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**WOMEN IN THE MILITARY:
SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

BY

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The incorporation of the females into the U.S. armed forces has been an evolutionary process, spanning more than 200 years of U S. history. Since 1972 the number of women in the military has increased significantly. During this time, our military services have been confronted with recurring issues and questions concerning women in the military. This study discusses sexual harassment, examines reasons for the persistence of the problem and identifies ways to prevent and eliminate this unacceptable behavior. It concludes that despite well-intentioned efforts at high levels in the Department of Defense to eliminate gender discrimination in the work place, sexual harassment continues to be a serious problem in all the military services.

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WOMEN IN THE MILITARY: SEXUAL HARASSMENT

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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United States Army

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Project Adviser

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INTRODUCTION

In the past half-century, America's armed forces have confronted and successfully coped with some of the most profound social problems our nation has ever faced. From its integration of blacks and other ethnic minorities into the force to elimination of substance abuse, the military frequently has found itself leading the charge in institutional adaptations to evolving social issues. The incorporation of women into the military and expansion of roles and opportunities for them has been part of this evolutionary process.

Many women have fought and won uphill battles to work their way into previously all-male ranks. This struggle for full integration into all services, however, will continue because many unresolved issues persist concerning this change. One such issue the armed forces face is the complex social problem of sexual harassment. This is not a new issue and it could have a devastating impact on the total readiness of the forces. This paper will discuss sexual harassment, examine reasons why the problem persists, and identify ways to prevent and eliminate this unacceptable behavior.

DEFINING THE PROBLEM

Sexual harassment is difficult to define because it appears few of us agree on what constitutes sexual harassment. In our society it means different things to different people. Unacceptable behaviors may be identified in countless ways--ranging from "dating behaviors" to improprieties common in interpersonal relationships, such as jokes, gestures, unwanted pressure for attention. Then it can extend to other acts that are criminal in nature.

This lack of understanding about what actually constitutes sexual harassment has led to poor communication at numerous levels and inconsistent data on incidence rates. In fact, we often encounter a reluctance to accept that it even exists. Some people define sexual harassment rather narrowly, using the term to refer only to uninvited sexual advances and explicit sexual comments. Others contend that all gender-related acts and remarks that create a hostile environment constitute sexual harassment. Although acts of sexual harassment are generally directed toward women, men can also be victims of such harassment.¹

Sexual harassment, although a fairly new term, has been a problematic behavior since women began to enter the predominantly male work force in the last century. In the mid-seventies, however, the women's movement began to focus

broader public attention on sexual harassment, perhaps even exacerbating the problem as an unintended result of focusing public attention on women's rights.

The Department of Defense (DOD) defines sexual harassment as a form of sexual discrimination that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

a) submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's job, pay, or career, or

b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person, or

c) such conduct interferes with an individual's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.²

No examples are cited, but the Department of Defense makes it clear that any person in a supervisory or command position who implicitly or explicitly uses or condone sexual behavior to control, influence or affect the career, pay or job of a military member or civilian employee is engaging in sexual harassment. Also any military member or civilian who makes deliberate or repeated unwelcome verbal comments, gestures or physical contact of a sexual nature is engaging in sexual harassment. Although not categorically specified, all acts of sexual harassment in the military are punishable

under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).³

Although each service has drawn up its own interpretation and definition of sexual harassment, the services uniformly agree on one point--this behavior will not be condoned or tolerated. It must be understood that sexual harassment is not just limited to the work place, but can occur at almost any place where members of the opposite sex communicate or commingle. Despite all of these attempts to discourage sexual harassment, it was recently brought to the attention of the Chief of Staff of the Army that the officers and noncommissioned officers did not know what sexual harassment was or how to prevent it.⁴

Even though the military has officially defined sexual harassment, many of the cultural beliefs, attitudes and perceptions that foster such behavior, especially toward women, are not addressed. Yet, unless we change stereotypical thinking, sexual harassment will not be effectively curtailed.⁵

