The issue of Navy women in combat has been widely discussed since women first served during World War I. In this paper I intend to present the political, philosophical, and historical reasoning behind the changing of the regulations to allow women in combat.

History shows that the Navy has faced political, social, moral and ethical problems of this nature before and has successfully dealt with them. The political interests are highly varied and are a significant force in the debate. Reasons for and against allowing Navy women to serve in combat positions cover such concerns as physical and psychological abilities, the technical nature of warfare, and the need for a larger youth cohort.
In January of 1994, the time had come for combat exclusion statutes to be repealed and for the Navy to admit women into combat roles. The issue was at the forefront of the Clinton Administration's agenda and a strong public constituency was in support of eliminating the unethical practices of sexual harassment, fraternization, and other forms of gender related favoritism. The role of women in society, as a whole, had progressed from politically weak positions as homemaker and childbearer to highly influential positions as industry executives and congressional representatives. These elements, coupled with the Navy's historically documented ability to deal effectively with issues of equal opportunity and integration, were the driving force behind the changes.

Gender integration will take time and undergo significant growing pains, but with continued support from political and military leadership, proper training of the troops, and the desire to win, the Navy will achieve victory in developing a gender-neutral fleet.
Women Combatants in the United States Navy: A Victory for Equal Opportunity

by

Holly A. Rosenberg

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The role of women in the United States military, in general, has been an intensely debated issue since they first served during World War I. Traditionally, women were only allowed to serve during war time, but with the end of the Vietnam conflict and the beginning of the All-Volunteer military, women took a more active role in all branches of the armed forces. Service women, however, were restricted in job assignments, and as a result, capacity for promotion ability. They were limited to administrative, health care and supply roles. While these are important facets of the military system, combat readiness is the main purpose. Women, by statutory provision, were not allowed to be assigned to a position that might see combat during a war, or in units that trained specifically to fight armed conflicts. In December of 1991 a portion of the regulation was repealed to allow women aviators to be permanently assigned to squadrons that trained specifically for combat situations, and in November of 1993 the combat exclusion law in its entirety was repealed. Women in the Navy had finally achieved a sense of equality of opportunity and advancement. Female service members victoriously achieved the chance to be judged on their abilities, rather than on gender; which has far greater implications than the repealing of combat exclusion statutes alone.
This change, and the on-going discussion of this issue, is not without disagreement, debate and significant contemplation. The discussion, however, has never included the reasoning behind these changes. Why, suddenly, in the last decade of the twentieth century have women in the military gained a greater degree of equality with their male counterparts? What forces were significant in causing this change? The purpose of this thesis is to answer these questions from a perspective of the Naval branch of the service, incorporating the intellectual traditions of history, political science, and philosophy. The questions of who, what, why, where, when and how that encompass the issue of Navy women in combat will be explained under the following headings: Chapter II - Laws, Interpretations, and Judicial Review; Chapter III - Naval Women in History; Chapter IV - The Current Debate; Chapter V - New Legislation; and Chapter VI - Results and Implications.
CHAPTER II : LAWS, INTERPRETATIONS, AND JUDICIAL REVIEW

Before the discussions and questions surrounding the issue of Navy women in combat can be understood, it is necessary to explain the laws that regulate the role of women in the military. "The focus of the controversy over whether women should serve in combat positions centers on statutes passed by the United States Congress under the powers granted it in Article I of the Constitution;" to "raise and support Armies," "provide and maintain a Navy," and "make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval forces." Under this authority, Congress passed two statutes excluding women from combat positions in the Air Force and the Navy. Section 6015 of Title X of the United States Code deals with naval forces and states,

"Women may not be assigned to duty in vessels or in aircraft that are engaged in combat missions nor may they be assigned to other than temporary duty on vessels of the Navy except hospital ships, transports and vessels of a similar classification not expected to be assigned to combat missions"

The original version of this statute, established in 1948 as part of the Women's Armed Forces Integration Act, barred women from duty on all ships. It was not until 1978 that Public Law 95-485 modified section 6015 to permit the assignment of women on support and supply vessels. In addition to Congressional regulations, the Navy has established its own set of instructions for the assignment of women members.


