

“RECRUIT THE SOLDIER, RETAIN THE FAMILY”: THE UNITED STATES ARMY  
AND THE EVOLUTION OF POLICIES TOWARDS THE MILITARY FAMILY

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MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE  
Military History

by

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## ABSTRACT

“RECRUIT THE SOLDIER, RETAIN THE FAMILY”: THE UNITED STATES ARMY AND THE EVOLUTION OF POLICIES TOWARDS THE MILITARY FAMILY, by Major Alexandra Teskey, 115 pages.

One of the barriers for the United States Army to retaining talent is the balance of career and family. Over the years the U.S. Army has undergone significant policy changes to adapt to the cultural shifts among both the civilian and military populations. The transition to a career-oriented, all-volunteer force and the inclusion of women into the force influenced a culture shift in the perception and support of the Army family. These changes challenged the Army with maintaining the commitment and resiliency of its military families to enhance recruitment, retention, and readiness of service men and women. The purpose of this study is to examine how the U.S. Army adapted its culture, policies, and programs to the evolving military families of the gender-integrated, all-volunteer force. The following will include a summary, survey, and assessment of changes and progress from the American Revolutionary War to 2016; a description of the Army family and its influence on readiness; and discuss the initiatives and recommendations for the Army of the future. This thesis argues that the U.S. Army's adaptation of its culture, policies, and programs has not kept pace with the evolving military families of the gender-integrated, All-Volunteer-Force.

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## ACRONYMS

ACS	Army Community Service
AFAP	Army Family Action Plan
CFSC	Community and Family Support Center
DACOWITS	Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services
DoD	Department of Defense
FRG	Family Readiness Group
WAAC	Women's Army Auxiliary Corps
WAC	Women's Army Corps

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

We recruit Soldiers, but we retain Families. Winning the war for talent means making sure our best and brightest people don't have to choose between service and family.

—General James McConville, quoted in, “Soldiers Inspire New Army Directive on Parenthood, Pregnancy, and Postpartum Policies”

Since its establishment, the United States Army's mission is to “deploy, fight, and win our Nation's wars by providing ready, prompt, and sustained land dominance by Army forces across the full spectrum of conflict as part of the Joint Force.”<sup>1</sup> This mission remains unchanged. Amid an increasingly complex global environment, the Army remains in high competition with the civilian labor market to retain high quality, talented individuals. However, the end of conscription in 1973 exposed a readiness issue undermining the force. The transition to an all-volunteer force drastically transformed the gender composition, and subsequently, the family demography of the Army.<sup>2</sup> One of the barriers for the United States Army to retaining talent is the balance of career and family. While family readiness impacts the retention of both service men and women, research

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<sup>1</sup> Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, Sergeant Major of the Army, James C. McConville, *The Army People Strategy* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army, October 2019), 1, [https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/the\\_army\\_people\\_strategy\\_2019\\_10\\_11\\_signed\\_final.pdf](https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/the_army_people_strategy_2019_10_11_signed_final.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Mady W. Segal and David R. Segal, “Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States,” in *Handbook of the Sociology of the Military*, ed. Giuseppe Caforio (New York, NY: Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, 2006), 226-227.

shows that women were 28% more likely to leave service compared to men.<sup>3</sup> With the growing number of military families, as well as the increasing diversity of these families, the Army must adapt its attitude, policies, and programs towards the military family to retain the talent of its force.<sup>4</sup>

Historians and social scientists have been examining the relationship between the Army and its families for over fifty years. These studies reveal the transition to an all-volunteer force and integration of women into the labor force as two primary influences in the evolution of the relationship between the Army and its families. Two renowned sociologists, Mady Segal and David Segal, elaborate on these influences in their article “Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States.” Segal and Segal describe how the end of conscription and the consequent competition in the labor market had important implications on the family demography, gender composition, and policies and practices of the Army.<sup>5</sup> Their work established a foundation for research on how the United States Army adapted to support military families in a gender-integrated, all-volunteer force. A preponderance of the literature revealed three primary themes. The first theme examines the organizational culture and

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<sup>3</sup> U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), *Female Active-Duty Personnel: Guidance and Plans Needed for Recruitment and Retention Efforts* (Washington, DC: GAO, May 2020), 18, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/710/707037.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Karen De Angelis, David G. Smith, and Mady W. Segal, “Military Families: A Comparative Perspective,” in *Handbook of the Sociology of the Military*, 2nd ed., ed. Giuseppe Caforio and Marina Nuciari (New York, NY: Springer Science+Business Media, LLC 2018), 346.

<sup>5</sup> Segal and Segal, “Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States,” 226-228.

structure of the Army. The second theme explores how the Army reacted to the demands of the evolving military family. The third theme focuses on the effect women in the military had on the social structure of the military and the subsequent policies to integrate and retain women.

The decision to transform the Army from a force of “mostly conscripts and draft-motivated ‘volunteers’ to a force of professionals” had a great impact on the organizational culture of the Army.<sup>6</sup> Bernard Rostker’s *I Want You! The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force* is a comprehensive record and examination of the policies and economic analysis from 1960 to 2006 that transformed the Army to the All-Volunteer Force. As a research economist, Rostker served as an analyst and government policymaker in several of the events covered in his book. His personal context and in-depth historical analysis allow the reader to gain a deeper understanding of the analysis and decision-making behind the Army’s policies. Additionally, Rostker’s features the history of the analysis and debate over the service of women in the military and the consequent policies to recruit and retain them. Though limited in detail on the policy arguments, his work illustrates the decision to move to an all-volunteer force was largely influenced by the increased need for and utilization of women. Rostker’s book is critical to understanding the history of the evolution of the All-Volunteer Force and the research efforts the Department of Defense undertook from 1960 to 2006.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Bernard Rostker, *I Want You! The Evolution of the All-Volunteer Force* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Cooperation, 2006), iii.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, iii.

Through the study of the Army's policies, historians and sociologists described the Army's organizational culture as gendered. It became evident that the social assumption is that military personnel are men, and, therefore, the resultant family policies and programs are centered around traditional gendered roles and traditional family structures.<sup>8</sup> Two studies describe how gender ideologies of society shaped the gendered organizational culture for women as both spouses and service members. In her work, "Men's and Women's Liberation: Challenging Military Culture after the Vietnam War," Heather Marie Stur examines how the American society's traditional masculine and feminine values influenced the military policies and practices. Her work emphasized that despite inclusive policy changes, culture is more difficult to transform.<sup>9</sup> Deborah Harrison and Lucie Laliberte expand on the impacts of gendered military culture in their study, "Gender, the Military, and Military Family Support." Harrison and Laliberte assert the "genderedness" of the military community are socially constructed and sustained through the institutionalized roles of military spouses and the perceived disruption of readiness with the integration of women.<sup>10</sup> The authors examine the military organization's reliance on the military spouse as a self-reliant, unpaid volunteer. The

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<sup>8</sup> Segal and Segal, "Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States," 227.

<sup>9</sup> Heather Marie Stur, "Men's and Women's Liberation: Challenging Military Culture after the Vietnam War," in *Integrating the U.S. Military: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation since World War II*, ed. Douglas Walter Bristol, Jr., and Heather Marie Stur (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 162.

<sup>10</sup> Deborah Harrison and Lucie Laliberte, "Gender, the Military, and Military Family Support," in *Wives and Warriors: Women and the Military in the United States and Canada*, ed. Laurie Weinstein and Christie C. White (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1997), 35.

emergence of military family support groups served to strengthen their claim that the military relies on the family support to enhance readiness.<sup>11</sup> Both these works illustrated the challenge of gender integration was not the restrictive policies, but the culture of the organization.<sup>12</sup>

Despite the military maxim “if the army would have wanted you to have a wife...it would have issued you one,” it was recognized that increased family support enhances the readiness of the Army.<sup>13</sup> *The Army Family* white paper of 1983 written by Army Chief of Staff General John Wickham is noted by General Eric Shinseki as the “most salient single initiative...with respect to Army families.”<sup>14</sup> Wickham’s landmark document was the first to recognize the critical partnership between the military and its families. In addition to detailing the history of family policies, the white paper was the first of its kind to “systematically gather and consolidate” research about the needs of families.<sup>15</sup> Though his document acknowledged the emergence of nontraditional families, his policies and programs focused on that of the traditional family structure. Importantly,

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<sup>11</sup> Harrison and Laliberte, “Gender, the Military, and Military Family Support,” 41.

<sup>12</sup> Stur, “Men’s and Women’s Liberation,” 143.

<sup>13</sup> Rene Moelker and Irene Van der Kloet, “Military Families and the Armed Forces: A Two-Sided Affair?” in *Handbook of the Sociology of the Military*, ed. Giuseppe Calorie (New York, NY: Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, 2006), 209.

<sup>14</sup> Chief of Staff, U.S. Army (CSA), *The Army Family*, A White Paper, CMH Pub 70-84-1 (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History (CMH), 2003), iii, [https://history.army.mil/html/books/070/70-84-1/cmhPub\\_70-84-1.pdf](https://history.army.mil/html/books/070/70-84-1/cmhPub_70-84-1.pdf).

<sup>15</sup> Chief of Staff, U.S. Army (CSA), *The Army Family*, White Paper 1983 (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1983), 23, <https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=YG3g3mJmzQC&pg=GBS.PA4&hl=en>.

Wickham directed a continuing analysis and comprehensive needs assessment of Army families.<sup>16</sup>

Twenty years later, in 2003, Army Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki revisited Wickham's *The Army Family* and provided an updated review and assessment of the relationship between the Army and its families.<sup>17</sup> Like the previous white paper, Shinseki's *The Army Family* documented the evolutionary history of the Army family and described the Army's policies and program that address the needs of families. One key difference is his recognition that the integration of women changed the Army family demographics resulting in a need to assess the quality of the current family readiness policy and programs. Most importantly, these documents committed the Army to a lifelong partnership with families.<sup>18</sup>

As the demands of the military families increased, the United States Army began to adapt its attitudes, policies, and programs to address the needs. In examining how the United States Army reacted to the demands of the military family, Rene Moelker and Irene Van Der Kloet investigated in "Military Families and the Armed Forces: A Two-Sided Affair?" the interdependent relationship between the Army and its families. The study described the genesis of family support organizations due to the demands of military families and the Army's strategic response of cooptation. Cooptation is a "mechanism of including groups of people closely connected to one of the characteristics

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<sup>16</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, 23.

<sup>17</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 2003, iii.

<sup>18</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, 1.

of the military organization.”<sup>19</sup> In this case, the authors identify greediness as the connected characteristic of the family and the military.<sup>20</sup> Moelker and Kloet emphasize the Army recognizes the family’s influence on the commitment of the soldier and therefore adapted to accept responsibility for the family through cooptation.<sup>21</sup> The authors define the military’s strategy of cooptation as the “process in which groups outside the [military] organization will get involved in the making and implementing of new policy.”<sup>22</sup> This strategy allows the outside organizations (the families) realize some of their goals, while the original organization (the military) gains total devotion of the soldier and increased readiness.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, Moelker and Kloet explore the greedy characteristic of the military and family as institutions that lead to conflict for the service member. Their study concludes that the conflict between family and military is reduced by the Army’s adaptation of culture, policies, and programs to support the military family.<sup>24</sup>

While Moelker and Kloet studied the Army’s response to the family demands as an institution, sociologist Hanna Papanek examined the Army’s response to families as individuals. In her article, “Men, Women, and Work: Reflections on the Two-Person

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<sup>19</sup> Moelker and Van der Kloet, “Military Families and the Armed Forces,” 204.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 222.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 205.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 223.

Career,” described the role of American women in their husband’s career through a two-person career construct. Papanek defined a two-person career as the “informal and formal institutional demands placed on both members of a married couple of whom only the man is employed by the institution.”<sup>25</sup> This article illustrated key elements of the relationship and conflict between the military institution and the family. Primarily, it proved how the traditional family structure was the best fit for the military demands. In a two-person career structure, the Army commits the devotion of the soldier and the spouse, increasing its readiness as an organization. Alternatively, it introduced conflict when the two-person career pattern encounters the two-career family in which both the husband and wife follow independent careers.<sup>26</sup>

This conflict is also described in the research study, “Blue Navy Blues: Submarine Officers and the Two-Person Career.” The authors Laurie Weinstein and Helen Mederer highlight that as women enter the workforce, to include the military, their job title of wife remains with its expectations and responsibilities. Weinstein and Mederer illustrate Moelker and Kloet’s and Papanek’s assertion that the military life is an example of a two-person career and how the military benefits the most from the family support and readiness organizations developed from this arrangement.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Hanna Papanek, “Men, Women, and Work: Reflections on the Two-Person Career,” *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 4 (1973): 852, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2776607>.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 853.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 858.

The historiography of women in the military documents the challenges of integration, inclusion, retention, and readiness. Martin Binkin and Shirley Bach's book, *Women and the Military*, serves as a foundation to research the history of women's participation in the United States Army. It outlines the current policies of each military service and examines the political and military challenges of integrating women into the armed forces. The authors demonstrate how the Women's Armed Service Integration Act of 1948 sowed the seeds of gender discrimination by establishing limitations on women's service. The study provides statistical data to enhance the authors' argument of expanding women and their roles in the military. Their work concludes that until policies are modified to eliminate discrimination, women will continue to be consigned to secondary roles in the military.<sup>28</sup>

Unlike Binkin and Bach, Georgia Clark Sadler argues in her work, "From Women's Services to Servicewomen," that the ultimate challenge is not the military policies, as they argue, but rather the military culture within the armed forces. She demonstrates that the Army remains a predominantly male culture in which women's performance is scrutinized and compared to the male military standard, presenting the impression that women are a problem.<sup>29</sup> Sadler's work examines the history of women's integration into the Army and the evolution of family policies to retain women in service. She also analyzes barriers women face as an effect of the male culture. Her work

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<sup>28</sup> Martin Binkin and Shirley J. Bach, *Women and the Military* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1977), 47.

<sup>29</sup> Georgia Clark Sadler, "From Women's Services to Servicewomen," in *Gender Camouflage*, ed. Francine D'Amico and Laurie Weinstein (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 49.

concludes that for progress to continue, the adaptation of policies and programs is not enough. The Army must adapt its culture, as it affects women, to enhance the quality of our armed forces.<sup>30</sup> Sadler's final sentence alludes to the Army's future talent management: "The simple standard must be the best person for the job."<sup>31</sup>

Policies and culture are not the only barriers to women in the military and as members of the military family. In her book, *Ground Zero*, Linda Bird Francke captures the gendered cultural war through the stories of men and women as it relates to the inclusion of women in combat. She provides a historical study of the institutionalized gender discrimination and cultural barriers women had to overcome to gain access and recognition for their service in the military. Francke examines how the "attrition of women is largely driven by the policies that treat women differently from the way the men are treated given similar circumstances."<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, she investigates the gendered culture that continues to impact the retention of women, despite the policies reflecting inclusion. *Ground Zero* enhances the historical, statistical data with emotionally charged, personal stories to emphasize the cultural wars in the Army are not over.<sup>33</sup>

Building on the scholarship, this thesis argues that the Army's adaptation of its culture, policies, and initiatives has not kept pace with the evolving military families of

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<sup>30</sup> Sadler, "From Women's Services to Servicewomen," 53.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 201.

<sup>33</sup> Linda Bird Francke, *Ground Zero: The Gender Wars in the Military* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 260.

the gender-integrated, All-Volunteer Force. The transition to a career-oriented, all-volunteer force and inclusion of women influenced a culture shift in the perception and support of the Army family. To highlight this challenging and ever-evolving process, the following thesis includes a summary, survey, and assessment of changes and progress from the 1973 to 2016; a description of the Army family and its influence on readiness; and discuss the initiatives and recommendations for the Army of the future. Though there are various types of military families, such as sole parents and same-sex couples, this study focuses on the dual-professional, to include dual-service, modern family structure which emerged from the increased integration of women into the labor force.

This study is organized thematically into four chapters. Chapter 2 chronicles the evolution of the military recognition of family concerns from the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783) to the advent of the All-Volunteer Force in 1973. It provides historical perspective on how the dependence on a conscripted force led to the initial characterization of the Army's attitudes toward families as "neglectful, informal, piecemeal, and reactive."<sup>34</sup> Additionally, it describes the revolution of women in the workforce, outlining two critical roles women assume in the military: the soldier and the spouse. This chapter provides the foundation for the assessment of changes and progress of the relationship between the Army and its families.

