, 2000; and Strother, 1999), however, see military masculinity more monolithically, as the tough and aggressive warrior. In their eyes, when the military branches recruit or put out images of themselves, there is a masculine approach and non-masculine approaches. The masculine

approach, as exemplified by the Marine Corp, would be characterized by such visual markers as weapons and strong, unsmiling male bodies, either in postures of action or of rigid military bearing, as well as by ideals of physical toughness, testing oneself, and aggression. This failure to recognize any other masculine characteristics as appropriate to the military reveals anxiety about masculine roles and a desire, in the face of changing gender roles in the larger culture, to preserve a traditional ideal of masculinity in an institution that has been so important to the construction of masculinity.

### *The Crisis in Masculinity*

Beginning in the early 1970s, around the time of the inception of the All-Volunteer Force, the perception began to spread that American manhood was in crisis. The growing women's movement, the defeat in Vietnam, the deindustrialization of the economy and with it the loss of well-paying manufacturing jobs that could allow working-class men to be breadwinners all contributed to the idea that men could no longer be certain of their status or their roles.<sup>5</sup> The next few decades saw an outpouring of popular and academic literature on the problems of men and the uncertainties they faced. In 1973, George Gilder proclaimed in *Sexual Suicide* that if men lost exclusively male roles to the women's movement, the result would be the breakdown not just of the family but society as a whole. Some pro-feminist men, like Marc Feigen Fasteau (1975) argued that men needed to dismantle the old concepts of masculinity, because stereotypes

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<sup>5</sup> Working-class men, who could no longer be certain of their ability to support a family and their place in the social order, were particular subjects of the "crisis." They are also the men most likely to be a target of military recruiters, since they are less likely than middle- or upper-class men to go to college and more in need of the economic benefits.

of manhood damage men and cause them to cut themselves off from their emotions and also lead to misogyny, violence, and war. In 1979, in the introduction to his book on the history of masculinity in America, *A Man's Place: Masculinity in Transition*, historian Joe L. Dubbert could look back over the previous decade and see a new concern with masculinity and male roles. As one sociologist put it in 1987, "That men today are confused about what it means to be a 'real man'—that masculinity is in 'crisis'—has become a cultural commonplace, staring down at us from every magazine rack and television talk show in the country" (Kimmel, 1987:121). Best-sellers ranging from Susan Faludi's *Stiffed* (1999) to Robert Bly's mytho-poetic *Iron John* (1990) to *Real Men Don't Eat Quiche* (Feirstein, 1982) have all proclaimed, in their own way, the insecurity of men's roles.

Anxiety over masculinity, to put the current crisis in context, is nothing new. Kimmel (1996) has shown that masculinity has repeatedly been in crisis when large-scale social transformations have affected institutions that undergird masculinity, like the economy and the family. In Kimmel's description of American masculinity, masculinity has always been troublesome—both difficult to achieve or to definitively prove and in a state of flux and uncertainty. Throughout our history, Americans have intermittently worried over the meaning of manhood and the virility of the nation, looking back on the era of their fathers as a time when the path to manhood was supposedly more certain, clear, and secure.<sup>6</sup> The present has always been a struggle and the past a golden age; "the

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<sup>6</sup> Kimmel is talking mainly about white, American manhood. His descriptions, for instance, of various 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century transformations in masculinity were of hegemonic forms and did not impact African-American slaves in the same way as white men; a male slave of the 1830s would not have looked back to his father's era as a time when masculinity was secure, though white men struggling with the emergence of

search for a transcendent, timeless definition of manhood is itself a sociological phenomenon—we tend to search for the timeless and eternal during moments of crisis, those points of transition when the old definitions no longer work and the new definitions are yet to be firmly established” (Kimmel, 1996:5).

Kimmel argues that the periods when manhood has been thought to be threatened “were also crisis points in economic, political, and social life—moments when men’s relationships to their work, to their country, to their families, to their visions, were transformed” (ibid.:10). The responses to crisis have followed a general pattern: “American men try to *control themselves*; they project their fears onto *others*; and when feeling too pressured, they attempt an *escape*” (ibid.:9). Elaborating on these responses, Kimmel explains:

To some men, masculinity became a relentless test, demanding that it be proved in increasingly physical demonstration. From 19<sup>th</sup>-century health reformers to contemporary bodybuilders, some men have pumped up to regain lost confidence. Others have actively resisted women’s equality; from 19<sup>th</sup>-century antisuffragists to VMI cadets and promoters of “men’s rights,” [...] And finally, others have simply run away, escaping to some pristine homosocial world, whether mythic or real, as an all-male solace against encroaching dissolution. When the going’s been tough, the tough have run away. (2005:xi)

There is also a fourth possible response: to attempt to resolve the crisis in masculinity by supporting equality for women. Some men have joined each struggle for women’s rights “because they saw that gender equality was the only way that they, too, could live the lives they said they wanted to live—as men” (ibid.:xii).

One of the biggest crises in American manhood came at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup>

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“marketplace masculinity” in the cities would have. (Kimmel is sometimes explicit about issues of race and masculinity and at other times he is not and generalizes about American men in ways that seem to only be relevant to white men.) Men in various subordinate social categories may also face crises of masculinity, but they won’t necessarily map neatly onto the crisis points of the dominant group.

Century, in a situation with some economic and social parallels to the period during which the All-Volunteer Force came into being:

Three coincident processes shifted the terrain upon which manhood had been traditionally grounded—an unprecedented level of industrialization; the entry into the public sphere of large numbers of women, newly freed blacks, and immigrants; and the closing of the frontier—and the meanings of manhood were once again uncertain. The combined impact of these processes led many men to feel frightened, cut loose from the traditional moorings of their identities, adrift in some anomic sea. By the last decades of the century, manhood was widely perceived to be in crisis. This *fin de siècle* crisis of masculinity was a popular theme for critics and experts. All agreed that it was increasingly difficult to be a real man. Who was a man? What did manhood mean? How could one tell that he was a real man? (Kimmel, 1996:78)

One of the major responses to that crisis was to create a new frontier through imperialist expansion (in 1898 the US annexed Hawaii, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam) and to revive American masculinity through militarism. War was a potential way to reinvigorate a population that had grown “effeminate” through peace, office and factory work, and city life (*ibid.*:111-112).

While the military was a way to salvage American masculinity in the years before World War I, in the post-Vietnam years, the military was itself a part of the problem and the figure of the soldier in need of redemption. J. William Gibson (1991) argues that Americans have traditionally linked their military victories to moral superiority, and the American defeat in Vietnam “created a cultural crisis in American national identity” and “raised fundamental questions about the dominant political and military paradigm of how war should be conceptualized, organized, and fought” (182). During the same period, civil rights and Black Nationalist movements questioned the racial practices of domestic society and US foreign policies in the Third World, and the women’s movement challenged traditional gender roles and the split between a masculine public sphere and

feminine private sphere, giving new grounds for a critique of the military; “War as a particularly male activity, as opposed to a nongendered ‘public’ policy, became subject to scrutiny” (ibid.:183). The combined impact of these social movements was “a serious challenge to traditional male military values,” making the 1970s “a time of deep crisis for the cultural reproduction of war and the warrior” (ibid.).

But while the military was discredited and a component of the masculinity crisis, by the late 1970s and into the 1980s, many men were turning to the military as a way out of the crisis and a means of escape. Men weren’t, for the most part, literally enlisting in the US armed forces; however, they looked to militarism as a redemption of masculinity. Gibson identifies two cultural strands that sought to redeem America’s loss in Vietnam and “restore the nation’s cultural heritage as the land of good men who always win” (183). In one, a paramilitary hero, like Rambo, goes outside the bureaucratized constraints of military structures to achieve victory.<sup>7</sup> According to these representations, politicians and military bureaucrats had restrained the military might of the US soldier in Vietnam, leading to defeat, so the paramilitary hero exists outside of those bounds. In the late 1970s and through the 1980s, paramilitary culture was celebrated in “scores of movies, television shows, men’s ‘action-adventure’ novels, magazines, war games, ‘combat’ shooting and ‘mercenary’ or ‘survivalist’ training schools, and the militarization of the domestic civilian arms market” (184). Within this culture, the warrior is “a gender ideal for all men; every man could be a warrior and should be prepared to fight his own

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<sup>7</sup> The emblem of the fantasy of a re-claimed warriorhood is the figure of John Rambo—played by Sylvester Stallone—a Green Beret in Vietnam who is mistreated on his return to the United States. In the second film in the series, 1985’s *Rambo: First Blood, Part 2*, when he is asked to return to Southeast Asia to find suspected POWs, Rambo responds with the now-famous question: “Do we get to win this time?”

private war against domestic and foreign enemies” (ibid.).<sup>8</sup> While the paramilitary culture challenged military institutions and celebrated the individual warrior’s skill over high-technology warfare, the other type of cultural production that tried to heal the wounds of Vietnam, the “techno-thriller” (as typified by Tom Clancy’s novels) did validate the military and capital-intensive warfare, by contrasting the values of Western society with those of the Soviet Union. The power of the Western forces comes not only from their technology, but from the organization of the military men into “extended male families” (188) which links the men through bonds of emotion and filial obligation. Susan Jeffords (1989) also argues that in the 1980s, cultural representations of the war in Vietnam, in the form of books, movies, and television shows, sought to heal the wounds of the loss of that war and “remasculinize” America.

In 1980, Americans elected Ronald Reagan to be their president, a man who was hostile to feminism (he actively opposed the Equal Rights Amendment), willing to stand up to communism and to use military force, and who declared it was “morning in America.” He was photographed on his ranch, riding his horse and chopping wood. Reagan exploited the heroic myths of the American West and used displays of physical strength symbolically (Norton, 1993). As Kimmel puts it, the 1980s was a decade “of the reassertion of pride, the retrieval of political and metaphoric potency for America and, hence, for the American man. In a replay of the frontier cowboy myth, America was once again sitting tall in the saddle” (1996:291).

Still, for many men, the sense of crisis continued into the 1990s. 1990 saw the

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<sup>8</sup> For a further exploration of paramilitary culture and the fantasy of re-masculinization through “New War,” see Gibson, 1994.

publication of Bly's *Iron John*, a lament for distant fathers, lost male initiation rites, and ancient masculine archetypes, followed the next year by Sam Keen's *Fire in the Belly*, about men's need for new spiritual rites and new ways of defining their identities without looking to women for approval. As Kimmel notes, "All across the country in the first few years of the 1990s, men [were] in full-scale retreat, heading off to the woods to rediscover their wild, hairy, deep manhood" (1996:316). 1990 was also the year that football coach Bill McCartney founded the Christian men's group The Promise Keepers, which held emotional rallies in football stadiums, where men were encouraged to—gently and lovingly—become the leaders of their families. While Bly worried about the wounds caused by distant fathers, and McCartney called on men to take their place at the head of the family, public attention began to focus on the role and importance of fathers. "Fatherlessness" became a politically-charged concept and a subject of social policy (Daniels, 1998). This concern over fatherhood in the '90s "indirectly [expressed] profound male gender anxiety about the erosion of received definitions of masculinity" (Stacey, 1998:57).

Malin (2005) argues that the form of masculinity that was culturally dominant in the 1990s was a conflicted, hybrid masculinity that combined sensitivity with toughness. President Bill Clinton could be seen as the archetype for this form of manhood: "Sensitive to our pain, but tough on crime; wealthy graduate of Yale, but down-home Arkansas boy," Clinton's conflicted masculinity embraced "a kind of new, sensitive nontraditional masculinity at the same time that it sought to demonstrate a powerful, thoroughly established sense of 'real American manhood,' the sort conventionally depicted in advertisements for pickup trucks by Ford, Dodge, and Chevy" (Malin,

2005:7).

While Malin sees hybrid masculinity as conflicted, Steve Niva (1998) describes a similar form of masculinity as an emerging ideal. According to Niva, the 1991 Gulf War was a turning point for American masculinity, finally putting to rest the ghosts of Vietnam and ushering in a “New World Order” masculinity “that combined toughness and aggressiveness with some tenderness and compassion” (111). A benevolent United States would lead the post-Cold War world, upholding international law and serving as a model of democratic government and enlightened gender relations. While enemies in wartime are conventionally feminized, in this war, Saddam Hussein was portrayed as hypermasculine. American manhood, by contrast, was progressive and sensitive, as well as tough, and America’s military might was also advanced and technologically sophisticated, allowing US soldiers to project lethal force, while also, supposedly, sparing innocent lives with their precision. Niva argues:

In addition to emphasizing the contrast with Saddam Hussein and his regressive model of manhood, the new hegemonic vision of US masculinity also accentuated the technological and civilizational superiority of the US military and society. The military’s new “technowar” paradigm for capital-intensive, high-technology warfare highlighted the differences between economies and political systems and, thus the superiority of Western men over other men. The old John Wayne image of the warrior was replaced by blending the technologically sophisticated heroes of Tom Clancy’s “technothriller” novels with the megamasculine Rambo. Infantrymen took a backseat in war coverage to computer programmers, missile technologists, battle-tank commanders, high-tech pilots, and those appropriately equipped and educated for new world order warfare. (119)

Technological power in service of benign might and strength tempered with compassion make the American man and his new form of manhood the putative superior to his rivals.

While “New World Order” masculinity was coming to the fore on the stage of global politics and war, global markets and economics was another arena for the

development of a transformed masculinity. In 1998, Connell suggested that a new hegemonic model of masculinity might be developing among managers in the global corporate economy, and he named this emerging pattern “transnational business masculinity.” Like older forms of business masculinity, the new form “is involved in exercising and legitimizing collective power, institutional power, and personal authority in the workplace” but it also includes “a self-conscious modernity in relation to nationality, sexuality, and gender” and a “conscious endorsement of gender equity” (at least in theory, if not in practice; the vast majority of international managers are male) (Connell and Wood, 2005:359). It also includes “an uncertainty or provisionality” about the position of men in the world, both in terms of men’s position vis-à-vis women and the place of individual men within corporate structures, where no loyalty binds employer and employee and one’s job, no matter how well-paid, is never secure (ibid.:360). As a response to uncertainty, the businessman treats both his body and his life as things to be managed, applying the types of reasoning used in the office and in business decisions to personal life and seeing himself as a corporate entity or enterprise. Both transnational business masculinity, which is linked to an economic elite, and new world order masculinity, which is specifically tied to and grows out of the US military, may, like other models of masculinity, be sources on which military recruiters can draw or against which they can measure military service when crafting their appeals for recruits.

This discussion of masculinity, its relationship to the military, and the playing out of the crisis in masculinity since the early 1970s is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to provide some background for the coming chapters by showing the context in which the US armed forces faced the prospect of attracting volunteers and its complexity;

masculinity and the military are closely interrelated, and the AVF commenced in a period when masculinity was in flux, in part because of the military loss in Vietnam. However, while military masculinities were to some degree discredited in the immediate aftermath of that war, militarism—perhaps in some new form or associated with different masculine characteristics—was still a potential way to redeem or reinvigorate American masculinity.

### The Military, Citizenship, and Gender

One reason that the military should be considered a vital subject of study for political scientists is that it has a special relationship both to masculinity and to the nation and citizenship. The military not only stands at the nexus of the domestic and the international, but at the nexus of citizenship and gender, helping to create a gendered conception of citizenship. In the United States, except for the military, every aspect of citizenship, including voting, holding office, and jury duty, is formally accessible to women on the same terms as to men. The military, however, remains fundamentally gendered as masculine because of the exclusion of women from ground combat and the resulting requirement that only young men are obliged to register for Selective Service and a potential draft.<sup>9</sup> The military also institutionalizes a heterosexual idea of citizenship, since homosexuals are barred from serving. This, too, however, is tied to

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<sup>9</sup> The Selective Service System was discontinued during the Ford Administration, but reinstated in 1980. Since then, within 30 days of their eighteenth birthday, young men (including undocumented immigrants who want to safeguard their chances for future US citizenship and benefits) are required to register and remain registered until they are 26. In *Rostker v. Goldberg*, the Supreme Court ruled in 1981 that since the purpose of registration is to create a pool of potential draftees for combat, and since women are barred from ground combat, women can be excluded from the Selective Service System.

gender. The gay ban is in large part about what constitutes proper manhood, and as Cohn (1998) argues, it helps to preserve the masculinizing function of the military.

After the American and French revolutions, the mass army made up of citizens came to replace the mercenary system, and with this democratization of war the nation and the military were linked. In various national contexts, participation in the military has been a requirement of citizenship. The mass citizen army may only come into being at rare moments; in practice, the military may be a separate class from the rest of society. Since the democratization of war, however, the relationship between the people and the military has come to matter, and the appropriate link between a democratic society and the people who defend it is a subject for debate. In the United States, only a small percentage of the population ever dons a uniform, but since the Revolution, Americans have been worrying over the proper relationship among the people, the military, and the state.

The founders of the American republic were committed to the idea of the citizen-soldier as a safeguard against tyranny. The mobilization of citizens to defend the republic, a form of self-rule, would prevent the ills of a standing army, engage the citizen in civic practices, and inculcate the citizen-soldier with the virtues required for responsible citizenship in the republic. Under the Militia Act of 1792, every free, white, able-bodied male citizen was required to enroll in his state's militia.<sup>10</sup> While citizen-soldiers were of questionable military utility and military reforms, beginning with the Dick Act of 1903, nationalized the militias and then transferred men's military obligation

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<sup>10</sup> For a discussion of the development and importance of the citizen-soldier tradition in America, see Snyder, 1999.

from his local community to the nation, the citizen-soldier concept lingered on, even into the All-Volunteer Force.

At the conclusion of the Peace of Paris in September 1783, at a ball to celebrate the establishment of the United States of America, Sarah Livingston Jay, wife of treaty-negotiator John Jay, offered the following toast among others: “May all our Citizens be Soldiers, and all our Soldiers Citizens.” According to historian Linda Kerber (1990), “American men, listening to the toast, knew they were citizens and might be soldiers; [...] American women, however, upon hearing the toast, knew that they had fought for and supported the revolution in many ways but as yet were denied full rights as citizens” (90). The survival of the American republic had depended on the willingness and ability of men to fight: “the connection to the Republic of male patriots (who could enlist) was immediate; the connection of women, however patriotic they might feel themselves to be, was remote” (92). Military service and citizenship were conceptually linked from the beginning of the republic, and since then, various groups—African-American men, women, gays and lesbians—have fought to participate in the military on an equal basis with white men, in order to claim the rights and benefits of both service and of first-class citizenship.

Since the Revolutionary War, fighting in the armed forces has been a way to earn American citizenship, and naturalization has been used as an incentive for aliens to serve. In the US, the welfare state’s beginnings lay in the Civil War pension system, a benefit based on military service (Segal, 1989:80), and through much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, major social benefits, like educational assistance, were tied to military service (ibid.:2-3). The twenty-sixth amendment to the US Constitution, which lowered the voting age to 18, was

justified on the grounds that the young men between eighteen and twenty-one being drafted to fight in the Vietnam War deserved a political voice. In addition to the relationship between service and voting, Americans have presumed that military service makes one more worthy of a public voice, and veterans have particular clout in national security debates. Participation in war is considered to be good preparation for political leadership. According to Charles Moskos (1993), “For at least the first three decades after World War II, military service (or at least a very good reason for having missed it) was practically a requirement for elective office,” though the end of the draft and the unpopularity of the Vietnam War weakened this view. As Sheila Tobias notes, “To be sure, women have made great strides in politics, but they remain handicapped because men have one insurmountable advantage—experience in war—that matters a great deal in politics” (1990:164). Tobias found that whether men participated in popular wars, like World War II, or unpopular wars, like Vietnam, wartime military service has a great deal of political value. Aside from the duty and heroism represented by war service, participation in war, especially a morally questionable one such as Vietnam, leads to “moral ripening” that is a qualification for political leadership. After Vietnam, even prisoners of war, who could be considered unsuccessful warriors, and veterans who protested the war could use their experience as political currency: “While the parameters of heroism may change, the basic phenomenology appears to remain the same: war is the vital playing field, the grooming ground for politics” (ibid.:167).

America entered World War I during a period of activism in the struggle for women’s suffrage. Pro-suffrage women recognized the connection between military service and the rights of citizenship, and many of them took the opportunity opened to

them by the Navy to serve in the Naval Coast Defense Reserve Force, in the hopes that it would bolster their claims for voting rights. In March of 1917, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels received a postcard that made that link:

I am sure your proposal to recruit women in the US Navy will meet with great success. The women in this country are eager to do everything they can to help the government—and they are also anxious to become citizens of the USA. I hope you will help women to get the vote and women will show what they can do. “Women are people.” (Quoted in Ebbert and Hall, 1993:8)

The active role of women in supporting the war, including the work they did in factories, helped them to win support for the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

In the years before President Truman signed Executive Order Number 9981, which declared a policy of racial equality (a policy which was not immediately or easily implemented), African-Americans (African-American men, that is<sup>11</sup>), were at times excluded from service entirely and at times allowed to serve in segregated and/or menial positions. During World War II, civil rights organizations demanded the “right to fight” (Moskos and Butler, 1996:29). This demand was a both a claim to the rights and obligations of citizenship and a claim to the privileges of manhood. African-American men, in asserting a right to fight, were proclaiming their masculinity and their equality to white men.

The literature on citizenship and military service from the past several decades has mainly been concerned with the effect of the end of conscription. Surprisingly, most of this literature ignores questions of gender, although the end of the draft has important

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<sup>11</sup> A small number of Black women were allowed to serve in the Army during World War II.

consequences for gender. State armies do not, as a general rule, draft women.<sup>12</sup>

Conscription ties all males to the military, and makes men, as a group, ultimately responsible for the security of the state. Women may be allowed to volunteer in some form or another, but their service is not required. Ending conscription, so long as both women and men can volunteer for service, breaks the automatic link between masculinity and soldiering. Professional armies allow for the inclusion of greater numbers of women and on more equal terms.

The literature on citizenship and military service frequently expresses concern that service is no longer viewed as an obligation but only a possible economic choice. Commentators fret over the composition of the forces, in terms of socio-economics and race, and over how society is impacted when middle- and upper-class young men don't serve. With the end of the draft, concerns over who participates and issues of civic obligation are a matter of concern, but only in relation to men. That this whole question of civic obligation completely excludes one half of the citizenry not subject to the draft, women, is basically a non-issue. For example, Charles Moskos asks the question "what has been lost" as the end of the draft has led to new attitudes toward service and a differently-composed military:

The answer is simple. Universal military service was the one way in which a significant number of Americans discharged a civic obligation to their nation. If this fact is obvious, its significance has been obscured by a political culture that ignores the importance of individual obligations while virtually enshrining individual rights--possibly to the detriment of our civic health. Universal military service did something else: It brought together millions of Americans who

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<sup>12</sup> Israel is most often pointed to as the exception to this rule. It does draft women, but for a shorter term than men and for non-combat roles only. There are a few other states that draft women, including Eritrea, Libya (for their People's Militia), and Peru. The vast majority of states with conscript armies only draft men.

otherwise would have lived their lives in relative social and geographic isolation. No other institution has accomplished such an intermingling of diverse classes, races, and ethnic groups. (Moskos, 1993)

Moskos sees great value in compulsory military service, but implicitly argues that the participation of women isn't necessary to the achievement of this social good. He talks about "Americans" and "universal" service, without any acknowledgement of the fact that "American" means only American men, and "universal" isn't.<sup>13</sup>

Similarly, in discussing the demise of the actual citizen-soldier (even if the ideal continues), Eliot Cohen paints a picture of the diversity of earlier forces:

The true army of citizen-soldiers represents the state. Rich and poor, black and white, Christian and Jew serve alongside one another in similarly Spartan surroundings—at least in theory. The idea of military service as the great leveler is part of its charm in a democratic age, one of whose bedrock principles is surely the formal equality of all citizens. The voluntary military, by way of contrast, is very rarely representative. To be sure, in the contemporary United States recruiters attempt to maintain some rough balance among ethnic groups, although even here it is clear that minority groups are overrepresented. Recruiters pay no heed, however, to socioeconomic, religious, or other kinds of ethnic diversity in the ranks. That the children of millionaires almost never serve or that a bare handful of Ivy League graduates don a uniform is not even a matter for comment. (2001)

Rich and poor, black and white, Christian and Jew, but not male and female. The concern for diversity and formal equality is, without being acknowledged, only among men. (Elsewhere in the same article, Cohen makes an offhand reference to "the

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<sup>13</sup> Elsewhere in the same essay, he discuss the expansion of women's military roles, advising caution and expressing concern over whether all women would be subject to a combat liability, as all men in the military are, including those in non-combat roles. In a December 2001 exchange in *American Enterprise* about whether the US should re-institute a draft in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks, Moskos is on the pro-draft side. He advocates a demanding civilian alternative-service option, which could include such activities as airport baggage screening, for conscientious objectors and those who wouldn't perform well militarily. Despite the proposed non-military options, the first principle on which he thinks the draft should be based is "Males only, as combat would be a likelihood. Women should be allowed to volunteer as they do now" (Moskos and Korb, 2001:16). Without discussing it, he retains the idea that only men have an obligation to defend their country, and only their contribution is necessary.

inevitably male-oriented world of military service.”) In terms of gender, the All-Volunteer Force, with its greatly increased participation of women, becomes more representative of society, not less, but this isn’t seen to have value, the way that the mingling of various classes of men does. The discussion of women’s participation still centers on their potential liabilities or whether or not they have a right to greater opportunities, not whether they have an equal responsibility, leaving intact the concept of a masculinized citizenship obligation.<sup>14</sup>

The questions of whether citizens/men should be compelled to fulfill a military obligation to the state and of how much the military should “look like America,” in terms of race and class or in terms of gender are part of a larger debate over whether the military, in a democracy, needs to itself be concerned with issues of democracy, citizenship, and citizen participation and civic engagement, or whether it simply needs to protect that democracy from outside threats. James Burk (2002) delineates these two main approaches, which can be associated with Morris Janowitz (1960) and Samuel Huntington (1957), respectively. In Huntington’s view, civilians should decide on the objectives of security policy, but then allow the military to decide autonomously how to fulfill those objectives. Janowitz, on the other hand, was concerned with preserving the citizen-soldier ideal in an age when war no longer requires the participation of the majority of (male) citizens but rather a large, standing professional force. Janowitz believed that military service “demonstrated and enhanced one's citizenship, and fulfilling the obligation [to serve] improved democratic life” and so he argued for a national service program, including military service, that would give (male) youth a

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<sup>14</sup> One attempt to re-frame the issue of women’s participation to one of civic obligation is Snyder, 2003.

chance to serve and participate, and he was also concerned that “professional soldiers continued to think of themselves as citizen-soldiers rather than as mercenaries or just another politically partisan occupational pressure group” (Burk, 2002:11-12). So, “the liberal theory, underwriting Huntington's work, is primarily concerned that civil-military relations preserve the military's ability to protect democratic values by defeating external threats,” while the “civic republican theory, underwriting Janowitz's work, is primarily concerned that civil-military relations sustain democratic values—especially the value of civic virtue—by bolstering civic participation through the citizen-soldier's role” (ibid.:12). So the question becomes whether the military needs to itself advance and embody the values of society. In the era of the AVF, this plays out in debates over whether the military should engage in “social experimentation” with the integration of women and gay people, potentially threatening military readiness (as those in the Huntington camp might put it), or whether a commitment to equality and democratic values requires concern about who participates in the military, whether the issue is the expansion of participation or the racial and socio-economic make-up of the force. It can also lead to questions about how the military should present itself, what picture of service it should project, and what types of people it should attempt to appeal to in its efforts to recruit.

There is political competition over who should serve and what service means—whether there is a right to fight and all groups must have equal access in order to reap the benefits of service, or whether the military (or technically, Congress, acting to protect the military's interests) may put restrictions on service in order to best serve the cause of military readiness. The images that the military branches put forward in recruiting

materials provide some answers to this question through the kinds of people they show and the ways in which they show them. More broadly, the military branches make choices about how to portray military service and the link between service and citizenship, including whether service is specifically gendered, either as masculine or also as potentially feminine, and if so in what forms. The next section of this chapter will describe the inception of the All-Volunteer Force, which forced the service branches to make these choices and to articulate conceptions of military service in recruiting materials.

#### The All-Volunteer Force (AVF)

For much of its history, the US experienced cycles of mobilization and demobilization, with large recruitment efforts and conscription during periods of war, followed by a fairly rapid demobilization to a small peacetime standing force. Between the two World Wars, America fielded an all-volunteer force that was the largest peacetime army in the nation's history up to that point, but that was still small by today's standards; the National Defense Act of 1920 authorized a maximum force of 280,000 for the Army, though enlisted strength remained far below 200,000 until 1940 (Griffith, 1982:22).

After World War II, America's role in the world, the growing Cold-War rivalry, and new technologies, like the advent of nuclear weapons and new dependence on air power, meant that the US needed a larger peace-time standing force than it ever had before. Although the new technologies vastly reduced the number of men needed to wage war, they altered war's time frame. While past conflicts had allowed time for a

small standing force to be built into a mass army, new international challenges and new forms of warfare would require a quick response and a larger force in being. To man that large standing army, except for a period from April 1947 to June 1948, American men were subject to a draft from World War II to 1973. However, while America needed a larger standing force than ever before—more than 2 million men on active duty for most of the period and higher during the Korean and Vietnam conflicts—the changes in warfare also meant that truly mass mobilization wasn't necessary, and only a small portion of the draft-eligible population was actually needed for service. A mass mobilization on the scale of World War II was an unlikely future prospect. Large numbers of draft-motivated volunteers enlisted, in order to exercise control over when they served and to get their choice of service. These volunteers, along with an expanding population of draft-age men, kept draft calls low. (Conscription was more important for motivating enlistments than for actually producing draftees.) Because few conscripts were needed, deferments, for certain occupations, for education, and for family responsibilities, expanded. Because of the deferments and the ability of local draft boards to select inductees, the draft was coming to be seen as inequitable. Based on the shrinking number of call-ups, being called to serve through conscription came to be seen less as an ordinary, expected obligation and more like bad luck. In 1964, when Barry Goldwater was seeking the Republican presidential nomination, he promised to end the draft, and President Johnson ordered the Department of Defense to conduct a study of the draft. If not for the Vietnam War, conscription might have ended in the mid-1960s (Segal, 1989).

During the Vietnam War, call-ups increased, along with opposition to the draft.

After World War II, new technologies required that military personnel meet higher mental aptitude standards. The results of aptitude tests tended to correlate with socio-economic status, meaning that many poor young men were considered unfit for service. The poor who did qualify were more likely to be drafted (and this includes a disproportionate number of African-American men, since African-Americans are disproportionately poor) because they were less likely to be eligible for educational and occupational deferments. Once drafted, poorer inductees were also more likely to be channeled into combat forces, and thus more likely to be wounded or killed, than those with stronger educational backgrounds who were more likely to be given jobs requiring technical skills (*ibid.*). Socio-economic factors may have driven conscription and casualty trends, but there was a perception among African-Americans, who had earlier pursued the right to fight, that they were unfairly bearing the costs of this war. Concern over the unfairness of the draft increased. In 1966, President Johnson appointed a commission to make recommendations on reforming the system, and that same year various other conferences on the draft were also held to consider possible alternatives, including an all-volunteer force. In 1967 and 1968, Congress limited educational deferments, and in 1970, the power to select inductees was taken away from local draft boards and replaced by a national lottery. By 1969, draft calls were beginning to decrease with the “Vietnamization” of the war, which shifted the military burden to Vietnamese forces.

Richard Nixon made a campaign promise to end the draft, and after being elected, he appointed the Gates Commission to develop a plan for instituting a volunteer force. The Gates Commission presumed that a marketplace philosophy, focusing on soldiers’

pay and benefits, could attract recruits (Griffith, 1996:35-36). Many military sociologists were opposed to the idea that economic incentives would be the basis for service. They feared that traditional service values would be undermined, and they argued that if military service comes to be seen as just another job, it will be bad for the military and for society, leading to a mercenary force disconnected from American society and values. Charles Moskos (1982), for instance, was concerned that the military was shifting from an institutional framework to an occupational one. An institution: “is legitimated in terms of values and norms, i.e., a purpose transcending individual self-interest in favor of a presumed higher good. Members of an institution are often seen as following a calling, captured in words like ‘duty,’ ‘honor,’ and ‘country’” (137-138). An occupation, by contrast, “is legitimated in terms of the marketplace [...] Supply and demand rather than normative considerations are paramount” (138). Soldiers in a volunteer force would be motivated by self-interest and feel no sense of identification with the institution and its purposes; the notion of citizen obligation would be undermined.

The Gates Commission rejected such arguments. It claimed that military compulsion undermined patriotism and respect for government more than a force that allowed individuals to freely choose service. Volunteers were not mercenaries and the choice to serve was based on many factors, including a sense of duty; no one had claimed that career officers were mercenaries (Rostker, 2006:79). Nixon accepted the Commission’s findings, and asked Congress to change the law. Congress approved the AVF in 1971. The draft was set to expire in July of 1973, but draft calls had been declining and all of the forces were preparing for the volunteer force, and by January of that year, conscription had ended.

The AVF appeared to be a success in its early years. Military pay was comparable to entry-level civilian wages, and youth unemployment was high, making the AVF an attractive option, despite young people's reservations about the military in the wake of the Vietnam War. During this period, however, the demographics of the military began to change. The Gates Commission had claimed that ending the draft wouldn't change the composition of the force. They were mainly talking about issues of race and educational background. The Gates Commission hadn't even considered the possibility of expanding the recruitment of women. The commissioners assumed that women would continue to make up less than 2% of the military and even discussed replacing many of the positions that women tended to fill, like clerical jobs, with civilian workers to reduce costs (Binkin and Eitelberg, 1986). The volunteer force succeeded in large part, however, due to the increasing participation of African-American men and of women.

According to military sociologist David R. Segal:

With unemployment particularly high among young black males and with the women's movement coming to regard the military as a channel for mobility, enough people were brought in. Contrary to the expectations of the Gates Commission, however, the social composition of the force did change. It became increasingly dependent on the poor, the black, and to a lesser extent, women. (Segal, 1989: 38)

The end of conscription and these demographic shifts had potential ramifications for the relationship between military service and masculinity, and for the specific constructions of gender, and masculinity in particular, that the military branches create and deploy.

The link between masculinity and the military was potentially weakened: women became a more regular part of the force, men were no longer automatically linked to service by conscription, and military service was also less associated with middle and upper-class white males, the group of men which, due to its privileged social position, is most likely

to be associated with hegemonic masculinity. However, the association has deep historical roots, and with the end of both the draft and the Vietnam War, the military would get the chance to rebuild itself and to craft portrayals of itself which could remake the connections between service and masculinity, perhaps on new terms. The differing ways that each of the services attempted to do this will be explored in the chapters to come.

In addition, while the military became less relevant for elites, the military branches began to make a concerted effort to attract other men and to take advantage of their needs and desires, constructing masculine ideals that could be locally hegemonic in the process. The military can attempt to shape both wider cultural conceptions of military service and those of particular groups. In discussing the post-draft relationship between masculinity and the military, it's also important to note that even if only a portion of eligible young men actually enlist, and even if those of the highest socio-economic status are unlikely to consider enlisting, the military can still help to define masculinity in society. The young men who don't join the military will still be exposed to a large amount of recruiting advertising, along with other representations of the military that can impact their understanding of the military and their ideas about masculinity. As noted earlier, men who don't serve may still consume various cultural productions tied to the military (which can include not just books, movies, games, and clothing, but the enjoyment of recruiting commercials), in large part for their associations with masculinity. Even men who resist the military's masculine norms may still use the military as a negative referent, the representative of a culturally dominant idea of masculinity *against* which to define themselves.

Another potential effect of the transition to a volunteer force was that the marketplace model of service embraced by the Gates Commission could impact ideas about masculinity in the larger culture or within targeted groups. The military's role as a standard-bearer of masculinity means that its acceptance of free-market values could help to make the aspects of masculinity related to earning more socially prominent and those tied to collective values less so. In other words, if recruiting materials emphasize individualism, rationality, and career advancement over duty and honor, this may help make masculinity related to those concepts hegemonic. In fact, the service branches have drawn on a variety of masculine attributes, including those associated with individual economic advancement.

Since those early years, the AVF has gone through periods when recruiting faltered, quality dropped, and some have called for a return to conscription. Funding for military pay and benefits has also risen and fallen. In 1996, General Maxwell A. Thurman delineated several distinct eras of the AVF. The first AVF, from 1973-1976, was the period of transition and initial success, and it came to a close with the end of the GI bill. The second AVF, from 1976-1979 was marked at the end by the failure of all the services to achieve their recruiting goals. Military pay and benefits had begun to fall behind those of entry-level civilian jobs, and for several years the scoring system for the Armed Forces Qualifying Test was miscalibrated and a large number of unqualified recruits were allowed into the military, degrading the quality of the force. This period saw calls to declare the AVF a failure and return to the draft. The forces rebounded during the third AVF, from 1979-1983. This period included an increase in military pay and the introduction of the Army College Fund, but also a reduction in the resources

devoted to recruiting. The fourth AVF, from 1983-1991, ended with the fighting of Desert Storm and the beginning of force reductions. Thurman characterized the fifth AVF, the period during which he wrote, as a time of reduced forces, reduced recruiting resources and little advertising, a lower recruiting mission, regional threats, and peacekeeping missions (Thurman, 1996).

In the years after Thurman's analysis, the AVF again faced major recruiting shortfalls. In the late 1990s, all of the forces except for the Marines struggled to meet their recruiting quotas. The recruiting shortfalls were blamed on a number of factors, the most important of which seemed to be a healthy economy and low unemployment rates. Media coverage also attributed recruiting problems to: a drop in the recruitable population of 18-to-24-year olds; the increasing propensity of young people to go to college and the growth of non-military sources of educational assistance; a cohort whose fathers came of age after 1973 when the draft ended, or whose parents may have developed negative feelings toward military service during the Vietnam war; a lack of direction, purpose, and leadership in the armed forces; longer deployments and more work for members of the downsized military; and an erosion of military tradition and changes in military culture, including expanded roles for women and the perception that gays were being permitted to serve under the "don't ask, don't tell" rule.

Discussions of the military's recruiting problems during this period often focused on the military's culture, and whether the military, in integrating women and performing operations other than war, had undercut its war-fighting ethos and abilities and become too soft to attract young men, and possibly also to still be an effective fighting force. The Marine Corps, which continued to meet its recruiting goals as the other services faltered,

was held up as an example for the other services to emulate. The Marine Corps is the smallest branch of the service, it has the smallest percentage of women (six percent), and the fewest jobs open to them. While the recruiting materials of the other three services have often highlighted the tangible benefits of service, the Marine Corps has emphasized challenge, elitism, and self-transformation, using overtly masculine imagery and celebrating war-fighting. While a variety of solutions to the recruiting crisis were posed, including: targeting recruitment efforts and advertising more efficiently; emphasizing service and patriotism, developing more distinct “brand identities” for each of the services, accepting lower quality recruits, shortening terms of service, and changing economic incentives and retirement benefits to better fit with the times, many commentators (e.g. Bonat, 1999; Keene, 1999; Smart, 2000; Strother, 1999) argued that the other services should be more like the Marines and appeal to a masculine, warrior spirit, blaming recruiting problems on a de-masculinization of the other branches.<sup>15</sup>

Some academics took this view as well. Military historian Martin van Creveld (2000) linked recruiting shortfalls to a degradation of the military caused by women. Elliott Abrams, a political scientist and former Assistant Secretary of State, and Andrew J. Bacevich, a political scientist and former Army officer, didn’t blame women for the recruiting trouble, but looked to masculinity as a solution. The two co-chaired a conference on “Citizens and Soldiers: Citizenship, Culture, and Military Service” in

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<sup>15</sup> Though it is beyond the time frame of this study, it is interesting to note that in January 2005, the Marines missed a monthly recruiting goal for the first time in a decade, and have continued to have recruiting problems since then. The Iraq War has dampened Marine and Army recruiting, and all the manliness of Marine Corps ads can’t prevent the branch’s death toll from dissuading young people from joining up. The Navy and Air Force, which aren’t suffering many casualties, have done quite well at recruiting.

2000. Based on the discussion at that conference, they made a number of suggestions (reported in Abrams and Bacevich, 2001), including that the military overtly use claims about masculinity to improve recruiting:

[...] in a society in which male adolescents find it increasingly difficult to discern what it means to be a man or how to become one, we should *promote military service as a rite of passage to manhood*. Young males yearn to leave boyhood behind and to become men. But in a society in which fathers are increasingly absent, in which gender roles have blurred, and in which adolescents increasingly trade activities once thought to be “manly” in favor of becoming mere spectators, opportunities for the individual to demonstrate to himself that he is indeed a man have dwindled. The rigor and purposefulness of military service can offer just the opportunity to do a man’s work, something that the Marine Corps has long recognized and effectively exploited. The other services and above all the Army need to do the same. There are more than enough men out there to fill the services’ needs. [Emphasis in original.]

Brian Mitchell, a strong opponent of women in the military, writing before the late ‘90s problems about the AVF more generally, goes so far as to argue that the military would have no problem meeting recruitment goals if women were excluded from the armed forces, not just from combat-related roles, but entirely. (Like many of the women who have fought for increased opportunities in the military, Mitchell rejects the distinction between combat and non-combat roles as artificial.) He argues that in today’s gender-confused culture, young men would flock to an all-male military, more than enough to make up for the loss of female labor:

The AVF might still exploit the need for young American men to prove themselves, and easily make up the number of women now in service, if it aggressively portrayed itself as a place for men only. By highlighting its integrated aspects and aggressively pursuing young women, however, the AVF is actually working to eliminate any remaining attractions that the military might hold for young men. Recruiting commercials with cute coeds bragging about being ‘airborne’ are guaranteed to turn away men more effectively than they attract women. Men simply do not aspire to be women or to emulate women, and whatever women are, men will seek to be anything other. (Mitchell, 1989:218)

Mitchell implies that military recruiting highlights gender integration, targets young

women, and features them as military personnel. There is a fairly common assumption (Gutmann, 2000; Strother, 1999) that the armed forces, in a bow to political correctness, are using women to represent themselves to the public. As the coming chapters will show, this is not a highly accurate portrait of recruiting advertising. Many of these same commentators who laud the Marine Corps' approach make reference to the slogan, "we're looking for a few good men"; the Marines have occasionally used the phrase in advertisements, but they stopped using it as their regular slogan in 1976. The commentators who still refer to the phrase as the Marines' slogan seem to think it's what it should be. There is sometimes a difference between what the services are doing and what people assume or fear they are doing, and it reveals their anxieties about the links between the military and masculinity.

Those who extol the masculine approach of the Marines may really be bemoaning the decline of the cultural power of a particular form of masculinity and the rising dominance of other varieties (business-related, tied to technology, hybrid forms like Niva's new world order masculinity). There is an idea that the military should remain the bastion of a certain form of masculinity—one whose characteristics include physical strength, aggression, courage, toughness, and a willingness to sacrifice for others which will be rewarded with special privileges—even and especially if that form is no longer dominant outside the military. It is a desire for a masculinity that seems more certain and more truly masculine; it involves nostalgia for a time when masculinity was supposedly more secure and men's prerogatives less endangered by women's demands. The culture wars over the military involve an effort to fix a gender order that has been in flux and to use the military to shore up a version of masculinity under threat. The military branches,

however, need to appeal to young men growing up in the post-Vietnam, post-Women's Movement, post-industrial gender order, and so they draw on a variety of masculine constructions to appeal to a wide range of them and to serve the branches' specific needs.

### Chapter 3: THE ARMY

This chapter examines how the Army has faced the problem of recruiting an all-volunteer force (AVF) in a period when the concept of masculinity—historically a key component of the appeal of military service for young men—was being challenged in the larger culture. In order to see how the Army responded to this “masculinity crisis” in its public representations of soldiering, I collected print advertisements published by the Army in the magazines *Life*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Sports Illustrated* and *Seventeen* between 1970 and 2003 and analyzed the 143 different advertisements I found to determine how the Army represents itself and how it uses ideas about gender in its appeals. I also viewed fifteen television commercials<sup>1</sup> that aired between 1980 and 2003 and two different incarnations of the Army’s recruiting website.

Over the course of the AVF, the Army has frequently made economic appeals, showcasing service as a path to economic security and upward mobility. Army recruiting ads have offered good jobs, technical training, and increasingly, access to professional careers. Army recruiting materials in the second half of the AVF have sometimes forged links between civilian careers and militaristic imagery. In addition to promising the excitement of military action, these ads bring together more traditional forms of military masculinity with newer, business-world forms of masculinity that are gaining prominence in the larger culture. In this way, I would argue, the Army is making a bridge between the older forms of masculinity with which Army service had been associated and forms

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<sup>1</sup> While the print ads were collected in a systematic fashion (see Chapter One), and I know how frequently the service branches chose to publish a given print ad as well as in what publication, this is not the case with the television commercials. Some of the commercials I saw as they were being broadcast, some I found on the Internet, and some were in the collection of the Museum of Television and Radio.

which are becoming hegemonic in the civilian world, which serves both to revitalize Army masculinity, making it seem more up-to-date, and to validate the business world as a source of status and prestige for young men.

The Army has also promised character development and personal transformation, developing a soldiering masculinity that involves young men testing and proving themselves. While this form of masculinity relies on the traditional warrior trope of facing a challenge and demonstrating strength and courage, and it involves displays of weaponry and other visual markers of warriorhood, the Army's version of soldiering masculinity is accessible and personified by "regular guys." As fits a military branch that needs to attract large numbers of recruits, in the Army, manhood seems to be a goal within reach of the average young man. The Army, more so than any other service, has also created many ads—especially those touting specific educational benefits—that could be read as gender neutral. In addition, the Army has presented women the most frequently of any of the services and has gone the farthest in framing them as normal, unexceptional members of the institution, though they are never associated with the still fully-masculinized realm of combat.

This chapter will provide some background material on the Army's culture and how the Army was positioned going into the all-volunteer force, before presenting an analysis of the recruiting materials and the forms of masculinity they construct. It will also examine how the Army genders women's military service in recruiting materials, while giving a brief history of women's participation in the Army.