SECNAV Instruction 1300.12A succinctly defines the roles of women outlined in Title X U.S.C. Section 6015. Paragraph four, section A defines combat missions as "a mission of an individual unit, ship or aircraft that individually or collectively as a naval task organization has as one of its primary objectives to seek out, reconnoiter, and engage the enemy..." The instruction also limits the role of Navy women based on an established Risk Rule. This is defined as:

"risks of direct combat, exposure to hostile fire, or capture are proper criteria for closing noncombat positions or units to women, when the type, degree and duration of such risks are equal to or greater than the combat units with which they are normally associated within a given theater of operations."3

As a result of these provisions and instructions, women in the Navy have been limited in their job opportunities and resulting career advancements, maintained relatively low percentage of the total force strength, and been the subject of social and ethical upheaval within the Naval ranks. In an effort to remedy these limitations the combat exclusion statute has received significant attention in political arenas, by media sources, the public at large and in intellectual circles.

Legislation and internal regulations are not the sole source of governing power on the issue of women in combat, nor have they been the sole source of debate. The Judicial system in the United States is the third and increasingly more powerful division of the federal, state, and local governing institutions. On the issue of Naval Women in Combat, the debate and ensuing results occur on the national level;

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involving the President and the White House Staff on the Executive level, Congress in the Legislative position, and the Federal Courts in the Judiciary branch. Because the laws and regulations established by Congress and signed by the President are often vague and ill-defined, it becomes the responsibility of the agency or department for which the laws were written and the courts to detail the meaning of the law. The issue of women in combat and 10 U.S.C. 6015 is not the exception, but clearly follows the pattern of a law outlined by Congress, interpreted by the Department of the Navy, and questioned in the courts.

"While federal courts have frequently decided issues of sex discrimination and have discussed the combat exclusion laws themselves, the United States Supreme Court has never decided whether or not the statute is constitutional."4

A brief review of some important cases will provide insight into the influence of the courts on political decisions.

What is customarily referred to as the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution is contained in Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment: "No state shall...deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."5 The Equal Protection Clause has been held to be applicable to the federal government through the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment. As a result, persons similarly situated are to be given equal treatment under the law and the federal government may not engage in unjustifiable discrimination.6 Since the combat exclusion laws treat individual citizens differently based solely on

4 McDonald, 5.

5 McDonald, 5.

6 McDonald, 5.
their gender, these laws are subject to judicial scrutiny under the Equal Protection Clause.

The case of Frontiero v. Richardson decided by the United States Supreme Court in 1973 was the first of many subsequent decisions affecting women in the military and the Equal Protection Clause. The court "found the Air Force regulations requiring female service members to prove that their spouses were dependent on them before they could receive increased benefits to be invalid..."7 Because the service already paid such benefits to married male service members regardless of dependency, the court ruled that women were protected from such discrimination of "romantic paternalism." The affect of such a suit was to allow married female service members in all branches to receive benefits parallel to those available to their male counterparts. While such entitlements for military dependents did not increase the roles available in the workplace to military women, it was a step toward equal treatment on a social and ethical level.

In the case of Crawford v. Cushman (1976), the Circuit Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit held that Marine Corps regulations mandating the discharge of female marines if they became pregnant violated the Constitution’s guarantees of equal protection and due process.8 Once again, the effects of this ruling were felt within all the military services. Pregnancy among women in the military, however, continues to be a contested issue as will be discussed in the following chapters. Although after 1975, women in the Navy were not forced out as the result of

7 McDonald, 9.

8 McDonald, 7.
pregnancy, misuse of unwritten laws and practices by male and female leadership and pregnant women allowed many female service members to terminate their military obligations early or to receive extended periods of absence. Whether the Navy is the right place for a pregnant woman to be or not is no longer an intensely debated issue, it has already been decided in court.

