

AN INSURGENCY WITHIN: ORGANIZATIONAL DISSENT AND CHANGE IN
THE US MILITARY

by

Ellen Haring
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Committee:

_____ Chair of Committee

_____ Graduate Program Director

_____ Dean, School for Conflict Analysis and
Resolution

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by

Ellen Haring
Bachelor of Science
United States Military Academy, 1984

Director: Sandra Cheldelin, Professor
Department of Conflict Analysis and Resolution

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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my parents, Gil and Joan Haring, my husband Brandon Denecke and my three wonderful children Julianne, Nick and Morgan.

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I would like to thank the many friends, relatives, and supporters who have made this happen. My colleagues Dr. Chantal de Jonge Oudraat and Dr. Megan MacKenzie assisted me in my research. Dr. Sandra Cheldelin and the other members of my committee were of invaluable help. I would also like to thank the servicewomen who dared to push the boundaries of socially imposed limitations; women of past generations who opened doors for me and my generation, the women of my generation who pushed the door a little further open and the women who serve today who continue to test and challenge themselves as they serve in defense of the United States of America. I am especially grateful to the women of the cultural support team program who risked their lives pushing boundaries to prove what servicewomen are capable of achieving. I am also grateful to my co-plaintiffs who risked their careers, alienating their colleagues, their friends and even their families by daring to tackle the last vestige of formal discrimination against servicewomen.

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ABSTRACT

AN INSURGENCY WITHIN: ORGANIZATIONAL DISSENT AND CHANGE IN THE US MILITARY

Ellen Haring, Ph.D.

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Dissertation Director: Dr. Sandra Cheldelin

This study documents, analyzes and assesses the internal conflict that developed when personnel policies and practices concerning the employment and assignment of servicewomen were out of sync in the U.S. military and the subsequent efforts to realign policy with practice. Specifically, this study examines why some servicewomen ultimately dissented and challenged the policy that prohibited their assignment to the ground combat units of the U.S. military. Conversely, it examines the ensuing resistance to changing existing policies to allow women to serve in combat units that existed across the institutional spectrum. Looking at this conflict holistically it highlights inherent tensions and shortcomings in theories of conflict analysis and practical methods for resolution. Finally, it considers the role that organizational change models may contribute to conflict resolution practices and the potential shortcomings of those models.

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2011, I considered suing the Department of the Army for sex discrimination. I had served in the Army my entire adult life; clearly this was an enormously painful and frightening prospect. As an Army colonel I had an insider's view of the U.S. military during 10 years of war. Although the military has historically discriminated against women by limiting the jobs and units we could access, we had not violated laws or our own policies to do so. Now, due to military necessity and to increase combat effectiveness, commanders on the ground engaged in creative ways to circumvent policies that limited their ability to do their missions. Quietly and creatively we violated our own published policies while refusing to address the untenable nature of the policies themselves.

We engaged in a game of semantics by “attaching” rather than “assigning” women to combat units when we needed them. We “attached” servicewomen who were Arab linguists and medics to infantry companies when we needed translators or medical support since “assigning” women to combat units was prohibited by Department of Defense (DOD) policy¹. We sent small teams of servicewomen to work from forward

¹ Attaching soldiers for short duration operational requirements to make use of specialized skills is common practice in the military. However, in situations where the need is enduring, like the requirement for a medic to support an infantry unit during a combat deployment, women were being temporarily attached while their male counterparts were permanently assigned.

operating bases and at combat outposts as Lionesses² and Female Engagement Team³ members. We intermittently shuttled servicewomen back to rear areas for short durations, sometimes just overnight, and returned them to forward operating bases to avoid violating “colocation” rules that prohibited women from being permanently collocated with combat units. But shuttling women to rear areas and attaching vice assigning women are distinctions without a practical difference that violated the intent of combat exclusion policies.

At meetings we talked about how our actions were patently violating combat restrictions on women. In 2006, two Army colonels—also students at the US Army War College—conducted a series of surveys and studies that documented the wide variations that Commanders used in interpreting the restrictive policies. In one survey, 70% of their War College classmates agreed or strongly agreed that the policy needed to be revised, and 74% agreed or strongly agreed that “all soldiers regardless of gender should be assigned to positions for which they are qualified” (US Army War College, 2008, p. 2). They found that the “Combat Exclusion Policy with its attendant ‘collocation’ restriction is incompatible with the nature of the war in which the US Army is currently engaged and the forms of conflict it is likely to be engaged in for the foreseeable future” (US Army War College, 2008, p. viii). But in 2008 there was no move afoot to eliminate or modify this policy.

² A Lioness is a servicewoman assigned to conduct searches of civilian women at checkpoints and during combat patrols.

³ Female Engagement Teams are small teams of servicewomen (2-4) assigned to combat units to interact with civilian women during military operations.

This study documents, analyzes and assesses the internal conflict that developed when personnel policies and practices were out of sync in the US military and the subsequent efforts to realign policy with practice. More specifically, the study examines why some servicewomen ultimately dissented and challenged the policy. Conversely, it examines the ensuing resistance to change that was manifest across the Department of Defense. Chapter 1 documents what I experienced during a 35 year Army career. Beginning in 1980, when I entered West Point, it traverses the 1980s and the 1990s when all laws that limited women's service were overturned, and it follows recent events unfolding during more than 10 years of war when policy and practice diverged. It highlights the conundrum that servicewomen experienced and our responses when policy and practice were out of sync. Furthermore, it documents servicewomen's efforts to challenge existing exclusionary policies through a host of different methods.

Chapter 2 examines the literature of organizational dissent and motivation for dissent. It explores basic human needs theories including those of identity and recognition as the underlying causes for some servicewomen's activities and eventual dissent. It considers how the same theories may explain the strong resistance to inclusion that these servicewomen experienced as they pushed for greater inclusion. Last, it examines conflict and organizational change theories and practices to highlight how basic human needs theory rarely, if ever, informs theories and best practices in organizational change literature and practice.

Chapter 3 outlines the in-depth, single case study research design and methodology of this study. The research methods included interviews, focus groups

discussions and an online critical discourse analysis. Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with servicewomen who sought out combat duties that violated existing exclusionary policies. Interviews were also conducted with the plaintiffs of the two lawsuits that challenged the existing policy. Finally, to understand who was most resistance and why there was strong resistance across the organization an online discourse analysis was conducted.

This research will answer two broad questions: 1) what reasons do women who sought inclusion in the ground fighting occupations and units of the U.S. military give for doing so despite longstanding policy prohibiting it? Was it because they wanted to fight? Or, were they seeking respect and recognition by joining the most honored identity group in the military? It also seeks to understand why some servicewomen resorted to the extreme measure of suing the Department of Defense to overturn existing policies. The second question this research seeks to answer is: 2) what reasons for opposing the full inclusion of servicewomen in ground combat occupations and units are given by members of the military who do so? And, what are the implications for resolving this conflict using existing recommended change models and methods? Finally, this study will explore what this case reveals about organizational change in the U.S. military.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the research by summarizing and analyzing the data. Chapter 5 synthesizes the research, providing findings and implications for the utility of conflict and organizational change theories and practice.

CHAPTER 1: DISSENT AND RESISTANCE

THE EARLY YEARS

In 1979 I entered the Army. I was 17 and wanted to go to West Point. I didn't come from a military background and joining the Army was not a family tradition. I stayed in the Army because I liked it. I believed in its mission and purpose and I still do.

The Army provided me countless opportunities and experiences that few other professions offered. In the areas where I was allowed to serve, I was well treated: a valued team member; respected and promoted right along with my male peers. Moreover, everyone doing the same job receives the same pay. There was, however, a chronic and lingering problem with my chosen profession: women were excluded from serving in our core competency, our combat arms occupations. As a result, we have a two-class culture that women are acutely aware of from the moment we enter the military.

At West Point and throughout the Army there is emphasis placed on, and status accrued by, combat specialties like Infantry, Rangers and Special Forces from which women are entirely excluded. These specialties are honored and young men (and women) aspire to serve in them. They are the groups from which we draw our mythical and real heroes and they are also where we turn for our most senior military leaders.

Eighty percent of Army generals come from combat specialties and 60% are West Point graduates (Dao, 2012).

While I resented being in the second-class citizen group, and I believed there were many women who could handle the mental and physical rigors of the combat arms, I didn't do anything about it. I was young and a product of a culture that generally devalues women. I'd already made an unconventional choice by going to West Point and joining the Army. Women only comprised 10% of my graduating class and about 8% of the Army in the 1980s (Manning, 2013). It was an unusual career path for any woman.

However, there was one intrepid young woman who did challenge the status quo. Lillian Pfluke graduated from West Point in 1980 with the first class of women to graduate from any military service academy. Lil was inspired by the emphasis and importance placed on combat branches and Lil was a superb athlete. She wanted to be an infantry officer. Lil sought out infantry training experiences at every opportunity and she attended the Jungle Operations Training Course in Panama and the Airborne School at Fort Benning, Georgia. When Lil graduated from West Point she made a formal request for an 'exception to policy' to join the infantry but that request was denied and Lil was assigned to a support branch (McAleer, 2010). She subsequently turned to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) for help. The ACLU decided to challenge the all-male selective service law first, and hold Lil's case in abeyance until they settled that dispute. The ACLU lost the selective service suit on the grounds that the selective service is a sourcing mechanism for the combat arms, and since women can't serve in the combat arms there was no reason to overturn the law. It took several years for the ACLU to lose

because the case ultimately went to the Supreme Court (“Rostker v. Goldberg 453 U.S. 57 (1981),”). They should have fought Lil’s battle first, since women’s combat exclusion was the grounds for losing the selective service suit.

Lil continued to serve and although she excelled as an ordnance officer she got fed up with her second class status, accepted an early retirement, and left the Army as a major after 15 years.⁴ In retrospect, I was not as brave as Lil. It took me many years to challenge the social norms of my peer and professional group, and the institution that I served. It only happened after witnessing other brave and intrepid young servicewomen who were serving during a time of war, volunteering for new and dangerous assignments and succeeding in very non-traditional roles.

REPEAL OF LAWS: ESTABLISHING NEW POLICY

After Lil’s graduation in 1980 the percentages of women across the military Services crept upward and women served in a variety of new occupations. In 1989, during the invasion of Panama, Army Captain Linda Bray led a military police company in a prolonged fire fight with Panamanian military forces. Her involvement in direct combat opened the debate about laws prohibiting women from engaging in combat. Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder called for the immediate elimination of all laws that limited women’s military service to support roles (“History Archive: Linda Bray,” n.d.). New legislation was on the horizon.

⁴ Post retirement, Lil founded and leads a non-profit organization, American War Memorials Overseas, that documents, promotes and preserves war memorials and grave sites outside of the US. She is also a world class cyclist, winning multiple World Masters Cycling Championships with world racing records in various age categories (Escobar, 2013).

The 1991 Gulf War added additional pressure to eliminate restrictive laws. Ultimately, 38,000 women deployed in support of that conflict and despite their support positions, 16 women were killed, 2 were captured, and many more were wounded (Parham, 2005, p. 384). In the lead up to the 1992 National Defense Authorization Act, Congresswoman Schroeder introduced an amendment to the bill that would eliminate laws that limited women pilots to support aircraft in the Air Force. She was joined by Congresswoman Beverly Byron in an expanded amendment that ultimately led to legislation in the Senate that lifted the ban on all combat aviation across the Services. In 1993, newly elected President Clinton's Secretary of Defense Les Aspin asked Congress to similarly repeal the law that prohibited women from serving on Navy ships, which they did, thereby eliminating all legal restrictions on servicewomen's employment (Parham, 2005, p. 389).

In 1993, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin directed the military services to begin to integrate women into all aviation units and onto most ships. In 1994, women began flying combat aircraft and serving on nearly all Navy ships. Women could now fight in the air and at sea, but not on land. In place of the legal limitations previously imposed by laws, the Department of Defense instituted the "direct ground combat definition and assignment rule" (Office of the Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, 2012, p. 17) most commonly known as the "combat exclusion policy." This policy established that "service members are eligible to be assigned to all positions for which they are qualified, except that women shall be excluded from assignment to units below the brigade level whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground"

(Miller, Kavanagh, Lytell, Jennings, & Martin, 2012, p. 3). Additional restrictions prohibited women from being physically collocated with ground combat units and from engaging in long range reconnaissance missions.

MORE WARTIME CHALLENGES

By late 2011, we had been at war for ten years. Although women served in support branches in land units, there were countless instances when women successfully engaged in combat alongside their male team mates. For example, Lieutenant Brittany Meeks was a Cadet just starting her senior year at West Point on 9/11. When Brittany was interviewed by the Associated Press that year she played down her anxiety at being commissioned into an Army that was at war. She believed she was well trained and was ready for the challenges of combat. Like Captain Linda Bray in 1989, Brittany's skills as a military police platoon leader were soon put to the test in combat in Iraq in 2004. During one busy day Lieutenant Meeks led her platoon, the battalion's quick reaction force, to the scene of a convoy that was under heavy attack. When she arrived at the scene she found trucks on fire, two Apache helicopters circling overhead and a Blackhawk medical evacuation helicopter trying to land to rescue the wounded. Amid heavy, sustained gunfire, Meeks called in suppressive fires and secured the convoy just as one of the Apache's crashed into a ball of flames nearby. She subsequently secured the Apache wreckage and brought in the Blackhawks to extract the dead and wounded. When her Brigade Commander arrived on the chaotic scene with additional support he asked her, "Lieutenant Meeks, how come every time I see you things are blowing up?"

How can I help?” (U.S. Army Platoon Leaders, 2009, p. 99). She directed his security detail to shore up her perimeter as they mopped up the scene.

I had watched an interview with Sergeant Leigh Anne Hester, a 23-year-old National Guard soldier from Nashville, TN. In 2005, Hester’s military police squad of two women and eight men in three tactical vehicles were providing security to a supply convoy when it was ambushed in Iraq. Hester’s squad leader directed the squad to move into a flanking position in order to cut off and engage the 50 insurgents who were firing on the convoy. During the ensuing 30 minute fire fight Hester and her platoon sergeant dismounted from their vehicles and began systematically engaging the insurgents along a trench line with their grenades, M4 carbine rifles and a grenade launcher. When the fight was over, 27 insurgents were dead, 6 were wounded and 1 had been captured. Hester was awarded the Silver Star, the nation’s third highest award for valor in combat for her actions that day. When asked about her actions during that encounter she modestly asserted that, “I am just another soldier doing his or her job (*Sergeant Leigh Ann Hester - First female soldier to win Silver Star since WW2*, 2011).”

I had read about 19 year old Specialist Monica Lin Brown, a combat medic, who received the Silver Star in 2007 for her actions and courage under fire in Afghanistan. Brown was on patrol with a cavalry troop when the last vehicle in the convoy hit an improvised explosive device and they were ambushed. Brown exited her vehicle, and while under heavy fire, rushed to the rear vehicle to render aid to five wounded soldiers. She used her body to shield the wounded while she helped move them to a more secure location. The fight was so intense that she had difficulty providing aid but she remained

focused and determined to save the lives of two critically wounded soldiers. After moving the wounded a second time she was able to stabilize the most seriously injured until medical evacuation could be secured. By all accounts she demonstrated an uncanny ability to direct other soldiers in life saving procedures during a chaotic and dangerous situation. Soldiers who knew Brown said that she had been their pick, over other available medics for that mission because she had earned the trust and respect of the all-male unit and when you want the best to save your life gender becomes irrelevant (Clare, 2008).

In late 2011, I saw a notice about 1st Lieutenant Ashley White. Like me, White had volunteered for a new program that Special Operations Command (SOCOM) was piloting called Cultural Support Teams. I'd read about the program in the Army Times and I emailed the address that was recruiting women for this pilot program. Although I was well senior of the women they were recruiting I decided to offer my services in any capacity that might be available to a colonel. I received a quick response from the staff that was developing this pilot program and I was encouraged to apply to be the program manager. I applied and was accepted and I spent the next three months getting ready to deploy to Afghanistan to lead this new initiative.

'Cultural Support Team' is the name SOCOM adopted for what is their version of the female engagement team program first used, informally, in 2008 in Afghanistan by the Marines. Female engagement teams are small groups of U.S. and allied partner female soldiers, nominally trained to interact with Afghan women and men. While I was

training I attended several meetings where the combat exclusion policy's implications for this program were discussed.

Although the combat exclusion policy prohibited women from serving in units and specialties that were dedicated to ground combat missions, the intent of the cultural support team program was to do exactly that, imbed women, at the lowest tactical level, on Ranger teams and on Special Forces teams. It clearly violated the restrictions imposed by the ground combat exclusion policy. When this violation was raised in meetings I attended it was dismissed as "not our problem." Two International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Commanders, first General Stanley McCrystal and later General David Petraeus, had directed the use of female engagement teams by all tactical units. Our NATO allies were complying and so did the US. One special operation's sergeant major casually remarked that this program had effectively rendered the combat exclusion policy obsolete. Unfortunately, no move was underway in the military to eliminate the policy.

Ultimately, and to my extreme disappointment, I did not deploy to Afghanistan to be the program manager. Three weeks before I was set to deploy I received a call saying that Army Special Operations Command had decided that I did not possess the necessary qualifications for this job, namely that I didn't have the "right operational experience." The "right operational experience" is hard for a woman to come by because it's a euphemism for a combat deployment. Although my unit had been tagged to deploy to Iraq in 2007 almost all women were removed from the deployment roster because our assigned mission was to train the Iraqi Army and the belief, at that time, was that Iraqi

soldiers would not accept training from US servicewomen. Consequently, my only previous opportunity for a combat deployment, which would have given me the “right operational experience”, never occurred. Ultimately, I was replaced by a male Special Forces officer who I outranked.

Lieutenant Ashley White, however, did deploy. She was assigned to support Army Rangers during direct action night raids. The US Army Special Operations Command biographical sketch of Ashley states that, “She was killed during combat operations in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan when the assault force she was supporting triggered an improvised explosive device (U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 2011).” Ashley died in combat fighting alongside two Army Rangers that day. She was 24 years old.

CONGRESS QUESTIONS DOD POLICIES

The fact that women were successfully serving in combat, fighting, being wounded and killed (today more than 900 have been wounded and over 160 have died (“Women in the Global War on Terror In Memoriam Honor Role,” n.d.)) and that the US military was violating its own policies did not go unnoticed. The 2009 National Defense Authorization Act established the Military Leadership Diversity Commission whose task was to “conduct a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of policies and practices that shape diversity among military leaders (MLDC, 2011, p. 1).” The commission’s findings were released in March of 2011. The commission determined that the combat exclusion policy presented “an overt barrier” to women’s advancement in the military

and they recommended a phased approach to its complete elimination. Again, DOD made no move to lift or alter the policy.

In the 2011 National Defense Authorization Act Congress directed DOD to review its policies specifically affecting the assignment of women in the services. The result of that review was completed and released in February 2012. The report, called the “Women in the Services Review,” made minor changes to the direct ground combat exclusion policy. Realizing that it could no longer keep women out of combat units entirely, the policy was modified to allow women to co-locate with combat units and to serve in currently open specialties, like intelligence, communications, and logistics, at the battalion staff level (Undersecretary of Defense Personnel and Readiness, 2012). It was touted by DOD as a big advancement for servicewomen because it opened 14,000 new positions. But for those of us serving we knew it was a very limited modification. There were still more than 238,000 positions that remained closed. This modification retroactively allowed what had already been occurring during the last ten years of war (Whitlock, 2012). In 2007, combat medic and Silver Star recipient Specialist Monica Brown was on a multiday patrol with a cavalry troop in violation of the existing combat exclusion policy. In fact, she would still be in violation of the modified policy because the new policy only allowed women to serve at the battalion level but Specialist Brown was patrolling with a cavalry troop, a unit below the battalion level. These degrees of specificity are lost on those who are not intimately familiar with the military but they are enormously important when you look at the number of positions closed to women and how it affects women’s options, their careers and how they are treated in the military.

For me, this limited modification was the last straw. I decided that I would go forward as a plaintiff in a lawsuit.

BECOMING A PLAINTIFF

On May 23rd, 2012 Command Sergeant Major Jane Baldwin and I sued the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army over this policy (“BALDWIN et al v. PANETTA et al,” 2012). Our lawsuit began as an idea in early 2011 on the campus of the University of Virginia. It started with a group of first year law students at the University of Virginia’s School of Law. The students had the fortune of taking a class from an inspiring professor, Anne Coughlin, who taught feminist jurisprudence among other topics. Her students believed that even though they were just first year law students they could do something about a long-standing injustice. They practiced what John Paul Lederach calls a “paradoxical curiosity” in that they refused to accept their place in a “dualistic polarity” (Lederach, 2005, pp. 35–36), namely, that even though they were new law students and had no authority to practice law, they were not willing to let that stop them from attempting to change the course of U.S. history.

They pressed Professor Coughlin to let them create their own independent study group with the intention that it could lead to a lawsuit. Professor Coughlin repeatedly discouraged them regarding the lawsuit, but agreed to coach them on aspects of building a case. First, they needed to determine if there were any potential plaintiffs. She pointed out that neither she nor the students knew if there were men or women who felt “harmed” by this policy. The law requires that in order to bring a lawsuit against any organization or individual there must be a victim—a plaintiff—someone who can show that they have

been harmed. The students decided to talk to people in the military to see how they felt about this policy. They created a series of focus groups aimed at veterans and ROTC departments at high schools and at the university to see if there were members of the military who felt that they had been harmed by this policy. They named their class “The Molly Pitcher Project” after a legendary Revolutionary War heroine who allegedly took her husband’s place on a canon crew when he was mortally wounded at the Battle of Monmouth (“Molly Pitcher Project,” n.d.).

The students’ project gained some local media attention and a newspaper published an article about their work, which was subsequently carried in *The Army Times*. After the article ran nationally in *The Army Times*, servicewomen from all over the world began contacting the school. Professor Coughlin was stunned by the response and began flying around the country to interview potential plaintiffs. I was one of the women who read that article and contacted Anne Coughlin. Agreeing to become a plaintiff and suing the institution that you serve is inherently risky. I struggled with my decision to become a plaintiff but in the end I determined that someone had to be willing to take a risk and “step into the unknown without any guarantee of success or even safety”(Lederach, 2005, p. 39) if we wanted to make a change.

The remaining task of the Molly Pitchers was critical. They needed a well-regarded law firm willing to take this case on a pro bono basis. They pitched their case to an attorney who was an adjunct professor at the University of Virginia and a partner at the prestigious Washington, D.C. law firm of Covington and Burling. He took the case back to his law firm where he ran it through the firm’s pro bono selection board. He and

three associates, all women, volunteered to represent us and they filed our suit on May 23rd, 2012.

The Department of Defense, through its Department of Justice lawyers responded to our lawsuit by moving that it be dismissed on two grounds. They argued that we lacked standing as plaintiffs because we couldn't clearly establish that we had been harmed by the policy and that the military was "entitled to substantial deference" in determining what is necessary for military service (*Baldwin v. Panetta Move to Dismiss*, 2012, p. 14). Essentially, their move to dismiss was based on our inability to prove that the two of us had been directly harmed by specific aspects of the policy and that the military had historically been afforded great leniency in determining what capabilities are required to meet national defense requirements. Fortunately for us, the judge, also a woman, did not dismiss our case and we were allowed to respond to the move to dismiss. Our attorneys responded with a request to present oral arguments before the judge.