Next, Chapter 3 provides a historical summary of the integration of women into the Army from 1948 to 2016. Using the parameters of the Women's Service Integration Act of 1948, this chapter depicts the barriers women overcame to achieve equal service to

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<sup>34</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 2003, 1.

that of men. Additionally, this chapter highlights the significant cultural barrier of gendered norms in the military and society. It examines the work-family conflict from the perspective of women service members, revealing the reconciliation of a military career and a family life negatively impacts the retention of women.

Chapter 4 then analyzes the interdependent relationship between the military institution and family institution revealing the “[readiness] of the Army depends on the [readiness] of its soldiers and their families.”<sup>35</sup> The chapter defines the Army and the family as greedy institutions in competition for the total commitment of the soldier. It explores how the gendered norms present in the military shaped the Army’s response to retain soldiers through the family policies, programs, and initiatives focused on a traditional family structure. Additionally, this chapter illustrates how women in the workforce dramatically changed the structure of the military family, increasing conflict between the two greedy institutions.

Finally, Chapter 5 examines how the preceding chapters led to a review of the Army’s commitment to its people. It examines *The Army People Strategy* and emerging policies and programs focused on the retaining the best talent through quality of life. The chapter concludes with the author’s recommendations to reexamine the gendered culture of the military to ensure the policies and programs established will not be rejected upon implementation.

Today, the United States Army recognizes that the commitment and resilience of military families are essential to the recruitment, retention, and readiness of its service

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<sup>35</sup> Harrison and Laliberte, “Gender, the Military, and Military Family Support,” 41.

men and women.<sup>36</sup> As the Army recommits to a “People First” philosophy, it must examine its cultural assumptions of the role the Army family assumes in the readiness of the force. During the Army’s transition from a steady state of decentralized combat to a longer-term strategic competition, it is imperative to review the historical precedent, assess progress, renew commitment, and focus on the work that remains to be done.<sup>37</sup> The first body chapter of this study reviews the historical precedent of the Army’s attitudes and policies towards military families.

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<sup>36</sup> Joining Forces Interagency Policy Committee, *Strengthening America’s Military Families* (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2021), 1.

<sup>37</sup> John C. Wickham, “Army Wives: Partners and Leaders,” (Address, Army Officer Wives of Greater Washington Luncheon, Washington, DC, April 18, 1985).

## CHAPTER 2

### CONSCRIPTION TO ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE

The relationship between the United States Army and its families has evolved throughout its history. Since its founding, the United States has largely depended on volunteers to fill the ranks of the armed forces. However, when voluntarism failed to provide the required quota of personnel to fight large-scale wars, the U.S. government turned to conscription.<sup>38</sup> Conscription appeared in many forms and under various names through the years, but the principal eligibility requirements largely remained the same: male, unmarried, age range from 18-45, with limited compulsory service. These principal eligibility requirements focused on recruiting, enlisting, and sustaining a predominantly male, bachelor army. The short-term enlistments of primarily bachelor-conscripts enabled the U.S. Army to ignore establishing policies involving care for families. Although the U.S. government offered pensions to family members of service members as early as the nineteenth century, it was the transition to the All-Volunteer Force in 1973 that ushered in radical change regarding families and policy. The All-Volunteer Force drastically transformed the gender composition and, subsequently, the family demography of the armed forces.<sup>39</sup> This chapter provides a historical overview of how America's dependence on a conscripted force affected its attitude to the family as an institution and

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<sup>38</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 19.

<sup>39</sup> Segal and Segal, "Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States," 226.

how the Army's relationship with the Army family evolved with the transition to a professional, all-volunteer force.

Prior to the American Revolutionary War, the colonies under British rule maintained a strong and efficient militia system in which "...every able-bodied man, within prescribed age limits, who was required by compulsion to possess arms, be carried on musters rolls, train periodically, and be musted into service for military operations whenever necessary."<sup>40</sup> This system soon degraded as the colonists' antipathy grew against the British Empire. Among the complaints against the British, colonists also resented and feared the standing army. To fight the war against the British, the newly-created Continental Congress established a volunteer force in which the national Continental Army directly competed with the state militias in recruitment.<sup>41</sup> The recruiting efforts for the Continental soldiers were surprisingly dismal compared to the "short-term enlistments and high bounties" of the militias.<sup>42</sup> Anxious to fill the ranks of the Continental Army, Congress enacted several successive bounties and additional grants for soldier enlistments. Additionally, Congress imposed quotas on the states. To meet the quotas, the states continued to motivate enlistment through patriotism and rewards, but as a last resort resorted to coercion by enacting the draft. Though the details of the draft varied by state, the primary principles of impartiality, selection by lot, and

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<sup>40</sup> Marvin A. Kreidberg and Merton G. Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army 1775-1945* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1955), 3, <https://history.army.mil/html/books/104/104-10/index.html>.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

unmarried men, established the standards of the selective service.<sup>43</sup> The Revolutionary War demonstrated the necessity for conscription when voluntarism failed and established the foundational principles of the selective system.

The Revolutionary War also influenced the earliest relationship between the United States military and its family members. At its inception, the American military gave no consideration to the policies in providing for the families of soldiers, whether during their service or after their death. There was an underlying assumption that soldiers would care for the needs of their families without the oversight or involvement of the military.<sup>44</sup> Though the conscripted soldier during the Revolutionary War was most likely unmarried due to the parameters of the draft, the married volunteer faced difficulty providing for the needs of their family. According to historians Bruce Bell and Robert Iadeluca in their report, *The Origins of Volunteer Support for Family Programs*, family members could receive half rations for wives and quarter rations for children by marching with the troops and providing essential services. These services included cooking, sewing, cleaning, medical care, servicing weapons, and any type of service support required by the troops.<sup>45</sup> Recognized as “camp followers,” these women became

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<sup>43</sup> Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army 1775-1945*, 15.

<sup>44</sup> Bruce D. Bell, and Robert B. Iadeluca, “The Origins of Volunteer Support for Army Family Programs,” (Research Report 1456, U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, Fort Belvoir, VA, 1987), 5, <https://ellisarchive.org/sites/default/files/2021-09/The-Origins-of-Volunteer-Support-for-Army-Family-Progra.pdf>.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

the first combat service support elements providing essential services to the troops.<sup>46</sup> In 1794, twelve years following the Revolutionary War, the United States Army first acknowledged its responsibility to the military family by providing cash payments to widows and orphans of fallen officers and subsequently to non-commissioned officer families in 1802.<sup>47</sup>

The recruitment and enlistment practices during the early-nineteenth century resembled that of the Revolutionary War. The United States Army was divided in two factions: the state militia and the Regular Army. As both governments relied on voluntarism to fill their ranks, there was increased competition between the two factions. The Regular Army continued to struggle to meet enlistment quotas as volunteers opted for the more desirable “shorter enlistment and higher bounty” offered by the state governments.<sup>48</sup> The War of 1812 highlighted this conflict. The mobilized state militias were untrained or unused so often due to the brevity of military contracts that the federal army struggled to maintain a fighting force.<sup>49</sup> Though national military policies remained against conscription, Founding Fathers, such as James Monroe argued for a federal selective service to secure manpower in times of war. Monroe’s proposal outlined a

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<sup>46</sup> Doreen Drewry Lehr, “Military Wives: Breaking the Silence,” in *Gender Camouflage: Women and the U.S. Military*, ed. Francine D’Amico and Laurie Weinstein (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 118.

<sup>47</sup> Sondra Albano, “Military Recognition of Family Concerns: Revolutionary War to 1993,” *Armed Forces & Society* 20, no. 2 (Winter 1994), 284, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/45346580>.

<sup>48</sup> Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army 1775-1945*, 47-50.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 52-53.

federal draft that applied to all male citizens between the ages of 18 and 45 and contained most of the principles for the federal selective service system that would emerge in the twentieth century.<sup>50</sup>

In this relative time of peace, the United States continued to rely on voluntarism through a “small professional army of the federal government” that served as the military infrastructure for militias and volunteers to be called upon.<sup>51</sup> The United States utilized this small, volunteer army in its expansion of the western frontier. As soldiers were deployed out to the isolated frontier posts, many army officer wives and children accompanied their soldier as they moved out west.<sup>52</sup> Due to the lack of formal support for families, frontier wives bonded together, inspiring “the tradition of volunteerism and mutual support that survives to this day as a core component of military family support programs.”<sup>53</sup>

Female volunteerism was not limited to the expanding frontier but was also seen in cities during peacetime and war. The role of female volunteerism emerged as the Industrial Revolution reshaped and defined the gendered roles of society. The Industrial Revolution introduced the ideology of the doctrine of separate spheres in which labor roles for men and women were separated into the public (men) and private (women)

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<sup>50</sup> Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army 1775-1945*, 53-54.

<sup>51</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 21.

<sup>52</sup> “Those Who Served: The U.S. Army on the Frontier,” National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, accessed December 20, 2021, <https://nationalcowboymuseum.org/explore/served-u-s-army-frontier/>.

<sup>53</sup> Albano, “Military Recognition of Family Concerns,” 285.

spheres.<sup>54</sup> In her work, “Ideologies on Women in Nineteenth Century Britain, 1850-70s,” Sudesh Vaid describes how the ideology “depends on the premise that women were radically dissimilar to men,” reinforcing the notion that women were morally superior and meant to run households and raise families.<sup>55</sup> Women’s entry into the public sphere was facilitated by the volunteer movement. Women volunteered in local charities, the church, and organizations such as the American Red Cross.<sup>56</sup> This tradition of female volunteerism shaped the relationship between the Army and wives of soldiers for generations. The ideal Army spouse remained domesticated in the home, caring for the children, and volunteering to support their soldier and the Army.

During the time of the Mexican War (1846-1848), militia service became voluntary.<sup>57</sup> In 1847, Congress reinforced the ethos of bachelor army by enacting a law prohibiting married men from enlisting, reducing the number of military families.<sup>58</sup> This volunteer, bachelor army structure continued until the immense pressures for manpower of the Civil War resulted in the first national draft in America’s history.<sup>59</sup> The significance of conscription during the American Civil War is that both sides, the United

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<sup>54</sup> Sudesh Vaid, “Ideologies on Women in Nineteenth Century Britain, 1850s-70s,” *Economic and Political Weekly* 20, no. 43 (1985): WS65, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4374971>.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>56</sup> Albano, “Military Recognition of Family Concerns,” 285.

<sup>57</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 21.

<sup>58</sup> Albano, “Military Recognition of Family Concerns,” 285.

<sup>59</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 21.

States, and the so-called Confederacy, recognized that voluntarism would not supply the necessary manpower to win the war. Even though “conscription was...contrary to the spirit of the people” it was necessary to provide the manpower for the fight.<sup>60</sup> The Enrollment Act of 1863, also known as the Conscription Act, echoed the compulsory service requirements of wars previously: all eligible male citizens, ages of 20 to 45, with authorized exemptions for personal or family considerations.<sup>61</sup> This act bypassed the authority of the states and demonstrated the authority of the federal government to directly draft eligible men into the national army. Though unpopular as evident by the confederate states backlash or the Union draft riots, the Civil War draft provided the critical lessons to refine the principles and standards of a future federal draft.

In support of the Civil War effort, many wives departed the private sphere and organized as volunteers to care for the soldiers.<sup>62</sup> They performed relief work and nursed wounded soldiers, demonstrating the proficiency and professionalism in organizing volunteers on large scale.<sup>63</sup> At the start of the Civil War, there were no organizations of trained nurses. Several women, such as Florence Nightingale and Clara Barton, laid the

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<sup>60</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 22.

<sup>61</sup>“The Conscription Act: The Bill for Enrolling and Calling Out the National Forces, and for Other Purposes,” *New York Times*, February 19, 1863, <https://www.nytimes.com/1863/02/19/archives/the-conscription-act-the-bill-for-enrolling-and-calling-out-the.html>.

<sup>62</sup> Albano, “Military Recognition of Family Concerns,” 286.

<sup>63</sup> Bell and Iadeluca, “The Origins of Volunteer Support for Army Family Programs,” 2-3.

foundation for modern nursing concepts and trained nursing care during this period.<sup>64</sup> Women demonstrated the clear need for trained nursing care to support the administrative tasks of physicians and, most importantly, help with the social and psychological needs of servicemen.<sup>65</sup> The advent of these volunteer organization demonstrated the patriotic sense of duty the Army wives exemplified, despite the lack of formal care or recognition from the Army. Furthermore, the wives exhibited the commitment and moral fortitude to identify critical needs of military families and established the Women Relief Corps in 1883.<sup>66</sup> The Women Relief Corps, organized by spouses of Civil War veterans, provided aid to veterans and their families following the war. The war and post-war volunteer efforts of Army wives were essential to the military; however, the Army policies continued to discourage marriage by denying the right to separate housing, free family transportation, and denying the reenlistment of married soldiers.<sup>67</sup>

Since the Civil War, the U.S. has maintained a volunteer federal military force and National Guard to fight and defend the nation. However, as World War I erupted in Europe, America was faced with the challenges of raising a large scale, wartime army. Though the guiding strategy of President Woodrow Wilson reflected the traditional American ideology of an all-volunteer force, the policies passed by Congress reflected

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<sup>64</sup> Stanley B. Burns, MD, "Nursing in the Civil War," Essay, Mercy Street, *PBS*, accessed January 13, 2022, <http://www.pbs.org/mercy-street/uncover-history/behind-lens/nursing-civil-war/>.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> Bell and Iadeluca, "The Origins of Volunteer Support for Army Family Programs," 2-3.

<sup>67</sup> Albano, "Military Recognition of Family Concerns," 286.

the realities and necessities of war.<sup>68</sup> The National Defense Act of 1916 outlined in detail the requirements of the Regular Army and most importantly, formally “nationalized” the National Guard forces for the first time.<sup>69</sup> Less than a year later, Congress enacted the Selective Service Act of 1917. Like previous drafts, the new Selective Service law required all men, ages 18 to 45, register for the draft and be classified for service.<sup>70</sup> The classification system subcategorized the eligibility of service into five Classes: Class I included those where there was no obstacle for immediate enlistment; Class II, III, IV included those whose occupation or domestic status delayed their enlistment; and Class V included those physically unfit or totally unavailable for service.<sup>71</sup> Though the law did not provide opportunities for bounties or substitution, it did provide deferments based on occupation, physical fitness, or dependency.<sup>72</sup> Of 17,593,868 men classified, 6,964,229 men were granted deferments for dependency, accounting for 40% of the classified population and 62 percent of all deferments in World War I.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 24.

<sup>69</sup> Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army 1775-1945*, 192.

<sup>70</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 24.

<sup>71</sup> Kreidberg and Henry, *History of Military Mobilization in the United States Army 1775-1945*, 265-267.

<sup>72</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 24.

<sup>73</sup> U.S. Provost Marshal General’s Bureau and U.S. War Department, *Final Report of the Provost Marshal General to the Secretary of War on the Operations of the Selective Service System to July 15, 1919* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1920), 20, [catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002019902](http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002019902).

Table 1. Deferments and Exemptions in World War I

Category	Number	Percent
Total	17, 593,778	100.0
Number Held for Service	6,373,414	36.2
Number Deferred or Exempted	11,220,364	63.7
Agricultural Deferments	506, 815	2.89
Dependency Deferments	6,964,229	39.6
Industrial Deferments	317,570	1.81
Aliens	1,467,319	8.33
In Armed Forces	722,335	4.11
Physically Disqualified	925,878	5.27
Other Deferments	316,223	1.80

*Source:* U.S. Provost Marshal General’s Bureau and U.S. War Department, *Final Report of the Provost Marshal General to the Secretary of War on the Operations of the Selective Service System to July 15, 1919* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1920), 20, [catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002019902](http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/002019902).

In reducing the number of married men to serve, the dependency deferment illustrated the government’s priority of maintaining a traditional family structure while also reducing the fiscal responsibility of support for dependents. Even with the high rate of dependency deferments, the Selective Service Act was able to produce the required number of mostly single men to the military services until the end of the war. The opposition toward enlistment or reenlistment of service members with wives or children was reflected in Army policies until 1942.<sup>74</sup> As the war continued, it became evident that Congress needed to enact some appropriate legislation under which families would be

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<sup>74</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983.

provided.<sup>75</sup> In October 1917, the 65th Congress established the first nationwide Family Allowance system, which provided payment of family allowances to senior enlisted men.<sup>76</sup> With the conclusion of World War I the Army demobilized, and conscription ended.