An important judicial case that addressed directly the issue of combat exclusion was the 1978 *Owens v. Brown* case heard in Washington by United States District Court Judge J. Sirica.9 "The class action suit charged discrimination in that the Navy's existing combat restrictions unconstitutionally denied equal protection under the law to women in the Navy, specifically by disallowing women to serve aboard naval vessels."10 The court ruled that the Navy could not use Section 6015 Title X of the United States Code as the sole basis for excluding women from serving aboard ships; as a result, the statute was amended to assign women to hospital ships, transport ships, and other support vessels.

The latest and most descriptive example of judicial politics is the 1981 case, *Rostker v. Goldberg*. In this case, the United States Supreme Court discussed the combat exclusion laws when "draft age males brought suit alleging that they were being discriminated against illegally because only males were required to register for possible draft into the armed forces."11 The court ruled that the Military Selective
Service Act did not violate the Due Process Clause, because the Congress had acted reasonably in limiting registration to males, since females were not eligible for combat, and the purpose of the Military Selective Service Act was basically to provide a pool of individuals for combat service.”

In delivering the court’s decision Justice William H. Rhenquist wrote for the majority,

"In most instances the court must defer to Congress' Constitutional duty to raise and support Armies' and 'provide and maintain a Navy.' The court has the power to overturn laws pertaining to the military, but the draft registration statute is not one of them."

Although this issue clearly involved the combat exclusion law, by choosing not to overturn the draft registration statute, the court implied strongly that the combat exclusion constitutional. As many critics have alleged, the court will hide behind the "will of Congress" when it wishes to avoid particularly difficult questions or politically charged issues.

Because the Supreme Court is acutely aware of the political ramifications of its decisions, if faced with a case specifically questioning the combat exclusion statute, it would most likely find it to be constitutional. As a result, any hope for expanding the roles of women in the Navy is placed in the hands of Congress and the political action groups and special interest groups.

Since the Rostker v. Goldberg hearing, and prior to 1991, little had been heard from the national level on the issue of women in combat and the repealing of Section 6015 Title X of the United States Code. The Air

12 McDonald, 7.

13 McNally, 19.
Force Times published an article in the May 12, 1990 edition, entitled, "Personnel Lobby Needed," in which Representative Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.) is quoted as saying, "It's outrageous that there is not a personnel lobby for the military as in the civilian sector. We don't have a readiness lobby or personnel lobby. As a result, we're more into hardware, where there are strong and active lobbies getting the attention of Congress." While addressing a joint seminar of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service (DACOWITS) and the Congresswomen's Caucus, Representative Schroeder along with Representative Margorie Holt (R-Md.) both expressed disappointment over the lack of progress toward equal opportunity for women in the military and believed it was due in large part to this lack of constituency and support. Despite these voiced concerns, in activity would remain the status quo for another six years. It was in the October 13, 1986 edition of the Air Force Times that an article appeared restoring hope to the possibility of renewed political vigor toward the opening of opportunity for military women. The article entitled, "Bill Would Let Women Work Closer to Combat Zone," tells of a bill introduced by Senators William Proxmire, (D-Wis.) and William S. Cohen, (R-Maine) to open more combat support jobs to women. Despite the Senators resolve to ensure the legislation was passed, Congressional aides were reported as saying, "there is little chance the legislation will be approved before Congress adjourns for the year..." Unfortunately, the fervor Proxmire and Cohen seemed to hold on the issue was not rekindled in the


following year's session and as a result it would take another five years before the roles of women in the military would again become national issue.
CHAPTER III : NAVY WOMEN IN HISTORY

Before the current debate on women in combat can be fully understood, it is necessary to explain the historical role of women in the Navy. Women have been members of the United States Armed Forces since the days of the Revolutionary War and it is their history and the history of those that followed that deserve and require explanation.