Sexual harassment stems from certain widespread cultural attitudes that have been prevalent through the ages. For example most men still believe that the woman's place is in the home. Men often "jovially" express that women should be "barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen." Women have lived under male protection--benevolent or otherwise--thereby being forced to live by the rules of men who dominate them. A pattern of cultural attitudes

supporting men's domination of women has thus been established. This cornerstone of most world cultures is learned and continually reinforced in many societies, including our own.⁶

The attitude that the services are for men only has been embedded in the services for many decades. For example, women who enlisted in the Navy in World War I were discharged immediately when peace was declared. In the 1960s and 70s, the military began to turn to women to help bolster its ranks in response to personnel demands of the Vietnam War, pressure from the feminist movement, and problems in recruiting high quality males. Even so, at the Air Force Academy there is a quote, in large reinforced metal letters, on one of the outside walks, very visible to the cadets and staff: "Bring me men." Male cadets often point this sign out to their females counterparts, as though it proves male sexual superiority. It also suggests that if women don't fight or fly they are second class citizens.⁷ Rep. Beverly Byron has addressed this problem straight on; she states that until we start looking at ability, and not gender, we will continue to look at women as second class citizens and treat them unequally.⁸

Such sexist attitudes are no longer acceptable to many service members, and authorities generally agree that both sexes have been severely burdened in the attempt to maintain male superiority. To date the services have treated this

problem in the same manner they usually respond to an operational crisis--only when it becomes necessary. But sexual harassment is not a behavior that can be wished away overnight. Dealing effectively with it is time-consuming; changing behaviors will require total support from chain of command.

Some critics believe that the armed forces have treated the symptom, but have not addressed the cause: sexism. The definition of sexism is a way of thinking and behaving as though one sex is better than the other. I believe it may be easier to impose sanctions on actions than on attitudes, and the military has the power to effectively coerce its members' actions. Yet by failing to address the root cause of sexual harassment against women, the military has avoided addressing the more fundamental question of sexism. Thus there are military policies against sexual harassment, but not against sexism. This may be due to an organizational assumption that sexism is permissible in military organizations. It is similar to saying that discrimination will not be tolerated, but prejudice is okay.⁹

HOW WIDESPREAD IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

The extent of sexual harassment cannot be accurately determined, simply because we have failed to maintain the necessary data. Military sources acknowledge that it is difficult to assess the magnitude of the problem; because, until 1989 the services were not required to compile comprehensive statistics on reports of sexual harassment or to keep records of how those cases were resolved. However, the services are currently maintaining reports from Department of Defense down to the organization level.

Data compiled at Department of Defense are not all inclusive, simply because a percentage of sexual harassment cases are handled at the lowest level of command. They may or may not be reported to the Installation Inspector General or Equal Opportunity representative. The Presidential Commission noted in the report on the assignment of women in the armed forces that sexual harassment is a problem in all services.¹⁰

In recent years a number of surveys, officially sanctioned, have provided data which may best be considered as representing a floor, rather than a ceiling. In 1988, for example, Soldier Magazine found that 34% of enlisted Army women indicated that they had been sexually harassed.¹¹ A Survey of Army women in Europe found 70 percent of those

interviewed said they were sexually harassed but did not report the incident.¹² A "Culture and Climate Assessment" report submitted to Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Military (DACOWITS) Sept 14, 1992, stated eighty-five percent of women cadets at the Coast Guard Academy had been sexually harassed. A representative from the Academy also stated that seventy-eight percent of the enlisted women at the academy and fifty percent of the civilian women reported some form of sexual harassment.¹³

A General Accounting Office (GAO) questionnaire has revealed that sexual harassment exists at the three Military Academies. This chart highlights the results:

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE STUDENTS INDICATING THEY EXPERIENCED HARASSMENT AT LEAST A COUPLE TIMES A MONTH