Following World War I, Congress passed the National Defense Act of 1920 to reorganize the United States Army and prepare for the mobilization of the military in the event of a future emergency.<sup>77</sup> Twenty years later as World War II began in Europe, Congress resurrected the selective service system and passed the first peacetime draft in American history. The Selective Service Act of 1940 paralleled the draft during the World War I. It required all men between ages 21 and 36 to register, reissued deferments, and held national lotteries to call upon and train.<sup>78</sup> Shortly after the United States entered the war in December 1941, the manpower needs led the Army to establish the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC), which opened clerical, intelligence, communications, and other noncombat specialties to women.<sup>79</sup> An effort led by Congresswoman Edith Rogers; the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps was established to "free a man to fight"

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<sup>75</sup> Harry Grossman, "Administration of Family Allowances for Men in Military Service," *Cornell Law Review* 29, no. 2 (1943): 220, <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/clr/vol29/iss2/7>.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 26.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Stur, "Men's and Women's Liberation," 144.

while also gaining recognition of women's service to the war effort.<sup>80</sup> Though women served as nurses in the Army Nurse Corps since the 1900s, the establishment of the WAAC was one of the greatest gender-changing events in American history. It created an opportunity for women to demonstrate their irrefutable contributions to the success of the Army. In many ways, the WAAC policies reverberated the bachelor army lifestyle. The enlistment of women into the WAAC was restricted to unmarried women, with no dependents, between the ages of 21 and 45.<sup>81</sup> Those who did become pregnant during service were discharged.<sup>82</sup> The auxiliary status of the WAAC resonated the conscripted force ideology that women's presence in the Army was temporary.

Despite serving in the same military roles as men, women were not granted full military status and benefits until 1943 when the WAAC transformed into the Women's Army Corps (WAC).<sup>83</sup> As the draft and manpower policy excluded some Americans through the classification and deferment processes, it also set out to protect the family institution. World War II draft legislation declared "the maintenance of the family as a

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<sup>80</sup> Women in the Army, "Creation of the Women's Army Corps," U.S. Army, accessed May 5, 2022, <https://www.army.mil/women/history/wac.html>.

<sup>81</sup> Judith A. Bellafaire, *The Women's Army Corps: A Commemoration of World War II Service* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 2005), <https://history.army.mil/brochures/wac/wac.htm>.

<sup>82</sup> Mattie E. Treadwell, *The Women's Army Corps* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1954), 507-508, <https://history.army.mil/books/wwii/wac/index.htm>.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

unit is of importance to the national well-being,” placing married men with dependents into a deferred classification.<sup>84</sup>

As the war ensued, the manpower needs made it impossible to exclude married soldiers and efforts to provide for their families commenced. The Servicemen’s Dependent Allowance Act of 1942 provided for the payment of family allowances by the United States Government to the dependents of enlisted men in the armed forces.<sup>85</sup> The Army created a classification scale and a “chief support” test to determine the dependability of the family member and their associated family allowance rate.<sup>86</sup> The classification scale was divided into two classes. Class A dependents include wives, children and former wives divorced but not remarried. Class B and Class B-1 dependents which include parents, brothers, and sisters must demonstrate a substantial portion of their support is reliant on the soldier.<sup>87</sup> Upon the integration of the Women’s Army Corps in 1943, Congress extended the Servicemen’s Dependents Allowance Act of 1942 to the eligible service women, however not equitably. For husbands of a WAC service member to receive family allowance, the “chief support” test was applied to determine if the dependent was reliant upon the service woman for chief support.<sup>88</sup> In other words,

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<sup>84</sup> Beth Bailey, *America’s Army: Making the All-Volunteer Force* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 9.

<sup>85</sup> Grossman, “Administration of Family Allowances for Men in Military Service,” 220.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 220.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.

service women had to prove the dependency of their husband or spouse as opposed to the automatic dependent status of a male service member's wife and children, and for that matter ex-wife. Once proven, the family allowance rates were identical to those of enlisted men. The figure below depicts the family allowance rates by classification.

<sup>11</sup>A comparison of the old and the new rates for family allowances is as follows:

Dependent	Old	New
Wife	\$50	\$50
Wife and 1 child	62	80
Wife and 2 children	72	100
Additional children (each)	10	20
Child but no wife	42	42
Additional children but no wife (each)	10	20
Wife divorced	42	42
Wife divorced and 1 child	62	72
Additional children wife divorced (each)	10	20
1 parent (dependent for chief support):		
Where there is no Class A dependent	37	50
Where there is Class A dependent	20	50
1 parent (dependent for substantial support):		
Where there is no Class A dependent	37	37
Where there is Class A dependent	20	37
2 parents (dependent for chief support):		
Where there is no Class A dependent	47	68
Where there is Class A dependent	30	68
2 parents (dependent for substantial support):		
Where there is no Class A dependent	47	37
Where there is Class A dependent	30	37
1 parent and 1 brother or sister (dependent for chief support):		
Where there is no Class A dependent	42	68
Where there is Class A dependent	25	68
1 parent and 1 brother and sister (dependent for substantial support):		
Where there is no Class A dependent	42	37
Where there is Class A dependent	25	37
Additional brothers or sisters (each):		
Dependent for chief support	5	11
Dependent for substantial support	5	None

Figure 1. A Comparison of the Old and the New rates for Family Allowances

Source: Harry Grossman, "Administration of Family Allowances for Men in Military Service," *Cornell Law Review* 29, no. 2 (1943): 223, <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/clr/vol29/iss2/7>.

Prior to World War II, unit commands informally addressed family emergencies through local volunteer efforts of military spouses, the United Service Organization, and

the American Red Cross.<sup>89</sup> These organizations discovered soldiers and their families experiencing “problems of adjustment to the financial strains, family separations, and emotional burdens” that accompany the life of a soldier in war.<sup>90</sup> As the need for military family assistance increased, the national resources provided by these non-profit organizations were stressed.

Government officials soon identified the Army required its own agency to support the welfare of soldiers and their families. In 1942, the Secretary of War, Henry Stimson, directed the organization of the Army Emergency Relief as a private, nonprofit organization to collect and administer funds to relieve distress among Army soldiers and their families.<sup>91</sup> The success of the Army Emergency Relief was its ability to capitalize on Federal, State, county, and private agencies resources to relieve distress of soldiers and their family members determined its permanence as an Army program. The establishment of Servicemen’s Dependent’s Allowance Act and Army Emergency Relief characterized the Army’s reactive and ad hoc approach to addressing the needs of families.<sup>92</sup> Benefits and services came into existence piecemeal and evolved over time to meet the needs of the soldiers and their families.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, 2.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

At the conclusion of World War II, Congress ended the draft and began to demobilize the wartime armed forces to include the Women's Army Corps. As men and women were discharged, the Army faced the challenge of maintaining a competitive, volunteer force to complete the global occupations and deterrent missions accompanying the victories of World War II.<sup>94</sup> This challenge was short-lived as the cold war loomed and the inability to recruit enough men for an all-volunteer force led President Harry Truman to request for a peacetime draft.<sup>95</sup> In 1948, due to their wartime success and the need for military manpower, Congress passed the Women's Armed Services Integration Act authorizing women to permanently serve in the military, albeit constrained.<sup>96</sup> The combination of draftees, volunteers, and the Women's Army Corps provided the United States Army with a ready army in the event of a national emergency during the cold war era.

The Post-War era witnessed the reconstruction of the American family as critical to the foundation of reestablishing the national identity. Out of the war emerged the nuclear family in which a gendered based division of labor emphasized the woman's role is to focus on "creating a successful home, one which will exemplify all of the principles of democratic living desired by the community and the nation."<sup>97</sup> This gendered based

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<sup>94</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 26.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Bettie J. Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, U.S. Army, 1990), 55, <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015018852163&view=1up&seq=75&skin=>.

<sup>97</sup> Allan C. Carlson, *The Family in America: Searching for Social Harmony in the Industrial Age* (New York, NY: Routledge, July 12, 2017), 115, Books on Google Play.

family construct was prevalent across the United States Army. The United States Army constructed welfare systems that transformed the family members to “military dependents,” ultimately reducing their status as members of society to be dependent on the soldier.<sup>98</sup> In 1953, the Wickenden Study identified the lack of social services available to the military family as a significant problem.<sup>99</sup> This study coupled with President Dwight Eisenhower’s committee to study housing conditions in 1953 stimulated a series of military family policies to address the housing problems, education and childcare for children, and insurance for families in the event of a soldier’s death.<sup>100</sup> As the need for a large-scale army in peacetime remained, it was near impossible to retain a bachelor army. In 1960, the number of family members outnumbered the service members, and the growing needs of the families outpaced the established programs.<sup>101</sup>

This growing sense of isolation from civilian society and the sole dependency on the military created by the military lifestyle, compounded the family issues impacting the readiness of army organizations. This dynamic led to the establishment of an umbrella organization of family services, the Army Community Service (ACS) in 1965.<sup>102</sup> The

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<sup>98</sup> Laurie Weinstein, “Introduction,” in *Wives and Warriors: Women and the Military in the United States and Canada*, ed. Laurie Weinstein and Christie C. White (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1997), xviii.

<sup>99</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, 4.

<sup>100</sup> Bell and Iadeluca, “The Origins of Volunteer Support for Army Family Programs,” 10.

<sup>101</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, 4.

<sup>102</sup> Bell and Iadeluca, “The Origins of Volunteer Support for Army Family Programs,” 10.

establishment of ACS was two-fold. First, it provided a central location for essential services for military families. Army Regulation 608-1, *Army Community Service* outlines the services which are included:

1. Provision of information, referral to Army and non-Army agencies, and follow up services for soldiers and their families.
2. Financial planning and assistance.
3. Relocation services (e.g., household items, in a lending closet for emergency use and orientation/welcome packets).
4. Help with handicapped children.
5. Child advocacy programs.
6. Child support services.<sup>103</sup>

Second, it provided an outlet for the military spouse to enter the public sphere and connect with the community through volunteerism. According to Bell and Iadeluca, it was assumed that organized volunteer groups of dependents (e.g., wives and other adult dependents) would provide most of the needed personnel support.<sup>104</sup> This assumption established the Army's interdependent relationship with the military spouse.

The selective services system's validity was in question in the 1960s and 1970s, in response to the Korean and Vietnam wars respectively. The public perception of the inequities of conscription led to studies on how to reform the selective service system and

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<sup>103</sup> Bell and Iadeluca, "The Origins of Volunteer Support for Army Family Programs," 18.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

the feasibility of an all-volunteer draft.<sup>105</sup> In 1966, two separate advisory panels, The Marshall Panel to advise the President and the Clark Panel to advise Congress, were established to study and report the issues with the current conscript system.<sup>106</sup> Though these panels agreed on “the idea of a volunteer force as too expensive,” they did not agree on the fundamental issues with the current system stalling the wanted reform.<sup>107</sup>

Following his election in 1969, President Richard Nixon charged the Secretary of Defense Thomas Gates, Jr. to set up a commission and “develop a plan for eliminating conscription and moving toward an all-volunteer force.”<sup>108</sup> The President’s Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force determined an all-volunteer force to be not only feasible, but largely like the conscripted force of 1970. Gates asserted the current force was mostly volunteers and that an all-volunteer force “will not produce a major change in the personnel of our armed forces; the men who serve will be quite similar in patriotism, political attitudes, effectiveness.”<sup>109</sup> The Gates Commission further recognized that the shift to an all-volunteer force would shift the culture of the Army. Volunteers, instead of conscripts, were more likely to re-enlist and commit to a career in the Army. Therefore,

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<sup>105</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 28.

<sup>106</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 32.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>108</sup> “Statement Announcing Appointments of the President’s Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force,” Richard Nixon, March 27, 1969. <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/238771>.

<sup>109</sup> President’s Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force, *The Report of the President’s Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1970), 12.

policies and procedures must adapt to consider the impact of a soldier's family and overall quality of life.<sup>110</sup> However, the Gates Commission failed to consider the impact women volunteer service members would have on the Army culture and family institution.

The final decision to transition to the All-Volunteer Force was made on March 21, 1973, when Secretary Elliot Richardson announced the expiration of the draft induction authority on July 1, 1973.<sup>111</sup> The All-Volunteer Force had important implications for the family policies and demography of the American military. Shaped by the social trends of the 1960s and 1970s, the Army evolved into a married, professional family institution. Though families were always associated with the Army, the All-Volunteer Force forced the Army to recognize the impact families played in mission readiness.

In 1983, ten years after the transition to the All-Volunteer Force, the Army Chief of Staff, General John Wickham described the Army's relationship with its military families as one that "moved from studied neglect, through ambivalent and selective inclusion of families in the military community, to a sense that the development of family philosophy is an institutional imperative."<sup>112</sup> General Wickham's attitude to shift focus to the readiness and retention of families was radical for his time. His historic document, *The Army Family*, captured the interdependence of the military and its families. General Wickham asserted the competition between the family and Army demands had altered the

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<sup>110</sup> President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force, *The Report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force*, 141.

<sup>111</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 183.

<sup>112</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, 1.

way the Army perceives its role in relation to military families.<sup>113</sup> Without explicitly defining the two institutions as greedy, General Wickham described how the modern All-Volunteer Force, and its families continued to adapt to the social trends of American society, influencing the competition and demands between the two institutions. As the demands of the military increased and the military family patterns evolved, the conflict between these two greedy institutions continued to rise.<sup>114</sup>

Furthermore, the evolution of the military family altered the demands of the military family institution. The traditional family structure was joined by a variety of nontraditional family structures, each with their own unique challenges and demands. General Wickham identified the Army's failure to adapt to these nontraditional family structures and commissioned studies and programs to address the readiness gap.<sup>115</sup> Studies revealed families embodied the "questioning, activist nature" of the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s and were more practiced at identifying and advocating for their needs.<sup>116</sup> The changing dynamics of the military family and the more vocal nature of their demands shaped the Army's focus on family support programs. The modern military family of the 1980s meant an increase in the percentage of soldiers who are married and have families, increase in nontraditional families; demands for equal

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<sup>113</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, 1.

<sup>114</sup> Rene Moelker, Manon Andres, Gary Bowen, and Philippe Manigart, *Military Families and War in the 21st Century: Comparative Perspectives* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2015), 23, Books on Google Play.

<sup>115</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, 21.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

rights in parenting, demands for quality childcare, demands for stability in an otherwise unstable career, demands for career development assistance for Army spouses and accommodation of families in which the jobs of both husband and wife are considered equally important, and political sophistication of Army families that organize at grassroots level to form self-help and advocacy groups to address needs directly with leadership.<sup>117</sup> The next chapters discuss how the integration of women further changed the character and capabilities of the military and how the Army adapted policies and programs to support military families from 1973 to 2016.

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<sup>117</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, 9-10.

## CHAPTER 3

### WOMEN IN THE MILITARY

The integration of women into the All-Volunteer Force shaped the character and capabilities of the military. The social changes in civilian society such as changes in gender norms relating to family and work created space for women's increased military participation. Although, women have played a critical role throughout the history of the military, the integration of women into the All-Volunteer Force has been scrupulously slow. The integration of women into the Army introduced a family structure the Army was not prepared to support.

The Women's Armed Forces Integration Act of 1948 set the tone for women's service in the United States Army. Though it recognized women as an "integral part of the permanent Army establishment, it failed to give them status equal to that accorded to men."<sup>118</sup> The Integration Act enacted several restrictions that shaped the military's gender equality fight for decades to come. It imposed a 2 percent ceiling on women's service in the total force, set differing enlistment standards and dependency entitlements for men and women, automatically discharged women for pregnancy and parenthood, established separate promotion systems from men, restricted promotion at the rank of lieutenant colonel, prevented women from holding command authority over men, and established the combat exclusion law.<sup>119</sup> These gender limits impacted the opportunity for women's participation in the military and extended to the twenty-first century. Over

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<sup>118</sup> Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978*, 56.

<sup>119</sup> Bailey, *America's Army*, 141.

the next sixty years the conditions established by the Integration Act were examined, debated, and changed as the role of women in the military transformed. The advent of the All-Volunteer Force in 1973 set in motion the radical change in gender composition to initiate true integration of women into the armed forces.