## Army Culture

Beneath any changes undergone by the military branches with the transition to the AVF, each service has retained central elements of a core culture and institutional worldview. The influential RAND corporation military analyst Carl Builder explored the “enduring personalities” of each of the services. According to Builder:

The altar at which the Army worships is less apparent than the altars for the other two<sup>2</sup> services. That may be because its ideals are more diffuse or variable or subtle. Several consistent themes surface, however when the Army talks about itself: They have to do with the depth of its roots in the citizenry, its long and intimate history of service to the nation, and its utter devotion to country [...] Of all the military services, the Army is the most loyal servant and progeny of this nation, of its institutions and people. If the Army worships at an altar, the object worshiped is the country; and the means of worship are service. (Builder, 1989: 19-20)

The Army is the service branch that sees itself as the most closely tied to the citizenry, however citizenship is defined at any given historical moment. More important than the Army’s self-perception here may be that the Army’s links to citizenship, through the citizen-soldier ideal and the Army’s ties to the militia system, may make it the biggest political target of the armed forces for competition over the meaning of military service or concerns about who serves. Discussions of military service often focus on the Army and soldiers, rather than on the other branches; the Army is the branch most emblematic of military service. It is the biggest service, and it needs to attract the most recruits each year. (The numbers shift depending on the authorized end strength and how many soldiers re-enlist but have been somewhere in the range of 70,000 to 90,000 new recruits each year during the AVF.)

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<sup>2</sup> Builder does not examine the Marines. Although the Marine Corps has a unique service personality, as a part of the Navy, it doesn’t play a strong independent institutional role in defense planning and strategy, his motivating concerns.

Builder also claims that the Army is more concerned with people—how many of them it has and their skills—than with hardware and technology. The Army divides itself into the three traditional combat arms: infantry, artillery, and armor. The three combat arms are a source of pride and identification, but intra-service competition among them is minimal, and the three branches on the whole recognize their dependence on one another. Another division within the Army is more salient in terms of status, power, and promotions. According to Builder: “In the Army, the basic division is between the traditional combat arms (e.g., infantry, artillery, and armor) and all others, who are seen in (and fully accept) support roles to the combat arms” (ibid.:26). This has had a significant effect on the status of women within the Army. The Army privileges the combat arms over supporting roles, and women are prohibited from serving in direct ground combat. Women as a group are excluded from what the Army perceives as its core function and what is certainly its main source of prestige.

Gender integration is still an issue for the Army, as it is for all of the armed forces, but during the AVF, racial relations have been less of a problem. African-American men have fought with the Army in every major American conflict (as well as on the British side in the American Revolution), generally in segregated units under white leadership, often in menial positions, and usually with a great deal of controversy. However, in the years since President Truman ordered the desegregation of the military, the Army has made the greatest strides in achieving integration and equality. Moskos and Butler (1996) characterize the Army as a relative success story in terms of racial relations, in comparison to the larger American culture. According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies:

The Army routinely receives high marks in human relations. Since its slow start in the early 1950s, the Army has become a model for the other services in the successful integration of racial minorities into its ranks and promotion of minority officers. Fully 40 percent of the active Army is composed of minority personnel, and 21 percent of the active Army's officer corps comes from minority populations. (2000:11)

African-Americans have found better opportunity and more of a meritocracy in the military than in the civilian world, and have entered the volunteer Army in disproportionate numbers. In the 1970s, some military observers worried that, as seemed to be the case with integration of neighborhoods, once the Army reached a certain "tipping point" of 30-35% Black, in an occupational version of white flight, young white men would no longer enlist (Nalty, 1986:339). These fears proved to be unfounded—white men's propensity to enlist has had much more to do with their prospects in the civilian economy than with the racial make-up of the force. Recruiting ads regularly depict African-American men, both on their own and as part of groups of soldiers.<sup>3</sup> In recent years, as Hispanics have become a larger share of the American population, the Army has become more concerned with how to reach out to this sector of the youth market<sup>4</sup> (Porter, 2002; Clemons, 2005).

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<sup>3</sup> In my advertising sample, a little more than a third of all the ads that depicted people included an African-American man. The same is not true for Black women. Although African-American women serve in proportionally greater numbers (and in some years greater absolute numbers) than white women, they only appear in a few recruiting ads. Some Army ads will picture a white man, a Black man, and a white woman, as though this in some way covers a set of diversity bases.

<sup>4</sup> Most of this advertising was on cable TV channels aimed at a Hispanic audience, and thus was not a part of my print ad sample. Over the course of the AVF, an individual who appeared as though he might be Hispanic or who was identified by a Hispanic name would occasionally appear in an ad. The "Army of One" campaign ads in my sample included one ad that seemed to directly address Hispanics. In it, Specialist Rafael Sampayo, and Electronic Warfare Specialist/linguist says, "In school, they didn't want me to speak Spanish. They said it would be useless, that I wouldn't get far. They were right. I needed five languages to become what I am."

### The Recruiting Background

The US Army, surprisingly, has a more limited recruiting history than either the Navy or the Marine Corps. This is mainly because for much of US history, a substantial federal force came into being only for specific, brief periods of time. In the early years of the American republic, military service was tied to local militias and state, not federal, government. In 1784, after the Revolutionary War, Congress discharged George Washington's Continental Army, except for "twenty-five privates to guard the stores at Fort Pitt and fifty-five to guard the stores at West Point, with a proportionate number of officers," none of whom could hold a rank higher than Captain (Millis, 1956:46). The states were responsible for the recruiting, training, and arming of their militias, and in times of national emergency, the federal government would call on the states to provide troops, both conscript and volunteer, for a national army. This system created a host of problems during times of conflict, but lasted through the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (though for a period of the Civil War, there was a federal draft). A small, national Army that ranged in size from about 5,000 to 10,000 volunteers manned frontier posts and fought Native American Indians during the periods when the country was generally at peace in the years before the Civil War, and 25,000-35,000 men did so in the period afterward.

From 1919 to 1940, the United States had a peacetime standing Army, manned by volunteers. As the Army began recruiting that force after World War I, it turned to paid advertising to attract recruits. The Army placed ads in the "help-wanted" sections of newspapers, and a typical ad read: "Men Wanted for Enlistment in the U.S. Army from 18-40 yrs. of age for a 3 yr. period with every Opportunity to Earn, Learn, & Travel" (quoted in Griffith, 1982:31). Army posts offered educational and vocational training to

enlistees, including classes in agriculture, mechanical arts, and academic subjects

(ibid.:33). In March of 1920, the War Department launched a major recruiting campaign:

The campaign, patterned after wartime bond rallies, sought to combine patriotism with the functional benefits of army service. In a telegram to all recruiters General Harris said that the campaign would “insure immediate recognition that the Regular Army is not only in theory but in fact a part of the Nation and not a thing apart,” and that the result “will make not only for the welfare of the Army’s lasting benefit, but for the welfare of the nation as a whole.” (Ibid.:37)

The drive failed and the Army learned that patriotic appeals didn’t work well in peacetime—service benefits were the draw (ibid.:38-39).

In the 1920s, the economy was strong and enlisted pay low, and the Army had trouble finding enough recruits (a lesson, perhaps for the critics of the All-Volunteer Force who blamed the recruiting shortfalls of the late 1990s on a degradation and demasculinization of military culture). During that decade, the Army “built athletic facilities, theaters, recreational centers, and, beginning in 1929, improved barracks in an effort to increase service attractiveness,” but it took the stock market crash and Great Depression to solve recruiters’ problems (Griffith, 1979:172). An “A-Board” recruiting poster from 1931 shows the range of inducements that the Army used to attract recruits (reprinted in Mitchell, 1967). Over the course of four panels, a young man and a recruiter talk about the benefits of Army life, next to a series of changing Army posters, as the young man’s suit transforms into a soldier’s uniform. In the first panel, the young man says he’s “always wanted to see more of the world before [he] [settled] down,” next to a poster advertising travel in the Army. The second panel includes a poster that says “Earn and Learn in Army Schools: Qualify for a Better Job!” In the third panel, the recruiter lists the tangible benefits of Army life: “good food, quarters, clothing, and medical attention in addition to pay of \$21 to \$157.50 monthly” while the poster in that

panel says “Retire at Middle Age.” In the final panel, the civilian, now wearing a uniform, shakes the recruiter’s hand and agrees to serve, next to a poster that proclaims “The US Army Builds *Men*.” Travel, education and advancement, pay and benefits, and manhood were all bases of the Army’s recruiting appeal.

In the early 1970s, the US Army once again had to attract recruits to a volunteer, peacetime force. The end of conscription posed the biggest challenge to the Army. Of all the services, the Army was the most reliant on conscripts, it needed the largest number of recruits each year, and it suffered from the worst reputation, even aside from the antipathy generated by the Vietnam War. Military sociologist Charles Moskos reports that:

attitudinal surveys conducted during the Cold War period showed Americans consistently giving highest prestige to the Air Force followed, in order, by the Navy, Marine Corps, and Army. These surveys also found specific stereotypes associated with each of the services: Air Force, technical training and glamour; Navy, travel and excitement; Marine Corps, physical toughness and danger; Army, ponderous and routine. (Moskos, 1970:18)

As the Gates Commission, appointed by President Nixon, studied the creation of an all-volunteer force, the Army quietly conducted its own study of how it could meet its manpower needs in the absence of a draft. The study, known as Project Volunteer in Defense of the Nation, or PROVIDE, uncovered some disturbing news for the Army:

One of the fundamental revelations of the PROVIDE study was the extent to which the Army’s public image had declined. Butler’s group cited surveys which indicated that veterans rated the Navy and Air Force ahead of the Army as the service of preferred enlistment and that the general public and educators ranked the Army last. More troublesome was the discovery that 70 percent of Army veterans advised prospective volunteers to join services other than the Army. Given such attitudes, the study group concluded, rebuilding the Army’s public image was a prerequisite to achieving an all-volunteer force. (Griffith, 1996:22)

The Modern Volunteer Army Program attempted to make life in the services more

attractive, with such changes as relaxed haircut regulations, an end to hated KP (kitchen police) duty, and dormitory-style rooms instead of open barracks, and it tried to highlight those changes in the media. The Army also developed various service options, like training guarantees and delayed entry. In anticipation of the All-Volunteer Force, the Army began advertising heavily in the beginning of fiscal year 1972 (Summer 1971). In addition to the specific pitches being made, the Army tried more generally to rehabilitate its image. To demonstrate that it was changing, the Army adopted the slogan “Today’s Army Wants to Join You,”<sup>5</sup> and ads told potential recruits that the Army “wants to accommodate” them.

### The Recruiting Advertisements

Over the course of the AVF, Army recruiting has followed several different tracks, allowing the Army to appeal to different sectors of the population. While the balance of the types of ads may have shifted as the economy changed or the Army had new benefits or programs it could advertise, each type of ad has recurred during the AVF. All of these categories, which will be illustrated and discussed in detail below, draw on different sets of masculine models and characteristics. A given advertisement may use more than one type of appeal or may not fall clearly into one category or another. In general, however, the ads either follow the economic track, promising economic independence and security or upward mobility and the chance for advanced training or a

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<sup>5</sup> It worked well with target audiences, so the Army began using it despite strong resistance from within the Army itself. On being presented with the theme by advertisers, General Westmoreland asked, “Do you have to say it that way?” and General Palmer recalls, “God, I just wanted to vomit” (quoted in Griffith, 1996:142).

college education (which can provide access to hegemonic forms of masculinity for a working-class population)<sup>6</sup>; or they offer character development and personal transformation, developing a soldiering masculinity that makes reference to traditional warrior traits like strength and courage, but in an accessible, un-aggressive form, softer than that offered up by the Marine Corps; or, less frequently, and mainly in television commercials rather than print ads, they follow a service and patriotism-oriented track, which allows the potential recruit to imagine himself in the traditional role of the protector.

Economic benefits have always been part of the appeal of military service when it has been done on a volunteer basis, and this was certainly the case with the all-volunteer force. In the early 1970s, most ads promoted benefits, money for education, skills training, and good jobs. In addition to emphasizing jobs and benefits, they feature “regular guys” hanging out together. In fact, they make explicit references to “the guys.” Many show smiling, approachable young men in civilian clothes. Some of the ads from this period that reflect this approach read as follows:

“Now the Army starts you at \$268.50 a month. And you may not even have to spend it.”

“We’ve got over 300 good, steady jobs.”

“We’ll pay you \$288 a month to learn a skill.”

“The job you learn in the Army is yours to keep.”

“Lots of people have jobs we taught them.”

“Would your son get more out of college 3 years from now?”

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<sup>6</sup> A benefits-based appeal isn’t by definition masculine. However, many of the economic-track ads carry a masculine subtext, either in terms of the way the promise of economic advancement is framed or through other visual and textual markers, like references to “the guys.”

“Some of the best college freshmen are veterans.”

“Mike, Leroy, Rocky, Vince and Bunts are taking the Army’s 16-month tour of Europe. Together.”

Throughout the 1970s, some portion of the ads published talk about specific benefits, like the “Project Ahead” program which allows soldiers to attend college while they serve and have credits they earn on post or at a local college transferred to the school of their choice, or about jobs and skills training. These ads show soldiers doing various kinds of work, and most of these ads also make some mention of less tangible perks like challenge or pride. The Army is presented as a place for a young man to get his start in life by developing his character and learning a skill or getting ready to go to college. The Army is a place to become a man, but not in the sense of an initiation rite, more in the sense of growing up, becoming responsible, gaining an economic foothold, and maturing.

While most of the ads at the inception of the AVF focused on benefits and economics, a small number of ads from the early 1970s, and more from the mid-1970s, use more overtly masculine enticements and fall into the character development/soldiering masculinity track I identified. An ad from 1973 mentions the Army’s new Adventure Training program. It pictures an expanse of desert, with brush and a cattle skull in the foreground and mountains in the background, next to the heading: “You get 12 matches, a knife, some twine, and 3 days to enjoy yourself.” The ad promises an exciting adventure that allows a soldier to test himself, though, it’s important to note, the ad makes it clear that this type of adventure is an option, not a requirement. (It’s another way the Army is being accommodating; this isn’t the Marine Corps.) An ad from the same period focusing on Airborne says “When you jump, it’s just you,” and it

talks about “the jolt in your gut.” Another ad features the M60-A1 Tank, under the title “Think Enormous,” contrasting the size and power of the tank with a small, gas-efficient car.

In several ads from the mid-1970s, the Army appears as a place to serve, be challenged, and prove oneself. Basic training is presented as “8 weeks of physical and mental conditioning that’ll push you to limits you never thought you could reach.” Another ad warns recruits that “The Army offer reads well, but it doesn’t come easy”; to be soldiers they’ll need “intelligence, courage, discipline, teamwork, pride in self and love of country.” A third ad from this period refers to the pleasures of testing oneself against the Army’s heavy equipment:

Step on the throttle. And 750 horsepower jumps to your hand. Ahead is a 60° gradient of mud and rocks. Although your stomach wants to bail out, you’re ready. You’re riding in an M60-A2 tank. 54 tons of armored steel. Months of training, as rugged as the Texas terrain you’re rumbling through, have put you here. Smack in the middle of our proving grounds. When you make it, you’ll be a proud, proven member of Armor.

These ads promote a warrior masculinity, with their references to physical challenges, courage, and ruggedness, and, unlike the ads promoting benefits, with the exception of what appears to be a mother at her son’s graduation from Basic Training, they only show men. The soldiering masculinity on offer, however, isn’t extreme or intimidating. The “Think Enormous” and “12 Matches” ads both have a lighthearted tone, and the “Step on the throttle” ad uses explicitly masculine language and pictures two men in a tank, but the men, while militarized, don’t look fierce—they are smiling at the camera.

In the late 1970s, the Army ran a series of ads in which a soldier reflects on a

word. Those words include “Challenge,” “Country,” “Decision,” “Drive,” “Direction,” “Discipline,” “Fighter,”<sup>7</sup> “Growing,” “Honor,” and “Skill.” Most of them show men in fatigues in an active role, performing some task. All of them also feature a small paragraph in the upper right corner entitled “Pay & Benefits.” These ads talk about a variety of intangible benefits that come from serving in the Army, mainly having to do with personal growth, accomplishment, and character development, though a few of them (like “Skill” and “Europe”) are focused on tangible benefits. These ads combine approaches: some of the imagery and language offers a soldiering masculinity while they also include an economically-based appeal.

By the late 1970s, however, entry-level military pay began to lag behind civilian pay, and in 1976, the GI bill (an educational benefit) ended. The military had trouble meeting its recruiting goals (in 1979, the services were short 20,000 recruits, 7% of their target), and the quality of male recruits became a concern (Segal, 1989: 39). Challenge and personal development were not enough to make potential recruits sign contracts under the highly unfavorable economic circumstances. After the recruiting failures of the “hollow Army” of the late 1970s, the Army developed a research program on the attitudes of young Americans, involving N.W. Ayer, the Army’s advertising agency, the RAND Corporation, the Department of Defense’s Youth Attitudinal Tracking Survey, the Army Research Institute, and the Military Academy at West Point (Thurman, 1996:60).

In 1981, the Army switched its slogan from “Join the People Who’ve Joined the Army” to “Be All You Can Be.” N.W. Ayer also created several alternative campaigns, based on its research. In addition to “Be All You Can Be,” the agency offered the

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<sup>7</sup> This ad is not about combat. A boxer discusses fulfilling his goals.

slogans: “The Advantage of Your Age—Join the Army,” “Join Tomorrow’s Army Today,” and “Army—We’ll Show You How” (Thurman, 1996:60). The Army introduced the slogan in a TV commercial. The debut TV ad is very slick, with constantly shifting images and a variety of camera angles, backed by a soundtrack featuring electric guitar. The ad shows a young, white, blond, man, in the final stages of putting on his dress uniform, lightly polishing a boot, buttoning his jacket, and adjusting a shining belt buckle, as details of the uniform are interspersed with shots of the soldier’s face and a flag flashing over the screen. A voice intones:

To most people, this is just a uniform, but to me, it’s something more. Every time I put it on, it makes me feel better and stronger than I was yesterday. When I’m in this uniform, I know no limits. You’ve got to see the pride in my mom’s eyes or the way my friends look up to me. But none of that matches the satisfaction I feel inside. That’s the pride of being a soldier in the US Army.

Then the voice of an announcer asks if the listener is “interested in wearing this uniform?” and explains some of the benefits, including college money or an enlistment bonus. While the announcer speaks, the viewer sees shots of a young white woman and a young black man in uniform, tanks rolling, parachutists jumping out of a plane, helicopters, and soldiers climbing a net, paddling a small boat, and creeping along in combat gear. At the end, we hear the voices of the three individual soldiers featured, saying that the Army can “bring out the best of what’s inside you,” before the announcer says “be all you can be.” The ad mentions some of the new tangible economic benefits of service the Army could offer—a key factor in the rebounding of the AVF in the early 1980s—but, as fit the new slogan, it put more emphasis on development and improvement of the self. The ad uses militaristic imagery, emphasizing the military aspects of Army life, not other potential types of work soldiers do, and the focus of the ad

is a strong, handsome young man, looked up to by his friends.

Another TV commercial, from 1983, that's part of this strand of soldiering masculinity shows a young African-American man making a parachute drop with his unit. The soldiers collect their gear and then enjoy breakfast; the featured soldier greets the large man who had pushed him out of the airplane at the beginning of the ad with a cheerful "Hey First Sergeant, good morning." A voice-over announces "In the Army we do more before 9 a.m. than most people do all day." The Army's new jingle plays over most of the ad, with lyrics about "stretching out," having a "future to find," "reaching," and "growing."

While these ads offer a personal growth and development that's directly tied to soldiering, other ads from the period follow the economic track. A 1982 TV commercial shows a conversation between a father and son about the son joining the Army. A young man in a letter jacket talks to his father as the older man works in his TV repair shop. The father expresses some concern when the young man says he's joining the Army, because he thought the son was going to go to college and become an electrical engineer. The son says that he's still going to be an engineer; he'll be learning about electronics in the Army, and the Army College Fund will help pay his tuition, so that the son can help the father out for a change. The commercial ends with the father's acceptance and a hug. The Army is going to give the young man upward mobility, raising him from his TV-repair roots into engineering, and letting him do it independently, without having to rely on his father. Here, the Army is offering economic advancement to working-class young men, with a subtle but distinct masculine undertone, communicated through the framing of the young man as an athlete, the machinery in the shop, and, most importantly, the

emphasis on the father-son relationship. The Army gives the son independence from his father, and it enables him both to gain his father's approval and to rise above him in social class.

The Army had new educational benefits to advertise, like the Army College Fund, the New Army College Fund and the New GI Bill Plus, and in the print ads, it also returned to an emphasis on job training. Unlike the campaign of the early AVF, however, this time the Army was specifically marketing interesting, exciting job skills (as opposed to just a good trade) and advanced technology. These job opportunities included "96 Bravo," also known as intelligence, "one of the biggest mental challenges the Army offers," as well as "98 Golf" or signal intelligence, which is a soldier who "translates and analyzes foreign radio communications." The soldiers in these ads are all young men (with one exception, discussed in the section on women below) wearing battle dress uniforms (camouflage) or in a few cases, a service uniform, pictured with or using some type of military equipment, and they are all smiling, projecting competence, accessibility, and friendliness.

Some of the ads in this series which appeared in *Popular Mechanics* but not in *Life* or *Sport Illustrated* focused on the maintenance of military hardware, such as aircraft structural repair (68 Golf), avionics mechanics (35 Kilo), and helicopter repair (67 Victor), perhaps reflecting the idea that readers of that publication would be likely candidates for jobs that feature advanced technology and are also based on the traditional, blue-collar masculine skill of repairing machinery. Other ads that appeared in *Popular Mechanics* later in the 1980s also featured high-tech military hardware, and forge a link between the fighting prowess of the military and technical skills needed to keep the weapons working.

For instance, one ad shows a photo of a helicopter under the title “the Army has the fiercest helicopter in the world,” along with a mechanical drawing of the same helicopter with its weapons systems labeled and the tag, “here’s what’s in it for you.” The ad promises: “It can see in the dark. And attack without being seen. Rain or shine, it can strike like lightning. It’s fast, mean, and smart. But the Apache attack helicopter doesn’t fly by itself. It needs trained experts to keep it at its most ferocious. You can be one of those experts.” The ad features the technician, not the pilot, as the necessary human element. Not only does the ad indicate that the soldier will have expertise, it associates that technical expertise with military ferocity, offering the readers of *Popular Mechanics* a masculinity tied both to technical skill and martial strength. The ads for these technical jobs in particular combine elements of the economic draw, with the Army promising good technical jobs and advanced training to people who might otherwise be mechanics, with a special military slant that imbues these jobs with a sense of power, importance, and military muscle.

In the mid- and late-1980s, the Army published both ads that featured the upward mobility of college and skills training, with the promise that the Army will help soldiers direct their interests and decide what they want to do, and ads that featured the character development and, implicitly, transformation into manhood that comes with facing challenges and testing oneself mentally and physically (development that will, incidentally, also help a soldier succeed in the world). For instance, in one ad, a member of a Ranger battalion explains that “If you can succeed as a Ranger, you’re bound to succeed in life,” because Rangers face mental challenges like overcoming fear, and they must train hard physically so that they can “move faster, go further, work harder.” One

of the ads in this series is notable for featuring a woman instead of a man. SP4 Michelle Kowalski of Signal Intelligence declares, “I thought I could test myself here. But I’ve practically reinvented myself.” The Army offered a challenge and took her on an “inner journey to [her] independence,” letting her “grow up—all the way up—and find out what [she’s] made of.” Here, as will be discussed further below, women, too, are given the chance to “be all [they] can be,” and access to some traditionally masculine behaviors— independence, the chance to find out what one’s made of, to test and challenge oneself.

This theme of character development was generally linked to men, however, and to specifically martial images, and it continued throughout the 1990s. Images of soldiering are linked to characteristics like “adventure, pride and confidence.” A photo of soldiers rappelling down a rock face carries the headline “Meet the Greatest Challenge of Them All. Yourself.” Another ad promises: “You’ll be the one others look to. You will be a leader.” Soldiers who drop out of a helicopter straight into water “swim in the deep end,” with all the mastery that implies. These ads further developed the theme of soldiering masculinity grounded in self-development and the transformation of one’s character.

The other major trend of the 1990s, one that I think is particularly significant for conceptions of hegemonic masculinity, was the linking of militaristic imagery to the idea of professional success. Many print ads combined a textual emphasis on civilian careers, or, in a few cases, educational attainment, with explicitly martial visual references, such as camouflage-print backgrounds, weaponry, and soldiers in battle dress, often captured in a moment of action. One such ad is headlined, “before you start your career, it pays to learn the ropes” and goes on to claim that attributes sought by employers, like “Making

decisions,” “Handling responsibility,” and “Working with others” are developed in the Army. The accompanying picture is of several soldiers dangling on ropes hanging from a helicopter. Several of these ads mention national surveys about the traits businesses look for. One calls the Army a “management training program that’s been endorsed by hundreds of American companies.” An ad that appeared several times in the mid-‘90s says “the best place to start a business career isn’t always in business.” This phrase captions a picture of a man in battle dress in mid-air, leaping from one giant boulder to another, holding a rifle above his head, his mouth open in a shout. Several TV commercials also link civilian business-world success or educational attainment to imagery of military action. In one of the ads the Army broadcast during the summer of 2000, soldiers with camouflage face-paint rise out of the water with their rifles aimed in front of them; they ride a small watercraft into the open back of a helicopter, while the voice-over intones: “Someday, at a job interview, they’ll ask, ‘do you work well under pressure?’ Try not to laugh.” Masculinized, militaristic adventure is combined with civilian job prospects.

A few of the print ads specifically mention high-tech training, or working with technology from the future, and they indicate that the recruit will be qualified for jobs requiring technical skills. Most, however, are looking for recruits to fill positions, like combat-oriented jobs, with no clear civilian counterpart. The Army is promising that these jobs will also lead to civilian-world success. Although he won’t have learned a specific skill, the soldier will be prepared, because of the traits he’s acquired, for the corporate world (which may lead to greater prestige and more money than training in a particular technical field could, though the Army doesn’t say this, needing the technical

workers as well). These ads promise the excitement of military action, but they seem to recognize that while excitement and adventure are appealing, they may not be enough for a young man who would like to be able to compete in the business world and who looks to that world for models of status and success. (Young men who are mainly interested in the combat aspects of service and see them not just as a type of adventure but as markers of status and success in and of themselves and an end in themselves may be more likely to join the Marine Corps.) Thus, these ads bring together more traditional forms of military masculinity, with their imagery of combat action, with newer, business-world forms of masculinity that had been gaining prominence in the larger culture; they conflate martial and corporate masculinities.

While most Army recruiting followed the two tracks discussed so far (economic and personal transformation) during the AVF and particularly in the 1990s, alongside the melding of the martial and the professional that the Army was promulgating, there was a third strand to the Army's approach: a patriotic appeal to service that put the soldier in the traditionally masculine role of the protector or defender. As both feminist Jean Bethke Elshtain (1987) and anti-feminist Brian Mitchell (1989) would agree, serving as a protector of women (or of an idea of home or a set of values represented by women) and earning or demonstrating one's manhood by doing so are fundamental motivations for going to war. The soldier-as-protector theme is most directly exemplified in an early-1990s TV commercial entitled "Freedom Isn't Free." In this commercial, scenes of martial action—including soldiers (all male) in tanks, in the rain and the mud, running with rifles, and dropping out of helicopters—are interspersed with shots of civilians—including kids getting on a school bus, a couple sitting on a car, a pregnant woman, boy

scouts, a wedding, a boy in a football uniform, old men at a diner, guys playing basketball, a little girl with her hand over her heart like she's pledging allegiance to the flag—and scenes of a farm, a flag being raised, hands touching the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and the Statue of Liberty. In the background plays a song with these lyrics:

I'm from a town, where things are as good as they come, and it's pictured in my mind just as clear as the midday sun. Now I'm out here in the darkness and the rain is coming down, never was like this in my hometown. My hometown is not like this, but that's all right with me. See I'm out here for my hometown, 'cause freedom isn't free. We walk through the wind, we move through the rain, we ride the skies above to make this world a better place for the ones we love. And freedom, oh freedom, I'd gladly pay the price, 'cause you can't have your freedom without sacrifice. My home time is not like this, but that's all right with me. See I'm out here for my hometown, 'cause freedom isn't free.

This song lays out the protector role explicitly. The men suffering in the mud and wielding weapons make the idyllic American life possible.

Other TV commercials carried this same theme, though some of them pictured a few women as soldiers along with the men (generally not doing anything that appeared combat-oriented, though they might be standing in formation or marching). These ads tend to alternate between footage of soldiers, usually dramatically lit to help them appear heroic, with shots of civilians or idealized scenes of civilian life; often, the civilians form a literal appreciative audience at a parade. There may be stirring music in the background. In one commercial from the summer of 2000, the voices of soldiers intone a few of the lines from the soldier's creed, intertwined with the voices of individual civilians praising and thanking the troops. They say: "You are my brother"; "You are my sister"; "You are brave"; "And full of courage"; "You're my son"; "You are my daughter"; "You're a peacekeeper"; "You stand tall"; "You make me proud"; "You keep your promises"; "You keep me safe"; "You are my hero"; "You keep freedom alive."

This 2000 version of the ad includes references to women and to peace-keeping, but still frames soldiers as heroic protectors, and thus implicitly as part of the masculine protector tradition.

This type of ad appeared much less frequently than the others, but it offered a distinct variant of soldiering masculinity. One print ad in my sample from the late 1970s and one TV commercial from 1987 called on the idea of the soldier as a defender in the Cold War context—both of them picture a soldier in Berlin. The soldier in the print ad talks about looking over at the “other side” at Checkpoint Charlie, which “gives a soldier a very clear sense of his duty—which in [his] opinion is to protect certain beliefs and a way of life.” The rhetoric and imagery of the soldier as protector, however, is more fully developed after the 1991 Gulf War, which seemed to re-invigorate or re-legitimize the idea that the American soldier plays this role, allowing recruiters to make use of it.

In addition to print ads and television commercials, in the late 1990s, the Army began to utilize the Internet as a recruiting tool. In the year 2000, the Army’s website, [www.goarmy.com](http://www.goarmy.com), was built around the “TEAMS” concept: Training, Education, Adventure, Money and Service. The section on training links the military and civilian job markets, focuses on technology, and makes occasional references to the excitement of combat roles. The Army claims that:

High-tech training makes our soldiers more marketable in an information-based society. Much of it is either directly transferable to a civilian career, or builds character traits that employers are looking for. So, basically, wherever a soldier wants to go in life, he or she can get there from here.

The page goes on to describe several specific occupational areas, including aviation, air defense, infantry, medical, armor, artillery, signal corps, and chemical. The description of infantry encourages the idea that we are moving into an age when the infantry soldier

is above all a technologist:

Soldiers toting M-16s, crouched in foxholes, shivering in the rain...that's the Hollywood image that probably comes to mind when you think of the Infantry. The truth is, today's Infantry soldiers are smart and very well trained. They use hand held computers to collect and relay data about their positions and that of enemy units to commanders miles away, all in near real-time. And as we draw closer to the 21<sup>st</sup> century and technology makes its way further into the field, infantry soldiers will be even better trained...for careers in the civilian world. Before long they will carry powerful laptops in their packs that will pinpoint positions and perform equipment diagnostics. Even the weapons they carry will be computerized.

Air Defense Artillery soldiers sound a lot more like warriors. They “venture where the action is—up alongside our battle tanks” and they “prowl the battlefield in a Humvee-mounted Avenger, ready to unleash lethal Stinger missiles against intruding aircraft.”

The air defense occupational specialty offers up “a world of excitement and a crucial role to play on new millennium battlefields.” In all of the four basic areas (Combat Arms, Combat Support, Combat Service Support, and Health Services) however, the website notes how skills in each specialty can be transferred to the civilian world, or where there isn't a direct correspondence, how employers would appreciate the traits acquired.

Military service can either be understood in terms of advanced technology and success in the information-based economy or in terms of the excitement and adventure that can be linked to combat and to soldiering masculinity.

While adventure (the “A” in TEAMS) comes generally from “facing new challenges, being awed by their magnitude and overcoming them,” the website gives the specific examples of Basic Training, which all recruits will experience, Infantry, Army Rangers, Airborne, Air Assault, and Parachute Rigger. The education page describes several educational programs available to recruits, and the money page talks about bonuses and benefits. The final component of TEAMS, service, doesn't receive much

attention—it only merits three paragraphs. Those three paragraphs, however, frame the soldier as a protector, who “stand[s] between our nation and anything that threatens its freedom” and is “the one the nation turns to in times of need.” The brief section also talks about tradition, about the code of “Duty, Honor, Country,” and about badges, medals, and insignia, which “remind soldiers of the values their unit holds sacred, the victories it has won and the pride that comes with serving.” With its briefness, and its bringing together of so many broad concepts with so little discussion or explanation of them, this page implies that the job/benefits/economics and excitement and adventure themes are what service is really about.

By the end of the 1990s, the Army, along with the Navy and Air Force, were struggling to meet recruiting quotas. In fiscal year 1999, the post-Cold War troop level reductions, which had masked recruiting problems from 1993 to 1998, came to an end. The Army had failed to meet recruiting missions, but these failures were “forgiven” in terms of mission requirement numbers by applying them to the annual reductions required by the drawdown (Hauk and Parlier, 2000). In 1999, the Army’s recruiting goal was 74,500 soldiers; it fell short by 6,290.

In January 2001, in an effort to turn around the recruiting situation, the Army radically altered its public face when it retired “Be All You Can Be” and rolled out a new advertising campaign, created by Leo Burnett USA, built around the slogan, “An Army of One.” The Army hoped to counter the perceptions of young people that soldiers are, as an Army public relations official put it, “nameless, faceless people in green uniforms crawling through mud” (Leo, 2001; 13). The Army wanted to encourage the idea that young people will have the chance to be a part of something larger than themselves,

while still retaining their individualism. Although Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera claimed that the campaign would de-emphasize benefits, the Army also coined a secondary slogan, “212 different ways to be a soldier,” which refers to the number of training specialties which are potentially open to recruits. In order to enhance its brand identity, the Army also created a new logo, a white star outlined in gold and black.

In the debut TV commercial, a soldier jogs in the desert as the voiceover narrates:

I am an army of one. Even though there are 1,045,690 soldiers just like me, I am my own force. With technology, with support, with training, who I am has become better than who I was. And I'll be the first to tell you the might of the US Army doesn't lie in numbers. It lies in me, Corporal Richard Lovett. I am an army of one, and you can see my strength.

The ads appeared on the NBC sitcom “Friends,” Fox’s “The Simpsons,” and WB’s “Buffy the Vampire Slayer,” as well as on cable stations MTV and Comedy Central. The bulk of the Army’s TV advertising had traditionally been broadcast during sporting events, and during football games in particular. By debuting the ads on “Friends,” the Army hoped “to help broaden its audience and also shake off its stodgy male-only image” (Dao, 2001). The Army also bought airtime on Spanish-Language TV networks Univision and Telemundo. Several of the advertisements in the campaign—which use real soldiers instead of actors—feature soldiers from a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds. Corporal Lovett of the first TV ad comes from a Panamanian and Native American background (Dao, 2001).

The new slogan met with a great deal of derision. An editorial in the *VFW, Veteran's of Foreign Wars Magazine* criticized the slogan on the grounds that “[d]efying logic, it makes no appeal to the foundations of service: camaraderie and patriotism” (VFW, 2001). (Of course the “Be All You Can Be” slogan was based not on

camaraderie or patriotism, but on self-development, putting the focus on what the Army could do for the recruit more than what the recruit could do for his country.) Critics pointed out that the military is based on group work and unit cohesion, not individuality (Derbyshire, 2001, Garfield, 2001a). John Leo of *US News & World Report* complained about the new campaign's (and along with it, the Army's) de-emphasizing of masculinity, in contrast to the Marines' approach. He claims that the decision to debut the ad on "Friends" instead of during the Super Bowl was not based on the age range of the viewers of each, but on another reason:

The Super Bowl features macho males, while the Clinton administration has been working for a gender-fair, androgynous Army that seems to downplay aggressiveness and bravery as too macho. (Even weapons may carry a new stigma. So far, no soldier has been shown carrying a gun in the "Army of One" ads.) Meanwhile, the Marines, who have no trouble meeting their recruitment goals, keep stressing the old values. The Marines' current TV ad seems to like the end of a video game. A man with a sword slays a monster made up entirely of fire and is rewarded by being turned into a marine. But viewers have no doubt that the Marines demand struggle and readiness for combat, as opposed to nation building or international social service. (Leo, 2001)

Despite this criticism, the ads in the campaign show no softness. The print ads use a dark visual palette and are framed in the stark black and gold of the new star logo. And while most of the ads show the head and shoulders of a soldier, some do show weapons. One ad from the summer of 2001 shows the upper body of a soldier, identified in small print at the top of the page as Sgt. Joseph Patterson, Enlisted Liaison Operational Forces Interface Group. He is encased in body armor, his face obscured by a helmet, holding a rifle. It is a stark image in shades of gray and black, without any text infringing on the image. Small print along the side of the photo says: "What you see is a Soldier system that gives me 360 vision in pitch black. Makes me invisible to the naked eye. Lets me walk up a mountainside. And run in a desert. You've never seen anything like

me. But don't worry. They haven't either. I AM AN ARMY OF ONE. And you can see my strength." It's an image of a faceless, impenetrable military machine that presents a technologized, warrior masculinity, and it's more hard-edged and aggressive than most of the ads in my sample. There is a second version of the ad that shows Sgt, Patterson, viewed from below, in an action shot, leaping with his gun pointed in front of him. Other ads show a Bradley armored vehicle "blasting through a sandstorm" and special forces soldiers in snowy terrain. A minority of "Army of One" ads show a warrior masculinity (and one that, if anything, is harder than earlier versions used by the Army), but it is still one strand of the Army's approach.

Some ads in the campaign seem like a clear continuation of the character development theme, with taglines like: "Most job training teaches you how to make something. Mine taught me what I'm made of" and "This uniform didn't change me. Earning the right to wear it did." Other ads include a description of the pictured soldier's specialty. These may include advanced skills that seem sophisticated, implying high-level, important work. One ad that specifically mentions the Special Forces shows three soldiers in free fall, with text along the top stating "The HALO jump wasn't the hard part. Knowing which Arabic dialect to use when I landed was." This ad does not feature "aggressiveness and bravery," as John Leo complains, but it does feature a more subtle masculinity, that involves mastery of difficult intellectual skills, as well as taking for granted the physical prowess and courage required to jump out of an airplane. Another ad shows the face of a young woman identified as Specialist Tiffany Komarek of Military Intelligence. Small print along the side of the page says:

Straight out of the Army language school, I joined a Tactical Analysis Team at the American Embassy in Bolivia. There I was—my first year in—working with

the DEA on a National Security case reporting straight to the Pentagon. I AM AN ARMY OF ONE. And *who I am* is better than *who I was*. (Emphasis in original)

Here, the jobs aren't directly related to civilian-world success, but are presented as interesting, challenging, and even prestigious in and of themselves.

Although the campaign faced a lot of criticism, its debut was considered highly successful—the Army recruited its yearly quota a full month early (shortly before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001). There was a downturn in the economy, which generally boosts military recruiting, but the Army claimed that the timing meant that the improvement in recruiting couldn't be attributed to the economy. There is usually a time lag before a rise in unemployment is reflected in recruiting (Teinowitz, 2001).

The new ad campaign also included a re-design of the Army's website. The new site reflected the aesthetic of the Army of One campaign, and along with information on Army life and Army careers, it included several personal stories from individual soldiers and video segments following recruits through basic training (research had shown that many potential recruits fear basic training). The site included downloadable wallpaper—pictures to use for the background of a computer desktop—each of which featured a single stark image, including a parachutist, a tank, and a helicopter, with slogans such as “Become Your Own Force,” “You Can See My Strength,” and “16,600 lbs of Anti-Gravity.” The website presented these images of power, but it also offered up several profiles of recruits talking about why they decided to enlist, what they hoped to get out of the Army, and their concerns about basic training. The personalization of the Army experience through these individual soldiers and their hopes and fears makes the hard images in the wallpaper seem achievable.

Along with a more interactive website, the Army's revamped recruiting strategy

included the development of a highly sophisticated video game, called “America’s Army,” available for free online ([www.americasarmy.com](http://www.americasarmy.com)). The Navy and Air Force have also provided games on their websites, but these are fairly simple, small-scale games, while “America’s Army” is a long-form game to which players can devote hours. The game, which debuted on July 4, 2002, includes a role-playing basic-training segment called “Soldiers: Empower Yourself” and a combat segment called “Operations: Defend Freedom,” which allows various players to engage in virtual warfare together over the Internet. The game includes highly realistic details, particularly in terms of how the weapons look, sound, and function. (The game, however, does not aim for realism in the depiction of killing itself—deaths are indicated only by a red splotch) (Hodes and Ruby-Sachs, 2002). According to a description of the game in *The Nation*, “There are four combat missions included in the ‘Recon’ version of ‘Operations’: defend the Alaskan oil pipeline against terrorist saboteurs, safeguard an enemy prisoner of war, raid a terrorist training camp and cross a bridge held by enemy forces” (Ibid.). The Army updated and expanded that “Operations” game into “Special Forces,” in which “players attempt to earn Green Beret status by completing individual and collective training missions drawn from the Special Forces Assignment and Selection (SFAS) process” (<http://www.americasarmy.com/intel/features.php>).

In a “Frequently Asked Questions” section, the website claims that the game is not just focused on combat and is not about killing. However, the game’s characters are all combat soldiers of one kind or another, and much of the game seems to be about training for combat and learning to use weapons. The website lists the possible roles a player can fill in the game, assuming that he or she passes the virtual training required.

The characters pictured on the “Squad Roles” are all portrayed as men. The skills, weapons, and role of each squad member are described, and each description contains a link to a description of the job on goarmy.com, the Army’s recruiting website, merging the characters in the game with real Army soldiers. All of the squad roles in the game, with the exception of medic, are marked “closed to women” on the recruiting website.

The “America’s Army” website includes an extensive collection of images (screen shots) from the game in a video gallery. The gallery includes groups of photos from 27 different scenarios, such as “Blizzard,” “Oasis,” “Village,” “Camp MacKall,” and “Rifle Range.” In all of the photos in all of the scenarios, the only ones that show female characters are in the “Combat Medic” section. These female characters are not players in the game, but characters that the players interact with, and they include a female instructor, female medical personnel, and a female receptionist, whom the players are told not to bother on their way out. While women may certainly play the “America’s Army” game, the game focuses on male characters and glorifies combat soldiers.

The video game medium itself may affect its audience quite differently than other marketing tools used by the Army, such as print ads or television commercials. Cultural anthropologist Charles Piot describes some of the various theories about video games and violence, including this common view:

some scholars suggest that the bodily violence of video games performs the same role that scatological humor has long performed in boys’ culture generally—allowing maturing males to explore what it is like to live in masculine bodies and to reject maternal constraint. Moreover, the ‘phallicism’ of the characters—the weaponry that appends itself to and extends, often doubling the size of, the bodies of its predominantly male protagonists—is seen as providing a form of identification for an otherwise emasculated male suburban youth deprived of the old socializing institutions. (Piot, 2003:353)

This raises the question of whether violent video games are in and of themselves a source

of masculine identification for young men, whether playing them gives the players a feeling of manliness or masculine bodily power, which the Army can then tie directly to soldiering through its video game. Piot himself, based on conversations with teenage informants, understands video game violence in terms of “bodies and agency”:

the body is experienced as detachable/combinatory and porous rather than bounded and whole, and the self as ‘intensity’—and site of intense action—rather than as ‘emotion.’ Living in an increasingly technologized cyborg culture where the boundary between human and machine becomes ever more blurred, these games play with the border not only between self and other but also between one type of self and another. In so doing, they offer players an opportunity to explore new subjectivities they find exciting and enhancing and they enable a re-imagining of human possibility and action in a post-contemporary world. (Ibid.: 361)

In this case, the “re-imagining of human possibility and action” is linked to a figure that the player could one day inhabit in the non-virtual world, the US Army soldier. The pleasure of video game combat, of the melding of self with powerful, destructive (phallic) machines, is linked with the real-world role of soldiering.

Having described and analyzed Army recruiting over the course of the AVF and how recruiting materials construct several different strands of masculinity, while occasionally noting how women fit into or are absent from these tropes, the chapter now considers more directly how the Army genders women’s military service in recruiting materials, while giving a brief history of women’s participation in the Army.

### Women, the Army, and Recruiting

As noted, of all the services, the Army faced the biggest challenges in fielding a volunteer force. As a result, the Army has been more willing than the Navy or the Marine Corps to utilize the services of women, and of all the services, the Army’s

recruiting materials have pictured women the most frequently. Throughout the AVF, the Army has tried to tempt women into joining by offering them equal opportunity, but it has also at times attempted to reaffirm the femininity of female soldiers. Overall, however, the Army is the service most likely to present women as a regular part of the institution

In World War I, women served in the Army nurse corps, but could not enlist in the Army, despite pressure from some women's groups like the Young Women's Christian Association and the Women's League for Self Defense. It was only because of severe personnel shortages that the War Department, with some reluctance, allowed Army posts to hire women for *civilian* positions (Holm, 1992:13-14). Late in 1940, as the war in Europe led to the reinstatement of male conscription, many women's organizations began lobbying for women to be a part of the mobilization.

Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers, who had tried to gain benefits for the women who served overseas in World War I without military status, introduced legislation in May of 1941 to open the Army to women. After negotiation with the War Department, the resulting law, which finally passed in May of 1942 created an auxiliary corps for women, the WAAC. The auxiliary status caused a variety of problems and, in 1943, the Women's Army Auxiliary Corp became the Women's Army Corp (WAC). The Army decided it would be highly selective and only take an elite group of women, selecting its first group of 400 white and 40 black female officers out of 30,000 applicants (ibid.:28).

The Army initially planned to recruit 12,000 women the first year and reach a maximum strength of 25,000 within two years, but there was an immediate rush to enlist and field commanders and agencies began requesting thousands of women, so the Army

made quick plans to expand the program, and even envisioned an eventual women's force of 1.5 million, an unrealistic goal that would hurt the program (ibid.:30). With new civilian employment opportunities for women rapidly expanding and widespread resistance to women's participation in the military among both women and men, there was no way the Army could recruit so many women without conscripting them (ibid.:46). The WAAC/WAC was plagued with problems, from its initial auxiliary status, to inappropriate recruiting practices (hostile male recruiters stationed in recruiting offices in the worst areas of cities), to poorly designed and badly stocked uniforms, to a vicious slander campaign against the WACs, waged mainly by US troops.