<u>Form</u>	<u>Naval Academy</u>	<u>Air Force Academy</u>	<u>West Point Academy</u>
Derogatory Comments or Jokes	28%	40%	63%
Remarks that stds have been lowered	33%	38%	64%
Remarks that women don't belong there	19%	22%	45%
Offensive posters, signs, graffiti, T-shirt	26%	21%	49%
Derogatory letters or messages	5%	5%	12%
Mocking gestures	15%	17%	51%
Exclusion from social activities	10%	6%	18%
Unwanted horseplay or high jinks	6%	13%	16%
Unwanted pressure for dates	4%	4%	4%
Unwanted sexual advances	4%	5%	14%

According to the report, sexual harassment "occurs more frequently" at the military academies than is usually

reported or acknowledged. The GAO stated that the Army's West Point had the worst problem, with 14% of women reporting unwanted sexual advances. At the Air Force and Naval Academies fewer than 5% of the women reported such incidents.¹⁴

The most comprehensive such survey to date was mandated by Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci and known as the 1988 DOD Survey of Sex Roles in the Active-Duty Military. The first large-scale study, it surveyed 38,000 men and women on active duty. The stated purpose of the survey was to focus on: (1) the frequency of sexual harassment among the active duty military; (2) the context, location, and circumstances under which sexual harassment occurs; and (3) the effectiveness of current programs designed to prevent, reduce, and eliminate sexual harassment.¹⁵ It found that 64% of active-duty women and 17% of active-duty men felt they had experienced some form of sexual harassment in the year immediately preceding the survey--a significantly higher rate of sexual harassment than that recorded by the federal government.¹⁶

The following chart highlights the different types of abuse reported among women surveyed (1988):

DIFFERENT TYPES OF HARASSMENT

In 1988 Department survey of sexual harassment of women in the military found many reporting abuse. But officials says the level of abuse reports is about the same as in the general population. For instance, the Army had 0.47 reported rapes per 1,000 soldiers, vs. 0.41 for the overall U.S. population. Percentage of abuse reported among women surveyed:

<u>Harassment</u>	<u>Army</u>	<u>Navy</u>	<u>Marines</u>	<u>Air Force</u>
Actual/attempted rape or sexual assault	11%	7%	10%	4%
Pressure for sexual favors	32%	20%	26%	18%
Touching, cornering	64%	59%	62%	55%
Looks, gestures	72%	65%	72%	62%
Letters, calls	26%	21%	27%	22%
Pressure for dates	53%	36%	53%	32%
Teasing, jokes	79%	78%	81%	77%
Whistles, calls	66%	61%	75%	49%
Other attention	49%	39%	42%	33%
None experienced	32%	34%	25%	43%

A representative from USA Today conducted an interview with Kay Krohne, a retired Navy Commander. She was asked to compare this data with other organizations. Basing her response on two surveys conducted by the U.S. Merit System Board (1981 and 1987: 42% of the women surveyed experienced sexual harassment), Commander Krohne concluded that women in the military are 50% more likely to be sexually harassed.¹⁷

To further elaborate on the extent of sexual harassment, another relevant survey was cited by the Government Executive Magazine in its August 1989 issue. This survey included military women in the ranks of lieutenant colonel (05) to brigadier general (07): 556 responded. This group reported concerns about a broader spectrum of gender harassment:

* 53% felt their lives were more closely scrutinized than those of their male colleagues.

* 51% reported that male subordinates had resisted taking direction from them because they were females.

* 69% had the impression that their views were not as respected as they would have been if they had been men.

* 38% said that they had felt sexually harassed at some point in their careers, 63% had witnessed women officers being harassed, and 65% had witnessed women enlisted members being harassed.¹⁸

The results of all these surveys point in the same direction: They give us at least some idea of how widespread sexual harassment is in the services. Yet the survey method itself has obvious drawbacks. By their very nature, surveys depend on voluntary compliance to provide the required information. They call upon fallible recollections of events often far in the past. Finally, they fail to take into account the emotional overlay of sensitive material which may color the responses in individual surveys.