While these back and forth exchanges were occurring an attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) contacted Professor Coughlin. The ACLU was considering making a similar attempt to eliminate this policy with a group of four more servicewomen and a veteran's advocacy organization, The Service Women's Action Network. The ACLU strategized with Professor Coughlin and decided to go forward with a companion law suit which they filed in San Francisco, California on November 27th, 2012 ("Hegar, et al. v. Panetta," 2012). We had filed our case in a Washington, D.C. district court. Our lawyers had chosen Washington because they expected the case would, on appeal, go to the Supreme Court and filing in D.C. meant that there would be

just one less court of appeals to get through before the case would have to be heard by the Supreme Court. Now the Department of Defense was facing two lawsuits with six servicewomen on both the east and the west coasts. On January 26, 2013, eight months after we filed the first law suit and shortly before we were to begin oral arguments Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) Leon Panetta rescinded the combat exclusion policy in its entirety.

REPEAL OF THE COMBAT EXCLUSION POLICY

Secretary Panetta gave the military services three years to fully open all positions and specialties. He told the services that if they felt there was an area that could not be safely and responsibly opened, he would consider an exception to policy but that any “exceptions must be narrowly tailored and based on a rigorous analysis of factual data regarding the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for the position” (Dempsey & Panetta, 2013, p. 2). The deadline for opening all positions and specialties was set for January 1, 2016.

The attorneys for both cases requested their case remain open until the Services provided integration implementation plans that they could review to determine if DOD was moving forward in good faith. Implementation plans were due in May of 2013 but were not made available until June. The attorneys for my case said that the plans lacked specificity and did not show how the Army would correct the policy in such a way that would allow senior women to benefit from the change. The integration plans only addressed how entry level and junior servicewomen would be admitted to the combat specialties in the future. It made no provision for correcting the harm done to mid-grade

or senior servicewomen. In an effort to test the good faith of the Army my co-plaintiff, Command Sergeant Major Jane Baldwin, applied for a position as a training battalion command sergeant major in a combat arms training battalion. In October 2013 Jane was notified that although her application had been accepted and considered, she was not selected. At that point we decided we would not request any more continuances in our case and our attorneys moved to “dismiss without prejudice.” A move to dismiss a case “without prejudice” means that no findings developed that would preclude us from reopening the case in the future. It was a legal strategy to avoid setting a precedent that would harm any future challenges to a potential exception to policy that might be established in the coming years. The ACLU plaintiffs were younger, junior level officers and non-commissioned officers who might benefit from the openings. The ACLU stayed their case until January 1, 2016 to allow the military to use the time they were allotted to open all occupations and units to women. However, on December 3, 2015, a new Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter, announced that there would be “no exceptions” granted to the new policy and that all positions in all of the Services would be opened to women on an equal basis to men no later than April 1, 2016 (Carter, 2015).

CONCLUSION

This single case study reveals a number of issues and associated questions: Why did it ultimately take two lawsuits to change a policy that was clearly being violated within the military’s own ranks? Why did it take 20 years after all laws limiting women’s service in the military were removed for servicewomen to challenge this discriminatory policy? What does this case reveal about organizational culture, organizational dissent

and the conditions that lead to open dissent? Was it the disconnect between policy and practice that eventually drove the change or did servicewomen intentionally create the policy-practice disconnect by slipping into occupations and units that they had been barred from? Why do so many men and some women in the military continue to resist this change? As the institution moves forward with full integration, how will the Department of Defense and its subordinate organizations accommodate this change? These questions and more will be explored by examining the literature on dissent, identity, recognition, and organizational change and by researching what people who have engaged in this conflict have to say about their beliefs, values and behavior.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Academic literature sheds light on what may have motivated us to engage in dissent and the likely sources of organizational and inter-group resistance to the impending integration of women into historically all-male ground combat units. Conflict theories add depth to understanding dissent and resistance to change, which until fairly recently have relied largely on theories of power and control. Organizational change literature provides recommendations for how this change should be managed for the best organizational outcomes. This chapter is organized thematically following the development of my case and the subsequent organizational change that is currently underway. Part I examines the literature behind dissent. Specifically, what motivated some servicewomen to challenge organizational norms? Part II examines the literature surrounding how and why resistance to change manifests within organizations, focusing on why the military may have resisted addressing the policy practice disconnect for so long. Part III considers recommended methods for engaging in productive organizational change. Throughout each section our case and the subsequent policy change that is currently being implemented is used to reveal limitations of relevant literature and theories and as well as the successes and failures in the ongoing organizational change efforts.

PART I: DISSENT WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS

According to Kassing (2011), an organizational change theorist, change can be driven by employee dissent that is a result of “economic, political and socio-cultural factors” (Kassing, 2011, p. 88). It can come from single individuals or it can come from sub-groups. Whistleblowers are individuals who challenge the unethical or illegal practices of an organization. Their actions may result in revolutionary changes when wrongdoing or illegal activity is revealed. Dissent also comes from groups “who feel disenfranchised by the organization that employs them” (Burke, 2014, p. 48). Strikes, a well-established form of dissent, are group actions that may be motivated by pay demands or by calls for improved working conditions. Change is also driven by inter-organizational conflicts which occur “when incompatibility arises between interdependent groups who interact regularly” (Kassing, 2011, p. 35). Inter-group and intra-group identity based conflicts, disputes about “who we are” also regularly lead to dissent that drives organizational change (Horton, Bayerl, & Jacobs, 2014, p. S8).

What is missing from organizational dissent and change literature is an in depth analysis of what drives individuals to openly dissent. Simply saying that people dissent for economic, political or ideological reasons or because they feel disenfranchised, fails to examine underlying motivations that drive dissenting behaviors. This overgeneralization leads to less than optimal responses by leadership and management to deal with the dissent and any subsequent change that the dissent garners. Women in the military did not dissent for political or economic reasons and although we did feel disenfranchised what does that mean in a practical sense? We didn't seek power or

money. Moreover, we didn't disagree with the military's foundational principals. Our motivations were, at the most basic level, motivated by needs for inclusion, respect and recognition.

In the mid part of the 20th Century, psychologist Abraham Maslow first introduced the theory of human needs in his 1954 book, *Motivation and Personality*. He later reflected that the book “represented a different philosophy of human nature, a new image of man” (Maslow, 1970, p. x) that focused on healthy human motivations versus abnormal human behavior. From 1950 to 1970 he studied and wrote extensively about universal human needs. He refined his theory into a hierarchy of human needs that begins with physiological needs and advances through a series of psychological needs. He believed that higher level needs emerge only as lower level needs are satisfied and that frustration of needs produce a struggle to achieve unmet needs.

Maslow's theories of motivation and needs influenced a wide range of theorists across multiple academic disciplines. Psychologists, sociologists, political scientists and international relations scholars have all used Maslow's theory to help understand and explain conflict at the interpersonal, community, societal, inter and intra state level. Conflict scholars reduced Maslow's hierarchy into three broad categories of needs, security, identity and recognition, which they argue are not hierarchical in nature (Burton, 1990, p. 308). Recent research supports Maslow's original theory of universal needs while providing empirical findings that supports conflict theorists' beliefs that needs are not hierarchical, as Maslow originally envisioned (Tay & Diener, 2011, p. 355). Although all three categories of needs ultimately come into play in this case, two

categories, identity and recognition, are particularly relevant to both why some servicewomen sought greater inclusion and why others resisted their inclusion.

Identity

The theoretical concept of identity based needs is applicable at multiple levels when applied to women's dissent in the military as well as the organizational resistance to granting women's demands for greater inclusion. In this case individual identity, group identity and organizational identity all come into play. The concept of organizational identity is generally attributed to the 1985 work of David Whetten (He & Brown, 2013). It is an outgrowth of concepts grounded in the earlier work of individual and social identity theorists. In order to understand where organizational identity comes from, it is necessary to show the linkage to and the distinction from the other two identity theories.

In "A Tale of Two Theories", Hogg and colleagues trace and compare individual identity theory to group or social identity theory. Identity theory is a micro-level theory of the person which seeks to understand the "multifaceted notions of self and the wider social structure" (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995, p. 256). It is explicitly focused on understanding an individual's roles, both ascribed and assumed, and how those roles dictate interpersonal interactions. Within organizations, people have different identities that are based on roles which govern how they interact with other people in the organization. These roles are intricately woven within the fabric of the organization's structure. Individual identities are multiple and multi-layered and they rise and fall in importance depending upon whom an individual is interacting with.

Social identity theory is distinct from identity theory in that it is a meso-level, social psychological theory that examines intergroup processes (Craib, 1998; Korostelina, 2007). It was developed through a series of studies conducted by Henri Tajfel and John Turner that examined group beliefs and behaviors associated with racism, discrimination and prejudice (Hogg et al., 1995, p. 259). Overtime, social identity theory has broadened to examine social categories like those of nationality, political affiliations, and professions. As people join groups they accept the values and beliefs of the group and follow normative group behaviors. Social identity is characterized by categorization that promotes self enhancement. Groups establish boundaries that create distinctions between their group and other groups and these distinctions favor the in-group over other groups (Brown, 2001, p. 77). Social identity theory seeks to understand how and why groups act the way they do as collectives. This is important to understanding intra organizational dynamics since organizations are comprised of many sub groups.

While both individual identity and social identity theory are useful to understanding human behavior, Whetten and Godfrey (1998) believe that organizations develop macro-level organizational identities that manifest as a combination of individual and group identity markers. Like individuals, organizations assume a variety of roles which are multi-layered, and, like individuals these role based identities rise and fall in salience. So too, like groups' organizations create boundaries and then self-enhance their organization over others. Most importantly, and unlike individuals or groups, an organization's identity is ultimately tied to its products and/or services. A challenge to an organization's product becomes a threat to image, esteem and thus organizational

identity. This multi-layered complexity presents as a “multifaceted identity, each component of which is relevant to specific domains or constituents, without appearing hopelessly fragmented or ludicrously schizophrenic, as an individual might” (p. 21).

The complicated array of identity factors is constantly at play when assessing how, why and when an organization adapts to changing demands and requirements. Within an organization, change is experienced differently depending on how one believes the change will affect her, her group within the organization, or the organization as a whole. People resist or embrace change at varying levels. Change poses identity threats to individuals, to sub-groups and to the organization and these threats may occur simultaneously and may even compete with each other. For example, while a member may recognize the need to change the organization’s identity, that change may threaten his/her intra organizational sub group identity. Each of these levels must be analyzed for potential threat, resistance to change and eventual identity modification. The graphic depicted below (Figure 1) is an attempt to visually outline the ways these identities are simultaneously interlocking, layered and distinct. The interlocking nature of multiple layers of identity makes it impossible to decouple any one layer from the other and analyze any one in isolation.

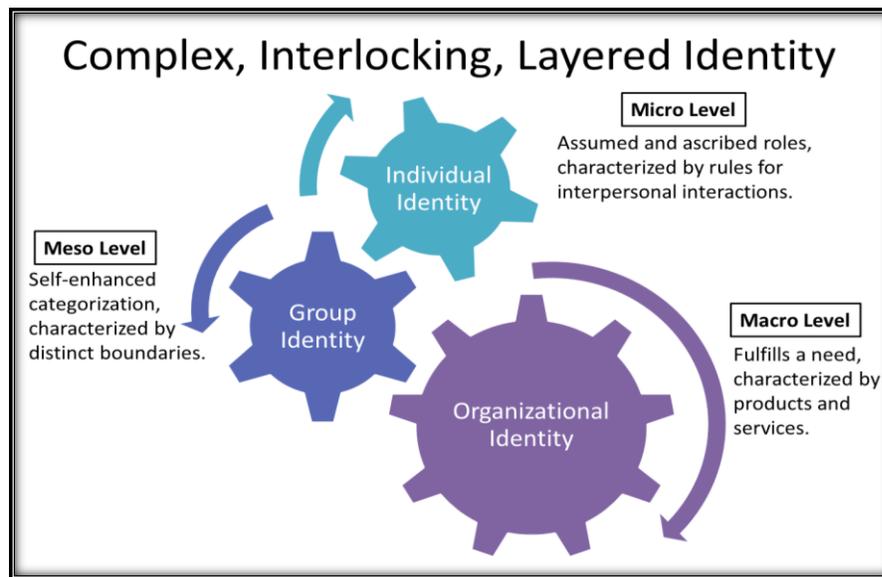


Figure 1: Complex, Interlocking, Layered Identity

Women’s dissent within the military may have been motivated by individual identity based needs for inclusion that have subsequently challenged the group or social identity of many exclusively all male subgroups. Until very recently, women in the US military were prohibited, first by law and then by policy, from serving in any combat related positions. Fighting positions were considered the exclusive domain of men. But many women objected to their ascribed identity and fought for the opportunity to assume previously prohibited roles while others found ways to subvert their ascribed identity.

History shows that thousands of women have simply camouflaged their sex and served as men in order to fight (Goldstein, 2001, pp. 106–111). Perhaps the most comprehensive example of women rejecting their ascribed identity in the military and successfully seeking combat positions occurred in the Soviet Union during World War II. Young Soviet women besieged recruiting stations volunteering to fight and defend the

Motherland. Although it took them almost a year to lobby their way onto the front lines “more than 120,000 out of half a million women in the field army” served as direct combatants in the Soviet Army in World War II (Krylova, 2011, p. 10).

Women’s dissent may also have been motivated, not just by the desire to choose their individual identity, but by the desire to belong to the military’s primary social or core identity group. According to Maslow’s theory of human needs the need for group belonging is very strong and humans “will strive with great intensity to achieve this goal” (Maslow, 1973, p. 161). Women’s long-time exclusion from the US military’s core competency, the combat arms, created a two class culture that women are acutely aware of from the moment they enter the military. At West Point and throughout the Army there is an emphasis placed on combat specialties like Infantry, Rangers and Special Forces from which women were entirely excluded. A glance at any of the Army or Marine Corps recruiting websites reveals the importance and honor bestowed on the fighting specialties. These specialties represent the military prototype.

Unfortunately, while some servicewomen were struggling to choose their individual identity and be included in the core group, many men who belonged to the combat arms group believed that women’s inclusion violated the group’s boundaries and prototype. Social identity groups have clearly defined boundaries that exclude those who don’t fit the prototype. Additionally, these groups make themselves distinct by self-enhancing the traits and characteristics of their group. In the case of the combat specialties, one of the self-enhancing distinctions propagated by the group is that only men are appropriately suited to effectively perform in these roles (Serrano, 2014). In

Bring Me Men (2012) author Aaron Belkin details the construction of military masculinities by showing that they have historically rested on a contrasting or “differentiated other”, the differentiated other being the feminine (Belkin, 2012, pp. 25–31). Consequently, if everything feminine is the antithesis of the masculine military identity then how can the prototypical group possibly admit women?

Finally, because the combat arms are considered the core competency of the military the institutional identity is closely tied to this group. A short perusal of the Marine Corps’ official website (www.marines.com) reveals a very glossy, sophisticated website that is laden with pictures of men. In their mission statement the Marine Corps says that they are “the first to fight” and they are our nation’s “first line defense”. There is not a single picture on the website of a woman Marine and no obvious effort to recruit women. It is clear that the Marine Corps sees its mission as one of a fighting force that is composed exclusively of men. Women Marines make up just 7% of the Marine Corps and they serve in support roles. Adding women to the fighting ranks of the Marine Corps challenges the organization’s identity as an exclusively all male fighting force and has garnered organizational level resistance to the full inclusion of women. This resistance is evident in a series of articles that were clearly against allowing women to serve in the combat forces, published by the Marine Corps’ professional journal, the Marine Corps Gazette, even after the SECDEF announced that he was eliminating the combat exclusion policy (Petronio, 2013; Serrano, 2014).

Despite the seemingly immutable nature of identities, especially those with very clear boundary markers like the physiological differences that separate men and women

boundaries do shift and identities change (Tilly, 2005, p. 133). Mechanisms that precipitate boundary changes and allow for expanded identities include: *encounter*, *imposition*, *borrowing*, *conversation* and *incentive shift* (Tilly, 2005, p. 136). *Encounter* occurs when previously separate groups begin to inhabit the same social spaces. *Imposition* occurs when some authority figure redraws the boundary line. *Borrowing* occurs when groups adopt the characteristics of other groups making the distinctions between groups less obvious. *Conversation* occurs when information is routinely exchanged across groups bringing the groups closer together. *Incentive shift* occurs when incentives are offered to either keep the boundaries closed or to encourage cross boundary interaction. All of these boundary change mechanisms are occurring, to varying degrees, as the institution accepts women into previously closed occupations.

Respect and Recognition

While identity is important to understanding women's desire for inclusion as well as group and organizational resistance to their inclusion, respect and recognition may be the more potent and primary underlying factors driving the quest for inclusion. Maslow argued that, "All people...have a need or desire for a stable, firmly based, (usually) high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others" (Maslow, 1973, p. 162). Maslow called this category of needs "esteem" needs but subsequent scholars (Taylor, et al., 1994) have lumped esteem and respect into a broader category of needs called "recognition".

Recognition theory posits that recognition represents a "vital human need" that people will struggle to achieve and that "nonrecognition or misrecognition ... can be a

form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being” (Taylor et al., 1994, pp. 25-26). In their book *The Politics of Recognition*, the authors trace the evolution of identity and recognition to the dissolution of social hierarchies which were grounded in notions of honor but inherently rest on structures of inequality. For one group to hold status and have honor there had to be an inferior ‘other’. In past years, honor and recognition was derived via the individual’s social group, and often was an accident of birth and couldn’t be substantially changed. Recognition could also be achieved internal to one’s group but was always limited in degree by a person’s social category. However, as social hierarchies crumbled and notions of individual worth and dignity evolved, demands for recognition emerged from a wide range of actors.

Critical theory, broadly interpreted, is a theoretical body of literature that emerged in the 1920s that seeks to critically examine the subordination of groups. According to this body of literature domination occurs in many forms and the struggle to be free of domination is fundamentally “the struggle for recognition” (Honneth, 1996, p. 31). Applying a critical lens to understand the struggle for recognition requires an interdisciplinary approach that includes “psychological, cultural, and social dimensions, as well as institutional forms of domination” (Bohman, 2013, para. 3). Women’s demand for equal status within the institution may be fundamentally a claim for recognition.

According to Cast and Burke (2002), past analysis and subsequent research on self-esteem and recognition has divided along two dimensions: competence and worth. Competence has to do with how people evaluate their own capabilities and worth has to do with how others value or recognize them. Resulting research has focused on how

individuals develop and evaluate their competence and how others can impact one's own sense of self-worth.

For servicewomen, self-esteem needs were frustrated by their ascribed identity and an imbalance between competence and recognition. As Lilian Pfluke, a member of the first class of women graduates from West Point once explained, being a support officer was like playing on the junior varsity team where no matter how proficient she became at the game there would never be an opportunity to move up to the varsity. Despite being recognized as an outstanding ordnance officer she got fed up with her second class status and accepted an early retirement and left the Army after just 15 years. Pfluke's inability to change groups and earn the recognition that she believed her talents merited led to her early departure from the military. She would seek respect and recognition elsewhere.

The Needs Conundrum

Although needs have been sorted into categories and analyzed separately, the distinctions are neither clear-cut nor distinct. Identity affects both security and recognition. Our individual and group identity affords us security or, conversely, places us in an insecure location. When humans are born into an excluded, minority identity group, say black in the U.S. or female almost anywhere in the world, they automatically become less secure than dominant groups. Their ascribed identity affects their level of security on multiple levels. Identity also affects opportunities for recognition. Minority identities often have fewer opportunities to achieve recognition because their group has limited access to power and resources. Critical theorist Nancy Fraser (2000) argues that

recognition and identity are inherently linked in ways that makes analysis of one without the other impossible. The very nature of group formation, with resulting boundaries establishes both status and subordination and creates the conditions that beget recognition problems. Rather than depicting human needs as a hierarchy or even as separate silos of equal needs, perhaps the theory should be depicted more like a group of interlocking needs where identity is central to all other needs as is depicted in Figure 2, below.

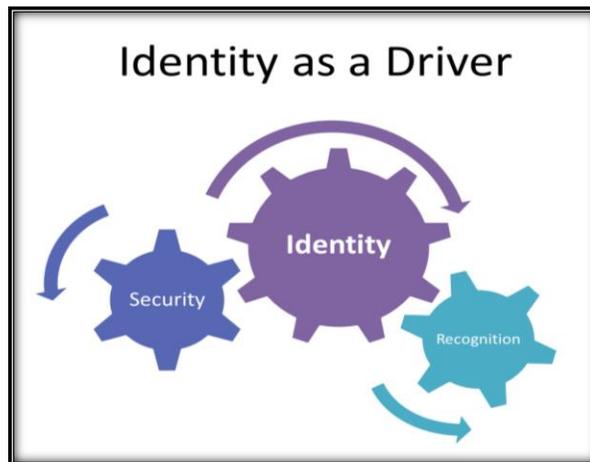


Figure 2: Identity as a Driver

However, it is possible that recognition is the driving force behind all other needs and that the need for recognition is so strong that humans will sacrifice security and even identity needs to obtain recognition. Certainly, minority groups who have struggled for recognition have frequently done so at the risk of their personal and family security. Others have sacrificed their own identity group in order to join identity groups that

receive recognition. The countless examples of women who disguised their identities as men to fight in all male fighting units attest to this fact.

For women in the military, opportunities for recognition were limited by ascribed identity roles. Challenging ascribed identity placed women at odds with the institutional identity and the dominant group identity; the combat arms branches. Challenging exclusionary policies put those who made the challenge at risk for being further excluded by possibly losing their jobs in the military. Interestingly, the law suits that both legal teams developed against the Department of Defense on behalf of the women were based on security needs despite the fact that none of the women was directly interested in security. Security encompasses physiological needs for food and shelter and is understood to include earnings and earning potential. Our lawsuits had to empirically show that women's security, as demonstrated by earning potential, was limited by this policy even though we made no demands for money or promotions in our lawsuits. Neither lawsuit was concerned with the potential, underlying needs for identity or recognition. Fortunately, recent studies that the Department of Defense conducted, through provisions included by Congress in the 2009 and 2011 National Defense Authorization Acts documented the reduced potential for promotions and related earnings for service women created by this policy (Lyles, 2011).

Ultimately, did servicewomen who challenged the ground combat exclusion policy seek to join combat forces because they wanted to fight? Or, was recognition the underlying reason that servicewomen sought to join the combat forces of the military? Finally, and perhaps most importantly, did struggles for recognition lead to unquestioning

conformism where servicewomen simply chose to conform to the dominant group's self-created and self-enhanced position of superiority in order to meet needs for full recognition? Certainly, the long history of honoring military service, especially those who fight, likely plays into the desire to join this group. These questions will be addressed and explored during interviews with women who challenged combat exclusion policies.