The Integration Act established the Women's Army Corps as a separate organization of the Army where all women, regardless of occupation, served.<sup>120</sup> This differed from the assignment of male soldiers, who were assigned to a particular branch of the Army based on military occupational specialty.<sup>121</sup> In creating a separate organization for women, the Army established its own doctrine of spheres relegating women to a subservient role to the male dominant organization. Additionally, the 2 percent ceiling on women's service resulted in higher enlistment standards for women. Women were required to be at least twenty-one years of age, of good moral character, and could not have any dependents or children under the age of eighteen.<sup>122</sup> These standards contrasted with the male enlistment standards where men were required to be at least eighteen years of age and had no limitations on their dependents.<sup>123</sup> Limiting the role of women provided Congress an opportunity to retain the strength of the military

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<sup>120</sup> Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978*, 56.

<sup>121</sup> Therese M. Strohmer, "Soldiers, Not Wacs: How Women's Integration Transformed the Army, 1964-1994," (Ph.D. diss., University of North Carolina, 2016), 19, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

<sup>122</sup> Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978*, 56.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

force while determining, through experimentation, how to best utilize women in the military.<sup>124</sup>

While women would receive the same base-pay, health care, and opportunities for retirement as men, gender discrimination in enlistment and dependency benefits remained a barrier for many servicewomen.<sup>125</sup> Husbands of WAC members were required to demonstrate dependency to receive family benefits automatically granted to the wives of servicemen. Access to housing, commissary privileges, health care, and other benefits were denied to civilian husbands unless proven unable to provide as the head of the household.<sup>126</sup> This cultural assumption of gender roles was exacerbated further by the pregnancy and parenthood discharge policy. In 1951, President Truman enacted Executive Order 10240 permitting services to discharge servicewomen who had a natural or adopted child under eighteen, was a stepmother of a child who lived in her household more than thirty days of the year or was pregnant.<sup>127</sup> Under this legislation, civilian women who wished to enter the services were forced to give up legal custody of their children. In comparison, Congress provided married men with children a monthly family allowance for his wife and each child.<sup>128</sup> This military practice and policy reinforced the American value of the family institution by ensuring “no woman would face the conflict

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<sup>124</sup> Binkin and Bach, *Women and the Military*, 10.

<sup>125</sup> Albano, “Military Recognition of Family Concerns,” 290.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 290.

<sup>127</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 137.

<sup>128</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 578.

between career and family; according to military leaders, family trumped everything else for women.”<sup>129</sup>

Career opportunities for women were circumscribed by the “brass ceiling” structured from the prohibitions of the Integration Act.<sup>130</sup> Congress established a “separate but equal” promotion system in which women could promote to a finite number of positions above the rank of lieutenant colonel.<sup>131</sup> In competing in a separate promotion system, women often aged out to retirement before reaching the highest rank of lieutenant colonel in the Women’s Army Corps. As women were not allowed to serve higher than the rank of lieutenant colonel and excluded entirely from the flag rank of general, women had little influence in military policy beyond the advisory role related to women’s service.<sup>132</sup> Though the Integration Act excluded women from holding key positions such as command or combat roles, women were arguably more diversified than their male officer counterparts. Without disrupting their career patterns, women were more easily assigned to “branch immaterial” positions enhancing their knowledge and skills across the Army.<sup>133</sup> However, without the option of equal training, equal opportunities, and

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<sup>129</sup> Tanya L. Roth, “An Attractive Career for Women: Opportunities, Limitations, and Women’s Integration in the Cold War Military,” in *Integrating the U.S. Military: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation since World War II*, ed. Douglas Walter Bristol, Jr., and Heather Marie Stur (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 86.

<sup>130</sup> Strohmer, “Soldiers, Not WACS,” 38.

<sup>131</sup> Morden, *The Women’s Army Corps, 1945-1978*, 56.

<sup>132</sup> Strohmer, “Soldiers, Not WACS,” 21.

<sup>133</sup> Morden, *The Women’s Army Corps, 1945-1978*, 129.

equal experiences, women were not always regarded as part of the team.<sup>134</sup>

Servicewomen were seen as interchangeable and temporary. By limiting the career progression and promotion opportunities for women, Congress reinforced the gender norms of male dominant power.

Combat exclusion remained the most polarizing debate of gender integration. It illuminated the military's attitude towards women: indispensable in times of crisis, yet disposable in times of peace.<sup>135</sup> The combat exclusion laws emerged from the congressional debate of the permanence of women's service in the military amidst the passing of the Women's Armed Forces Integration Act in 1948. The notion was the United States must "have the full use of the total personnel power of the nation," but that women would only want to serve in the feminine roles of administration or clerical work.<sup>136</sup> This traditional, gendered mindset legally banned women of the Air Force and Navy from serving in combat roles. However, absent from the statutes was the Army. Unlike the Air Force and Navy, the Army could not clearly define the parameters of ground combat. This lack of definition led to the Army's total control of its personnel policies on the utilization of women.<sup>137</sup> The Army's interpretation of the combat exclusion legislation implied that "(1) no women engage in combat-related occupations; (2) no women were assigned to direct combat units, and (3) limits are set on the extent to

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<sup>134</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 27.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

which women can participate in all other units.”<sup>138</sup> This understanding and total control of its policies would allow the Army to delay the integration of women over the next several decades. Though political and military senior leaders were in accordance, that the Army cannot succeed without women, they were not synchronized on how to break down the resistance towards women.<sup>139</sup>

One of the first efforts to evaluate personnel policy related to women in military service was the establishment of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS).<sup>140</sup> Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall established DACOWITS in 1951 to “provide advice and recommendations on matters and policies relating to the recruitment, retention, employment, integration, well-being, and treatment of servicewomen in the Armed Forces.”<sup>141</sup> On November 8, 1967, DACOWITS achieved its first step for military women’s equality when President Johnson signed Public Law 90-130. The legislation removed the 2 percent ceiling on the number of women allowed on active duty, lifted the promotion cap of lieutenant colonel, and opened positions for women to general and flag ranks.<sup>142</sup> Since its formation, DACOWITS forced the

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<sup>138</sup> Binkin and Bach, *Women and the Military*, 104.

<sup>139</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 18.

<sup>140</sup> William A. Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy: From World War II to the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2016), 136.

<sup>141</sup> “Welcome,” Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), accessed February 26, 2022, <https://dacowits.defense.gov/Home/>.

<sup>142</sup> Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy*, 137.

consideration of expanded opportunities for women in the military service and fought hard to eliminate the inequities in existent policies.

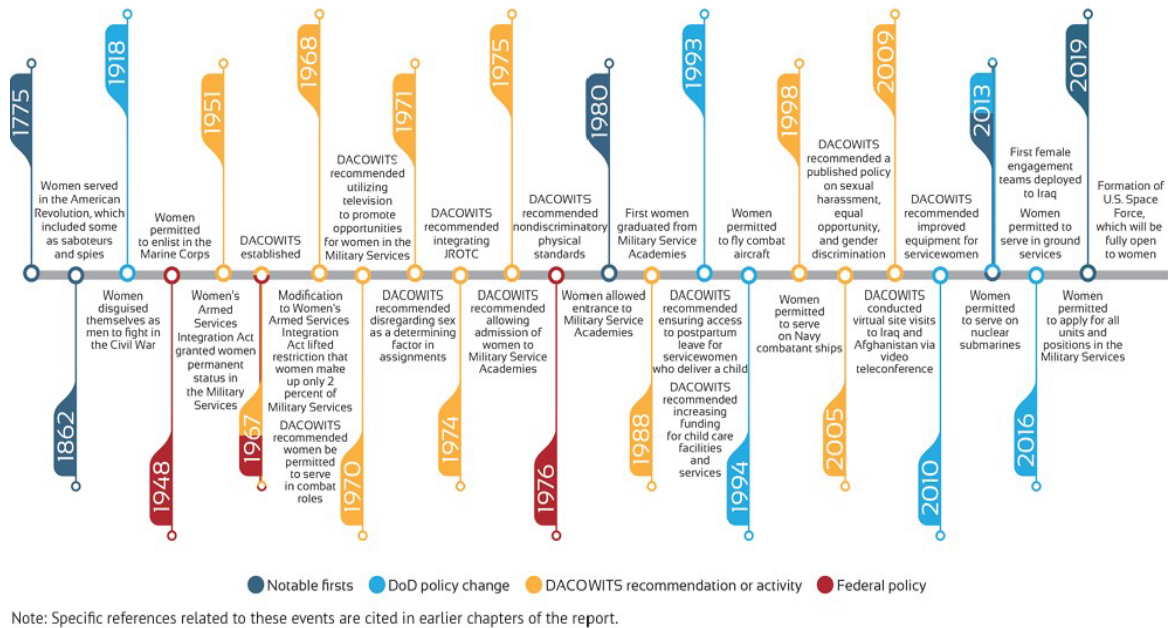


Figure 2. Timeline of Selected Milestones, DoD Policies, Passage of Federal Laws, Notable Firsts, and Associated DACOWITS Recommendations

Source: Secretary of Defense Federal Advisory Committee, *A Historical Review of the Influence of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) From 1951 to Present: A 70-Year Review* (Arlington, VA: DACOWITS, December 2020), 52.

As depicted in Figure 2, even though progress was slow and incremental, DACOWITS was present in nearly every moment of change for women in military service.<sup>143</sup>

The 1970s served as a pivotal period of change for women in the United States Army. While many women viewed military service as a viable career, the restricting

<sup>143</sup> Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy*, 136.

practices and policies from the 1948 Women's Armed Services Integration Act limited their future service.<sup>144</sup> The separate Women's Army Corps restricted servicewomen to jobs on the basis of their sex such as administrative and clerical jobs that were representative of "traditional female career roles."<sup>145</sup> Unequal job opportunities, legitimized by the combat exclusion laws, led to "the separate and lesser military status that bred the host of other gender-specific problems...from sexual harassment to stalled careers."<sup>146</sup> Furthermore, the pregnancy discharge policy ensured a woman's career to be temporary. This policy forced the choice between career or family, and with the Army in control, the choice was to discharge women in support of the traditional family. The social movements of the 1970s coupled with the onset of an all-volunteer, professional army sparked the gender revolution that would transform the role of women in the military. The women's liberation movement sought to expand the rights, opportunities, and identities available to women, eliminating the doctrine of separate spheres.<sup>147</sup> When Senator Patrick Moynihan predicted "that female equality will be a major cultural / political force in the 1970s," he could not foresee the changes to come.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Michelle Sandhoff and Mady W. Segal, "Women in the U.S. Military: The Evolution of Gender Norms and Military Requirements," in *The Modern American Military*, ed. David M. Kennedy, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2013), 78.

<sup>145</sup> Roth, "An Attractive Career for Women," 84.

<sup>146</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 27.

<sup>147</sup> Alix Kates Shulman and Honor Moore, "A Brief History of Women's Liberation Movements in America," Literary Hub, February 19, 2021, <https://lithub.com/a-brief-history-of-womens-liberation-movements-in-america/>.

<sup>148</sup> Daniel P. Moynihan, Memorandum For The President (The White House, Washington, DC, August 1969), <https://cdn.nixonlibrary.org/01/wp-content/uploads/>

Within the first year of office, President Nixon appointed two commissions that would impact the role of women in the military: the President’s Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force and Selective Service Reform—the Gates Commission, and the Women’s Task Force on Rights and Responsibilities. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the Gates Commission recommended to end conscription and move to an all-volunteer force under three recommendations: 1) raise military pay, 2) improve the conditions of military service and recruiting, and 3) establish a standby draft system.<sup>149</sup> Though there was no mention of women in the report, the shift to an all-volunteer force caused the services to examine their manpower and readiness. Additionally, the Women’s Task Force on Rights and Responsibilities called for the “national commitment to basic changes that will bring women into the mainstream of American life.”<sup>150</sup> These changes included the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment and the demand for gender equality in all aspects of life. Though these two commissions on the surface seem to have no relation, they proved to motivate the political and military leaders to respond to the inequities of military policy in relation to servicewomen. Two years later, President Nixon demonstrated his commitment to gender equality when he promoted COL Anna Mae Hays, Chief of the Army Nurse Corps, and COL Elizabeth P. Hoisington, Director of Women’s Army

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2017/08/04151852/August-1969-Memo-from-Moynihan-about-women-becoming-a-major-political-force.pdf.

<sup>149</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 87.

<sup>150</sup> Presidential Task Force on Women’s Rights and Responsibilities, *A Matter of Simple Justice: The Report of the President’s Task Force on Women’s Rights and Responsibilities* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, April 1970), III.

Corps, to the rank of Brigadier General.<sup>151</sup> This representation at flag officer level inspired hope and confidence in the political leaders to bring the necessary changes for gender equality.

In parallel to the presidential commissions, the Army established its own staff study to research the impacts of the draft reform and shift to an all-volunteer force. The task force's primary concern was manpower and readiness. It projected with the elimination of the draft and the effects of the Vietnam War, there would be a shortage of eligible and willing men to volunteer for military service.<sup>152</sup> How then was the Army to "attract by voluntary means the number and quality of personnel needed" to sustain an all-volunteer force?<sup>153</sup> The Army turned to the Women's Army Corps. In late 1972, Secretary of the Army Robert F. Froehlke approved General Beth Bailey's "Plan to Improve WAC Recruiting and Retention" in which he expanded the WAC strength, opened all military occupational specialties to women, except those that might require combat training or duty, and removed the ban on women commanding units with men.<sup>154</sup> The decision to expand the Women's Army Corps and their roles was twofold. First and foremost, women were seen as the most economical way to fill the projected manpower shortfall of the All-Volunteer draft.<sup>155</sup> The latest competition with the labor market saw a

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<sup>151</sup> Women in the Army, "A Time of Change (1970-1978)," U.S. Army, accessed May 5, 2022, <https://www.army.mil/women/history/wac.html>.

<sup>152</sup> Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy*, 137.

<sup>153</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 147.

<sup>154</sup> Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978*, 273.

<sup>155</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 561.

decrease of male volunteers who were unwilling to settle for the lower military salary. Whereas women were attracted to military service because the low military salary was comparatively higher than that of what would be earned in the civilian sector.<sup>156</sup> Second, it demonstrated the Army's commitment to support the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution which passed through Congress, March 1972.<sup>157</sup> The task force study preempted Assistant Secretary of Defense Roger Kelley's directive to "eliminate all unnecessary [restrictions] applying to women" and implemented policy changes reflective of the American society's social changes.<sup>158</sup>

The move from the draft to the All-Volunteer Force in 1973 produced a radical change in the gender composition of the armed forces.<sup>159</sup> The increase of women and the expansion of their roles in the military highlighted the discriminatory practices under the current Integration Act. Though many of the discriminatory policies had been modified by the Secretary of the Army, the unequal dependent benefits and entitlements and the combat exclusion law continued to prevent women from obtaining the opportunities naturally afforded to men.<sup>160</sup> The women's liberation movement and the build-up to the All-Volunteer Force emphasized these inequalities. Women were breaking barriers in the male-dominant career fields and realizing their voice had an impact on the social justice

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<sup>156</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 561.

<sup>157</sup> Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy*, 278.

<sup>158</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 562.

<sup>159</sup> Segal and Segal, "Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States," 226.

<sup>160</sup> Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy*, 278.

and equality deserving to all. As more women were recruited and trained, the Army had to shift focus to retention. Between 1973 and 1980, the Army adapted several policies to remove institutional barriers that restricted women's service.

The current dependent policies limited women from pursuing a military career and maintaining a family. During the fall conference of 1968, DACOWITS recommended the Defense Department "study the definition of spouse of the Women in the Service and dependents of Women in the Service" and "provide equality of treatment for married women members of the uniformed Services."<sup>161</sup> This recommendation extended to the dual-service couples to receive joint domicile and separate basic allowance for quarters.<sup>162</sup> These and several additional recommendations sought to eliminate the inequities of the family support policies for servicewomen. Under pressure to maintain readiness and to equalize the treatment of servicewomen, the Army began to repeal the restrictive family policies. By 1973, the Supreme Court eliminated the different requirements for women to receive benefits for their spouses in the noteworthy Supreme Court case, *Frontiero v. Richardson*.<sup>163</sup> The Supreme Court assessed the differing qualifications criteria for men and women military spousal dependency violated the Fifth

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<sup>161</sup> "DACOWITS History of Recommendations-Fall Conference 1968," Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), accessed February 26, 2022, <https://dacowits.defense.gov/Home/Documents/1968-Fall/>.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> *Frontiero v. Richardson*, 411 U.S. 677 (1973).

Amendment's Due Process Clause and the equal protection requirements it implied.<sup>164</sup>

This historical case elevated women to equal enlistment and benefit standards.