Sexual harassment and sex-related violence may be more prevalent in the military than they are in civilian society, but the military is no worse than other male-dominated organizations, such as sports teams or fraternities.¹⁹

All services have reported that systems to track sexual harassment are in place. Thus they are making it easier for commanders to recognize the scope of the challenge they face in eradicating the problem on their bases and aboard their ships. Nonetheless, MG Jeanne Holm, Air Force Retired,

testified that reports of sexual harassment are increasing because men in the military see women as inferior.²⁰

ELIMINATION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The elimination of sexual harassment is not an easy process. In the past several years many initiatives have been implemented to eliminate this unacceptable behavior, but such behavior persists. As we have seen, a major problem in the past has been the lack of desire to change attitudes and behavior based on the view that women are "second class" citizens. Harassment has persisted also because of the lack of enforcement of policies, lack of confidence in the system, and restrictive laws and regulations.

Lack of Effective Policies and Enforcement

A contributing factor to sexual harassment has been the lack of enforcement of the policies and subsequent refusal to take the appropriate actions to reduce this unacceptable behavior. The Secretary of Defense made it clear to the service chiefs that he intended to eliminate sexual harassment in the Department of Defense. Leaders at each level of the services were directed to establish programs to eliminate the behavior and to act quickly on allegations of sexual harassment. The leadership from top to bottom in the past has failed to take the appropriate action to implement the program.

Sexual harassment has continued in spite of the policies and guidance, including three policy statements issued by the Secretary of Defense in the past twelve years and in spite of specific policies and programs supposedly developed to combat it. Commanders and leaders have failed to impose UCMJ sanctions against offenders, to set up effective training programs (such as awareness sessions or seminars), to treat females as equals, to investigate sexual harassment allegations in a timely manner, and to educate themselves concerning this issue.

To a great number of commanders and leaders in the field, enforcing the policy meant nothing more than, before an installation Inspector General inspection, ensuring that the sexual harassment policy letter was posted on the organization bulletin board. If the unit had the policy letter posted, it would automatically receive a "GO". Or if someone was appointed on orders to deal with the problem, the unit would receive an excellent rating. No one took the problem seriously. The same could easily be said for DOD, simply because of the lack of systems established to monitor the programs, lack of educational information distributed to the services concerning sexual harassment (pamphlets, posters, television and radio commercial), and failure to implement a uniform sexual harassment program for all the services.

Even today training and education vary among services.

For example, during basic training one service covers the subject of sexual harassment prevention as a separate topic; one addresses it as part of equal opportunity training, and a third addresses it as part of rights and responsibilities. Members of each service spend a different amount of training time on the topic. Each service uses different definitions, thereby hampering the creation of an effective and uniform policy.²¹

The leadership and chain of command have failed to stress the most critical factors in solving and, indeed, precluding human relations problems that lead to sexual harassment. Strong, aggressive commitment must first be made at the top of the chain of command, then all command levels must be held accountable.²²

Sexual harassment has been around just as long as racial discrimination. The problems are similar: both have been classified as an unacceptable behavior; both require an extensive amount of behavior awareness training. At the present, none of the services require service members to attend sexual harassment seminars similar to the training received to reduce racial discrimination. The 40 hours of Race Relations training did not eliminate or eradicate racial discrimination, but it did make people aware that a serious problem existed.

Admiral Frank Kelso, USN, summed up quite well how we deal with such problems. He said that we have never failed

to identify the problems. But he admits that we have sometimes failed to act on early warnings. This is definitely true for sexual harassment. For many years, we have known it existed, but we have failed to respond.²³

Despite efforts by the military in recent years to curb sexual harassment, internal Pentagon documents show that the problem remains widespread. They further reveal that the services' systems for resolving sexual harassment grievances frequently do not work. Commanders and leaders at every level must be involved to enforce the policies and ensure this issue is not taken lightly.²⁴