While reports exist of women who fought during the Revolutionary War, dressed as men, the majority of the contributions made by women were as civilians supplying food and clothing to the revolutionary troops. The earliest accomplishments of women in uniform were during the War of 1812 when women served as nurses in Navy hospitals and at sea on Naval vessels. During the Civil War and Spanish American War, women nurses were again contracted by the Navy for service in the first hospital ship, Red Rover, and to assist in land based hospitals. Additionally, during the Civil War, women were responsible for raising the money to commission ships like the Red Rover and Daniel. On May 13, 1908 the United States Navy Nurse Corps was established, and following training, the first twenty women in the Navy reported to Washington, D.C. for assignments. By the end of World War I the number of women nurses had grown to 1,386 and their duty stations ranged to such forward deployed regions as England, Ireland and Scotland. Women nurses also served aboard the Navy transport ships, USS Mayflower and USS Dolphin. The Naval Reserve Act of 1916 allowed for the enlistment of qualified "persons" for service. When the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, did not receive an answer to his question, "Is there
any law that says a Yeoman must be a man?" the Navy authorized the enlistment of women. Initially the women were designated Yeoman and later Yeoman (F), but they were unofficially known as "yeomanettes." Although the women recruits did not receive any type of indoctrination training, or boot camp, they performed beyond expectations in such roles as recruiting; stenography; general clerical; drafting; production in ammunition factories; and translation. While most were stationed in Washington, D.C., some were assigned to bases in France, Guam and Hawaii. Both men and women were given equal pay based on rank and rate, but generally the men received additional monetary benefits for serving in combat positions. "When the armistice was signed on November 11, 1918 there were 11,275 Yeoman (F) in the Naval service and 300 female Marines." However, the signing of the Treaty of Versailles not only served to end the war, but also the role of women in the Navy. Once the war was over and the men came sailing home, the only women permitted to remain on active duty were those in the Navy Nurse Corps. Women in the Navy, however, were an overwhelming success and the impact they had on the civilian population contributed to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in August of 1920. Military service proved to be the rite of passage to true citizenship for women as it would later be for people of color; and legislation allowing women to vote would seal that change. Throughout time, the roles of women in the military will continue to be likened to


likened to those of women in the civilian sector. Feminists, Lobbyists, and Congress people both conservative and liberal will compare, study and seek to equalize the position of women in civilian professions to those in the profession of arms.

Twenty years following the drawdown of 1918 women were again allowed to serve in defense of their nation, under the Naval Reserve Act of 1938, as mobilization began in the anticipation of a United States involvement in World War II. In July of 1942, the act was amended to include the Women's Auxiliary Reserve, later known as the "WAVES" (Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service). Many women who served during World War I as Yeoman (F) returned to again serve their country. However, thousands of women new to the Navy way-of-life were also enlisted, including the President of Wellesley College, Mildred McAfee, who was selected to lead the new Women's Auxiliary Reserve. McAfee, along with several other women from professional and academic communities, were recruited to lead this fledgling addition. Unlike the women who served during World War I, the WAVES were trained in the basics of marching, Naval history, and in procedures and protocol. Training was conducted at Smith College in Northhampton, Massachusetts for officers and at Hunter College, Bronx, New York, for enlisted personnel. More than 86,000 women served in capacities varying from traditional administrative duties to such non-traditional jobs as rigging parachutes and aircraft mechanics. In 1947 the Army-Navy Nurses Act established the Nurse Corps as a permanent Staff Corps of the Navy, along with a permanent commissioned rank for nurses. On June 12, 1948, President Harry Truman signed Public Law 625, the Women's Armed Services Integration Act, abolishing the Women's
Auxiliary Reserve and making it possible for women to enter the United States Navy in active and reserve status. Although it seemed that women had achieved a great success under this law, it was not without restriction. PL. 625 limited the number of women in the military to no more than two percent of the total force and officer numbers to ten percent of that two percent. Although the Director of the WAVES served as Captain, O-6, promotions above Lieutenant, O-3, were capped. Women's opportunities were also limited by Section 6015 Title X of the United States Code from serving in combat units and more succinctly, women were allowed only in General Restricted Line billets. It would not be until 1967 that all rank restrictions applying to women were removed following the repeal of the limitation of two percent for female enlisted strength. While this seemed to have opened the path to advancement, the lack of equal job opportunities prevented real possibilities for advancement.