To appease the Department of Defense (DoD) while retaining involuntary discharge authority for pregnancy and parenthood, the Army implemented modifications to the current policy. In 1971 the Army began to grant waivers for women to remain on active duty while pregnant or for parenthood, expand the maximum postpartum absence to six weeks, and ensured commanders counseled servicewomen on their dependent care plans in the event of an absence or deployment.<sup>165</sup> However, these changes did not meet the intent of the DoD's initiative to eliminate all inequalities of men and women in service. In a counterargument, the Army outlined its concern surrounding the retention of pregnant women. The perceived lost and cost of time for pregnancy, postpartum recovery, or other complications was the issue.<sup>166</sup> According to a 1978 Deputy Chief of Staff Personnel study, "Evaluation of Women in the Army," showed that the average amount of time lost in carrying a pregnancy to full term was 105 days.<sup>167</sup> The cost for time lost due to pregnancies was estimated at \$10,762,150.<sup>168</sup> Conversely, the DoD conducted a study which compared the loss of time of enlisted men and women. The study indicated that enlisted men had a higher rate of lost time due to desertion, AWOL,

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<sup>164</sup> *Frontiero v. Richardson*, 411 U.S. 677 (1973).

<sup>165</sup> Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978*, 309-310.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 310.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

or alcohol and drug abuse compared to the enlisted women for pregnancy and medical care.<sup>169</sup> Despite its efforts to retain the involuntary discharge authority, the Army lifted the ban on pregnancy in 1975, and established a voluntary separation pregnancy policy.<sup>170</sup> The hard-won fight for women in uniform to enjoy the same family lives as men moved the services from the traditional bachelor force to a married force with children.<sup>171</sup>

One turning point in a woman's career is the opportunity for progression. The current combat exclusion laws stunted the professional growth of women in the services as it did not provide equal opportunity to excel and receive promotion to that of a man. In addition to benefits, entitlements, and family support, the DACOWITS studied and provided recommendations on gender equality and integration. The most notable which would stimulate the debate to appeal the combat exclusion law occurred in the Spring of 1974. The committee recommended allowing the admission of women to the Military Service Academies.<sup>172</sup> The issue of expanding the opportunities for women to attendance to the nation's military academies was perceived by senior military leaders as directly related to the established combat exclusion law.<sup>173</sup> The Army's Vice Chief of Staff, General Frederick Weyand, encapsulated the opposition in his testimony:

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<sup>169</sup> Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978*, 310.

<sup>170</sup> Roth, "An Attractive Career for Women," 86.

<sup>171</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 138.

<sup>172</sup> Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy*, 147.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

As I view it, the issue of whether women should become cadets at West Point is tied directly to the basic question of whether Americans are prepared to commit their daughters to combat. I am not prepared to do that. And I hope that that is the sentiment of most Americans.

The Military Academy has, indeed, the distinctive and necessary mission of educating and training [and] preparing...officers for combat roles.

As long as it is the desire of our people, expressed through Congress, that women not be employed in combat roles or positions, it seems to me that it would be a waste of a scarce and costly resource to divert any of the Academy's capabilities to a secondary and lesser mission.<sup>174</sup>

The amendment permitting women to enter the military academies passed resoundingly. On October 7, 1975, President Ford signed Public Law 94-106 allowing women to be admitted to all the service academies, and on July 7, 1976, 119 women joined the Corps of Cadets at the United States Military Academy at West Point.<sup>175</sup> Four years later, 62 women would graduate as members of the Class of 1980 becoming the first female members of the Long Gray Line.<sup>176</sup> The admittance of women into the academies and the continued expansion of women's roles in the armed forces

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<sup>174</sup> *Hearings on H.R. 9832, to Eliminate Discrimination Based on Sex with Respect to the Appointment and Admissions of Persons to the Service Academies and H.R. 10705, H.R. 11267, H.R. 11268, H.R. 11711, and H.R. 13729 to Insure that Each Admission to the Service Academies Shall Be Made Without Regard to a Candidate's Sex, Race, Color, or Religious Beliefs*, 93rd Cong., 2nd sess., July, 1975, 166.

<sup>175</sup> Brandon OConnor, "Forty Years have passed since the first women graduated from West Point in the Class of 1980," U.S. Army, May 2020, [https://www.army.mil/article/235994/forty\\_years\\_have\\_passed\\_since\\_the\\_first\\_women\\_graduated\\_from\\_west\\_point\\_in\\_the\\_class\\_of\\_1980](https://www.army.mil/article/235994/forty_years_have_passed_since_the_first_women_graduated_from_west_point_in_the_class_of_1980).

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

demonstrated a strong congressional support. However, despite the appeals and amendments it left the combat issue unresolved.<sup>177</sup>

Thirty years after the Women's Integration Act of 1948, Congress determined women could not be fully integrated unless it dissolved the separate corps status of the Women's Army Corps. On October 20, 1978, Congress passed Public Law 95-485 disestablishing the Women's Army Corps.<sup>178</sup> Five years after the establishment of the All-Volunteer Force, the United States began to the task to integrate women into the force. These victories were short lived as women continued to leave the Army at a higher rate than men. The limitations on career caused by the combat exclusion law and the demands on the modern military family without proper support remained the institutional barriers that impacted retention of women.

After several years of rapid evolution, the pace of change slowed and the number and role of women in the armed forces was called into question again.<sup>179</sup> Upon election in 1981 President Reagan sought to build up the nation's defenses and "told the services to support actively an increased role for military women."<sup>180</sup> Simultaneously, the Army announced its decision to pause its recruitment of women and cap enlisted women strength to 65,000.<sup>181</sup> This decision raised immediate concern in Congress and almost

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<sup>177</sup> Binkin and Bach, *Women and the Military*, 44.

<sup>178</sup> Morden, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978*, 397.

<sup>179</sup> Binkin and Bach, *Women and the Military*, 31.

<sup>180</sup> Sadler, "From Women's Services to Servicewomen," 45.

<sup>181</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 565.

immediately Deputy Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci requested a “joint assessment of...female officer and enlisted accession and retention policies on readiness and mission effectiveness.”<sup>182</sup> The study served two purposes. First it addressed the services concern of mission readiness. The Army’s concerns focused again on the attrition, pregnancy, sole parenthood, and physical capabilities of women. Second it reminded the services the viability of the volunteer force remained a priority. If the Army decreased its women’s accessions goals, what was the cost of recruiting additional males to meet the required strength determined?<sup>183</sup> During the “womanpause,” the Army resegregated basic training and closed some positions previously open to women.<sup>184</sup> On November 12, 1982, the Army published its long-awaited report, *Women in the Army Policy Review* which focused on the physical demands and direct combat probability (the combat exclusion policy). The report reassessed the number of enlisted women in the Army was able to use to 70,000, 5,000 above the “womanpause” number of 65,000, and reopened some jobs based on the direct combat probability coding.<sup>185</sup> Secretary of Defense Caspan Weinberger responded to the Army’s findings by reminding the services:

I want to state it again. It is the policy of this Department that women will be provided full and equal opportunity with men to pursue appropriate careers in the military services for which they can qualify. This means that military women can and should be utilized in all roles except those explicitly prohibited by combat exclusion statutes and related policy. This does *not* mean that the combat exclusion policy can be used to justify closing career opportunities to women The

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<sup>182</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 565.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, 566.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, 565.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, 569.

combat exclusion rules should be interpreted to allow as many as possible career opportunities for women to be kept open.<sup>186</sup>

By 1983, the debate over the utilization of women in combat roles continued.

Women now comprised 10 percent of the Army.<sup>187</sup> Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada tested the new assignment policies established and illuminated the challenges of the Army's combat exclusion policy. The initial deployment of U.S. personnel to evacuate American citizens from Grenada included four female service members assigned to military police duty; however, the women were sent back to their home station immediately.<sup>188</sup> Less than a week later, the female service members were again deployed and participated in operations beginning on November 2, 1983.<sup>189</sup> This confusion on how to utilize women amidst the current combat exclusion policy prompted the Department of Defense to define "combat mission" to establish a comprehensive assignment policy for women.<sup>190</sup> In 1988, the Secretary of Defense issued the "risk rule" to standardize the military's assignment policy of women.<sup>191</sup> The "risk rule" restricted women to only those noncombat support units where the risk of "direct combat, hostile fire, or capture" was

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<sup>186</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 569.

<sup>187</sup> Deputy Chief of Staff, Army G-1, "Active-Duty Army: Then and Now 1983-2003," (PowerPoint Presentation, Office of Army Demographics, April 2004), slide 8, <https://www.armyg1.army.mil/hr/demographics.asp>.

<sup>188</sup> Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy*, 150.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

less than the risk in the combat units that they supported.<sup>192</sup> Over the next years, Operation Just Cause-Panama in 1989 and Operation Desert Storm/Desert Shield in 1990 demonstrated that despite the risk rule, modern warfare had no clear differentiation of combat roles. Though women were not assigned to combat roles, their performance in combat brought to question what combat exclusion meant.<sup>193</sup> By 1992, women made up 11 percent of the active-duty force and continued to prove their worth through their performance. Considering their efforts in the Gulf War, President George Bush established the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces to reevaluate the combat exclusion clause.<sup>194</sup> In early 1994, the risk rule was rescinded and replaced by a new “Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule” directing 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...with individual or crew served weapons, while being exposed to hostile fire and to a high probability of direct physical contact with hostile force’s personnel.<sup>195</sup>

Over the next decades the Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule would serve as the basis for assignment of women in the Army. Women would continue to be tested during these operations, but it was no longer a question that women enhanced the combat readiness of the organizations.

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<sup>192</sup> Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy*, 150-151.

<sup>193</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 571.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 572.

<sup>195</sup> Secretary of Defense, Memorandum, Subject: Direct Ground Combat Definition and Assignment Rule (Department of Defense, Washington, DC, January 13, 1994).

September 11, 2001, marked another pivotal evolutionary date for Army women. The emergence of asymmetric warfare and nonlinear combat lines transformed the Army's mission on the battlefields in Iraq and Afghanistan. Where previously combat roles were distinguishable from noncombat roles, modern warfare made them indiscernible.<sup>196</sup> Women's service reached a high of 15 percent in 2003 as the Army began to transform to a modular force, focused on "smaller, interchangeable, and independent brigade combat teams."<sup>197</sup> The new design reassigned division assets such as engineers, medics, and support personnel, to be organic to the brigade combat team.<sup>198</sup> The transformation directly conflicted with the Direct Ground Combat Exclusion rule as many of the combat support positions were held by women. Transferring the job positions to brigade level or smaller hindered the Army's ability to fully employ its operational force. Even though the current policy prohibited the assignment of women to "units (battalion size or smaller) which are assigned a routine mission to engage in direct combat, or which collocate routinely with units assigned a direct combat mission", women inevitably served in combat.<sup>199</sup> Their presence and exemplary performance

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<sup>196</sup> Taylor, *Military Service and American Democracy*, 149.

<sup>197</sup> Scott Mills, "Women in the Army-Review of the Combat Exclusion Policy," (Strategy Research Project, U.S. Army War College, 2011), 8, <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA553212.pdf?msckid=a2f69650a89611ec801a927c9c81f57e>.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

<sup>199</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Army Regulation (AR) 600-13, *Army Policy for the Assignment of Female Soldiers* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 27, 1992), 1.

throughout the Global War on Terror, reignited the debate for elimination of the Direct Ground Combat Exclusion rule.

In 2008, the Global War on Terror campaign transmuted into a counterinsurgency operational environment. In a counterinsurgency environment, it was critical to win the hearts and minds of the population to eliminate the insurgent forces.<sup>200</sup> As cultural sensitivities prevented men from engaging with local women, the Army turned to military women to achieve mission success. The Army employed Female Engagement Teams attached to infantry units to conduct female search operations, run medical clinics, distribute humanitarian aid, and conduct engagements in Afghan homes.<sup>201</sup> The Army circumvented the combat exclusion policy by “attaching” these teams; therefore, military women were never “assigned” or in violation of the law. Military women that served in combat support units were also exposed to direct combat. Supply convoys, military police patrols, and other combat support roles received as much combat as maneuver units. Though women clearly served alongside combat units, whether on local patrols or contested supply convoys, women were not in combat because the Army, the Pentagon, and Congress said they could not be.<sup>202</sup> In 2009, the National Defense Authorization Act established the Military Leadership Diversity Commission to “conduct a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of policies that provide opportunities for the promotion and

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<sup>200</sup> Raymond T. Kareko, “Female Engagement Teams,” *NCO Journal* (October 2019): 1-5, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/NCO-Journal/Archives/2019/October/Female-Engagement-Teams/>.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>202</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 51.

advancement of minority members of the Armed Forces.”<sup>203</sup> The commission identified the combat exclusion policy as a “structural barrier” that prevented women from entering the tactical / operational career fields associated with promotion to flag/general officers and from attaining career-enhancing assignments.<sup>204</sup> In the midst of much debate, the Commission recommended the DoD and the Services should eliminate the combat exclusion policies for women as it was inherently discriminatory and no longer relevant to the operational environment of the twenty-first century.<sup>205</sup>

Finally, after sixty-five years of exclusion, women were integrated into the All-Volunteer Force. On January 24, 2013, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta announced the repeal of the combat exclusion policy.<sup>206</sup> Two years later, Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter directed the full integration of women, opening all military occupational specialties to women without exception.<sup>207</sup> The removal of combat exclusion policies opened opportunities for women that once were entirely unimaginable. In 2015, the first women graduated from Ranger School, in 2016 the first women graduated Infantry and Armor Basic Officer Leader Courses, and in 2017 the first gender-integrated Infantry

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<sup>203</sup> Military Leadership Diversity Commission, *From Representation to Inclusion: Diversity and Leadership for the 21st Century Military* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, March 2011), xiii.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

<sup>206</sup> Roth, “An Attractive Career for Women,” 86.

<sup>207</sup> Secretary of the Army, Memorandum, Subject: Army Directive 2016-01 (Expanding Positions and Changing the Army Policy for the Assignment of Female Soldiers), (Department of Defense, Washington, DC, January 29, 2016), [https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR\\_pubs/DR\\_a/pdf/web/ad2016-01.pdf](https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/ad2016-01.pdf).

One Station Unit Training graduated the first women Infantry noncommissioned officers.<sup>208</sup> Women were embracing the opportunity that was fought so hard for. Yet, as military women were breaking the glass ceiling, they continued to leave military service earlier in their careers than men.<sup>209</sup>

Another turning point in a woman's career is marriage and parenthood. The integration of women into the Army created a family structure that contrasted with the traditional military family structure. While military women were determined less likely to marry and have children than their male peers, those who chose to combine military career, marriage, and motherhood went to extraordinary lengths to make it work.<sup>210</sup> Despite the Army's best efforts, the family support systems for servicewomen trailed the initiative to retain women in service.<sup>211</sup>

Operation Desert Storm highlighted the increase in active-duty female service members deploying to combat and the readiness of their family structures. Active-duty female service member population increased from 9 percent in 1982 to 11 percent in 1990.<sup>212</sup> A total of 42 percent of female service members were married to a service

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<sup>208</sup> Women in the Army, "Post 9/11 (2001-Present)," U.S. Army, accessed May 5, 2022, <https://www.army.mil/women/history/wac.html>.

<sup>209</sup> Benjamin Ramsey, Ann Bednash, and John Folks, "Retaining Female Leaders: A Key Readiness Issue," *Joint Force Quarterly* 104 (1st Quarter 2022): 82.

<sup>210</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 142.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>212</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 2003, 16.

member distinguishing them as a dual-service couple.<sup>213</sup> Conversely only 7 percent of married male service members were part of dual-service couples.<sup>214</sup> The statistics reveal women had a higher propensity to enter a dual-service marriage than a traditional service member to civilian marriage. Though there were many benefits to dual-service marriages, there was also an underlying current of stress in family and career planning for dual-service families. “Can you be stationed together, or will you be geographic bachelors? What will happen to the children if you both deploy? How realistic are your childcare arrangements?”<sup>215</sup> To help alleviate this stress, the Army established the Married Army Couples Program in 1983. The program was designed to help ensure married soldiers are considered for joint domicile assignments.<sup>216</sup> Though the program assisted soldiers in managing their careers, it did not always guarantee assignment together. Despite the consideration, separation of dual-service couples due to assignments is more common than for other married military personnel.<sup>217</sup> Geographic separation coupled with deployments added to the stress. As most dual-service marriages are married military

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<sup>213</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 2003, 16.

<sup>214</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 Human Resource Policy Directorate, “Army Demographics FY01,” (PowerPoint Presentation, Demographics Branch, Fiscal Year 2001), <https://www.armyg1.army.mil/hr/docs/demographics/FY01ArmyProfile.pdf>.