Lack of Confidence in the System

If the reporting procedures are in place, then there shouldn't be a problem with the responses to sexual harassment. There appears to be a lack of confidence in the reporting and in the grievance process. The U.S. Merit System Protection Board estimated that less than 5% of all women who experience sexual harassment take formal action toward redress. A survey of Army women in Europe found 70% of those who said they were sexually harassed did not report the incident, mostly because they thought no action would be taken or because they feared retaliation.²⁵

For many reasons, women resist reporting that they are the object of sexual harassment. They remain reluctant to file complaints against their harasser. If commanders and

counselors try to understand such lack of reporting, they may be better able to encourage the women to expose an intolerable situation and help them resolve it. According to Molly Moore, interviews with dozens of women, supported by internal military studies, suggested that one of the most critical breakdowns involves the military reporting system for sexual harassment charges. Problems are reported at virtually every step of the process.²⁶ DACOWITS noted that women at the Air Force Academy would rather ignore a problem of harassment or discrimination, or try to deal with it themselves, than go through the chain of command, for fear of being labeled troublemakers or whiners. The women felt most of the men were accepting them during their first year at the Academy. But, by the time they had become seniors, they reported blatant discrimination and harassment.²⁷

My experience indicates that sexual harassment is part of the female soldier's everyday life. The reason for this is quite simple: acts of sexual harassment are being witnessed daily on and off duty, and the victims see no actions being taken to prevent, discourage or eliminate this behavior. During my command of a Training Battalion, I felt that females often were sexually harassed, but they were apprehensive about reporting the incident. This reluctance was caused by embarrassment, fear of ridicule or reprisal, self-blame, intimidation, feelings of powerlessness, fear of not being believed, and fear of retaliation from their drill

sergeants. The single most difficult and essential action a victim of harassment can take is to report such behavior. Typically, however, sexual harassment victims keep silent and try to ignore the objectionable behavior. This inaction can be perceived by the perpetrator as tacit approval, so often the behavior continues.²⁸

Victims of sexual harassment must have confidence in the system. Otherwise the victim may pretend to enjoy or actively participate in sexually oriented banter, even while feeling harassed and uncomfortable. Whether officer or enlisted, the women most likely to suffer from sexual harassment are those who are young, low ranking, and inexperienced. It is sometimes natural that a person will go along with the majority to be accepted in the group.²⁹

Before we can build confidence in the reporting system, leaders at every level must become sensitized to the effects of sexual harassment. They must ensure that all personnel understand the system and know this behavior is punishable under the UCMJ.

Restrictive Laws and Regulations

In addition to the ineffective policies and inadequate enforcement, lack of confidence in the system, and cultural problems, the laws and regulations currently in effect restrict women's assignments to combat positions and thus further promote sexual harassment.

First, the restrictions perpetuate the view that women are inferior and therefore may be treated as inferior. The Update Report on the Progress of Women in the Navy, issued in 1990, described the Navy's institutional character as the "warrior mentality," which meant women don't belong. It further reported that both men and women believe there was a perception of a causal relationship between the non-acceptance of women as equal members of the Navy team and the occurrence of sexual harassment.

A GAO survey of the service academies in 1990 revealed that this pattern starts early in the military experience. It showed that almost two-thirds of female cadets at West Point reported being told at least twice a month that standards had been lowered because of their presence or that women do not belong there.

Second, legal restrictions on the assignment of women have kept numbers of female military personnel to a mere eleven percent, which helps create an atmosphere hostile to women. Low numbers of women in the work place; women working in non-traditional, non-combatant roles; women working under a male supervisor--all situations common to military women--are circumstances that have been correlated to high levels of sexual harassment and other types of sex discrimination.