PART II RESISTANCE TO CHANGE (INDIVIDUAL, GROUP, ORGANIZATIONAL)

Our lawsuits and the resulting policy change forced the institution and its subordinate organizations to change their practices. As the institution and subordinate organizations change, varying degrees of resistance have been evident. Organizational change literature considers change to be both evolutionary and revolutionary. Since organizations exist in an open systems environment (i.e. they must interact with their external environment), they are constantly subjected to a variety of external pressures that require evolutionary change. All organizations adapt and change over time but most change is incremental. Those organizations that resist even incremental, evolutionary change tend to disappear. According to Burke (2014) 95% of all changes are evolutionary and this type of change produces only slight organizational resistance. This kind of change impacts fewer people and is seen as necessary to continue an organization's core mission. It often indicates growth when new capabilities are added. Occasionally it requires consolidation of activities and functions that require downsizing.

Our case is arguably one of revolutionary change caused by external demands and internal disruptions. Revolutionary change, often unplanned, can also benefit from good

change management but is fundamentally different from evolutionary change in the way that it affects the deep structure of the organization. While some see deep structure as anchored in an organization's culture (Burke, 2014, p. 74), others see an organization's identity as just as important, if not more so, to an organization, calling identity, "the moral core of organizations" (Whetten & Godfrey, 1998, p. 296). Revolutionary change is seen as an immediate threat to the deep structure of an organization and is likely to garner strong resistance from organization members.

According to change theorists, change and resistance to change occurs at multiple levels within an organization and can be analyzed according to those levels. Change will affect individuals, groups and sub-groups and ultimately ends at the large system level (Burke, 2014; Horton et al., 2014). This military policy change threatens people and the organizations at all levels and has garnered resistance across the institutional spectrum.

Individual Resistance

According to organizational change theorists, at the individual level, resistance to change manifests in a variety of ways and is motivated by a host of psychological processes. Ultimately, they assert that change is about loss or giving up what is comfortable and familiar while adopting and adapting to something new and unfamiliar. Organizational change practitioners liken it to the "five stages of grief or loss" (LaMarsh, 2010, p. 116). These stages include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. People work through the stages of change at different speeds. Some individuals may fight desperately to maintain the current condition while others are less resistant to change.

According to Burke (2014) this resistance comes in three possible forms: blind resistance, political resistance, and ideological resistance. Blind resistance comes from individuals who are simply uncomfortable with any level of change. Change requires learning new things, operating in new environments and potentially failing at new challenges. It usually is destabilizing. Political resistance comes from those who believe they stand to lose something in the change process. They fear their position, authority, and ultimately their identity might be diminished in some way. Ideological resistance is based on strongly held beliefs that the change is wrong for the organization because it is ill fated or not in line with the organization's principles.

According to psychologist Dodge Fernald (2008) individual identity processes are grounded in the study of humanistic psychology. Individuality and self-theories outline key principles further developed in identity theory (Fernald, 2008, p. 184). These theoretical frameworks offer insights into how identity becomes salient, how it affects behavior, and how it develops and changes over time. Conflict theorists have studied how individual identities affect conflict in a range of settings. According to Korostelina (2007) people hold multiple identities, but of those identities only a few, usually five or fewer, are actual identities and of those only one is salient; the most important identity to a person at a given time. Actual identities are interlocking, like woman/mother or father/provider. When members of an organization are faced with a change that threatens one of their actual identities they are likely to strongly resist change. Schein (2010) and others mention loss of personal identity as problematic but only as it relates to loss of power or ideological disagreements, not as it is defined by identity theorists. Individual

identity is based on self-meaning and associated structured social behavior, which may or may not be about power or ideology.

In the military, individual resistance to women in ground combat positions comes in all of the previously outlined forms but is not always clearly evident in the arguments advanced against including women. Blind resistance seems evident in some of the arguments that simply say that including women will force men to change their behavior. It is often advanced as the “band of brothers” argument and cloaked as an issue of cohesion. Captain Serrano, a Marine Corps officer, argues that men should be able to maintain a space where they can “fart, burp, tell raunchy jokes, walk around naked, swap sex stories, wrestle, and simply be young men together” (Serrano, 2014, pp. 38–39). Ultimately, according to this line of reasoning, if women were introduced into their unit’s men would have to change their behavior due to existing social norms of male/female interaction that frowns upon this kind of behavior in mixed gender groups. Men don’t want to have to change their behavior and be forced to operate according to another paradigm. Changing behavior and shifting relations creates uncertainty and anxiety for many people.

Individual resistance to changing identity roles is also motivated by a fear of loss of prestige accrued by men who serve in the combat arms. This type of resistance is even harder to reveal since men won’t come out and explicitly say they don’t want women to diminish their status by joining their ranks. But according to one military observer, men from the combat specialties feel superior as long as women are kept in what are considered inferior positions. Doing so allows them to maintain a position of “unearned

recognition” (Mariner, 1994, p. 56). Dr. Carol Cohn attempted to sort through some of men’s objections to women’s greater inclusion by interviewing more than 80 military officers. She found that objections were reducible to what she euphemistically called “the PT protest.” The PT protest represented men’s objection to different physical fitness standards allowed for women, a complaint that is not leveled against older men whose fitness standards are reduced as they age. She found that the standards argument was simply an acceptable way to say that women don’t belong because it was grounded in a “fairness” argument. However, Cohn determined that the standards protest is “a means of constructing and reinforcing gender difference, a way of asserting male superiority, a form of expressing anger about competition from women, and rage and grief about the loss of the military as a male sanctum” (Cohn, 2000, p. 147).

Ideological resistance is perhaps the easiest to identify because the arguments against women are based on military effectiveness and are more palatably voiced. This line of reasoning says that women don’t belong because their presence will be bad for fighting units. Specifically, the claim is that combat units’ capabilities rest on a vital unit cohesion that only exists in all male units. Retired Major General Robert Scales argues that “the precious and indefinable band of brothers effect so essential to winning in close combat would be irreparably compromised within mixed-gender infantry squads” (Scales, 2012, par. 7). Scales’ challenge rests on a belief that this change would negatively impact the organization’s ability to accomplish its mission.

Group Resistance

Group resistance manifests in many ways but in fundamental ways draws from the same objections illustrated by individual resistance. Group resistance includes: turf protection, closing ranks, changing allegiances and making demands for new leadership (Burke, 2014, pp. 120–121). Turf protection manifests as group behaviors that attempt to protect existing functions and practices. Closing ranks includes behavior that pulls group members into a close knit team that refuses to adopt and adapt to changing requirements. Changing allegiances includes engaging in strategies that realign one group with another less threatening group. Demanding new leadership is a form of revolt by members who refuse to accept change or disagree for ideological reasons.

Turf protection is evident in numerous instances in the combat branches. As soon as it appeared likely that women might be allowed to join the combat branches a number of barriers were erected to keep women out. The most obvious examples occurred in the Marine Corps. The Marines changed entrance standards to their infantry officer course in order to make it nearly impossible for women to gain entry. Specifically, they changed the Day 1 Combat Endurance Test, a test that male officers who didn't pass on day 1 could retake until they passed, to a test that women had to pass on the first day with no option to remediate or continue on with the training until they passed (Santangelo, 2014). Of the 29 women who attempted the course only four passed that screening test but they were all subsequently eliminated for various reasons later in the course. Some women have called attention to these structural barriers and it has forced the Marine Corps to adjust their practices.

An example of closing ranks to keep women out was evident shortly after the Secretary of Defense lifted the exclusionary policy. The Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Amos, said that the Marines wouldn't let enlisted women even attempt to join the infantry until there were "enough" women infantry officers in the ranks to make it "worth" it (Dao, 2013). But as the previous example shows, a structural barrier had been erected to keep women officers from completing their course. Interestingly, in an effort to protect the infantry from the incursion of women but concede some ground, the Commandant acknowledged that it might be possible to include women in most of the other combat branches. This is an example of changing allegiances. The Commandant was willing to sacrifice some of the combat specialties in order to preserve the sanctity of the most honored, the infantry.

Many Marines have objected to the Commandant's position on women in any combat units calling it too soft and accusing him of making politically motivated concessions. In the comments sections of many blogs some even called for his resignation. One article questioned his ability to lead the Marine Corps at all because he did not come from one of the ground combat branches (Bacon, 2014). This is an example of group resistance that demands new leadership in an effort to avoid expected organizational change.

Institutional and Organizational Resistance

A collection of similar organizations are often considered to be part of a larger institution. However, while the terms institution and organization are often used synonymously they are not the same and the distinction is important. Institutions are

enduring entities that become a “way of organizing relationships that is widely familiar and routinely practiced” and is “defined by the unwritten rules that everyone understands about some kind of organized behavior” (Lune, 2010, p. 2). Marriage is considered an “institution” because it is a widely followed, organized human behavior. Similarly, higher education is an institution of learning and the military is an institution of national defense. All of these institutions are comprised of many organizations. As time passes, values, beliefs, and practices become so ingrained that there is little question or challenge to the normative beliefs and behaviors upon which institutions and the organizations that comprise them rest. Terms like institutionalized and institutional memory capture the essence of rarely questioned normative beliefs and behaviors among community members. Institutions are long lasting, resilient and stable. While they are subject to change processes, change is typically incremental and often discontinuous (Scott, 2001, pp. 48–49). It is important to understand where an organization sits with regard to institutionalization because of their long term, deeply rooted cultures and identities that are highly resistant to change.

Organizations provide stable, routinized structures in which humans operate cooperatively. They are comprised of varying levels and degrees of human social systems that, ideally, work harmoniously toward common goals. As organizations are established, these social systems are structured according to the functional needs and requirements of the organization. According to systems theorists, systems are self-organized (we create them), hierarchical and very resilient (Meadows, 2008, p. 75). Overtime, these social systems develop a degree of homeostasis or equilibrium which makes them particularly

stable. Not only does the hierarchical nature of the structure, perhaps epitomized in the military, contribute to stability but multiple social-psychological factors also serve to stabilize organizations. At the organizational level, resistance is systemic. That is, the system inherently resists being altered.

The Department of Defense is an institution that is composed of multiple subordinate organizations. These subordinate organizations, the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marines are well established entities whose long lasting, hierarchical structures are perhaps prototypically stable making them highly resistant to change. Although the military sometimes claims it has been ahead of other organizations in terms of social inclusion, as evidenced by racial integration, the truth is that the military was forced to make those changes by political direction and oversight and not by its own progressive policies or its ability to seek and accommodate organizational change (Lyles, 2011, pp. 4–7).

PART III MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

As the military moves forward with the full integration of women, organizational change theory reveals not just likely sources of resistance but how to overcome resistance in implementing positive and effective change. Many theorists and practitioners have found that the more control and input individuals have in the change process the more likely they are to adopt and adapt to the changing environment (Burke, 2014; LaMarsh, 2010). While many have advocated for participative change processes that give individuals a greater sense of control, others have determined that specific conditions determine whether or not participative change is better or worse for achieving the desired

outcome than directive change. Directive change may be necessary in situations where external forces, like new laws or policies, require an organization to adopt new behaviors, resulting in individuals having less control over the impending change (Hersey, 1996, p. 392).

In *The Change Handbook*, the authors capture, catalog, sort, and organize more than 60 change management methods currently being used by organizational change practitioners. They note that while methods have typically been categorized as “hard” science based, or “soft” (social) science based the trend in the field is to use a combination of practices that draws from both ends of the spectrum (Holman, 2007, pp. xi–xii). Directive change appears to rely more heavily on hard science theories and approaches while participative change relies on soft science theories and approaches. The military services are using a mixed method approach that draws from both ends of the spectrum to implement this change.

John Kotter’s “8 Stage Change Process” (1996) is an organizational change model and is part of the curriculum at the Army’s two professional military schools, the Command and General Staff College, and the Army War College. This model lays out a step-by-step process for effecting large scale, systemic organizational change. The model begins with recommended actions for organization leaders including: establishing a sense of urgency, creating a guiding coalition, developing a vision and strategy, and communicating that strategy to the organization. Next, Kotter recommends empowering employees for action, highlighting early successes, and consolidating gains. Finally, Kotter notes that the process is not complete until it is anchored in the organization’s

culture (Kotter, 1996, p. Chap. 1). Since Kotter's Eight Stage Change Process is the military's model of choice for orchestrating organizational change it will be used to frame, examine, analyze and evaluate the military's effort to affect this large scale, mixed method approach to organizational change.

Step 1 Establishing a Sense of Urgency

According to Kotter (1996), in order to mobilize human capital and resources, organizational leadership must overcome not just active resistance but a multitude of sources that contribute to complacency and impede change efforts. Creating urgency and momentum for change requires bold or even risky action. When the senior leadership of the military announced its plan to allow women to serve in all previously closed specialties, they did so in such a way as to create a sense of urgency. First, the change was directive in nature. It said that the 1994 Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule "is rescinded effective immediately. Currently closed units and positions will be opened by each relevant Service, consistent with the guiding principles set forth in the attached memorandum" (Dempsey & Panetta, 2013, p. 1). Second, although the policy opened positions and units "immediately" the leadership gave the military Services three years to implement the change. Finally, they established planning and implementation milestones to ensure the Services met the targeted goal of full integration within three years. Those milestones included the submission of integration plans with required quarterly updates.

Step 2 Create a Guiding Coalition

Effective guiding coalitions must include people who have power, expertise, credibility and good leadership skills (Kotter, 1996, p. chap. 4). When the SECDEF and the Chairman announced their decision to rescind the policy they placed responsibility for implementing this change on the military Service Chiefs and they designated the personnel and readiness office within the staff of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) to oversee implementation (Dempsey & Panetta, 2013, p. 1). Unfortunately, their actions arguably violated some of the key principles for creating a good guiding coalition. First, at the OSD level, the overseeing organization is an administrative staff with no authority to direct the actions of the military departments. Second, the OSD staff office likely lacks credibility for understanding the nature of the integration challenges faced by the various Services which provide the operating forces for each of the organizations. Finally, they have little expertise in overseeing an integration effort of this magnitude (Women In International Security, 2013, pp. 2–3).

Despite the fact that the OSD staff may not be appropriately suited to being a guiding coalition, each of the military Service departments assumed responsibility for implementation within their own organizations. Each of the departments took differing approaches toward establishing an internal guiding coalition. Some created robust guiding coalitions while others engaged in ad hoc efforts that were subsequently modified. For example, the Army designated a specific command to take the lead on the integration effort while the Marine Corps doled out responsibility to numerous subordinate agencies and staffs. After a year, the Marine Corps found itself in the untenable position of having made little progress while one third of their timeline had

elapsed. They were forced to regroup and develop a new plan that included a clear guiding coalition. In March of 2014, Marine Corps Commandant General James Amos issued a White Letter refocusing the efforts and direction of the Marine Corps (Amos, 2014).

Step 3 Developing a Vision and a Strategy

Vision tells people where the organization needs to go and why it needs to go there and strategy provides a way to get there. The best visions and strategies include some degree of member participation to garner buy-in (Kotter, 1996, p. Chap. 5). In this case the military again had a mixed approach that failed to incorporate best practices. When the SECDEF made the announcement that he was rescinding the policy, he clearly told the Services where they needed to go with full integration but he failed to explain why it was in the best interest of the military to go there. However, he did give the Services a limited chance to affect the final outcome. He told them that if they found that there were areas of their organizations that could not be fully integrated then they could request an exception to policy. But, he cautioned them that any exception would have to be “narrowly tailored” and based on a “rigorous analysis of the factual data regarding the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the position” (Dempsey & Panetta, 2013, p. 2). Therefore, while this change was directive in nature it allowed for some degree of participatory decision making relative to the final outcome. Interestingly, the different Services have taken different approaches to this change depending upon how they interpreted the language of the SECDEFs guidance. As to strategy, he largely left that up

to the military Services. He provided some guiding principles as well as benchmarked dates, but how they reached the end state was up to them.

Step 4 Communicating the Change Vision

A “shared sense of a desirable future can help motivate and coordinate the kinds of actions that create transformations” (Kotter, 1996, p. Chap. 6). Insufficient communication and mixed messages lead to confusion about the desired future. On January 26, 2013, when the SECDEF and the Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) announced this policy change, they did so at a Pentagon news conference that lasted for 38 minutes and included a question and answer period. At that press conference the SECDEF said, “The time has come for our policies to recognize that reality and the Chairmen and the Joint Chiefs of Staff and I believe that we must open up service possibilities for women as fully as possible. (Full Press Briefing - Panetta, Dempsey on the Women in Service Implementation Plan, 2013). Throughout that briefing and in subsequent statements the military leadership used qualifying language like “as fully as possible” to create a less than clear vision.

The individual Services have variously interpreted this vision. The Marine Corps’ professional journal, *The Gazette*, has subsequently engaged in a very public debate about the merits of opening up any combat occupations to women. They published numerous articles challenging the efficacy of allowing women into their core specialty, the infantry. Most of the challenges argued that, for a myriad of reasons, it is not “possible” to open the infantry to women (Keenan, 2014; Petronio, 2013; Serrano, 2014). At the same time that the Marine Corps was debating if women should be allowed into

combat specialties the Army set about a deliberate effort to figure how women would be integrated (TRADOC, 2013). The different approaches reveal widely differing interpretations of what should have been a clearly communicated vision and strategy for accomplishing this organizational change.

Step 5 Empowering Employees for Broad Based Action

Removing barriers gives employees both the power and resources to effect change. Structural barriers, recalcitrant leaders, and lack of training are all potential barriers to change (Kotter, 1996, Chapter 7). In the military, many of these barriers have hindered the change process. One of the structural barriers lies in the joint nature of the military services. Today, all of the military Services cross support each other to varying degrees and all of the Services provide personnel to Special Operations Command. As the Services have moved forward they have found themselves blocked by slower moving Services. For example, the Army trains the Armor officers for both the Army and the Marine Corps. The Marines have said that because the Army hasn't opened up their armor school they can't conduct any research on women in armor specialties. Similarly, all of the Services say that until Special Operations Command begins accepting women, they can't open their elite specialties to women because women's assignment and promotion opportunities would be limited (Women in International Security, 2013, pp. 2–3).

Another barrier has been senior military leaders who have made public statements that erect barriers to full integration. Shortly after the policy was lifted, Marine Corps Commandant General Amos said that if there aren't enough women officers who are

interested or who qualify for the Marine Corps infantry then is isn't worth the effort to allow any of them to serve in the infantry (Watson, 2013, para. 12). The Commandant's remarks clearly indicate a lack of senior leader support for this change. However, over time the Commandant has changed his tone and his level of support for this change. His March 2014 White Letter was a marked change to earlier comments made to the press (Amos, 2014).

Throughout 2014 the Marine Corps made a concerted effort to overcome organizational resistance and barriers by holding a series of "town hall" style meetings at units and installations throughout the world to address concerns held by Marines. They made these events open to all Marines and to the public. They emphasized that existing standards would be held firm and that only women who meet existing standards will be allowed to join combat units. These town hall meetings were designed to reassure Marines that not only will standards not change but that units will not be negatively impacted by the introduction of women. The meetings were conducted by senior Marine men who are themselves infantry officers (Haring, 2014). These examples illustrate recent efforts to address recalcitrant leaders and the rank and file by addressing their concerns.

Step 6 Generating Short Term Wins

As an organization begins to change, it is important that members see and understand how the change is benefiting the organization. If short term successes aren't highlighted then skeptics will begin to challenge the efficacy of the change (Kotter, 1996, Chapter 8). As the military has moved forward with this organizational change they have

highlighted and celebrated some early successes. Both the Army and the Marine Corps have allowed women from historically open specialties like communications, logistics and intelligence to serve in previously closed combat units. Both Services have noted that the women have been well received in the newly opened units. Also, when the first enlisted women graduated from infantry training during a trial the Marine Corps celebrated their success by allowing the media to cover their training and to publish what has come to be called an “iconic photo” of the young women (Sanborn, 2013).

However, others have noted that some of the early statements designed to celebrate this change within the military have been less successful. One observer points out that the military has made a number of statements to sell this change as one that will not “harm” the identity of the combat arms community. But this focus on the negative ignores lessons provided by the appreciative inquiry community that tell us to envision a better future state. Dr. Robert Egnell notes, “The issue of women in combat should not be approached through the lens of damage control, but rather with an emphasis on maximizing the effectiveness of military organizations in the contemporary strategic context” (Egnell, 2013, p. 41). His observation also highlights a failure in the vision from stages 3 and 4 which said that a vision should clearly articulate why this change is good for the organization.

Step 7 Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change

Resistance to change is “always waiting to reassert itself” (Kotter, 1996, p. X).

Hardcore resisters continue to look for opportunities to undermine the change process and short term gains are not enough to transform the entire system. The interdependent

nature of complex social systems means that change must be widespread across all systems before long-term change and transformation is realized. While the military is in the early stages of this change process they have already identified mid and long term challenges to fully realizing this change. For example, in order to accommodate women in the Navy, many ships must be modified to provide separate berthing for men and women. Although the Navy has redesigned future ships, some of their older ships were deemed prohibitively expensive for retrofitting. The Navy decided that they will let some of the older ships be decommissioned over time rather than modified to accommodate women (Klimas, 2013). While this seems like it makes financial sense, it is possible that the continued existence of male only ships will provide pockets of resistance to the overall transformation effort. Additionally, if any of the Services is granted an exception to policy that keeps any units or specialties closed it will undermine the entire transformation effort.

Step 8 Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture

Culture is arguably “the most difficult element to change in an organization” (Sarris & Kirby, 2013, p. 335). Kotter (1996) agrees, noting that not only is culture hard to change but that it should be the last area of focus of any organizational change effort. He asserts that “culture changes only after you have successfully altered peoples actions, after the new behavior produces some group benefit for a period of time” (p. 156). Kotter’s rule of thumb is that any organizational change plan that sets out to change culture as a first step is doomed to failure from the start. Regardless of how hard or when culture is tackled, it is clear that culture develops slowly, over time, and is hard to see and

understand even, and perhaps most particularly, for those who are imbedded within the culture. Some aspects of culture are visible while others are hidden deeply within the subconscious of the organization. Most definitions of organizational culture make reference to an organization's shared values, norms, rituals, stories and expectations (Burke, 2014; Schein, 2010). Culture is sometimes referred to as the software that invisibly guides all aspects of an organization's functioning.

Certainly the US military stands as an example of an institution comprised of organizations steeped in tradition with an enduring culture that rests on centuries of "the universal gendering of war" (Goldstein, 2001, p. 10) where women have rarely served as combatants. For this change to take root in the military it will require a sustained effort on the part of leaders and change activists to highlight improved capabilities, and cement new beliefs and new normative behavior in the organizations. It will likely take decades to realize full integration.