<sup>215</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 142.

<sup>216</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Army Regulation (AR) 614-200, *Enlisted Assignments and Utilization Management* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, January 25, 2019), 46.

<sup>217</sup> Mady W. Segal, “The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions,” *Armed Forces & Society* 13, no. 1 (1986): 27, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45305754>.

women it results in a higher percentage of married military women were more likely than married military men to be separated from their spouses due to their military assignments. These statistics illustrate the disproportionate negative impact on the readiness of military women and their families.

Moreover, military couples had to take a more proactive approach to managing their careers to ensure there were contingencies for every career plan. In the event both military parents deployed, the Army ensured dual-service couples maintained a short-and long-term family care plan.<sup>218</sup> Family care plans provided a “temporary transfer of custody, powers of attorney for a named legal guardian” and other legal documents to ensure a safe and smooth transition for children.<sup>219</sup> Operation Desert Storm tested the family care plans and support systems maintained by the Army and found them wanting. In many cases, family care plans were not established or were not sufficient to respond to a rapid or contingency deployment.<sup>220</sup> A 2001 Morale and Quality of Life Study determined that the “family support system [had] not kept pace with the family structure. Nor [had] it kept pace with the higher aspirations and expectations of an increasingly better educated workforce and their families.”<sup>221</sup> Operation Desert Storm and subsequent deployments emphasized institutional and leader support provided to all soldiers and all family structures significantly impacted the readiness and retention of the force.

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<sup>218</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 142-143.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*, 143.

<sup>221</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 581.

Childcare became a readiness and retention issue for many women.<sup>222</sup> Upon integration into the force, women depended on informal local efforts or family members to provide childcare while in service to their nation.<sup>223</sup> As the proportion of military families in which both parents worked or served in the military increased, the demand for childcare overwhelmed the informal childcare system. By the 1980s, roughly half of all military members had one or more children below school age and 10 percent of military families had both parents serving in the military.<sup>224</sup> These demographics placed pressure on the DoD to expand the availability of childcare to military families.<sup>225</sup> In response to the demand for increased quality care, Congress passed the Military Child Care Act in November 1989.<sup>226</sup> This act served two purposes. First it addressed the need to improve the quality and increase the quantity of childcare services in the military. Second, it standardized the delivery and quality of care across installations.<sup>227</sup> In 2001, DACOWITS briefed the Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy) on efforts to increase childcare availability for military personnel. The Committee sought to expand childcare hours, increase number of facilities, and

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<sup>222</sup> Gail L. Zellman, Susan M. Gates, Michelle Cho, and Rebecca Shaw, *Options for Improving the Military Child Care System* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2008), 14, [https://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional\\_papers/OP217.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/OP217.html).

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, xvii.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

improve provider compensation and benefits by Fiscal Year 2003.<sup>228</sup> Despite the growth of the childcare system, access to military childcare remained limited. Many families, including dual-service families, remained on waiting lists from six to twelve months or were forced to seek childcare off post.<sup>229</sup> The pressure was greatest on dual-service couples. Dual-service couples faced unique challenges and experiences balancing mission and home responsibilities. Moreover, the reconciliation of a military career and family life impacted women much more than it did men. A 2019 Blue Star Family report revealed that “44% of female service member respondents with children reported lack of childcare was a top stressor, compared to 20% male service member respondents with children.”<sup>230</sup> Furthermore a recent survey in 2020 revealed the DoD could accommodate only 78 percent of demand for childcare services.<sup>231</sup> The absence of high-quality childcare continues to impact the readiness and retention of women disproportionately.

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<sup>228</sup> “DACOWITS History of Recommendations-Spring Conference 2001,” Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS), accessed February 26, 2022, <https://dacowits.defense.gov/Home/Documents/2001-Spring/>.

<sup>229</sup> Joy S. Mojni, Gail L. Zellman, and Susan M. Gates, *Providing Child Care to Military Families: The Role of the Demand Formula in Defining Need and Informing Policy* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2006), 30, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG387.html>.

<sup>230</sup> Kristy N. Kamarck, *Military Child Development Program: Background and Issues*, Congressional Research Service Report for congress R45288 (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, last updated March 19, 2020), 15, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/R45288.pdf>.

<sup>231</sup> Leo Shane III, “The Military’s Lingering Readiness Problem: Lack of Daycare,” *Military Times*, February 8, 2019, <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/pentagon-congress/2019/02/08/the-militarys-lingering-readiness-problem-lack-of-daycare/>.

As the Army slowly and deliberately removed the barriers established by the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948, it demonstrated a commitment to the integration of women into the All-Volunteer Force. However, the process revealed the remaining barriers of organizational culture and family policies served as the greatest impact on the readiness and retention of service women. The conversion to a professional, All-Volunteer Force and the integration of women transformed the family demography of the Army. The next chapter examines how the Army adapted policies and programs to address the growing needs of the modern military families.

## CHAPTER 4

### FAMILY READINESS IS ARMY READINESS

As the United States Army transitioned to an all-volunteer force in 1973, the demography of the force changed. The end of conscription and the conversion to a more professional, career-oriented military implied that personnel would remain in service longer, as they aged, they would marry and have children, increasing the proportion of the force that was married with families.<sup>232</sup> In this pivotal transition from bachelor army to a married professional force emerged a competing organization: the military family. As military culture assumed that military personnel were men, the average military family structure assumed a traditional family model oriented toward traditional gender roles.<sup>233</sup> However, over the years the All-Volunteer Force dramatically changed the structure of the military family as the proportion of active-duty women increased, especially those in dual-service marriages, and civilian wives of military men increased labor force participation, creating dual-professional couples.<sup>234</sup> While there are several other forms of nontraditional family structures such as sole parents and same-sex couples, this study focused on the gendered norms present in the dual-professional and dual-service nontraditional family structures and its impact on the readiness of its individuals.

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<sup>232</sup> Segal and Segal, “Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States,” 226.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*

As the military family emerged and transformed, the Army adapted policies and programs to retain the commitment of the soldier through its family.

The changing gender and family composition of the All-Volunteer Force reshaped the families' needs and altered the demand for Army quality of life and family-oriented services. The military and the family both make great demands on service members in terms of their commitment, loyalty, time, and energy, rendering both organizations as "greedy institutions."<sup>235</sup> Greedy institutions, as defined by Lewis Coser, are those which "seek exclusive and undivided loyalty...and attempt to reduce the claims of competing roles and status positions on those they wish to encompass within their boundaries."<sup>236</sup> The military fits the description of a greedy institution because it demands the complete devotion of individuals through their time, energy, and normative behaviors.<sup>237</sup> Service members swear an oath of allegiance and conform to strict regulations to govern their lives in and out of uniform. Despite having positions such as family roles outside of uniform, service members voluntarily comply with the restrictive lifestyle of the military. Greedy institutions, like the Army, "aim at maximizing assent to their styles of life by appearing desirably to the participants."<sup>238</sup> In addition to nonmonetary compensation

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<sup>235</sup> Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 11.

<sup>236</sup> Lewis A. Coser, *Greedy Institutions: Patterns of Undivided Commitment* (New York: Free Press, 1974), 4.

<sup>237</sup> Karen A. Brummond, "A 'Greedy' Institution with Great Job Benefits: Family Structure and Gender Variation in Commitment to Military Employment," (Master's Thesis, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2015), 6, <https://doi.org/10.7275/6925884> [https://scholarworks.umass.edu/masters\\_theses\\_2/183](https://scholarworks.umass.edu/masters_theses_2/183).

<sup>238</sup> Coser, *Greedy Institutions*, 4.

such as job security, medical care, allotments by family size, subsidized on base consumer facilities, and on base services such as schools and recreation, the Army offers a higher purpose for those who serve.<sup>239</sup> General Douglas MacArthur captured this undeniable commitment to service in his Sylvanus Thayer Award Acceptance Address in May 1962:

Duty, Honor, Country: Those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you ought to be, what you can be, what you will be. They are your rallying points: to build courage when courage seems to fail; to regain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith; to create hope when hope becomes forlorn.<sup>240</sup>

These words inspired service members to believe the military would provide more than an opportunity to be all you can be, but an opportunity to be elite. Furthermore, the devotion to a greedy institution weakened the service member's ties to any opposing or outside institution, like marriage and family, therefore strengthening the service member's commitment to the greedy institution.<sup>241</sup>

Another greedy institution which demands the complete devotion of the service member's resources of time and energy is the military family. Sociologist, Mady Wechsler Segal, in "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," asserts the "[traditional] families make different demands on different members...[and] the family is

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<sup>239</sup> Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 31-32.

<sup>240</sup> Douglas MacArthur, "Sylvanus Thayer Award Acceptance Address," (Delivered at West Point, NY, 12 May 1962), <https://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/douglasmacarthurthayeraward.html>.

<sup>241</sup> Marianne Egger De Campo, "Contemporary Greedy Institutions: An Essay on Lewis Coser's Concept in the Era of the 'Hive Mind'," *Sociologický Časopis/Czech Sociological Review* 49, no. 6 (2013): 971, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24642546>.

greedier for some members than for others.”<sup>242</sup> Coser expands this idea and claims that it is not the husband, but rather the wife that is burdened by the greediness of the family. Wives are expected to devote most of their time and energy to the family, enabling “men to be fully engaged in their occupation without fear of being accused of lack of devotion to their families.”<sup>243</sup> This greedy family dynamic was evident in traditional military families in the early advent of the All-Volunteer Force and throughout the twenty-first century. The traditional military family structure is defined as a male service member married to a civilian woman. This framework required the “unfettered availability” from male service members to the military institution, who in turn relied on their spouses to provide unlimited, unpaid domestic labor.<sup>244</sup> Wives provided logistic and personal support services that allowed male service members to remain committed to the demands of the military organization.<sup>245</sup> The most common service is childcare. A total of 41 percent of traditional military families rely on the civilian spouse to forego pursuing education and employment to provide childcare.<sup>246</sup> In this structure the conflict between the two greedy institutions was circumvented because the family adapted to the military’s demands.

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<sup>242</sup> Segal, “The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions,” 13.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>244</sup> Moelker et al., *Military Families and War in the 21st Century*, 34.

<sup>245</sup> Meredith Leyva, “Transforming the ‘Retention Sector’,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 38 (3rd Quarter 2005): 85, <https://ndupress.ndu.edu/portals/68/Documents/jfq/jfq-38.pdf>.

<sup>246</sup> Mojni et al., *Providing Child Care to Military Families*, 38.

However, conflict between these greedy institutions surfaced when the Army interfered with the fulfilment of male service member's relatively minimal family demands.<sup>247</sup> Segal highlighted "the demands [of the Army] vary in frequency and intensity...[and] over the course of a military career, a family can expect to experience all the specific demands."<sup>248</sup> These demands were identified in the *1992 Army Families and Soldier Readiness* RAND study found the unpredictable, long working hours, frequent rotations and separation from family, and the normative pressures of the spouse's roles in the military community directly impacted the readiness of the service members.<sup>249</sup> When the service member deployed, wives assumed the role of single parents, made family decisions alone and assumed all familial responsibilities. These burdens coupled with the normative pressure of appearing as the self-reliant military wife increased stress on the military family. When the family becomes frustrated with the greedy demands of the Army, the service member feels the impact logistically and emotionally.<sup>250</sup> This conflict affects the readiness of the service member as he must choose between two greedy institutions that demand his total allegiance. The retention of a service members devotion

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<sup>247</sup> Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 24.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>249</sup> M. Audrey Burnam, Lisa S. Meredith, Cathy D. Sherbourne, R. Burciaga Valdez, and Georges Vernez, *Army Families and Soldier Readiness* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1992), v-vi, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R3884.html>.

<sup>250</sup> Leyva, "Transforming the 'Retention Sector'," 85.

depended on the Army's ability to recognize the individual as a professional with competing demands from an equally greedy institution.<sup>251</sup>

As the Army shifted from a conscripted force to an all-volunteer, professional force, it began to increase its greedy demands which changed the interdependence between the military and families.<sup>252</sup> The recent Global War on Terror in Afghanistan and Iraq saw more frequent and longer deployments in comparison to prior deployments. Service members received minimal time to integrate with families prior to the training and deployment of another mission. At the same time, the Army became greedier, the traditional military family structure rapidly changed the definition of who constitutes a family, increasing the conflict between two greedy institutions.<sup>253</sup> The nontraditional military family structure challenged the assumed culture norm of the traditional model of a married heterosexual couple operating in traditional gendered roles.<sup>254</sup> The gender-diversity of the new All-Volunteer Force introduced a new modern family institution. The modern military family grew from an increase in women's participation in the labor market, active-duty mothers, and dual-service couples.<sup>255</sup> The modern military family is most simply defined as a nontraditional family structure. The two most common nontraditional family structures are the dual-professional family and the dual-service

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<sup>251</sup> Leyva, "Transforming the 'Retention Sector'," 84.

<sup>252</sup> Moelker et al., *Military Families and War in the 21st Century*, 23.

<sup>253</sup> Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 13.

<sup>254</sup> De Angelis, Smith, and Segal, "Military Families," 345.

<sup>255</sup> Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 13.

family. The dual-professional family is a service member married to a civilian participating in the labor market whereas the dual-service family is two service members who are married. These nontraditional family structures find themselves at odds with the military institution due to their polarizing demands between home and the workplace, and the military's dependence on the traditional family structure.<sup>256</sup>

As the Army adapted to its new organizational structure, the dual-professional family structure emerged in response to the social changes sparked by the women's liberation movement. Between 1964 and 1978, discrimination based on sex brought about sweeping policy changes allowing women to actively participate in the labor market. Several historic legislative acts which paved the path for women to pursue higher education and employment included the 1964 Title VII of the Civil Rights Act prohibiting sex discrimination in employment; the 1972 Title IX of the Education Amendments prohibiting sex discrimination in all education programs; and in 1978 The Pregnancy Discrimination Act banning employment discrimination against pregnant women.<sup>257</sup> As a result, military wives' participation in the labor market from 1970 to 1983 increased from 30.5 to 47.6 percent.<sup>258</sup> By 1984, the average American military service member was married with children and an employed spouse. The dual-professional family structure impacted the "hypermasculine military institution" by

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<sup>256</sup> Moelker et al., *Military Families and War in the 21st Century*, 35.

<sup>257</sup> Susan Milligan, "Stepping Through History: A Timeline of Women's Rights from 1769 to the 2017 Women's March on Washington," *U.S. News & World Report*, January 20, 2017, <https://www.usnews.com/news/the-report/articles/2017-01-20/timeline-the-womens-rights-movement-in-the-us>.

<sup>258</sup> Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 29.

redefining socially acceptable gender roles and behaviors in the military and its families.<sup>259</sup> As more civilian wives participated in the paid labor force, male military service members were expected to share a greater part of domestic responsibilities.<sup>260</sup> The increase of family demands directly challenged the normative gender roles instituted by the Army and increased the conflict between work and family demands for men.<sup>261</sup>

Additionally, the advent of the All-Volunteer Force led to a more gender-diverse force. The changes in the character of the Army, including personnel needs, civilian policies, and social norms regarding gender influenced women's participation in the military.<sup>262</sup> Between 1973 and 1980 the percentage of women increased dramatically from 1.6 to 8.5 percent.<sup>263</sup> The percentage of women continued to increase through the 1990s and capped at approximately 15 percent through the 2000s.<sup>264</sup> Active-duty women faced an increased work-family conflict, reflecting Segal's argument that the military family was "normatively greedier for women than men" regardless of career roles.<sup>265</sup> This expectation parallels the gendered expectations maintained by the Army creating a

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<sup>259</sup> Moelker et al., *Military Families and War in the 21st Century*, 60.

<sup>260</sup> De Angelis, Smith, and Segal, "Military Families," 345.

<sup>261</sup> Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 15.

<sup>262</sup> Sandhoff and Segal, "Women in the U.S. Military," 274.

<sup>263</sup> Carolyn Becraft, "Women in the Military (1980-1990)," *Women & Criminal Justice*, 4, no. 1 (1993): 137-154. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J012v04n01\\_07](https://doi.org/10.1300/J012v04n01_07).

<sup>264</sup> Deputy Chief of Staff, Army G-1, "Active-Duty Army: Then and Now 1983-2003," slide 8.