The Women's Army Corp was created with the idea that women would serve in a limited number of roles that were customarily filled by women in the civilian sector, such as clerical and administrative work. As manpower shortages increased, women began filling roles that had previously been considered unsuitable, such as radio operator and repairman, gunner instructor, parachute rigger, and engine mechanic (ibid.:60). By the summer of 1945, there were about 100,000 WACs in uniform (and 57,000 Army nurses); virtually all of them were demobilized at the end of the war.

Looking ahead to a future conflict in which the US might once again need to mobilize women, in 1948, Congress passed the Women's Armed Services Integration Act, which allowed women to serve in the active peacetime forces, but limited their numbers to no more than two percent of the total force, capped the number of women officers at ten percent of the two percent, limited the promotion of women, and denied spousal benefits to husbands. Military policies also prohibited women from having command authority over men.

Between World War II and the inception of the all-volunteer force, the only time the military attempted to increase the number of women in the services and aimed recruiting efforts specifically at them was during the Korean War. In order to reduce draft calls for men, the Pentagon decided in October of 1951 that in the next ten months, they would try to add 72,000 women to the armed forces, increasing their numbers from 40,000 to 112,000. The Women's Army Corps was to grow from 12,000 to 32,000. President Truman kicked off the recruiting drive in November of 1951. The campaign attempted to appeal to women's patriotism using slogans like "Share Service for Freedom" and "America's Finest Women Stand Beside Her Finest Men" (ibid.:151-152). The drive was a failure and came nowhere near meeting its goals. Public opinion was turning against the war, and the services' pay and living standards were not competitive in a tight labor market. In addition, as Jeanne Holm suggests, "the public's attitude toward women serving in the armed forces had not mellowed since World War II. If anything, the frantic recruiting campaigns of 1951-52 had reawakened the old accusations of immorality and masculinity as attributes of women who joined the services" (ibid.:153-154).

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the number of women in the military never came close to reaching the two percent limit mandated by Congress. The services were highly concerned with the quality of female recruits, holding them to higher educational, mental, and physical standards than the male recruits (ibid.;179). The range of jobs which women could hold were seriously limited; by 1965, 70 percent of enlisted women performed clerical and administrative work, and an additional 23 percent worked in a medical capacity (ibid.;183-184). Members of the Women's Army Corps no longer

underwent the bivouac training that taught soldiers how to live in the field, and they were not allowed to fire small arms or take weapons familiarization training. They did, however, learn how to apply makeup during their military indoctrination. Uniforms and hair style regulations aimed for a neat, feminine appearance (ibid.:181-182). All branches of the military were highly concerned with the image of their women service members and the retention of their femininity.<sup>8</sup>

The Army had no plans to send women other than nurses to Vietnam, but the commander of US forces in Vietnam, Gen. William Westmoreland wanted WACs assigned to his headquarters to help deal with the war's paperwork (ibid.:209). Over the course of the war, about 500 WACs served tours in Vietnam. With resistance to the Vietnam War and the draft growing, in 1967 the Pentagon decided that it would increase the size of the women's programs for the first time since the Korean War, by adding about 6,500 women. That same year, the 1948 legislation on women's integration was modified; some of the restrictions on the promotion of women officers were lifted, as was the two percent ceiling on women's participation. Both the Armed Services Committee and the Defense Department made it clear during the Congressional hearings that the

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<sup>8</sup> Some of the concern over femininity came from the female directors of each of the women's services, all of whom remembered the accusations of masculinity pointed at women who served during World War II and worried about the reputations of the women serving. They felt that women in the military would be better accepted if they met higher standards than the men, didn't venture too far into non-traditional occupations, and retained a feminine appearance. During the Vietnam War, when the Tet Offensive began, everyone, including the women serving, was ordered into fatigues. The WAC director, back in Washington DC, struggled with commanders in Vietnam to get her troops back into skirts and pumps. The director was upset when photographs of women in field uniforms occasionally appeared in newspapers: "in the director's view, the parents of young girls did not like to envision their daughters in the rough, tough environment conveyed by the field uniforms; it lowered the desirability of military service for women and the prestige of the Army as contrasted with the other services, namely the Air Force, whose women had more feminine work uniforms" (Holm, 1992: 238-239).

legal changes were not meant to change the type of jobs that women filled in the military or to expand their roles in any way (ibid.:201).

As the military began to explore how it might successfully achieve an all-volunteer force, it looked to women as potential substitutes for male draftees. The 1969 Army study known as PROVIDE, Project Volunteer in Defense of the Nation, found that in order to increase the number of women serving, the Army would have to change the image of the Women's Army Corps. Lt. Col. Jack R. Butler wrote that "Although today's women are ranging further into fields of employment previously reserved for men, they hesitate to enter military service" because of "traditionalism by parents, males, and women themselves" (quoted in Griffith, 1996:190). Butler recommended a publicity campaign which would demonstrate to women that "their true value to the service is not that they are capable of replacing men, an unfeminine connotation, but that they are women and the feminine touch is required to do the job better" and would also emphasize that in the Army, women and men receive equal treatment when it comes to pay, benefits, and responsibilities (Griffith, 1996:190-191). But the Army couldn't just offer up those jobs traditionally associated with femininity, like health care and clerical work: "If the Army expected to revamp the image of the WAC and attract more women at a time when American women in the private sector were entering the nontraditional job market in increasing numbers, it would have to provide equal job opportunities" (ibid:193).

The Army's Office of Personnel Operations, in response to an order by the Secretary of the Army to reduce dependence on male soldiers, completed a study that recommended opening more Military Occupational Specialties to women. The chief of the Office of Personnel Operations advocated the implementation of the study's

recommendations, to “improve the Army’s image as a pioneer and leader in equal opportunities and the ‘women’s liberation movement,’ to place the Army in a stronger recruiting position in competition with our sister services, to enrich the morale of the members of the Women’s Army Corps, and, more importantly, to help the Army transition to a volunteer force” (ibid.). The Army planned to increase the size of the WAC incrementally from 12,400 in fiscal year 1972 until it reached 23,500 in fiscal year 1978 (ibid.).

Thus, at the inception of the AVF, the Army’s research indicated that it should try to appeal to women’s desire for equal opportunities and keep up with women’s entry into nontraditional fields, at the same time that it tried to reassure women and men that women could serve and retain their femininity. It is ironic that this male-dominated institution, so tied up with masculinity, might claim that women’s “feminine touch is required to do the job better” as the Army was opening jobs to women that had always been done by men and that men would continue to do. None of the recruiting materials in my sample claimed that women have special feminine talents that make them good soldiers, but there were ads specifically aimed at women, some of which sought to reinforce the femininity of women in the Army.

In 1972, an Army ad instructed young women on “ How to tell your parents you want to join the Army,” which seems to presume that the Army expected female potential recruits to face some resistance from their families. The ad mentions job training, salary, vacations, education, and the chance to mature. It presents several possible job fields— “medical, dental, personnel management, communications, stock control, data processing, or administrative procedures”—all of which are fairly traditional for women.

Another ad from 1972 posed the question, “What’s new for women in today’s Army?” The answer included new job opportunities, “over 300 in all” because “almost every job open to men is now open to women,” new travel opportunities, and new uniforms. The Army promises:

We’re working on a whole new uniform wardrobe, including some things you can wear right now. A black felt beret, white shirt, gloves and scarf. Smart patent leather, low-heeled shoes, clutch handbag, and a matching umbrella and raincoat.

So even if Army women are exploring new career territory and performing jobs previously restricted to men, the Army has ensured that they’ll be wearing feminine clothes. This ad assumes that while young women are interested in new job opportunities, they might worry that the Army will diminish their femininity. (And perhaps the Army wants to make sure it attracts “normal” women who, while interested in career opportunities, are still concerned with their appearance.)

While most ads from this period are aimed at young men, a few of them do make textual references to “young men and women” and include women among groups of men pictured. For instance, an ad from 1972 that claims, “We’ve got over 300 good, steady jobs,” shows a crowd of Army personnel in a various kinds of uniforms, including not just two female nurses, but also a woman in uniform. The Army made visual references to women as soldiers earlier and more frequently than the other services pictured female members of the military.

Over the course of the 1970s, women’s participation expanded rapidly, with their numbers rising and their job opportunities increasing. Congress opened the service academies to women in 1976, and in 1978, the Women’s Army Corp was dissolved as a unit separate from the rest of the Army. Over the next two decades, the expansion in

women's participation was accompanied by backlash, attempts to roll back women's participation, and political controversy.

The 1980s began with new military benefits and a new Army slogan—Be All You Can Be—and with an attempt by the Army and the Air Force to scale back the number of women they recruited. The services wanted to limit women's recruitment until their impact on readiness, which had already been the subject of study in the 1970s, could be further studied. Even before the conclusion of the Women in the Army Study, the Army barred women from 23 military occupational specialties that had previously been open to them because of potential proximity to combat operations in wartime (Holm, 1992:402). Retired Air Force Major General Jeanne Holm attributed the attempt to limit the recruitment of women to both resistance to female incursions into previously male areas and to a desire to undermine the AVF and convince the incoming Reagan administration to return to a draft (*ibid.*:395). The Pentagon was not considering conscription, and didn't support new restrictions on women's roles. In fact, later in the decade, the Pentagon studied ways to address various issues faced by women in the services and to achieve some consistency among the services in their application of combat restrictions. The result was the Department of Defense's 1988 "Risk Rule," which established uniform criteria for closing non-combat positions to women, based on the risk that they would be exposed to direct combat, hostile fire, or capture, and which allowed for the opening of thousands of new positions to women.

Despite the attempt to limit women's participation, in the mid-1980s, the Army began to produce ads that feature a woman and that are similar to ads that picture men. The series of ads featuring job codes like "96 Bravo"—there were nine of them in my

sample—including “93 Juliet,” air traffic radar control, which was illustrated with a smiling woman at a radar console wearing a headset. The ad featuring Specialist Michelle Kowalski talking about testing herself and finding out what she’d made of is from this same period. While Kowalski is feminized to the extent that she is clearly wearing makeup, in terms of the ad’s content, as it relates to other ads in the campaign, she is not being put into some special or different category. From this point on, one or two ads in any particular series might show a woman instead of a man, but with basically the same message or theme. While women aren’t pictured nearly as frequently as men, when they do appear, they seem to be a legitimate part of the service.

Two ads from the 1990s make a direct pitch to women as women. These ads share the same general look as others from the same period, with text superimposed on a camouflage-print background. The first, from 1995, bears a text box with the words “there’s something about a soldier,” and then continues:

Especially if you’re a woman. Because you’ll find yourself doing the most amazing things. Like being a flight Crew Chief or a Topographic Surveyor, or any one of nearly 200 skills the Army offers. You’ll also find yourself doing some very familiar things. Like getting into aerobics, going to the movies or just being with friends. The point is, a woman in the Army is still a woman. You carry yourself with a little more confidence. And you may find yourself shouldering more responsibility than you ever dreamed, but that’s because, in the Army, you’ll gain experience you can’t find anywhere else. You could also find yourself earning as much as \$30,000 for college, if you qualify, through the Montgomery G.I. Bill and the Army College Fund. If you’re looking for experience that could help you get an edge on life and be a success at whatever you do, call 1-800-USA-ARMY. ARMY. Be All You Can Be.

The ad pictures the head and shoulders of a serious-looking young woman, lightly made up, wearing a helmet with a radio headset, with a helicopter in the distance behind her. A smaller picture inset in the text shows the woman in civilian clothes and jewelry with her hair down, with a young man in a bolo tie who has his arm around her.

In some ways, this ad is like others in the same series, with its overall look, the picture of the soldier in some sort of military gear, the mentions of educational benefits, and the references to the value of Army experiences and to success. On the other hand, there are several aspects that both visually and rhetorically serve to reinforce the female soldier's femininity, and to reassure a potential female recruit that becoming a soldier won't compromise her feminine identity and make her unrecognizable to herself. A woman in the Army is still a woman.

The other ad, from 1996, isn't as overtly concerned with the female soldier's gender presentation and identity. The ad states in large, boxed print, "If you have the will to succeed, we have about 200 ways." The rest of the text reads:

As a woman in the Army, you will receive training in one of 188 military specialties. It's training that could prepare you for a career in high technology. You could learn guided missile technology or work with complex computer systems. You could manage communications and intelligence systems—all while working as a vital part of a team. And, if you qualify, you'll earn money for college, too. So come with the will to succeed. Today's Army will make a way.

The accompanying picture, which is captioned "Patriot Missile Team," shows a woman and two men in front of a control panel. One man, with a headset, sits at a keyboard. The woman, standing above him, holds a clipboard and points to a screen as the other man, leaning over her shoulder, looks on. The image of a missile launching and lines of computer code are superimposed over the picture. The woman is subtly feminized, with makeup, a ring, and manicured fingernails, but she is clearly in a position of some authority, and she is linked to technology, and specifically to a weapons system.

While the ad's imagery prominently features a woman, without looking carefully at the ad copy, a viewer wouldn't necessarily think this is an ad aimed at women, and by glancing at the picture and the most prominently displayed text on "the will to succeed"

might just absorb a general message about the Army, technology, and success which isn't clearly linked to gender. In some ways then, this ad affirms that women are a regular part of the Army.

Women, in fact, could theoretically be a more regular part of the Army after changes in policy in the early 1990s. While small numbers of women soldiers had participated in the invasions of Grenada (Operation *Urgent Fury*) in 1983 and of Panama (Operation *Just Cause*) in 1989, more than 40,000 women (about 30,000 of whom were in the Army), or a little more than seven percent of the total US forces, were deployed in the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The military's experiences in that war and the election of the Clinton administration led the Pentagon to rescind the Risk Rule, which had set the parameters for women's military participation, in 1994. The rule change allowed women to serve in more combat support positions, including more than 32,000 new positions in the Army, while still keeping them from direct ground combat (Women's Research and Education Institute, 2003). The 1990s brought allegations of rape and sexual harassment at the Army's Aberdeen Proving Grounds, as well as concerns in Congress over whether gender-integrated basic training was weakening the military. The 1990s also saw women serving in "peace operations" in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo.

The Army's advertising campaigns of the late 1990s rarely used images of women (though television commercials might show a few women soldiers among the men). My print ad sample, in fact, only includes a single ad with a woman (the ad appeared three times in 1997 and 1998) from 1997 to 2000. This ad was one of a series about what the potential recruit will be in the Army. The ad picturing a woman reads: "You'll be pushed to the limit. And discover you have no limits. You will be a soldier." Three pictures

accompany the text: a row of parachutists trailing behind an airplane; a closer shot of a few parachutes, and one parachutist; and the parachutist, now on the ground in a dress uniform, with a very small caption reading “Cpl. Patricia Burdette. Age 23. Parachute Rigger.” In this ad, the soldier just happens to be a woman. As in the 1980s ads with women, there are no textual references to her femaleness, but unlike the earlier ad, the picture of her face doesn’t dominate the page, so the casual reader might just see an Army ad with parachutes, without really noticing the soldier’s sex.

Women have appeared in a few “Army of One” print ads, some of which were published in *Seventeen Magazine* (they were the only Army ads I came across in *Seventeen*). They talk about their interesting jobs and how they’ve developed in the Army. One ad, which pictures Specialist Robin Ingram, a Transportation Management Coordinator, reads: “This uniform didn’t change me. Earning the right to wear it did.” This exact same copy appears on another ad that pictures an Infantryman, Specialist Marc DeCarli. The ads that depict women use the same dark tones and overall aesthetic of the campaign as a whole, and the women aren’t overtly feminized. (However, in a couple of them, the women’s faces are in close-up, so you don’t see that they are in uniform, making them look less militarized.) As with the earlier campaigns, women aren’t pictured with weapons.

This most recent campaign follows the pattern set by the Army over the course of the AVF. In any given advertising campaign, one or two print ads in a series are likely to show a woman instead of a man, with basically the same message or theme, or ads might include a few women, while the majority of soldiers shown would be men. While a few ads have directly addressed women as women and made reference to their perceived

potential concerns and desires, the Army, at least in its public representations, has mainly been offering to women the same things it has been offering to men, including roles, behaviors, and characteristics that have been associated with masculinity. However, women are never associated with combat and never shown wielding a gun.

While the Army made some use of women's magazines, publishing Army of One ads in *Seventeen*, it also published ads both that feature women and that make a direct pitch to them (including the "There's Something About a Soldier," and "If You Have the Will to Succeed" ads) in *Sports Illustrated*, which is mainly read by men. The Army may have guessed that athletic women or those interested in sports were likely targets, but it also means that the Army didn't fear that it would alienate young men by presenting women as soldiers. The Army presents women as a normal part of the service.

#### Conclusions: Masculinity and Army Recruiting

During the late 1990s recruiting shortfalls, commentators accused the Army, Navy, and Air Force of abandoning the concept of the warrior and masculinity. There was a common assumption that the armed forces, in a bow to political correctness, had been using women to represent themselves to the world (e.g. Gutmann, 2000; Strother, 1999). Gutmann, a critic of gender-integration of the armed forces, described Army recruiting efforts as follows:

There are very few ads—some aired during the NBA playoffs, for instance—that show a man's world; most are scrupulously gender-balanced. In some of its displays and literature the Army even uses the image of a woman wearing a helmet, BDUs [battle dress uniforms—camouflage], army boots, carrying a rifle, walking forward, shoulders hunched menacingly. The Army is about 22 percent female and none are "ground-pounders," but the Army still uses a lone female to represent itself to the world! (2000:278)

Not only does Gutmann overstate the percentage of women in the Army, she misrepresents Army advertising. While some Army ads include women, and any given series of print ads may include a few which feature women, the great majority of soldiers pictured are men. The Army does *not* “[use] a lone female to represent itself to the world,” and the women who have been shown are unlikely to be pictured as Gutmann describes, with helmet and rifle and “shoulders hunched menacingly.” Anyone so pictured will be a man.

The Army did not abandon masculinity in its recruiting materials with the transition to a volunteer force. As this chapter has argued, the Army has used a number of masculine appeals, though some of the inducements are connected to economics, which some commentators refuse to recognize as having anything to do with masculinity, because it isn’t part of a warrior masculinity based on such factors as strength, courage, challenge, and aggression. What the economic appeals do offer is the earning potential and economic independence that are prerequisites for manhood in American culture. The Army may also use visual or textual markers of masculinity to underline the masculine aspects of the economic appeal.

In addition, the Army offers upward mobility and the chance for advanced training or a college education, which can provide access to hegemonic forms of masculinity for a working-class population, particularly as good-paying factory jobs have disappeared and threatened the social position of blue-collar men. During the AVF, there is a shift in the way that job-training benefits are framed, and this happens to some degree with Air Force and Navy recruiting as well. Ads from the 1970s and into the 1980s talk about learning a skill, which will give the recruit future economic independence and

security in the civilian world, or getting a good job in the Army. A few early ads list traditional blue-collar skills as well as a few more aspirational ones. (One ad claims the Army has “Jobs in construction, transportation, communications, computers,” and “Jobs for photographers, printers, truck drivers, teachers, typists, TV cameramen and repairmen. Cooks, electricians, medical aides, meteorologists. Motor and missile maintenance men.”) Often, it’s specifically technical skills that are on offer, like data communications specialist, teletypewriter operator, or computer technician. In the 1980s and especially the 1990s, the language changes from a blue-collar offer of job training and skills, to the use of terms like “career” and “professional.” The term “skills” is still occasionally mentioned, but only in relation to using highly advanced technology. As the economy’s manufacturing base continued to decline, the ability of blue-collar work to confer economic security and social status on men diminished. In the larger culture, knowledge-society, information-based careers had become the main route to a comfortable lifestyle and to social prestige, and, thus, to masculine achievement.<sup>9</sup> In the past, middle and upper-class men had careers, while working-class men could still act as breadwinners and achieve economic independence and status in their communities through blue-collar work. Without good-paying factory jobs, working-class men who can’t move up into careers or into highly specialized technological fields will find themselves slipping down into low-paying, low-status service industry or retail work,

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<sup>9</sup> According to Wolff (2005), in the US, information workers have increased from 42% of the workforce in 1960 to 53% in 1980 and 59% in 2000. In 1950, over half of all jobs could be categorized as blue-collar; by 2000 the percentage had declined to less than a quarter.

fields that employ a preponderance of women.<sup>10</sup> Linking military service to careers and professionalism taps into the masculine model that has achieved dominance in the economic realm.

The other main thrust of Army recruiting is a soldiering-based masculinity, to a small degree using the role of the protector, but mainly in terms of character development and personal transformation, with reference to such traditional warrior traits as strength and courage and with frequent use of militaristic imagery. However, there is no doubt that overall, the soldiering masculinity offered by the Army is of a less aggressive and more accessible form than that offered up by the Marine Corps. The Army can make a man out of a boy, but he needn't undergo an extreme rite of initiation or a trial by fire to achieve that transformation. While soldiers are often depicted in military contexts, in combat uniforms, riding tanks and carrying weapons, they are also often pictured out of uniform, going to school or socializing or playing sports. Even in uniform, they are often smiling and relaxed, projecting a good-natured competence. Soldiers are often named, giving the potential recruit an individual with whom to identify.

The Army needs to attract the most recruits and appeal to the widest possible audience. The Army has varied the bases of its appeals, but overall has presented an accessible version of manhood, showing "regular guys," just like the readers of *Popular*

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<sup>10</sup>Men who lose high-paying blue-collar jobs may have trouble finding other jobs for which they are qualified and that give them comparable wages and status. According to the *New York Times*, many such men see the work that is available to them, often in the retail or service sectors, as being beneath their dignity and demeaning, as well as too low-paid to be worth their time (Uchitelle and Leonhardt, 2006). The blue-collar jobs had given men earning power and a sense of identity, and these disappeared along with the jobs. The *Times* has also reported that men without college degrees who lose factory jobs are likely to permanently fall out of the middle class (Egan, 2005) and that men without college degrees have experienced the biggest decline of any group in marriage rates, in large part because of economic insecurity and poor earning potential (Porter and O'Donnell, 2006).

*Mechanics* or *Sports Illustrated*, only better, stronger, prouder, and more skilled for having joined up.

## Chapter 4: THE NAVY

This chapter examines how the Navy has confronted the problem of recruiting a volunteer force in a period when the ties between masculinity and the military have been complicated by disruptions to dominant conceptions of masculinity in the larger culture and by the increased presence of women in the military. In order to see how the Navy responded to this “masculinity crisis” in its public representations of service, I collected print advertisements published by the Navy in the magazines *Life*, *Popular Mechanics*, and *Sports Illustrated* between 1970 and 2003 (the Navy was the only one of the armed forces that didn’t place any ads in *Seventeen*) and analyzed the 63 different advertisements I found to determine how the Navy represents itself and how it uses ideas about gender in its appeals. I also viewed eighteen television commercials<sup>1</sup> that aired between 1980 and 2003 and two different incarnations of the Navy’s recruiting website.

The Navy has responded to these challenges by focusing its efforts almost exclusively on young men. While recruiting materials have made token references to female sailors, the Navy presents itself as a male world where women mainly represent the pleasures of travel and shore leave. Over the course of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF), Navy recruiting advertisements have promised travel and adventure, career advancement and skills training, and mental and physical challenges. Many ads in the latest campaign (“Accelerate Your Life”) have featured particularly martial forms of action and adventure, as opposed to the adventure inherent in life at sea. At some points,

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<sup>1</sup> While the print ads were collected in a systematic fashion (see Chapter One), and I know how frequently the service branches chose to publish a given print ad as well as in what publication, this is not the case with the television commercials. Some of the commercials I saw as they were being broadcast, some I found on the Internet, and some were in the collection of the Museum of Television and Radio.

the Navy has also bolstered its image of the sailor's life with references to tradition and patriotic calls to service that evoke a romantic idea of the Navy and its glorious past.

These different approaches have made use of various markers of masculinity. The Navy has relied on specifically militarized forms of masculinity (and interestingly, it has made this appeal to what could be considered traditional military masculinity recently in its history, showing that its commitment to masculinity isn't weakening), as well as forms which have conventionally been linked to Navy life at sea, with its physical demands and privations and chance for adventure and excitement. But the Navy has also looked to the civilian world repeatedly over the course of the AVF, tapping into the evolving masculine forms of the economic sphere, with offers of professional accomplishment and technical prowess.

After a brief discussion of Navy culture, this chapter will present an analysis of Navy recruiting materials from the first two decades of the all-volunteer force, pause to consider the role of women in recruitment materials and provide some background on women's participation in the Navy, and continue with analysis of recruiting materials in the 1990s and early 2000s.

### Navy Culture

According to RAND analyst Carl Builder, while the Army is concerned with the concept of service and with its ties to the citizenry and the nation, the Navy's institutional worldview is linked to tradition:

Tradition has always been an important part of military life, but the Navy, much more than any of the other services, has cherished and clung to tradition. The US Navy was born and bravely fought its way out from under the massive shadow of the British Royal Navy and its rich traditions.[...]This reverence for tradition in

the US Navy has continued right to the present, not just in pomp or display, but in the Navy's approach to almost every action from eating to fighting—from tooth to fang. In tradition, the Navy finds a secure anchor for the institution against the dangers it must face. If in doubt, or if confronted with a changing environment, the Navy looks to its traditions to keep it safe. (1989:18).

Builder also characterizes the Navy as concerned about its size as measured in ships (as opposed to the Army's concern with the number of people in uniform and their skill level), although it is not a particularly "toy-oriented" service—members of the Navy are not specifically devoted to a particular type of ship or a technology, but to the institution as a whole. Builder notes that "[w]hereas the things the Navy owns and operates are clearly a source of interest and pride for those who serve in them, Navy personnel are more likely to associate themselves with the Navy as an institution" (23-24).

However, despite service members' identification with the institution as a whole, there is also a great deal of intra-service rivalry among the various branches:

The Navy is the most elaborate in its distinctions among, and the relative ranking of, its various components, branches, or activities. The implicit intraservice distinctions with the Navy provide an extensive, fine-structured, hierarchical pecking order from top to bottom. At the pinnacle of this structure, since World War II, has been carrier-based fighter aviation. At (or very near) the bottom is mine warfare. Submarine and surface warfare specialties, in that order, lie in between. (25)

Dunnigan and Macedonia agree that "[t]he major branches of the Navy don't get along very well" and that "[a]mong the Navy branches, there is a more visible pecking order than in the Army" (1993:220). However, they rank the branches slightly differently than Builder does, putting the nuclear submarine crews ("squids") just above the carrier aviators ("Airedales"), with surface-ship sailors coming in last. Certainly both aircraft carriers and submarines are proudly and frequently displayed in recruiting ads, more often than other types of ships.

The nature of naval life has historically allowed commanding naval officers at sea great independence. Independent command at sea is another hallmark of Navy culture, and it is one that may influence the Navy's relationship to the larger society. According to a report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies: "In one sense, the Navy's fierce streak of independence may insure its world-renowned professionalism, but it also may have insulated the service from social trends and sensitivities felt more keenly by the other services and society in general" (CSIS, 2000:12). The combination of tradition, independence, and elitism may have led to conservatism and resistance to change in terms of women's participation in the Navy, and historically, as will be discussed below, African-American men's as well.

The Navy's resistance to women's participation, while partly attributable to a conservative culture that resists change and an idea of life at sea and a set of homosocial traditions and rituals (like the "Shellback" ceremony that initiates sailors who cross the equator for the first time) that envision the ship as a male world, it can also be attributed to the Navy's institutional needs. The Navy has had trouble utilizing women's labor. When women were barred from serving on most ships, placing them in shore billets caused problems because it meant that men would have to spend more time at sea. To allow sailors some semblance of a home life, they generally rotated between sea billets and shore billets, alternating periods of time at sea and in port. Putting women into shore billets disrupted this sea/shore rotation system. When women's opportunities to serve at sea expanded, the Navy had to worry about sexual relations between male and female sailors and about the reactions of sailors' wives to the news that their husbands would be spending six months at sea on a ship with women. Opponents of gender integration

gleefully dubbed the USS Acadia “The Love Boat” when it was reported that on its return to San Diego in 1991 after deployment to the Middle East, apparently 36 women out of the 360 on the crew (women made up about a third of the crew) were missing because earlier in the cruise they had been airlifted to shore because they were pregnant (Gutmann, 2000). Whether for reasons of practicality or tradition or both, women have not been a focus of Navy recruiting efforts during the AVF.

### The Recruiting Background

The US Navy has long experience with recruitment. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when many nations depended on a draft or the impressments of sailors to man their navies, the US relied entirely on voluntary enlistments (Shulman, 1995:39). The Navy only recruited experienced seamen to fill its ranks, and it restricted its recruiting efforts to coastal areas. These limitations, combined with the low pay and poor shipboard conditions led to a force that was approximately half foreign-born, with immigrants from all over the world. At the turn of the twentieth century, with a nativist desire to create a more “American” force and with technological changes in ships requiring more highly trained sailors, the Navy began recruiting inland and enlisting young men from the American interior without sea experience to be trained in their duties (ibid.: 40). So from the end of the nineteenth century, the Navy has been trying to appeal to young men across the country who may have had no direct exposure to life at sea.

In the late 1800s, the Navy attempted to raise its public profile through expositions and displays, articles in both magazines aimed at boys and those aimed at adults, and statues and memorials (ibid.:46). In 1906, the Navy hired a New York

advertising firm to prepare its first illustrated, professionally-produced recruiting brochure. The 32-page pamphlet, called *The Making of a Man-o'-Warsman*, offered an attractive account of the training and opportunities offered by the Navy (Harrod, 1978:3,43). Historian Frederick Harrod notes that “[t]he title evoked romantic images of deep-water sailors on high-masted frigates; yet, ironically, the booklet was issued when the traditional ‘man-of-warsman’ was rapidly becoming a part of the past and was giving way to a new breed of sailor-technician” (3). The title also suggests a particularly naval form of masculinity—the strong, salty man-o’-warsman. Around this time, the Navy also began to advertise frequently in the “help wanted” section of newspapers. A typical ad read:

WHAT THE NAVY OFFERS YOUNG MEN. For the young man between 17 and 25 years of age, who has a good character and sound body, not afraid to leave home, the Unites States Navy offers excellent opportunity for steady employment; work is not severe, and plenty of time for recreation; athletics of all kinds encouraged. Pay \$16 to \$70 a month, according to ratings, with no expense for food, lodging, doctor’s attendance and medicine. A complete outfit of clothing furnished gratis on first enlistment. (Quoted in *ibid.*:42)

From its inception, Navy recruiting in peacetime used appeals to tradition, the romance of life at sea, and the masculine character of naval service, but also offered recruits economic opportunities and concrete benefits.

Men were not drafted into the Navy in the post-World War II period, but the end of the draft still had an impact on the Navy and its recruiting practices. During the period of Project Volunteer in the early 1970s, as the draft-dependent Army tried to figure out ways to fill its ranks without conscription, the Navy estimated that somewhere above half of its enlistees were true volunteers, but the rest were draft-motivated, joining the Navy to avoid being drafted into the Army (Griffith, 1996:56).

In 1972, as the armed forces were making the transition to the AVF, the Navy produced an ad which appeared several times in my sample, in which it offered up its advantages, telling potential recruits that they can “Get a little more in the Navy,” including “More job,” “More choice,” “More guarantees,” “More travel,” “More bread,” “More hair,” (sailors may wear “nicely trimmed” beards) and “More freebies.” The ad uses casual language to make the Navy seem accessible. It assumes a male audience, with references to beards and to what “new guys” earn, and it tries to make reference to tradition at the same time that it claims that the Navy is changing: after mentioning that sailors can wear beards, the ad claims “It’s a Naval tradition; it’s also a brand new Navy.” Later ads were generally less blatant about the rewards, but here the Navy wanted to introduce itself as a “brand new Navy” to a Vietnam-era public that was wary of military service and highlight the efforts to modernize that the Navy, like the Army, had undergone.

#### The Recruiting Advertisements—Part I: The First Two Decades of the AVF

At the beginning of the AVF, like the Army and the Air Force, the Navy used an economic appeal, promising training and good jobs, and it also layered on top the promise of an exciting, challenging life. Throughout the course of the AVF, the Navy has made two central offers, sometimes in combination and sometimes separately: one economic, with the promise of good jobs or high-tech training, and one related to adventure and the traditional benefits of life at sea—excitement, challenge, travel, getting away from home and finding oneself, and through all of these things, becoming a man. At some points, the Navy bolsters its image of the sailor’s life with references to tradition

and patriotic calls to service, which in addition to appealing to patriotic sensibilities themselves, evokes a romantic idea of the Navy and a glorious past with which the potential recruit could associate himself.

One of the first campaigns of the AVF used this tactic. In 1972, the Navy embarked on a campaign that juxtaposed early recruiting posters with pictures of modern life in the Navy. Two of these ads read: “1919 Join the Navy and see the world. 1972 Join the Navy and find your place in the world”; “1919: Join the Navy and see exotic places. 1972: Join the Navy and get job training that will take you places.” These ads claim that the old benefits of Navy life, like world travel, haven’t disappeared, but now new benefits and good job training are also available. They end with the slogans, “Be someone special in The New Navy” and “Be a Success in the New Navy.” The Navy tries to evoke nostalgia for a rich past and the traditions of sailing, while appealing to young men in need of good jobs. Nostalgic and patriotic appeals reappeared in 1975 when the Navy celebrated first its bicentennial and its role in American history.

Continuing with the “be someone special” theme, the Navy ran a series of ads which focused on training and skill development, but stressed that the kinds of jobs one would get in the Navy were interesting and fulfilling, and they frequently differentiated naval life from civilian life, painting Navy life as more challenging and worthwhile. Some of these ads announce:

“Life’s too short to waste time wishing you were somewhere else. Get moving.”

“Don’t just make a living. Make a life for yourself.”

“Life’s what you make it. Make it great.”

“A Navy career. Because there’s more to life than a paycheck.”

“Get out of the ordinary. Get into the Navy.”

“The Navy won’t hand you the same old routine.”

These ads characterize the Navy as “a place to grow,” which offers “challenge,” “hard work,” “high standards” “leadership” and “personal responsibility.” Civilian jobs are disparaged as leading to “nowhere,” where one may be just “punching a time clock” or “following some other routine [one is] bored with.” Most of the ads include multiple pictures, showing sailors engaged in a variety of work and leisure activities—on the decks of ships, working with technical equipment, socializing, and traveling. Some of the ads focus on the particular opportunities available in the Advanced Electronics and Nuclear Power Programs as challenging options with great potential for future success in the Navy or the civilian world. The ads in this series also promise travel, educational benefits, the chance to make new friends, and an exciting new life. The references to punching a time clock and jobs leading nowhere imply that the potential recruit’s other option is some form of blue-collar work, and the Navy is implicitly offering upward mobility and the access to a better, broader kind of life than the recruit could have at home.

Several of the ads from the first half of the 1970s offer a masculine pride in work that is both physically and mentally challenging. The Navy is “a profession that lets you stand a little taller” and a place to “Master a skill.” Navy work is “Good, hard work. With your own two hands. And the wind in your teeth.” The Navy offers “jobs that keep your head busy” as well as “action-filled jobs” and “active jobs that that keep your muscles moving.” And while Navy life is good (according to the Navy), they’re “not saying Navy life’s a snap. Far from it. It’s hard toughening work.” In addition to such

descriptions of work, one of the ways that these ads demonstrate that Navy life is demanding, surprisingly enough, is by reference to the “chores” that are a part of that life. Men who join the Navy for advanced technical training need, in addition to such attributes as “good hands,” “a good mind” and a “strong desire to learn and achieve,” “a willingness to do [their] share of the housekeeping chores.” Other ads mention swabbing decks, “dealing with your fair share of chores,” and “the nitty-gritty housekeeping chores.” “Housekeeping” is a term generally associated with women, and the performance of housekeeping chores was a contentious issue in America at that time, as women demanded a more equitable distribution of household labor. In the context of the ads, however, a willingness to do one’s fair share of chores does not signal a loosening of gender roles or a concern for gender equity. Rather, in the (then) all-male world of the Navy ship, housekeeping loses its association with femininity, and becomes a way to signal that Navy life won’t be soft or easy. The references to chores, especially when modified by a rough-sounding adjective like “nitty-gritty,” emphasizes how physically demanding the life of a sailor can be, and turns the difficult, routine, unpleasant tasks of taking care of a ship into badges of masculine toughness.

While the chance to “be someone special” was, implicitly, mainly being offered to men, this offer was not limited to white men. With the shift to an all-volunteer force, the Navy of the 1970s seemed to be making a concerted effort to reach out to African-American men. In my sample, most of the ads that pictured sailors included African-American men. The only ad in the entire sample that profiled an individual sailor in depth, published in *Sports Illustrated* in 1975, told the story of a Black Naval Flight Officer from New Jersey. The Navy created a series of recruiting posters in the early

1970s (available at the Navy's military history website, [www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil)) that featured African Americans. Some of these posters appeal to an idea of racial pride and promise individual and group advancement, with captions such as: "we'll take you as far as you can go," "you can study black history and go out and make it," which may be making a reference to a World War I recruiting poster with the caption "The Navy Needs You! Don't READ American History—MAKE IT!" and "join the Navy and see the world change," a play on the historic offer to join the Navy and see the world, offering new opportunities rather than travel. Other posters claim that being in the Navy won't conflict with or detract from African-American racial identity. In particular, one with a picture of two men wearing dashikis states, "You can be Black, and Navy too," and a companion poster shows a young man with an afro hairstyle next to the words, "Your son can be Black, and Navy too."

This effort to reach out to African American men was a shift from earlier, racist Navy policies, dating back to the Navy's efforts to "Americanize" the service at the turn of the twentieth century. From the 1880s to the 1890s, under the new recruiting policies the percentage of African American men in the Navy dropped from 14 percent to below ten percent, and the opportunities for service narrowed down to servant-like positions as cooks and stewards (Shulman, 1995:41). From 1919 to 1932, Black people were completely prohibited from enlisting (Harrod, 1978:168). During World War II, African American men in the segregated Navy could only serve on ships as messmen and stewards, and they weren't commissioned as officers. In 1945, the Navy began allowing integrated crews to serve on non-combat ships, with the proportion of Black personnel on any ship capped at ten percent (Segal, 1989:107). President Truman's directive to

integrate the military after World War II was resisted by the Navy. According to Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, while the other services honored Truman's order more quickly, the Navy, seeing itself as an elite service, attempted to keep itself "lily white or to have the minimum possible integration."<sup>2</sup> In the late 1960s and early 1970s, all of the armed services experienced racial tensions and disturbances, and for the Navy this included race riots on the aircraft carriers *Kitty Hawk* and *Constellation* in 1972 (Segal, 1989:111). The larger social pressures of the civil rights movement and a desire to decrease racial tensions in the service probably pushed the Navy to overcome its conservatism on race and persuaded it to include African American men in its public representations of itself and its construction of the figure of a masculine sailor. I suspect that an even bigger factor was that with the challenge of recruiting an all-volunteer force, the Navy needed to expand the pool of potential recruits, and increasing the number of African-American men in the service seemed preferable to increasing the number of women, black or white, which was another possible alternative. Greater racial integration would be less disruptive to the Navy's culture and less problematic than greater gender integration.

The emphasis on physicality, toughness, and mental challenge in Navy recruiting materials continued in the late 1970s and was joined by a new focus on adventure and testing oneself. The Navy offers the ocean itself as a road to masculine achievement. One ad shows an expanse of water with the caption, "the toughest proving ground on earth." The text continues:

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<sup>2</sup> House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Military Personnel and Compensation, *Gender Discrimination in the Military*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Congress, 2<sup>nd</sup> Session, July 29 and 30, 1992. Other military commentators at the hearing claimed that "the Navy moved more slowly on social issues than did the other services" and that the Navy has a reputation as "the most conservative of the services."

Since the beginning of time, men have tested themselves against the sea. At sea, there are no free rides. Every mile you travel is paid for in skill, courage, grit and ingenuity. There are no excuses or second bests. The sea asks the limit of your ability and accepts nothing less...Proving yourself is worth some effort.

Many ads from this period show dramatic pictures of a ship in an open expanse of ocean or a submarine surfacing, and they begin to use the slogan, "It's not just a job, it's an adventure."

In the early 1980s, the Navy continued to use that slogan, but the tenor of the ads changed, and instead of emphasizing challenge and adventure, they highlight career opportunities, technical skill, and personal development, especially in the ads running in *Popular Mechanics*. (The Navy may have needed more people with the aptitude for technical training, and assumed that it might find them among that magazine's readers.) A series of ads in the early 1980s explained in their headlines what the Navy meant by the word "adventure":

"Making the Most of Yourself Is What the Navy Adventure Is All About."

"A Job Important Enough to Become a Career Is Part of the Navy Adventure."

"Choosing the Career You Want Is Part of the Navy Adventure."

"Pride in Being One of the Best Is Part of the Navy Adventure."

"New Challenges Are Part of the Navy Adventure."

"A Career You Can Be Proud of Is Part of the Navy Adventure."

The Navy attempted to reframe the "adventure" of its slogan as a journey to self-development and personal success. They attempt to update the figure of the sailor (which they themselves promulgated just a few years earlier) from someone who has an exciting life at sea doing challenging physical labor to someone who has an exciting life performing technical work and making use of advanced training. Copy in one ad reads:

“Accept the challenge and you’ll never be the same. In the Navy you will become an experienced professional with a job skill you can build a career on. And you’ll possess the pride, maturity and self-confidence only the Navy Adventure can give you.” Another promises “You become a top-notch professional and achieve a level of skill second to none.” Technology is mentioned frequently, with references to “modern equipment,” the “most-up-to-date equipment and methods,” and “today’s hottest technologies [including]: micro-electronics, state-of-the-art computers, advanced communications, nuclear power and more.” Most of these ads picture a young man in uniform working with technical-looking equipment or at a control panel. One ad states: “There’s no prouder moment than when you master a highly technical skill.” This claim is a bit surprising coming from a branch of the US military—one might think that someone serving his country in the armed forces, sworn to defend the nation, might have prouder moments than mastering a technical skill. In these ads, however, the Navy gives a young man a chance to feel pride by allowing him to become a technical professional, with the word “professional” recurring frequently.

In the mid and late 1980s, Navy advertising frequently mentioned career opportunities, travel, adventure, and pride. Some of the ads were dominated by spectacular images, like a ship silhouetted by the setting sun or a submarine surfacing, inside the outline of the word “Navy.” These ads use the slogan “live the adventure” and contain less text than the other ads, highlighting the drama of the images. One such ad, picturing a submarine, states “Break through to adventure. The Navy adventure is new challenges. New opportunities. And a sense of pride you’ve never had before. If you’re ready, it’s all out here waiting for you.” Other ads from the late 1980s are tagged with

the slogan “You are Tomorrow. You are the Navy.” They emphasize career training, but they also talk about personal development, with words like “challenge,” “responsibility,” “discipline,” “confidence,” “teamwork,” and “leadership.”

A series of television commercials from 1986 which use the “live the adventure” slogan imply that a sailor will gain the masculine traits of mastery, confidence, and control of his future through his Navy training and experiences. Each is a montage, including scenes of sailors at work, either on a ship, submarine, or carrier deck; dramatic shots of anchors rising, jets taking off, and submarines surfacing; scenes of training, like men running on a beach; and a few images of travel, including sailors sitting with kimono-wearing Japanese women in a garden. In one, the narrator declares: “To break free, to reach new heights, master new skills, to meet the world, on its terms and yours, feel the pride, show the world you’re US Navy.” Another says “To rise, to meet the challenge, to master the most advanced skills, to meet the future with new confidence, to break through, show the world you’re US Navy.” The ads mention “advanced skills,” but the emphasis is on sailors rising to a challenge and gaining control of their own destinies.

Throughout the 1980s, Navy recruiting materials offered adventure, challenge, and discipline, which are the traditional masculine rewards of the sailor’s life, but they also promised young men the more modern masculine achievements of mastery of complex technology and career advancement. The accomplishment of career and personal success could give young men both economic independence and social status. As the economy continued to shift its emphasis from manufacturing to service and information, status and economic success were tied less and less to a “good trade” and more and more to knowledge-society careers. As American culture in the Reagan ‘80s

celebrated the Yuppie (young urban professional)<sup>3</sup> and Wall Street (both the financial sector and the movie, which trumpeted that “greed is good”), some strands of Navy advertising emphasized career, professionalism, and technology.

Before discussing Navy recruiting in the 1990s and 2000s, the chapter will shift its attention and discuss women’s participation in the Navy and their role in Navy recruiting materials.

### Women, the Navy, and Recruiting

During the first two decades of the AVF, Navy recruiting expressed ambivalence about women, making token reference to the possibility that they might be sailors, but mainly using them, when they pictured them at all, as a way to attract potential male recruits. The Navy has relied on women’s labor in limited contexts and used their images as a recruiting tool, but has tried strenuously to keep them off ships and thus away from the core of the service’s culture and functions.

Several World War I recruiting posters by Howard Chandler Christy used the image of a young woman to entice young men into joining the Navy. One showed an attractive young woman dressed like a sailor next to the words “Gee!! I Wish I Were A Man. I’d Join the Navy.” Half of her wide collar is blowing around her head and the open neck on the blouse reveals quite a bit of skin. Below her, the poster reads, “Be A Man And Do It. United States Navy Recruiting Station.”

During this period, women actually could join the Navy, though their service life was drastically different from the men’s. In the spring of 1917, Josephus Daniels,

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<sup>3</sup> For example, see Adler (1984) and Huntley (1984).

Secretary of the Navy, feared that the Navy was heading into war without enough manpower. Having discovered that the wording of the 1916 Naval Act, which authorized a build-up of naval forces, did not specifically exclude women, the Navy decided to invite women to enroll in the Naval Coast Defense Reserve Force. Most of the women performed some form of clerical work. The women were enrolled as Yeomen (F), with the designation “(F),” for female, ensuring that they wouldn’t inadvertently be assigned to sea duty. The way the term “Yeoman (F)” sounds when spoken aloud led many in and out of the service to refer to Navy women as “Yeomanettes” (Ebbert and Hall, 1993:4-10). All Navy yeomen had to be assigned to ships, but Navy regulations prohibited women from serving on Navy ships. The Navy solved this problem by assigning the yeomen (F) to tugs at the bottom of the Potomac River (Holm, 1992:12).