As the roles of women and the population of women began to grow from the end of World War II through the 1960's, the issue of pregnancy and how the Navy should deal with pregnant service members became a major concern. At this time, Department of Defense policy required all service members who became pregnant to leave the Navy. The 1960's was also a period of significant public and political debate on the issue of legalizing contraceptives, specifically the use of birth control pills. It seemed possible that the legalization of contraceptives may have given female service members the chance to remain on active duty by controlling when they would get pregnant.

In 1964, the United States Supreme Court ruled on the Griswold v. Connecticut case, abolishing the last remnants of state Comstock laws prohibiting the dispensing of contraceptives or information about them.\(^{19}\) By 1965 contraceptive use was an accepted fact of life for the American public. "The pill had become the most commonly used marital contraceptive and had probably become a favorite method of birth control among unmarried women as well."\(^{20}\)

Supporters of allowing pregnant service members to remain on active duty service, argued that the legalization of contraceptives had finally given American women a highly effective way to control and plan pregnancies. Having achieved this new level of control over their bodies and reproductive lives, women in the service should be able to plan their pregnancies in order to minimize adverse affects on unit productivity and readiness. In other words, proponents argued that women had proven to be professional, responsible and highly effective members of the armed forces, and under newly established laws for the legalization of birth control, the issue of pregnancy should not keep women from serving their country.

Unfortunately, it would not be until 1975 that the Department of Defense would reassess its policy and allow pregnant service members to remain on active duty.

At the end of the Vietnam War and the beginning of the All-Volunteer Force in December of 1973, landmark events changed the course of Naval history. Women were first admitted to officer accession

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\(^{19}\) Luker, Kristen, Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood (Los Angeles : University of California Press, 1984), 111.

\(^{20}\) Luker, 111.
programs such as Officer’s Candidate School and Reserve Officer Training Corps. The first female officers entered flight school for pilot or navigation training. A year later, in 1974, "the age requirement for enlistment of women without parental consent was made the same as for men." In 1978, the law prohibiting assignment of women to fill sea duty billets on support and non-combatant ships was amended and the Women in Ships program was put into action. As a result, women were assigned to sea billets in supply roles, ship’s service, personnel and basic seamanship. Even though the regulation was changed in 1975, pregnant military members were often given the option to leave the service early up until the late 1980’s. While many officers, both male and female, saw this as a way to reduce personnel problems caused by military mothers, the majority of the enlisted strength (male) viewed early discharges as a form of favoritism. Combined with the issue of the assignment of women to mostly shore station billets, military women were often viewed unfavorably by their male counterparts. Interestingly, the standards established by predominantly male politicians, perceived by women as extremely unjust, were also discriminatory toward men. The increasing hostility toward women due to separate standards for male and female service members has been a reoccurring theme in the Navy’s history and was the cause of significant internal strife among the troops until more recent legislation reduced the inequality gap. By 1980, most non-combat job opportunities in all Naval fields except SEAL/s (Sea, Air, Land Team) and submarines were open to women.

21 Collier, 1.
In describing the history of women in the Navy and its relation to the combat exclusion discussion, it is important to realize that a different history exists for Navy women of color. Although women of color are fully integrated and receive the same opportunities accorded Caucasian women today, the Navy was not always an advocate of equal opportunity.