CONCLUSION

"(I)identity based conflicts are only set to increase, as the multiplicity and complexity of workplace environments and roles intensify..."(Horton et al., 2014, p. 6). In many organizations multiple, nested and potentially competing identities coexist. These identities are rooted at the individual level, cross into subgroups and traverse the organizational level. Competing identities develop when sub groups make "divergent identity claims" within an organization and they must be negotiated in order for organizations to function effectively (Horton et al., 2014, p. 10). However, organizational change literature does little to address this kind of tension. Recent efforts

that include participative change methods may allow elements of identity to emerge and be addressed, but they don't directly tackle identity as a primary organizational dynamic. In a survey of over 60 organizational change methods only one, Holman's (2007) Integrated Clarity framework, starts by examining identity and its implications for organizational change. Certainly, the military's change model of choice does not call out identity as a starting point nor does it explicitly examine identity in any of the eight steps.

In the military there is a clear divide between the ground combat occupation based identities, and service and support based identities, despite the fact that all servicemembers are considered Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen or Marines. Ultimately, a range of conditions and people drive change, and in the change process normative internal behaviors are disrupted and adaptation occurs. As adaptation occurs, organizational cultures evolve and reconstructed identities will emerge. How long that takes is dependent upon the change methods that the military employs. Women's acceptance into the service and support based occupations has been slow but steady, although even today women comprise less than 20% of the military. If the military ultimately opens all combat positions to women, the path to changing the culture and adapting individual, group and organizational identities within this sub-community is likely to be even slower given the broader socio-cultural notions of gendered identities.

CHAPTER 3: RESEACH DESIGN

INTRODUCTION

This study utilizes a single, in-depth case study, research design format. A case study is the examination of a specific example of a “class of events”(George, 2005; King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994). It is a qualitative research method that allows for “cumulative and progressive generalizations about social life and seeks to develop and apply clear standards for judging whether some generalizations fit the social world better than others” (George, 2005, p. 19). As such, this case study will use explanations that have been advanced for why individuals and groups, in this case a specific group of servicewomen, dissented and challenged existing norms and policies. Basic Human Needs theory will be used to analyze both the dissent and the resistance to the impending change brought about by the dissent. Minimally, the case will be analyzed using two theoretical approaches: social identity theory and recognition theory. It is quite possible other explanations will emerge from the data. If the hypothesized reasons for the dissent and resistance to change prove true, then the case has implications for other theoretical approaches such as organizational change theory and its corresponding techniques and methods.

This case is an instance of a discrete example of servicewomen’s report of a struggle for full inclusion in the U.S. Armed Forces. It falls, as a specific case, within a larger group of events that includes the integration of African American, Japanese

American and sexual minorities into U.S. military units. Although this case falls within a group of similar events, it is different from the others in one significant way. Namely, when racial, ethnic and sexual minority men were integrated they were integrated into all units simultaneously. They were never barred from some types of units the way women were barred from fighting units. Men from minority groups were segregated into their own units or not allowed to reveal their sexual orientation until they were admitted as a group, and then they were admitted to all units and occupations. As men, they were never assumed to be incapable of performing some duties.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM & RESEARCH GOALS

Although there is speculation about why some servicewomen pressed for full inclusion, there have been no definitive studies that have actually asked the servicewomen to articulate their reasons for seeking full inclusion, particularly as related to inclusion in fighting units. The literature review chapter offers some possible theory based explanations that are grounded in two key elements of basic human needs theory: identity and recognition. While social identity theory helps clarify some aspects of this conflict it doesn't fully explain why servicewomen—who had long been accepted within many of the institution's organizations—were excluded from specific sections even after they had demonstrated their desire and ability to serve in prohibited occupations. The same theory may explain why those who were in the combat fighting units wanted to keep women out. Can the same theory be used to understand the desire for inclusion and for exclusion? Perhaps the better explanation is that these servicewomen only sought access to combat fighting units as a means to reach full status and achieve recognition

within the military. Group inclusion was just a means or an access point to gain recognition.

If identity and recognition needs are the basis of this conflict, and are what has driven this change in the military, then what does it tell us about organizational change theory? Very little in organizational change theory mentions identity or recognition. Instead, much work has focused on processes for change that tackle communications, leadership and occasionally culture rather than methods that engage group identity and fulfill needs for recognition. If identity and recognition are at the heart of this conflict, then it is likely that organizational change literature, theory and practice need to be adapted to accommodate this dynamic.

Conflict scholars argue that a thwarting of basic human needs will lead to struggle and conflict (Burton, 1997; Cast & Burke, 2002; Korostelina, 2007; Coate & Rosati, 1988). Therefore, this study will examine the validity of some of those theories using this case. It has five specific goals:

Goal 1: Analyze servicewomen's motivation for seeking access to fighting occupations and units using social identity theory.

Goal 2: Analyze the perspective of those who oppose the inclusion of women in fighting occupations and units using social identity theory.

Goal 3: Analyze servicewomen's motivation for seeking access to fighting occupations and units using recognition theory.

Goal 4: Look for alternative explanations for why some servicewomen sought access to fighting occupations and units.

Goal 5: Look for alternative explanations for why some servicemembers resisted the full inclusion of women in fighting occupations and units.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Two primary questions underpin this research.

Question 1: What reasons do servicewomen give for seeking inclusion in the ground fighting occupations and units of the U.S. military?

Question 2: What reasons for opposing the full inclusion of servicewomen in ground combat occupations and units are given by members of the military who do so?

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses an explaining outcomes process tracing design composed of qualitative research methods. Process tracing is a social science tool that provides a methodology for showing how a “causal chain and causal mechanisms” link to outcomes (Beach & Pedersen, 2013, p. 1). According to Beach and Pedersen (2013) process tracing is particularly suited to single case studies as it allows for “within case inferences”. The explaining outcomes process tracing models depicted in Figures 1 and 2, below, are derived from a model used by Beach and Pedersen (2013) in *Process-Tracing Methods: Foundations and Guidelines*.

According to the model, theory underpins our understanding of causal mechanisms. Causal mechanisms fall into two categories: probabilistic and deterministic. In a small “N” study like this case study, deterministic causality is required. Deterministic causality means that, “if properly specified, a deterministic model should explain 100 percent of the variance of a given dependent variable” (Beach & Pedersen,

2013, p. 27). In Figure 1, some servicewomen's demand for access to combat jobs, X, was an empirical manifestation of their need for recognition and was necessary to achieve outcome Y. A series of events, including slipping into combat units in support positions, event a, and outright suing the Department of Defense, event b, for access to combat units, led to the empirical outcome which was new policy Y. At the same time that these servicewomen were seeking greater avenues to recognition, group and institutional resistance, event c, slowed their efforts. However, X was an absolutely necessary condition for outcome Y.

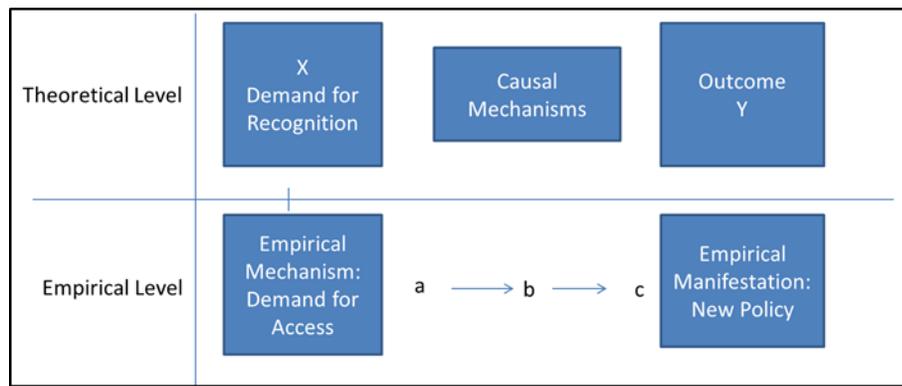


Figure 3: Theory Centric Process Tracing

Causal mechanisms manifest as observable behavior and can therefore be identified, collected and studied. Collected observable behavior becomes evidence that links theory to outcomes. Figure II, depicts how this research is operationalized for data collection and analysis purposes. In step 3, evidence is collected via interviews, discussion groups and through written narrative analysis.

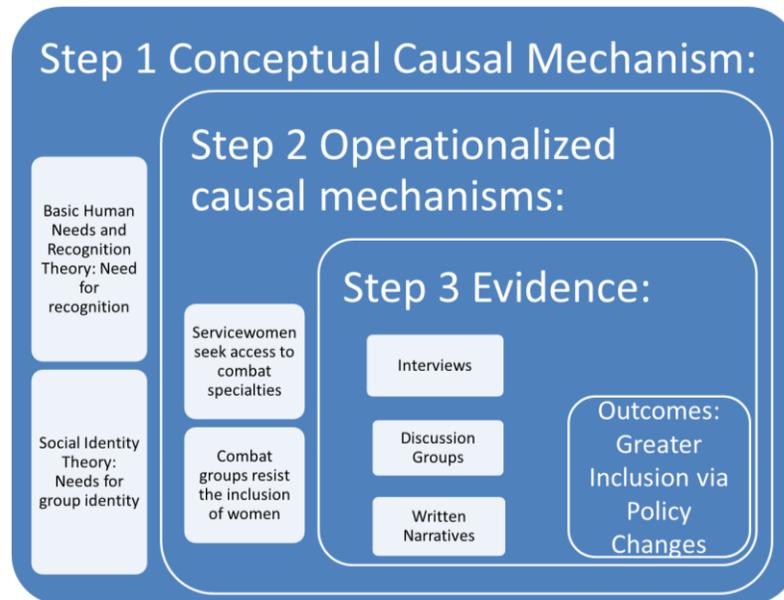


Figure 4: Within Case Evidence Collection

First, interviews were conducted with two primary research groups: the five plaintiffs from the two lawsuits and servicewomen who actively sought out and served in combat positions. Interviewees were all current or former servicewomen whose ages ranged from 25-44. Most women were between the ages of 25-35. The officers were in the ranks of first lieutenant to major. There were two warrant officers. All of the enlisted women were in the rank of E5, sergeant to E7, sergeant first class with the exception of one E9, a Command Sergeant Major who was one of the plaintiffs. None of the women were junior, entry level servicewomen. All of them had served for at least four years and two of them had served for more than 20 years. Participant observation of multiple

formal discussion groups was used to parse out dominant narratives and counter narratives relative to the full inclusion of women.

Second, a critical discourse analysis of articles and reader comments was used to identify the stated reasons of those who resisted the full inclusion of servicewomen. Although the population demographics of this group cannot be definitely determined the site where the data was collected is one where military writers publish their articles appears to attract a military readership. Commenters at this site often cite their own military background and experience when they provide comments.

INTERVIEWS/FOCUS GROUP RESEARCH

Servicewomen who engaged in combat operations in violation of existing policies were interviewed to determine why they pursued such jobs. This group also participated in a series of focus group discussion over a two day research conference. Plaintiffs from the two lawsuits that challenged the combat exclusion policy were interviewed to determine why they not only challenged the policy but were willing to go to the extreme measure of suing the institution that they served to change the policy. This data collection targeted a very specific group: those servicewomen who were highly motivated to see the ban lifted. This group provided an answer to research Question #1: What reasons do servicewomen give for seeking inclusion in the ground fighting occupations and units of the U.S. military? Questions for this group focused on understanding the values, beliefs and motivations of this target group. A list of interviewees is available at Appendix C.

PARTICIPANT/FOCUS GROUP ANALYSIS

The majority of the interviews were conducted during a two day conference during which participants also engaged in 7 recorded focus group discussions. See Appendix A for research conference agenda. The titles of the focus group discussions were: 1) Dispelling Myths, 2) Gaining Acceptance/Resilience and Coping, 3) Selection, Training, and Assignment, 4) Preparing Units and Leadership, 5) Integrating Combat Teams and Units, 6) Returning Home, and 7) Telling War Stories. Each focus group discussion was designed to examine different aspects of the reported experiences of the women who served in combat. Some discussions, like Dispelling Myths and Gaining Acceptance were designed to elicit what the servicewomen believed were objections to their assignment to combat units.

Both the interviews and the focus group discussions were analyzed using thematic narrative analysis techniques. Specifically, they were analyzed for content or “what” the interviewee said, “rather than ‘how,’ ‘to whom,’ or ‘for what purposes’ the narrative occurred (Riessman, 2007, p. 54). As with all narrative analysis, the type of unit of analysis, either individual words or general themes are tricky to capture and then to assign meaning. However, methods for analysis and coding are offered in *What is Narrative Research?* (2014) and were followed in this research project. Specifically, the spoken narrative was analyzed for content specific words and stories that followed a theme. In many instances themes emerged in response to the same questions. As *narrative themes* emerged they were further analyzed for meaning (Squire et al., 2014, pp. 8–10).

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

When people write or speak, their “discourse” provides overt as well as subtle clues to underlying values and beliefs. In the Spring of 2013 I began to write and publish in support of servicewomen’s full integration. Many of my journal articles, newspaper articles and blog posts were met with vitriolic hostility and anger. Other people have similarly written articles and blogs in opposition to servicewomen’s full integration into the combat specialties. Articles in opposition to women’s full inclusion did not appear to garner the same degree or level of heated response as those that supported full integration. I gathered a series of articles and their associated comments to conduct a critical discourse analysis of the content provided in the articles and the comments provided by readers. This data collection targeted a specific group: writers and readers of a military blog who have a military background or who work closely with the military. This group provided an answer to research Question #2: What reasons for opposing the full inclusion of servicewomen in ground combat occupations and units are given by members of the military who do so? A list of articles, authors, dates published and the number of comments garnered by each article is listed at Table 1.

I chose to use articles from a blog with their attendant comments rather than conduct interviews because they provided a rich source of existing, or “naturally occurring data” (Taylor, 2013, p. 60). I feared that conducting interviews would not yield the same candid responses that appeared in the comments section of blog posts. Furthermore, the vast majority of comments in the blogs appeared to oppose women

serving in combat units and I was seeking answers to research question number 2. I used critical discourse analysis methods to analyze this data.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary form of data analysis that is an outgrowth of Critical Theory. CDA is used to analyze social relations by acknowledging the multi-layered relationship that exists between people and between society and the institutions that they create (Fairclough, 2010, p. 3) According to critical discourse theory, language is organized as “systems or aggregates of meaning” that develop over time and “‘hang together’ by association rather than logical links” (Taylor, 2013, p.9). These aggregates of meaning are taken for granted and perpetuated through the “authority of experts who can ascribe such categories as linked to a justification” and they are supported by “the traditions and institutions which provide the ‘knowledge’ underpinning the justification and the power structures and institutions through which they are administered” (Taylor, 2013, pp. 9). These aggregates of meaning fall into two principle categories: truth and power, and, culture and identity. Notions of truth, truth telling or truth claims are socially constructed and perpetuated by those who hold positions of authority and power (Taylor, 2013, p. 20). Culture is composed of a series of “common sense” precepts that are rarely questioned and generally believed to rest on scientific evidence. Ascribed and assumed identities put individuals in groups of more or less power in terms of who knows and who speaks the truth (Taylor, 2013, p. 21).

To apply a critical discourse lens to the content of comments the comments were coded according to the following rubric.

1. Comments that primarily challenged or supported the accuracy of the article were coded as “truth” comments.

2. Comments that challenged or supported the authority of the author were coded as “power” comments and are marked in red. Included in this category were comments where the writer used his/her personal experience as the grounds for his/her authority to speak on the subject.

3. Comments that relied on notions of “human nature” and “common sense” and “the way things are” were coded in the “culture” category.

4. Comments that noted exclusivity of the group and supported socially constructed gender distinctions were coded in the “identity” category.

In addition to conducting a critical discourse analysis using the above coding rubric the data underwent a simple word count analysis using Microsoft Word’s software. This was run to determine if individual words that were being used repeatedly yielded a different pattern of response from those identified during the critical discourse analysis process.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL APPROACH TO DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data was further analyzed and interpreted using a constructivist framework. Constructivism is a scientific theory first advanced by Piaget that contends that “by and large human knowledge, and the criteria and methods we use in our inquiries, are all *constructed*” (Phillips, 1995, p. 5). More specifically, all human knowledge is based on socially constructed precepts rather than on any innate or scientifically provable genetic basis. Using a constructivist framework means that data analysis and interpretation is

based on acknowledging and parsing out the socially constructed values, beliefs and behaviors that shaped the perspectives of the men and the women who engaged in this conflict.

VALIDITY AND OBJECTIVITY

There are a number of advantages as well as limitations to using a mixed methods single case study format. One of the major disadvantages is that scientists and others see a single case study, a small “N” study, as being less legitimate or valid than large “N” studies (George, 2005). Findings are often dismissed or believed to be of limited scientific value because they are very specific to a single episode or event. However, the flip side is that a case study of this type allows for much greater depth of research and analysis with potentially unexpected findings. A means to mitigate some of the criticism associated with small N studies is by using several different evidence collection efforts to answer the primary research questions which is why this in research utilizes three different, and discreet, types of data collection and analysis methods (Leavy, 2011, p. 60).

Another challenge to social science evidence analysis is in figuring out how to design questions that accurately predict elusive concepts included within basic human needs theory. Needs for identity and recognition are rarely understood by the study subject. Therefore, getting individuals to state that they were motivated by needs for identity or recognition is unlikely. Consequently, the researcher must develop processes or mechanisms for identifying what is considered a response that correlates to needs for

identity or recognition. Finally, coding and interpreting the data in ways that show either causation or correlation is difficult and may leave the findings open to criticism.

A final but significant limitation is the objectivity of the researcher. As a plaintiff in the case against the combat exclusion policy, I am certainly not an unbiased researcher. However, this can be both negative and positive since “the human factor is the great strength and the fundamental weakness of qualitative inquiry and analysis” (Rajendran, 2001, p. 3). In this case my in-depth knowledge and personal connection to the case gives me insights and access to case study subjects that more neutral observers likely would not have. It also made it more likely that respondents, the plaintiff in particular, would candidly answer the interview questions since they knew they were speaking with a sympathetic interviewer. However, it also likely blinds me to perspectives that are fundamentally different from my own. But according to numerous researchers (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2008; Gorard, 2013; King et al., 1994; Rajendran, 2001) not only is bias common and expected, there are ways to mitigate its effects and still produce good research.

According to Gorard (2013) the research design is fundamental to controlling for bias. He specifically suggests that involving “people with no vested interest in the outcome can help protect against the researcher effect” (Gorard, 2013, p. 165). In my case study I joined efforts with a Canadian research scientist, Dr. Megan MacKenzie, who is the lead researcher on an Australian Research Council funded comparative project that is examining the decision to remove combat exclusion policies in the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Both Dr. MacKenzie and I conducted interviews with the

research subjects. We also enlisted the support of the historians from the Army Women's Museum at Fort Lee, Virginia. We anticipated more than 30 participants would attend our research conference and we knew we wouldn't be able to interview that many subjects while simultaneously running focus group discussions. Three research historians used the interview questions that we developed (see Appendix B) to conduct the bulk of the interviews. Additionally, we were able to get the support of an Army Combat Camera Company to film the interviews since the final interviews will be archived at the Army Women's Museum as oral histories.

Using outside interviewers reduced the possibility that I personally swayed the answers of the research participants. Additionally, although the focus of our research efforts is different, the interaction with Dr. MacKenzie led to interview questions for group 1 that are broader, but likely just as important to the topic being studied. Dr. MacKenzie has also shared prepublication research on sources of resistance to full inclusion that I was able to review that might support or challenge my findings.

Decisions about writing style, including voice and tense, have to be negotiated in ways that do not taint the relevance of the findings. Providing an introduction in the first person alerts the reader to my bias but can be successfully addressed by the way evidence and findings are presented. Furthermore, a very complete and transparent rendering of raw data (Rajendran, 2001) and a thorough explanation of how the data was coded and analyzed is a means of obtaining a critical review of the research findings. Finally, evidence must be examined and presented in multiple forms. For example, while it is a fact that at the beginning of this research project 95% of military occupational specialties

were open to women it is also a fact that the 5% of closed specialties made up 17% of closed Army positions, 26% of Marine Corps positions and 34% of Special Operations positions. The way data are presented can prejudice both the analysis and the findings if it is not critically examined and carefully parsed for potential bias. Presenting both sides in a factual manner and then explaining the process by which one arrived at the conclusions is vital to scholarly research and is not impossible even with acknowledged bias.

CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the research methods that were utilized for this study. The next chapter presents a detailed explanation for how the data was collected, analyzed and it presents a summary of the analyzed data. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the findings and the implications for the fields of conflict analysis and resolution and organizational change theory.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the results and the analysis of the data that was gathered to examine the both sides of this conflict. Part I presents the data from the interviews and focus group discussions with servicewomen who actively challenged combat restrictions. Part II presents the results and the data from the online blog analysis of those who opposed opening combat positions to women.

PART I SEEKING COMBAT JOBS: THEMATIC NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

The first question this research project seeks to answer is; what reasons do women who sought inclusion in the ground fighting occupations and units of the U.S. military give for doing so despite longstanding policy prohibiting it? To answer this question I interviewed or had other interviewers conduct interviews with 27 servicewomen. In addition to individual interviews I conducted focus group discussions with two groups of servicewomen. The first group included women who had volunteered to serve on Army Ranger teams and Special Forces teams in direct combat and in violation of the existing combat exclusion policy. The second group was composed of the women who were plaintiffs in the two lawsuits, filed in 2012, against the Secretary of Defense over the combat exclusion policy. Both groups of servicewomen had challenged the existing policy in implicit and explicit ways. Both groups had deployed to combat zones and had engaged, to varying degrees, in combat operations. Nearly all had received combat

related awards, including combat action badges, purple hearts, and awards with valor designators including one Distinguished Flying Cross.

All interviews and focus group discussions were conducted orally and recoded either using video or audio methods. Narrative analysis research methods were utilized to examine the responses of both groups of servicewomen. These research methods include analyzing aspects of narrative structure, narrative content and narrative context (Squire et al., 2014). This research project employs methods of narrative content analysis within a narrative context. Narrative content focusses on identifying themes or meanings that may occur within a single narrative. When themes develop across narratives thematic narrative analysis is used to examine broader phenomena. Narrative context simply situates the meaning within the broader social and cultural context.

Both groups of women were asked a series of questions related to their deployments and why they sought jobs on the front lines. The second group of women was asked additional questions about why they had gone beyond simply seeking out combat related jobs to become plaintiffs in the lawsuits. The questions were directly related to deployment experiences, with specific questions that targeted motivation for seeking combat positions. For example, all interviewees were asked if they had engaged in combat operations and if so; how they had become involved in combat operations, if they had actively sought out ground combat opportunities and, why they had sought out those opportunities. They were also asked a range of questions about their deployments and if they viewed themselves as combatants. General questions about their deployments were designed to elicit information about culture, identity, inclusion, respect and

recognition that may or may not have influenced their interest or desire to serve in combat units. Interviewees were also asked if they would have selected a combat specialty if those specialties had been open to them when they joined the military and if they wanted to move to a combat specialty if those occupations became available to them in the future. (See appendix B, interview questions.)