The Naval Reserve Act of 1925 limited enlistment to “male citizens of the United States,” in part because some Senators feared that allowing women into the peacetime Naval Reserve could open the door to women’s service in the Army Reserve. The sex-restrictive language was carried over into the Naval Reserve Act of 1938, meaning that at the beginning of World War II, women were legally excluded from the Navy (Ebbert and Hall, 1993:19). The Navy initially believed it would not need to recruit women for World War II and that the civil service would be able to supply additional personnel to perform the tasks that women naval personnel might do. Shortly after Pearl Harbor, the Navy came to realize that it was mistaken and began months of struggle with Congress over whether the Women’s Naval Reserve would be an auxiliary force, as with the Army, or whether women would be members of the Navy, as the Navy preferred (*ibid.*:30). (As it turned out, the auxiliary status of women was unworkable for the Army.) The Navy

won the battle in July of 1942, and the new women's service was created. To stop the newspapers from using terms like "sailorettes" and "goblettes" to describe the naval women ("gob" was a slang term for a sailor), Elizabeth Reynard, a special assistant to the head of the Bureau of Personnel, came up with the acronym WAVES, Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (ibid.:38).

In 1948, the Women's Armed Services Integration Act made women permanent members of the Navy, but it restricted women from serving on ships other than some transports or hospital ships. Very few women served on ships, and most of them who did served in a medical capacity, rather than running the ships. Early in the Vietnam War, transport ships that had been carrying dependents became troop transports, making women ineligible to serve on them, and when the Navy decommissioned its last hospital ship in 1971, even nurses could no longer go to sea (Holm, 1992:328). By the time Martin Binkin and Shirley J. Bach completed a study for the Brookings Institution in 1976 on women in the military, they could report that "[s]ince there are currently no hospital or transport vessels in the fleet, all seagoing jobs are closed to women" (Binkin and Bach, 1977:24).

Naval policymakers felt that the most cost-effective way to use women was to congregate them in a few locations and limit them to traditional fields, and over the course of the Cold War the Navy restricted the ratings (job categories) in which women could serve. In 1952, enlisted women were eligible to serve in thirty-six ratings (about 60% of all ratings). In 1956, the number dropped to twenty-five ratings, and by 1962 twenty-one ratings could be filled by women (Ebbert and Hall, 1993:141). During the Cold War, women served overwhelmingly in the traditional fields of

clerical/administration and health care. The Navy, like the other services at the time, worried about its female members projecting a feminine appearance to the world. Navy regulations required that women's hair "shall be arranged and shaped to present a conservative, feminine appearance," and when Navy women, following civilian trends, began neglecting to wear their hats in 1968, they received a reprimand from the director of WAVES reminding them that "WAVES are ladies first and always[...] Taking off the hat in public is strictly a man's gesture; it is not ladylike" (quoted in Holm, 1992:182).

During the Vietnam War, many Navy women, wanting to be more directly involved in the war effort, requested to be sent to Southeast Asia, but, aside from nurses, only one or two female officers were there at one time on the staff of the Commander, Naval Forces in Saigon, and no enlisted women were allowed to go (Holm, 1992:217).

In 1970, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt became Chief of Naval Operations. Anticipating passage of the Equal Rights Amendment and the inception of the all-volunteer force, in August of 1972, Zumwalt issued a directive, known as Z-116, expanding roles for women in the Navy. In the past, the Navy had been content to recruit few women, who were held to much higher standards than male recruits in terms of mental capacity and educational levels, and it wasn't concerned when it failed to retain many of its over-qualified female service members. With the end of conscription, however, the Navy would be losing draft-motivated volunteers, and Zumwalt wanted to better utilize and retain women. Z-116 authorized limited entry of enlisted women into all ratings; allowed a limited number of officer and enlisted women to serve on the noncombatant USS *Sanctuary*; allowed women to serve as commanding officer of shore units; opened the Navy's ROTC program to women; and allowed women to attend the

National War College.

Over the course of the 1970s, opportunities for women in the Navy further expanded. In 1973, Navy women become eligible for aviation duty in non-combat aircraft. In 1978, a sex-discrimination lawsuit against the Navy led the courts to rule that the Navy could not use the 1948 Integration Act as the sole basis for excluding women from duty aboard ships. Congress amended the fiscal-year 1979 Defense Authorization Act to allow the assignment of women to ships, but at the Navy's urging women were still barred from combat ships. In 1979, Navy women became eligible for a number of shipboard duties for the first time (Women's Research and Education Institute, 2003).

During the first two decades of the AVF, Navy recruiting ads make occasional references to women as sailors, visually and textually, but the idea that women are a regular part of the Navy is repeatedly undercut. (Of course, women *weren't* a regular part of the Navy since they were restricted from so many duties.) Some ads refer specifically to men, like one that ran in *Popular Mechanics* in 1973 which shows a picture of a man at a control panel and includes the copy, "any man who learns to operate or repair the Navy's sophisticated electronic systems or nuclear power plants guarantees himself a firm foothold in the future." The wording of the advertisements, however, sometimes made an effort to acknowledge that women could also enlist. For example, an ad from 1972 which features a 1919 recruiting poster states, "The new Navy still gives young men and women the opportunity to visit exotic places," and it promises "the kind of training that helps a man or woman go places inside the Navy or out." Another ad from the same year also mentions women—the copy reads "The new Navy still gives young men (and women, too!) a chance to see the world"—but the use of parentheses and

the exclamation point make the presence of women seem like a novelty, and the same paragraph goes on to claim that the Navy offers “the kinds of jobs a man can build a world of his own on.” Ten years later, some recruiting materials retained this pattern of making a reference to the service of men and women, but also using language that indicates that the generic sailor is a man. For instance, an ad from the “Navy Adventure” series claims that “today’s Navy depends on modern equipment and the men and women who operate and maintain it,” but the copy begins by stating “most guys go through job after job” and the picture shows a man with a clipboard in front of a set of controls. The references to women in these advertisements seem like a formality.

Visually, Navy ads from this period send mixed messages about women. They seem both to be trying to reach out to women as possible recruits, and to offer women up as a potential prize for men’s service. The subtext in many ads seems to be that joining the Navy will make a man attractive to women. The advertisements that contain several pictures, showing sailors at work and at play, often include one of a man in uniform with a woman in civilian clothes (or several men and women together). Often, the man has his arm around the woman. These ads hint at the sexual rewards of being a sailor. The traditional pattern of naval life is long stretches of duty at sea, punctuated by liberty in ports of call around the world, where sailors could indulge themselves with women and alcohol, and while the ads don’t explicitly mention this aspect of Navy life, the references to travel and the images of civilian women subtly evoke it.

When women are shown dressed as sailors, they are presented in a different way than the male sailors are. Female sailors are almost always shown with a male sailor or sailors. Only one of the ads in my sample that featured multiple pictures included a shot

of a woman alone—a headshot of a woman in dress uniform. (None of the ads that only pictured one sailor featured a woman.) Men are pictured in a range of situations. They are shown performing a variety of tasks, from working in the control room of a submarine, to welding, to directing a helicopter landing. Women sailors, on the other hand, are generally not pictured working, on the deck of a ship, or with equipment. Women sailors, like the women pictured in civilian clothes, usually appear in pictures that represent travel or leisure; they are shown outdoors, often in a foreign or exotic setting, like a pigeon-filled European plaza, or near London Bridge, or on a shoreline with ancient ruins. They are travel companions to the male soldiers they accompany. Women, in a sense then, aren't being shown as true sailors; even when visually present in naval uniforms, they aren't acting like sailors. The images of them as companions to men and at leisure implicitly feminizes them and distances them from the Navy's military functions and operations.

One ad from 1973 reveals just how much trouble the Navy was having reconciling its desire to use traditional gender roles to attract men and the need to recruit women to fill “manpower” needs in the All-Volunteer Force. The ad reproduces a 1917 Howard Chandler Christy recruiting poster with a picture of a woman (a “Christy girl”) and the phrase “I want you for the Navy.” Above this, the headline states, “People used to join us to get away, to get the girl. Today they also join us to get ahead.” The copy continues:

You can still join the Navy and get around; seeing the world is a Navy fact of life. You can still join the Navy and get away from the humdrum and the ordinary to the exciting and the involving. And you can still join the Navy and get the girl (or, if you're a girl, you can join the Navy and get the guy). Girls like the way we've updated our famous bell bottoms with the handsome new uniform (on the sailor below). But the best reason for joining the new Navy is to get ahead[...]

The claim that girls like the new uniform is a bit confusing coming on the heels of the preceding sentence about getting girls and girls getting guys. Are they talking about a new uniform for men, which helps them get the girls, or did the Navy design new bell bottoms for the girls who join and are getting the guy? Are girls sailors, or admirers of the sailors who wear the handsome uniforms? To see the uniform modeled on “the sailor below,” the viewer looks at a picture which shows a man and a woman together, *both* of whom are wearing naval uniforms, but “the sailor” in this picture is the man—the woman’s uniform features a skirt. The Navy wants to appeal to men’s (heterosexual) sexuality and offers up women as a reward, but it also wants to avoid offending women and knows it must appeal to them as well, so the ad makes a token attempt at equality, without addressing whether “getting the girl” and “getting the guy” are equivalent and with it, whether joining the Navy means the same thing for women and men.

The Navy admits that until the early 1990s, it made no serious effort to recruit women into the AVF, because its use of women was so limited. At a 1993 conference at the US Naval Academy to commemorate two decades of the All-Volunteer Force, Rear Admiral Marsha Johnson Evans, who had served as Commander of the US Navy Recruiting Command explained:

What do we know about recruiting women? Frankly, precious little—except that as long as we have needed only a few women in traditional roles, we did not have to prospect. It did not take 31 calls to recruit someone—she walked into the recruiting station ready to sign. And because female demand to join was greater than the number needed, the standards for women could be higher than for men—non high-school graduates and those with Armed Forces Qualification Test scores in lower categories need not apply.

About a year ago [1992], in anticipation of the expansion of opportunities and in concert with the Navy’s desire to begin placing more women in nontraditional career paths, we began an effort to test the market. One year ago, the Navy had no experience in working the female market and no money to undertake research

on it. [...] no advertising money had been spent to create market awareness of opportunities open to women. (Evans, 1996:267)

The Navy didn't believe it needed many women, so it did little to recruit them, and it used women in recruiting materials in token or symbolic ways, often to appeal to male recruits.

Having given some background on women's relationship to the Navy, the focus can now return to the recruiting advertisements during the 1990s, a period when many of the restrictions on women's participation were lifted.

#### The Recruiting Advertisements—Part II: The 1990s to the Iraq War

The Navy began the 1990s with a new advertising slogan, "You and the Navy, Full Speed Ahead," that both emphasized forward motion and progress and harkened back to the famed exclamation of Admiral David Farragut during the Civil War battle of Mobile Bay, "damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead." These ads carry over many of the themes from previous series. All of them make references to advanced technology ("technology so high even our ships fly"), and they link the training in technology to future civilian careers; the caption over a photo of a sailor directing the landing of an F/1-18 Hornet reads "if you think it looks impressive here, imagine how it looks on a resume." In addition, the campaign also frequently mentions educational benefits and intangibles like challenge, responsibility, and growth. Most of these ads show men performing a task. One features a woman sitting at a control panel, though a man leans over her, turning a knob, as if he is supervising or instructing her. The ad also has a small photo of two men and two women in civilian clothes with bicycles; here, again, women are used to represent leisure.

In 1996, the Navy rolled out a new campaign, based on the slogan “Let the Journey Begin.” One print ad reads: “It begins with a step away from the known and a step towards the unknown.” In the foreground, the head of a serious-looking young man wearing a cap that says “Navy” gazes into the distance. This image is superimposed over a photo of a hilltop covered with tile roofs and a church steeple—it appears to be an old European village or city—overlooking an expanse of ocean with a ship in the background. The bottom of the page reads “Navy. Let the Journey Begin,” and gives a phone number to call and the URL (Internet address) for a recruiting website. There is no other text on the page, no description of job fields or educational benefits. The other initial ads in the series are similar; they promise adventure, by implying that something exciting is on the horizon, and they don’t promise anything else. Each shows the face of a young male sailor in the foreground, superimposed on an image of a ship or submarine next to a city that looks foreign. One ad promises: “Today is the day when you stop listening to the tales of other lives lived,” and another reads “You’re born, you go to school, then one day things begin to get interesting.”

A series of television commercials extend the print ads. In each one, Aaron Copland’s “Fanfare for the Common Man” rises up in the background. Each begins with a young man—on a farm, riding a bike, studying—who stops what he’s doing to look off in the distance, presumably looking for something better or more challenging than his current situation. Each ad continues with a montage of images of Navy life, including dramatic shots of submarines surfacing, small craft skimming the water next to large ships, exotic foreign ports, helicopters flying, an anchor dropping into the sea, and sailors busy at work on deck and in control rooms. The narration in each promises exciting,

unexpected new experiences. For instance, one includes the following voice-over:

It's something you've been waiting for your entire life. It begins with a step away from the known towards the unknown. It will excite you, teach you, move you, and shake you. It will take you to ports halfway around the world and into uncharted waters deep inside yourself. Above all it, it will demand your honor, your courage, and your commitment. It's your journey. Start it in the right direction.

These ads go beyond the traditional offer of adventure that a life at sea can bring to promise a transformation. The journey is to a new better, self, possibly even into manhood.

The early 1990s brought both the Tailhook scandal and changes in the law restricting women's shipboard service. The 1991 annual convention of the Tailhook Association of naval aviators led to public revelations of debauchery and accusations of the mistreatment of women, including the groping and abuse of female naval officers in attendance. In 1993, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin ordered the Navy to draft legislation to repeal the exclusion of women from combat ships, and Congress approved the changes (Women's Research and Education Institute, 2003). From that point on, women could theoretically be assigned to any Navy billet other than SEALs, (because of remaining combat exclusions) and submarine duty (based not on any combat restrictions but on the difficulty of accommodating both male and female submariners in the limited physical space of a submarine). Each of these was a major event for the Navy, and each in its own way challenged constructions of masculinity within the Navy. The opening of combat ships to women, which was fiercely resisted by much of the naval community, threatened the masculinizing function of service on a Navy ship, which stretched back to the days of romanticized man o' warsman. Tailhook exposed the Navy's tacit encouragement, in relation to naval aviators, of a brand of masculinity that includes risk-

taking behavior, sexual aggressiveness, and hard drinking. (While the Navy gave extensive support to *Top Gun*, the 1986 Paramount Studios movie about naval aviators, they withdrew support for a planned sequel, because Tailhook “made the drinking and womanizing in *Top Gun* no longer something the navy wanted to brag about” [Robb, 2004:182].)

Neither Tailhook nor the opening of roles to women seems to have had much effect on the recruiting materials of the period. The ads revisit themes that have appeared before in Navy ads, which alternate between an emphasis on high-tech career skills and an emphasis on the adventure and challenges of life at sea, in both cases aiming the appeal visually and textually at young men. Despite the new roles for women and the risk that Tailhook may have discouraged women from enlisting, the ads don’t reflect an attempt to appeal to women. In the late 1990s, the Army, Air Force, and Marines all began publishing recruiting ads in *Seventeen*, a magazine read by young women, but the Navy didn’t. A 1997 *Christian Science Monitor* article on the recruitment of women into the military in the wake of sexual harassment scandals reported that the Navy’s recruitment of women was down, not because women were reluctant to enlist, but because large numbers of women were choosing to stay in the service, and the Navy had limited spaces on its ships open to women. According to a lieutenant in the Navy Recruiting Command, “We have many, many more women wanting to come into the Navy than we have billets to fill” (quoted in Marks, 1997:3). While in theory many more positions were open to women, the Navy was not rushing to make space for them on ships.

The recruiting problems of the late 1990s affected the Navy as well as the Army.

The Navy missed its accession requirements for 1998 by over 7,000 sailors (Hauk and Parlier, 2000) and only managed to meet its goals for 1999 by lowering its target numbers and accepting more recruits with general equivalency diplomas (Myers, 1999). In an attempt to reverse the trend, the Navy, while continuing to use the slogan “Let the Journey Begin,” introduced a new campaign that focused on the lives of individual sailors.

Each of the print ads pictures a sailor, alone or in a group of other sailors, and charts his—or in one ad in my sample, her—Navy journey. A short timeline lists the sailor’s achievements and the age at which each was accomplished. For example, the Navy journey of Aaron Womack, an “operations specialist” and “drummer” who is also featured in a television commercial, includes: “works in communications dept. on board USS Coronado,” “forms band—plays in Singapore,” “attends instructor school—develops curriculum for teaching,” “certified as master training specialist in anti-sub warfare,” “attends naval leadership school,” and “earns associates degree in computer science.” While Womack’s timeline mainly focuses on his naval training, the emphasis of other ads varies. One ad shows a young man out of uniform, who has already left the Navy by age 24 for a job with Qualcomm. Others mention travel, education, and buying a “really cool car.” The one ad from this series in my sample that features a woman pictures a smiling woman in a flight suit, Lieutenant Commander Loree “Rowdy” Hirschmann, flanked by a man and woman in jumpsuits with a plane in the background. Her journey includes, after Navy ROTC and a BA in Mathematics, “attends Navy flight school to become a pilot,” “lands on aircraft carrier for the first time,” “marries fellow Navy pilot,” and “debating whether to use GI bill to finance film school or Harvard

Business School.” Hirschmann is one of the few women to join the elite group of naval aviators—the *Top Gun*, Tailhook guys. She is considering post-Navy careers with some prestige (film school has cultural cachet while Harvard Business School promises corporate success), but with no direct connection to flying, technology, the military, or her naval training. Hers is the only journey which mentions marriage, asserting her femininity, heterosexuality, and desirability (she has landed a naval aviator!).

These print ads were part of a \$20 million campaign developed by the advertising agency BBDO that also included television ads directed by film director Spike Lee (Dill, 1999). The five commercials highlight different aspects of Navy life: in “Travel,” sailors discuss the exotic ports of call to which the Navy has taken them; in “Homecoming,” a young Hispanic man at a welcome-home party is the subject of proud attention from his family and respect and admiration from younger party-goers; in “SEALs” four men discuss the challenges of being a SEAL while the camera shows them in dramatic action; “Education” presents a group of young men and women who have been given the opportunity to go to college, courtesy of the Navy; and in “Band,” a group of Hispanic and African-American men describe the high-tech jobs they perform on board the ship and the instruments they play in the blues band that they’ve formed together in their free time. Interestingly, women in the TV commercials are connected with travel and with educational benefits, rather than with shipboard life or Navy jobs.

In a congressional hearing, the Navy presented its own view of what the campaign was attempting to communicate:

Navy’s advertising campaign continues to incorporate the ‘Let the Journey Begin’ tag line in all advertising products. It highlights the attributes of ‘Navy Life’ with an underpinning tone and symbolism of core values. This research-based advertising strategy places increased emphasis on what young people can expect

in Navy life. It also highlights the advantages of a Navy career: high-tech education and life-skills training; self-challenge and preparation for the future; travel and adventure; teamwork and camaraderie; and quality of life enhancements such as leisure activities and family support. The campaign continues to add depth and realism by featuring the testimonials of real Sailors, about the fun, adventure, and challenge of Navy life. It connects with the target audience in an honest and relevant way and allows potential recruits to ‘see and hear themselves’ in the Navy. Alongside this ‘Navy Life’ campaign we are continuing to fund visibility of the existing ‘Honor, Courage, Commitment’ ads. (Ryan, 2000)

These ads, with the exception of the “SEALs” commercial, which is distinctly martial, male, and action-oriented, don’t try to present the Navy experience as qualitatively different from civilian life; rather, they present the Navy as superior to civilian life, but not foreign to it. (This is particularly true of the first incarnation of the website, as will be discussed below). The Navy presents itself as an organization that offers experience with cutting edge technology, opportunity for advancement, equal opportunity (the ads show several men from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and a smattering of women, most of whom are white), and excellent benefits, including education, travel, and leisure activities.

In the late 1990s, the Navy began using the Internet as a recruiting tool, and advertisements directed potential recruits to its website (Navyjobs.com). The Navy described itself on the site’s “About the Navy” page as follows:

Today’s Navy is a forward-thinking, technologically advanced, worldwide team of highly trained professionals serving their country at sea, under the sea, on land and in the air. Nearly 400,000 active duty men and women proudly serve in today’s ethnically diverse Navy, the majority of which, some 336,000 are enlisted Sailors and midshipmen. The opportunities for advancement are equal for all, and with the exception of SEALs and submarines, all assignments are open to women. In today’s Navy you can learn high-tech skills in one of more than 60 job fields, including such dynamic, cutting edge fields as electronics, engineering, computer technology, nuclear propulsion and aviation. The Navy can put you on the leading edge of technology, and you don’t need experience to start. Bring honor, courage, and commitment, and let the journey begin.

By describing itself as “a team of highly-trained professionals,” the Navy presents itself as though it were a corporation. It doesn’t mention that the service in question is the nation’s defense—that this is a *military* organization. Technology and equal opportunity are the two big draws that the Navy highlights. The jobs are “dynamic and cutting edge”; they no longer involve physical challenge, “the wind in your teeth.” While still showing many more men than women, the website features women more prominently and shows them in a wider variety of contexts than the print ad sample.

To high school students and graduates, the Navy specifically offers training, money for college, and the opportunity to travel. The Navy promises: “We can help turn raw talent into polished professionalism and prepare you not just for a career in the Navy, but give you a head start in whatever profession you choose...learn how we can tailor a program that best suits your goals.” Instead of stressing the differences between Navy jobs and civilian jobs, the adventure and challenge which trumps boring routine, the Navy presents itself as a professional organization, superior to, but not fundamentally different from, the civilian world. It has “better benefits than most civilian employers could hope to match” and recreational programs. In its “Frequently Asked Questions” sections, the Navy answers the query “Other than having a good job, what are the benefits of joining the Navy?” with the response:

Plenty! Here’s the short list: Outstanding educational opportunities. Exceptional training in a specialized field. Competitive salary. Excellent promotion prospects. Great sports and leisure programs. Worldwide travel and duty assignment preferences. Plus the Navy offers you non-taxable benefits, and excellent medical and dental care for you and your family.

Nothing here differentiates the Navy from a civilian workplace. None of the benefits have to do with what the Navy actually is and what it does. That the Navy named its

website [Navyjobs.com](http://Navyjobs.com) is telling.

The Navy promises college students and graduates: “If you’re a college graduate looking to maximize your potential, today’s Navy can put you on the fast track to success and personal fulfillment. As a Navy Officer, you’ll step into a responsible position that offers you action, adventure and travel opportunities unparalleled in any civilian organization.” Navy officers reap many personal rewards: “In addition to traveling and living in exotic locales, you are able to work on personal goals and strive for professional achievement alongside equally driven and talented individuals.” The Navy claims that “the standard of living for an officer is excellent,” and they bolster that claim with a photo of people playing golf.

This initial version of the website can be read as an extension of the trend that began in the 1980s of emphasizing the Navy as a pathway to a career. Not a trade, or a job, or a good skill, but a professional career. The late 1990s were a period of low unemployment, economic expansion, and the rise of dot-com wealth. Internet-based and technology-intensive start-up firms were celebrated in the media.<sup>4</sup> Instead of emphasizing the differences between Navy and civilian life and the challenges and adventure of life at sea, Navy ships are almost presented as technology-intensive floating corporate campuses, with plenty of perks. A young man may not have the chance to be a part of a high-tech start-up, where long hours are balanced by the excitement and challenge of a new venture, the prestige of working in the economy’s hottest sector, and the potential for stock-option wealth, but he can “maximize [his] potential” and be a

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<sup>4</sup> In 1997, one commentator for a technology publication complained about journalists calling high-technology firms “sexy” and referring to Microsoft founder Bill Gates as a “sex-symbol” (Benjamin, 1997).

professional in the technology-intensive Navy. The picture of the Navy presented on the website reflects models of masculine achievement that held sway in the civilian world, where jobs in the technology sector carried great prestige. They were framed as strenuous and demanding, requiring technical skill, creative thinking, intelligence, and stamina, and the work done at these high-tech firms was seen as the key to our economic and technological future.<sup>5</sup> The emphasis on equal opportunity also fits with the masculinity of the new dominant corporate culture; despite continuing male privilege and the continuation of practices that help sustain men's dominance of the corporate world,<sup>6</sup> Connell and Wood's (2005) model of transnational business masculinity includes "a self-conscious modernity in relation to nationality, sexuality, and gender" and a "conscious endorsement of gender equity" (359).

This corporate, equal-opportunity view of Navy life did not sit well with many military observers. As was the case with the Army, some commentators blamed Navy recruitment problems on a perceived lack of masculinity in the service's public image and made negative comparisons to the still-virile Marines. To these commentators, the presence of women in some ads, combined with a lack of overt markers of a physical, warrior masculinity, publicly symbolized a feminization of the Navy or an emphasis on gender equality at the expense of the Navy's image as a fighting force.

In an article in US Naval Institute's journal *Proceedings*, former Navy Commander Thomas Strother claims that while young, blue-collar men enlist for a variety of reasons, including economic security or a desire for adventure, "usually the other (albeit rarely

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<sup>5</sup> See Cooper (2000) for a discussion of how "new economy" high-tech work is framed as masculine through these traits.

<sup>6</sup> See Hamm (1997) on the barriers women face in Silicon Valley and the high-tech sector.

admitted) reason was to enjoy the rite of passage: to become a man” (1999). Strother confesses that one of his main reasons for joining the Navy was that “it was different from ‘normal society’”; unlike the “feminized culture” of elementary and high school, “it was a bastion of masculinity where young men were encouraged to be a little wild if it contributed to combat readiness” (ibid.). Strother claims that the military’s lifting of the ban on gay people serving in 1993<sup>7</sup> and the end of the ban on women serving in combat vessels and aircraft are directly to blame for recruiting problems. According to Strother:

since allowing women to serve in combat roles, recruiting slowly has slid in the tank. The Navy has countered this falloff in recruiting with ideas on how to recruit more females. This society is a long way from becoming gender-blind; if the Navy thinks it is solving its problems by running co-ed advertisements in order to recruit more women and men, it will accomplish neither goal. It will take many years, if ever, for it to be acceptable in our nation for teenage girls to fight and die in the military, and because of Navy Recruiting ‘women-in-charge’ ads, fewer blue-collar teenaged boys will join. The last thing that many of our prospective male recruits need is another matriarch. Plus, as my 19-year-old nephew told me when I asked him to consider the Navy for the challenge it offered, “How hard can the Navy be if all you have is sissies and girls in it?”[...] The perception in working-class America (in this case New Jersey) is that the Navy is now a haven for gays and women. Their attitude is: What self-respecting teenaged guy would join the Navy? If you believe I am wrong, look at the very macho series of Marine Corps TV commercials. Is the Marine Corps suffering from the horrible recruiting problems that plague the Navy? No. (Ibid.)

Strother goes on to ask whether the Navy can “recruit enough gays and women to offset the loss of working-class males who, feeling cheated of that tough Navy boot camp, turn to the still macho Marine Corps or pass up the military entirely” and puts it to the admirals to “decide if it is worth it to toughen the image of the Navy by ending recruiting

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<sup>7</sup> Of course, the military did *not* lift the ban on gays in the military in 1993. It instituted the policy of “don’t ask, don’t tell,” under which the military is not supposed to ask service members about their sexual orientation, and service members weren’t supposed to reveal it. The ban has not been lifted, and gay service members continue to be kicked out of the military. Strother, however, presents the policy change as simply a lifting of the ban.

appeals that deter young men” (ibid.).

Strother conflates the issue of image with the question of the toughness of the Navy as an experience, especially in relation to boot camp. He has been discussing perceptions, but seems to take for granted that Navy boot camp must have changed. If the ban on service by gay men and lesbians had indeed been lifted, it was not specifically a Navy policy and would have applied to the “still macho” Marine Corps as well. While the Navy ads of the 1990s, and the BBDO “Let the Journey Begin” campaign in particular, did show some women, to describe them as “women-in-charge” ads is certainly a stretch, at least as far as the ads in my sample are concerned. Certainly the Navy wasn’t featuring gay sailors in its recruitment materials. The heterosexuality of the most “in-charge” woman shown, Lieutenant Commander Hirschmann, is emphasized in the description of her Navy journey (although clearly it’s gay male sailors that concern Strother). It seems that for Strother, the presence of women and the lack of overt macho-ness in the ads serve to challenge the masculinity of the service overall, making it appear as a “haven for gays,” even though Navy policies on homosexuality would not differ from those of the other services. I would argue that the Navy did still deploy a form of masculinity in its late-90s advertising, but a civilianized, post-masculinity-crisis, transformed masculinity, which, to a traditionalist, does not count as masculinity, certainly not in relation to the military.

The same year, another commentator in *Proceedings*, naval aviator Lieutenant Christian Bonat, negatively compared Navy advertising, and specifically the ad featuring female naval aviator Hirschmann, to Marine Corp advertising. Bonat looks at a Marine ad with a picture of a shaved-headed recruit struggling to climb over an obstacle and the

tagline “Pain Is Weakness Leaving the Body.” Bonat analyzes the ad as follows:

The subtext speaks of the mind and body “meeting” a common goal and “winning.” Who is the intended audience here? My pop-psychological Madison Avenue analysis is that this service is targeting those in a young, active demographic and offering them a challenge—both physical and mental. No direct benefit or reward is offered, save the anticipated pride and confidence that the recruit soon will have as he succeeds in pulling himself over that obstacle. What does this ad say about the Marine Corps? Is warrior ethos too much to glean out of this ad? Maybe so, but it certainly would reinforce that idea if it already were there. This ad presents a tough and challenging place to be. The Marine Corps shows itself as an organization that the reader would be proud to be a part of—if he could measure up, and if he could get over that obstacle. It also describes an organization that the nation would be proud to have as its premier fighting force. (1999)

Bonat then describes the Hirschmann ad and the features of her timeline, and asks the same questions about it that he does about the Marine ad:

Who is the intended audience here? Again, my analysis tells me the service in question is targeting a young, college-bound demographic and offering education benefits, among other things, as reward for going to flight school. At first glance, the cynic in me thinks this is specifically aimed at females, but then again, it could be aimed at young males. What does this ad say about the Navy? First, it certainly must be short of people seeking ROTC scholarships or who want to be aviators. Second, the Navy provides equal opportunity with regard to gender and it provides educational benefits. Any sacrifice for a common goal, reinforcement of a proud heritage, or reference to a warrior ethos? The three service members do connote a team atmosphere. But nothing in this ad even implies any sacrifice—except maybe the late nights spend debating whether to ‘journey’ to Harvard for your MBA. The ad also downplays any challenging training by using the soft verb ‘attend’ when referring to “Navy flight school.” Does one “attend” Parris Island? The ad, in an apparent oversight, leaves out ‘attending’ anything else—like a deployment to the Western Pacific or the Persian Gulf in service to the nation’s interests, or ‘attending’ a potential foe’s hasty departure from the breathing world. Could the national and current service members be proud of the Navy as displayed in this advertisement? With respect to our emphasis on equal opportunity and education, probably so. With respect to the Navy being a challenging organization with a proud heritage and a dedication to remaining a supreme fighting force, however—our recruiting and retention numbers provide the answer. (Ibid.)

Bonat sees a great deal in these two ads. He attributes warrior ethos and sacrifice to the

Marines and projects that a reader would be proud to be a part of the Marines and the nation would be proud of the Marines as a fighting force, all from an ad that shows someone struggling to meet a physical challenge on an obstacle course. Bonat criticizes the Navy ad for not presenting the Navy's "proud heritage" or status as "a supreme fighting force." As he's described it, the Marine ad doesn't do these things either. Like the Navy ad, the Marine ad doesn't make reference to deployment or killing an enemy. But the Marine ad does have a more overtly masculine subtext, and its physicality, its concern for triumph over pain and weakness, which are traditional components of a warrior masculinity, stand in for all of the other values that Bonat reads into the ads. Bonat does not overtly connect the Marine ad to manhood, nor does he connect the organizational values he attributes to the Marines to men or masculinity—he seems to be scrupulously avoiding such language—but he does implicitly make those connections. The martial masculinity of the Marines is heightened by contrast to the Navy, which, by merely picturing a woman and tracing out her career, has committed the sin of attempting to appeal to women. ("The cynic" in Bonat thinks the ad is aimed at women, implying that he finds such a strategy objectionable.)

By 2001, the Internet-stock bubble had burst and high-tech start-ups had lost their venture capital and their allure. This may be one reason why in its next incarnation, Navy advertising shifted away from an emphasis on benefits and career, back toward adventure and challenge—this time with a distinctly martial tenor and a return to a more exclusively male portrayal of Navy life. Around the same time that the Army attempted to revitalize its image with the "Army of One" campaign, the Navy also made major changes in how it presented itself, with a sleek, sharp-edged new campaign. In

September of 2000, the Navy awarded a contract to the advertising firm Campbell-Ewald, and early in 2001, the Navy adopted the slogan “Accelerate Your Life,” rolled out new advertising, and revamped its website, changing the URL from navyjobs.com to navy.com.

A print ad from the new series asks, “If someone wrote a book about your life, would anyone want to read it?” Underneath the picture of a shaved-headed young man in sunglasses carrying gear, the copy reads: “You’ve got one life. Make it count. Check out the Life Accelerator at navy.com or call 1-800-USA-NAVY.” The ads feature a flashy, angular new font, and direct the reader to the Navy website’s new “Life Accelerator,” an aptitude test that advises visitors to the site about Navy careers that might suit them. The Life Accelerator has to do with Navy careers, but the pitch that leads potential recruits there evokes excitement, adventure, and a departure from the routine. A television commercial which ran on the hit show “Survivor: Outback” in the Spring of 2001 asks the same question as the print ad. As throbbing rock music by the group Godsmack thunders in the background, the viewer sees a quickly-shifting series of images, including a face in camouflage make-up, a small craft skimming over the ocean’s surface and up into the back of a helicopter, a man with a rifle seen through a night-vision scope, men dropping out of a helicopter into water, and men with rifles dropping over the side of a small boat into water. The imagery is all distinctly martial, the action is fast, and the players are all men.

Bob Garfield, who panned the “Army of One” advertising when it debuted two months earlier, reviewed the initial “Accelerate Your Life” television campaign in *Advertising Age*:

“Accelerate Your Life”[...] splits the difference between “Be All You Can Be” and “Join the Navy, See the World.” It’s about ceasing to be a slacker, or a loser in some numbing job, in favor of genuine, heart-pounding adventure. The promise isn’t that you’ll make yourself into a better person or broaden your vistas via exotic ports of call. It’s about the rush, dude. The adrenaline. The experience. Even the danger. The X-Games, basically, only with heat-seeking missiles instead of skateboards. Three very similar spots carve that message into discrete slices. All show rapid pulses of sea-training action, images of warships and dinghies, helicopters and Seals, accompanied by hard-driving percussion and punctuated by black screen. “If someone wrote a book about your life,” the voiceover asks, “would anyone want to read it?” And we’re, like, ouch. That is sooooo cold...but compelling—and, we believe, quite motivating.[...] Not a word here is mentioned about service, or duty, or patriotism or some potential long-term benefit. It’s all about the experience right now. (Garfield, 2001b)

While Garfield makes fun of the campaign a bit by mimicking the language of the type of young people he expects will be appealed to by the ad (and he also later compares the focus on immediate experience to the way illicit drugs are—successfully—sold to the same target market), he highlights the speed, the action, and the distinctly martial tenor of the campaign.

In the summer of 2001, the Navy asked its advertising agency, Campbell-Ewald, to develop a public service announcement “to convey the Navy’s core mission of projecting power globally to protect and defend America” (Military.com, 2004). The Navy was considering several slogans, but after the terrorist attacks of September 11 of that year, one in particular seemed to stand out from the rest and “capture the fresh sense of danger and combine it with the renewed pride and determination felt throughout the fleet” (ibid.). After successful test-marketing, “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of All Who Threaten It” debuted on cable TV and in print ads in *Boy’s Life* and *Entertainment Weekly* in early 2002. This slogan taps into the re-masculinization and militarization of US foreign policy in the wake of the terrorist attacks, re-invigorating and toughening the Navy’s image for a post-September 11 audience. (The Army, perhaps because it needed

to attract more women to meet its recruiting quotas, did not so whole-heartedly embrace a warrior approach.)

The print ad pictures an aircraft carrier with support ships in the ocean, with a very faint grid pattern superimposed over the page. The headline reads “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of all who threaten it,” and small text along the bottom of the page says “For over 200 years, the US Navy has been protecting America’s most valuable asset: freedom. If you’re ready to answer your country’s call, check out the Life Accelerator at [navy.com](http://navy.com) or call 1-800-USA-NAVY.” The ad has a sleek, high-tech look thanks to the text fonts and the grid, but it makes reference to Navy history and tradition, and makes an explicit call for patriotic service. The companion television commercial, like previous ones in the “Accelerate Your Life” series, uses thundering rock music and fast-moving, inter-cut images—including a helicopter rising into the air, a submarine, and a jet taking off from the deck of an aircraft carrier. The voiceover says, “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of all who threaten it. Navy. Accelerate your life.”

Another television commercial available on the Campbell-Ewald website emphasizes nothing but action and excitement, with a distinctly masculinist cast to its appeal. “Minivan” (available at [www.campbell-ewald.com/html/work/television/navy.minivan.htm](http://www.campbell-ewald.com/html/work/television/navy.minivan.htm)), shows a series of very fast-moving images of undersea divers, men with rifles dropping out of helicopters, speeding watercraft, jets flying, and the like. This parade of images is briefly interrupted for a shot of a hapless-looking civilian man, gazing somewhat blankly at a minivan. Over the de-rigueur rock music, a voice-over announcer says, “and to think, somewhere, some poor guy is buying a minivan.” The Navy, with its fast action and prominent display of weaponry, contrasts militarized

excitement and adventure with the undoubtedly dull life of the guy buying the minivan. A minivan is not a fast, sexy car, but an automobile that represents family obligations, meant for hauling around kids and groceries—it's a suburban mom's car. The man buying the minivan is implicitly emasculated, highlighting the masculinizing power of the Navy.

A later version of the “Life, Liberty” television commercial and other print ads in the series combine the new emphasis on military action with the kind of appeals the Navy has used over the course of the AVF, of both adventure and challenge, and tangible benefits like access to technology, education, and career advancement. In one ad, for example, a sailor dangles in the air, high above the deck of an aircraft carrier. A “to do” list in the corner of the page includes such disparate items as: “get airlifted off a carrier”; “take psych. Finals in Maui”; “run w/bulls in Spain”; “decipher code in 6 languages”; and “defend freedom.” The list draws attention to various benefits of Navy life, like travel, education, and interesting jobs, but the imagery emphasizes the main draw, which is the militarized thrill of the airlift, while the references to Maui and running with the bulls add to the aura of excitement and adventure.

In 2003, the Navy ran a few print ads that departed from the formula, focusing on the Navy as a source of opportunity, in particular for African-American men. Two versions of the same ads feature different pictures—both of Black men—with the same text. They read:

I've never been the type to wait for anything, especially an opportunity. Matter of fact, the only handout that was ever given to me was a Navy brochure. I wanted to see the world...I did. I wanted a bright future, and I have one of those, too. I've worked; now I own my own company...all, because of the experience I've gained in the Navy. So do what I did. Call 1-800-USA-Navy or log on to navy.com.

In one ad, the top half of the page shows a smiling Black man in a sport jacket, sitting at a desk holding a pen and a Navy mug; on the bottom of the page the desk morphs into water and a jet takes off from the deck of a carrier. These ads seem to assume that for the group targeted, upward mobility is a bigger draw—and perhaps a more coveted marker of masculinity than fast action and adventure.

Overall, the “Accelerate Your Life” campaign was action-oriented and militaristic, even before the attacks of September 11, 2001, which only seemed to heighten the trend. Some of the “Accelerate Your Life” TV commercials show a surprising number of guns. The Navy’s military role has very little to do with individual sailors carrying rifles—even calling the service members pictured “sailors” seems like a misnomer. All of the ads flaunt Navy vessels, with dramatic shots of technologically-advanced ships, submarines, and planes in motion. The Navy personnel engaging in the exciting, martial action all appear to be men. It’s possible that some of the individuals obscured by their uniforms and gear are actually women, but the impression is of a male world. The ads don’t talk about “the wind in your teeth” or “men [testing] themselves against the sea” as they did in the 1970s, but there is again an emphasis on physicality, toughness, and challenge, this time in the form of a visually expressed technology-tinged warrior masculinity.

### Conclusions: Masculinity and Navy Recruiting

Over the course of the All-Volunteer Force, Navy recruiting appeals have tended to shift back and forth between an emphasis on career and benefits, with the promise of good jobs or high-tech training, and on adventure and challenge. Each of these sets of

appeals, however, contains a masculine subtext, if not an overt association with manhood. The career and benefits theme was presented first in terms of masculine pride in work that is physically and mentally challenging—“good, hard work”—later shifting to an emphasis on professional careers, personal success, and exposure to cutting-edge technology, more closely aligning the Navy with the high-status careers of the information age. While the latter is less blatantly masculine, the connections to technological prowess, professionalism, and success, fit with dominant models of masculinity in the civilian world. The Navy’s other main approach is to highlight adventure, offering young men the excitement of life at sea and challenges that allow him to test and prove himself. In the 2000s, the offer of adventure became more explicitly militaristic, layering a warrior masculinity on top of other kinds of appeals. The fact that the Navy began utilizing what could be considered traditional military masculinity recently in its history shows its lingering appeal and its continuing power to attract some sectors of the wider culture—despite the general displacement of traditional masculinities—when other forms of masculinity may have failed them. The Navy is asserting that its commitment to masculinity hasn’t weakened.

The Navy’s personnel needs (or at least its understanding of them) are also revealed in its gendering of Navy life. The ads make token references to women as sailors but basically present the Navy as a male world, sometimes using images of women to attract men rather than to recruit women. While almost all Navy ships are theoretically open to women, in practice, space for women is limited, and their marginal status on board ships—the locus of naval power and status—is reflected in their place within the Navy’s self-representations. With the creation of the AVF, however, the Navy

broke with its racist past—at least representationally—and expanded its offer of masculinity to African-American men, tapping into a potential source of manpower that had been underutilized.

## Chapter 5: THE MARINE CORPS

This chapter examines how the Marine Corps has dealt with the question of how to recruit an all-volunteer force in a period when masculinity has been in flux and women's roles have been expanding. While military institutions in general are tied to masculinity, the Marine Corps in particular, with its emphasis on combat, has been seen as the force with the most macho and aggressive men. With the end of the draft, the Corps didn't retreat from its association with masculinity, but sought to emphasize it. I came to this conclusion by collecting print advertisements published by the Marines in the magazines *Life*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Sports Illustrated* and *Seventeen* between 1970 and 2003 and analyzing the 39 different advertisements I found to determine how the Marine Corps represents itself and how it uses ideas about gender in its appeals. I also viewed six television commercials<sup>1</sup> that aired between 1980 and 2003 and three different incarnations of the Marine Corps' recruiting website.

In terms of its recruiting materials, over the course of the AVF, the Marines have altered their approach slightly, and the look of the ads has changed over the years. At the beginning of the AVF period, Marine Corps ads worked to differentiate the Marines from the other services, noting that all of the services provide benefits and job training, but the Marine Corps offers a special challenge and a sense of pride. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Marines are frequently posed in dress uniforms, and when they aren't, they are shown in utility uniforms (fatigues) in a specifically martial context, like dangling out of

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<sup>1</sup> While the print ads were collected in a systematic fashion (see Chapter One), and I know how frequently the service branches chose to publish a given print ad as well as in what publication, this is not the case with the television commercials. Some of the commercials I saw as they were being broadcast, some I found on the Internet, and some were in the collection of the Museum of Television and Radio.

a helicopter or crawling up a riverbank with a rifle. In a series of ads from the late 1990s and early 2000s, a shaved-headed recruit struggles through some portion of an obstacle course, with a promise that by the end of training he will be completely transformed. Despite any changes in the look of the ads or shifts in emphasis, overall, Marine Corps advertising has remained remarkably consistent in terms of its message. Throughout the entire period of the AVF, the Marine Corps has emphasized its elitism. The main message is that the Marines will demand that a recruit prove his worth, but once he has met the challenge, he'll know he's one of the best and feel the pride that's a Marine tradition. The Marines are basically presenting a rite of passage into manhood. Marine recruiting advertisements rarely show women and make no attempt to use gender-inclusive language. Marine ads talk specifically to and about men, and they offer them the chance to become warriors.

After briefly discussing Marine Corps culture and providing some historical background to Marine recruiting, this chapter will present an analysis of Marine recruiting materials over the course of the all-volunteer force and how they construct masculinity. It will also examine the place of women in the Marine Corps and within Marine recruiting materials and how women fit into the Corps' ideas about gender.

### Marine Culture

The culture of the Marine Corps is reflected in its slogans and mottoes: “semper fidelis” (always faithful), “every Marine a rifleman,” and “once a Marine, always a Marine.” The Marine Corps sees itself as a brotherhood, and according to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, it has “actively discouraged the emergence within the

corps of subcultures based on branches or separate war-fighting communities” (CSIS, 2000:13). Or, as RAND strategist Carl Builder put it, while each of the other services maintains internal distinctions and hierarchies, “to be a marine is enough” (quoted in Ricks, 1997:189). The focus of the institution is the rifleman, the common enlisted Marine, but that Marine is anonymous and is celebrated as one of the group, not as an individual.

In his examination of Marine Corps boot camp, *Making the Corps*, journalist Thomas E. Ricks describes the Corps as “a culture apart” (Ricks, 1997:19). According to Ricks:

The Air Force has its planes, the Navy its ships, the Army its obsessively written and obeyed “doctrine” that dictates how to act. Culture—that is, the values and assumptions that shape its members—is all the Marines have. It is what holds them together. They are the smallest of the US military services, and in many ways the most interesting. Theirs is the richest culture: formalistic, insular, elitist, with a deep anchor in their own history and mythology. Much more than the other branches, they place pride and responsibility at the lowest levels of the organization [...] Alone among the US military services, the Marines have bestowed their name on their enlisted ranks. The Army has Army officers and soldiers, the Navy has naval officers and sailors, the Air Force has Air Force officers and airmen—but the Marines have officers and Marines. (Ibid.)

The Marines have a strong sense of who they are and a deep pride in their institution. They celebrate their history and inculcate recruits with the sense that they are the latest in a long line of warriors who have served their country in battles—battles which are likely to be named aloud at Marine Corps events and celebrations—stretching back to the Revolutionary War.