Women of Color

The population growth of racial minority women in the Navy took longer to develop than that of their male counterparts. As a result of their under representation, little is written about the early efforts of women of color in the Armed Forces. It has been reported that some women, dressing as men, did participate in the Revolutionary War, but instances of women nurses during the Civil War have been documented by an African American woman, Susie King Taylor; viewed as a slave by the law, she worked as a laundress and volunteer nurse for the Union army. "According to government documents, Taylor's wartime memoirs provide the only written record of African-American nurses during the Civil War."22 Harriet Tubman, known for her work with the underground railroad, was also employed by the federal government to spy on Confederate soldiers. Once the war was over, however, Taylor, Tubman, and other women participants were not permitted to stay in the military. This would continue to be the pattern for both Caucasian women and women of color until World War II.

22 Moore, 366.
African American, Asian American, Hispanic American and Native American women in the military faced additional forms of discrimination beyond those experienced by their Caucasian counterparts. Women of color have been said to have "had to confront the consequences of double jeopardy - racism and sexism - the sum of which is greater than its parts." The segregation that existed in the civilian community was also evident in the military. Women of color worked alongside Caucasian Americans, but they were forced to live and socialize in racially segregated facilities. Due to racial inequality, women of color also had less opportunity to serve than their white counterparts. Perhaps the largest problem confronting minority females was the pressure of being "forced out" of the service because they did not score to acceptable levels on the Army General Classification Test (AGCT). This test was required of all military members, but women were required to score higher on the test than men. The Department of Defense believed that because women largely performed nursing and administrative duties, the requisite skill level would require higher test scores than was needed for the combat jobs filled by men. Caucasian women often scored much higher on the AGCT than women of color, which is indicative of the lower level of education provided in racially segregated schools. Thus, just as discrimination systematically affected people in the civilian sector, so too were military members subjected to the unequal treatment of the social system. Because the majority of African American, Asian American, Native American, and Hispanic American women were unable

23 Moore, 366.

24 Moore, 368.
to attain the scores needed for technical and skilled occupations, they were often barred from re-enlistment and forced to leave the service. As a result of the Civil Rights Movement and the ensuing Women's Liberation Movement, the beginning of the All-Volunteer military saw a dramatic increase in the number of Caucasian women and women of color in the service. In 1974 only one half of one percent (.56%) of the Armed Forces was comprised of women from non-European background; this figures out to be 14.4% of the female enlisted population and 3.3% of the women officer population. As of 1989, the number of minority women had grown to 33.7% of the enlisted and 13.2% of the officer female populations. (see figure #1)  

The year 1989 is significant, not only for the rise in the military's minority populations, but it is also the year General Colin L. Powell became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Not to be tokenized, nonetheless, the rise of General Powell to this post does seem to reflect on the increasing equality of opportunity for African Americans, as well as Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans. The United States military, as a whole, has made a large effort to eliminate discrimination from its ranks. The strides that it has made are evident in the fact that General Powell, an African American, was able to achieve such a high ranking post. Had the discriminatory practices of earlier years still been in place, General Powell along with hundreds of other top ranking officers of ethnic heritage, would have been prevented from achieving such positions. Table #1 in the Appendix shows the number and percent distribution of commissioned Navy officers, by gender, racial

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25 Moore, 364.
group, and rank. Women, as a group, hold positions in every officer rank with the exception of Vice Admiral and Admiral; and women of color are found in all but the Rear Admiral, Vice Admiral and Admiral positions. The increase in opportunities as well as the increasingly non-discriminatory environment, is also evident in the rise of minority members since 1989. The 1994 edition of the *Uniformed Services Almanac* presents a well-defined table of the numbers and percentages of each minority group, separated by service. (see table #2) Based on the total number of Department of Defense uniformed personnel, 1,692,439, and the total number of minorities, 501,636, minorities make up 29.6% of the United States military; this is more than a three percent increase in just five years. Currently, people of color work in every job capacity the military has to offer; but women of color are legally barred from some combat positions, just like Caucasian women. However, as the success of women entering recently opened combat aircraft and combat ship roles continues, the opportunities for women of all races will expand.