Group 1: Cultural Support Team Members

The first study group was comprised of women who had answered a Department of Defense recruiting call looking for servicewomen to volunteer for deployment with special operations forces in Afghanistan in a program named Cultural Support Teams (CSTs). According to the recruiting battalion website, cultural support teams are small teams of female soldiers whose “primary task is to engage the female populations in an objective area when such contact may be deemed culturally inappropriate if performed by a male servicemember (“SORB MISO Home,” par 1, 2015).” Volunteers were told they would “work with special-operations forces performing missions such as medical outreach programs, civil-military operations, key leader engagements, and searches and seizures (“SORB MISO Home,” par 4, 2015).” Assessment, training and selection occurred at Fort Bragg, N.C. and was followed by an 8 month deployment to Afghanistan where the women were assigned to support one of two types of missions: some women were assigned to Special Forces teams performing Village Stability Operations while others were assigned to Ranger teams supporting Direct Action missions.

Six women were interviewed at a conference on April 27, 2015 during a book launch of Gayle Lemon’s book, *Ashley’s War: The Untold Story of a Team of Women*

Soldiers on the Special Ops Battlefield. In addition, nineteen interviews and 6 focus group discussions were conducted over two days during a research conference called, “Women in Combat: Learning from Cultural Support Teams” which occurred July 12-13, 2015 (see conference agenda and interview schedule at appendix A). The women were invited to both events via a snowball email that went to some women who had served on CSTs and via a Facebook posting at a CST closed site. A formal attempt was made to get approval and support from the Department of Defense via a research grant and official approval from Special Operations Command, the command under which the women had served when they were assigned to the CST program. This support and approval for the women to attend the conference would allow them to attend at no cost to themselves and it would have given them approval to talk about their experiences. Although official approval was initially provided it was revoked two days before the conference. Several women from US Army Special Operations Command at Ft. Bragg, NC who were scheduled to attend were no shows. However, twenty-two women from other units, units not under Special Operations Command, did attend and most came on military funded orders.⁵

Despite the revocation of official support participants candidly answered a series of questions that directly speaks to this research. First, participants were asked about their combat experience. This question was asked to determine if the women had actually engaged in combat during their assignment. Then the women were asked if they

⁵ Four interviews from this group are available for viewing online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7eq9KuwFYwk&list=PLWJFfPR3XFACqp3GrFd_a1cc3xDUSp0ut&index=3

had sought out combat related assignments, and if so, why they had sought out these kinds of assignments. If they had engaged in combat they were asked if they identified as combat soldiers. They were also asked to generally describe their experiences while assigned to the all-male teams, with specific questions about gaining acceptance, team cohesion and reintegration. Finally, they were given an opportunity to describe high points and low points in their combat deployment.

Of the 22 total CST members interviewed at the two events all but one said that she was involved in direct ground combat. When asked what direct ground combat meant, the women identified being involved in fire fights, being targeted by enemy munitions including mortars and rockets and/or experiencing some form of explosion from improvised explosive devices. Many participants had experienced all of these forms of violent interaction at various times during their deployments. Captain Victoria Salas said, “I was engaged in troops in contact. I got hit by a VBIED (vehicle borne improvised explosive device). I shot my weapon. So yeah, I think I was in combat.” All participants carried and were proficient on personal and crew served weapons systems. Sergeant Janiece Marquez said that she served as her team’s primary gunner during the last three months of her deployment.

Interviewees were then asked if they had sought out combat jobs. Fifteen women definitively said “yes”, that they had sought out this assignment because it was a ground combat assignment. The seven women who were not clearly seeking out ground combat positions provided a range of answers. Several of them said that they had been excited by the opportunity to do this particular job. They repeatedly cited the opportunity to

work with special operations forces, as it was outlined on the recruiting website. When Lieutenant Beth Carrier was asked if she had been looking for combat jobs she said, “At first no, but when I heard about this program I was in.” Other women like Lieutenant Manuela Belser said, “No, it was more of a coincidence. I wasn't fully aware of what I was getting myself into.” Captain Annie Kleiman, an Air force officer, said that she wasn't seeking combat per se but that she knew it was likely with this assignment. She said that she experienced a “weird kind of cognitive dissonance” in wanting to work with these teams but not thinking of it as a combat assignment. Even women like Captain Kleiman, who had not been actively seeking out a ground combat assignment, acknowledged the strong likelihood of being involved in ground combat when they volunteered for this assignment.

Although 21 participants said that they had engaged in ground combat and 15 of them said that they had been actively seeking ground combat assignments, they provided an assortment of nuanced answers to the question “Do you identify as a combat soldier?” Many were hesitant to say “yes” even if they had received a combat action badge or higher award. Combat action badges are awarded to soldiers who satisfactorily engage, or are engaged, by enemy combatants in a designated conflict zone (Military Awards, 2015, p. 101). There was a sense that they didn't deserve or hadn't earned the right to call themselves combat soldiers. When asked if she identified as a combat soldier, Captain Kleiman said, “I don't like to say that but I've been in TICs (troops in contact) and I have a combat action badge. There is always somebody who's been in more combat.” Lieutenant Chris Trembley said, “Well, this wasn't my first deployment. Yes, I am a

combat veteran but other people experienced more combat and it was their direct mission to engage in combat.” Captain Amanda Tamosuins seemed to make a distinction between her deployed identity and her current military identity stating, “then yes, now no” as if combat soldier is a fleeting identity and not one that she claimed after this assignment. Male soldiers who come from non-combat specialties and have been in combat may similarly be reluctant to claim this identity. However, it didn’t appear that these women thought this to be the case. Some defiantly claimed the identity of combat soldier while simultaneously acknowledging that it might be an identity that they would be challenged on. Chief Warrant Officer Raquel Patrick who had deployed to conflict zones 5 times said, “Yes, I would. I would challenge anyone to tell me not.” Another woman said, “Yes, just to the extent that I have that experience. I have those skill sets now that I can use and employ if necessary.”

Participants were subsequently asked why they had sought out combat jobs. The seven women who did not identify as specifically seeking combat jobs provided responses that were similar to the women who said that they had sought out ground combat opportunities. Two sergeants simply said that this was the kind of work that they had always wanted to do. Sergeant Janiece Marquez said that when she went to the recruiter to enlist in the Army she had tried to enlist in the infantry and had been surprised that it was closed to women. She said, “It was the kind of work I wanted to do.”

For all of the women, one consistent theme was that they were seeking a challenge that was outside of their traditional jobs. The words challenge, challenging and

opportunity, often accompanied by superlatives like amazing, exciting and awesome were evident in nearly every response. Captain Perry Foster said, “It sounded challenging.” Sergeant First Class Mary Mathews said, “For the excitement, for the challenge.” Lieutenant Manuela Belser said, “I was looking for a higher challenge.” Captain Samantha Nicol said, “It was too good to be true. The opportunity to serve with high caliber individuals was different and unique and I wanted to challenge myself. You want to test your mettle and serve.”

Another consistent theme was the notion that they would be joining an elite group, performing highly valued missions. Special operations forces are considered to be the most elite forces within the U.S. military. Even the title, which includes “special”, indicates a unique status. Many interviewees indicated that they wanted to serve with Special Operations forces because they represented the best that the military has to offer. Captain Alison Lanz said that she wanted to serve with “the best of the best” while Captain Kleiman said it was a fantastic opportunity to work with “these amazing, elite teams”. Staff Sergeant Darti Jensen said that she “had always pictured myself doing something worthwhile and meaningful in the Army” and this opportunity seemed more worthy than her job as a supply sergeant. Sergeant Emmy Pollack explained that, “It is a very respected thing to do. I looked up to those who had been in combat and I couldn’t wait to be part of that club of people who had deployed.” The desire to serve in combat was clearly linked to the most worthy work that a soldier could perform and these women were seeking access to that kind of work.

Imbedded within their narratives was the idea that they were making history; that they would be contributing to opening opportunities for servicewomen. Captain Victoria Salas, an Army nurse said, “I wanted something more. I wanted something different. I was looking for a new challenge and I like history and I knew that women had never done this before. It was a historic opportunity. We all wanted to be a part of something greater.” Captain Kathryn Weurtz agreed saying, “It was a phenomenal opportunity. It was a chance to do something bigger than we had ever dreamed possible.” Captain Meredith Mathis said that it was important to be “one of the first and know that in some ways that your work is proving that women can be successfully integrated into combat.”

During conference introductions CST members were asked to identify their career highlights. Without exception the women identified their deployment on a CST as their career highlight. Many of the interviewees believed that this assignment was transformational. Captain Tamosuins said, “This was my defining moment in the military, probably in my career, so for me, emotionally it was quite a big deal.” Staff Sergeant Darti Jensen talked about how this assignment had impacted her saying, “It was like you had done your purposeful thing, the place where you felt like you belonged ... you didn’t have anymore. It was tough to know that that life was out there and you don’t get it anymore.” Lieutenant Beth Carrier, a physician’s assistant who normally works in emergency medicine said that this deployment had completely changed her life. She said, “I am not the same person. My life is gone. I have been on multiple deployments but this one was very different. Life is forever changed. There are things from this deployment that haunt me.”

During focus group discussions about reintegration they discussed being variously treated by their units, other servicemembers and civilians upon their return. The CST women felt that their selection, training and subsequent experience supporting special operations set them apart from and above the average soldier. Some said that their units used their experience and training to train other deploying soldiers but others were frustrated by their treatment and a general lack of understanding of what they had done. One CST said that when she was asked about her deployment and she responded that she couldn't talk about the details people became annoyed with her. Her joking response was, "well maybe you need to join the cool kids club. I don't know what else to tell you." Another said that when she tried to explain what she had done the response was to liken the deployment to that of a female engagement team (FET). This comparison clearly frustrated and annoyed her and other CST members. She said she would distinguish her role as a CST from that of a FET by saying, "no, we worked with special operations forces. There is a selection process that we had to go through and we were specially trained." Comments like these, where the women were setting themselves apart from other soldiers, were pervasive throughout the focus group discussions. There was the sense that they had done something historic and important but there was frustration that it wasn't acknowledged or recognized inside or outside the military. The CSTs felt that they were unique and to some degree superior (although they never used this word) to other soldiers due to the selection process they went through and the combat experience they gained.

Despite feeling like they were a cut above the average and that they had made some significant contributions they also believed that they were poorly treated upon their return and that reintegration was particularly difficult for them. Captain Lynn Powers said, “Trying to tell someone what I did, they think I am lying. Reintegration was a big problem for me.” One Staff Sergeant said that when she was out-processing her medical questionnaire raised some red flags that caused her to be referred to a mental health specialist. When she got to the specialist he asked her a few questions and then encouraged her to change the answers on her questionnaire so that she wouldn’t draw attention or require counseling. Despite the fact that she had served with Rangers on Direct Action missions, she said that she was told, “you didn’t really do anything so you shouldn’t have any problems reintegrating” and he cleared her for out-processing.

Although many of the women said that they weren’t looking for recognition, they simultaneously called out Special Operations Command for not recognizing them. Many of them noted that when they returned from this deployment they were dismissed and sent home with little or no follow up support. Sergeant Meghan Malloy was clearly disappointed by what happened to her upon her return. When asked if her combat experience was recognized she said, “not really...with this particular unit it was like we’re gonna kinda dump you in a hotel room and hope that everything is good and then boot you out.” Captain Kleiman said, “Coming home was really weird. We stood around a parking lot and our OIC handed out our bronz stars and we disbursed and went home.” Several of them said they received their combat awards in hallways or parking lots while

one woman asked the group at large if anyone knew who she could contact to find out the status of her award which she had not received after more than two years.

When the group was asked why it was important for institutional acknowledgement and for people to know what they did, several of them tried to explain. Lieutenant Belser said, "I think it's because you gave a part of yourself in some way. You left something there. When you come back from a regular deployment people can relate to you. When you come back from this deployment and go off to another unit nobody really understands. It was this big thing that you've done and no one else seems to understand." Sergeant Pollack said that it was like discovering a cure for cancer and then not being able to tell anyone about it except the few people who had helped you make the discovery. Captain Kristie Lamond said that it was important for follow on generations of young women to know what was possible for them. Sergeant Leslie Ash said that it was also important that people know what they had done because it would debunk some of the myths about how women perform in combat units.

Ultimately, the servicewomen who volunteered for this assignment were seeking access to combat related jobs that they viewed as prestigious because they are highly valued in the military. They were looking for opportunities to challenge themselves at the kind of work that was considered the most worthy and was denied to women. They wanted to prove that women could successfully integrate and perform on combat teams. They had a historic sense of purpose that they did not think was recognized upon their return. Although they said "we weren't looking for glory" or recognition, they do seem to have been seeking a degree of respect for themselves and for servicewomen but the

newfound respect didn't materialize. First, they weren't allowed to speak about their experiences and second, no one inside the military was recognizing them for what they had contributed. Worse, there were those inside the military, including the former Commander of Special Operations Command under which these women served, who said that they weren't combat soldiers and that their service shouldn't be considered as such (Hoffman, 2015). This likely made the reintegration process harder since the women felt both disconnected and unrecognized.

Subsequent to the research conference several of the servicewomen asked us to organize a follow-on conference that would focus more specifically on reintegration challenges and would provide tools for coping with reintegration. Since that was outside of our expertise and resources we told attendees that we would find a suitable option. In December 2015, six of the interview subjects attended a week long veteran's retreat program at Boulder Crest in Aldie, VA.⁶ Another six women will attend the program in March 2016 and the program will continue to host servicewomen-specific retreats on a quarterly basis into the foreseeable future.

The women who participated in this program clearly stated that they were seeking a challenge that was outside what was expected of women and that they believed they were pioneers who were opening new options for women. Although they didn't directly state that they were seeking admission to an elite identity group or that inclusion in this group represented new avenues to culturally constructed sources of respect or recognition these were underlying themes. In fact, when asked about recognition they defaulted to

⁶ Warrior PATHH (Progressive and Alternative Therapies for Healing Heroes) is Boulder Crest Retreat's 7-day combat stress recovery program. <http://www.bouldercrestretreat.org/warriorpathh/>

culturally acceptable notions of selfless service that all servicemembers are taught from the moment they enter the military. The Army teaches 7 foundational values with “selfless service” listed as the fourth value. Your service is supposed to “Put the welfare of the nation, the Army and your subordinates above your own” (Department of the Army, n.d., para. 4). When you are taught that your service is supposed to be selfless there is no room for seeking personal fulfillment and it would have been unacceptable for any of these women to state that they were seeking respect and recognition.

Their sense of their place in history was backed up by one of the men, a Ranger who was tasked with training the women for this program. He admitted that when he was tasked to train these women for deployment he was highly skeptical of their abilities to perform in these roles but as time went by and he observed their capabilities and determination he observed that, “These may be our own Tusgee Airmen” (SenatorBlumenthal, 2015, sec. 54:00). It seems that throughout the process there was a sense of historic importance to what they were doing and why they were doing it.

Group 2 Plaintiffs

The five lawsuit plaintiffs had many similarities with the CST members; however, some key differences were also apparent. The five plaintiffs included two active duty Marine officers, two Army reserve sergeants and one California Air National Guard officer. All five plaintiffs had deployed to combat zones, either to Iraq and/or to Afghanistan, at least once. Major Mary Jennings Hegar had deployed three times to Afghanistan while Staff Sergeant Jennifer Hunt had deployed twice, once to Iraq and

once to Afghanistan. Major Hegar and Staff Sergeant Hunt were wounded and are Purple Heart recipients.

Unlike CST members, only one plaintiff said that she had engaged in ground combat. Major Hegar, the Air National Guard combat search and rescue helicopter pilot, said she had engaged in air and ground combat. Major Hegar said that she engaged in ground combat after her helicopter was shot down and she and her crew had to fight off insurgent forces until they were rescued. She found it necessary to point out that she had engaged the enemy with her weapons and that the rescue crew saw her engaging the enemy. Major Hegar was shot in the right arm and right leg. She was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross with Valor and a Purple Heart for the events associated with this incident.

None of the other plaintiffs, two Soldiers and two Marines, including the other Purple Heart recipient claimed any ground combat experience despite being continuously exposed to combat conditions. For example, when Command Sergeant Major Baldwin was asked if she had engaged in combat and if she identified as a combat soldier she said, “No, but I have been in a combat zone.” Then she proceeded to describe “combat occurring all around us” that included mortar attacks where unit members were injured, wounded and evacuated. She also said that “one night we got attacked and the insurgents came over the wall but unfortunately for them they stumbled right into the Special Forces guys who killed them.” She clarified her answer by adding, “In my mind I'm not combat arms. I wasn't in a direct fire fight but it was happening all around you.” Similarly, even though Staff Sergeant Hunt, a civil affairs specialist, was wounded when her vehicle hit

an improvised explosive device she does not claim to have engaged in ground combat. She said, “No, because I never personally fired my weapon. I was in combat situations but it is such an uncomfortable situation to discuss. I don't want to claim anything that I can't support with evidence.” She went on to say, “but I was constantly exposed to hostile forces because my job forced me out into the civilian population and I was always ready to engage or be engaged. Not only were we engaged off the base but we were targeted on the base. We took strafing fire from small arms and mortars and rockets on base.” Both of the Marine plaintiffs said that although they were in a combat zone they had not directly engaged in ground combat.

Of the five plaintiffs only two, Captain Zoe Bedell, one of the Marine officers, and Major Hegar said that they had actively sought out combat opportunities. Major Hegar caveated her comment saying that she sought out air combat not ground combat. Captain Bedell, a Princeton University graduate said that when she graduated she had specifically chosen the Marine Corps over all of the other Services “because I saw it as the most hard core, most intense, most elite of the services. I had joined the Marine Corps to see if I could thrive and succeed under difficult conditions. I was looking for a challenge.” Major Hegar said that while her love for flying is what led her to become a pilot she did not want to fly cargo and transport missions. She said, “I wanted to be in combat. I wanted to support ground operations.”

Although the plaintiffs had varying levels of combat experience and had not necessarily sought out combat duties, they were united on two key issues: they all wanted to see the combat exclusion policy completely eliminated so that servicewomen could

serve in any position for which they qualified and they could all point to specific examples of how the policy had harmed them and women around them. The two Marine officers, both of whom had been in charge of female engagement teams in Afghanistan, said that they were deeply frustrated by the way the women who worked for them had been treated prior to and during deployment by other Marines. Captain Bedell seemed intensely troubled by what she saw as a double challenge. She said that not only did women Marines have to face the dangers of a hostile enemy, but her Marines had to contend with added layers of pressure due to harassment and insults leveled against them by their own colleagues. Captain Farrell added that the female Marines were in less secure positions due to other factors. Specifically, her teams were not trained to the same level or degree that the male Marines were trained prior to deployment. She said that the women were excluded from key training events and had to learn combat drills only after they had arrived in country and were preparing to participate in combat missions. Captain Farrell was particularly disturbed over the way combat ribbons for women Marines were uniquely scrutinized and challenged. She said “it was really, really difficult for me to ensure that my Marines got a combat action ribbon. A lot of people were reluctant to award the combat action ribbon to my teams.” She went on to explain that a “combat action ribbon is a sign of respect. It shows people what you have done in your career and what you have been through.” Like the CSTs, the female engagement teams had short demobilizations, lasting only three days before they were returned to support units. She said, “after we returned, the FETs were returned to non-combat units and I couldn’t check

up on them the way I wanted to. Some of them had PTSD issues and they lost their support group.”

The plaintiffs also had a sense of themselves within the larger historical context and they seemed to assume a degree of responsibility for, and obligation to other servicewomen. They all pointed to the women who came before them that allowed them to serve in their current positions in the military. Major Hegar said, “I definitely recognize the people that came before us that brought us to this point.” Marine Captains Bedell and Farrell, both of whom had left active duty and were in a reserve status when their lawsuit was filed, felt like they had abandoned their female Marines and that this was a way to continue to support them. Command Sergeant Major Baldwin was particularly disturbed by the way servicewomen’s deaths were being characterized. She said, “I’d read about Ashley White being killed. We had been through CST assessment together. I was disturbed by the characterization of her death which didn’t mention what she had been doing. I knew that she was serving in a direct action combat mission.” She said that Lieutenant White’s death was characterized as combat related rather than as direct combat. Staff Sergeant Hunt situated the plaintiffs work and efforts to eliminate the combat exclusion policy within the broader context of the Global War on Terror, asserting that, “If there was one good thing to come out of the GWOT I think it was this.” She was referring to the subsequent elimination of the combat exclusion policy.

All of the women from both groups had fought the tactical battle for acceptance and admission into prohibited units and jobs. The women from the CSTs, FETs and aviation had demonstrated their ability to successfully perform in combat. However, it

was the plaintiffs who took the fight to the strategic level when they engaged in a fight to dismantle the policy. Interestingly, none of the plaintiffs was the driving force behind the creation of either lawsuit. Both lawsuits were developed by civilian organizations; a law school and the American Civil Liberties Union. The women had simply joined lawsuits that were already being developed. A few women were actively recruited by the ACLU for their lawsuit.

Finally, none of the plaintiffs was willing to credit her lawsuit with having changed the policy. While they all believed that their lawsuits may have applied pressure on decision makers and may have been a tipping point none of them believed that it was the direct cause. They all repeatedly, and humbly, acknowledged other cultural forces at play and women who had fought harder battles before them. They seemed to see this effort as just one effort in a series of ongoing efforts to remove barriers to servicemen's full inclusion.

PART II UNDERSTANDING RESISTANCE: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The second question that this research seeks to answer is: what reasons for opposing the full inclusion of servicewomen in ground combat occupations and units are given by members of the military who do so? To identify both who is most resistant to this change and their reasons for resistance, an online discourse analysis was conducted. Online public discourse provides a rich window into public policy debates that are often frank, only moderately filtered, and include a larger set of opinions and data points than are typically available through other means. It allows access to the thoughts of readers who have chosen to comment on a published article. Although writers provide opinions

and commentary that is often shared by those who read their articles, the “comments” sections allow individuals who may not be able or inclined to get their opinions published, to share their opinions and engage in debate on controversial topics. Opinion polls and surveys can also be used to assess opinions but they are often limited by their construct, the questions provided and by those who chose to participate, while online discourse is composed of free flowing opinions and debate.

On May 29, 2014 I authored an article, “Can Women be Infantry Marines?” It was published on a popular military blog, *War on the Rocks*. It was the first article published on the topic at this site but was the “twelfth most trafficked article in 2014”.⁷ It garnered 52 comments that were posted throughout the year. Since my article appeared, 15 subsequent articles on this topic have been published including, “An Editor’s Observations on Civility and the Military’s Gender Integration Debate”. The managing editor observed that no other articles have been “quite as controversial as those about women serving in combat units. This issue arouses strong emotions on both sides (Evans, 2015a, para. 1).” Subsequent articles have run the gamut from those who support the full integration of women to those who support it on a limited basis to those who are strongly opposed. However, the vast majority of comments in the comments sections appeared to oppose integration; as a result, this was a rich site for examining the views of those who are against full integration. Four articles were selected from this site, along with their corresponding comments, for a critical discourse analysis.

⁷ Email notification from editor, Ryan Evans, at War on the Rocks on 12/31/2014.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a research analysis methodology used to analyze material—usually written text—which covers a wide range of contentious social, political and cultural topics (Kirkham, 2015). It is used to examine how discourse produces, or resists social inequality. Ultimately, CDA seeks to study “the relationship between discourse and ideology (a set of beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that constitute a perspective on the world)” (Kirkham, para 2, 2015). CDA looks at three levels in which the text appears. First, it considers the macro level, the historical and cultural context, in which the narrative appears. Then it considers the meso level, or source of the text. Finally, it examines the micro level, or the written words of the text. At the micro level it engages in an “exploration of social meanings as systems or aggregates, accrued over time” (Taylor, 2013, p. 8).