This strong sense of culture and the greater concern with their identity than with their size or their hardware or a stratified structure has helped the Corps to be an adaptable organization militarily, but may make it less flexible in other ways. According

to Ricks, because the Corps isn't heavily invested in its number of personnel and its hardware, but rather in preserving its independent culture, the Marines are "less threatened [than the other services] by the post-Cold War cuts in the defense budget—but more worried by social changes, including those relating to gays and women, imposed on the services" (ibid.:189). Judith Hicks Stiehm also observes how the presence of women disrupts Marine culture. According to Stiehm, "The Marine slogan 'Every man a rifleman' [sic] glorifies the interchangeability of personnel: the substitutability, the possibility, the equally shared jeopardy of every marine" (Stiehm, 1989:231). This idea of shared risk, which all of the services promote to some degree, is, of course, a myth. Only some men are in positions that make combat or exposure to violence a possibility. Stiehm notes, "Women in uniform make this myth less believable. Their very presence forces recognition that military personnel are *not* 'in this together.' Holding noncombat jobs only, uniformed women are a constant reminder that all those in uniform are not equally jeopardized" (ibid.). The presence of women in the Marine Corps upsets the idea of the generic, interchangeable, anonymous, fighting Marine, who sees every other Marine as his brother. Women can't be riflemen, and thus they don't fit into the culture as legitimate Marines. The Marine Corps tends to put women into a special, separate category, both in its institutional practices and in its recruiting materials, which, like Marine culture, celebrate an anonymous warrior.

The strong sense of culture, the insularity, and the concepts of brotherhood and "once an Marine always a Marine" which encourage Marines to privilege their identities as Marines over other aspects of their identities may also contribute to racial problems within the Corps. According to Thomas Ricks:

the Marine culture also sometimes seems too narrow for some of its own people—the 27,000 Marines who are black. In 1994, for example, the Center for Naval Analyses, a Defense Department-supported think tank, trying to determine why minorities did relatively poorly in joining and rising in the Marine officer corps, pointed to the culture as a problem. “All of the black former Marines present (at a symposium) spoke about the narrowness of Marine Corps culture,” the CNA reported. They went on to speak of “the need for blacks to conform to this culture to succeed in the Marine Corps. A particular style of dress was expected: khakis, polo shirts, and deck shoes. Those wearing jeans or silk shirts off duty were subject to ridicule or chastisement from senior officers.” (Ricks, 1997:203)<sup>2</sup>

Ricks believes that though only six percent of the officer corps is African-American, “the complaints of black Marines about the Corps generally seem to point more to insensitivity, and perhaps an ignorance of how to alter the Corps’ culture to make blacks more comfortable, than they do to a deep-seated racism” (ibid.:204). The Corps, like the other services, certainly has racism in its history. The Marine Corps, unlike the Army and the Navy, did not recruit any African-Americans during World War I. The Corps began, somewhat unwillingly, to recruit Black (male) Marines for the first time in 1942, for service in segregated battalions that would occupy Pacific islands that white units had captured from the Japanese (Segal, 1989:106-107). The Corps hadn’t intended to continue the Black units after the war ended, but resumed enlistment of African-Americans and then began to integrate them under orders from President Truman (Millet, 1991:468). Full integration was hastened by the manpower and logistical demands of the Korean War. The Marine Corps, like the other services, suffered violent racial incidents during the Vietnam War, most notably in 1969 at Camp Lejeune and Kaneohe Naval Air

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout his discussion, Ricks seems to be talking about problems faced by African-American men, though he seems unaware that he is neglecting to talk about African-American women. I would guess that despite whatever specific problems non-white women face, because of combat restrictions and the fact that women are outsiders to Marine culture, any woman in the Marines is seen as female before she is seen as anything else.

Station (Segal, 1989:111). As noted earlier, African-American men, mainly as a function of socio-economic status, were over-represented in the draft and more likely to end up in the ground combat forces, which included service in the Marine Corps. The perception that African-Americans were bearing an unequal burden in fighting the Vietnam War contributed to the racial unrest.

In dealing with its racial problems, the Corps has promoted the idea that there are no black Marines or white Marines but, as the saying goes, “there are only green Marines” (Millet, 1991:599). Like other aspects of Marine culture, this view of race asks Marines to allow their identities as Marines to subsume other parts of their identities; it also doesn’t take into account the ways that this “green Marine” culture has been directed and created by white men or how asking people to make being a Marine the dominant part of their identities may have different meanings and costs for whites and non-whites. However, in the AVF era, this seems to be more of a problem for Marine officers than for enlisted Marines, the vast majority of whom don’t make a career of service and leave after a few years. Recruiting materials certainly depict African-American men, offering them the same warrior masculinity and transformation as white men, though they aren’t shown nearly as frequently as white men.

### The Recruiting Background

The Marine Corps is the smallest service, a factor which allows the Marines to claim elitism in their ads in a way that the larger services couldn’t do as credibly, and they had the fewest ads, by far, in my sample. In part that may be because they need fewer recruits than the other services, though they need a proportionally large number for

their size. The Marines have a smaller leadership structure than the other services; fewer members can stay in the service and be promoted, so turnover is purposefully high and relatively large numbers of recruits—about 40,000—are needed each year (Freedburg, 1999). About 75% of enlisted Marines leave the service after their initial term is up (Schmitt, 2005). This structure, along with the high proportion of combat jobs, means that unlike the Navy or the Air Force, the Marine Corps doesn't need recruits with the aptitude for technical training who will stay in the service long enough to justify the costs of that training. The Corps needs short-timers who are looking for a few years of action and excitement before returning to the civilian world. This set of needs helps to drive recruiting strategy; the Marines can use the promise of a warrior masculinity to lure in young men who want to spend a few years doing combat-oriented jobs, and they don't need to emphasize benefits or job training as would probably be necessary to recruit people who would make a longer commitment and do more technical jobs.

The small number of advertisements may also be attributable to the Corps' skill at forging a distinct public image and its ability to obtain positive media coverage. Throughout its history, the Marine Corps has had to fight off attempts to abolish the service, and it has become adept at justifying its existence and working with the press (McCarthy and Haralson, 2003).

During the recruiting crisis of the late 1990s, the Marine Corps, which was able to meet its recruiting goals, was held up as model for the other services to follow. Marine recruiting materials of the period downplayed benefits and highlighted challenge, elitism, and masculinity, and some commentators believed that the other services should emulate the Marines, and in particular their appeals to a masculine warrior spirit (Bonat, 1999;

Keene, 1999; Smart, 2000; Strother, 1999). The Marines were lauded for their recruiting skills, though the Marine Corps attributed its success to the qualities of the service itself, its values and its high standards, rather than its ability to sell itself. Despite the plaudits for the Corps' recruiting skills, it had done poorly at recruiting in the 1970s, as all of the services did, and had trouble again in 1995, missing its goals for the year (Schmitt, 2005). The Marines' problems of the mid-1990s didn't receive as much coverage as the successes of the late 1990s. The Corps has managed to create a mythology about its recruiting practices, and many articles have repeated the claim that the Marines have never used benefits to sell themselves, but only offered the chance to become a Marine (Keene, 1999; McCarthy and Haralson, 2003). One article goes so far as to claim that "the Corps, as it has almost since its inception 223 years ago when legend says recruiting was done out of a Philadelphia tavern, offers little more than a challenge to all comers," taking the word of a Public Affairs chief for the Marine Corps Recruiting Command, Gunnery Sergeant Cynthia Atwood, that since 1775 "We've really never changed our recruiting approach [...] We are still offering young men and women only the chance to be Marines" (Keene, 1999).

It may be true that in 1775 the Marine Corps offered young men little more than the chance to become Marines, for the simple fact that at the time the Corps didn't have much in the way of benefits to offer. During the Revolutionary War, soldiers and sailors could receive enlistment bounties, but the Marines didn't have that enticement available, and the nascent Corps had trouble recruiting, never meeting its authorized strength.

According to Marine historian Allan R. Millet:

Recruiting officers visited port cities and towns in New England, the Mid-Atlantic states, Virginia, and Charleston, South Carolina, but found few men of "sobriety

and fidelity” who would enlist. [The first Marine Corps Commandant, William Ward] Burrows also had to allow his officers to recruit aliens (mostly Irishmen) up to one-quarter of the Corps’s strength and reduce the height requirement to 5 feet, 4 inches, although he prohibited the enlistment of blacks, Indians, and mulattoes. Many recruits were physically defective, and Burrows finally had to force his officers to pay for such rejects’ expenses from their own pockets. Marine officers often marched their recruits to their camps under armed guard and tried to get them aboard ship as quickly as possible, especially if warm weather was approaching, for desertions increased with temperature and the availability of unskilled jobs.[...] There was little about the new Corps that marked it as an elite military unit. (1991:31)

Not only was the early Marine Corps not in any way elite, it served different purposes than the Marines of today. The original functions of Marines were to act as ships guards (in essence, protecting officers from the crew), provide firepower during battles at sea, mainly from their muskets but in some cases from the ships’ guns, and be a part of landing parties for skirmishes on shore. Marines fought on ships but did not sail them. The Marine Corps couldn’t find enough men to perform these duties in the War of 1812, despite the introduction of an enlistment bounty (lower than the Army’s), and eventually an authorization for advance pay (*ibid.*:46).

The Corps began to change, in its purposes, its public image, and its ability to recruit, with the expansionist foreign policy of the turn of the last century. The Corps began to perform expeditionary duties, increased in size, and gained prestige, finally becoming the elite and selective force that it claims to always have been. Recruiting posters of the late 1800s had made appeals based on benefits (despite the stereotype that the Corps has never done so), namely pay, job security, food, clothing, and travel, but in the early 1900s, posters began to refer to the Marines’ foreign service and present the Marine as a warrior, with slogans like “The First to Fight” and “If You Want to Fight! Join the Marines” (*ibid.*:175). During this period, the Corps began to develop its public

relations skills. Recruiters wrote articles for newspapers and told stories to reporters about the heroism of Marines in the colonial service and the Spanish-American War, and in 1911 the Corps founded a recruiting publicity bureau in New York City. The bureau published *The Recruiters' Bulletin*, with adventure stories recruiters could use to entice recruits, it created pamphlets on the Marine Corps, it worked with major newspapers, and it even produced an early motion picture entitled "The Peacemakers: An Educational Pictorial Showing the United States Marines in Barracks, at Sea, and on the Field of Battle," with footage of the Marines fighting in the Caribbean (ibid.:175-176).

From that period on, the Corps cultivated and mainly managed to maintain the image of an elite force of combat-ready warriors. Recruiting posters from both World Wars highlighted the Corps' connection to combat. During World War I, the Corps could boast that it was a selective, all-volunteer service, as the newly-created Selective Service System conscripted men into the Army; as Millet reports, during that war, the Marines' successful recruiting and public relations efforts drew "the cream of the 1917 volunteers" and the Marines only accepted 60,189 of the 239,274 men who tried to enlist (ibid.:289). During World War II, the Marines did very well in the rush to enlist after the attack on Pearl Harbor, but as that rush subsided and manpower needs expanded, the Corps had to lower enlistment standards in April 1942 to meet its recruiting quotas. Despite this, and even as President Roosevelt put all men between the ages of eighteen and thirty-six under selective service and put an end to volunteering, the Marine Corps still managed to maintain its image as an elite, all-volunteer force, by identifying the draftees who preferred the Marines and maneuvering them into the Corps and by enlisting seventeen-year-olds (ibid.:373-374). Despite willingly accepting draftees for the first time during

the Korean War (ibid.:508), within the framework of Cold War conscription, up until the Vietnam War, the Marine Corps generally maintained its reputation and image. The Marine Corps was not perceived as the most prestigious of the armed forces—that distinction belonged to the newer and more technologically-advanced Air Force—but it was still the service for warriors; according to surveys conducted during the Cold War, the stereotypes associated with the Marine Corps were “physical toughness and danger” (Moskos, 1970:18).

### The Recruiting Advertisements

The Marine Corps faced the commencement of the All-Volunteer Force in dismal condition. While all of the services were suffering demoralization and loss of public confidence in the wake of the Vietnam War, Thomas Ricks claims that the “the Marines were arguably the most devastated of the services” (1997:136). Because the Marine Corps is the most combat-oriented of all the services, and the war was mainly fought on the ground by combat troops, the Marine Corps was especially damaged and demoralized. The Marine Corps bore more casualties in Vietnam than it did in World War II, and it suffered from drug abuse and violent racial incidents. As warrior masculinity was under attack in the larger culture by both the anti-war and women’s movements, the Marine Corps, as a major purveyor of this type of masculinity, may have felt under siege. Jeffrey Record described the Marines in the early 1970s in the United States Naval Institutes *Proceedings* as follows:

the Corps registered rates of courts-martial, non-judicial punishments, unauthorized absences, and outright desertions unprecedented in its own history, and, in most cases, three to four times those plaguing the US Army. Violence and

crime at recruit depots and other installations escalated; in some cases, officers ventured out only in pairs or groups and only in daylight. (Quoted in *ibid.*:136)

The Marine Corps had stopped taking draftees in 1970, and despite its problems, as the draft ended the Marine Corps believed that its recruits were true volunteers. In fact, only half were (Millet, 1991:611). In order to meet its personnel needs, the Corps allowed quality to plummet. Half of new male recruits lacked a high school diploma. The poor quality of recruits exacerbated the Corps' problems, and by 1975, the Marines had the worst rates of imprisonment, unauthorized absence, and courts martial of all of the armed services and high rates of drug and alcohol abuse, second only to the Navy (*ibid.*:612). In 1975, the incoming Commandant, Louis H. Wilson, worked to revamp recruiting and raise standards, preferring to increase the proportion of high school graduates and stop accepting recruits from the lowest mental category, even if that meant the Corps ended up below strength, and the Corps slowly began to rebound.

Marine Corps advertising in the early 1970s steadfastly ignored the Corps' woes. While Army and Navy ads from the beginning of the AVF sought to show how the services were changing and improving, which could be seen as an indirect acknowledgement of the military's problems, the Marines began with an emphasis on their elitism—an emphasis that has remained consistent in the decades since—despite the fact that as far as recruit quality in the 1970s went, the elitism was mainly wishful thinking.

In the early and mid-1970s, Marine Corps advertising worked to differentiate the Marines from the other services. The Marines placed themselves in direct competition with the other branches of the armed forces. When the Army began using the slogan “Today's Army wants to join you,” the Marines responded with “We're not joining

anybody,” a slogan that the Defense Department quickly made them drop (Keene, 1999).

The Marines argued that they were special and a challenge. The ads in this period stressed Marine pride. Several of the ads in my sample from 1974 and 1975 follow the trend of making the Marines stand out from the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Some of them read as follows:

“If you’re thinking about the military, you’ve got three choices or one challenge.”

“The Marine Corps gives you as many educational opportunities as the Air Force, Navy or Army. Now, what makes us different: It’s as simple as this: we *are* the Marines. A tough team to make.”

“The Marine Corps teaches valuable technical skills, just like any other service. Now, what makes us different: We’re different because of something we feel: a fierce pride.”

“You earn the same good pay in any branch of the service. So is it worth the sweat to be a Marine? It depends on you. How far do you want to go?”

“You can train to be an aviation professional in any branch of the service. So why start with 3000 pushups and a Marine D.I.? Because it’s part of boot camp. And boot camp is part of being a Marine.”

These ads serve the double purpose of elevating the Marines above the other services, while also reminding or reassuring potential recruits that, like the other services, the Marines, too, have benefits, even if they aren’t the reason to join. They subtly highlight the tangible benefits of service, like travel, job training, and education, while emphasizing the intangibles that are specific to the Marines.

From the early 1970s up through the present, the Marines have stressed their elitism. They will demand that a recruit prove his worth, but they promise that once he’s

been accepted, he'll know that he's one of the best—he'll deserve to feel that pride that's a Marine tradition. The two slogans that the Marines have used since the inception of the All-Volunteer Force—"We're looking for a few good men" and "the Few, the Proud, the Marines"—both emphasize their selectiveness. So does the following ad copy, which appeared between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s:

"We don't settle for field goals."

"Try out for the varsity."

"The Marine Corps can show you the world. But before you travel in our company, you've got to show us."

"How do you know if you're cut out for the Corps?"

"For over 200 years we've kept our ranks small and our standards high."

"Maybe you can be one of us."

"Quality, not quantity."

One ad that appeared in *Popular Mechanics* in 1976 had an entirely different focus. It presents "the smart way" to join the Marines and talks about guaranteed job training "in exciting fields like aviation technology, aircraft maintenance/ordnance, mechanical/electrical, motor transport, radio communications and more." This ad is striking as a contrast to other Marine recruiting materials from the AVF. The copy begins:

Be quick. Act fast. Join now. We have good jobs for high school graduates. But remember, there are several million of you, and only a few thousand openings in the Corps. So now is the time to act. If you've got the qualifications, you can even sign up for a guaranteed program today, and not begin training for up to six months.

Four pictures show technical work: a man wearing goggles and holding a tool, a pair of

hands working on electronic equipment, two Marines surveying, and a ground crew member with a jet. While the ad does emphasize that there are more high school graduates than available spots in the Marines, and the copy also mentions that the Marines are “an elite force” and “it won’t be easy,” visually and textually the ad stands out; with its emphasis on job training, it could be an ad for one of the other services, and by contrast it points out the distinctiveness of the Marine Corps’ approach to recruiting.

Many ads from the early and mid-1970s were heavy on text, and the pictures that did appear occasionally showed Marines at work on equipment or as part of an airplane’s ground crew. In the late 1970s, the ads stopped making references to the other services, they began to be dominated by images and the text was minimized. Ads from the late 1970s on stopped showing Marines doing technical or support work. They either display Marines in their formal dress uniforms, or show them in an overtly militarized context, with weapons. In addition to a continued emphasis on the elitism and exclusivity of the Marine Corps, as the ads changed their visual and textual focus somewhat, they continued to focus almost exclusively on men.

The language and visual imagery of the advertisements reinforce the impression that the Marine Corps is a bastion of masculinity and a place to become a man. While advertising by the other services frequently uses the term “men and women,” the Marines’ print ads virtually always use the word “men” only. Not including the ads the Marine Corps placed in *Seventeen Magazine*, which will be discussed below, the ad sample contains a single exception to the “men”-only rule; one ad from 1976 makes reference to “a few good men, a few determined women.” Other ads from the same year look for “a few good men with ambition” and “Men who’ll make good Marines.” In

1977, the Marines replaced the slogan “We’re Looking for a Few Good Men,” with “The Few. The Proud. The Marines.” Even after the direct reference to men was removed from the slogan, however, the print ads continued to directly address men and describe the Marines in exclusively masculine terms. In 1981, the Marines bragged that they were “Men at their best”—men in “rock hard, top physical condition” who “know how to handle themselves in tough situations,” who have “mastered skills,” and are “going somewhere in life.” The expression “a few good men” continued to appear occasionally in the text of recruiting ads or as a slogan, from a 1982 ad that describes the Marines as “A few good men prepared to get the job done,” to one from 1990 that notes that “Pride” can be found in a few good men. The 1990 “Pride” ad goes on to describes the kind of man who is one of “a few good men.” A Marine is “not just any kind of man, he’s one of a kind,” and one can see “from the determined look in his eye” that “he possess an unusual quality that says he is something special.” The ad asks the reader to “take a good look at this man” and ask yourself whether “you think you see yourself in him.” This is not a gender-neutral use of the term “man,” but a clear invitation to men to imagine themselves as Marines.

Visually, the ads portray a male world. Male Marines pose in the woods in camouflage gear, dangle out of a helicopter, crawl out of a river, or parade in their dress uniforms. My print ad sample, again excluding the ads in *Seventeen* Magazine, contained only a single image of a female Marine. In a 1979 ad which asks, “How do you know if you’re cut out for the Corps?” a white male Marine in a dress uniform stands in the center of the frame. An African-American male Marine stands behind his left shoulder, and that lone female Marine stands behind his right shoulder. She smiles broadly, with her teeth

showing. In very few of the ads do Marines ever smile, and when they do their mouths are generally closed. The female Marine sticks out as an anomaly.

This masculine trend continued in the more recent ads. In the late 1990s, the Marines debuted a series of ads that focus on challenge and self-transformation. They showcase extreme physical challenges as a route to this transformation, a change in self that goes beyond the physical. These ads present individuals, both Black and white, struggling to become Marines, and each makes reference to pushing and testing oneself. In every ad, a shaved-headed man, his face contorted with pain and determination, engages in an arduous physical task, like climbing an obstacle. Each ad also has a small picture of the man in a dress uniform, holding a sword, under the words “The Change Is Forever.” The ads proclaim:

“Pain is Weakness leaving the body.”

“When quitting is no longer an option, you’re halfway there.”

“Every day you have to test yourself. If not, it’s a wasted day.”

“Running won’t kill you. You’ll pass out first.”

Drill instructors exhort their charges with these sayings at boot camp (Ricks, 1997), and the ads are making promises about how the process of becoming a Marine will transform the recruit physically and mentally. Neither the ads, nor other public pronouncements by the Marines make direct reference to making men out of boys, but such a change is certainly implied.

Throughout the period of the AVF, in addition to its masculine focus, Marine Corps print advertising has been consistent in its visual portrayals of Marines. Marines are always pictured dressed and acting like Marines. The other services tend to show

their members in a range of situations—at play, with their families, and going to school, as well as working at their jobs or in a specifically martial context. In Army ads, soldiers are often smiling and relaxed, and frequently pictured out of uniform. Some Navy ads show ships, and many Air Force ads feature aircraft instead of people. Marine ads feature serious-looking Marines—in uniform—parading, training, engaged in martial action, or posing in their dress blues. They don't appear in civilian clothes or in non-military contexts. Being a Marine is the entirety of their identity. Not only are Marines generally pictured in uniform, they always wear either dress uniforms or utility uniforms (fatigues or camouflage battle dress); they don't appear in service uniforms. Dress uniforms are for parades, ceremonial occasions, formal wear, and embassy duty. Utilities are worn for heavy work and in the field. Service uniforms are the everyday uniforms that would be worn in an office environment, and these are the ones that are nowhere to be seen in Marine ads; Marines are either on formal display, engaged in a physical task, or ready for battle, but they are not associated with the day-to-day, routine indoor functions performed by service members.

Not only do Army ads show soldier smiling and out of uniform, they tend to present soldiers as individuals; those pictured are often identified by name and military occupational specialty. The potential recruit is offered an accessible model with whom he can identify. Marine Corps advertising, on the other hand, only puts forward an anonymous, generic Marine. Marines aren't identified by name or rank. Some ads picture a shaved-headed recruit, and, of course, one of the main functions of the boot-camp haircut is to strip away the recruit's individuality and make him an indistinguishable member of the group. This presentation fits with a Marine culture that

glorifies the common Marine, but not as an individual, as a member of the Corps. Being a Marine, a member of the brotherhood, is the core of the Marine's identity. The style of presentation also fits with the culture's elitism; the strong, unsmiling, masculine Marine in his dress uniform or camouflage BDUs is not a figure with whom to identify, but one to which the viewer may aspire.

The Marine Corps themes of elitism, challenge, and transformation, within a male environment, are also the foundation of the Corps' television and Internet advertising. The Marines are known for their dramatic, memorable television commercials. They produce one major ad every few years, and air them during sporting events watched by a young, male demographic and in movie theaters (Minogue, 2002). (While the Army shifted its ad time to other kinds of programming to reach a wider audience, the Marines continue to devote their resources to sporting events.) The commercials generally show a young man undergoing a challenge and then being transformed into a Marine. These spectacular challenges have included a maze with an animated dragon and an opposing knight and other players on a life-sized chessboard. In an ad that aired during the 1985 Super Bowl, the making of a Marine is compared to the forging of a sword. Two recent commercials are "The Climb" and "For Country." In "The Climb," which was conceived in the spring of 2001 and debuted early in 2002, a man in fatigues scales a sheer rock face with his bare hands. As he struggles up the mountain, images flash over the rock, including Marines raising the flag at Iwo Jima. At the top, a Marine officer reaches down to help the climber up. Lightning strikes, the climber is transformed into a Marine in dress uniform, and he is backed by a row of Marines, including a single woman. "For Country," from March 2003, includes combat footage shot by Marines in Afghanistan

during “Operation Enduring Freedom” (McCarthy and Haralson, 2003). The minute-long ad follows Marines in training and in action, interspersed with titles that flash on screen; they read “For Country,” “For Courage,” and “For Honor,” before the familiar “The Few. The Proud” appears. One brief shot, about halfway through the commercial, shows women jumping hurdles on an obstacle course. The scores of other Marines pictured are all men. There is no voice-over narration, only stirring classical music. The ad doesn’t feature the fast action, quick jump cuts, and pulsing rock music of some recruiting ads (like the Navy’s), aimed at firing excitement, but offers a more stately and majestic vision of war, meant to inspire pride and patriotism, as well as to glorify combat. Men are the central players in all of these TV commercials, though in recent years women have become a token presence.

In its various incarnations, the Marine Corps website ([www.marines.com](http://www.marines.com)) has echoed the themes of the print ads and television commercials. In 1999, the Marine Corp website welcomed visitors with this introduction:

They are born in an inferno that tests both mind and body. Those who complete the challenge become beacons of honor, courage, and commitment. What does it take to become one of the few? The answer lies within.

Visitors were asked their gender and their level of education. Male and female potential enlistees (as opposed to officers) were channeled into different pages, each of them animated, interactive sites that featured a drill instructor and a recruit, each one the same sex as the website’s visitor. The instructor, who informs the visitor, “while you are on my website, I will demand of you and will demonstrate by my own example, the highest standard of personal conduct, morality and professional skill,” requires that the visitor address him/her as sir/ma’am and exacts disciplinary virtual sit-ups if the visitor fails to

do so. The recruit is led on a challenge—a climb up a mountain, before the visitor reaches the part of the website that gives more specific information about enlisting in the Corps.

In 2000, the Marines redesigned the website, ratcheting the challenge rhetoric up several notches. The new website directed all potential enlistees to the same place, an introduction which portrayed both men and women, though the women only appear infrequently and in groups. The introduction to the Marine Corp website begins with the same command that drill instructors use to welcome new recruits as they arrive at Parris Island for training: “Get off my bus!” It then continues:

One must first be stripped clean. Freed of all the false notions of self.  
 Unhappiness does not arise from the way things are. But rather from a difference  
 in the way things are and the way we believe they should be.  
 You within yourself. There is no one else to rely on. And when the self is  
 exhausted no one to lift you up.  
 But finally we wake to realize there is only one way to get through this, and that is  
 together.  
 Once you’ve walked through fire and survived, little else can burn.  
 We came as orphans. We depart as family...Do you have what it takes?

The text makes reference to getting through together and to family, because it is during the transforming experience of boot camp that the enlistee becomes a part of the Marine brotherhood, a life-long bond to all other Marines. And because the Marine identity is all-encompassing, before joining the Corps, the recruit was an “orphan,” bereft of his true family, the Marine family.

Each page also contained a hidden message that only became clear when the cursor is passed over a particular part of the screen. The text of these messages is as follows:

It is the Marine Corp that will strip away the façade so easily confused with self.  
 It is the Corps that will offer the pain needed to buy the truth. And at last, each

will own the privilege of looking inside himself to discover what truly resides there.

Comfort is an illusion. A false security bred from familiar things and familiar ways. It narrows the mind. Weakens the body. And robs the soul of spirit and determination. Comfort is neither welcomed nor tolerated here.

There you have seen in yourself invincibility. You now confront vulnerability. You have faltered, and the root of your weakness lies painfully exposed with the weight of failure heavy on you. You realize you have been overcome because you walk alone.

There is only determination. There is only single-minded desire. Not one among them is willing to give up. Not one among them would exchange torment for freedom. Finally, they just want to be Marines.

But first, a final test will take everything that is left inside. When this is over, those that stand will reach out with dirty, callused hands to claim the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor. And the title United States Marine.

The Marines are promising nothing short of a total transformation. A full-scale rite of passage, a trial by fire, in which the old self is destroyed and a new, better self emerges.

This description of recruit training, which includes rejecting comfort, suffering pain, and overcoming challenges, evokes a ritual passage into manhood, reinforced by the image of “dirty, callused hands.”<sup>3</sup>

Potential Marine officers (those who initially identified themselves as college students or graduates) are offered information about benefits and eligibility (and the benefits include, in addition to those touted by the other services, like promotions and medical benefits, such intangibles as “a lifelong commitment to excellence,” “motivation to take the initiative,” and “a sense of pride that comes with belonging to the most elite military organization in the world”) and, unlike the other services’ web pages, information about the potential officer’s obligations. On the page entitled “Resources,” potential officer recruits can find links to a discourse on leadership and an explication of the Marine Corps’ core values of honor, courage, and commitment. On this same page,

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<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of masculine rites of passage and their relationship to war, see Goldstein, 2001.

General Lejeune compares the relationship between “officers and men” to that between fathers and sons, as officers “are responsible for the physical, mental and moral welfare as well as the discipline and military training of the young men under their command.” Here, the family metaphor is extended. All Marines are brothers, and officers are their fathers and strong male role models. Whatever the recruit’s experiences in the outside world, the Marine Corps will serve as a nurturing male family. Also, like the Marine Corps’ print ads, the language used here doesn’t strive for gender inclusiveness.

While the websites of the other services sometimes shy away from the central function of each service as a war-fighting institution, particularly in their discussion of jobs and career development, the Marine website makes direct reference to combat, just as the print ads often show Marines in a martial context. On the 2000 version of the website, the index of career jobs for officers begins with infantry, the “cutting edge of the Corps” where the officer is “trained how to fight.” The description of jobs in engineering, tracked vehicles, field artillery, air control, and aviation all make reference to their relationship to combat. The description of “occupations of special support” strains a bit to make them seem as important as the other jobs, sounding almost apologetic: “Every occupational field is vital to the success of the Marine Corps. The following seven support fields are often managerial or administrative in nature; nonetheless, they offer Marine Corps officers an opportunity to lead.” Instead of highlighting these jobs for their potential transferability to the civilian marketplace, the support jobs (which are the jobs that women are permitted to fill) are subtly denigrated for not being directly involved in the Corps’ combat mission.

The website has changed more than once since then, but, as the graphics and

interactivity of the site have gotten more complex, each of the iterations has continued to highlight the Marine Corps' exclusivity, to talk about challenge, transformation, and the pride of being a Marine, and to show strong young men (and a very few women) training, parading, and in action as warriors.

### Women, the Marine Corps, and Recruiting

The Marine Corps is the service most closely associated with masculinity, from its connection to combat, reflected in the saying "every Marine a rifleman," to the well-known slogan, "we're looking for a few good men." Of all the services, the Marines have the fewest women, only about six percent of the force. The Navy provides much of its support and medical services, so a greater percentage of jobs in the Marines are closed to women than in the other services. Because of its small size and its focus on combat, the Marine Corps has avoided some of the controversies and pressures over women's participation that the other services faced.<sup>4</sup>

The Marine Corps seems to take a "separate-but-equal" approach to women; it has given lip service to the importance of women to the Marine Corps, while it has tried to keep tight limits on the number of positions women can fill and segregated women in a variety of ways. The Corps has sought to preserve the masculinizing function of the men's training and protect the femininity of women recruits by training male and female recruits separately, the only service to still do so. At Parris Island, women train in their

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<sup>4</sup> The Army (Aberdeen Proving Grounds) and Navy (Tailhook) both faced major public scandals over the sexual abuse and harassment of women in the 1990s, but the Marines, which didn't suffer any scandals, have the largest percentage of women who have experienced sexual harassment, according to Defense Department surveys (Ricks, 1997:204).

own battalion and have their own barracks, drill deck, mess hall, gymnasium, and beauty shop, only encountering male recruits on Sundays at recruit chapel, where the women sit in their own assigned pews (Ricks, 1997:44). Male recruits are trained by male drill instructors and the women by women. After training, women still aren't always fully integrated. Thomas Ricks notes that in the early 1990s in Somalia, Marine Corps policies caused inter-service tensions: "Army women, accustomed to sleeping in areas where their units sleep, usually behind a blanket or poncho draped over a rope, were upset when the Marine commander overseeing the operation got wind of those arrangements and ordered them to move to sexually segregated sleeping areas" (202-203). The separateness of women Marines is also reflected in the continuing references to women who are Marines as "Women Marines." Women in the Army and Navy are no longer known as WACs and WAVES, but women Marines are still "Women Marines." Male Marines are simply Marines, but the femaleness of Women Marines prevents them from being wholly and purely Marines.

In terms of recruiting materials, The Marine Corps *has* created print ads (described below) that picture women Marines. These materials are clearly aimed at female potential recruits only and are placed in magazines like *Seventeen*, where only young women are likely to see them. Print ads in other kinds of publications, read by a mostly male or a mixed demographic, tend to show men only. Television commercials and web pages may show one or two women, but they mainly show men, in groups or as individuals, and never mixed groups of men and women working together. The segregation of women, thus, applies to the public face of the Marine Corps as well as its internal practices.

The history of women in the Marine Corps is itself contentious. According to Holm (1992), during the War of 1812, Lucy Brewer served as a Marine on the USS *Constitution* for three years as George Baker, and the Marine Corps has acknowledged her as the “first girl marine” (5). But Brian Mitchell, a fierce opponent of women’s participation in the armed forces, challenges this story:

Sometimes, however, the revisionists’ enthusiasm for a good story overcomes their natural skepticism. Fancy is often mistaken for fact when titillating tales of soft breasts beneath coarse uniform tunics are accepted at face value. Most such tales escape close scrutiny, but one that did not involved a prostitute by the name of Lucy Brewer. Lucy’s tale has come down to us in a number of recent “histories” of fighting women, few of which show the slightest inclination to doubt her incredible claim of having passed herself off as a male Marine aboard the USS *Constitution* during the War of 1812. The revisionists seem to accept Lucy’s claim on faith alone, without explaining how Lucy managed to conceal her sex for three years aboard the cramped frigate. Conditions on the ship alone would have made her masquerade impossible. The ship had no toilet facilities and no private quarters for enlisted Marines. Fortunately for persons inclined toward greater skepticism, Marine Corps historians have discovered that Lucy was a fraud. Her published accounts of her wartime exploits were lifted “almost verbatim” from official after-action reports filed by the *Constitution’s* commanding officer. Officially, the legend of Lucy Brewer is a “mockery of the bona fide traditions” of the Corps. (1989:13, quoting from US Marine Corps, History and Museums Division, “The Legend of Lucy Brewer,” 1957)

Mitchell sexualizes the “revisionist” view, with his reference to “titillating tales of soft breasts,” despite the fact that he cites as revisers Binkin and Bach (1977), who studied women’s military roles for the Brookings Institute, and Jeanne Holm, a retired Air Force Major General who worked to expand the opportunities for women in the armed forces; neither seem to be likely to be passing along a tale they found titillating. Mitchell also makes sure to point out that Brewer was a prostitute, echoing the claims made over the years that women in the military are either lesbians or whores.

Whatever the status of Lucy Brewer, women were first allowed to enter the Marines during World War I. As a part of the Navy, the Marine Corps was authorized to

enlist women in the reserves in March 1917, shortly before the US entered the war. The Marines waited until August 1918, two months before the war ended, to enroll women, when severe shortages of combat personnel finally led them to replace some of the male Marines performing clerical work at headquarters with women. A survey had indicated that about 40 percent of the clerical work could be done by women as well as by men. The male clerks predicted that it would take three women to replace two men, but the reverse turned out to be true (ibid.:12). Three hundred women, commonly referred to as “marinettes” served as Marines in World War I.

During World War II, the legislation that authorized the creation of the Navy Women’s Reserve in July of 1942 also authorized the Marine Corps Women’s Reserve. Unlike their WAC and WAVE sisters, the women Marines had no official acronym: “according to the commandant, they would be marines” (ibid.:27). Female Marines, however, have never been referred to simply as “Marines”—the term is always modified to indicate their femaleness, and they are known, as previously noted, as “Women Marines” or “WM.” Unofficially, the Women Marines were (and sometimes still are) known as BAMS or Bammies, for “Broad-Assed Marines” (Williams, 1989:69).

Despite authorization, the Marine Corps was again reluctant to accept women and, again, only did so once they realized that shortages of combat personnel necessitated that men be freed for combat. The Marine commandant, Lt. Gen. Thomas Holcomb worried that admitting women would create “untold problems” but in November of 1942, he gave in to pressure from his staff and told the Secretary of the Navy that “as many women as possible should be used in noncombat billets thus releasing a greater number of the limited manpower available for essential combat duty” (quoted in Holm,

1992:33). By the summer of 1945, there were 18,000 Women Marines and 87 percent of the enlisted jobs at Corps headquarters were being performed by women. All of these women were white. Unlike the WAC and the WAVES, which accepted small numbers of Black women and segregated them, the Marine Corps did not enlist African-American women until 1949 (ibid.:77).

In the lead-up to the passage of the 1948 Women's Armed Services Integration Act, the Marine Corps took the position that the Marines didn't need women in the peacetime force, since the Navy provided much of the Corps' non-combat support. The Marine Corp conceived of itself, much as it does today, as a combat-ready force available for immediate deployment anywhere in the world, and it did not envision women as a part of this structure, although the Corp saw potential value in a well-trained Women's Reserve that could serve in shore establishments if the Marines were deployed for an emergency (ibid.:117).

During the Cold War, women served in the Marine Corps in small numbers and in limited roles. When the Marine Corps expanded in 1964, the Commandant, Gen. Wallace M. Greene, Jr. appointed a group of senior officers to study the Woman Marines program and plan for a small increase in the use of women. The study group was highly concerned with maintaining quality in the Women's program, and it wrote in its report:

Women Marines must always be the smallest group of women in the military service. In accordance with the Commandant's desire, they must also be the most attractive and useful women in the four lines services. Within a [small] group of [...] enlisted women, there is room for none but the truly elite. (Quoted in ibid.:181)

The Marine Corp decided to raise already-high enlistment standards for women, to make sure the Marines' standards were as high as or higher than the standards for the other

women's programs, and like the other services at the time, attractiveness and femininity were part of the definition of "quality" for women. However, the Commandant also decided to increase the number of women by 70 percent, which would bring the number of women up to 2,750, or one percent of the Corps' total strength, to assign women to additional bases, and to open new job categories to women to improve enlistment and retention (ibid.:188). As the number of troops deployed to Vietnam increased, the Marine Corps wanted, as in earlier conflicts, to replace male Marines in non-combat positions with women to release the men for combat duty. During the war, 36 Women Marines were sent to Vietnam.

In the 1970s, all of the services except for the Marines began the gender integration of officer training. In 1976, the Commandant, Gen. Louis H. Wilson, decided to examine the requirement that women be trained separately, in a shorter course. The next year, the Marines allowed twenty-two female second lieutenants into the 21-week basic course, as part of an all-female platoon within Charlie Company. They were soon referred to as "Charlie's Angels." The next Commandant reversed course and partially re-segregated the training, because the women's successful completion of the course had led to charges that the training had "gone soft" (ibid.:272). The Marines continued to train enlisted male and female recruits separately, while the other services began coeducational training. Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Robert H. Barrow, according to Jeanne Holm, said more than once of the separate training that "while he wanted his men to be men, he wanted his women marines to remain women" (273).

In 1981, as the DOD undertook a study of accession and retention policies in relation to women, called *Background Review: Women in the Military*, the Marine Corps

initiated its own studies on its requirements for female personnel. There were 6,700 women in the Corps at the time, making up less than four percent of the service. As a result of these studies, completed in 1984 and 1987, the number of enlisted positions open to women doubled, from 5,000 to 12,000, and the number of officer positions increased from 655 to almost one thousand. With the opening of new positions to women, in 1984, the Corp decided to incorporate defensive training that included weapons training into the women's recruit indoctrination program (boot camp). By that time, all of the other services had already begun giving women some form of combat training. While opening new roles, the Marines put a 50 percent ceiling on the number of women who could enter any of the fields open to them—a quota which never applied to men—including those fields which women tend to dominate in civilian employment. By the end of the 1980s, the proportion of women in the Marines had inched up to five percent (*ibid.*:415-418).

While the number of women in the Corps and the roles they could fill were very slowly increasing, attitudes within the Corps about appropriate gender roles weren't changing much. Women were becoming a more regular part of the other services, especially the Army, but in the 1980s, the Marine Corps still worried about the femininity of women Marines. The Marine Corps basic training manual continued to include rules on cosmetics that required women recruits to wear makeup—at minimum eye shadow and lipstick (Williams, 1989:63). In interviews with female Marines conducted in 1985, sociologist Christine Williams found a general belief that the Marine Corps is more concerned with the femininity of its female personnel than any of the other branches. She notes:

several women told me they had chosen the marines over the other services because it emphasizes the femininity of its female recruits more than other branches: “One thing I liked about the Marine Corps is that it’s the only service that requires that you wear makeup during training...I like that because it kind of symbolizes that they really want you to be feminine.” But femininity means more to them than dress and grooming. The women I interviewed understand the difference between the rough-and-tough marine and the expression of femininity the corps expects from them: “You are in the marines, but they don’t want you to lose the fact that you are female. They don’t want you to act macho...It’s one thing they always want you to remember—you’re a lady.” (Ibid.:75)

In the era of the all-volunteer force, the Marines have continued to insist upon strict gender divisions. The enforced femininity of female Marines differentiates them from and reinforces the masculinity of male Marines.

The legal and policy changes of the early 1990s opened thousands of new positions on ships, in aviation, and in ground units to women in the Marine Corps. The rescinding of the “risk rule” made women eligible to fill 48,000 new positions in the Marines (Women’s Research and Education Institute, 2003). In a 1994 Hearing of the House Armed Services Committee Military Forces and Personnel Subcommittee, *Assignment of Army and Marine Corp Women under the New Definition of Ground Combat*, Lt. Gen. George R. Christmas testified that at that time (October, 1994), the Marine Corp included 7,713 women—613 officers and 7,100 enlisted—out of 174,000 Marines. While the policy changes would lead to new assignments for women, the Marines would proceed slowly and deliberately. Gen. Christmas expected that the number would rise to 10,400 women, or about six percent of enlisted Marines and seven percent of officers, over the next fifteen to twenty years. Women were a small part of the Marine Corps, and the Marines expected that to remain unchanged, even as new roles were opened to women.

During that same hearing, the Marine Corps stated its intent to devote resources to

the recruitment of women. According to the written testimony of Gen. Christmas:

An additional investment will be made in our advertising program to inform women of expanding opportunities; by FY 1997, we will spend \$1.8 million more than we did in FY 1994, with additional funds channeled to print and television advertisements that target high-quality women candidates. We also will begin a direct mailout program to potential female applicants.

Though they allocated only a small budget to the recruitment of women—for comparison, the television commercial “The Climb” cost \$23 million to make in 2001 (Minogue, 2002)—the Marine Corps did create print ads aimed at women.

Five different ads appeared in *Seventeen*, each running several times, with the first appearing in 1995 and the last in 2001. The first, which pictures the head and shoulders of a non-commissioned officer in a dress uniform holding up her sword, states: “You can look at models, or you can be one.” The ad continues:

Do you have what it takes to be a role model? A model of integrity, intelligence, and courage? If you’re an individual who thrives on challenge and never gives less than your best, you could be doing things most people only read about. You could become a leader, an inspiration. You could become a United States Marine. Do more than look at models, be one. Interested? Call 1-800-MARINES. The Few. The Proud. The Marines.

Another ad states “you can go anywhere if you’ve got the right make-up,” and a third says “get a make-over that’s more than skin deep.” Each of these pictures a woman in camouflage utilities with camouflage make-up on her face. Both talk about the internal qualities that are part of being a woman in the Marines. All three of these ads make reference to conventions of femininity and fashion that are a foundation of the magazine in which the ads appeared. In one sense, these ads implicitly point to the superficiality of a feminine concern for appearance, contrasting a concern with make-up and models with the inner strengths developed by the Marines (despite the fact that the Corps has insisted upon its female members appearing sufficiently feminine). However, these ads also seem

fully accepting of the tropes of femininity they refer to—the line “you can go anywhere if you’ve got the right make-up” is more playful than satirical or critical. In addition, the women in these ads are noticeably attractive and even feminized. The woman in camouflage seems put-together and pretty, with her long hair neatly tied back in a braid, and the women in the “models” ads are clearly wearing cosmetics.

These ads fit with one of the general conventions of Marine advertising, in that they offer intangibles rather than benefits. They also differ from the ads aimed at men in one way that is particularly striking. These ads present the only exceptions in my sample to the anonymity of the individual Marine. In 1998, the “you can look at models” ad began identifying the Marine pictured as Master Sergeant Marialena Bridges, and this same ad also appeared once with the picture of another woman, identified as Sergeant Eborah Lawson. The other two ads both picture and name the same woman, Captain Roma Sharpe. Perhaps within the context of *Seventeen* Magazine, the Marine Corps wanted to let readers know that these women aren’t, in fact, models and that women Marines not only actually exist, they are attractive and appropriately feminine, not a female version of the masculine male Marine. The whole idea of the anonymous Marine may not apply as easily to women; the female Marine is an exception, not a member of the brotherhood. The mere fact that female recruits don’t have their heads shaven means that they don’t become one of an anonymous mass but retain their individuality along with their femininity.

From 1999 to 2001, the Marine Corps ran a second, very different set of ads in *Seventeen*. These ads were part of the “The Change Is Forever” campaign the Marines were running in other magazines, but with women in place of the men. One had the

headline “Pain is weakness leaving the body,” and the other “Every day you have to test yourself. If not, it’s a wasted day.” The rest of the text, about challenge and transformation, was the same as in the male versions of the ads, and in both a female recruit struggles with an obstacle, her mouth grimacing with determination. In these ads, the women aren’t overtly feminized—though unlike the men, their heads aren’t shaved—and they are shown in a moment of physical exertion. In what seems to be a major shift for the Marines, women are being offered the same things as the men and being put in the same situation.

It’s not clear why the Marine Corps altered its approach to women in this second set of ads. The Marines may have decided that the women who would respond to the transformation ads would best fit with the Marine culture. Either they were becoming less concerned with drawing sharp distinctions between male and female Marines, or they may have decided that society has changed such that women who are tough and up for a challenge can still be what the Marines consider appropriately feminine. It’s also quite possible that the Marines weren’t that concerned with recruiting women—after all, they had been meeting recruiting goals when the other services hadn’t and weren’t under the same pressure or scrutiny—so they didn’t go through the effort or expense of creating a separate advertising concept to appeal to women.