Third, harassment problems, limited access to higher-level jobs usually awarded to those with combat experience,

and related attrition of women has meant few women hold senior positions. As a result, those charged with enforcing the harassment policy are generally men, and they may not take the problem seriously because of different experiences.³⁰

On the other hand a military official whose name was withheld from The Washington Post said that as women rise in rank, the services have begun to receive occasional complaints from men of sexual harassment from female colleagues. If this is a correct assessment, then sexual harassment may become less of a women's issue and more a reverse sexual harassment issue. As such, it may then receive more serious attention.³¹

At this point, it should be clear that in order for the services to eliminate sexual harassment, they must develop a more effective policy and enforce it, remove unfair restrictions, and increase the number of women both in service and in key positions to create a better mix between males and females. Rep. Patricia Schroder (D-Colo) has voiced her opinion: In a letter to top Defense Department officials, she charges that the military is reluctant to either change its attitudes or institute means to eliminate the harassment.³²

CURRENT AND FUTURE INITIATIVES

Since the Tailhook scandal, top officials have taken another look at sexual harassment policies and programs. Each of the service chiefs has adopted the "Zero Tolerance" policy. When implemented, it will mean that sexual harassment will not be condoned; every effort will be made by all members of the service to eliminate this unacceptable attitude. This is not a new policy, all the services have had this policy to fight sexual harassment since the 1980s. But they failed to implement or enforce it.³³

All the services are taking this matter seriously, at the moment. The Air Force, for example, relieved a Wing Commander in Korea for sexual harassment. The Navy relieved four admirals, and the Secretary of the Navy resigned over the tailhook incident. Similar actions have been reported throughout the armed forces.³⁴

According to Congresswoman Beverly B. Byron, the services need to turn the heat up on sexual harassment to ensure that everyone gets the message that zero tolerance is the only acceptable standard. Not everyone reacts to the same policy the same way, but we must not lose sight of the quality we seek for military personnel--men and women.³⁵

Commanders at all levels are beginning to understand the need for unit awareness of this seemingly intractable

problem; they are increasingly committed to finding a solution to it. Thus it now represents a leadership imperative. Like racial harassment, sexual harassment can no longer be tolerated in the military environment as an unfortunate but inevitable fact of life. Even so, critics, as well as the military's own studies, continue to charge that the armed forces are not doing enough to eliminate the problems.³⁶

Admiral Frank B. Kelso II, Chief of Naval Operations is leading the way. His policy, effective 1 March 1993 states:

Any individual in the Navy, regardless of rank or position, found guilty of a single incident of aggravated sexual harassment is automatically processed for administrative separation. There are no exceptions or waivers. Administrative or disciplinary action is required for individuals who commit less serious acts of sexual harassment. Those who repeat the less serious offenses are also subject to discharge.³⁷

This represents a firm stand against sexual harassment. Some critics believe this could do the Navy more harm than good, especially if it is not fully implemented and enforced. If the leadership fails to enforce this policy, it could be viewed as "lip service." This in turn would cause women to have less faith and confidence in the chain of command.

Quite recently, the Navy conducted sexual harassment training. According to Katherine McIntire, it was standing room only aboard a ship, where 250 sailors crowded into a small room to watch the video on two small televisions.

What is wrong with this kind of implementation? It may be interpreted by many as saying, "business as usual." Senior leaders must not allow this to happen if they are serious about eliminating sexual harassment. We can't afford to pay lip service to this problem. Every leader, regardless of rank, must be held accountable for their actions.³⁸

According to Congresswoman Schroeder, the Navy's one-day training program isn't going to do it. She makes it clear that there has to be follow-through and that top command has to start showing leadership--just as it did in previous crises over racial tensions and drug abuse. Other critics believe the elimination of sexual harassment, like racial discrimination, will be a continuous process.³⁹

Future Initiatives

Some positive measures and initiatives can eliminate and prevent sexual harassment in the many months and years ahead:

Leadership Commitment:

- * Most critical element of an effective agenda for change, and must be totally involved and committed. Lip service and lack of involvement in dealing with sexual harassment must be unacceptable.

- * Enforcement of policies.

Mandatory Awareness Training:

- * Trained Human Relations specialists.

- * Conduct sensitivity training to ensure that all personnel recognize sexual harassment (Initial Entry Training (IET) soldier must be trained prior to starting basic training).