Macro—Historical and Cultural—Level of Analysis

At the macro level this discourse occurred over an 18 month period in 2014 and 2015 when the U.S. military was concluding combat operations in Afghanistan and had just ended a war in Iraq. During these two wars the traditional roles of servicewomen had been stretched to the point that new policies were being adopted. Although servicewomen had served as direct combatants in a myriad of ways that challenged the conventional use of servicewomen, some people remained unaware of these changing roles, while others strongly objected to the expanded roles. Traditional notions of gender were being challenged, tested and resisted.

Meso—Source—Level of Analysis

For data analyses at the meso level, a popular military blog was selected for several reasons. First, articles from this site are featured in a Pentagon news roundup called *The Early Bird* that is published every morning by the *Military Times*. This distribution ensures that articles from the site are circulated amongst the military community. In fact, the article I authored appeared in *The Early Bird* the morning after it was published at *War on the Rocks*. The site has an extensive military readership and garners submissions from respected military veterans like Senator John McCain. Second, according to its website, “War on the Rocks is a platform for analysis, commentary, debate and multimedia content on foreign policy and national security issues through a realist lens” (Evans, 2015, para 3). The site’s submission guidelines say that it rarely accepts unsolicited work, and when it does, the author must be able to demonstrate that he/she has military experience or has worked or served in a war zone for an extended period of time because, “Our touchstone is **experience**” (Evans, 2015, para 2).

In addition to publishing articles, the editors post podcasts of their interviews with national security experts, senior military leaders, and columnists like David Ignatius of *The Washington Post*. The podcasts often feature carefully selected alcoholic beverages or liquor that the guests sip and comment on while they discuss war and national security topics. The website logo is a glass with ice cubes and an M16 rifle that appear to serve as a swizzle stick. The website title serves as a double entendre which could be taken literally to represent discussions of war while drinking a beverage that is served on ice. Or, the title may imply that “war” is a ship that has run aground, is “on the rocks”, and is in a state of ruin or destitution.

I chose this site because both contributors and readers are largely members of the military or are closely associated with the military. In order to understand both who is resisting this change and why they are resisting it, this site offered a rich source of discourse from the military community. Although commenter's backgrounds are not vetted by the editors, writers are vetted for their connection to the military. Being able to verify the military background of commenters is nearly impossible to do (since commenters aren't vetted) and even their online names can't be verified and are often pseudonyms. However, information about the average reader and the depth of knowledge of the military revealed in the comments sections indicates that most comments come from personnel who have served in the military or have close ties to the military.

Four articles with their associated comments were selected for analysis. Two were written by military officers, one male and one female. I authored the woman's article. It advocated for integration. The man's article opposed integration. The other two articles were written by academics, a man and a woman, both of whom have close ties to the military. The man advocated for integration and the woman opposed integration. The four articles were selected because they provided the perspectives of both men and women, a man and a woman who were for full integration and a man and a woman who were opposed to full integration. My own article was a starting point—the first one published at this site—and it may have initiated the ensuing debate. Table 1 summarizes the articles used for data analyses purposes.

Table 1 Articles Used for Data Analysis

Author/Position	Title/Date Published	Comments
Colonel Ellen Haring FOR Integration	Can Women be Infantry Marines? 29 MAY 2014	52
Professor Anna Simmons AGAINST Integration	Here's Why Women in Combat Units is a Bad Idea 18 NOV 2014	95
Dr. Anthony King FOR Integration	Here's Why Women in Combat Will Work 1 DEC 2014	25
General Gregory Newbold AGAINST Integration	What Tempers the Steel of an Infantry Unit 9 SEP 2015	105

Micro—Written Text—Level of Analysis

In order to analyze this vast amount of online data, a multi-step approach was utilized. First, a quantitative analysis of the data was conducted by; 1) identifying the sex of the authors and the commenters, 2) categorizing the sentiments as supporting or opposing those expressed by the author, 3) categorizing the sentiments as either FOR or AGAINST the integration of servicewomen into ground combat positions. Next, I utilized Microsoft's word count capability to help identify themes through the use of the same or similar words. Finally, I conducted a critical discourse analysis.

The sex of commenters was determined using the following protocol. Commenters who provided online names that are traditionally associated with men like Art, Mohammed or Mike were automatically put into the male group. Also included in the male category were commenters who provided online names like "Marine Infantry Officer" or "Former 0331" which are military positions that can only be held by men. Finally, a few commenters like "deep think" revealed his sex in his comment when he

wrote “having been a Vietnam combat veteran,” a status that could not have been held by a women. Some comments came from online screen names where the sex could not be determined. These included names like ‘Popseal’, ‘TUSS’ and ‘Condor’.⁸ They were coded as “sex unknown.”

After identifying the sex of the commenter, the comment was categorized as agreeing or disagreeing with the premise of the article. Then it was categorized as being “for” or “against” the full integration of women in combat positons. Some comments could not be clearly placed in either category and were coded as “ambiguous.”

Next, a simple word count was conducted utilizing Microsoft Word’s software capabilities. To do this, words that appeared repeatedly in an article were counted and then the same word was searched in the comments section. In some cases a word had several related variations and was counted in an aggregated grouping. For example, “physical” and “physically” were counted and placed in the same category as was “weak”, “weakness” and “weaker” since they were applied similarly within the context of the discussion.

Finally, a critical discourse analysis was conducted. According to critical discourse theory, language is organized as “systems or aggregates of meaning” that develop over time and “‘hang together’ by association rather than logical links” (Taylor, 2013, p.9). These aggregates of meaning are taken for granted and perpetuated through the “authority of experts who can ascribe such categories as linked to a justification” and

⁸ Names of commenters are denoted with single quotes and are displayed exactly as provided online by the commenter. Spelling, grammar and diction errors are only corrected when necessary for clarification. Corrections are denoted in double brackets ().

they are supported by “the traditions and institutions which provide the ‘knowledge’ underpinning the justification and the power structures and institutions through which they are administered” (Taylor, 2013, pp. 9). These aggregates of meaning fall into two principle categories: truth and power, and, culture and identity. Notions of truth, truth telling or truth claims are socially constructed and perpetuated by those who hold positions of authority and power (Taylor, 2013, p. 20). Culture is composed of a series of “common sense” precepts that are rarely questioned and generally believed to rest on scientific evidence. Ascribed and assumed identities put individuals in groups of more or less power in terms of who knows and who speaks the truth (Taylor, 2013, p. 21). To apply a critical discourse lens to the content of comments the comments were coded according to the following rubric.

1. Comments that primarily challenged or supported the accuracy of the article were coded as “truth” comments.

2. Comments that challenged or supported the authority of the author were coded as “power” comments and are marked in red. Included in this category were comments where the writer used his/her personal experience as the grounds for his/her authority to speak on the subject.

3. Comments that relied on notions of “human nature” and “common sense” and “the way things are” were coded in the “culture” category.

4. Comments that noted exclusivity of the group and supported socially constructed gender distinctions were coded in the “identity” category.

Many commenters had elements of one or more of the coded categories and their comments were so noted in the coding rubric. Following is a summary of the analysis of each article followed by a synopsis of the aggregated data.

Article #1: Can Women be Infantry Marines?⁹

I authored this article when I was an active U.S. Army reserve colonel. It was published on May 29, 2014 and was the first article published on the subject of combat integration at *War on the Rocks*. The article challenged the notion that women Marines who were attending the Marine Corps officer training course, on a trial basis, were being fairly treated. It also challenged some of the fundamental requirements for what constitute job qualifications for Marine Corps infantry officers (Haring, 2014).

The article garnered 52 comments. The first comment was posted on May 29th, 2014 and the last comment was posted on June 12th, 2015. After controlling for repeat commenters and eliminating my own response to two comments, a total of 43 different people submitted comments; 30 men, 2 women and 11 of unknown sex. Seventy seven percent of the comments (33 of 43) disagreed with my premise while the remaining 10 or 33% provided comments that neither supported nor rejected the premise of my article. This group simply commented on some aspect of the topic, often in response to another comment. For example, ‘Michael Krogh’ said, “Rick, that last line was a red herring and you know it.” None of the commenters openly supported or defended any aspect of my argument. Of those who clearly disagreed, they did so for two reasons. First, some

⁹ This article and all quotes in this section are available at <http://warontherocks.com/2014/05/can-women-be-infantry-marines/>

believed that I provided inaccurate information, including how often an officer can recycle. Second, others—the large majority—objected to my argument on the grounds that I failed to grasp what is required to be a successful Marine infantry officer and that my position on the topic was fundamentally flawed because of this lack of knowledge.

Since the purpose of this analysis was to see who is against fully integrating women and what reasons they give for full integration I sorted the data, pulling out and analyzing only the responses of those who clearly stated that they opposed women serving in combat positions. From this article fourteen commenters fit this category. Ten of the fourteen are men, while 4 are of unknown sex. Extracted and displayed in Table 2 is the data from the 14 commenters who were clearly against allowing women to serve in combat units.

Table 2 Article 1 Commenters Who Were Against Women in Combat Units

Commenter	m	f	sex unk	agree	disagree	ambiguous	for	against	unk	truth	power	culture	identity
Mike Jones	1				1			1					1
Art Corbett X 2	1				1			1				1	1
Marine Infantry Off	1				1			1		1	1		1
Mike Berger	1				1			1				1	
kenny	1				1			1					1
Tony	1				1			1					1
Don	1				1			1		1		1	
Scott	1				1			1			1	1	1
deep think	1					1		1				1	1
O341 E4	1				1			1				1	
popseal			1		1			1				1	
Condor			1		1			1		1	1	1	1
expat vet			1		1			1				1	
Think about this...			1		1			1		1	1	1	1

Truth

Of the 14, four objected on the basis of the truth or accuracy of my information. ‘Don’ said, “Facts are a stubborn thing. Men are better at killing than women. The job of the military is to kill. Anything that complicates that job is reducing the military’s effectiveness.” A commenter named ‘Thinking about this’ broke a personal rule and said “I never post on the internet, but this time, I must make an exception.” He went on to say, “The premise of her argument is horribly flawed because Marine infantry officers ARE the standard of leadership in their community and across the Corps.” He wrote seven paragraphs outlining why Marine infantry officers must be held to different and higher job standards than all other Marines. Both of these commenters believed that I missed or left out a key element of truth that is required for a discussion of this topic.

Power

Four objected on the grounds that I cannot speak with authority on this topic because I don’t have the requisite personal experience and therefore the insight and knowledge required to express an informed opinion. This group believes that knowledge resides with those who have experience in combat or in combat units. ‘Scott’ said, “(This is) Precisely WHY I am rock steady against allowing people who have never been in the Infantry to dictate standards that it (the infantry) should follow.” Some juxtaposed their personal experience against mine to highlight this difference. ‘Condor’ begins his comments by outlining his personal experience in combat and then writes, “I think the biggest reason this stuff is easy for most to talk about from the sideline is because they have never been their (sic) and done that.”

Culture

Ten commenters raised culturally based objections. Culturally based objections rely on what is understood as natural and acceptable to the community. The culture objections fell into several categories. Some relied on notions of “human nature” and “natural” differences between men and women like ‘Don’s’ comment quoted earlier, while others rested on understandings of national and organizational cultures. For example, ‘Mike Berger’ says, "I have no doubt that there are women who could pass all the tests and could be successful infantry soldiers, but is that what America really wants?" By contrast, ‘popseal’ seems concerned with the effect on unit culture when he writes, "I've been deployed to war zones eight times and women close by always caused ‘trouble’, lots of trouble."

Identity

Nine comments invoke elements of identity. ‘John’ seems to be saying that any challenge to existing notions of a Marine infantry officer might reduce its importance when he says, "being an Infantry Officer is supposed to be a[n] important title in the Marine Corps." Another commenter, ‘kenny’, seems concerned with the prototype of a combat soldier resting on the male gender when he says, “There is no place for second best gender in war." ‘Marine Infantry Officer’ links military effectiveness to a necessarily exclusive group when he says, “The Marine Infantry has rightfully gained its reputation as THE most feared fighting force the world has ever known because we have standards and a life style that are exclusive." Finally, ‘Art Corbett’ invokes both culture and identity when he says, "In an era when marriage can be redefined into absurdity and gender is reduced to whim I have no doubt that 'Progressives' can do equal violence to the

well understood terms Marine and infantryman." Later he says, "proponents redefine the terms to repurpose the institution. I have every confidence that women infantrymen will be every bit as potent as a homosexual marriage." His comments reveal a strong reliance on culturally constructed, traditional notions of marriage and gender as well as his understanding of the identity of what constitutes a Marine and an infantryman.

Article #2: Here's Why Women in Combat Units is a Bad Idea¹⁰

Professor Anna Simons, a professor of Defense Analysis at the US Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California wrote Here's Why Women in Combat Units is a Bad Idea. It was published on November 18, 2014. Her main argument against allowing women into combat units rests on the idea that naturally occurring sexual tensions between servicewomen and servicemen in small ground combat units will be bad for unit cohesion and will negatively impact the combat effectiveness of the units and the organizations (Simons, 2014).

The article garnered 95 comments. The first comment was posted on November 18, 2014 and the last comment was posted on September 14, 2015. After controlling for repeat commenters, a total of 73 people provided comments; 44 men, 10 women and 19 of unknown sex. Twenty three percent (17 of 73) disagreed with Professor Simons' position while 38% (28 of 73) agreed. The remaining 38% provided ambiguous responses that addressed some aspect, outside of sexual tension and cohesion, of the debate about women in combat. Forty three percent (31 of 73) were against allowing

¹⁰ This article and all quotes in this section are available at <http://warontherocks.com/2014/11/heres-why-women-in-combat-units-is-a-bad-idea/>

women in combat positions while 19% (14 of 73) were for allowing women in combat positions. The remaining 38% (28 of 73) provided comments that did not clearly indicate being for or against women in combat positions. Nine out of 10 female commenters supported opening combat positions while only 4 out of 44 men supported opening the positions to women.

Table 3 provides a summary of the 31 commenters who clearly stated they were against having women serve in combat positions. Of that group, all objections were based on cultural beliefs or reasons related to identity. None of these commenters provided responses that challenged Simon's factual account of the topic or her authority to speak on the topic. In fact, none of the 73 commenters challenged Simons' authority on this topic, like they had done to me, although 17 did disagree with her.

Table 3 Article 2 Commenters Who Were Against Women in Combat Units

Commenter	m	f	sex unk	agree	disagree	ambiguos	for	against	unk	truth	power	culture	identity
John	1			1				1				1	
Alan	1			1				1				1	
Gene	1					1		1				1	
ken	1			1				1					1
Guest X 3	1			1				1				1	
Richard Cumming	1			1				1				1	
Dave Boling	1			1				1				1	1
Chuck Finley X 2	1			1				1					1
Joe X 2	1			1				1				1	
Tim McCormick	1			1				1				1	
Matt B	1			1				1				1	
buck	1					1		1				1	1
bram X 2	1					1		1				1	1
thomas	1					1		1				1	1
Stacy0311	1			1				1				1	
Big Don Burnett	1			1				1				1	
Frank	1			1				1				1	1
Donald Sensing	1					1		1				1	
Daniel	1			1				1					1
Oldgrunt	1			1				1				1	1
Clint9	1					1		1					1
ROBERT	1			1				1					1
Toby West	1					1		1				1	
Malikav	1			1				1				1	1
Patrick Hughes	1					1		1				1	1
RMEWIFE		1		1				1				1	1
ADM64 X 2			1	1				1				1	1
TMLutas X 2			1			1		1				1	1
Chagersix			1	1				1				1	1
Gospace			1	1				1					1
KHPatton			1	1				1				1	1

Culture and Identity

The subject of this article, sexual tension and cohesion, drove a discussion that focused on interactions between men and women. This made it difficult to categorize the comments as being more culturally constructed or more identity based. The majority of comments invoked aspects of both culture and identity. Many commenters highlighted the physical differences between men and women and then relied on their understanding

of how physical differences “naturally” account for different behaviors and capabilities. However, these understandings are culturally and socially constructed in a way that directly impacts identity. Many commenters cited differences in male/female bodies that they said make women unsuitable for physically demanding combat positions. The most common objection was that women are generally smaller and therefore less likely to be capable of performing the same physical tasks as men. In addition to size and strength, women’s menstruation, hormones, pregnancy, hygiene requirements and urinary tract infections were cited as reasons that make women unfit for combat units. For example, ‘Patrick Hughes’ says, “What really matters is that for one week a month, a female is chemically [u]nstable and has a bad temper, bad judgment, and makes bad decisions.” This comment called out biological differences as well as socially constructed expectations about how physiological differences impact a woman’s ability to make sound decisions. This comment was coded as both culture and identity because it calls attention to physiological differences but then invokes socially constructed expectations for how these differences impact women’s behavior.

One commenter, ‘John’, invoked God as the authority on this topic stating that, “God never created women to do what men do. Men fight so women don’t have to.” ‘John’s’ comment was similarly coded into both the culture and identity categories since his understanding of men’s and women’s roles is based on commonly accepted religious and cultural beliefs. A few comments invoked culturally constructed beliefs like ‘ADM64’s’ comment that, “No national value that I know of says that we are committed to the interchangeability of men and women.” This comment, like most of the comments

for this article, clearly invokes male and female identity but relies primarily on cultural values.

In a few instances, comments were coded solely as identity based if they called attention to threats to men and combat units. ‘Malivak’ is concerned with the physical threat to men when he says, “We all volunteered to do this, and we did so because we know that we will be in good hands with the guys we are serving with. Sticking women on the front lines will get people killed all in the name of diversity for diversities sake.” ‘ROBERT’ reveals his concern with changing Marine men’s identity when he says, "The emasculation of Marine ground troops, what a farce. Men want to change the world, women want to change men.”

Article #3: Here’s Why Women in Combat Will Work¹¹

Dr. Anthony King, Professor of Sociology at the University of Exeter, wrote Here’s Why Women in Combat Will Work. It was published December 1, 2014. The article was written in response to Dr. Simons’ article. Essentially, Dr. King challenges Simmons’ characterization of combat cohesion as resting on male bonding. Instead, Dr. King provides research and examples that support the idea that group cohesion is largely based on competence and commitment to the task at hand rather than on social categories (King, 2015).

The article garnered 25 comments. The first comment was posted on December 1, 2014 and the last comment was posted on January 3, 2015. After controlling for repeat

¹¹ This article and all quotes in this section are available at <http://warontherocks.com/2014/12/heres-why-women-in-combat-will-work/>

commenters and eliminating Dr. King's responses to 2 commenters, a total of 13 different people submitted comments; 8 men, 0 women and 5 of unknown sex. Ten commenters disagreed with Dr. King while 3, including the editor, neither agreed nor disagreed. Six out of 13 were clearly against allowing women to serve in combat units while 2 were for and 5 did not take a position either way. The 6 who identified as against full integration also disagreed with the author. Table 4 provides a summary of the commenters who clearly stated they were against having women serve in combat positions.

Table 4 Article 3 Commenters Who Were Against Women in Combat Units

Commenter	m	f	sex unk	agree	disagree	ambiguous	for	against	unknown	truth	power	culture	identity
Tony	1				1			1				1	1
O3Vet	1				1			1			1	1	1
ADM64			1		1			1		1			1
Couv			1		1			1				1	
Medic5392 X 4			1		1			1		1	1	1	1
Clint9	1				1			1				1	

Culture and Identity

Only a couple of the commenters who were against women in combat positions objected for reasons of truth or power. Instead, the majority of objections fell into the categories of culture and identity. For example, '03Vet' invoked the commonly accepted notion that combat is the domain of men when he asked, "Would you professor allow your daughter to be forced into frontline combat?" The implication here being that it is OK for men but problematic for women. 'Medic3592' makes clear that he views combat

as the exclusive domain of men when he says, "A man, be he purples, brown, black, white, red, gay, straight, or whatever...is still a man."

Truth and Power

The comments section of this article generated a lengthy, and noteworthy, exchange between editor, 'Ryan Evans', and two commenters, 'Medic5392' and 'Mark Adams'. 'Medic5392' was clearly against women in combat units while 'Mark Adams' didn't take a position. Although 'Medic5392' and 'Mark Adams' are the only two who engaged in this online debate other commenters, who did not clearly state that they were against women serving in combat shared the view that the author's background kept him from being able to knowledgeably write on this topic. This exchange is noteworthy because it addressed one of the primary categories of analysis: truth and power. According to CDA, "truth" is generated and perpetuated by those with the "power" to control the dialogue. The debate started when the editor cautioned commenters to keep their comments civil and focused on the topic, not the author. That led to a debate about who is authorized to write about this topic and who should be censored. 'Medic3592' and 'Mark Adams' argued that Dr. King should not be allowed to publish an article on this topic because he didn't have personal experience in combat. 'Mark Adams' went on to say, "Sadly War on the Rocks published this piece at a cost to its reputation." He added, "the moral of the story is to not ask people to write about a subject they can't know anything about." 'Ryan Evans' responded saying, "some participants in this thread (including you) were objecting to the fact that Tony has not served in combat arms and implied his opinion is therefore invalid." 'Ryan Evans' further defended publishing this

article saying, “Whether you agree with him or not, the author of this piece has done considerable research on the topic and is well-regarded in the field of civil-military affairs.” This exchange is significant because it highlights the way that people may or may not control and disseminate “truth”. Interestingly, Anna Simmons who also has no combat experience, but supports the exclusion of women, received no such challenges to her ability to write about this topic.

Article #4: What Tempers the Steel of an Infantry Unit¹²

Retired Marine Corps Lieutenant General Gregory Newbold wrote *What Tempers the Steel of an Infantry Unit*. It was published September 9, 2015. The article argues that the current debate about women in combat units has been artificially constrained to discussions about physical capabilities. General Newbold concedes that there will be women who are physically capable of performing in combat units but he says that the discussion must include “intangible” and “unmeasurable” considerations. Specifically, he says that women will negatively impact the fighting capabilities of infantry units because they will disrupt male bonding; a vital component of success in combat (Newbold, 2015).

The article garnered the largest response with 105 comments. The first comment was posted on September 9, 2015 and the last comment was posted on September 28, 2015. After controlling for repeat commenters, 81 different people submitted comments; 62 men, 7 women and 12 of unknown sex. Fifty-seven commenters (70%) agreed with

¹²This article and all quotes in this section are available at <http://warontherocks.com/2015/09/what-tempers-the-steel-of-an-infantry-unit/>

General Newbold, 11 (14%) disagreed and 13 provided ambiguous responses. Forty-six commenters both agreed with General Newbold and were against allowing women to serve in combat units. Only 3 commenters were clearly for women in combat while 30 provided ambiguous responses that were neither clearly for nor against women serving in combat units. Of the 46 who were against women serving in combat positions 85% (39) were men, 4% (2) were women and 11% (5) were of unknown sex. Table 4 provides a summary of the 46 commenters who clearly stated they were against having women serve in combat positions.