In the chapter on the Navy, I discuss an article by naval aviator Lieutenant Christian Bonat (1999), who favorably compares the male version of the “Pain is weakness leaving the body” ad, with its “warrior ethos,” to a Navy ad that followed the career of a female naval aviator. Bonat seems critical of the Navy for the very attempt to appeal to women. It would seem not to occur to Bonat that the Marine Corp might also

be making a pitch specifically to women, and with the very ad which he praised at that. One key difference in strategy between the two services is that the Navy placed its ad featuring a woman in *Sports Illustrated*, where men like Bonat and young men in general might see it, while the Marine Corps made the decision to place the ad picturing a woman in a magazine where only young women would be likely to see it, leaving its masculine image intact in front of a male audience.

### Conclusions

The Marine Corps has faced the challenge of recruiting an all-volunteer force by reinforcing the ties between masculinity and military service, offering young men the chance to test themselves and, if they prove worthy, join an elite brotherhood of men. Women are almost completely absent from Marine Corps advertising, except for in the few ads aimed at women in magazines read by young women. The Corps recruits very small numbers of women and segregates them in various ways. The public face of the Marine Corps is fully male and fully masculinized.

The culture of the Marine Corps is reflected in its recruiting materials, which portray anonymous, generic Marines, strong, hard young men, who are shown only as Marines, not in any other contexts and not as individuals. The connections to combat are reflected and highlighted by martial images of Marines, fighting or training in camouflage fatigues, or perfectly turned out in dress blues brandishing a rifle or a sword with rigid military bearing. The Marines have the strongest culture of any of the services, and they are concerned with finding recruits who are attracted to that culture (and not just to military life in general) and want to be a part of it.

Marine Corps advertising isn't just masculine; it specifically presents a warrior masculinity. Marine recruiting materials generally downplay benefits and economic incentives, so their appeals don't draw on models of masculinity tied to economic independence or technological prowess and mastery of machines. The structure and personnel needs of the Marines (which are connected to the culture) also drive the recruiting approach. Marines only use one version of masculinity because they are looking for a particular type of recruit—short-timers who are interested in combat jobs—who responds to that appeal. According to Richard H. Kohn, a military historian at the University of North Carolina, "the Marines tend to attract people who are the most macho, seek the most danger and are attracted by the service most likely to put them into combat" (quoted in Schmitt, 2005).

The brand of masculinity portrayed in Marine advertising is often held up as model and, in fact, the Marines are seen by many commentators as the only service which utilizes masculinity in its appeals (e.g. Smart, 2000; Strother, 1999). Warrior masculinity seems to be the only form of masculinity recognized in these cases. There are some who believe that the military should remain the last bastion of a strong form of masculinity, of fixed and certain male roles and privileges, even and especially if that form is no longer dominant outside the military. The Marine Corps taps into those desires and offers itself as that bastion.

## Chapter 6: THE AIR FORCE

This chapter examines how the Air Force has coped with the recruitment of a volunteer force in a period when one of the key underpinnings of military service—its ties to manhood—had become uncertain, both because the meaning and value of manhood had itself become uncertain and because more women began to serve in the military. In order to understand how the Air Force has responded to this challenge, I collected print advertisements published by the Air Force in the magazines *Life*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Seventeen* between 1970 and 2003 and analyzed the 51 different advertisements I found to determine how the Air Force represents itself and how it uses ideas about gender in its appeals. I also viewed five television commercials<sup>1</sup> that aired between 1980 and 2003 and two different incarnations of the Air Force's recruiting website.

In the period before the draft ended, the Air Force was considered the most glamorous of the services and was more desirable to many draft-eligible young men than the Navy, Marines, or, especially, the Army. Since the end of the draft, the Air Force has developed appeals based on the Air Force's technological and career-related strengths that draw on conceptions of masculinity that are not particularly martial or militaristic. In the early 1970s, for many young men, militarized forms of manhood had been discredited by the Vietnam War, and during those years, military recruiting across the branches did not emphasize the military aspects of service or show a lot of militaristic imagery, like

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<sup>1</sup> While the print ads were collected in a systematic fashion (see Chapter One), and I know how frequently the service branches chose to publish a given print ad as well as in what publication, this is not the case with the television commercials. Some of the commercials I saw as they were being broadcast, some I found on the Internet, and some were in the collection of the Museum of Television and Radio.

weapons and combat uniforms. Over the course of the next three decades, the other branches made intermittent use of specifically martial forms of masculinity in their imagery and appeals; the Air Force, for the most part, has not.

Air Force recruiting has emphasized job training, and has specifically offered respect and advancement to blue-collar, mechanically-inclined young men, reinforcing a working-class masculinity that values skilled labor and economic independence. This was especially true of recruiting advertisements in the 1970s but continued as a theme in later ads as well. For a brief period in the early 1980s, Air Force advertising highlighted the intangible benefits of service, but it soon returned to an emphasis on job training, education, and benefits. One lasting theme that began during this period was the evocation of pride and awe in the Air Force's sleek aircraft and advanced technology. The Air Force had always showcased its technology in relation to job training and skills that would be valued in the civilian world, but from the 1980s on, the Air Force has used imagery of aircraft to lend glamour and appeal to the service as a whole. Technology is "widely acknowledged as [a] powerful [motif] of hegemonic masculinity" (Lohan and Faulkner, 2004:319), so the deployment of technology in recruiting materials implicitly masculinizes service in the force.<sup>2</sup> The Air Force has offered, by association with the world's most advanced technology, the masculine advantages of mastery, dominance, and control. In recent years, the Air Force has offered recruits not direct physical excitement, as the other services tend to do, but the vicarious thrills of the video gamer, who has extreme experiences through the mediation of technology. The picture of

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<sup>2</sup> See Lohan and Faulkner for a review of the literature on the relationship between technology and masculinity.

manhood painted by the Air Force also in many ways coincides with the “tough and tender” new world order masculinity postulated by Steve Niva (1998) (and described in Chapter Two), in which aggression is tempered by compassion, and technological might and power are used for benign dominance and humanitarian ends.

After a brief discussion of Air Force culture, this chapter will present an analysis of Air Force recruiting materials over the course of the all-volunteer force, and it will also examine the place of women within the Air Force and its recruiting materials, to trace out the service’s constructions of gender and specifically of masculinity in its representations of military service.

### Air Force Culture

The Air Force is the youngest of the armed forces, and it emerged out of a specific military concept, that of air power, and a specific technology, the airplane. The culture of the Air Force is built around the airplane and those who fly it. According to RAND analyst Carl Builder (1989), the Air Force worships “at the altar of technology” (19) and measures itself by its aircraft, favoring technological advancement and performance over quantity. The Air Force is anxious to always be at the cutting edge of aircraft technology.

Just as in the Army there is a crucial distinction in power and status between the combat arms and the supporting roles, in the Air Force there is a strict hierarchy which places pilots—who make up a much smaller group than combat specialists do within the Army—above all others. These pilots, who are in the dominant position in the service, identify themselves with the planes they fly more than with the Air Force itself,

according to Builder; “The pride of association is with a machine, even before the institution” (23). Builder explains that the pilot’s fundamental concern is with flying, not with war-fighting or issues of security and defense:

Air Force pilots delight in showing visitors their toys. It is not hard to get an invitation to sit in the cockpit, to share its owner’s excitement with the power and freedom of flight. The cockpit visitor will probably find it easier to engage the owner in a discussion of the difficulties and restrictions associated with weather and airspace in peacetime than the relationship of the man and machine to war. This is not to denigrate the great skill and courage of those who are prepared to fly and fight but simply to note that flying and flying machines are nearest to their hearts. The prospect of combat is not the essential draw; it is simply the justification for having and flying these splendid machines. (Ibid.)

This emphasis on the machines and technologies more than on the service itself is quite different from the cultures of the other services. In the Navy and in the Marine Corps, the pride and loyalty of service members is firmly lodged in the institution itself. Army culture doesn’t glorify equipment and technology, but rather the skills of service members (ibid.:24), and a firm focus on combat grounds the cultures of both the Army and Marine Corps.

Although the Air Force inherited concepts and customs from its parent service, the Army, the Air Force is the least tradition-bound of the services, and it is also the one that most resembles large, bureaucratic, civilian organizations. In terms of the ratio of tooth to tail, the Air Force’s combat components, its pilots, aircraft, and missiles, require a vast support apparatus. According to military sociologist Charles Moskos (1970), characterizations of the US military tend to run along two lines: “[o]n the one hand, there is the view, documented in many scholarly studies, that the contemporary military establishment is increasingly sharing the attributes common to all large-scale bureaucracies in a modern complex society,” and “[o]n the other hand, there is the

continuing portrayal, especially in the popular culture, of the military as a quasi-feudal organization with features quite unlike those found in the community at large” (37).

Moskos finds that the “organizational characteristics tending toward convergence with civilian structures have been most apparent in the Air Force” (ibid.), and he goes on to describe the Air Force as having a “maintenance-shop and office atmosphere” (ibid.:61).

As the youngest and least tradition-bound of the services, the Air Force has been relatively free of racial strife and fairly willing to integrate African-American men into the service almost from its inception. When President Truman’s Committee on Equality of Treatment and Opportunity, commonly known as the Fahy Committee, began working in 1949 to implement the Executive Order mandating racial equality in the armed forces, it found that the Air Force favored integration and was ending racial quotas and making personnel assignments and promotions on merit, not race (Binkin and Eitelberg, 1982:27). When the Air Force was first established, about 6% of the total force was African-American, a figure which had risen to about 10% by the time the draft ended (Gropman, 1998:165-166). African-Americans were somewhat underrepresented in the draft-era Air Force, which was able to attract the highest-quality recruits (in terms of test scores and education level), but the service suffered few racial problems. The Air Force could not escape turbulence during the Vietnam War, and like the other services, it, too, experienced racial unrest in the form of a riot in May 1971 at Travis Air Force Base,<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The riot, which began when a fight broke out over the volume of a record player at a party thrown by Black airmen, was caused by an accumulation of grievances, including: the perception (borne out by some statistics) that African-Americans were punished for offenses that only earned whites counseling or a reprimand; anger that a base-commander had not placed an off-base apartment complex reputed to exclude Blacks off-limits to all personnel; anger over the firing of the mostly-Black staff at the NCO club after an audit revealed financial irregularities; complaints of discrimination by the civilian personnel office; and the prohibition by the base commander of the clenched-fist “Black Power” salute (Gropman, 1998:159).

even though it “had been virtually free of racial problems” (Binkin and Eitelberg, 1982:36). During the AVF, the Air Force has been 12-16% Black, with African-Americans serving in numbers roughly proportional to or slightly higher than their numbers in the general population. African-American men have been a regular presence in Air Force recruitment advertising, though a minority in relation to the representation of white men. African-American airmen are presented in the same manner and context as white airmen, although one ad in the sample, from 2002, specifically celebrates the Tuskegee Airmen of World War II, who “escorted bombers into Europe and equality into America.”

Another distinct aspect of the Air Force is that while it wields awesome destructive power, including the nation’s arsenal of nuclear-armed inter-continental ballistic missiles, the Air Force is, in a sense, the least militaristic of the military services in terms of its culture. In the other services, those who serve at the lowest levels may be warriors—the common soldier, sailor, or marine may be in combat. In the Air Force, however, it is officers, and an elite few at that, who fly the fighters and bombers that can destroy an enemy. The institution as a whole has less of a warrior culture than the other military branches. This tendency may only be heightened as the Air Force increases the use of unmanned drone airplanes (a difficult and controversial transition for a force dominated by pilots) and further develops space-based weaponry. According to the Center for Strategic and International Studies, “Some observers also perceive a shift from an air and space force to a space and air force, with the future dominated by nonaircraft systems in space” (CSIS, 2000:11). These new weapons systems may increase the Air Force’s ability to deliver lethal force, but will also serve to further distance those who

inflict violence from the violence itself. Even with increased destructiveness, the Air Force may become more like a highly technological civilian organization and less traditionally militaristic, as many of its warriors “fight” from computer consoles on US bases.

### The Recruiting Advertisements

Before the advent of the All-Volunteer Force, the Air Force had little experience with recruiting. The Air Force came into being as a separate branch from the Army on September 18, 1947, and Congress authorized a peacetime renewal of the Selective Service system in 1948. Throughout the period of the Cold War draft, the Air Force attracted all of the qualified personnel it needed. The Air Force had the most glamorous reputation of all the services (Moskos, 1970:18), and enough young men preferred it to the other services or sought out its technical training that it never needed conscripts, nor did it need independent recruiting campaigns. According to Army historian Robert K. Griffith, Jr., as the draft wound down and the Defense Department thought about how to build a force without conscripts, in spite of its success at bringing in volunteers, the Air Force focused on trying to claim a large portion of recruiting resources, much to the chagrin of the Army. When the Army requested funds for proficiency pay for recruits who went into the combat arms after basic training, the Air Force tried to get a share of the money. The Air Force also argued that the Army should not be allowed to experiment with paid advertising on its own, but must work with the other services, and it tried to demand a share of the Army’s barracks rehabilitation funds, even though the Air Force had the most modern facilities and the Army some of the oldest (Griffith, 1996:56).

Despite its posturing at neediness, the Air Force entered the era of the all-volunteer force in arguably the best position of any of the four service branches.

With a few exceptions, most Air Force recruiting materials have offered a masculinity tied to technology, mostly in connection with an economic appeal—either a good technical skill for a blue-collar worker, or, in later ads, the promise of a high-tech career—but also as a vehicle for dominance and mastery, the projection of benign power, and vicarious experiences of adventure and excitement, as in a video game. While the Army and Navy also make appeals based on technology, it is more central to the Air Force’s representations of itself.

In the early period of the AVF, Air Force recruiting embraced a marketplace philosophy, showcasing the service as a route to economic advancement. Ads from the early 1970s focus almost exclusively on the economic benefits to enlistees. While the Army and Navy also pushed benefits and job training during this period, the Air Force emphasized them even more emphatically. The Air Force’s chief selling point was that it would give airmen skills that are highly valued in the civilian work world. The main message of three ads from 1972—when the services began advertising in earnest in preparation for the end of the draft—demonstrate this clearly: “The Air Force skill. You can take it with you”; “The job we guarantee you today, can guarantee your future tomorrow”; and, “I learned my job in the US Air Force.” The service bragged that the “re-usable skill” is an “Air Force specialty.” One of these ads makes a reference to national defense, but the Air Force’s role in defense is not what it seems to be most proud of:

But let’s not kid ourselves. The Air Force trains men and women with the idea of keeping them as valuable contributors to its ultimate mission...the defense of our

nation. But, inevitably perhaps, each year some choose to leave us. Yet, even then, the Air Force can take pride in knowing that of all the military services, we are the foremost producer and provider of this nation's most precious resource: its skilled workers. (Emphasis in original)

Instead of expressing pride in its traditions or history, the Air Force claims pride in its production of skilled workers. The reference to defense is an anomaly during this period. The ads are devoted almost entirely to the issue of job training, and they assume that most enlistees won't make a career of the Air Force, but will spend some time learning a skill and return to civilian life. Many of the ads feature double images of the same task being performed, once by an airman and once by a civilian. In some cases, like the ad above, ad copy that promotes skill training also frames that training as a contribution to the nation as a whole. Another example of this reads as follows:

Art Edwardson fell in love at the age of 6 ½. In his mind he still sees her. A vision of metallic beauty, poised on the runway, waiting to take off. Art held on to his young love through high school, until the Air Force made his boyhood dream a reality. A dream he lived out as a pilot in the Air Force. Today Art is a pilot for one of the world's largest airlines. His story is the perfect example of an Air Force specialty...the re-usable skill. Two kinds of people find themselves in the Air Force: those who know exactly who they are and what they want those who are still searching. Those who know just need opportunity. For the rest the Air Force uses aptitude tests, psychological interviews and good old common sense to help find the one job among hundreds they'll do best. Either way—Air Force training gives a man a skill he can always carry with him...even back to civilian life. The product of the Air Force's training programs are skilled technicians. They represent a substantial natural resource for the whole nation. The jobs we train America's youth for are needed not only by the Air Force, but also by the civilian job market. In fact, each year over \$300 million worth of Air Force investment in trained manpower is returned to the civilian economy. Remember. The re-usable skill...it's an Air Force Specialty.

This ad promotes the Air Force as a positive economic force for the country, rather than a drain on its resources, and promises young men a bright economic future, as well as making reference to the lure and beauty of airplanes, a theme that would become more prominent in the visuals of later Air Force ads.

Throughout the 1970s, the word that is used most frequently in Air Force advertising copy seems to be “skill,” though ads from this period also highlight other tangible benefits like vacation time, medical care, job security, and educational opportunities. During this period, the Air Force used the slogan, “Find Yourself in the US Air Force,” but the ads say nothing about self-discovery or personal emotional growth; they’re talking about finding oneself by figuring out how to turn an interest into a good, solid skill. An ad from 1973 begins, “If all your job pays is money you should read this,” but instead of alluding to intangibles like satisfaction or pride that a job might theoretically “pay,” the headline refers to other concrete benefits like thirty days of paid vacation in the first year. Similarly, the slogan the Air Force began using in 1976, “A Great Way of Life,” seems to refer to a good job, benefits, and the chance at an education, not to a life of adventure, challenge, or service.

Overall, Air Force recruiting ads of the 1970s aren’t at all militaristic in tone or in their imagery—in the early 1970s they tended to picture jet engines rather than jet fighters. The Air Force doesn’t offer recruits a traditionally martial masculinity, but they do put forward a working-class version of masculinity grounded in skilled physical labor. The Air Force presents itself as a place for a man to learn a trade and advance himself; for instance, the service claims that “Air Force training gives a man a skill he can always carry with him.” This kind of blue-collar manhood is further exemplified in the following ad copy, with its references to “craftsman’s hands” and “a master at his skill”:

Start with an inquiring mind. Add a passion for making things work. Then combine these qualities with a love of machines and a craftsman’s hands, and you’ve got a natural born mechanic. When the Air Force gets hold of a guy like that, they’ll spend thousands of dollars to train him to be a master at his skill.

The Air Force offers young, blue-collar men a recognition of their worth and promises

them respect, development, and economic security and self-sufficiency. Several ads from the 1970s published in *Popular Mechanics* specifically look for potential recruits with “inborn” or “inherent” mechanical abilities, and some sought to challenge the reader with a spatial reasoning quiz and to validate his technical skills and interests. While many young women in the early 1970s may have had mechanical skills, the references to such abilities being natural or inborn evokes a masculine skill to be treasured.

Ads from the late 1970s continued to emphasize job training and benefits, including new educational opportunities like the Community College of the Air Force and the Golden Opportunity Program, but the appeal broadened somewhat beyond the singular focus on tangible benefits. The first ad in my sample to use the slogan “A Great Way of Life,” expands on the marketplace appeal by promising “In the Air Force you can get outstanding training in a skill you’re interested in and qualified for, as an airman or officer...while serving your country with dignity and pride as part of the worldwide Air Force community.” The ad goes on to claim that “It’s a great way of life for those young men and women dedicated to the continuation of 200 years of American freedom.” Another ad from that same year also mentions “a worldwide community” and describes members of the Air Force as “devoted to service and nation.” The allusions to service and American freedom may just be artifacts of the bicentennial; training and benefits are still the main thrust of the ads in the “great way of life” series, despite an occasional reference to serving one’s country.

In the late 1970s, Air Force ads made a visual shift, and began to associate service in the Air Force with sleek, sophisticated aircraft. Even as the ads continued to emphasize benefits and job training, the imagery began to include fewer pictures of men

repairing machinery and more pictures of planes in flight. Soon, the dramatic images of aircraft began to dominate the ads entirely; many ads from the early 1980s include little text, allowing the images to speak more loudly. This change would seem to indicate a broadening of the attempted appeal from a blue-collar, mechanically-inclined (presumably male) audience to a somewhat wider public. The ads provide a different idea of technology, moving from a narrow emphasis on mechanics and specific jobs to a more expansive, cutting-edge vision of technology that lends glamour to the service as a whole.

Ads from the early 1980s make reference to “serving your country,” and “a proud spirit,” and the Air Force began to use the slogan “Aim High.” One ad that appeared occasionally between 1982 and 1985 sounds an inspirational tone and barely mentions concrete benefits. Over a dramatic shot of an F-15 Eagle or an F-104 Starfighter (there were two versions of the ad) the text reads:

Reach for new horizons. It's never easy. But reaching for new horizons is what aiming high is all about. Because to reach for new horizons you must have the vision to see things not only as they are, but as they could be. You must have the dedication to give the best you have. And you must have the courage to accept new challenges. The history of the Air Force is a history of men and women reaching for new horizons, dedicating their vision and courage to make our nation great. You can join us in our quest for new horizons. Our pay and benefits are better than ever, with opportunities for growth and challenge. Aim High! Find out more. See your Air Force Recruiter Today...

The ad combines national pride and patriotism with a challenge to service, and it's a far cry from the ads touting the re-usable skill.

The Air Force's emphasis on intangibles didn't last, however, and for the rest of the 1980s and into the 1990s, recruiting ads offer job training and experience, while the striking imagery of graceful aircraft in flight, futuristic-looking planes, and even the

occasional shot of the space shuttle allows the technical work described to bask in reflected glory. After the calls for service and the promise of challenge, the Air Force ad that ended up appearing the most frequently in my selection of ads, appearing in both *Popular Mechanics* and *Sports Illustrated* and running more than a dozen times between 1985 and 1987 sounds a lot like the ads from the 1970s:

We'll pay you to take the most exciting classes anywhere. You'll learn electronics, avionics, aircraft maintenance, health care sciences, management or logistics—the Air Force will train you in one of more than 200 technical specialties America needs today. You'll get hands-on experience with the latest equipment, and we'll pay 75% of your tuition for off-duty college courses, to get you even further. Whatever your goals, the Air Force will equip you with the skills to get where you want to be. If you're looking seriously into your future, Aim High to a future in the Air Force.

The Air Force needs good, technically-inclined workers who want a skill, maybe with the associated glamour of airplanes. The Air Force presents itself as a workplace, not a way of life or a calling. It promises none of the adventure or excitement of the Navy (despite the phrase “most exciting classes anywhere”) nor the transformation, masculinity, or warriorhood of the Marines. This impression is reinforced by a 1986 ad aimed at potential officers which reads: “As an Air Force second lieutenant, you'll manage people, projects and offices; you'll be in charge, making decisions, shouldering the responsibility. You'll belong to an organization dedicated to achievement, innovation and high technology.” The Air Force could be a large manufacturing concern, with a sizeable technical work force managed by a professional staff.

My sample contains few advertisements from the 1990s. In the post-Cold War period, the Air Force faced personnel cuts that, proportionally, were almost as large as those faced by the Army (McCormick, 1998:29). The small number of ads that were published talk about career opportunities and cutting-edge technology. An ad from 1992

pictures an F-117A Stealth fighter above the headline, “Sometimes the biggest opportunities are the hardest to see.” The ad goes on to refer to the plane as the “hero of Desert Storm and America’s most famous disappearing act.” Any of the other services would certainly talk about *people* as the heroes of Desert Storm, but the Air Force is touting itself as “the high technology world of tomorrow” and offering its machinery as a reason to enlist. A 1997 ad in *Popular Mechanics*, like earlier ads, explicitly looks for potential recruits who are “mechanically inclined.” This one reads:

Your dad thinks you oughtta get a job out at the airport. Your buddies think you oughtta come work at the garage so you can hang out with them. Your brother thinks you oughtta come work at the plant. Anybody ever ask you what you want to do?

If you’re mechanically inclined, the Air Force could be the perfect place for you. Where else could you learn about Tactical Aircraft Maintenance, Aerospace Propulsion, and everything in between while earning a good salary and learning to be a leader? If a mechanically oriented career is what you want, think about the Air Force. It’s one road that can take you anywhere.

In this ad, the references to a father, brother, and “buddies,” along with a picture of a young man, make it clear that the ad is talking to men, while the list of potential job sites—the airport, the garage, and the plant—place the targets of the ad in a working-class milieu. The Air Force wasn’t advertising broadly or trying to sell itself to a wide population. It wanted people with specialized skills, who would, presumably, be young men from a blue-collar background. This is reflected in the fact that throughout the period of the all-volunteer force, the Air Force placed more ads in *Popular Mechanics*, a magazine aimed at men who like to build things and are interested in mechanics,

technology, and machines, than it did in *Life* or *Sports Illustrated*.<sup>4</sup> In the late 1990s, the Air Force, among the other strands of its appeals, was still offering itself as a place where mechanically-inclined young men could earn respect and appreciation and develop a career.

Although the Air Force had always had a relatively easy time recruiting and been able to keep its standards high, like the Army and Navy it faced recruiting problems in the late 1990s. While the strong economy clearly had an impact on the general recruiting environment, the Air Force in particular may have been the service most affected by the boom in the technology sector, since the Air Force specifically targets the young people who are interested in and qualified to work with high technology, the same demographic that was most in demand in the civilian economy.<sup>5</sup> In fiscal year 1999, the Air Force missed its goal of 32,673 by 1,727, or five percent (Myers, 2000). The Air Force had been spending relatively little to market itself—\$12 million to the Army’s \$100 million in fiscal year 1998 (Chura and Snyder, 1999)—and its recruiters were outnumbered by those of the other services by a margin of thirteen to one (Peterson, 2000). In 1999, though, for the first time ever, the Air Force paid for television advertising in an attempt to boost its ranks. The TV commercials and a corresponding set of print ads provide the “flight plans” of three recent high-school graduates who have joined the Air Force, and their reasons for joining. The plans feature a Hispanic young man who hopes to someday become a doctor, who joined to gain independence, serve his country, get an

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<sup>4</sup> I found 29 different Air Force ads in *Popular Mechanics*, 10 in *Life*, 14 in *Sports Illustrated*, and two in *Seventeen*. By comparison, the Navy, which also needs a lot of technical workers, placed slightly more ads in *Sports Illustrated* (40), than they did in *Popular Mechanics* (34).

<sup>5</sup> See Hafner and Meyer (1997) and Baker and Barrett (1997) on the shortage of information technology workers in the late ‘90s.

education, and see the world; a young white woman who joined for the challenge the Air Force provides, to gain skills, earn money for college, and see the world; and a young Black man with an interest in mechanics and a fascination with airplanes, a track and field athlete who's father served in the military. My print ad sample contained two flight plans—those of the two young men—both of which appeared in my sample a number of times.

Each of these ads shows the young man's face, looking off into the distance and also includes a row of small pictures along the bottom of the page which includes a wide variety of images of aircraft, leisure, travel (the coliseum in Rome, Asian architecture), airmen and officers (including a couple of women) in dress uniforms and in camouflage. The elements of each flight plan include such markers of personal fulfillment as earning respect, leaving behind small town life, making one's family proud, as well as references to travel, education, and personal skills. One of the flight plans includes the goal, "Be better with the computer than my girlfriend is." With this statement, the Air Force at once acknowledges that women can be good with computers, which makes the Air Force seem forward-thinking and may appeal to women, but it also puts the young man in a position to be better than his girlfriend, putting him past her, skill-wise, and it shows that a young man associated with the Air Force is able to attract women. In the other plan, Kevin Collins, the African-American athlete wants, among other things, to "be a hero to someone," show people [he] can fix anything," "see places [his] dad told [him] about," and "ride [his] motorcycle across the desert." Being a hero, being competent to fix things, following in one's father's footsteps, and riding a motorcycle across the desert all hint at masculinity, though not in a particularly militaristic way.

In 1999, the Air Force also commissioned a study by the “corporate identity firm” of Siegel & Gale to help them develop a symbol and a theme to represent the Air Force. The firm interviewed members of the Air Force, the Air National Guard, the Air Force Reserve, and civilians about how they view the Air Force and its identity. The researchers found, according to an article in *Airman*, that “instead of one unifying theme, the Air Force has many different ways of expressing its identity” and that “there was little consistency in the visual representation of the Air Force.” Siegel & Gale found four dominant themes: “individual achievement, intelligence and technology, core values, and mission,” and they recommended that “mission” be the main focus of the Air Force’s identity, with the other three themes playing support roles. The firm “concluded the Air Force is a world-class, mission-ready organization” and “recommended the theme ‘World Ready,’” along with a new visual symbol that updates the Hap Arnold wings and star (Bosker, 2000).

Siegel & Gale also produced a series of television commercials meant to portray “the dedication and professionalism of Air Force people.” The ads included depictions of aircraft in flight, including fighters over the Mojave Desert and in-air refueling. According to the assistant director of the ads, while they show off Air Force hardware, the main intention was to show what it means to be an Air Force member, “the team spirit and sense of adventure in what the rest of the Air Force does.” The commercials also tried out a new slogan for the Air Force, “America’s Air Force—No One Comes Close.” According to Brig. Gen. Ron Rand, Air Force Director of Public Affairs, “‘No One Comes Close’ really describes our Air Force [...] People in the focus groups interpreted this to mean no other country in the world comes close to the United States; no other Air

Force in the world comes close to doing what we do; and no other endeavor comes close to the high-tech opportunities available to people in the Air Force” (Getsy and Johnson, 2000).

Apparently, the Air Force decided not to fully implement Siegel & Gale’s recommendations. The slogan “America’s Air Force—No One Comes Close” doesn’t appear in the print ad sample (although the Air Force did begin using it in television commercials after the dissertation’s sample period ended). The Air Force’s next major campaign, which debuted in 2001 and will be discussed below, doesn’t follow the theme “World Ready” and doesn’t focus on the Air Force’s mission, trending more toward the “individual achievement” and “intelligence and technology” themes identified by Siegel & Gale. (I would argue that those two have often been prominent messages in recruiting materials, while “core values” and “mission” have been almost entirely absent, though they may appear in other types of Air Force representations.) In the summer of 2000, however, the Air Force’s website ([www.airforce.com](http://www.airforce.com)) did express all of the themes that Siegel & Gale discussed. The site is a far cry from the skill-focused early ads of the All-Volunteer Force. It emphasizes the history of the force, its technology, and its missions.

The main part of the site is divided into three sections: “Past,” “Present,” and “Future.” “Past” presents a history of the Air Force, starting from well before the Air Force existed, back in 1903, up through the present, along with a timeline noting missions, new technologies, events, and historical “firsts.” The history of the 1990s describes both military operations, such as *Desert Storm* and Operation *Allied Force*, the 1999 NATO-led air strikes on the former Yugoslavia, and humanitarian and relief missions in Somalia, Bangladesh, and the Philippines. The Air Force ends this history

with the promise that “as the new century begins, the Air Force will maintain this constant readiness to respond with humanitarian help, wherever it’s needed, and to keep its resources honed and ready to defeat any threat from any quarter that jeopardizes the security of the United States at home and abroad.” This section on the past also includes “the boneyard,” which describes retired aircraft, and “flight plans,” which gives brief biographies of three members of the Air Force: the actor Jimmy Stewart, Major General Dick Catledge, and pro-football player Chad Hennings.

“Present” is divided into six sections: “Air Force life,” “the Hangar,” “technology,” “flight plans,” “Air Force arcade,” and “media gallery.” “Air Force life” includes discussions of basic training, officer candidate, school, base life, and similar kinds of information that is likely to be provided in recruitment materials. (Another part of the website, separate from the Past/Present/Future overview of the Air Force, goes into more detail about careers, education, and benefits.) This type of information however, is a small part of the overall website, and receives much less emphasis than it does in the Army and Navy websites. “Air Force life” also presents the Force’s core values of integrity, service before self, and excellence and describes the “Air Force spirit” which is an “unrelenting passion for personal growth—for pushing yourself further than you ever thought possible.” “The Hangar” describes itself as “home of the most sophisticated aircraft in the world today,” aircraft which “protect and defend...train and explore, and they’re piloted by an elite few.” This section shows off pictures of and facts about a wide range of aircraft.

The pages on technology specifically describe communications, flight systems, weaponry, and aerospace systems. The “weaponry” page strives to show off the

technological advances of Air Force weapons, while at the same time down-playing their actual purpose and the devastation of war. The page states:

While the obvious purpose of military weapons is a destructive one, the technology behind their power is actually designed to preserve lives—those of civilians as well as our military personnel. Today’s advanced weapons guidance technologies allow us to be so extremely precise in our targeting that the loss of innocent lives during battle situations may be virtually eliminated.

The Air Force also promises that Air Force personnel will avoid the risks of combat.

They claim that the same technology that protects innocent civilians “also protects our warfighters by enabling them to guide weapons like the AGM-88 HARM to a specific ground location from outside the target area—and safe from harm.” This section goes on to claim that the Air Force, in cooperation with civilian researchers, is developing methods to “destroy the nitrogen oxides that cause smog and acid rain—essentially ‘zapping’ pollution from the sky,” and that “computer innovations developed to help smart weapons find their targets will soon be used to help radiologists detect breast cancer earlier in mammograms.” (A high-tech twist on the old idea of protecting women?)

The website’s section on the future is mostly concerned with future technology and the potential of outer space. The Air Force envisions itself in the future as a space-based force, “instantly aware, globally dominant, selectively lethal, and virtually present...a smaller, leaner service totally focused on accomplishing its mission anywhere at a moment’s notice.”

On this website, the Air Force is proud of its history and even prouder of its technology. It touts benefits like travel, training, and money for college, but it doesn’t push them hard. The Air Force seems to be trying to cultivate a warrior spirit which is

mediated by technology, to appeal to kids who grew up blowing things up and battling in space in video games, kids who prize mastery of technology. By stressing the anticipated extreme precision of Air Force weaponry and by actually providing video games on the website, some of which include instructions to “eliminate ground targets,” (“F-15 Eagle Clean Sweep”) the Air Force is advancing an antiseptic, high-tech vision of warfare from a distance, which is efficient, carries minimal risk, and only punishes the guilty. The Air Force is presenting an image of itself as a benign force which provides aid and assistance to those in need, which vanquishes threats with the most advanced, intelligent technology in the world, and which is creating technology not just for fighting, but to better the world, to fight pollution and breast cancer. The recruit who joins this service is participating in this benevolent dominance and can make claims to mastery. This is the first place where the vision of service put forward by the Air Force reflects the set of characteristics that Niva (1998) ascribes to new world order masculinity, with the references to humanitarian work, devastating technological power being put to benign ends, and compassion mixed with strength.

As the Army and Navy launched major new campaigns in 2001, the Air Force also developed a new slogan, “Cross Into the Blue,” and rolled out new ads. The Air Force seems to have decided not to focus on the force’s mission, as had been recommended, but instead created a more individualistic campaign. This campaign, which has a slick, cutting-edge look, tries to imbue the potential recruit with a specialness that the Air Force is able to recognize, using the line “We’ve been waiting for you,” and it links technology with excitement and adventure.

In one TV commercial, scenes of a snowboarder whipping along a snowy

mountain morph into shots of an FA-22 Raptor racing through the sky. Physical adventurousness and excitement are linked with the technological and militaristic excitement and prowess of Air Force aircraft. In another ad, a video game player turns into a fighter pilot, overtly linking war-fighting with video game-playing. This connection at once assures the recruit that he has the necessary abilities and that his “skills,” which may have been denigrated by the authority figures in his life (parents, teachers), are actually valuable and necessary—the Air Force claims to have been “waiting for” just such a young person, while also promising him that he’ll have access to a “game system” that is much cooler and more exciting than whatever he’s playing on at home.

Three different “We’ve Been Waiting For You” print ads ran in *Sports Illustrated* in 2002 and 2003. One states, “Fastball—90 MPH, Slap Shot—120 MPH, Human—1,500 MPH” and pictures a pilot’s oxygen-masked and helmeted head in the dome of a cockpit. In the second ad, a trio of sleek F-15 Eagles and an A-10 Thunderbolt fly above a forested mountain topped by a picturesque old city; the caption reads: “Some people backpack across Europe. Some don’t.” The third ad asks, “Ever wish science fiction wasn’t?” above a shadowy picture of a futuristic-looking plane. All three also include a blank Air Force identity card with the outline of a young man’s head and the phrase “We’ve been waiting for you.” These ads offer the potential recruit the chance to stand apart from others in cool, high-tech ways—getting to go super fast, flying across Europe in fighter jets instead of backpacking, working with “science fiction” technology.

After a redesign, in early 2002 the Air Force’s website focused on five central “missions” that might appeal to a potential recruit: humanitarian, health care, flight,

aerospace, and research. The reference to humanitarian missions is notable. None of the other services highlight humanitarian missions in this way. The earlier version of the website noted the specific humanitarian and peace-keeping missions of the 1990s as part of the Air Force's history, and while the Air Force removed the historical timeline, the emphasis on humanitarian action increased with its framing as one of the main career areas. The "Humanitarian Outreach" mission page says "Expect more from your peers. Expect more from yourself. Sometimes the enemy is an earthquake, hurricane or flood. Air Force humanitarian missions save lives and bring aid and comfort to those in need. Do you expect more from yourself?" The text is illustrated with a picture of three men next to a gurney with a helicopter hovering behind them. They are in camouflage: one wears a flight helmet, another sports dark sunglasses, and the third talks into field telephone. The look is distinctly military—no one would confuse these airmen with the Red Cross. Interestingly, of the pictures that accompany the five missions, this is the only one that doesn't include a woman. Humanitarianism is sometimes associated with women or with femininity; some commentators who want to keep the military focused on combat tasks and traditional war-fighting try to minimize the importance of both relief work and peace-keeping or denigrate them by casting them in feminine terms, as social work or caring for children.<sup>6</sup> The Air Force, however, is gendering humanitarian missions as masculine. The website allowed visitors to sign up for a monthly email

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<sup>6</sup> For example, Stephanie Gutmann, an opponent of gender integration in the military, in discussing ways to strengthen the military by re-masculinizing it, includes reducing efforts to recruit women, separating men and women during basic training, and removing peace-keeping and humanitarian work from the military's jurisdiction. She argues: "If the United States continues to play social worker to the world, it is time to create a separate branch to dispense medicine, deliver bags of disposable diapers, show third-world mothers how to use them, inoculate animals, et cetera" (Gutmann, 2000:282). She feminizes relief work by focusing on diapers and mothers and by including it in a list of what the military needs to change if it's going to attract and retain suitable men.

newsletter, “News from Inside the Blue,” and this bulletin often featured a dramatic account of a humanitarian mission, including natural disaster relief,<sup>7</sup> medical assistance,<sup>8</sup> humanitarian support in war zones,<sup>9</sup> and instances when advanced technology helped to save lives.<sup>10</sup> Again, this picture of masculinity evokes Niva’s new world order masculinity.

The descriptions of the other missions—excluding health care—include references to cutting edge technology, a recurrent Air Force selling point, and, in a newer move, to power and dominance. The “Aerospace” mission page reads: “Be ready to go above and beyond. The future of aerospace power transcends the skies into outer space. And we command the entire aerospace column from aircraft to spacecraft. Are you up for the challenge?” The page on “Scientific Research” states: “Be on the cutting edge. We’ve got the latest technology and the sharpest minds—because today the military mind is as important as military might. We stay in front by utilizing new technologies to ensure air dominance. Do you have what it takes to be on the cutting edge of technology?” And, finally, the “Flight” mission page challenges a potential recruit to: “Embrace a future in the Air Force. Things are constantly changing in this fast paced

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<sup>7</sup> For instance, “Cyclone Relief in Mozambique” led the March 21, 2002 issue. This story is an excellent example of how humanitarian missions could be related in the manner of an edge-of-your-seat thriller, lending them excitement and importance. The portion of the story included in the email newsletter (the rest could be read by clicking on a link) proclaimed: “Forty airmen waited to hitch a ride home. After 64 days in Turkey supporting Operation Northern Watch, Naval Station Rota, Spain, was just one of several rest stops along the way. The calm before the storm interrupted, as rumors of another mission trickled through the crowd. Then a gust of urgency blew into the room. A cyclone had ravaged Mozambique, a country they couldn’t spell without wiping the sleep out of their eyes. The possibility of redeployment home dissolved as motionless bodies woke to the surge of fragmented information.”

<sup>8</sup> For example, “Medical Care for Honduran Children” from September 18, 2002.

<sup>9</sup> Examples include “Airmen Support Operations in Liberia,” from September 18, 2003, “Relief Efforts with Wheels,” from March 4, 2003, about the delivery of wheelchairs to Afghanistan, and “Medics Make a Difference,” from December 9, 2003, about assistance for Iraqi citizens.

<sup>10</sup> Two examples are “Satellites Help Save a Life at Sea” from February 4, 2003 and “Humanitarian Airdrop Methods Improve” from May 6, 2003.

world. And no one can match our speed, global range, precision and power. We can be anywhere, anytime in a moment of crisis. Think you can keep up?”

Commanding the aerospace column, ensuring air dominance, and maintaining unmatched speed, range, precision, and power are all assertions of might. The Air Force presents itself in these descriptions in a distinctly more militaristic fashion than it had in the past, although to nowhere near the degree that the Navy was militarizing its recruiting image at around the same time. This change goes along with the depiction of a pilot, discussed above, in the “Cross Into the Blue” print ad whose face is obscured by his helmet and mask. It is a more warrior-like portrayal of a pilot than had been customary in Air Force advertising—the image implies impersonality and impenetrability, a powerful force with the ability to be destructive. The assertions of dominance and the militarism on the website are clearly linked with technology. While the other services may highlight advanced technology to varying degrees, no service makes the connection so direct; certainly the military prowess of a Marine does not depend on the Corps’ hardware (let alone its software).

Most of the website, however, explores the career opportunities and the benefits of an Air Force life. The website profiles five people with careers in flight, with brief entries under the categories “my career,” “my life,” “my education,” and “my technology.” They include: Captain Tim Baggerly of airborne communications, who has learned in the Air Force “to live [his] life to the fullest and do [his] job with integrity” but who also has “a life on the other side of that gate,” one which, according to the pictures, includes golf; Technical Sergeant Tom Parker, a crew chief who trains mechanics, enjoys the chance to travel and to use his free time participating in fishing tournaments, and who

claims to have grown personally in the Air Force; Major Fritz Heck, a fighter pilot who graduated from the Air Force Academy, has flown a number of combat operations, and now has friends all of the world; Senior Airman Genis Timmerman of security forces, who joined the Air Force so that she could start a career in law enforcement at the age of eighteen, feels that the Air Force has given her “the chance to mature and take responsibility,” and who likes “to play sports, work out, dance and cheer” in her free time; and Senior Airman Marilyn Pool, an air traffic controller who discusses the importance and excitement of her career. Pool’s profile is particularly interesting. In the section on her life, Pool, who is African-American, talks about her personal growth and becoming a “more articulate, disciplined and well-rounded individual” as well as about her financial security and stability. She goes on to note: “I’ve learned how to balance a full-time job and be the mother of a two-year-old girl. Motherhood is great and the benefits have been wonderful. One of the things I enjoy most is traveling and spending time with my boyfriend and daughter.” This page is buried fairly deep in the website, but it’s advertising the Air Force as a place where women can have both a career and a family. Not only that, but the reference to the boyfriend shows that this airman is clearly a single mother.

Photo galleries portray world travel (England, Alaska, Venice) and leisure activities (boating, surfing, windsurfing, golf, white-water rafting, camping) as well as on-base amenities including sports facilities, base exchange stores, and nicely-decorated dormitory rooms. The various pages describe a fulfilling life that includes career advancement, travel, adventure, personal growth, and friendship. There are also several references to family life. The Air Force promises: “You’ll have time to advance your

career, bond with your peers, spend time with you family and grow as an individual.” Air Force bases “are designed to be functional and family-friendly, with lots of opportunities for fun family get-togethers” and “In addition to recreation centers, pools and playgrounds, Air Force bases offer a variety of youth programs like t-ball.” While the website certainly devotes most of its attention to the Air Force’s technology and the careers and benefits available to potential recruits, the recurrent references to family are notable. The Air Force may be attempting to appeal to women, but also, perhaps, to men who may want a more well-rounded life than they might imagine possible in the other services. The Air Force needs to find people who are suited to working with technology and who will stay in the Air Force long enough for the service to get a return on the expensive training it may have provided, but who may not have perceived themselves as military types or as suited to military life. These potential recruits are offered the chance to be a part of an institution whose technology gives it power and dominance, that engages in exciting and demanding humanitarian work, and that offers a good career, all while allowing for a normal family life.

### Women, the Air Force, and Recruiting

The Air Force has had the most complex relationship with women of any of the services. The Air Force faces the fewest legal restrictions on women’s participation, and from its inception as an independent service after World War II, women were integrated into the organizational structures. However, while the Air Force was in the best position of any of the services to utilize women, it had the least incentive to recruit them, because the Air Force could always attract the highest quality male recruits. The other services all

had higher standards for women recruits than for men, and could therefore make a choice between recruiting higher-quality women or lower-quality men, but the Air Force could attract enough men to hold them to higher standards as well. The Air Force has frequently taken the lead in opening opportunities to women—it was the first service to train male and female officers together, the first to open ROTC to women, and the first to allow women with children to enlist, but it also kept women off of airplanes, limiting the aviation positions in which they could serve, well beyond what the law against women in combat required. The Air Force has the largest percentage of women, and, unlike the other services, its advertising hasn't promoted overtly militaristic forms of masculinity, but the small amount of advertising the Air Force has done over the course of the all-volunteer force has mainly been aimed at a technically-inclined young men, and women have been only a token presence.

During World War II, before the Air Force was an independent military branch, the aviation components of each of the services were the most enthusiastic about the participation of women. The aviation components didn't have long-standing institutional practices or traditions, and they were working with new technologies that weren't firmly tied to gender roles. The Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics was staffed with young officers figuring out how to work with new technologies. In the months before WWII, they encouraged the Navy to draft legislation to allow for the recruitment of women, and they identified a wide range of skilled and technical jobs related to aviation that they thought women could perform (Ebbert and Hall, 1993:28). Nearly half of the women in the Army during WWII served with the Army Air Force (AAF) as "Air-WACs." About a thousand women served as WASPS—Women's Airforce Service Pilots. These women

had civil, not military status, but they ferried military aircraft, towed gunnery targets, and taught flying. They didn't fly combat missions, but performed other kinds of military flying to free male pilots for combat (Holm, 1992:64).