<sup>265</sup> Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 18.

greater work-family conflict for military women than for military men. The Army continued to place familial expectations on active-duty women which forced the choice between career and family. The cultural assumption of the Army was that women could not be fully committed to both roles of soldier and spouse/mother. In addition to balancing the greedy demands of the military institution, women faced the challenge of disestablishing normative gender roles placed on the military family. Civilian spouses were no longer solely wives, but also husbands.<sup>266</sup> The military neglected and struggled to integrate civilian husbands into the military community.<sup>267</sup>

Furthermore, dual-service marriages became more common with the integration of women. By 1998, dual-service marriages grew to 10.8 percent of all marriages. Dual-service couples encountered higher work-family conflict as both members navigated the challenge of balancing the greedy demands of the military against the normative gender family roles. As the proportion of women in dual-service marriages was higher than those of men, the effect of work-family conflict in dual-service couples impacted the readiness and retention of women disproportionately higher.<sup>268</sup> One of the top stressors identified and discussed in Chapter 3 was the lack of quality and available childcare.<sup>269</sup> This analysis supports Segal's assertion that the family is greedier for women than men. Thus,

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<sup>266</sup> Segal and Segal, "Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States," 227.

<sup>267</sup> Sofia K. Ledberg and Chiara Ruffa, "Military Families: Topography of a Field," in *Handbook of Military Sciences*, ed. A. Sookermany (Stockholm, Sweden: Springer Cham, 2020), 8, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02866-4\\_35-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02866-4_35-1).

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>269</sup> Ramsey, Bednash, and Folks, "Retaining Female Leaders," 85.

military women are likely to leave military service earlier in their careers than men because gendered norms maintain the woman, regardless of labor status, the primary caretaker.<sup>270</sup>

Even with the increased presence of active-duty military women and dual-professional and dual-service families, women felt pressured to accommodate certain social roles in line with the traditional family model, which the military institution favors.<sup>271</sup> Greedy institutions, like the Army, expect families to accommodate the work demands placed on the husband. The assumption that the male service member always has an immediate support system available for domestic responsibilities minimized the professional role of the employed civilian or active-duty military spouse. In addition to their professional roles, active-duty women and employed civilian spouses were compelled to provide essential services such as devoting significant amount of time to entertain, mentor, and socialize with other wives; help children adjust to new life settings upon relocations; and assuming domestic responsibilities at home.<sup>272</sup> When wives chose not to fulfill normative gendered labor roles in favor of their own careers, it increased the work-family conflict. The traditional family model created a unique disadvantage for the nontraditional family structures. Male service members in a dual-professional family structure were not able to maintain the same state of readiness as a counterpart in a traditional family structure. Similarly military women in a dual-service family structure

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<sup>270</sup> Ramsey, Bednash, and Folks, “Retaining Female Leaders,” 82.

<sup>271</sup> Moelker et al., 34.

<sup>272</sup> Harrison and Laliberte. “Gender, the Military, and Military Family Support,” 37.

or married to a civilian spouse were left to assume both traditional gendered roles of the professional and the spouse as there was no role expectations for their husbands.<sup>273</sup> The Army has been slow to adapt to the demands of the nontraditional military family increasing the conflict between the military and family institutions.<sup>274</sup>

The relationship between the greedy institution and the individual must be exclusive and does not tolerate competition. Segal emphasized for institutions to survive in the face of competing demands on individuals, they must develop coping mechanisms for motivating individual participation and commitment.<sup>275</sup> Between 1975 and 1985, in response to the demands of the military family, the Army commissioned several military family research studies to recommend family policies that would most influence the family's loyalty to the organization.<sup>276</sup> The Army recognized to retain the commitment of the soldier; it must recruit the family. The research studies revealed the greatest effect on the soldier's commitment was the wife's commitment to the Army.<sup>277</sup> If the wife became frustrated with the demands of the military lifestyle, the service member felt the

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<sup>273</sup> Moelker et al., 34.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>275</sup> Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 12.

<sup>276</sup> Harrison and Laliberte, "Gender, the Military, and Military Family Support," 41.

<sup>277</sup> Jennifer M. McFadyen, Jennifer L. Kerpelman, and Francesca Adler-Baeder, "Examining the Impact of Workplace Supports: Work-Family Fit and Satisfaction in the U.S. Military," *Family Relations* 54, no. 1 (2005): 134, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40005283>.

impact, often leading to a departure from the institution.<sup>278</sup> So, the traditional family became the building block of the whole military institution, emphasizing the “team” approach to service in the military.<sup>279</sup> The Army relied on what author, Hanna Papanek defined as the two-person career, “a combination of formal and informal institutional demands which is placed on both members of a married couple whom only the man is employed by the institution.”<sup>280</sup> The two-person career defined how the Army took the traditional military family model and co-opted the military wives. Civilian wives recognized their volunteer work as a critical component of their service member’s success. In this case, the two-person career emphasized the gendered ideal-worker as male and the ideal-caretaker as female.<sup>281</sup> This structure favored the Army as it puts more pressure on the service member resulting in the wife assuming the domestic responsibilities at home. The Army’s two-person career appropriated gender roles between the military and family, so that conflict resolved in favor of the military.<sup>282</sup>

The Army two-person career not only required the soldiers to be ready, resilient, and adaptive, but also their family. Wives must be willing, available, and able to perform

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<sup>278</sup> Leyva, “Transforming the ‘Retention Sector’,” 85.

<sup>279</sup> Laurie Weinstein, “Part 1: Wives,” in *Wives and Warriors: Women and the Military in the United States and Canada*, ed. Laurie Weinstein and Christie C. White (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1997), 2.

<sup>280</sup> Papanek, “Men, Women, and Work,” 852.

<sup>281</sup> Brummond, “A ‘Greedy’ Institution with Great Job Benefits,” 14.

<sup>282</sup> Moelker et al., 60.

roles vacated by the absent husband.<sup>283</sup> Military wives were encouraged to be active in the military community through their unpaid, volunteer work. Authors, Deborah Harrison and Lucie Laliberte detailed that in the gendered labor construct of the two-person career, it was assumed all military wives would: “(1) assume 100% of the couple’s domestic work and child care responsibilities...when her husband is away on deployments; (2) counteract the domestic destabilizing effects of her husband’s absences by not seeking, or awarding high priority to, her own paid employment; (3) relinquish her paid employment every time her husband is posted to a new place; (4) do most of the unpaid work associated with each new posting...and helping children adjust...; (5) fill the vacuum created by her weak affiliation with the labor market by performing cheap—and often volunteer—work on military bases; and (6) (in the case of senior officer [and enlisted] wives) devote a significant amount of time to entertaining, mentoring other wives, and representing the military in charity work.”<sup>284</sup> These presumed expectations placed on the military wives served as a dual function of reinforcing the commitment of the soldier while also benefiting from the services the wife provided.<sup>285</sup> This is not to say the volunteer work and support rendered by the military wife is forced or overlooked, but rather that it has become a luxury the Army depends upon. By recognizing the legitimacy of family demands, the Army built its family policies on the two-person career to ensure

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<sup>283</sup> Segal, “The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions,” 24.

<sup>284</sup> Harrison and Laliberte, “Gender, the Military, and Military Family Support,” 37-38.

<sup>285</sup> Papanek, “Men, Women, and Work,” 852.

both the service member and their spouse sustain mutually high commitment to both the military and the family institution.<sup>286</sup>

However, the elements of a two-person career presented major problems for the modern military family.<sup>287</sup> There was a higher level of work-family conflict due to the competing demands, and the Army's dependence on the traditional family model.<sup>288</sup> Though accepted as a norm in American society, dual-professional couples in the military culture were a minority demographic in the military. By 1998, 55 percent of the Army's total population was married.<sup>289</sup> Approximately 33 percent of the married population were married to an employed full-time civilian spouse, and 10 percent were in dual-services marriages.<sup>290</sup> Despite the change in social norms, the dual-professional lifestyle contradicts the traditional family norms of the Army.<sup>291</sup> Denise Skinner describes how the internalized "shoulds" regarding the traditional male and female roles conflict with the androgynous roles many dual-professional couples adapt, resulting in tension,

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<sup>286</sup> McFadyen, Kerpelman, and Adler-Baeder, "Examining the Impact of Workplace Supports," 134.

<sup>287</sup> Papanek, "Men, Women, and Work," 852.

<sup>288</sup> Moelker et al., *Military Families and War in the 21st Century*, 35.

<sup>289</sup> Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 Human Resource Policy Directorate, "Army Demographics FY98," (PowerPoint Presentation, Demographics Branch, Washington, DC, Fiscal Year 1998), <https://www.armyg1.army.mil/hr/docs/demographics/FY98ArmyProfile.pdf>.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> Denise A. Skinner, "Dual-Career Family Stress and Coping: A Literature Review," *Family Relations* 29, no.4 (October 1980): 473, <https://doi-org.lumen.cgsccarl.com/10.2307/584461>.

anxiety, and guilt, primarily in women.<sup>292</sup> This unspoken gendered expectation impacted women greater because of an internalized social construct that women must give primary allegiance to their families.<sup>293</sup> The modern military family struggled to manage their dual careers and family under the influence of military culture.<sup>294</sup> Dual-professional couples, to include dual-services, spent majority of their time and energy focused on creating individual solutions for career and family management as no institutionalized support existed.<sup>295</sup> Dual-services couples were challenged with the balance of deployment schedules, collocation of assignments, childcare arrangements, and work schedules, all while maintaining a high-level readiness in the Army.<sup>296</sup> Likewise, the challenge of relocation and employment restricted the career advancement of employed civilian wives in dual-professional couples. The stress and tension of managing two interdependent careers combined with family illustrated the inflexibility of the military institution.<sup>297</sup>

Furthermore, the two-person career was absent from the woman's perspective. There was no formal or informal institutional demand on the spouse of the military woman. Instead, it was an additional burden placed on the military woman to maintain the same level of commitment held by the military husband and civilian wife in the two-

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<sup>292</sup> Skinner, "Dual-Career Family Stress and Coping," 473.

<sup>293</sup> Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 14.

<sup>294</sup> Moelker et al., *Military Families and War in the 21st Century*, 60.

<sup>295</sup> Skinner, "Dual-Career Family Stress and Coping," 473.

<sup>296</sup> Segal, "The Military and the Family as Greedy Institutions," 28.

<sup>297</sup> Moelker et al., 64.

person career. Women in the military were challenged to overcome society's gendered occupational and familial norms amidst the Army's traditionally masculine culture.<sup>298</sup> They were under intense pressure to perform in their masculine occupational duties, remain true to their authentic feminine identities, and disestablish the gender norms of a woman's role as primary caretaker and domestic support.<sup>299</sup> Skinner highlighted in her review that the "continued existence of role conflict and overload strain are often at the expense of the woman's personal identity and career aspirations."<sup>300</sup> The greediness of the military and family institutions forced women to choose daily on where to place her time, energy, and commitment.

Additionally, the spouse role was no longer exclusively female. Husbands, whether civilian or dual-service, were introduced with the integration of women.<sup>301</sup> Even though husbands were supportive of a service member, they were not pressured by the military institution to uphold the supportive responsibilities expected in the two-person career construct. This double-standard added additional stress on the female service member to perform at a higher level with extra domestic responsibilities to remain competitive against her male peers. Consequently, the organizational culture led to women leaving military service earlier in their career than men.<sup>302</sup> Thus, military

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<sup>298</sup> Brummond, "A 'Greedy' Institution with Great Job Benefits," 6.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>300</sup> Skinner, "Dual-Career Family Stress and Coping," 477.

<sup>301</sup> Segal and Segal, "Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States," 227.

<sup>302</sup> Ramsey, Bednash, and Folks, "Retaining Female Leaders," 82.

readiness was directly impacted by the gendered expectations placed on the modern military family.

Military readiness was achieved when military policies, programs, and practices adapted to the social trends of the military family while military families adapted to military requirements.<sup>303</sup> Throughout the transformation, the married, professional force proved more stable than the bachelor, conscripted force due to the family support of service members and their commitment to the military.<sup>304</sup> Research on the relationship between mission readiness and family support of service members revealed the influence of the military family.<sup>305</sup> If the family was satisfied with the demands of the military lifestyle and military support system, soldiers were most likely to re-enlist, returning two-fold on the Army's initial investment.<sup>306</sup> Thus, the Army sought ways to improve the quality of life for service members and their families through family readiness and support programs.

The 1980s brought a cultural shift in how the Army acknowledged its families. Grassroot volunteer movements led by military spouses organized three Army Family Symposia in 1980, 1981, and 1982 to identify, discuss, and recommend solutions for military family problems with senior leaders.<sup>307</sup> Following the symposiums, the Chief of

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<sup>303</sup> Segal and Segal, "Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States," 232.

<sup>304</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 138.

<sup>305</sup> Albano, "Military Recognition of Family Concerns," 291.

<sup>306</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 138.

<sup>307</sup> Albano, "Military Recognition of Family Concerns," 291.

Staff of the Army, General John Wickham was the first to acknowledge the interdependence of the Army and its families in his landmark document, *The Army Family*, white paper in 1983. He identified the Army “as an institution, [that] has moral and ethical obligations to those who serve and their families; they correspondingly, have responsibilities to the Army.”<sup>308</sup> General Wickham identified the relationship between the Army and its family in the Army Family Philosophy:

A partnership exists between the Army and Army Families. The Army’s unique missions, concept of service and lifestyle of its members—all affect the nature of this partnership. Towards the goal of building a strong partnership, the Army remains committed to assuring adequate support to families to promote wellness; develop a sense of community; and strengthen the mutually reinforcing bonds between the Army and its families.<sup>309</sup>

By defining the relationship as a partnership, General Wickham established the foundation for the Army Family Action Plan.

The 1983 Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) established the process to review existing quality of life programs, develop a “coordinated, standardized, and functionally aligned family support system,” and create a forum to identify, discuss, and recommend “improvements in policy areas directly affecting families.”<sup>310</sup> Since 1983, the AFAP provided a platform to soldiers, civilians, and family members to voice quality of life issues to Army leadership. This process provided Army leadership with the knowledge of issues impacting the readiness of its formations and the opportunity to solve these issues at the lowest level. Since its establishment, over 700 issues have been raised to the

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<sup>308</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, v.

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-16.

<sup>310</sup> Albano, “Military Recognition of Family Concerns,” 29.

Department of the Army resulting in over 500 improvements for soldiers, families, and Army communities.<sup>311</sup> One of the early and recurrent issues of AFAP was childcare. For years military spouses and service members conveyed a variety of issues with military childcare including “unmet demand, inadequate staff training and low retention, lack of developmental care, inadequate facilities, and uneven quality of care.”<sup>312</sup> In the absence of quality childcare, military families reverted to the use of less qualified babysitters or unregulated home daycares.<sup>313</sup> This evidence surmounted to attest that the readiness, morale, and retention of our military force was impacted by the lack of quality childcare. In response to this crisis, Congress enacted the Military Child Care Act of 1989 which resolved of resourcing and policy issues standardizing and providing quality, accessible care to military families.<sup>314</sup> Though there remain issues with the military childcare, the enactment of the MCAA demonstrated the effectiveness of the AFAP process.

The Army Family Action Plan was simply one system to address family concerns. Another program established in the White Paper was the installation-based Army Community and Family Support Centers (CFSC). The CFSCs incorporated the Army

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<sup>311</sup> Army MWR, “Army Family Action Plan,” Army Family and MWR, accessed April 25, 2022, <https://www.armymwr.com/programs-and-services/personal-assistance/army-family-action-plan>.

<sup>312</sup> Gail L. Zellman, Anne Johansen, Lisa S. Meredith, and Molly Selvin, *Improving the Delivery of Military Child Care: An Analysis of Current Operations and New Approaches* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1992), ix-xiii, <https://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R4145.html>.

<sup>313</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO), *Military Child Care: Extensive, Diverse, and Growing* (Washington, DC: GAO, March 1989), 12, <https://www.gao.gov/assets/hrd-89-3.pdf>.

<sup>314</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 2003, 8.

Community Services Center programs, chaplains, lawyers, relief workers, and other social service specialists to provide information and counseling for military families.<sup>315</sup> Under this umbrella, family support groups emerged in the 1990s in response to Desert Storm. Organized by volunteer military spouses, the family support groups offered internal communications to disseminate information, routine meetings for social or information purposes, access to counseling, help with childcare, and responded to any other need of local military families.<sup>316</sup> These grassroots organizations were valued so highly during deployment, the XVIII Airborne Commander directed all his tactical units to form Family Support Groups.<sup>317</sup> By the mid-1990s, deployable units across the Army had family support groups which mirrored XVIII Airborne Corps. However, one of the primary issues with the family support groups was the variance across units and installations. There was no standardized program to benchmark “what right looked like.”<sup>318</sup> Recognizing the value of the Family Support Groups, the Army developed these grassroots organizations into a funded program known as the Family Readiness Group (FRG).<sup>319</sup>

The Family Readiness Groups reflected the Army’s philosophy of readiness. Military families were to be ready to overcome any challenge in the absence of their

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<sup>315</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 581.