Table 5 Article 4 Commenters Who Were Against Women in Combat Units

Commenter	m	f	sex unk	agree	disagree	ambiguos	for	against	unknown	truth	power	culture	identity
OIF grunt	1			1				1			1		
Buzz Elliott	1			1				1					1
Mike Jacobson	1			1				1				1	1
Colonel David Davenport	1			1				1			1		1
gerry zanzalari	1			1				1				1	1
John	1			1				1					
Dale X 3	1			1				1			1		1
Mark Dietzler	1			1				1					1
Mike Kalashian	1			1				1					
Col Jim Bathurst	1			1				1			1		
James Gilliard	1			1				1				1	
John M. Mode	1			1				1				1	1
Marine Infantry Officer X 3	1			1				1			1		
DCRAPE	1			1				1				1	
Mike "Coyote" Carr	1			1				1					1
Paul Gido	1			1				1				1	
Ron Mendleski	1			1				1			1	1	1
Noe Ontiveros	1			1				1			1		1
Robert R. Ingram	1			1				1			1		1
William Knoop X 2	1			1				1			1		
Ramon (Tony) Nadal	1			1				1			1	1	
Maj Dale Wilson X 4	1			1				1				1	
Biff Winnetka X 2	1			1				1					1
David Little	1			1				1					
john werneken	1			1				1				1	
Bram	1			1				1					1
Dennis Hathaway	1			1				1					
Claude Lacombe	1			1				1					1
John the River	1			1				1				1	
Malcolm Massie	1			1				1					
Eddie Stephen Ray	1			1				1					
Bill Greinke	1			1				1					1
Darrell L. Holley	1			1				1		1			
gruntleader	1			1				1			1		
Ronald Smith	1			1				1			1	1	
LTC Chalres Krohn	1			1				1			1		
John Knapp	1			1				1					
Sylvester L Cook	1			1				1			1	1	
David Wellman	1			1				1					
Elaine Donnelly		1		1				1				1	1
Denise Mull		1		1				1				1	
CW X 5			1	1				1				1	
C.E. Rice X 2			1	1				1		1	1		
JD Donahue			1	1				1					
Sgt Wack			1	1				1					
Redcatcher			1	1				1				1	

Truth and Power

Unlike the previous three articles, many commenters (14) simply provided congratulatory comments to the author like ‘OIF grunt’ who says, “Well, said sir! On target...fire for effect!!” ‘Col Jim Bathurst’ thanks the general for his article saying, “Thank you Greg, it’s inspiring to finally see a flag officer who has not sipped the Kool Aid.” ‘Marine Infantry Officer’ simply said, “Well said! Semper Fi!” Although only a few comments were coded into the truth category using the coding rubric rules these congratulatory comments are a form of salute and a sign of respect to the General for his willingness to provide the “truth” on this topic.

Others, like ‘William Knoop’, cited the general’s authority to speak on this topic when he said, “The best article written about this ill advised social experiment. The General speaks of what he knows and has experienced, anyone who has never been in combat can NEVER understand.” Only one commenter challenged the general’s ability to speak knowledgeably on this topic. In response to ‘William Knoop’s’ comment ‘Major Edward Carpenter’ said, “Bill, curious to hear you say that “the General speaks of what he knows” – since a review of his biography and ribbon rack shows he’s a veteran of The Long Peace, not The Long War – he has no Combat Action Ribbon, no Purple Heart, no Bronze Star, no “V” for valor on any of his medals... Where exactly did LtGen Newbold gain his first-hand combat experience?” ‘Major Edward Carpenter’ didn’t receive a response to his challenge but other commenters like ‘JD Donahue’ continued to congratulate General Newbold, even after this challenge, saying “General Newbold is on target. He has shot the center out of the 10 ring. Well done sir.”

Many commenters called attention to their own combat experience as they addressed the topic. Several cited Vietnam War experience as their basis of knowledge including 'MAJ Dale Wilson' who said, "As a Vietnam combat infantry vet and retired armor officer, I can personally vouch that the rationale spelled out by General Newbold in this article I (is) sound." 'Col Jim Bathurst' said, "Thirty-six years as a Grunt and I am completely baffled as to why we are even thinking of such an idiotic idea." 'Dale' said, "I am a career infantry officer with battlefield experience."

Culture

Of the 46 commenters who were clearly against women serving in combat positions almost all of their comments were coded in the culture and/or identity categories with culture slightly edging out identity. 'Sylvester L. Cook' said, "As Americans we are not ready CULTURALLY to have women in the Infantry." 'Paul Gido' calls attention to the American cultural value of "fairness" but believes that there are times when the value must be subjugated in the interest of the collective good. He says, "This social experiment will only lead to disasters on future battlefields. Fairness does not win battles." 'Paul Gido' links winning to the necessary exclusion of women even if it means sacrificing a cultural value.

Many commenters rely on their manifest understanding of how sexual attraction plays out in the U.S. context. For example 'DCRAPE' says, "Any sexual attractions begin the jealousies and conflict of interest that undermine the unit." His assumption here is that sexual attraction necessarily results in jealousies that ultimately harm team capabilities. Similarly, 'gerry zanzalari' notes, "Jealousy and interpersonal competition

among Martian 19 year olds is legendary. She's my woman and I will fight for her honor. A surefire recipe for disaster." This culturally understood sexual dynamic is applied exclusively to relationships between men and women and then extrapolated to team degradation as though men are never jealous of other men for any other reason that might also undermine the team's capabilities.

Identity

Although cultural reasons were commonly cited, many objections were identity based. 'Claude Lacombe' implored General Newbold to protect the Marine Corps when he said, "Sir, not sure how you are going to do it but please take on this uphill battle to ensure our beloved Marine Corps does not make a mistake that will take years to recover from." 'Bram' says, " – the dynamic goes much deeper than women falling out of runs and marches. It completely changes the culture of a unit." While 'Bram' calls attention to unit culture it is the integrity of the unit's identity that seems to be at stake here. 'Robert Ingram' makes it clear that despite caring about women the team must remain pure when he says, "I still love you Ladies but not as part of my combat team."

Summary of Data

The four articles garnered 277 comments from 210 readers. Table 6 provides a summary of the sex distribution of commenters. Men provided a significant majority of the comments to all four articles. Even if all of the commenters in the sex unknown category were women the clear majority of commenters on this topic is still men. This may be because the majority of the readership for this blog is composed of military readers, the majority of whom are men.

Table 6 Disaggregated Sex Data of Commenters Who Were Against Women Serving in Combat Units

Sex	# of Comments	% of Total Comments
Men	144	69%
Women	19	9%
Sex Unknown	47	22%
Total	210	100%

Based on participation levels in the comments sections the articles that were against women serving in combat garnered the most interest from this community of readers. These two articles received 210, or 76% of all comments while the two articles that were for women serving in combat positions received 67, or 24% of the total comments. Of the 210 commenters 97 or 46% were clearly against women serving in combat units while only 24 or 12% were for and 40% provided comments that were ambiguous. Table 7 summarizes how comments were categorized for the 97 commenters who were against women serving in combat units.

Table 7 Aggregated Discourse Data of Commenters Who Were Against Women in Serving in Combat

Commenters	Truth	Power	Culture	Identity
77 Men (79%)	3	17	42	37
3 Women (4%)	0	0	3	2
17 Sex Unknown (17%)	5	4	12	9
97	8	21	57	48

Culture and identity markers dominated the discussions with many comments falling into both categories making them hard to reliably separate. Often a comment invoked aspects of what is understood as human nature and physiological difference to explain and justify identity based exclusions. Culture and identity were so co-dependent that efforts to separate them may be counterproductive.

Objections based on truth and power were evident in the various articles but they manifested differently depending on the position of the article. Both Dr. King and I wrote articles that advocated for the full inclusion of women while General Newbold and Professor Simons wrote articles that opposed including women in combat positions. Dr. King and I received many challenges from commenters on our ability to comment on this topic because of a perceived lack of experience and expertise. I received 10 challenges while Dr. King received 4 challenges. In response to the challenges to Dr. King the editor weighed in with a lengthy justification for publishing Dr. King's article that included his personal relationship with the author and an outline of Dr. King's defense

credentials. By contrast, Professor Simons received no challenges and General Newbold received just 1 challenge.

A simple word count run on the articles and comments provided additional insight into areas of focus within the debate. Words that appeared at least 25 times are captured in the word count data table below. The word “combat” dominated the discussion since the debate is about combat service. After combat, physical abilities and standards dominated the debate with fighting, sex and cohesion following closely behind.

Table 8 Aggregated Word Count Data

	physical(ly)	sex(ual)	cohesion	combat	fight/ing	strong/er	un/equal/ly/ity	standard/s
Article 1 Haring	7	0	0	14	1	1	0	10
Comments 52	48	10	0	39	11	9	14	34
Article 2 Simons	4	2	13	36	1	0	0	6
Comments 95	18	34	17	110	24	10	17	19
Article 3 King	2	3	15	12	1	0	0	1
Comments 25	20	5	4	46	7	3	7	12
Article 4 Newbold	11	2	1	9	5	1	3	2
Comments 105	22	14	17	111	18	4	8	8
Totals	132	70	67	377	68	28	49	92

The word count reinforces the earlier findings that objections to women serving in combat are based on culture and identity. The word “physical” dominated the discussion and focused on the physiological differences between men and women. The common thread was that these differences make women unable to adequately perform combat

duties. The next highest word usage was “standards” as related to physical capabilities. There was a sense that standards would be sacrificed if women were allowed in. This was tied back to physical differences between men and women. However, even when commenters acknowledged that there are women who are physically capable of meeting standards they said that their presence would still harm the fighting capabilities of combat units. They reached this conclusion by relying on their understanding of existing group norms. The existing norms, where men and women are segregated for certain work, seem to be logical and effective and any change will necessarily degrade the capabilities of the all-male groups.

CONCLUSION

Examining what opponents from both sides of this conflict say reveals a complicated web of culturally based values and beliefs that simultaneously motivates or threatens members within the same community. This conflict developed between two groups that share a common culture, have voluntarily joined the same organizations and are committed to the same ideas and outcomes. Despite the commonalities a deep divide exists in a seemingly intractable conflict of needs and interests.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to fully explore both sides of a large-scale institutional conflict that pitted the aspirations of some servicewomen against commonly accepted gender roles for men and women in the U.S. military. The study examined both sides of this institutional conflict that came to a head during the longest period of war in U.S. history. The case study informs both conflict and organizational change theories and practices in multiple ways. It highlights some of the inherent contradiction and shortcomings in both theoretical bodies of literature and it highlights gaps in practical solutions to resolving conflicts through well managed organizational change.

Foundational conflict theories like Basic Human Needs theory (Burton, 1990) require a deep understanding of human needs for security, identity and recognition for generating and sustaining conflicts but provide little practical means for resolving conflicts when the basic needs of one group are at odds with those of another group. Furthermore, the role that culture plays in shaping how a group conceptualizes these needs—respect, recognition and identity—further complicates prospects for mutual understanding and conflict resolution. Moreover, much of conflict analysis theory fails to reflect organizational change models where conflict occurs in the form of moderate to extreme resistance to change. Although culture is often an acknowledged underlying issue in organizational change theory, too often it is not fully addressed or change

practitioners are cautioned that it is “the last thing” that should be tackled. When conflict exists within an institution that drives or forces organizational change, the way to manage the change rarely takes into consideration needs for recognition or notions of identity and the critical role that culture plays in shaping all of them. What follows is an analysis of Chapter 4 data, and what these data tells us about the shortcomings of our conflict theories and gaps in knowledge of practice when addressing large scale internal organizational conflicts.

FINDINGS: A COMPLICATED NEXUS BETWEEN RECOGNITION, IDENTITY AND CULTURE

Recognition and Culture

The principal finding of this study is that culture undergirds every aspect of conflict, even when the conflict exists within the same cultural group. Small variations in the values and beliefs within the same community of people can have very large consequences in the lived experiences of those people, especially as it plays out in the daily lives of men and women. For example, in the U.S., a high premium is placed on individualism and equality of opportunity. At the same time that we value individualism and equality of opportunity, men and women are raised to believe that men and women, as unique identity groups, have specific and *natural* roles to play within the society. When one steps outside the bounds of his or her *natural* role to take advantage of individual opportunity—a highly valued belief within the culture—a clash ensues between beliefs and values. A tension exists between what we are taught to value and what we have come to believe is the naturally occurring order of human interaction even

within the same culture. Such was the case of the struggle for women's inclusion in combat units within the Department of Defense.

Although many of the service women in this study specifically stated that they weren't seeking recognition, as after all, that would have sounded "self-serving," and therefore a motivation that is at odds with the ideals of "selfless service" that they are taught, their stated reasons were nevertheless directly, but subtly tied to needs for respect and recognition. Instead, they said that they wanted to "challenge" themselves and to serve with "the best of the best." Not one of the women interviewed ever said that she wanted an opportunity to fight, although one admitted, "I wanted to see if I could get shot at and not shit my pants." But even this response was more about seeing how she would handle a stressful situation. Why did these servicewomen perceive joining combat units as "challenging" and how did many of them determine that they would be working with the "best of the best?" These are evaluative judgments about what is understood as important within the culture. They are nuanced responses that provide subtle insight into the women's motivation and the culture within which these women operated. Ultimately, the question becomes: Why do people seek out personal challenges and how is a "challenge" defined or understood? Also, how did some service women arrive at what constitutes the "best of the best" within their community?

From the moment that men and women enter the military they are bombarded with messages that place value on combat roles. Indeed, the highest military honor that a service member may receive, approved and bestowed by the President of the United States, is the Medal of Honor. The Medal of Honor is an award given for "gallantry and

intrepidity at the risk of his or her life above and beyond the call of duty” while engaged in “armed conflict against an opposing armed force” (Department of the Army, 2013, p. 49). Recipients receive extra pay and benefits for themselves and their family members that last well beyond the recipient’s life. It is the highest honor afforded servicemembers and one that is exclusively reserved for those who engage in violent events during which they are risking their own lives. Only one woman was ever honored with this award: Dr. Mary Edwards Walker, a physician who provided medical aid to both the Union and Confederate armies’, received it for her Civil War service during which she was captured and held as an enemy prisoner of war. It was subsequently revoked because she didn’t meet the exact criteria for the award. Her award was eventually reinstated in 1977 by President Carter, long after her death (Blakemore, 2016).

Obvious markers of recognition like the Medal of Honor are supported by more subtle messages that celebrate the combat occupations. Every soldier that has ever served in the Army has sung cadences that include refrains like, “I wanna be an Airborne Ranger; live a life of guts and danger.” Statues of war heroes and tributes to military units are found on every military installation and in even the smallest U.S. towns. A close look at the statues reveals that not only do they celebrate combat veterans but they are almost exclusively of men. For example, there are 23 separate monuments and statues at West Point that pay tribute to wars, soldiers and military leaders. All but one is a tribute that depicts or cites men for their bravery in combat. The only tribute to a woman is a statue that marks the resting place of Margaret Corbin in the Cadet Cemetery.

Margaret Corbin was a Revolutionary War heroine who is said to have taken her husband's place at the front when he was mortally wounded.

U.S. national culture celebrates war and combat stories on a vast scale. A quick internet search for war movies reveals options for the "Top 10", "Top 20", "Top 50" and "100 Greatest War Movies" ("100 Greatest War Movies," 2009, para. 1). An editor's note reveals that this list only includes depiction of wars that occurred since 1900.

Although the movies don't always celebrate the war and frequently show the profound impact that wars have on soldiers, the soldiers themselves are depicted as heroic, honorable and self-sacrificing. Film is not the only cultural artifact that celebrates the status of combat veterans. Military museums and war cemeteries dot the U.S. landscape.

Given the respect and recognition that is afforded to combat soldiers, it is not surprising that many servicewomen seek to join the ranks of the most honored group within their chosen profession. Respect and recognition comes in two forms, both internal and external. Internal recognition rests on the personal knowledge and satisfaction that is derived when individuals feel confident in their abilities. Succeeding at a personal challenge feeds the need for internal or personal self-respect and self-recognition. External recognition comes when others provide affirming feedback for those and other qualities. Some people have greater or lesser needs for both internal and external recognition but the basic need for recognition is a human need that all humans seek to fulfill despite the differing degree to which people seek it or the various ways it is satisfied.

Although the servicewomen in this study said that they weren't seeking recognition, they made a point of highlighting the way that they were treated relative to the military's customary recognition standards. Typically, when soldiers and Marines engage in their first successful fight, it is recognized by the award of a Combat Action Badge¹³ in the Army and a Combat Action Ribbon in the Marine Corps. Both of the female Marine officers in this study expressed frustration by the pushback they experienced when they submitted the women on their teams for Combat Action Ribbons. They believed that the women's combat experiences were being questioned and scrutinized in ways that did not occur with their male colleagues. The women from the cultural support teams were clearly troubled, in some cases angry, about the way they were presented their awards when they returned from deployment. Many of them were simply handed their awards in hallways and parking lots rather than receiving them, as is customarily done in the military, at some sort of ceremony. One woman was still seeking her award two years later, asking the other women whom she might contact to find out what had happened to her award. If the women truly didn't care about the recognition that is afforded soldiers who deploy to a combat zone then they wouldn't have made a point of the lack of recognition that they received for their deployments.

In addition to not receiving formal recognition in the manner anticipated for their combat deployments, they were also troubled by the outright denial of their combat experiences. Healthcare professionals, senior military leaders as well as other soldiers and citizens denying or minimizing their experiences was troubling to them. When asked

¹³ By 2013 more than 9,000 U.S. women soldiers had received combat action badges. Data on Army combat awards for women was received via a Freedom of Information Act request.

if they considered themselves combat soldiers they provided very thoughtful and considered responses that demonstrated both an understanding that they would be denied the recognition that comes with that title as well as a determination to claim that identity despite the denial that they had experienced. Subsequent to the research conference some of the cultural support team members participated in media interviews where they addressed being denied the title of combat veteran. During one interview Chief Raquel Patrick thought it necessary to outline all of her deployments and to emphasize that they were *combat* deployments when she said, “I have five deployments, five Combat deployments. I did one back in Somalia in 1993, three deployments to Iraq and I did one to Afghanistan as a cultural support team member.” She added, “I definitely consider myself a combat soldier (Baldegg, 2016).” Sergeant Shirley Wu noted, “Most women are reluctant to identify with their military experience because people don’t validate their military experience (Baldegg, 2016).” It is clear that these women want to be respected and recognized for successfully entering an exclusive but respected identity group.

Identity and Culture

Similar to the relationship between recognition and culture, identity and culture inextricably coexist. The comments to four articles were analyzed to determine what objections are being expressed against women serving in combat units. The majority of the objections fell into two categories, standards and cohesion. These were coded as culture-and/or identity-based with many falling into both categories. All four articles addressed standards and cohesion to varying degrees. Two articles focused on cohesion, one on standards and the third on both. The two articles that primarily addressed

cohesion were against women serving in combat units and these two articles accounted for 76% of all comments. Of the other two articles, the one that focused on standards called into question the validity of the Marine Corps' current combat screening methods. The other article argued that soldiers who demonstrate that they meet the standards and are competent and committed to the task will not negatively impact cohesion; that it is capability not gender that creates cohesive units. This article garnered the fewest comments.

The commenters who were against women in combat said that women either didn't have the requisite physiological make up to adequately perform combat duties and that their presence would disrupt a vital bond that develops between men, that allows men to be successful on the battlefield. Even though some commenters and one author allowed that there might be some women who were physically capable of performing combat duties, they still didn't think women should be allowed in because they believed women would disrupt a bond between and among men. Both views fundamentally rest on socially constructed beliefs and perceptions about men and women, how men and women *naturally* interact, and how the interaction will necessarily threaten the capabilities of all male groups. This pits two primary identity groups, men and women, against each other. It further positions women as a threat or a danger to all-male groups.

The article that garnered the fewest comments, written by Dr. King, said that research shows that cohesion is a function of capability and success; the more successful a group is the more cohesive it becomes and cohesion is not dependent on single sex groups. Ultimately, he argued that ensuring that all soldiers meet specified standards and

demonstrate their competence is the key to cohesive groups and success on the battlefield. Rather than address the research, the majority of the commenters simply challenged Dr. King's ability to comment on this topic at all. They said that since he hasn't worked as a member of an all-male combat team he can't understand the type of cohesion that exists on such teams and therefore he shouldn't be allowed to write on the topic. At the same time none of the commenters challenged Professor Simmons' ability to comment on this topic even though she too has no military experience.

As service women have gained greater access to military jobs, each expansion point has seen varying levels of resistance. All of the incremental changes experienced some challenges and resistance but this struggle for inclusion was unique because it would eliminate all remaining barriers to servicewomen's full inclusion in the occupations and units that represented the essence, or core of the institution and arguably presented a deep threat to the masculine identity itself. In *Bring Me Men* (2012), Aaron Belkin provides a detailed account of the development and evolution of masculine identity which he says is quintessentially tied to masculine military identity and is deeply embedded in U.S. culture. According to Belkin, "(T)he *ideal* of military masculinity has been predicated on a rejection of the unmasculine (Belkin, 2012, p. 6)". In this framing, the masculine and feminine are positioned as binary opposites and anything feminine is automatically unmasculine. It sits in opposition to the masculine military core identity. For service women this poses a significant hurdle to admission to the core identity group within the military. While some servicewomen were seeking new challenges and

opportunities to join this core identity group, their desires clashed with long-held cultural notions about the essence of military masculinity.

During this extended period of national conflict, and as a result of the nature of the conflict, two complicated counter-insurgencies that required innovative approaches, military commanders began using women in creative and non-traditional roles. In some instances, even those who were responsible for employing servicewomen in these new roles resisted calling them “fighters.” Indeed, they were given titles and names that didn’t reflect the actual nature of their duties. Notionally, female engagement teams and cultural support teams were teams of women who were imbedded in ground combat units for the express purpose of engaging with women in Iraq and Afghanistan in a culturally sensitive manner. Despite the names given to these teams, the women participated in a range of active combat roles right alongside their male counterparts but there was a clear effort made to differentiate their work from that of the masculine ideal combat soldier.

Admiral Eric Olson, a former commander of Special Operations Command and one of the architects of the Cultural Support Team program insisted that the women who served on cultural support teams were not fighters. His belief was that although they were assigned to combat teams and were being killed and wounded, and were receiving combat action badges, that they weren’t there strictly as fighters and shouldn’t be viewed in that capacity even if they were fighting and being killed in combat. During an extensive discussion on the changing roles of women in the military, Olsen was asked why he believed that women shouldn’t serve in combat roles. His explanation had nothing to do with whether or not they were capable or whether they wanted these jobs.