When women became a permanent part of the regular armed forces in 1948, they were integrated directly into the Air Force, even as the Air Force's parent service, the Army, kept women in a separate corps. The Air Force's decision not to segregate women into a separate corps had less to do with ideas about gender than it did with a concern that the Air Force not have any separate organizations. The new Air Force rejected the Army's structure, with its myriad units, like the Signal Corps, the Quartermaster Corps, and the Women's Corps (ibid.: 122). As part of that integrated structure, Air Force women officers were incorporated into the male promotion lists—up until a woman hit the legal ceiling at lieutenant colonel, when her male contemporaries and subordinates would begin to pass her by—and while the direct competition might be seen as a sign of equality, it had the practical effect of putting women at a disadvantage, because they weren't eligible for career-enhancing pilot and navigator jobs, but they competed for promotion against men who were (ibid.:123).

While there was no separate women's corps, up until the 1970s, Air Force women were called WAF, just as Army women were called WACs and Navy Women were WAVES. Women were also placed in a separate category from men in that they could not be pilots. The 1948 legislation barred women from serving on "combat aircraft engaged in combat missions." All of the services took that prohibition farther than the law required, and as a matter of policy closed all pilot jobs to women, on the grounds that any pilot should be available for any kind of mission at any time. On the same basis, they

did not allow women to serve in navigator or most flight crew positions (*ibid.*:126).

Flying is the Air Force's core mission, and women were excluded from that core, just as they were kept off Navy ships and out of the combat arms in the Army and Marine Corps. Despite its reputation as the most forward-thinking and gender-integrated force, the Air Force was as resolved as the other services to exclude women from its central military function.

Air Force leaders envisioned the WAF as a small elite group of women. In deciding how to utilize women, the Air Force used four criteria: physical demands, psychological and environmental suitability, career opportunities (women would be barred from any field if positions up the career ladder were closed to them), and, in unclear cases, a poll of professional opinion. According to these criteria, the Air Force decided to close to women 158 of 349 enlisted specialties, although more might be opened during a mobilization for war (*ibid.*:139).

During the initial two years of women's integration, the Air Force didn't meet its goals of 300 officers and 4000 enlisted women, missing by about 100 officers and 200 WAF airmen. According to Holm, the Air Force was surprised by the shortfall: "After the success of the wartime AAF in recruiting Air-WACs, it had simply not occurred to Air Force leaders that women would not flock to the new, glamorous service" (139). In response, in 1950, Air Force Chief of Staff, General Vandenberg, asked Jacqueline Cochran, Director of Women Pilots for the WASPs during WWII, to examine the WAF program, passing over the female WAF director, Colonel Geraldine May. Cochran, who during World War II had fought to keep the WASP pilots as a separate female corps under female leadership (her own), was highly critical of many aspects of the program.

Her biggest criticism was that the Air Force was not recruiting women of a high enough quality, and her main criteria seemed to be attractive physical appearance and grooming (ibid.:142-143).

More than once during the Cold War, the existence of the women's program was threatened. In 1951, the Pentagon pushed to rapidly expand the number of women in each of the services to keep down Korean War draft calls. The recruiting drive was a failure, especially for the Army and the Air Force, which had set unrealistically high goals. If the point of a peacetime women's service was to provide the basis for wartime mobilization, but the expansion plan failed in the Korean War, then Air Force planners wondered why they needed a women's program. Developments in defense strategy further threatened the WAF. President Eisenhower's "New Look" defense policy of massive retaliation envisioned an air war decided by forces in being. There would be no time in a future conflict to expand the forces, according to this strategy, because early use of air power would be decisive, so, again, having a small group of women as the nucleus for an expanded wartime program couldn't be the rationale for the program (ibid.:166).

In the late 1950s, overall manpower reductions led the Air Force to shrink the already-small WAF program. (Of course, increases in Air Force end strength had never led to increases in the number of WAF.) There had been about 7,200 women on active duty in a force of 734,000 in 1958, with a ceiling on women's participation set at 8,000. The Air Force decided to reduce that ceiling to 5,000 by 1960, and to remove women from nontraditional fields and only place them in jobs that "women do better than men" (ibid.:172-173). In 1961, the Office of the Director of Personnel Plans put forward a study that recommended phasing out the WAF program entirely, but resistance from

Capitol Hill and the Pentagon, which was unwilling to cut a volunteer program at a time when reservists were being recalled to deal with international crises, saved the women's program (ibid.:174).

In the 1960s, the WAF was a token program, in which women served only in traditionally female occupations. Women recruits had to meet high standards for education and mental capacity, and they were also expected to meet a high standard of personal attractiveness. In 1966, according to Holm:

the Air Force Chief of Staff admonished the commander of the Recruiting Service to get "better looking WAF." 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. Civil rights leaders assumed the photographs' purpose was to determine race, but this was not the case—it was a beauty contest, and the commander of the Recruiting Service was the final judge. (Ibid.:181)

In the late 1960s, as in the other services, the trends slowly began to shift under the pressures of the Vietnam War and the growing women's movement. The Secretary of the Air Force ordered a study of the possibility of expanding the WAF program to keep down draft calls. The Air Force, unconcerned about the other services or the larger manpower issues raised by the Vietnam War, resisted, since it was having no trouble recruiting high-quality men, many of whom enlisted in the Air Force to avoid being drafted into the Army (ibid.:189). The Air Force eventually agreed to a small expansion.

After some early resistance, the Air Force eventually sent more than 500 women, more than half of them officers, to Southeast Asia, mainly to serve with the 13<sup>th</sup> Air Force in Thailand (ibid.:223-224). In 1969, the Air Force became the first service to open ROTC to women on a test basis. The AFROTC test was successful. The few women who had been allowed in performed well, and the air science professors reported that the presence of women helped to make AFROTC a more acceptable presence on

campus (ibid.:269), which would have been a significant concern in the face of anti-war activity on university campuses during that period.

As noted above, in the early years of the all-volunteer force, Air Force recruiting advertisements emphasized job skills and training, underpinned by a working-class version of masculinity. Some of the ads from this period do make rhetorical reference to women as well as to men, such as a 1972 ad on “The Air Force skill” which notes that each year “[t]housands of young men and women enlist,” or another ad from the same year, with the headline, “I learned my job in the US Air Force,” which states “[o]ne of the best reasons to join the Air Force is to take advantage of the training they offer young men and women.” Despite the references to women, the ads all seem to target men and only men are pictured.

The image of a woman appears in my sample for the first time in 1976. The ad contains a large picture of an F-16 Fighting Falcon, as well as three smaller pictures of Air Force personnel: two white men crouched under a jet, an African-American man working on piece of equipment, and a white woman with a clipboard standing in front of two reel-tape computers. From that point on, in ads that picture people—as opposed to just aircraft or text—if several people or several different photos are included, there may be a woman among the men. It is usually, however, just a single woman who is shown while several men will also be pictured. Most of the pictures of women are small—they are not the main visual image of the ad. (In a couple of cases, the women are pictured in tiny photos that run along the bottom of the ad.) Many of the ads in the sample feature a single man or a group of men, but only one shows a woman without any men. This ad, which will be discussed below, only ran in *Seventeen Magazine*, which has a young,

female readership. The only other exception is a drawing of a dejected-looking cheerleader in a 1977 ad about the Community College of the Air Force that states “Now our college has almost everything but a football team. And cheerleaders.” Out of the 30 ads in the sample that include a picture of a person or people, women appear in nine of them, including the drawing of the cheerleader. The few pictures of women do tend to feature them working, as airmen or officers, rather than at leisure or as civilians, as is common in the Navy ads.

In 1977, Air Force women became eligible for aviation duty in non-combat aircraft. The Air Force waited longer than the Army or Navy to let women compete for these positions, which opened them in 1974 and 1973, respectively (Women’s Research and Education Institute, 2003). The supposedly more gender-neutral Air Force had held out longer than the other services, perhaps because flying is the Air Force’s central mission, and Air Force men resisted allowing women into the heart of the Air Force. The recruitment advertisements don’t reflect this change in any way, probably not just because women played such a small role in Air Force recruiting ads, but more likely because the ads from the 1970s don’t tend to show pilots or air crew; they focus on enlisted airmen and technical and mechanical skills.

The ads from the early 1980s seem more gender-neutral than the earlier ads aimed at blue-collar young men, mainly because they are dominated by images of aircraft and most of them don’t show any people (though some include a small, inset picture of a man at a control panel). The visual emphasis is on the beauty and grandeur of the aircraft, not on the people who fly or maintain them. While the ads from this period don’t seem either to reach out to or to exclude women, in practice, the Air Force was attempting to hold the

line on female enlistments. In 1981, the Air Force joined the Army in an attempt to limit the number of women in the military while evaluating their effect on combat readiness. While the Army seems to have been attempting to force a return to the draft, Holm, who had served as WAF Director, believes that the Air Staff feared that if the Army held down female enlistments, the Secretary of Defense might look to the Air Force to take up the slack and recruit additional women to leave more men for the Army (Holm, 1992:391). While the Air Staff attempted to put limits on the recruiting objectives for women, in 1985, Congress, faced with the pressure to allocate more recruiting funds to the services to improve the quality of men recruited, told the Air Force that in 1987, 19% of new recruits should be women, and in 1988, the number should be 22%. After 1989, Congress mandated that the Air Force no longer set separate accession and strength ceilings for women, even as the other services, more restricted by combat exclusion law, could do so. The DOD's 1988 "risk rule" on combat exclusions opened 2,700 more positions to women in the Air Force, although the Air Force resisted actually assigning women to some of the new jobs until 1990, when DACOWITS<sup>11</sup> made an issue of it. By the end of the 1980s, 97% of Air Force jobs were theoretically open to women, and 77,000 of them made up 14% of the service (ibid.:421).

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1992-1993 removed legislative restrictions on the assignment of women to combat aviation. In April 1993, the Clinton administration, under Secretary of Defense Les Aspin, decided to allow women to compete for assignment to combat aircraft. For the Air Force, this meant that

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<sup>11</sup> DACOWITS, the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, was a body created by Secretary of Defense George Marshall in 1951, made up at the time of fifty prominent women, to advise the Pentagon on the recruitment and use of women in the military.

virtually all jobs could be filled by women, with the exception of combat control, special operations forces, and TAC Pararescue positions. In 1998, female aviators flew operational combat missions for the first time, enforcing the no-fly zone in Iraq. The next year, they participated in combat operations in the air war in Kosovo (Women's Research and Education Institute, 2003).

Since the late 1980s, when Air Force recruiting ads returned to an emphasis on job training, women have been occasionally included in the imagery of Air Force advertising. Women are a recurring presence in Air Force recruiting materials, but a minor one. In 2000, the Air Force began running an ad in *Seventeen*, a magazine aimed at adolescent girls, specifically for its officer training programs. The ad shows a rural landscape—fields and forests, from an upside-down and tilted view, presumably out of an airplane, with the caption “From up here your career takes on a whole new perspective.”

Small text along the bottom of the page reads, in part:

Get the kind of training that prepares you for anything life can throw at you. And it starts with a scholarship through the ROTC program, or enrollment into the Air Force Academy. Either way, you'll get the responsibilities, challenges and training to prepare you for a career in life.

The upside-down view lends some excitement, but it's basically a career-based appeal. The ad isn't offering job training in a good skill, but the college-bound equivalent. There is nothing in this ad that seems to be aimed specifically at women. It seems like an ad that could have appeared in *Sports Illustrated* or another magazine aimed at young men, though I only came across it in *Seventeen*. The Air Force did not place any ads in *Seventeen* before this, and then it ran this one ad for five months in 2000. The Air Force may have felt pressure to aim more directly at a female market when other forces were doing so during a period of recruiting difficulty, or the Air Force may have felt some

pressure to increase the number of women at the Air Force Academy at this particular period.

In early 2003, a scandal erupted over allegations that a large number of young women were raped or sexually assaulted by fellow cadets at the Air Force Academy, and that for the previous ten years the Academy ignored the problem, dissuading female cadets from reporting the attacks and punishing some of those who did.<sup>12</sup> In June of 2003, a few months after this scandal broke, in what may be a coincidence, the Air Force once again began running a recruiting ad in *Seventeen*. This ad is a part of the “We’ve Been Waiting for You Campaign,” and it specifically targets young women. In this ad, the blank Air Force ID card shows the outline of a distinctly female head, as indicated by the haircut (which serves to point out the maleness of the heads drawn in the other ads in this series, some of which might otherwise seem gender-neutral). The ad shows the head of an aviator in a cockpit, turning around to look at something, with another fighter jet in the distance behind. Not much of the face is showing between the helmet and the oxygen mask, but it appears to be a woman. The text along the top of the picture says “The best man for the job came in second.” It’s a direct offer of equal opportunity, and an equal opportunity to do something challenging and exciting that has traditionally been in the domain of men.

Two different ads in one young women’s magazine, each running four times during the period I studied, aren’t much from which to generalize. An advertisement that is outside the scope of this project because it appeared in *Seventeen* in 2005 may point the

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<sup>12</sup> Some cadets who attempted to pursue complaints of assault found themselves being investigated for drinking or fraternization (see Janofsky with Schemo, 2003, Schmitt, 2003, and Schmitt with Moss, 2003).

way to the future. The headline reads, “Girls often dream about the day they’ll change their name.” A sheet of loose-leaf notebook paper, with doodles of hearts, flowers, and little boxes in the margins, is covered with the signature of “Sarah Lassiter.” Each time her name is written, an Air Force rank is written in front of it, from “Airman Basic Sarah Lassiter” all the way up through “General Sarah Lassiter.” The text at the bottom of the page begins, “As a woman in the United States Air Force, you’ll change what people call you every time you grow through the ranks. There are over 150 career fields in the USAF, providing limitless possibilities to lead.” The Air Force is again trying to appeal to a desire for equality and career ambitions, this time by playing upon the stereotype that girls dream about getting married and becoming “Mrs.” Somebody. Here, they are offered the chance to improve their status on their own, though the feminine doodles of hearts and flowers serve both to be humorous and to keep “Sarah Lassiter” recognizably feminine, even though she’s looking to a career in the military to better herself. The “best man for the job” ad may thus have been the beginning of a new attempt by the Air Force—and the first one they made since the advent of the All-Volunteer Force—to specifically reach out to women and to make greater use of them, or it may not be. On its website, the Air Force has certainly made some effort to include women and to show them in a variety of contexts. Over the course of the all-volunteer force as a whole, however, despite the putative gender-neutrality of Air Force practices and the breadth of jobs open to women, women are a token presence in Air Force recruiting ads, which seem mainly aimed at young men, whether they be mechanically-inclined blue-collar types, or, more recently, technology-savvy video-gamers looking for a cool career.

### Conclusions: Masculinity and Air Force Recruiting

The Air Force, in its recruiting materials, has not based its appeals for service on a warrior masculinity, nor has it offered recruits a chance to test their manhood through physical challenges. Air Force advertising, as fits with Air Force culture, is rarely militaristic. Airmen and officers are usually pictured in their work uniforms, not in fatigues, which imply combat, nor in the dress uniforms meant for ceremonial military displays. There are no references to or images of missiles—a key element of US defense strategy and a major element of the Air Force’s arsenal—anywhere in my ad sample. This may be because missiles don’t imply daring and glory in the same way that the airplane does, and because missiles mainly sit in their silos, awaiting potential threats; they also carry immense destructive power. Airplanes, which have both military and civilian functions, get all of the adoration. Air Force aircraft are instruments of war, but their flight doesn’t evoke violence, and though Air Force fighter jets and bombers are clearly a different breed from non-military planes, it is the sleekness, power, and beauty of these planes that is highlighted, more than their lethal potential.

Air Force advertising has focused on skills training, offering mechanically-inclined young men the chance to acquire valuable skills that will help them advance in the civilian economy and that are a source of respect. Despite very occasional references to women, the job-training ads concentrate on blue-collar men, making the Air Force seen like a haven for them, and while not offering them a Marine Corps-style warrior masculinity, the Air Force is basing its appeal on a working-class version of masculinity founded on economic independence and mastery of a skill.

The Air Force has also made advanced technology a central draw, showing off

sleek aircraft and, on its website, describing communications, flight, weaponry, and aerospace systems that are the most advanced in the world. These technologies offer potential recruits the chance to be associated with power and dominance, even if their particular Air Force jobs won't directly involve the deployment of these advanced systems. The Air Force even seems sometimes to be promising that war and military force can be experienced as an exciting, bloodless video game. The recruiting website also emphasizes the Air Force's humanitarian role, painting humanitarian missions as dramatic and important. Thrill-seeking video-game players and snowboarders (both of which were pictured in Air Force TV commercials) will find excitement in the Air Force, whether through amazing technology or humanitarian work that is like an extreme sport.

The glamour and exhilaration of Air Force technology are also theoretically accessible to women as well as men. Almost all Air Force jobs are open to women, and though women are a very minor presence in Air Force advertising, when they are portrayed, it is generally in ways that are similar to how men are pictured. The Air Force has also made some small recent attempts to target women in print ads placed in *Seventeen*, making offers of equality. Over the course of the all-volunteer force as a whole, though, the Air Force has generally attracted a large number of high-quality recruits, and much of the recruiting the Air Force has done has been specifically aimed at people with technical and mechanical skills—whom the Air Force presumes are more likely to be young men—rather than at the general population of high school graduates.

The appeals to and portrayals of men, which make up the bulk of Air Force recruiting materials, can be thought of in terms of the “new world order” masculinity described by Steve Niva (1998). As I described in Chapter Two, Niva argues that the

1991 Gulf War ushered in a new paradigm for masculinity that retained some of the markers of previous forms of hegemonic masculinity, like toughness and aggressiveness, but also included compassion. The Vietnam War discredited military masculinity, and cultural productions of the early 1980s, like the Rambo movies, attempted to heal the wounds of Vietnam with violent displays of hypermasculinity, but the Gulf War allowed for a redemption of masculinity by highlighting a form which better fit with American gender relations after the Women's Movement and with America's conception of itself as the benevolent and responsible leader of the post-Cold War world. The "tough and tender" model of manhood is also embedded in America's advanced technology, the superiority of which reveals the superiority of Western men. In addition, this model of masculinity, instead of posing itself in stark contrast to femininity, involves a new, somewhat more progressive set of gender relations: "Whereas both the pre- and the post-Vietnam War man sharply differentiated himself from women and their activities, the Gulf War's new man sought to include women in his world, even if restricting them to strictly noncombatant roles" (ibid.:120).

The Air Force's portrayal of itself to some degree reflects Niva's conception of new world order masculinity. The Air Force doesn't emphasize toughness or aggressiveness, but it does assert its power and dominance. It also claims that its technology makes war less deadly and it highlights its humanitarian mission as an important function, one that is both demanding and rewarding (and it masculinizes humanitarian work as well). This balance fits with the "tough and tender" paradigm. The links between technology and warfare are stronger in the Air Force than in any other service, and the Air Force gives primacy to the technologist, validating and conferring

respect on his skills. The Air Force, in the period since the Gulf War, has given women access to most roles, including formerly-restricted combat roles (or, rather, it was directed to do so by its civilian overseers). In actual practice, women haven't achieved full equality in the Air Force, but the Air Force can wear its putative gender-neutrality and inclusiveness as a badge of its progressiveness.

Throughout the course of the all-volunteer force, the Air Force has focused on tangible benefits available to recruits, whether skills training, or a good career, or, as portrayed on the website, a comfortable lifestyle with a balance between work and other aspects of life, like leisure or family. Air Force advertising is highly individualistic. There are a few perfunctory references to teamwork, but the emphasis is either on the airman and his skills or on the Air Force's technology—the airplanes, not on the Air Force as a collective. The other services, and particularly the Marines, offer recruits the chance to become a part of something larger than themselves; the Marines focus on the group and celebrate their group identity and culture. The Air Force is at the other end of the spectrum. For most airmen and officers, it offers a work environment that is similar to that of a civilian bureaucratic organization, albeit one that uses a lot of sophisticated technology, with both offices and technical work areas. The Air Force does not promise to transform the recruit and give him a whole new identity that will subsume his old self. This fits with the Air Force's culture, which valorizes technology, does not have a particularly strong warrior culture, and allows its most elite members to identify more strongly with aircraft than with the institution itself. The Air Force offers technology-related forms of masculinity that don't demand a complete transformation or a new

identity and will allow the airman or officer to pass comfortably between and find status and opportunity in both the Air Force and civilian worlds.

## Chapter 7: CONCLUSION

While some military watchers have claimed that all of the services aside from the Marines have abandoned masculinity in their recruiting appeals, this dissertation clearly shows that this is not the case. At the inception of the All-Volunteer Force, the military's ability to deploy masculinity as a recruiting tool was constrained because dominant conceptions of masculinity were being disrupted by various social, economic, and political changes in American culture, because traditional military forms of masculinity were discredited by both the Vietnam War and the Women's Movement, and because women were becoming a more important source of military manpower. However, while these challenges to masculinity made the links between military service and masculinity more complex, the result was not the neutering of military service in recruiting appeals but the alteration of military masculinities. The military branches reacted to the changes in the larger culture and presented several versions of masculinity, including both transformed models that are gaining dominance in the civilian sector, and traditional warrior forms that can appeal to those who are threatened by the changes and looking for a refuge.

The Marine Corps is the branch that fully depends on a traditional masculine form. It has consistently depicted a warrior masculinity, with hard young men portrayed in martial contexts, either in a combat context or on ceremonial display. The Marines inform potential recruits that they'll need to prove their worth before being accepted into the brotherhood, in effect offering them a rite of passage into manhood. Based on their structure and personnel needs, the Marines only need to use one version of masculinity in their appeals. The Marines can use the promise of a warrior masculinity to lure in young

men who want to spend a few years doing combat-oriented jobs, and they don't need to emphasize benefits or job training as would probably be necessary to recruit people who would make a longer commitment and do more technical jobs. The type of young man who responds to the call of a traditional masculinity will also best fit into the strong warrior culture of the Marines.

All of the other services, however, must use various inducements, some of which are economic in nature. While some commentators refuse to recognize such appeals as masculine, they do offer the earning potential and economic independence that are prerequisites for manhood in American culture. Many of the ads touting the material benefits of service either frame earning in masculine terms (e.g., "the kinds of jobs a man can build a world of his own on") or contain other visual or textual elements that reinforce the masculinity of recruits. In addition, the Army, Navy, and Air Force have all used more than one form of economic appeal, shifting from a promise of a good job or a blue-collar skill to the language of professionalism and career, often in connection with cutting-edge technology. This change in the way that economic benefits are framed taps into the evolving masculine forms of the economic sphere. As Chapter Three argued, in the larger culture, well-paid, status-granting manufacturing jobs disappeared, and knowledge-society, information-based careers became the main route to a comfortable lifestyle, social prestige, and, with them, masculine achievement. Linking military service to careers and professionalism allows the services to exploit the masculine model that has gained dominance in the economic realm. In addition, as technology plays a larger role in the projection of military force, diminishing the need for physical strength in many military jobs but requiring technical training that may be transferable to the

business world, convergence between civilian and some military forms of masculinity becomes more likely.

The Army, in addition to using economic appeals, has offered character development and personal transformation, developing a soldiering masculinity that makes reference to traditional warrior traits like strength and courage and involves displays of weaponry and other martial visual markers. This version of soldiering masculinity, however, is accessible and un-aggressive, personified by “regular guys.” The branch that needs to find the largest number of recruits puts its martial form of masculinity within reach of the average young man, unlike the Marine Corps. The Army also created ads that combine martial imagery with the language of business, creating a bridge between the older forms of masculinity with which Army service had been associated and forms that are becoming hegemonic in the civilian world. This serves both to revitalize Army masculinity, making it seem more up-to-date, and to validate the business world as a source of status and prestige for young men.

The Navy’s main non-economic approach is to highlight adventure, offering young men the excitement of life at sea and challenges that allow him to test and prove himself. In the 2000s, the offer of adventure became more explicitly militaristic, layering a warrior masculinity on top of other kinds of appeals and reaffirming the Navy’s commitment to a strong form of masculinity. The Navy has also bolstered the image of the sailor’s life with references to tradition and patriotic calls to service that evoke a romantic idea of the Navy and a glorious past with which the potential recruit could associate himself.

Unlike the other services, the Air Force has not drawn on martial forms of

masculinity. Aside from economic appeals that specifically target mechanically-inclined young men, the Air Force has offered, by association with the world's most advanced technology, the masculine advantages of mastery, dominance, and control. In recent years, the Air Force has promised recruits not direct physical excitement, as the other services tend to do, but the vicarious thrills of the video gamer, who has extreme experiences through the mediation of technology. The picture of manhood painted by the Air Force also in many ways coincides with the "tough and tender" new world order masculinity (Niva, 1998) in which aggression is tempered by compassion, and technological might and power are used for benign dominance and humanitarian ends.

The choices made by each branch about how to portray service in recruiting materials seem to be driven by their individual personnel needs and their cultures. The branches develop campaigns that they believe (using research and in consultation with their advertising agencies) will attract the type of recruit they want in a given period, with its particular economic, social, and cultural context. According to my advertising sample, the services tend not to respond to international events or military missions in deciding how to portray themselves, making at best oblique references to real-world events and missions.<sup>1</sup> Historically, the military branches have needed to recruit small numbers for a standing force, or engage in major recruiting efforts for a specific conflict; recruiting posters from World Wars I and II are familiar icons in American history. Since 1973, the

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<sup>1</sup> During the Cold War, two Army ads mention "Checkpoint Charlie" at the Berlin Wall, but overall the struggle between the US and USSR, which formed the basis for military doctrine and practices, isn't alluded to. The Marine Corps TV commercial "For Country" used footage from Afghanistan, but that isn't acknowledged in the ad itself. The Navy's "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of All Who Threaten It" tagline seemed particularly relevant after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, but it was conceived of before then. The America's Army game makes reference to the War on Terror, but recruiting ads don't do so directly.

military branches have had to recruit fairly large numbers for a standing force (nowhere near as large as the mass armies of World Wars I and II, but vastly larger than pre-World War II standing forces, which numbered in the thousands, not the millions), rather than for participation in a particular conflict. They need to attract young men to service, not to participation in a particular mission or even a particular type of mission. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 didn't directly affect recruiting pitches; according to the *New York Times*, "in all of the armed services, recruiters have been pretty much sticking to their scripts in trying to persuade young men and women to join the military, not in order to fight the current war, but to make a career choice" (Chen, 2001). Similarly, according to press officers for the service branches, the war in Iraq "has not caused them to alter significantly the messages at the heart of their marketing campaign[s]" (O'Brien, 2005). Perhaps the recruiting commands believe that fighting a particular conflict isn't a reliable incentive and won't attract recruits who will adequately commit to the service and want to remain no matter how the international situation changes.

Overall then, while an appeal to serving one's country may make a rare appearance in a recruiting advertisement, military service is not tied to a concept of duty or to citizenship. With the end of conscription, at bottom, all of the various appeals are based on the individual getting something out of service, whether tangible, material rewards, like job training or benefits, or a set of experiences or characteristics, like personal fulfillment, adventure, the feeling of being a part of something larger than oneself, or even the Marine Corps' rite of passage into manhood. This emphasis on individualistic reasons to serve may, because of the military's association with masculinity and status as one of its standard-bearers, have its own effect on ideas about

masculinity: the disconnection between service and duty and obligation may help to reinforce the rational, individualistic aspects of masculinity over those tied to collective values.

The branches make choices about how to recruit based on their particular culture and personnel requirements and they draw on conceptions of masculinity or particular masculine characteristics and models that are circulating in the larger culture that they believe will best meet their needs. Though it may not be their explicit intention, the models that the branches choose to draw upon are thus reinforced and re-circulated, possibly in an altered form, bolstered by their connection to institutions with such strong historical ties to masculinity. While each branch generates its own prototypes of service, there are similarities and overlaps, as the branches mine a few key masculine models that are becoming dominant in the larger culture—professional/managerial forms, masculinity tied to mastery of technology, hybrid masculinity which combines toughness and aggression with compassion and egalitarianism—as well as the more traditional warrior form which still retains some salience. In this way, the military helps to cement particular understandings of masculinity in American society, at least until the next major set of social, economic, and political changes destabilizes them.<sup>2</sup>

One clear trend in military recruiting is the increasing role of technology in the services' appeals. Advanced technology, and information technology in particular, plays a key role in the American economy, it has transformed many military jobs, and it is becoming central to the armed forces' self-presentations. Service members are

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<sup>2</sup> While this dissertation tracks how each service deploys constructions of gender, it does not claim that young men automatically internalize all of these constructions. I argue that these constructions contribute to the dominant culture, but some men will resist them.

constructed as professionals who work with the most cutting-edge technology. The deployment of technologized masculinity, however, goes beyond an economic framework that connects service to high-status civilian careers. In addition to high-tech jobs, technology is important to military constructions of masculinity in other ways. Through the manipulation of technology, which is visually represented by control panels, screens with data, computer consoles, and complicated electronic arrays, servicemen get to exercise mastery and wield power, controlling some small part of American military might and feeling connected to American technological superiority and dominance, even if they aren't working directly with a weapons system. The Air Force is particularly dependent on the glamour and mystique of technology in its recruiting materials, even going so far in a few cases as to portray the use of military force as an exciting, bloodless video game (though with "America's Army," the Army quite literally offers war in the form of an exciting, bloodless video game). While the Marine Corps continues to offer the direct, physical experience of combat, the other services, and especially the Air Force, play into a fantasy of video-game war and imply that the recruit may experience the vicarious thrill of brandishing American military power by working with advanced military technology.

Another finding is that adventure and excitement are still part of the attraction of military service in recruiting materials. All of the armed forces make this offer in some form. This implies that however hegemonic masculinity has changed, there is still a desire on the part of men to prove themselves through adventure and challenge. The military takes advantage of that desire by showcasing its ability to provide those experiences. Earlier in American history, young men could test themselves by

conquering nature or settling the frontier; today's outlets include extreme sports like snowboarding, skateboarding, and mountain biking (and even extreme stunts) that young men can participate in or experience indirectly through the consumption of media like the X-games or shows like *Jackass* in which participants perform dangerous and ridiculous stunts. (Many have argued that young men turn to gangs and crime when they don't have more constructive ways to prove their manhood.) Recruiting ads regularly use the words "adventure," "challenge," and "exciting," and they present dramatic images of action. Once recruits join one of the services they may never directly experience the forms of action and adventure portrayed in the ads, but each of the branches has at one time or another tried to communicate that it is a place to escape the constraints of the civilian world and experience life more intensely.

In examining these various forms of masculinity that the services construct, one question that arises is how women fit into these masculine appeals. Young men make up the bulk of each service, from a low of just over 80% of the Air Force to a high of 94% of the Marine Corps, but the services have depended on women to meet their personnel needs and make the AVF a success, and they have faced political pressure to expand the participation of women. The draft tied men as a group to the military. The end of male conscription made the connection between masculinity and soldiering less automatic, and the services could theoretically have attempted to de-gender service in recruiting materials, but instead they re-forged the link, constructing masculinity both in ways traditionally linked to warriorhood and in alternative forms. In the recruiting ads, women have been offered some limited access to characteristics and experiences that have generally been associated with men, like testing oneself, experiencing adventure, and

having a career. However, the representations, which feature women so much less frequently than men, make it clear that men are the primary audience and the desired target. The approach to representing women taken by each service differs, but in every case, combat and warriorhood are still associated exclusively with men; women aren't shown with weapons or engaging in martial action. (Women are, of course, still barred from direct ground combat.) The image of the service member as a professional who works with technology is in principle an idea of service that is more accessible to women than a physical-strength/direct combat idea of service. Women are, in fact, given some representational access to this version of service life. However, technology has pre-existing connections to masculinity, and many aspects of the armed forces' deployment of technology in recruiting materials do not downplay but rather reinforce the connections to masculinity.

In terms of the particular approach of each service, women are most marginal to the combat-intensive Marine Corps, both in practice and in recruiting materials. Women are presented most frequently and most like ordinary, unexceptional members of the service by the Army. The Air Force, which is in the best position of any of the services to utilize women's labor power might be expected to take the lead in the portrayal of women in its recruiting materials. However, the Air Force, which has had a relatively easy time recruiting qualified personnel, has tended to target technically-inclined young men. Women were initially barred from serving on ships, and even after the restrictions were lifted, the Navy had difficulty integrating women. Women's limited access to ships is reflected in Navy recruiting materials, which tend to present women in token ways or as an inducement for men to serve. In order to find enough recruits, early in the AVF the

Navy turned to African-American men, making special attempts to reach out to a formerly under-represented and discriminated-against group, presumably under the assumption that greater racial integration would be less disruptive to the Navy's culture and less problematic than greater gender integration.

The picture of service drawn by recruiting materials that I've been describing contributes to the overall image of the US military. As was noted previously in this dissertation, the military is not just another institution in America, but one that has special ties to the nation and to concepts of citizenship, even though service is no longer an obligation. The military in many ways serves as a representative of the nation, to both domestic and foreign audiences. The overall image of the US military that is created by the combined effect of the recruiting materials of the various branches is of a technologically advanced fighting force that is progressive on racial and gender issues, while still keeping women away from direct combat. It combines transformed versions of masculinity that are civilianized or that can include both strength and a softness or compassion (possibly suitable for humanitarian missions) with pockets of warrior masculinity associated with the Marines and with ground combat. This dissertation is about the imagery projected by the armed forces, and it can't make claims about how those representations are consumed and thus how they contribute to American identity. However, I suspect that the limited inclusion of women and the claims that the military is a showcase of racial integration help the US to envision itself as a modern, forward-thinking nation that represents social equality and democratic values.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> During the 1991 Persian Gulf War, images of female soldiers were used as evidence of the superiority of Western culture and values to those of the Arab nations of the Middle East, whose inferiority was signaled

Early in the AVF, George H. Quester raised the issue of how the make-up of America's armed forces affects our image in the world. In a 1977 article in *International Security*, he speculates on the impact that a greater incorporation of women into the armed forces will have on the United States' reputation. He notes that historically, women have been used in combat service in defensive situations when a country has been under threat, and relates this to a potential positive change in America's image:

Throughout the cold war, most Americans saw themselves as under attack, as merely defending the status quo against aggression, as practicing containment; public opinion polls repeatedly show that Americans see themselves as "losing the cold war." In more recent years, the outside world and the younger portion of Americans have a different image, that of an imperialistic America continually seeking to expand its influence, riding roughshod over the wishes of others around the world. As noted, an all-male military force smacks of an imperialist army, while female participation in combat signals a defense of what is one's own—a signal we wish to send. To the extent that it will make the armed forces more representative of the entire country in its attitudes, as suggested above, the signal will be amplified and reinforced.[...] There is a part of the world, a growing part, in which the parameter of employing opportunities for women will be an important factor in a country's rating as "progressive." When the news reaches places like Stockholm (and one hopes that in the future there will be more rather than fewer places like Stockholm) that the United States military is comprised of ten percent and twenty (and thirty?) women, will it not mean that Washington, for a change, is at the forefront of social progress, rather than Peking or Moscow? Similarly one wonders at the inferences that might be drawn in, say, Belgrade when the fact becomes more widely known that there are hundreds of thousands of women in the American armed forces, and virtually none in the Soviet forces. (91)

Quester is talking about the actual practices of the armed forces and not the sort of overt image-making that is a part of recruiting, but his comments emphasize the symbolic role that a military can play and how the US might want to distinguish itself from any ideological rivals by positioning its military as "at the forefront of social progress." In

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in the subordination of women. American women in uniform were contrasted with veiled Arab women (Forde, 1995).

crafting their public images, the recruiting arms of the armed forces aren't worrying about how America's international reputation will be affected, but they are concerned with reflecting back to Americans an image of military service that they want to see.

This raises the issue of how the gendering of military service in the US compares to other states, and whether states that have political, economic, and/or cultural similarities have a similar understanding of military service and its relationship to masculinity. One of the most significant recent developments in ideas about soldiering is the declining popularity of the draft internationally. France, Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Argentina, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Portugal, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Romania have all ended conscription in recent years. Military experts see the draft, according to the *New York Times*, as “an obstacle to the slimmed-down, technologically advanced, rapidly deployable forces that the allies are trying to build to deal with trouble spots far from home—the main mission that NATO is planning for in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” (Whitney, 1999). Professional armies can invest the time to train their soldiers to work with high-technology weaponry, and professional soldiers can more easily be deployed on short notice. The US could get its aircraft over to Kosovo in 1999 faster than most of the European nations. Although done to make militaries more effective international political instruments, the end of conscription has implications for gender equality and the relationship between masculinity and military service. And, of course, when militaries replace draftees with professional soldiers, they must find volunteers, and they need to consciously create images of soldiering to attract them.

An open question, then, is whether the United States' approach is unique to our military institutions and our gender system or whether the military services in other states

that face similar changes, including the end of conscription and flux in gender roles, deploy constructions of gender in similar ways. As a first stab at the question of how other states with volunteer militaries—a growing crowd—construct the relationship between soldiering and masculinity and how military service relates to hegemonic masculinity in those societies, this dissertation will end with a preliminary comparative perspective through a discussion of Great Britain’s recruiting practices in the 1990s.

### Military Recruitment in Great Britain

Great Britain makes an interesting comparison to the United States, because the two states share many cultural similarities, including some related to military service. American attitudes toward the military and many American military traditions were shaped by British military traditions during the colonial period (Segal, 1989:18). The commonalities make the relevant similarities and differences in recruiting practices easier to identify. The comparison is not meant to be exhaustive but simply to open the question of whether any generalizations can be made about how military institutions construct gender and specifically masculinity when they need to recruit a volunteer force and how those constructions connect to hegemonic forms of masculinity in that society. I had less direct access to recruiting advertisements, so much of the analysis is based on samples of advertising and descriptions provided in news coverage. I used Lexis-Nexis and other search tools such as World News Connection (a service of the US State Department) to search British newspapers and newswires for coverage of military recruiting issues and links to actual recruiting materials, for the period from 1990 to 2002. Even this cursory examination reveals that despite some important differences, the

military services of both the US and Britain feature transformed versions of masculinity, linked to technological mastery and professionalism, alongside more traditional, warrior forms which are tied to combat soldiers and specifically the Marines.

Historically, the British depended on both a professional force and a compulsory militia for defense. In the seventeenth century, first Oliver Cromwell used Major Generals to rule England, and then the Catholic King James II, whom many saw as despotic, established a standing army to protect himself, and both of these experiences gave the British a strong distaste for standing armies. (A large navy, however, could play an important role in the defense of the island nation.) A professional army of volunteers served mainly overseas to maintain the British Empire. The British also relied on local recruits to police and protect their Empire, like the Nepalese Gurkhas who served in the British-led Indian Army. During wartime, British forces would be comprised of regular, militia, and temporary volunteer servicemen. In 1908, the historic militia units were transformed into a Territorial Force to meet mobilization needs in case of a conflict. Great Britain instituted conscription for part of World War I and again during World War II and after, though the post-war draft didn't last. In the wake of World War II, Great Britain's role in the world contracted, as the economically drained nation lost its empire through decolonization. The 1956 Suez crisis was another blow to Great Britain's international power, and after a 1957 review of national defense policy, Great Britain decided to phase out conscription and reduce the size of the military. By 1964, Great Britain had an all-volunteer force of about 423,000, down from over 700,000 at the time of the review (Harries-Jenkins, 1978:81).

By the 1990s, both the United States and Great Britain had a couple of decades'

experience with volunteer forces. Masculinity had come into question in Great Britain as it did in the US, in response to similar economic changes and similar challenges to male privilege and traditional social institutions, although Great Britain did not have the traumatic experience of the Vietnam War with its particular damage to military masculinity. (Though it had, some years earlier, endured the national humiliation of losing an empire.) British psychiatrist Anthony Clare noted that women's advances in education and the workplace, combined with the disappearance of jobs in heavy industry, left men feeling as though they have no specifically masculine roles to fill: "Now, the whole issue of men—the point of them, their purpose, their value, their justification—is a matter for public debate" (Clare, 2000:3). The military situation in the 1990s in Great Britain in many ways mirrored that in the US; there was concern over the size and roles of the post-Cold War military, pressure from liberal governments that wanted to make the armed forces better reflect society<sup>4</sup> and that expanded opportunities for women, and shortfalls in recruiting.

With the end of the Cold War, the British armed forces shrank from about 315,000 to about 215,000, 100,000 of which are in the Royal Army. Over the course of the 1990s, however, the military found itself faced with a growing set of international commitments, from Bosnia, to Sierra Leone, to East Timor. In 1997, the Blair government began a Strategic Defense Review (SDR) to reassess Britain's military needs. Britain was trying to figure out how to reshape its forces to make them more flexible and more easily deployed, better suited to a world in which containing the Soviet

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<sup>4</sup> In the US, the main concern was gender equality, although the Clinton administration was also caught up in the issue of whether gays could openly serve in the military. In the UK, in addition to women's roles, the major concern, as will be discussed, was racial and ethnic diversity.

Union is no longer the primary objective. The SDR authorized the British Army to bring its numbers up, but in 1999 the Army was 6000 under strength. The understaffed military was overstretched, leading to retention problems (Ritchie, 1999). In 2001, the service branches, which need about 25,000 new recruits each year, faced combined shortfalls of about 11,000 members (Hickley, 2001a).

Recruiting problems were blamed on a variety of factors, including: a demographic trough, a strong economy and low unemployment, the perception that with the end of the Cold War, the military doesn't need recruits or is an industry in decline, the success of government programs to keep children in school past the age of 16, a major reduction of recruiting efforts in the early 1990s under the "Options for Change" defense review budget cuts, and a "couch potato" culture. The military's public image was also seen as a barrier to recruitment; many young Britons see military life as entirely alien. They are uninterested in an institution that requires discipline and deference (or what an outspoken major calls the "Victorian paternalism" of the officer/enlisted division) (Crampton, 1998).

In the mid-1990s, the British press began to report that "couch potato" youth were not only less likely to be interested in the military, but actually unfit for it. The military found that record numbers of potential recruits could not pass the medical and fitness tests to get into the armed forces.<sup>5</sup> It also found that recruits needed to be treated more gently than earlier generations of soldiers, given more time in basic training to meet its physical demands, and even allowed to wear athletic shoes on marches until their soft

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<sup>5</sup> While the US Marines give fitness tests to recruits, the US Army does not, presuming that it can train recruits up to any necessary fitness level, even if that requires some recruits to spend longer in basic training.

feet become tough enough to run in boots. In the words of one Lieutenant General, “We are recruiting a generation of young people who seem to need more time to develop the resilience and toughness we require of them. If you try to push it too quickly, they seem to break more quickly than previous generations” (Miller, 1996). The blame has been laid on a culture in which young people watch TV and use computers instead of playing outside and ride in cars instead of walking, and in which schools have cut back on physical education. The military also finds young people less “mentally robust.” For instance, many of them are frightened of staying outside overnight for the first time (Almond, 1995). The military’s response to the problem, in terms of the changes it has made to training and the way it has discussed those changes, has been to cultivate the idea that the military is enabling and empowering young people, helping them to develop their potential, even if they are starting from further back. Most British youth seem not to be interested in the hard life that they fear the military requires. (Those who do still aspire to meet that standard of physical masculinity, however, might still enlist in the Royal Marines.) The Army’s Director of Manning, Brigadier Freddie Viggers “says that [...] flexibility over fitness shows not that the Army has gone soft but that it is becoming an ‘enabling, nurturing’ employer rather than the rule-bound, muscle-bound bureaucracy of the past” (Crampton, 1998). If the military has been known for turning boys into men, then for a top Army officer to characterize the Army as enabling and nurturing would seem to reveal a shift, at least among the young men that the military needs to attract, in conceptions of manhood and what it takes to achieve it.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Of course, many commentators were horrified by what they perceived to be a softening of the military and a capitulation to political correctness (e.g. Anderson, 2000a).

The British media's focus on the fat issue—with headlines like, "Recruitment Crisis Hits Armed Forces after Nintendo Generation Fail Their Medicals: Fall Out Soldier, You're Too Fat to Fight!" (Shipman, 2002) and "Paunches on Parade as Fatties Fail the Army" (Rayment, 1995b)—would seem to reveal anxieties about the physical prowess of British youth, and young British men in particular. The reports on the "softness" of British recruits and the image problems of the British military provide an interesting contrast to media coverage of basic training and recruiting issues in the United States. The US has certainly shared many recruiting problems with the British, particularly the economic issues and the demographic trough. The United States armed forces have also changed basic training to be more recruit-friendly, with various programs to prevent weak recruits from washing out, and like the British, all branches of the US armed forces fit recruits with running shoes instead of making them march in boots right away (Moniz, 2000). But while in Great Britain, poor recruiting and changes in basic training tend to be blamed on the "couch potato" culture, on the general weakness of British youth (young men), in the US, recruiting problems and changes in boot camp are frequently blamed on the incursions of "political correctness" on military culture, and in particular on its perceived "feminization" (see Bonat, 1999; Gutmann, 2000; Mitchell, 1998; Moore, 1998; Smart, 2000; Strother, 1999). In the UK, young men are feared to be too soft for the military; in the US, there is fear that the military has become too soft to attract young men. Each case reveals anxiety about the state of masculinity in the nation. In the UK, the concern seems to be that young men don't share the same standards of masculinity as their elders or don't subscribe to the notion that it's important for them to be tough and strong.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has taken a number of measures over the past several years to increase recruitment. It launched a series of advertising campaigns, and stepped up its efforts to recruit women and minority men (both of which will be discussed below). Military recruiters have put on “show days” where people get to look at and even try out Army equipment (“Army Is Gunning[...],” 2002). The MoD has worked to allow soldiers to obtain National Vocational Qualifications, a credential that is recognized by civilian employers (Rayment, 1995a). In 2000, it launched the magazine *Camouflage* to improve its image among young teens (Kleinman, 2001), and in 2001 it created the position of a “schools advisor” to raise the military’s profile within the schools (Hastings, 2001). In an effort to present itself as a high-tech organization and to reach out to those with technical skills, the Army released a CD-ROM called “First Contact” which provides information on the British Army, including detailed historical information on weaponry and equipment and which has eight computer games, aimed at various age groups. These include games related to basic training (weapon assembly, map reading, first aid, rank recognition), a survival game, a game related to relief for an island hit by a hurricane, and a game in which the player commands an armored formation, including attack helicopters and artillery (“Minister Launches British Army CD-ROM[...],” 1998).<sup>7</sup> It also created a live chat facility on its careers website, ([www.army.mod.uk/careers](http://www.army.mod.uk/careers)). The MoD has encouraged applications from citizens of Commonwealth nations, who are legally allowed to join the British military and who receive the same pay and benefits as regular British soldiers, along with a chance at

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<sup>7</sup> American forces, particularly the Army and Air Force, have also used video games or depictions of game playing to appeal to recruits, making war into high-tech, bloodless fun and linking the pleasure of video game combat, with its masculinizing extensions of bodily power, to real-world soldiering.