All four branches of the military, the Navy; Marine Corps; Air Force; and Army, have been able to achieve these improvements in overcoming discrimination for some very important reasons inherent in the military system. But the same methods could be used by society as a whole. Charles Moskos, a sociologist of the military, in his article "From Citizen's Army to Social Laboratory," describes the most basic of these reasons as a "level playing field." Basic training first establishes the belief that all military members are uniform, no one will be different or stand-out from the unit. The same physical as well as mental tests are administered to all new recruits and Moskos believes it is the first
chance people of color have to "outshine Caucasian Americans coming from more advantaged backgrounds." From this established playing field, the military develops its members through specialized training, in not only technical or skilled areas, but in social behavior as well.

A special equal opportunity section has been added to the evaluation reports for both enlisted and officer personnel. The service member receives points based on how his or her superior views their ability to conduct themselves in a racial and gender integrated environment. If a Navy member is viewed as racist or prejudiced against certain groups of people (whether it be of color, Caucasian, male or female) a mark made against him/her in this section could hurt the service member's career.

The Navy has established regular training sessions to discuss issues of racism, discrimination and oppression. The policy of the Department of Defense is explained and then discussions ensue on appropriate and inappropriate responses to the policy. This procedure is a highly effective form of education the military uses to combat all social problems - including sexual harassment and fraternization. As feminist and African American authors, Audre Lorde and June Jordan, have explained, education and awareness are the keys to reducing racism.

The military has by no means eliminated racism within its ranks. It has, however, developed some unique programs which work toward that goal. In addition to educating its members on established policies and technical requirements for specialized jobs, the military also encourages professional and advanced degree education. Recognizing that not all its

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26 Moskos, 88.
members have had nor would have the opportunity for a college education, the Armed Forces have created incentive programs. These programs include scholarships, tuition assistance, and the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs. The ROTC programs, divided into Navy, Air Force, and Army units, are training sites at established colleges and universities around the nation. The purpose is to allow its members to gain a college degree and prepare them for military service before being commissioned as officer's in a branch of the military.

A Survey of Attitudes Among ROTC Students

In February of 1994, I conducted a survey of the three ROTC units on the Oregon State University campus to gain a first hand perspective of the knowledge of racism in the ROTC unit, as representative of the service as a whole; the number of minority members in each unit; and the overall feeling of the ROTC members on the issue of racism. The surveys were personally prepared and distributed, under the guidance of Annie Popkin, Oregon State University Professor of Women's Studies. (see attachments #1,#2) The following discussion is an analysis of those results.

Approximately three hundred (300) surveys were distributed between the three units; thirty-five of which were directed specifically to students of racial minority heritage and the remaining questionnaires were directed to Caucasian students. After speaking with each Professor of either Naval, Military or Aerospace studies (Navy ROTC, Army ROTC, and Air Force ROTC unit's respectively) and explaining the purpose of the surveys, they were distributed to the various class
instructors. After a one week distribution and return period, I received thirty-eight (38) surveys from the Navy, twenty-three (23) from the Army, and after an additional week, twenty (20) from the Air Force.