- * Clearly established mechanism for reporting sexual harassment (Designate single agency to compile data and reports).

- * Mandatory training at Senior Service Colleges (Core subject).

Firm Enforcement:

- * Stated zero tolerance policy and strict enforcement of regulations.

- * Swift disciplinary action, including dismissal from the services in case of aggravated sexual harassment.

- * Regular evaluation of service members' compliance with sexual harassment regulations through fitness reports or other means.

Eliminate Unnecessary Barriers:

- * Eliminate unnecessary laws and regulations that discriminate against women in the military.

- * Increase the number of women in the military to balance the force.

- * Increase the number of women in key leadership positions.

Sexual harassment is a problem for the entire community. For any program to be effective all members must

become fully active and committed. In addition to the above initiatives, based on my experience, I believe commanders should recognize that their own attitudes are the most single important factor in the organization's harassment profile. They must treat all soldiers, male and female, with respect. They must monitor their own behavior, since subordinates will be understandably reluctant to point out their seniors' shortcomings in this area.

No one in a leadership position should expect this to be an easy task. Enforcement will be a valuable tool. Sexual harassment is just as dangerous as racial discrimination; it must be controlled twenty-four hours a day. The "zero tolerance" policy that senior leaders have talked about for the past 13 years must be enforced, not mentioned as lip service. No member of the Department of Defense should not be allowed to take this policy lightly--either military or civilian.

CONCLUSION

The issue of sexual harassment in the military is not new. It has been a serious problem in the armed forces for decades. For a variety of reasons, it has not been taken seriously.

Women in the military have been looked upon by their male counterparts as "the other" too long. Our society will not allow us to continue to ignore this unacceptable behavior. The initiatives listed above represent only a start in preventing and eliminating this behavior. All initiatives must be taken seriously and integrated into all the services' agenda.

Response to sexual harassment can't just be a "check box" on fitness reports, whereby members are checked off as being sensitive to sexual harassment. Nor is the solution as simple as checking the bulletin boards for policy letters. An effective policy can only result from strong training sanctions to back it up. Strong sanctions must replace current verbal reprimands and a wink that boys-will-be-boys. All members of DOD must be held accountable for their actions.

We have made some changes in the past, but much remains to be done. There are hopeful signs. But our senior leaders, both military and civilian, must continue to focus

on the problem. We cannot continue to do as we have done in the past. We can no longer condone or tolerate this costly unacceptable behavior. Behaviors must be changed. This is never an easy task. Attitudes, a far more resistant domain, must be worked on too. The military faces a real challenge in enforcing an attitudinal change among the male majority when these unwanted attitudes are still dominant in the society at large. Firm, explicit command policies from the top and repeated training at all levels, followed by sanctions against any perpetrators of sexual harassment, will continue to be necessary.

The problem of sexual harassment will not go away, nor are there any easy answers. The issues are complex and not readily resolved. Equity and fairness dictate that the problem can no longer be hidden. Our the military institutions must move forward to bring about a climate free of sexual harassment for the women in the military.

ENDNOTES

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²¹Department of Defense, Task Force Report on Women in the Military (Washington: U.S. Govt Printing, 1988), 1.

²²Ibid., 2.

²³Andrea Stone, "Top Brass Get Sex Bias Lecture," USA Today, 31 July-31 August 1992, p.

²⁴Molly Moore, "Attitudes of Male-Oriented Culture Persist as Grievance Go Unreported," The Washington Post, 27 September 1989, p. B12.

²⁵Maze, Army Times, 13.

²⁶Moore, A9.

²⁷Costantino, 9.

²⁸Krohne, Proceeding, 54.

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³⁰Shirley Sagawa and Nancy Duff Campbell, Women in the Military Issue Paper (Washington, 1992), 3.

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³³Chiefs of Staff, Defense Issue, 3.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Lamar-Garth, 13.

³⁶Moore, The Washington Post, 25 Sep 89, A10.

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