British citizenship; residents of the Pacific island of Fiji and the Caribbean island of St. Lucia have proved to be particularly enthusiastic about signing up (Clarke, 1999; Hickley, 2001b). In an effort to be more in line with the realities of contemporary society, the Army has decided to stop asking recruits whether they have ever experimented with drugs (Rayment, 2002), and it has relaxed its absolute ban on recruiting anyone with visible tattoos (Birkett, 1998).<sup>8</sup> And in moves that met with some public derision, the Army has looked for potential recruits in hostels for the homeless (Stokes, 1997) and set up a program to enlist young criminals who had been sentenced to two years in prison or less (Hickley, 1999).<sup>9</sup>

### *The British Army*

The first major post-Cold War Army recruiting ad campaign went by the title “Let’s Be Frank.” The series showed two bored young men thinking about their friend, Frank, who has joined the Army. The viewer sees Frank engaged in activities like windsurfing, chatting with women, and skiing while carrying an automatic weapon (Lavery, 1994). These much-derided ads, with their depictions of a “jet-setting squaddie,”<sup>10</sup> were, of course, less than frank about Army life, and applicants arrived at recruiting stations expecting fun in the sun (Cowen, 2001). Despite how misleading the ads are, at heart they rely on some familiar recruiting appeals: the chance to get away

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<sup>8</sup> The policy change was prompted by recruiters’ realization that a growing number of women were being rejected solely because of small tattoos, generally of birds, between their thumb and forefinger.

<sup>9</sup> German Defense Minister Rudolf Scharping angered the British government when he said, in defense of Germany’s conscript army, “Everyone will ask themselves whether we should oblige ourselves to repeat the bad experiences suffered by other countries with professional armies. Should we do the same as Britain and give criminals the option to serve in the army rather than go to prison?” (Gilfeather, 2000).

<sup>10</sup> “Squaddie” refers to a common soldier.

from home and see the world, militarized excitement and adventure (the skiing with an automatic) and even, as US Navy recruiting has also implied, success with women.

The major campaign of the 1990s, created by the ad firm Saatchi and Saatchi, introduced the slogan still used today, “Be the Best.” The “Be the Best” campaign was much grittier than the Frank ads, and was intended to give a more accurate picture of Army life. Over the course of the campaign, the ads have taken several approaches, including putting the viewer in a variety of challenging situations, portraying soldiers as competent and caring professionals, and emphasizing the usefulness of Army skills, and over the years, they have shifted from portraying martial to civilian contexts.

The first “Be the Best” ad debuted in 1994 at 6:20 in the morning. At the end, it gave viewers the options of phoning a recruiting office or going back to bed, offering the potential recruit a challenge and implicitly a chance to prove himself. The initial series of ads put the viewer in the position of a soldier or an officer facing a difficult situation, in order, according to the advertising magazine *Marketing*, to communicate that the Army presents “challenges that require not just physical courage but imagination, skill and intelligence.” In one TV commercial, a soldier is behind enemy lines and has to decide what to do, “but he keeps his head, pulls out his laptop and directs fire onto the target.” According to Saatchi and Saatchi, “the commercial promotes two fundamental messages: that army life is high-tech, not just a matter of muscle and brawn, and that it uses skill that can be applied to civilian life” (McLuhan, 1998). It is also an ad that presents a man in a combat situation, confronted by danger and prevailing over it. Militarized action and challenge are combined with the idea of professional competence and the use of technology. Militarized imagery is common in the advertisements.

In other dramatic ads, an officer and his soldiers must try to figure out how to help a dying child in a destroyed foreign hospital with fifteen minutes of power supply left, and a recruit must suddenly veer off the road and drive through a forest at night without lights. These ads show Army life as challenging and vital. In the foreign-hospital commercial, “the scenario is obviously Bosnia, though the [ad] agency won’t admit it” (Campbell, 1994). Defense correspondent Christy Campbell goes on to note that “the Army knows it must promote its caring, blue-beret image to win recruits.” The “blue-beret” reference is to UN peacekeeping, and indeed the Army often used humanitarian missions and “operations other than war” as a selling point. Army recruiting materials present this type of military work as important, exciting, and demanding. Officers and soldiers are decision-makers and professionals, making a difference in the world. One late-‘90s commercial presented a puzzle about how to get to landmine victims without becoming one (McLuhan, 1999). The “Be the Best” campaign “presented soldiers as ethical, thinking people who can find themselves dealing with natural disasters or solving disputes between rival military factions abroad”; in other words, soldiers are “humanitarian warriors” (Mayes, 1997). In 1997, the Army created a series of posters based specifically on its humanitarian work. The posters request “body builders,” “body piercers,” and “surrogate fathers.” The accompanying pictures show the “body builders” delivering food, the “body piercers” giving inoculations to refugee girls, and the “surrogate fathers” taking care of young boys (Millward, 1997). The combination of the terminology and the pictures invokes a caring masculinity. Overall, the presentation of humanitarian and peacekeeping missions in recruiting materials, with their blend of militarized imagery, the chance to do something important, and the offers

of both challenge and professional competence, constructs a transformed masculinity that, like Niva's (1998) model of new world order masculinity, leavens traditional masculine elements like strength and power with compassion and tenderness. This is akin to the way the US Air Force has presented humanitarian work, but in general, humanitarian or peacekeeping missions and the related strong-but-nurturing form of masculinity is a much larger part of recruiting strategy in Great Britain and more central to the British Army's portrayal of itself.

In one of the mid-'90s commercials, women are targeted as having a unique role to play in humanitarian operations. The TV viewer learns that the woman depicted holding a baby in a war-torn scene is a rape victim who has seen her husband killed. As the ad tells us, "the last thing she wanted to see was another soldier." But then, a *female* British soldier comes to her aid. *Marketing* magazine interprets this ad as an attempt to "[draw] attention to the growing equality of opportunity in a profession where 70% of jobs are open to women" (McLuhan, 1998). I would argue that rather than showing equality of opportunity, this ad implies that in the post-Cold War era, women in the military may have special, new roles, ones that are specific to them as women. Here, women are set out as the protectors of other women.

In the 1990s, the Army began to recognize that young people (meaning young men) believed the Army couldn't prepare them for good jobs. Adjutant General Sir Michael Rose, who sought National Vocational Qualifications for Army service, addressed this concern in an interview:

It is a false view of the infantry that they are mainly people who fix bayonets and charge, or dig trenches. The modern infantryman is a very technical person, using complex weapons and vehicle systems. They learn valuable technical skills as

well as motivation, commitment, loyalty and other characteristics valuable for employers. (Butcher, 1996)

His statements reveal an understanding that being a potential instrument of violence in the infantry, a wielder of martial power, does not on its own bring enough status—civilian society requires that young men seek career success.

Army ads began making more of an effort to show that Army training could prepare soldiers for a better civilian life. Some of these ads, from 2000, took a humorous tone to show that the Army provides useful skills. The ads feature nothing that is recognizably related to the military—no weapons or uniforms. In one, a young man uses his military skills to sneak into his girlfriend's bedroom, at one point clinging to the ceiling in his boxer shorts to avoid detection by her father. The girlfriend helps him out with Army signaling techniques. In another, a group of teenagers builds a car out of scraps, and in the third, a young woman uses her bra to repair a soccer goal post. These ads drop a tagline that had been used in many of the earlier ads, “a job for life,” and replace it with the motto, “if you've got what it takes, take it further” (Leonard, 2000). The new tagline concerns personal development and self-fulfillment, while also acknowledging the modern economic reality that young people no longer expect or want a job for life, but want to be able to take their skills with them.

While the commercials don't directly address career skills, they were generally understood as showing that the Army gives soldiers the initiative and creativity that will be an advantage in the civilian world. According to one review of the ads:

the British Army signalled a revolution within its marketing ranks as it ditched ads filled with uniformed soldiers for scenes of young recruits putting their skills to use when bedroom-hopping or fixing council estate goalposts. The switch appeared to mark recognition among the services of the increasingly mobile jobs market swirling around them. They would have to compete for recruits on the

same terms as private businesses - by offering career-enhancing skills and qualifications rather than a traditional job for life. (Cowen, 2001)

An advertising executive commenting on the Army's emphasis on career prospects said "the shift in advertising away from camouflage fatigues feels right. The brand offers so many training opportunities" (Arnold, 2001). For the target market in question, career training was probably a bigger enticement than militaristic imagery. The British Army seemed to be somewhat behind the American armed forces in trying to tap into changing economic realities and the social changes (such as in dominant forms of masculinity) that accompany them. This may be because, as will be discussed below, the British Army is a much more class-bound institution than its American counterpart, and the idea that a squaddie might be concerned about professional advancement and business-world success, instead of just the reliable job that the military could provide, might not have penetrated easily.

In a campaign launched in November 2001 aimed specifically at potential officers, the Army frames service as a path to leadership skills that are transferable to civilian life. According to an Army Recruiting Group officer, the point of the "People Aren't Easily Led" campaign is to "communicate how the Army is the ideal training ground for graduates to develop a wide range of the vital skills and experience required in today's ever-demanding workplace" (Tolley, 2001). The "People Aren't Easily Led" commercial shows several different situations in which a person is attempting to lead a group of people in some way—addressing a crowd in a lecture hall, speaking to a couple in their home, coaching a sports team, facing a group around a conference table—and clearly meeting resistance. There is nothing martial about the ad—no guns, no uniforms, nothing related to the military; there isn't even any dialogue. At the end of the ad the

tagline “people aren’t easily led” flashes on the screen, and then the URL [www.armyofficer.co.uk](http://www.armyofficer.co.uk) appears—the only indicator that this has, in fact, been an ad for the Army. The commercial doesn’t focus at all on the military experience itself; it makes implications about post-military civilian experiences when the officer will become a successful, professional leader.

Overall, the “Be the Best” campaign was considered successful. It won numerous advertising industry awards and it increased recruitment response 142 percent between 1994 and 2001 (Mills, 2001). In and of itself, however, the campaign could not solve the military’s recruiting and retention problems, particularly as the 1998 SDR raised recruiting targets. Over the course of the post-Cold War period, through its advertising the Army has presented itself (briefly) as a vacation fantasy, as a challenging, exciting, tough way to make a difference in the world, and as a good career opportunity and skill-builder. It has offered men several versions of masculinity: the soldier firing high-tech weapons, the professional who makes important decisions under tough conditions and saves lives, the caring surrogate father and provider of relief and protection, the bearer of marketable skills, and, of course, the guy who successfully gets into his girlfriend’s bedroom. The Army also offers women the chance to be challenged, to make life-or-death decisions, to make a difference in the world, to learn skills, and it also seems to offer them a special new role in post-Cold War missions, as feminine protectors of female victims.

*The Royal Marines*

Like the US Marines, the Royal Marines have cultivated a different image from the rest of the armed forces, one that is more overtly masculine and combat-oriented. One important difference is that unlike the US Marines, the Royal Marines don't recruit women at all—they are excluded from the service. Another difference is that unlike the US Marines, which managed to avoid recruiting shortfalls in the late 1990s while the other services were suffering, the Royal Marines were also understrength, though retention was a bigger problem than recruitment.

In the 1990s, the Royal Marines' advertisements and website projected an image of toughness and exclusivity. In 1997, the Marines launched the biggest recruitment drive of that decade with a series of advertisements that showed a group of recruits going through training and developing, physically and mentally, into Marines. In one ad, a Marine recruit goes from sliding down a rope in a gym to throwing himself backward off a cliff, climbing down a sheer drop in combat gear. According to the voiceover, "To become a Royal Marines Commando, your basic training has to be longer and harder than for any other fighting force in the world" (Hall, 1997). In January 2002, the Marines debuted another set of ads that more specifically show how difficult the training is. The camera follows a recruit as he struggles through a water tunnel on a training exercise. The ad says, "You've never known so much pain. Want to know more?" and ends with the slogan, "99.99 per cent need not apply" (Booth, 2002). The Marines also hold public demonstrations to show off their prowess to potential recruits. In a staged demonstration in Newcastle, camouflaged Marines jumped out of a helicopter to save a "woman" (actually a male colleague) from a ship that had been invaded by terrorists ("Marines

Fight Back[...],” 2002).

The Marine recruiting website (<http://www.royal-navy.mod.uk/static/pages/2650.html>) amplifies and expands on the advertising themes. Interspersed among the text on the informational pages (on the Marines’ history, structure, roles, and culture) are boxes with text and photos. All feature men in uniform, and in most, the men carry weapons, often aimed at an unseen target. These boxes include such messages as:

“The Royal Marines are uniquely trained for operations in arctic conditions. No potential theatre of conflict is beyond them.”

“Effective teamwork in the Royal Marines really is a matter of life and death.”

“Seaborne assault. The very essence of the Royal Marines.”

“The Corps is ready to deploy anywhere on the globe.”

“The ‘jungle’ is about surviving and operating effectively in one of the most demanding environments.”

The website directly presents the message of the ad campaign by asking “How much do you want this? (99.99% need not apply.)”

Marine recruitment strategies present a sharp contrast to the Army. They offer a traditional warrior masculinity, by focusing on combat, exclusivity, and physical and mental strength and endurance, and by virtually ignoring civilian job skills and career issues. British media did not suggest that the other branches of the armed forces emulate the Marines, as was the case in the US in the late 1990s. That the British Marines had recruiting problems as well meant that arguments about male exclusivity and clear male roles helping recruitment wouldn’t work in Britain. The old warrior masculinity, while it

still clearly retains a place in the culture, may have less lingering cultural resonance there or may appeal to a smaller group.

*Equal Opportunities—Race/Ethnicity and Gender*

Over the course of the past decade, the British military has been trying to increase its recruitment of women and minority men. They are doing so for a number of reasons, which include the general need to increase recruiting to meet personnel targets, the desire to project the image that the armed forces are a modern, equal-opportunity employer, to meet political demands that the military reflect the society it defends, as befits a democracy, and in response to the threat of legal challenges, in particular by the Commission on Racial Equality (CRE). Increasing ethnic minority participation in the military became a policy goal of the British government after the late-'90s Strategic Defense Review, both for reasons of equity and to widen the pool of potential recruits (Dandeker and Mason, 2003). These attempts have met limited success. The number of minority recruits has remained small, and the perception that the military is a racist institution persists within minority communities.

There are major differences between the UK and the US in terms of national identity, the history of immigration, and the assimilation of minority groups. While the US sees itself as a “nation of immigrants,” many minority groups did not receive British citizenship until after World War II and the end of the British Empire. According to Dandeker and Mason (2003): “the essentially ‘ethnicized’ nature of traditional British (and English) conceptions of nationality and citizenship contrast markedly with societies like the United States with their more contractual constitutions and civic nationalisms”; in

addition, “the relatively small, if growing, size of the British minority ethnic population and its near invisibility in the ranks of the armed services and other elite sectors of British social life, make easy comparisons with societies like the United States problematic” (482). The situation of African-Americans in the US and their troubled but long association with the armed forces is not analogous to the position of racial minorities in the UK and their relationship to the military. Britain’s history as an imperial power with an imperial army also certainly affects current perceptions in and of the armed forces. Much of British military history consists of campaigns against colonized people or to protect colonies from other imperial powers. The descendants of those colonized people don’t necessarily feel welcome in or have a desire to join the military.

In 1990, ethnic minorities made up 4.5% of the population. Of the 76,000 people who applied to join the armed forces, 1.4% were identified as Black, Asian, or another ethnic minority. Of the 29,029 who actually got into the armed forces, 1.1% were ethnic minorities. Less than one percent of new officers were from an ethnic minority group (“Defence White Paper[...],” 1991). In 2001, approximately 6% of the population were part of a minority group, and the percentage of personnel in the British armed forces drawn from a minority ethnic groups was 1.7 overall, including 1.2% of officers and 1.8% of enlisted ranks (Dandeker and Mason, 2003: 484).

In the early 1990s, the military’s public image was tarnished by reports of bullying and abuse of Black soldiers, some of whom went AWOL to escape the treatment (for example, see Muir and Hynes, 1992). In 1997, the Office of Public Management released a damning report that it had found evidence of widespread racism in the armed forces. The military responded by setting up ethnic monitoring programs, education

programs, and new procedures for handling discrimination complaints, as well as by pledging to make the percentage of minorities in the armed forces a more accurate reflection of society (Brown, 1997). That same year, the MoD issued a new set of recruiting posters based on the famous World War I, “Your Country Needs You” poster, but instead of showing Lord Kitchner, they feature Ghanian-born Captain Fedelix Datson or Warrant Officer Ashok Kumar Chauhan. In 1998, the Army launched its first-ever ad aimed specifically at recruiting ethnic minority officers. On the first page of the two-page print ad which ran in publications aimed at minorities, a white soldier appears above the words “In today’s Army, blacks and Asians get called all sorts of things.” On the next page, the same soldier is saluting, and the text reads, “Lieutenant, Captain, Major, Colonel” (Ministry of Defence, 1998c). All of the services initiated policies in matters such as dress and diet to make it easier for ethnic minorities from a variety of religions to serve.

Women—presumably both ethnic minority and white—were also a new target of recruiting efforts, and policy changes increased the number of roles open to them. In 1990, women made up 5.7% of the armed forces. In 2001, women were 9.5% of officers and 8% of the enlisted ranks, with 70% of Army positions, 73% of Navy positions, and 96% of Air Force posts open to them (Dandeker and Mason, 2003). These changes have not come without resistance from within the military and from some sectors of the public who fear that “political correctness” and equality will compromise the military’s fighting abilities (for examples see Anderson, 2000a; Anderson 2000b; and “Fairness and our Fighting Force,” 1998). In 1989, the Royal Air Force began to allow women to apply for pilot training, though they would still be excluded from “direct combat,” and the RAF

Regiment, a combat unit whose unofficial motto is “To kill the enemy.” In 1990, the Royal Navy opened warships to women. That move was prompted by manpower concerns, and by the Navy’s conclusion that “to attempt to categorize ships as combat and non-combat would be artificial and misleading in the context of modern maritime warfare, when all ships will be liable to serve in potentially dangerous waters” (Fairhall and Nettleton, 1990). That decision led to an immediate 20% increase in applications by women to join the Navy (Fox, 1990), but it also led to strong opposition from serving officers and sailors, retired Admirals, and naval wives.

In 1995, the Army began to devise a new set of physical fitness tests for recruits. Unlike the old tests, which were different for men and women, these new tests set up identical standards for each. The gender-neutral tests were presented as an equal opportunity measure,<sup>11</sup> and were implemented at the same time that the Army promised to open new combat support jobs to women, increasing the jobs available to them from 47% to 70% of all Army positions (Ministry of Defence, 1998b). To qualify for the new roles, women would simply have to meet the required physical standards, the same as the men would. The expansion of women’s military roles were propelled by the Labour government, which demanded that military leaders demonstrate that women were unfit for any roles that they wanted to keep them out of, including direct combat roles. As of now, Britain still bars women from infantry and armor units, from submarines, and from the Royal Marines.

In terms of so-called equal-opportunity issues, the US and British militaries differ

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<sup>11</sup> The changes were not just to accommodate women or open up new roles to them, but to help the men. The new tests were a way to deal with the high numbers of “couch potato” unfit (male) recruits who were failing the fitness tests (Butcher, 1995).

in several ways. In the US, gender integration is a highly contentious issue, while the Army is often pointed to as one of the most racially integrated institutions in the country, one of the only places where it is routine for an African-American to issue orders to a white person.<sup>12</sup> In Great Britain, however, white women may be having an easier time fitting into military culture than minority men are. A reporter for the *Independent* notes that “the Army is traditionally considered a male bastion” and calls gender “a contentious issue for the Army.” But she goes on to write that “Without doubt the most embarrassing issue for the Army has been its history of racism. Over the past few decades, there have been regular reports of racial discrimination and bullying. Not surprisingly, black and Asian graduates have hardly been queuing to sign up” (Hilpern, 2001). In the United States, one of the main arguments against the integration of women into combat units is that the presence of women disrupts the social bonding between men that is necessary for a cohesive, effective fighting unit (for a representative statement of this position see Simons, 2001). In Great Britain, not only are such arguments about women and combat made, but similar kinds of arguments about bonding and cohesiveness are heard in relation to “cultural background,” i.e., race and ethnicity. The *New Statesman* explains:

The problem of racial discrimination is deeply rooted in the army’s institutional culture, based on its tribal regimental system. In theory anyone can join the Welsh Guards, but it is widely believed that close ties, which the army prizes as essential in battle, are most easily forged among soldiers from the same geographic and cultural backgrounds. In the CRE’s [Commission on Racial Equality] report on the Household Cavalry a colonel is quoted as saying: “I am anxious to preserve the style and traditions of the country’s two senior regiments, and this means that our officers tend to come from a roughly similar background.” What the army calls tradition, others are starting to call discrimination. (Daniel, 1997)

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<sup>12</sup> This is not to imply that the US Armed Forces are free of racism or racial problems, only that issues surrounding women in the military are much more troublesome.

British conceptions of national identity may make it particularly hard for ethnic minorities to be integrated into military culture.

Another major difference between the US and Great Britain is that social class is a much more significant issue for the British military. In the US, socioeconomic status was mentioned frequently in debates over ending conscription, because many feared that the US would end up with an Army made up almost entirely of the poor, and access to higher education plays a role in who can become an officer. Overall, however, class (or at least class as a distinct category from race) is rarely mentioned in US debates about the military.<sup>13</sup> In Great Britain, it is a salient issue. In 1993, a university study found that Prime Minister John Major's plan for a classless society wasn't having much impact on the British officer classes, where a class-conscious "old-boy network" controlled senior appointments. Instead of merit being the sole criterion, appointments depended on membership in socially-prestigious regiments and on performance at traditional military social rituals (Hadfield and Bethell, 1993). In 1997, the Defence Secretary introduced an initiative to make entry to the top officer ranks more meritocratic and less class-based, by trying to recruit more officers from state schools (Deans, 1997). Whether or not the military is successfully shedding its class bias, the perception lingers. As a reporter from *The Independent* put it, "Others think that to be accepted by the Army [as an officer] you need a public-school<sup>14</sup> background, a double-barrelled name or at the very least a parent who has had an army career." The truth, according to a Colonel from Army Officer

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<sup>13</sup> While socio-economic class hasn't been much of a factor in debates over the military in the past thirty years, the Iraq War has raised some concerns over the make-up of the armed forces and whether poor kids are paying the costs of this war (for example, see Woodward, 2004).

<sup>14</sup> A public school is what Americans would think of as an elite, private school.

Recruiting who is clearly trying to put a positive spin on his numbers, is that “55 per cent of officers now have a state-school background and don’t come from military families[...] In relation to the country as a whole, of course, that percentage is still disproportionate, but it’s changing fast” (Hilpern, 2001). Change has come to the British military on a variety of levels, but, as with any military institution, the culture doesn’t accommodate change easily or quickly.

According to its website, the Army is committed “to the continued development and use of Service policies, practices and procedures which respect and value every individual's unique contribution, irrespective of their gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin or religious belief, and without reference to social background or sexual orientation.”<sup>15</sup> Whether or not the British military is actually an enlightened, non-discriminatory employer,<sup>16</sup> it is certainly trying to project that ideal to potential recruits and the public at large.

### *The Construction of Soldiering in Great Britain*

Since the end of the Cold War, the British military has been repositioning itself to domestic and international audiences as a force that can “make a difference” in the world, a force that is internationally effective and can take on today’s challenges. The British government and the Ministry of Defense have tried to shape a new public image for the military. Major General Christopher Elliot, Director General of the Army’s Training and

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<sup>15</sup> In January 2000, the British government was forced to rescind its ban on gays in the military after it lost a case in the European Court of Human Rights.

<sup>16</sup> In 2000, the armed forces had to fight a government proposal to allow disabled people to join the services in non-combat roles (Deans, 2000).

Recruiting Agency, outlined the new ideal in an MoD press release:

The British soldier of the future is a global citizen; highly trained, motivated and socially responsible, and is drawn from all elements of our society. Equal opportunities, education and training are now the watchwords of the modern British Army, and our soldiers represent one of the best qualified and trained work forces in the country. (Ministry of Defence, 1998a).

The image of service created through recruiting materials, at least for the Army, is, as this press release implies, built on inclusiveness, professionalism, the chance to be challenged and to do good in the world, all while gaining valuable skills. Peacekeeping and relief missions are part of the appeal, and the military presents itself to recruits as a nurturing, enabling employer which will develop their potential, even if they do not fit into the traditional military mold of the white, Anglo male. While attempting to appeal to women with equal opportunity rhetoric, the British Army constructs a set of masculine roles based on transformed ideals of masculinity, which combine martial strength with compassion, reflect an ideal of progressiveness, and acknowledge the importance of economic and professional success. As with the US military, a masculinity based on professionalism and mastery of technology is a dominant form, while more traditional warrior masculinity, which is more physical and combat-oriented, retains a special place in relation to all-male combat units.

This limited comparison of the US and Great Britain implies that as states share certain commonalities in the economic and cultural realms (commonalities which economic and cultural globalization may increase), there are likely to be similar sets of masculine characteristics circulating in their societies that form the pool from which militaries are likely to draw as they construct images of soldiering to appeal to potential recruits for a volunteer force, while local differences modify the available masculine

models and specific institutional imperatives direct the choices.

### Contributions to the Literature and Directions for Future Research

In addition to the specific findings about how each of the US military branches genders service in recruiting materials, and how the masculine models they deploy relate to the larger culture, I hope this dissertation contributes more broadly to the political science and gender studies literatures. It shows how textual interpretive methods can enrich a historical institutionalist approach, by including cultural productions and meaning-making in an examination of institutions. If, as historical institutionalists argue, institutions play a role in shaping people's preferences and are themselves socially and politically constructed, then the artifacts they create that are meant to influence people are worthy of analysis. Also, gender is central to the self-presentation of the military branches, and any institution may deploy or manipulate ideas about masculinity and femininity in order to exercise or augment its power; scholars who want to understand institutions and their political lives should not neglect gender in their analysis. The dissertation also shows how constructivism, which examines language, norms, and cultural productions, can be applied at the sub-state level to the interplay of institutions and society in order to help elucidate the complex ways that particular understandings of national identity are generated.

In terms of the gender studies literature, this dissertation has shown that the military is not a monolith and its relationship to masculinity is not one-dimensional; a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between gender and the military requires both a recognition that the military branches are different in important ways and that

military masculinity can take a variety of forms, only one of which is the stereotypical hard, aggressive warrior. This dissertation shows how the process of gendering begins long before a recruit reports for basic training, and it examines one of the central ways that the military influences public perceptions of the masculine nature of military service. In doing so, it expands the relevant realm of inquiry for the study of gender and the military, as well as providing data on the specific forms of masculinity that the services construct and deploy.

This dissertation has studied the production of images of military service and how they relate to ideas about masculinity in the larger culture. In order to make the link between the actions of the services and the construction of national identity at the cultural level, it would be necessary to learn more about how Americans react to or read (in the textual sense) the recruiting materials. Future research could examine how different sectors of society interpret and internalize these productions, and how they influence people's ideas about military service, gender, and national identity. Another avenue would be to look more closely at the production process itself and how the branches themselves understand the campaigns that they develop. Future research could also explore the relationship among military recruitment, masculinity, and a society's gender order in other states with volunteer forces, as well as how conceptions of military service are constructed and gendered in those places.

## Appendix

Table 1: Active Duty Military Personnel<sup>1</sup>

Year	Total	Army	Navy	Marines	Air Force
1789	718	718			
1801	7,108	4,051	2,700	357	
1810	11,554	5,956	5,149	449	
1812 <sup>2</sup>	12,631	6,686	5,452	493	
1813	25,152	19,036	5,525	591	
1814	46,858	38,186	8,024	648	
1815	40,885	33,424	6,773	688	
1820	15,113	10,554	3,988	571	
1830	11,942	6,122	4,929	891	
1840	21,616	12,330	8,017	1,269	
1846 <sup>3</sup>	39,165	27,867	10,131	1,167	
1847	57,761	44,736	11,193	1,832	
1848	60,308	47,319	11,238	1,751	
1850	20,824	10,929	8,794	1,101	
1860	27,958	16,215	9,942	1,801	
1861 <sup>4</sup>	217,112	186,845	27,881	2,386	
1862	673,124	637,264	33,454	2,406	
1863	960,061	918,354	38,707	3,000	
1864	1,031,724	970,905	57,680	3,139	
1865	1,062,848	1,000,692	58,296	3,860	
1870	50,348	37,240	10,562	2,546	
1880	37,894	26,594	9,361	1,939	
1890	38,666	27,373	9,246	2,047	
1898 <sup>5</sup>	235,785	209,714	22,492	3,579	
1900	125,923	101,713	18,796	5,414	
1910	139,344	81,251	48,533	9,560	
1917 <sup>6</sup>	643,833	421,467	194,617	27,749	
1918	2,897,167	2,395,742	448,606	52,819	
1920	343,302	204,292	121,845	17,165	
1930	255,648	139,378	96,890	19,380	
1940	458,365	269,023	160,997	28,345	
1941 <sup>7</sup>	1,801,101	1,462,315	284,427	54,359	

<sup>1</sup> Department of Defense Statistical Information Analysis Division, Personnel and Procurement Statistics, available at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/index.html>.

<sup>2</sup> War of 1812: 1812-1815

<sup>3</sup> Mexican American War: 1846-1848

<sup>4</sup> Civil War: 1861-1865

<sup>5</sup> Spanish-American War: 1898

<sup>6</sup> World War I: 1917-1918

<sup>7</sup> World War II: 1941-1945

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Army</b>	<b>Navy</b>	<b>Marines</b>	<b>Air Force</b>
1942	3,858,791	3,075,608	640,570	142,613	
1943	9,044,745	6,994,472	1,741,750	308,523	
1944	11,451,719	7,994,750	2,981,365	475,604	
1945	12,055,884	8,266,373	3,319,586	469,925	
1950 <sup>8</sup>	1,459,462	593,167	380,739	74,279	411,277
1951	3,249,371	1,531,774	736,596	192,620	788,381
1952	3,635,912	1,596,419	824,265	231,967	983,261
1953	3,555,067	1,533,815	794,440	249,219	977,593
1960	2,475,438	873,078	616,987	170,621	814,752
1964 <sup>9</sup>	2,685,782	973,238	665,969	189,777	856,798
1965	2,653,926	969,066	669,985	190,213	824,662
1966	3,092,175	1,199,784	743,322	261,716	887,353
1967	3,375,485	1,442,498	750,224	285,269	897,494
1968	3,546,071	1,570,343	763,626	307,252	904,850
1969	3,458,072	1,512,169	773,779	309,771	862,353
1970	3,064,760	1,322,548	691,126	259,737	791,349
1971	2,713,044	1,123,810	621,565	212,369	755,300
1972	2,321,959	810,960	586,923	198,238	725,838
1973	2,251,936	800,973	563,683	196,098	691,182
1975	2,128,120	784,333	535,085	195,951	612,751
1980	2,050,627	777,036	527,153	188,469	557,969
1985	2,151,032	780,787	570,705	198,025	601,515
1990	2,043,705	732,403	579,417	196,652	535,233
1991 <sup>10</sup>	1,985,555	710,821	570,262	194,040	510,432
1995	1,518,224	508,559	434,617	174,639	400,409
2000	1,384,338	482,170	373,193	173,321	355,654
2003 <sup>11</sup>	1,434,377	499,301	382,235	177,779	375,062

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<sup>8</sup> Korean Conflict: 1950-1953

<sup>9</sup> Vietnam Conflict: 1964-1973

<sup>10</sup> Operation *Desert Storm*/Persian Gulf War: 1991

<sup>11</sup> Iraq War begins.

Table 2: Female Enlisted Active Duty Military Personnel<sup>12</sup>

Year	Army		Navy		Marines		Air Force	
	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
1945		93,095		72,833		17,556		
1950		6,551		2,746		535		3,782
1955		7,716		5,707		2,113		8,282
1960		8,279		5,360		1,488		5,651
1965		8,520		5,261		1,441		4,741
1970	<b>1.0</b>	11,476	<b>0.9</b>	5,795	<b>0.9</b>	2,119	<b>1.4</b>	8,987
1973	<b>2.4</b>	16,457	<b>1.8</b>	9,174	<b>1.1</b>	1,973	<b>2.6</b>	15,023
1974	<b>3.9</b>	26,327	<b>2.8</b>	13,381	<b>1.4</b>	2,402	<b>3.7</b>	19,465
1975	<b>5.6</b>	37,701	<b>3.7</b>	17,498	<b>1.6</b>	2,841	<b>5.0</b>	25,232
1976	<b>6.5</b>	43,806	<b>4.2</b>	19,288	<b>1.8</b>	3,063	<b>6.1</b>	29,235
1977	<b>6.8</b>	46,094	<b>4.2</b>	19,464	<b>2.0</b>	3,506	<b>7.4</b>	34,610
1978	<b>7.5</b>	50,549	<b>4.5</b>	21,312	<b>2.7</b>	4,652	<b>8.7</b>	41,084
1979	<b>8.3</b>	55,151	<b>5.4</b>	25,044	<b>3.3</b>	5,501	<b>10.0</b>	46,427
1980	<b>9.1</b>	61,729	<b>6.5</b>	30,103	<b>3.7</b>	6,219	<b>11.3</b>	51,901
1981	<b>9.6</b>	65,304	<b>7.3</b>	34,558	<b>4.1</b>	7,091	<b>11.5</b>	54,372
1982	<b>9.6</b>	64,071	<b>7.7</b>	37,321	<b>4.5</b>	7,875	<b>11.3</b>	54,506
1983	<b>9.9</b>	66,535	<b>8.3</b>	40,792	<b>4.7</b>	8,273	<b>11.4</b>	55,305
1984	<b>10.0</b>	67,126	<b>8.5</b>	42,580	<b>4.9</b>	8,577	<b>11.4</b>	55,882
1985	<b>10.2</b>	68,419	<b>9.0</b>	45,690	<b>5.1</b>	9,041	<b>11.8</b>	58,134
1986	<b>10.4</b>	69,669	<b>9.0</b>	47,204	<b>5.2</b>	9,246	<b>12.3</b>	61,227
1987	<b>10.6</b>	71,608	<b>9.0</b>	47,735	<b>5.1</b>	9,140	<b>12.7</b>	63,239
1988	<b>10.8</b>	72,018	<b>9.2</b>	49,672	<b>5.1</b>	8,960	<b>13.1</b>	61,549
1989	<b>11.2</b>	74,297	<b>9.6</b>	52,065	<b>5.1</b>	9,012	<b>13.7</b>	63,700
1990	<b>11.4</b>	71,217	<b>9.8</b>	52,099	<b>4.9</b>	8,679	<b>14.0</b>	60,803
1991	<b>11.2</b>	67,774	<b>9.7</b>	51,410	<b>4.8</b>	8,320	<b>14.3</b>	59,113
1992	<b>12.0</b>	61,692	<b>10.2</b>	51,011	<b>4.7</b>	7,875	<b>14.8</b>	56,106
1993	<b>12.4</b>	60,188	<b>10.5</b>	49,336	<b>4.5</b>	7,206	<b>15.1</b>	54,481
1994	<b>12.9</b>	58,994	<b>11.0</b>	47,859	<b>4.5</b>	7,028	<b>15.7</b>	53,992
1995	<b>13.4</b>	57,260	<b>12.0</b>	47,931	<b>4.7</b>	7,403	<b>16.2</b>	52,079
1996	<b>14.3</b>	59,039	<b>12.2</b>	46,867	<b>5.0</b>	7,814	<b>16.9</b>	52,767
1997	<b>15.1</b>	62,438	<b>12.4</b>	44,782	<b>5.4</b>	8,498	<b>17.8</b>	53,827
1998	<b>15.1</b>	61,411	<b>12.8</b>	42,917	<b>5.7</b>	8,928	<b>18.4</b>	54,195
1999	<b>15.2</b>	61,506	<b>13.2</b>	43,923	<b>6.0</b>	9,275	<b>18.9</b>	54,633
2000	<b>15.5</b>	62,889	<b>13.6</b>	43,760	<b>6.1</b>	9,530	<b>19.3</b>	55,011
2001	<b>15.7</b>	63,388	<b>14.0</b>	46,590	<b>6.2</b>	9,572	<b>19.6</b>	55,553
2002	<b>15.5</b>	63,222	<b>14.3</b>	47,330	<b>6.1</b>	9,475	<b>19.8</b>	58,597
2003	<b>15.2</b>	63,495	<b>14.5</b>	47,342	<b>6.0</b>	9,577	<b>19.9</b>	60,033

<sup>12</sup> Department of Defense Statistical Information Analysis Division, Personnel and Procurement Statistics, available at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/index.html> and Office of the Under Secretary of Defense.

Table 3: Female Active Duty Officers<sup>13</sup>

<b>Year</b>	<b>Army</b>	<b>Navy</b>	<b>Marines</b>	<b>Air Force</b>	<b>Total</b>
1945	62,775	19,188	809		82,772
1950	4,431	2,447	45	1,532	8,455
1955	5,222	2,936	135	3,080	11,373
1960	4,263	2,711	123	3,675	10,772
1965	3,806	2,601	140	4,100	10,647
1970	5,248	2,888	299	4,667	13,102
1973	4,279	3,454	315	4,727	12,775
1974	4,388	3,649	336	4,767	13,140
1975	4,594	3,676	345	4,981	13,596
1976	4,844	3,544	386	4,967	13,741
1977	5,696	3,791	422	5,383	15,292
1978	6,292	3,980	433	6,010	16,715
1979	6,866	4,358	459	7,276	18,959
1980	7,609	4,877	487	8,493	21,466
1981	8,349	5,345	526	9,106	23,326
1982	9,033	5,740	560	9,942	25,275
1983	9,490	6,300	623	10,560	26,973
1984	10,230	6,553	648	11,234	28,665
1985	10,828	6,913	654	11,927	30,322
1986	11,263	7,260	643	12,377	31,543
1987	11,569	7,223	649	12,642	32,083
1988	11,750	7,335	653	12,899	32,637
1989	12,197	7,453	696	13,403	33,749
1990	12,404	7,808	677	13,331	34,220
1991	12,532	7,981	685	13,323	34,521
1992	11,738	8,294	649	12,683	33,364
1993	11,140	8,265	639	12,251	32,295
1994	10,884	7,966	643	12,322	31,815
1995	10,786	7,899	690	12,068	31,443
1996	10,584	7,825	750	12,047	31,206
1997	10,389	7,796	788	12,008	30,981
1998	10,367	7,777	854	11,971	30,969
1999	10,522	7,699	889	11,840	30,950
2000	10,814	7,846	932	11,819	31,411
2001	11,034	8,038	979	12,034	32,085
2002	11,543	8,189	998	12,912	33,642
2003	11,982	8,248	1,087	13,479	34,796

<sup>13</sup> Department of Defense Statistical Information Analysis Division, Personnel and Procurement Statistics, available at <http://siadapp.dmdc.osd.mil/index.html>.

Table 4: African-Americans as a Percentage of Active Duty Enlisted Forces<sup>14</sup>

<b>Year</b>	<b>Army</b>	<b>Navy</b>	<b>Marines</b>	<b>Air Force</b>	<b>Total</b>
1945	9.3	4.8			
1949	11.1	4.4	2.5	6.1	7.5
1964	11.8	5.9	8.7	10.0	9.7
1968	12.6	5.0	11.5	10.2	10.2
1970	13.5	5.4	11.2	11.7	11.0
1971	14.3	5.4	11.4	12.3	11.4
1972	17.0	6.4	13.7	12.6	12.6
1973	18.4	7.7	16.9	13.4	14.0
1974	21.3	8.4	18.1	14.2	15.7
1975	22.2	8.0	18.1	14.6	16.1
1976	24.3	8.1	17.0	14.7	16.9
1977	26.4	8.7	17.6	14.7	17.9
1978	29.2	9.4	19.0	14.9	19.3
1979	32.2	10.7	21.5	15.8	21.2
1980	32.9	11.5	22.4	16.2	21.9
1981	33.2	12.0	22.0	16.5	22.1
1982	32.7	12.4	21.4	16.9	22.0
1983	31.4	12.7	20.5	16.8	21.4
1984	30.5	13.1	19.9	16.9	21.2
1985	29.9	13.5	20.3	17.1	21.1
1986	29.7	14.2	20.6	17.3	21.2
1987	29.9	15.1	20.7	17.3	21.6
1988	30.5	15.9	20.9	17.6	22.1
1989	31.3	16.9	20.8	17.4	22.6
1990	32.1	17.7	20.7	17.7	23.2
1991	31.8	17.8	19.9	17.4	22.9
1992	31.5	17.9	18.9	17.1	22.4
1993	30.7	17.9	17.9	16.9	21.9
1994	30.3	18.1	17.3	16.8	21.8
1995	30.1	18.7	17.0	16.9	21.8
1996	29.9	19.1	16.8	17.0	21.9
1997	29.7	19.5	16.8	17.4	22.1
1998	29.5	19.9	16.6	17.8	22.2
1999	29.4	20.3	16.5	18.0	22.3
2000	29.1	20.6	16.2	18.4	22.4
2001	28.9	21.1	15.8	18.5	22.5
2002	27.5	21.0	15.2	18.1	21.8

<sup>14</sup> Compiled from Binkin and Eitelberg (1982:42; 1986:75) and Office of the Under Secretary of Defense.

Table 5: African-Americans as a Percentage of Active Duty Officers<sup>15</sup>

Year	Army	Navy	Marines	Air Force	Total
1945	0.8				
1949	1.9	0.05	0.05	0.6	0.9
1964	3.3	0.3	0.3	1.5	1.8
1968	3.3	0.4	0.9	1.8	2.1
1970	3.4	0.7	1.3	1.7	2.2
1971	3.6	0.7	1.3	1.7	2.3
1972	3.9	0.9	1.5	1.7	2.3
1973	4.0	1.1	1.9	2.0	2.5
1974	4.5	1.3	2.4	2.2	2.8
1975	4.8	1.4	3.0	2.5	3.1
1976	5.3	1.6	3.5	2.8	3.5
1977	6.1	1.9	3.6	3.2	4.0
1978	6.4	2.2	3.7	3.6	4.3
1979	6.8	2.3	3.9	4.3	4.7
1980	7.1	2.5	3.9	4.6	5.0
1981	7.8	2.7	4.0	4.8	5.3
1982	8.4	2.9	4.0	5.0	5.6
1983	8.6	3.0	4.3	5.2	5.8
1984	9.8	2.9	4.2	5.3	6.2
1985	10.2	3.2	4.4	5.4	6.4
1986	10.4	3.3	4.5	5.3	6.4
1987	10.5	3.3	4.5	5.4	6.5
1988	10.7	3.5	4.5	5.4	6.6
1989	10.9	3.7	4.8	5.5	6.8
1990	11.2	3.9	4.6	5.6	6.9
1991	11.3	4.1	4.6	5.7	7.1
1992	11.6	4.3	4.6	5.7	7.2
1993	11.2	4.5	4.6	5.7	7.0
1994	11.3	4.9	4.9	5.7	7.2
1995	11.3	5.3	5.8	5.6	7.4
1996	11.2	5.5	5.5	5.7	7.4
1997	11.0	5.8	5.9	5.9	7.5
1998	11.1	6.1	6.3	6.0	7.7
1999	11.3	6.3	6.5	6.2	7.9
2000	11.4	6.5	6.5	6.4	8.1
2001	11.9	6.8	6.5	6.6	8.3
2002	12.1	6.9	6.4	6.7	8.5

<sup>15</sup> Compiled from Binkin and Eitelberg (1982:42; 1986:75) and Office of the Under Secretary of Defense.

Table 6: African-Americans as a Percentage of Female Active Duty Enlisted Forces <sup>16</sup>

<b>Year</b>	<b>Army</b>	<b>Navy</b>	<b>Marines</b>	<b>Air Force</b>	<b>Total</b>
1972	17.7				15.1
1973	18.9				15.7
1974	19.8				16.9
1975	19.2				17.4
1976	22.4				18.0
1977	21.6				18.6
1978	30.3				20.8
1979	40.9				23.9
1980	39.6				26.1
1981	36.6				27.4
1982	29.9				28.1
1983	28.1				28.3
1984					28.9
1985					29.5
1986					30.3
1987					31.3
1988					32.4
1989	47.2	25.9	28.4	23.5	32.8
1990					
1991					
1992					
1993					
1994	48	28	26	24	33
1995					
1996	47.3	29.8	25.0	24.8	
1997	46.7	30.5	24.6	25.5	34.7
1998					
1999	46.6	31.1	23.5	26.9	34.9
2000	46.4	31.5	23.2	27.5	35.3
2001	46.5	31.6	22.8	27.7	35.3
2002	44.9	31.1	21.9	27.3	34.3

<sup>16</sup>Compiled from Binkin and Eitelberg (1986:76), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy/Equal Opportunity (1991:282), Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, *Population Representation for the Military Services*, Fiscal years 1997, 1999, 2000-2002, Skaine (1999:70), and Stiehm (1996:66). The incompleteness of this table reflects the fact that minority participation in the armed forces is generally conceived in terms of “women” or “African-Americans” (or another racial or ethnic minority group). The intersections between categories are rarely considered or reported on, despite the fact that non-white women make up such a large proportion of women serving, especially in the Army. This is also reflected in the representational practices of the armed forces, which, in addition to white men, who are portrayed the most frequently, tend to picture Black men or white women in recruiting materials, but Black women only rarely.

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 M.A. in Political Science  
 Ph.D. in Political Science  
 Graduate Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies  
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 American Politics
- 8/89 to 5/93 Amherst College, Amherst, MA  
 B.A., cum laude, in Political Science and Women's and Gender Studies

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 8/03 to 8/07 Program Associate,  
 Rutgers University Teaching Assistant Project, New Brunswick, NJ
- 8/06 to 12/06 Lecturer,  
 The City College of New York, New York, NY
- 5/97 to 5/06 Instructor,  
 Rutgers University: Department of Political Science, Department of  
 Women's and Gender Studies, Department of English Writing Program,  
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- 10/95 to 8/96 Program Assistant,  
 Project Renewal, New York, NY
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## PUBLICATIONS

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 Soldiering in Great Britain," *GSC Quarterly*, number 5, Summer 2002.