<sup>316</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 2003, 10.

<sup>317</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>319</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

service member with reasonable military community support.<sup>320</sup> To enhance the Family Readiness Groups, the Army expanded through the CFSCs the Army Family Team Building Program which provided training to prepare soldiers, family members, and civilians educational classes to enhance readiness. Furthermore, the CFSC developed a leader handbook called, Operation READY (Resources for Educating About Deployment and You) in 1994 to assist FRG leaders in providing resources and support through deployment cycles.<sup>321</sup> The interdependence reflected in the integration of FRGs demonstrated the Army's reliance on the two-person career structure. Family Readiness Groups relied heavily on the volunteerism of family members. Officer spouses often assumed the role of FRG leader and formed social networks that provided economic aid, emotional support, and information brokering.<sup>322</sup> The demands for these services increased when the service member deployed, and the family stressed increased.<sup>323</sup> However, the nontraditional family structures conflicted with the cultural assumption that military families maintained the traditional family structure. As military spouses continued to increase participation in the labor market, the availability for volunteering in the Family Readiness Group decreased. Additionally, the assumption that all spouses were female, inadvertently ostracized some family members from the group, decreasing

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<sup>320</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 2003, 10.

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>322</sup> Barbara Marriott, "The Social Networks of Naval Officers' Wives: Their Composition and Function," in *Wives and Warriors: Women and the Military in the United States and Canada*, ed. Laurie Weinstein and Christie C. White (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1997), 28-29.

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

readiness. Even so, Family Readiness Groups became essential to the readiness of service members and their families.

Following September 11, 2001, the Army entered its longest protracted war. The Global War on Terror introduced a heightened operational tempo that impacted the readiness and resilience of the soldiers and their families. Military families were becoming frustrated with the demands of the military. In response to the tension, the Chief of Staff, General Eric Shinseki revisited the landmark document *The Army Family* in 2003. He provided a historical summary of the Army family since 1983; described the current Army Family; and recommitted the Army to uphold and increase the partnership between the military and its families.<sup>324</sup> Most importantly, this document highlighted that the “Army still loses or alienates too many soldiers because of family circumstances.”<sup>325</sup> General Shinseki recognized the current framework of the family programs did not address all the diverse family structures of the modern-day Army. His white paper outlined an updated Army Family Action Plan that continued successful programs, such as the Army Family Team Building and Family Readiness groups, and commissioned research and studies to prevent future family problems.<sup>326</sup> General Shinseki recommitted the Army to the readiness of all military families.

Notwithstanding this recommitment to the readiness of families, funding remained a challenge during period of increased military operations, a time when the

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<sup>324</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 2003, iii.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*

needs of families were greatest.<sup>327</sup> As unofficial and grassroots organizations emerged to fill the void, Military OneSource remained one of the premier services to assist service members and their families across the globe. Military OneSource served as an extension of the installation-based Army Community and Family Support Centers and provided service members, families, and civilians access to confidential support in person, online, or phone to a variety of services and resources.<sup>328</sup> These services and resources included Spouse Education and Career Opportunities, Family Life Counselors, medical and financial readiness. The availability and responsiveness of this program ensured every military family had access to support service no matter where the military family resides.<sup>329</sup>

Military family readiness, also referred to as quality of life, remained in the top three priorities of the U.S. Army, since the late 1980s.<sup>330</sup> Throughout the twenty-first century, the relationship between the two greedy institutions (the military and the family) has been researched, studied, and assessed to determine how to maintain the mission readiness of the All-Volunteer Force. Thirty years following General Wickham's Army Family Action Plan to "increase the bond between the family unit and the Army community," the DoD continued to adapt its military family readiness policies. In July of 2012, the DoD updated and reissued the DoDI 1342.22 "Military Family Readiness,"

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<sup>327</sup> Rotsker, *I Want You!*, 581.

<sup>328</sup> *Ibid.*, 582.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>330</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, v.

establishing the Military Family Readiness System.<sup>331</sup> The Military Family Readiness System assumed all previous family readiness programs and established one managed system. This centralization ensured the role of the Military Family Readiness System was incorporated into military and family readiness organizational goals that support the “recruitment, retention, and operational readiness of the military force.”<sup>332</sup>

Ultimately, these policies and programs were developed to assist service members and their families to adapt to the Army’s greedy demands, not reduce the demands.<sup>333</sup> When General Wickham failed to specifically recognize women service members in his landmark document, he inadvertently ensured the initial framework of these family support programs were focused on the traditional family structure. Furthermore, the adapted policies and programs revealed the interdependent relationship between the military institution and the military families. As the military family structures evolved, so did their expectation and demands, increasing the work-family conflict for service members. Throughout military readiness studies, the assumption that the military career remained primacy illustrated the institutionalized gendered norms of the Army. Thus, the policies and programs developed remained centered on the two-person career, failing to adapt to the modern military family. It is imperative that the Army continue to assess and

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<sup>331</sup> Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense Instruction 1342.22, “Military Family Readiness,” (Department of Defense, Washington, DC, July 3, 2012), 11.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

<sup>333</sup> Moelker et al., *Military Families and War in the 21st Century*, 24-25.

adapt its attitude, policies, and programs towards the increasing and diverse military family to retain the talent of its force.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The United States Army has undergone significant policy changes throughout its history. Though its mission has remained unchanged, the method by which the Army generates and retains its force continues to adapt to the cultural shifts among both the civilian and military populations. The two most foundational cultural shifts were the transition to the All-Volunteer Force in 1973 and the integration of women into the Army in 1978. A radical change in family structures and expectations has also accompanied these changes in the military.<sup>334</sup> While the traditional, patriarchal family structure was once the dominant model, for the Army, the gender-integrated, all-volunteer force introduced a variety of nontraditional family structures, creating a complex new family institution with great influence over its service members.<sup>335</sup> These changes challenged the Army with maintaining the commitment and resiliency of its military families to enhance the recruitment, retention, and readiness of service men and women.<sup>336</sup> Ultimately, the Army's attempts to adapt of its culture, policies, and initiatives has not kept pace with the evolving military families of the gender-integrated All-Volunteer Force.

The Army's transition to a professional, all-volunteer force in 1973 fundamentally transformed the Army's relationship with its families. Prior to the end of conscription, the

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<sup>334</sup> De Angelis, Smith, and Segal, "Military Families," 353.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid.

<sup>336</sup> Joining Forces Interagency Policy Committee, *Strengthening America's Military Families*, 1.

Army's attitude towards families was "neglectful, informal, piecemeal, and reactive."<sup>337</sup>

Conscription allowed the Army to disregard the needs of its service members and families because the Selective Service System replaced those who did not choose the military lifestyle.<sup>338</sup>

Despite this lackluster attitude towards families, military wives have been an integral part of military history from its beginning. From camp followers to frontier wives to volunteers, military wives provided essential services that in the future would be adopted by the Army. Additionally, the volunteer movement in the twentieth century created an opportunity for unmarried women to enter the public sphere and provide organizational services to the Army. Women who volunteered in organizations like the American Red Cross, provided aid to the families and service members throughout World War I.<sup>339</sup> Their recognized performance eventually resulted in the establishment of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) in 1941 and consequentially the Women's Army Corps (WAC) in 1943.<sup>340</sup> These efforts of both civilian and military women directly and intimately influenced the development of Army family policy over the next century.

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<sup>337</sup> Albano, "Military Recognition of Family Concerns," 283.

<sup>338</sup> President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force, *The Report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force*, 141.

<sup>339</sup> Bell and Iadeluca, "The Origins of Volunteer Support for Army Family Programs," 20.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3.

The integration of women in the All-Volunteer Force was an arduous process. At every opportunity, service women proved they were essential to the readiness and effectiveness of the Army. Yet, institutional barriers established by the Women's Armed Service Integration Act in 1948 continued to impact women's ability to serve.<sup>341</sup> The restrictions of the Integration Act were examined, debated, and changed over the years as the role of women transformed. However, two institutional barriers remained: organizational culture centered on women's combat role and dependency and family policies centered on the readiness of women.<sup>342</sup> The repeal of the combat exclusion law in 2013 and the opening of all military occupational specialties to women in 2015 marked a pivotal transition in the Army's attitude towards women in service. Though the opportunities for women increased in the Army, the family support systems continued to trail the initiatives to retain women in service.<sup>343</sup>

The conversion to a professional, all-volunteer force and the integration of women in the All-Volunteer Force had important implications for the family demography of the Army.<sup>344</sup> First, the All-Volunteer Force implied that service members would commit to a career of service in the military, thus increasing the proportion of the force that was married.<sup>345</sup> Second, the integration of women into the labor force, to include the Army,

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<sup>341</sup> Bailey, *America's Army*, 141.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>343</sup> Francke, *Ground Zero*, 142.

<sup>344</sup> Segal and Segal, "Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States," 226.

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*

altered the structure and demands of the military family. Third, the Army learned to compete in a competitive civilian market for quality personnel.<sup>346</sup> These changes forced the Army to adjust its attitude towards families “to a sense that the development of a family philosophy is an institutional imperative.”<sup>347</sup> With the growing number of military families, as well as the increased diversity in these families, the conflict between the Army and the family increased through the years.<sup>348</sup> Recognizing the influence families have on the retention of service members, the Army expanded retention studies to understand the needs of military families.<sup>349</sup> These studies led the Army to establish policies, programs, and practices to assist service members and their families to adapt to the demands of military lifestyle.<sup>350</sup> However, since the military culture assumes military personnel are men, the resources satisfied the traditional family structure, leaving less formal support available for the nontraditional family structures.<sup>351</sup> This was evident in that service women were and are more likely to leave service earlier than men because the policies did and do not adequately address specific barriers to continued service.

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<sup>346</sup> Segal and Segal, “Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States,” 227.

<sup>347</sup> CSA, *The Army Family*, 1983, 1.

<sup>348</sup> De Angelis, Smith, and Segal, “Military Families,” 346.

<sup>349</sup> Segal and Segal, “Implications for Military Families of Changes in the Armed Forces of the United States,” 227.

<sup>350</sup> Moelker et al., 24-25.

<sup>351</sup> De Angelis, Smith, and Segal, “Military Families,” 349.

In 2019, the Army Chief of Staff General James McConville recommitted the Army to force modernization through *The Army People Strategy*. The strategy described the Army’s plan to “acquire, develop, employ, and retain the diversity and talent of its people to achieve Total Army readiness.”<sup>352</sup> McConville described *The Army People Strategy* as way to demonstrate an investment in the Army’s people as “foundational to the readiness” of the Army.<sup>353</sup> In committing to a “People First” philosophy, the Army devoted time and resources to improve quality of life programs and also, engaged leaders across the force to create a culture where diversity, equity and inclusion is valued.<sup>354</sup> As the Army shifts its focus to establish priorities for implementation of *The Army People Strategy* in fiscal years 2023 to 2028, the Army must continue to assess and adapt the quality-of-life programs to the diverse, military families. Moreover, the Army must reexamine its cultural assumptions to create an inclusive an environment in which all service men and women can succeed and thrive.

In addition to *The Army People Strategy*, the Army also offers the Army’s Quality of Life Program, which focuses on providing care, support, and enrichment programs to increase the health and well-being of soldiers and families.<sup>355</sup> Quality of life is a

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<sup>352</sup> Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff U.S. Army, and Sergeant Major of the Army, *The Army People Strategy*, 1.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>354</sup> Gen. James C. McConville, “People First: Insights from the Army’s Chief of Staff,” *Army Sustainment* (March 2021): 21, <https://alu.army.mil/alog/ARCHIVE/PB7002101FULL.pdf>.

<sup>355</sup> Thea Green and Dee Geise, “Family Voices: Army Quality of Life,” March 15, 2021, in *AUSA’s Army Matters Podcast*, podcast, 17:37, <https://podcast.ausa.org/e/family-voices-army-quality-of-life/>.

multidimensional, multidomain concept that evaluates the standards of health and comfort of happiness of the individual or groups.<sup>356</sup> As a person's quality of life changes based on personal priorities, it is imperative that the Army continue to reassess the programs and policies centered on family readiness. Army life experiences are not equal nor does every Army family look the same. There is a gap in research regarding the impacts of the military lifestyle on male spouses of service women and on that of same-sex couples. Therefore, the Army must commission research studies to examine the multitude of nontraditional family structures to assess their needs and increase retention of diverse talent.

Additionally, the Army must reaffirm its commitment to the readiness of families by revisiting *The Army Family*, 2003 white paper. It has been twenty years since Army reviewed the historical precedent, assessed the programs, and renewed commitment through an Army Family Plan. Though *The Army People Strategy* identifies quality of life as one of the four critical enablers to set conditions for success, the intention of committing to military families, of all diverse structures, in a separate white paper would improve trust between the Army and its families.<sup>357</sup> By outlining an Army Family Plan, it will increase transparency across installations on the vision, initiatives, and way ahead for enhancing the readiness of military families. It further demonstrates the Army's efforts to

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<sup>356</sup> Green and Geise, "Family Voices."

<sup>357</sup> Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff U.S. Army, and Sergeant Major of the Army, *The Army People Strategy*, 9.

invest in the commitment and resilience of military families to increase the recruitment, retention, and readiness of a diverse and talent force.<sup>358</sup>

In addition, *The Army People Strategy* identifies Army culture as another critical enabler to set the conditions to reach its strategic objectives of a ready, professional, diverse, and integrated team.<sup>359</sup> It expands the Army’s vision to “acquire and retain a highly skilled and diverse workforce” in *The Army People Strategy: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Annex*.<sup>360</sup> *The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Annex* provides guidance for “organizational, command climate, structural, and procedural changes” to create an “equitable and inclusive environment where the value of diversity ensure mission readiness.”<sup>361</sup> One of the barriers to retaining talent is the balance of career and family. Today, the Army took enormous strides to eliminate this barrier for service men and women through the publication of Army Directive 2022-06 (Parenthood, Pregnancy, and Postpartum) on 19 April 2022.<sup>362</sup> The directive updated Army policy to improve opportunities for soldiers to pursue a career of service while also, providing time and

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<sup>358</sup> Green and Geise, “Family Voices.”

<sup>359</sup> Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff U.S. Army, and Sergeant Major of the Army, *The Army People Strategy*, 4-5.

<sup>360</sup> Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), *Army People Strategy: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Annex* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army, September 1, 2020), 14, [https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/the\\_army\\_people\\_strategy\\_diversity\\_equity\\_and\\_inclusion\\_annex\\_2020\\_09\\_01\\_signed\\_final.pdf](https://www.army.mil/e2/downloads/rv7/the_army_people_strategy_diversity_equity_and_inclusion_annex_2020_09_01_signed_final.pdf).

<sup>361</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

<sup>362</sup> Secretary of the Army, Memorandum, Subject: Army Directive 2022-06 (Parenthood, Pregnancy, and Postpartum) (Department of Defense, Washington, DC, April 19, 2022), [https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR\\_pubs/DR\\_a/ARN35255-ARMY\\_DIR\\_2022-06-000-WEB-1.pdf](https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/ARN35255-ARMY_DIR_2022-06-000-WEB-1.pdf).

flexibility to grow their families.<sup>363</sup> The repeal of combat exclusion policies in 2013 coupled with the newly published directive continue to advance gender integration in the Army. As opportunities continue to increase for women, it is essential that the Army continually assesses the culture and climate of the organization as these policies are implemented in the force. Though it is too early to determine the consequences of granting full equality and neither can it be adequately assessed for either military effectiveness or for society, it is critical the Army continues to assess its progress and focus on the work that remains.<sup>364</sup>

Therefore, as the Army prioritizes its people as number one, it must advance the scholarship of this topic by conducting a needs assessment for nontraditional family structures; assess the organizational culture with the implementation of gender-integration and progressive family policies; and formulate a reassessment plan to continue to adapt to the evolution of cultural trends in both the military and society.

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<sup>363</sup> Secretary of the Army, Army Directive 2022-06, 1.

<sup>364</sup> Binkin and Bach, *Women and the Military*, 102.

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