Instead, he said, “I am personally not ready to see them take the first bullet on the target. I’m sorry but men and women are different, they just are” (Senator Blumenthal, 2015, sec. 1:00). He went on to struggle to explain his rationale, saying that while he thought that women should be allowed to attend Ranger school, he didn’t think they should be assigned to Ranger units as Rangers. He said that they should be there in a support or “enabler” capacity but not as primary combatants. His perspective and obvious struggle to explain himself mirrored many of the comments provided by opponents of women serving in combat that were evident in the blog responses. It was largely based on the notion that “men and women are different, they just are” and how the perceived differences dictate appropriate roles for men and women and the discomfort that many feel when those roles are challenged.

The blog analysis revealed that 79% of the online commenters who opposed women in combat were men while just 4% were women. The remaining 17% were of unknown sex. A 2012 survey of 54,000 Marines conducted by the Center for Naval Analysis found that 2 out of 3 male Marines (66%) opposed women serving in combat while only 1 in 3 female Marines (33%) opposed women serving in combat roles (Lamothe, 2016, para. 1). Clearly, opposition to women in combat positions comes disproportionately from men. The changing roles of men and women in the military affect both sexes but it appears to be more problematic for men than for women. Like Admiral Olson, the vast majority of the blog commenters objections to women in combat rested on culturally constructed notions of the appropriate roles for men and women. The blog comments overwhelmingly relied on similar understandings of what is understood

as naturally occurring differences between men and women that make each sex more or less suitable to combat.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

As with all research that relies on volunteer participants, there is the possibility that findings are skewed by those who are vested in the topic for one reason or another and chose to participate in the research. In this case both the women who participated in the Cultural Support Team conference and those who provided online comments may represent an extreme view. In the case of the servicewomen, they actively chose to participate in this research. However, shortly before the Cultural Support Team research conference commenced, official military support was revoked by officials at Special Operations Command. This revocation of support had a dampening effect on conference attendees and 10 registered participants from U.S. Army Special Operations Command did not attend.

The last minute revocation may have changed the overall type of participants who participated in this research and the responses that they gave. For example, most of the women from the Cultural Support Teams had signed Non-Disclosure Agreements in order to train with and serve alongside Special Operations forces in Afghanistan. None of the women had copies of those documents and they couldn't remember exactly what they had agreed to when they signed them. Many of the women were concerned about what those agreements meant in terms of what they could or could not discuss. The Staff Judge Advocate of Special Operations Command, Colonel Norm Allen, advised the following, "in general terms, the purpose of the non-disclosure agreement is to protect operational

details; so long as CST members limit their discussion to non-operational aspects of their experience, then I would expect they are in compliance. If a CST member never signed a non-disclosure agreement, then they should avoid discussing operational details to avoid potential security violations.”¹⁴ This statement was read aloud to participants at the start of the conference.

It isn't clear how much impact this statement had on who ultimately attended and their overall input, but it was clearly on the minds of many participants who would start to speak and then pause, and comment on the fact that they might be straying into forbidden territory. For example, at one point during her interview Sergeant Emmy Pollack paused and said, “I'm not quite sure what is OK to say and not say about our actual missions. What kind of things were the other girls saying?” At that point she stopped talking about the activities that she participated in. It is also possible that the women who were “no shows,” those who were assigned to the Army's Special Operations Command, would have provided a different perspective than those who were no longer serving in a special operations capacity if they had participated.

Finally, those whose comments were analyzed from the blog site might also represent a skewed population. Who decides to engage in online dialog may represent a very energized subset of the population. It is likely that those who provided online comments felt strongly about this topic and that their views represent one end of the spectrum of views on the topic. However, the Marine Corps survey and newly released

¹⁴ Email exchange from Colonel Norm Allen, Staff Judge Advocate of Lieutenant General Joseph Votel, Commander of Special Operations Command, to Ellen Haring on 7/9/2015.

surveys¹⁵ of Special Operators opinions concerning the integration of women into combat units confirms many of the findings from the online blog analysis provided in this research.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FIELD: THEORY AND PRACTICE

This conflict reinforces what conflict theorists added to Maslow's (1973) theory of human needs, namely that needs are not hierarchical. Maslow's original theory asserted that humans only struggle for higher level needs when lower level needs—those associated with physical security—are met. The servicewomen in this study clearly demonstrate that lower level needs, those related to physical safety and security were negotiable during their quest for respect and recognition. However, beyond the utility of understanding healthy human motivation, conflict theorists provide no practical methods for resolving conflicts when the basic needs of two different groups within the same population and culture, are in direct competition with each other. Furthermore, organizational change theorists don't even address human needs when they talk about resistance to change and how to overcome resistance to change. And, despite the importance that they all acknowledge that culture plays, they avoid directly examining and addressing it in organizational change models.

When former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta rescinded the combat exclusion policy in January 2013, he said that any future decision to exclude servicewomen would

¹⁵ On December 4, 2015 DOD published the results of surveys conducted by the University of Kansas and Rand Corporation of Special Operators. <http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/wisr-studies/SOCOM%20-%20University%20of%20Kansas%20-%20Project%20Diane.pdf>
<http://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/wisr-studies/SOCOM%20-%20Appendices%20-%20Considerations%20for%20Integrating%20Women%20into%20Closed%20Occupations%20in%20the%20US%20Special%20Operations%20Forces2.pdf>

be made as an exception rather than the rule, thereby flipping the paradigm from one of automatic exclusion to one of automatic inclusion. Although he gave the Services and Special Operations Command three years to accomplish full integration, he allowed that if there were any positions that they could not fully integrate during the three year transition period they could request an exception to policy to keep those positions closed. Secretary Panetta cautioned them that any exceptions would have to be “narrowly tailored and based on a rigorous analysis of factual data regarding the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for the position (Dempsey & Panetta, 2013, para. 4).” In the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress went a step further, requiring that occupational standards “accurately predict performance of actual, regular, and recurring duties of a military occupation”; and that they be “applied equitably to measure individual capabilities” (“PUBL029.PS - PLAW-113publ29.pdf,” n.d., sec. 527).

The initial three-year integration period set by former Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta ended on January 1, 2016. Only one Service, the Marine Corps, submitted a request for an exception to the new policy, but on December 3, 2015, Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter made the historic announcement that he is opening all military occupations and units to servicewomen; “no exceptions” (Carter, 2015). He directed the Services to provide new integration plans that would open positions no later than April 1, 2016. His announcement was the culmination of the three-year integration period. Despite the fact that former Secretary Panetta had told the Services and Special Operations Command to open all positions “expeditiously” and no later than January 2016, by March 2016, two months past the deadline, 220,000 of the previously closed

positions including all infantry, all armor and all special operations occupations had not been integrated. This failure to meet directives and deadlines represents strong institutional and organizational resistance to the full integration of servicewomen.

In March 2016, new integration plans were approved by Secretary Carter. Many of the new plans assert that there will be no women in the newly opened occupations for months or years with predictions that there will be very few women (2 percent) in some occupations. The Air Force plan doesn't anticipate women in any of its previously closed specialties before December 2016, with some occupations not seeing women before July of 2018 (James, 2015, fig. 2). The newly opened Air Force specialties have long training timelines but if the Air Force had begun the training process in 2013 when the policy was rescinded, women could conceivably be moving into those occupations in 2016. Rather than beginning the training process in 2013, 2014 or even 2015, the Air Force spent three years examining occupational and training standards. All of the Services and Special Operations Command essentially spent the three years conducting studies and doing research rather than actually getting to the business of integrating women into the combat occupations.

One plan in particular clearly reflects the concerns voiced in the comments section of the blog analysis, namely that women will negatively impact the fighting capabilities of combat units. Although blog commenters said they were worried about reduced standards and degraded morale and cohesion when their comments were closely analyzed, they were culturally based and indicated threats to the combat arms identity. The new Marine Corps integration plan is instructive in how sources of conflict are not

being addressed by practical solutions for organizational change. In a military plan there is a section called the “commander’s critical information requirements” (CCIRs) which outlines information data points that a commander needs to make informed decisions about mission accomplishment. The Marine Corps’ plan has 5 CCIRs, all of which seek information about negative impacts anticipated by the presence of women on combat units. For example, the first CCIR seeks “Indications of decreased combat readiness and/or effectiveness” (Neller, 2015, p. 11) that is based on expected injury rates. CCIR 5 is looking for “Indications that morale and/or cohesion is degraded in integrated ground combat arms units” and can be “correlated to integration” (Neller, 2015, p. 11). The Marines are clearly anticipating negative outcomes that will be used to make some kind of decision but what those decisions might be are not outlined in the plan nor are mitigation strategies offered to preclude potential negative impacts. If the Marine Corps were to recognize identity threat—and not women, as a potential reason for lower levels of morale and cohesion, then a mitigation strategy to re-conceptualize or broaden the combat arms identity that would include or embrace women would be developed. Rather than even consider the reconceptualization of the existing identity, women are simply expected to figure out how they can assume the identity as it exists for men even though it has been created in opposition to the feminine.

ONGOING WORK

This is a living research project. After the primary data collection at the research conference with the women from the cultural support teams, the women asked to convene a follow-up conference that would focus on issues of reintegration and mental health.

Many of them said that they had adopted very negative coping skills after their deployments and that they needed assistance with reintegration. Since I don't have any mental health qualifications I researched available programs, all of which seem to reside outside the military healthcare structure and exist as non-profits dedicated to helping veterans. Boulder Crest Retreat¹⁶ (BCR) is a combat stress recovery program that offers a weeklong reintegration program to combat soldiers. In December 2015, BCR piloted a CST program for my research subjects. The pilot went very well and BCR has dedicated 3 retreats in 2016 to the women who served as CST members.

Before the December retreat took place I was working with *The Atlantic Monthly* on a story they were researching about women in combat. The *Atlantic* video producer asked if they could do a short documentary with the women who would be attending the retreat. After working with the BCR staff and the women who were at the retreat, a few of the women volunteered to participate in the documentary. I believed that offering these women an opportunity to tell their stories would help them in their recovery process. In many of the discussions with them there was a sense that they had not been well treated or recognized for their contributions, and this seemed like an opportunity to provide a degree of recognition. Only three women participated in the documentary which was titled, *Women in Combat: In Their Own Words*.¹⁷ In a follow-up email I asked them if they felt that they had been pressured to participate. One of the participants wrote, "As for feeling pressured... We didn't feel so much pressure, as a sense of responsibility." She explained, "We have been given a unique opportunity to have a

¹⁶ <http://www.bouldercrestretreat.org/warriorpathh/>

¹⁷ <http://www.theatlantic.com/video/index/423600/women-in-combat/>

voice in a discussion [where] women are generally ignored. That opportunity creates a responsibility for us to use our voice when we can, where we can.” Again, the earlier themes of a lack of respect, evident in the comment “women are generally ignored”, and a sense of responsibility to other service women continued to emerge long after the initial research conference. Another documentary participant said that she had received “a lot of positive feedback and I’m proud to be a part of helping the next generation of military women.” She thought it “gave us the opportunity to get our voices heard.”

CONCLUSION

In many organizations multiple, nested and potentially competing human needs coexist. Needs for respect, recognition and identity are universal but how they are satisfied varies by individual and is culturally shaped. Identities are rooted at the individual level, cross into the group and exist at the organizational level. Competing identities develop when sub groups make “divergent identity claims” within an organization and they must be negotiated in order for organizations to function effectively. In the military there is a divide between the ground combat identities, which many hold in high regard, and the service and support identities, despite the fact that all servicemembers are considered Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen or Marines. Ultimately, a range of conditions and people drive change, and in the change process normative internal behaviors are disrupted and adaptation occurs. As adaptation occurs, organizational cultures evolve and reconstructed identities emerge. How long it takes is dependent upon the change methods that the military employs. Women’s acceptance into the service and support-based occupations has been slow but steady. As the military opens all ground

combat positions to women, the path to changing the culture and adapting individual, group and organizational identities within the combat sub-community is likely to be even slower but not impossible. A hundred years ago it would have been unthinkable to envision a woman sailor on any Navy ship but today women command Navy combat ships.

The military's record to date reveals a series of mixed approaches to this organizational change process. Mixed messages, provided by military senior leaders and outright challenges to a modified identity, evident in professional journals, don't bode well for a smooth transformation to reconstructed individual, group and organizational identities. However, changes outlined in the Army's 2014 Capstone Concept, identify a need for new approaches to "unified land operations" in a "complex world" that highlights the need for soldiers with a much broader range of skills than those typically associated with the combat arms of past years. It may be that this final integration effort is about to coincide with a reconstructed, post-modern soldier identity that embraces the contributions and inclusion of women.

Theories of conflict help us understand healthy human aspirations that become underlying sources of conflict and in some cases lead to unhealthy human behavior. While it is important to understand the underlying sources of conflict, what to do about it is another matter. Contact theory tells us that bringing people together breaks down barriers, reduces bias and unites people but how to bring people together in the first place can be challenging, especially when one group threatens the core, or essential identity of the other group as is the case with this conflict. Perhaps the answer is, as organizational

change best practices advocate, not to directly engage the foundational elements of resistance, culture and identity, but to work around the edges, thereby making small incremental changes to culture that allow for slowly evolving identities. Certainly, women's inclusion in formerly all-male identity groups has been happening for decades but history shows that progress has been slow and uneven with no template developed or advanced for how to mitigate or resolve gender based conflicts.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A RESEARCH CONFERENCE AGENDA AND PARTICIPANT LIST

Agenda

Women in Combat: Learning from Cultural Support Teams CST Working Group

12-14 July 2015

The Elliott School, George Washington University | 1957 E Street NW | Washington, DC

Sunday, July 12, 2015 (Rm. 211)

CST Deployments: Lessons Learned

Uniform for the day is business casual

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 0830 – 0900 | Breakfast and Registration |
| 0900 – 1130 | Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ <i>Welcome: Ellen Haring, Colonel, US Army Retired</i>∞ <i>About WIIS: Dr. Chantal de Jonge Oudraat</i>∞ <i>Research Objectives: Dr. Megan MacKenzie</i> |
| 1130 – 1230 | Working Group 1: Dispelling Myths <ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ <i>Facilitator: Dr. Megan MacKenzie</i> |
| 1230 – 1330 | Catered Lunch |
| 1330 – 1500 | Working Group 2: Gaining Acceptance/Resilience and Coping <ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ <i>Facilitator: Ellen Haring, Colonel, US Army Retired</i> |
| 1500 – 1515 | Break |
| 1515 – 1645 | Working Group 3: Returning Home <ul style="list-style-type: none">∞ <i>Facilitator: Dr. Megan MacKenzie</i> |
| 1800 | No Host Dinner at Ristorante La Perla (2600 Pennsylvania Ave NW #101, Washington DC 20037) |

Monday, July 13, 2015 (Rm. 212)

Moving Forward: Integrating Combat Teams

Uniform for the day is business casual

0730 – 0900	Breakfast: War Stories-the highs and lows ☞ <i>Facilitator: Dr. Megan MacKenzie</i>
0900 – 1130	Working Group 4: Selection, Training, and Assignment ☞ <i>Facilitator: Ellen Haring, Colonel, US Army Retired</i>
1130 – 1230	Catered Lunch
1230 – 1345	Working Group 5: Integrating Combat Teams and Units ☞ <i>Facilitator: Ellen Haring, Colonel, US Army Retired</i>
1345 – 1400	Break
1400 – 1500	Working Group 6: Preparing Units and Leadership ☞ <i>Facilitator: Ellen Haring, Colonel, US Army Retired</i>
1500 – 1530	Break
1530 – 1700	Capstone Discussion: Lessons Learned from Cultural Support Teams (Public Event in Rm. B12) ☞ <i>Moderator: Dr. Chantal de Jonge Oudraat</i>
1800	CST BBQ (Hosted by Meghan Malloy)

Tuesday, July 14, 2015

Capitol Hill Day

Uniform for the day is business attire (suit or dress)

0900 – 1200	Individual Meetings with Congressional Member and/or Staff
0910 – 1030	Tour of the Capitol Building (Capitol Visitor Center)
1200 – 1300	Lunch
1300 – 1830	Individual Meetings with Congressional Member and/or Staff
1450 – 1530	Tour of the Capitol Building (Capitol Visitor Center)

Interview Schedule Cultural Support Team Members

July 12, 2015 – Day 1

0930 – 1030

1: Rm. 212

2: Rm. 309

3: Rm. 313

1030 – 1130

4: Rm. 212

5: Rm. 309

6: Rm. 313

1130 – 1230

7: Rm. 212

8: Rm. 309

9: Rm. 313

1230 – 1330 LUNCH

1330 – 1430

10: Rm. 212

11: Rm. 309

12: Rm. 313

1430 – 1500 BREAK

1500 – 1600

13: Rm. 212

14: Rm. 309

15: Rm. 313

1600 – 1700

16: Rm. 212

17: Rm. 309

18: Rm. 313

1700 – 1800

19: Rm. 212

20: Rm. 309

21: Rm. 313

1800 DINNER

July 13, 2015 – Day 2

0930 – 1030

22: Rm. 309

23: Rm. 313

1030 – 1130

24: Rm. 309

25: Rm. 313

1130 – 1230 LUNCH

1230 – 1330

26: Rm. 309

27: Rm. 313

1330 – 1430

28: Rm. 309

29: Rm. 313

1430 – 1530

30: Rm. 309

31: Rm. 313

1530 – 1700 CAPSTONE
DISCUSSION

Participant List

Evelyn Araiza
Leslie Ash
Manuela Belser
Beth Carriere
Madeline Clark
Camile Effler (*remote*)
Shelane Etchison
Jessica Gilman (*remote*)
Demere Hess (*remote*)
Darti Jensen
Annie Kleiman
Christie Lamond
Alison Lanz
Meghan Malloy
Janiece Marquez (*remote*)
Emily Miller (*remote*)
Eleese Nickelson (*remote*)
Mary Mathews
Meredith Mathis
Rachael Nicol
Raquel Patrick
Megan Pekol-Evans
Christina Ramirez
Victoria Salas
Amanda Tamosuinas
Christina Trembley
Amanda VanDuynhoven
Rachael Washburn
Shirley Wu (*remote*)
Kathryn Wuertz

APPENDIX B INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Deployment/Combat Questions

Please state your full name and military affiliation.

What is your military occupational specialty?

EXPERIENCE

1. How did you become involved in combat operations?
2. Did you actively seek out ground combat opportunities? Why?
3. In hindsight, would you have selected a ground combat specialty if they had been available to you when you joined the service?
4. Describe your combat experience?
5. Did you operate with the same team throughout your deployment/s?
6. Were you attached or assigned to your team?
7. Did you live with your team in remote locations?
8. What were the living conditions like?
9. Can you describe a stand-out positive experience from your service?
10. Can you describe a stand-out negative experience from your service?

MYTHS

1. What do you think are the strongest misperceptions about women in combat- both within the services and amongst the public?
2. Why do you think there are these myths or misperceptions about women and combat? How do these myths survive?

COHESION/SUPPORT

3. How well did team members like each other?
4. How well did team members work together?
5. How would you define cohesion? Do you think women impact cohesion one way or another?
6. Do you believe that you were fully accepted on your team? Why or why not?
7. Did the men on your team support your inclusion on the team when you arrived? Did they support your presence after you had been on the team for a while? Was there an increase or decrease in support over time? How do you know? What did or didn't change?
8. Do you think women's presence changed the work and culture of the team? Did you notice a change in attitude over time?

COMBAT EXCLUSION

9. Do you support completely opening all ground combat positions to women? Why or why not?

10. Do you plan to change to a ground combat specialty when they are opened to women? Why or why not?
11. Would you be willing to serve as cadre in a ground combat unit when the first women are integrated into those units?
12. Would you be willing to provide the names and contact information of the men that you operated with?
13. Do you think your male team mates support the inclusion of women as equal partners, ie. in the same specialties that they hold, on their teams today?
14. Do you think women will officially serve in all combat roles within 5 years? Why or why not?

IMPACT, RETURNING HOME AND LESSONS LEARNED

15. What emotional or professional impact did this assignment have on you?
16. When you returned from this assignment how did you feel about the experience?
17. What has your post-combat deployment experience been like?
18. Did you face any challenges returning from your combat experience?
19. If you could inform the current policy-making process around women's integration into combat roles, what advice would you give policy-makers?
20. What question didn't I ask that I should have asked?

Plaintiff Questions

Have you been deployed? Have you engaged in combat operations? If yes, go to deployment questions above. If no, ask the following questions.

1. What motivated you to become a plaintiff?
2. What did you hope that your lawsuit would accomplish? Why?
3. How have you been treated by your service since becoming a plaintiff?
4. How have you been treated by the men and women in your unit/units, the public, or your friends and family since becoming a plaintiff?
5. Is there anything you wish you had done differently relative to becoming a plaintiff?
6. Has your role as a plaintiff impacted you emotionally? If so, how?
7. Has this lawsuit changed your career trajectory? If yes, how? If no, why not?
8. What impact do you think your lawsuit had on overturning the policy?

APPENDIX C INTERVIEWEES

Phase I Research Cultural Support Team Members (25 total interviews)

Participant's interviewed 29 April 2015, Washington, D.C.

1. Capt Annie Kleimann, USAF Reserve,
2. 1LT Chris Trembley, USA West Virginia National Guard
3. SFC Megan Malloy, USA
4. SGT Janiece Marquez, USA
5. MAJ Demere Hess, USA Reserve
6. CPT Perry Foster, USA

Participants interviewed 12/13 July 2015, Washington, D.C.

1. SFC(P) Evelyn Araiza, USA, CST Deployment 2012
2. CW4 Raquel Patrick, USA,
3. 1LT Chris Trembley, USA West Virginia National Guard
4. 1LT Wella Belser, USA
5. CPT Allison Lanz
6. CPT Amanda Tamosuins
7. CPT Annie Kleimann, USAF Reserve
8. CPT Katheryn Wuertz, USA
9. CPT Meredith Mathis, USA
10. SSG Darti Jensen, USA Reserve
11. CPT Victoria Salas, USA
12. SFC Leslie Ash
13. SFC Mary Mathews
14. SFC Meghan Malloy, USA
15. CPT Lynn Powers
16. CPT Samantha O'Rourke
17. CW2 Madeline Clark
18. LT Beth Carrier
19. SGT Emmy Pollock

Phase II Research Lawsuit Plaintiffs (5 total)

Interviews were conducted by phone or in person and recorded with the following plaintiffs on the dates identified.

1. CSM Jane Baldwin, FT Bliss, USA Reserve, FT Bliss, TX, 14 Oct 2015
2. Capt Zoe Bedell, USMC Reserve, Boston, MA, 6 Oct 2015

3. Capt Colleen Farrell, USMC Reserve, Philadelphia, PA, 21 Sep 2015
4. SFC Jennifer Hunt, USA Reserve, McLean, VA, 21 Oct 2015
5. MAJ Mary Jennings Hegar, California Air National Guard, Houston, TX, 28 Oct 2015

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[columbia/dcdce/1:2012cv00832/154397](http://dockets.justia.com/docket/district-of-columbia/dcdce/1:2012cv00832/154397)

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BIOGRAPHY

Ellen Haring graduated from Yorktown High School, Arlington, Virginia, in 1979. She received her Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Military Academy in 1984. She received a Master of Science degree in Public Policy from George Mason University in 2009. She served in the U.S. Army for 30 years and retired in 2014.