The Navy ROTC midshipmen and officer candidates provided the most articulated answers to the survey questions. Unfortunately, I did not receive completed questionnaires from any of the four minority students enrolled in the battalion. Of the thirty eight (38) general surveys returned from the one hundred and two (102) distributed, the majority believed the unit was composed of ten to fifteen minority students; minorities being classified as Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans (despite the current Department of Defense classification of Asians as non-minorities), and Hispanic Americans. While most people believe the ROTC unit treats minorities the same as Caucasian students, two midshipmen, with prior active duty military experience, described certain privileges they believed were provided for minorities. One student wrote, "for the purposes of the NROTC scholarships and/or selection to the program, minorities are given extra incentives and special considerations." The ROTC program offers a variety of scholarships in which the Navy will pay for three to four years of college education, and in return the student is obligated to serve at least four years as an active duty officer. The Navy and Army, unlike the Air Force, do not offer scholarships specifically directed toward minorities. The military as a whole establishes goals to have an equal number of minorities comparable to the number of minorities in the entire United States population. In order to reach these goals, a certain number of minorities are actively recruited and enticed to join the program. Often, if a scholarship selection decision must be made
between a minority student and a Caucasian of comparable test scores, Grade Point Average and aptitude, the minority will be selected to fulfill that quota. Question number three on the survey asks about this type of military minority quota system and whether or not the students agree with it. The majority of the midshipmen felt this system was and is wrong and that "everything should be based on individual achievement and ability." Another student stated, "although the military's actions in the past have been less than desirable in areas of discrimination, qualified non-minority service members should not be excluded from positions to meet a quota." All of the students agreed that minorities should be military members and that they would not have a problem working with a person of a different ethnic heritage. Most also agreed that the ROTC program and the Navy in general is a good place for minority opportunities; however, one student pointed out, that while the institution does not perpetuate racism, often individual members practice discrimination. A midshipman of Native American heritage felt that "the Navy is the best example of equal opportunity in progress and that a minority member would have a better chance for achievement than in the civilian sector." The majority of the students felt the ROTC unit and the military in general is doing its part to combat racism; with the exception of one student who wrote, "the military should not actively attempt to ensure equality. Its purpose and organization do not tolerate discrimination." All of the respondents felt they had the freedom to practice religious and cultural traditions as long as they did not interfere with the Navy's mission. In answer to the final question, many students commented on the need for equality of opportunity for both minority and non-minority members. "As an officer in the USN (United States Navy), I
want the best person for the job, regardless of race or gender...I do not want a qualified person cast aside in favor of a quota member who can't perform well."

The Army ROTC detachment is composed of one hundred and one students (101) with members from both Oregon State University and Western Oregon State College. Among those students I received twenty-three (23) of the surveys from Caucasian students; but of the three surveys distributed to minority group members, only one was returned. From the Caucasian student surveys, most believed three ethnic minority cadets were in the unit; however a surprising number stated that they had not noticed or had no idea. All of the students felt the minorities were treated equally within the unit compared to Caucasian students. Interestingly, a majority of the Army cadets did not know a military minority quota system existed. This, in fact, was the hypothesis made by their Professor of Military Science prior to the survey distribution. Does this indicate that the ROTC program alone or the Army as a whole attempt to conceal the truth of the system from its members? A survey presented to active duty Army service members with similar responses would certainly be telling of this situation. All of the cadets felt minorities should have an opportunity to serve in the Army and felt it would not be difficult to work for or with minorities. One cadet stated, "in the US Army we are all 'green.' When we are all in uniform there is no color that precedes another." While most of the cadets said the ROTC program and the military in general is a good place for minorities to pursue a career, obtain an education, and raise a family, one cadet of Hispanic heritage has experienced discrimination and
believes it is often overlooked by the Army. Another survey responder writes,

"in many regards the Army is further along than the civilian sector in civil rights. For the most part all soldiers have the same opportunities once they enter the service from promotions to jobs/positions."

All of the cadets, with the exception of one, believe the ROTC unit and Army in general are doing their part to combat racism. The one exception was from a minority responder who remarked that, "when a Professor of Military Science finds out you are a minority and stars show up in their eyes because you mean bonus points, it makes you feel like you've lost a few inches." Like the NROTC midshipmen, the Army cadets also felt they had the freedom to practice their personal religious and cultural traditions. A female cadet, who had prior active duty Army experience, writes in her closing remarks that "in military housing, children and spouses often congregate with people of their same ethnic background. Additionally, spouses of ranking officers project an attitude of requiring special privileges because of their spouse’s military position."

Another survey responder closes with, "I truly believe the Army and the military as a whole is doing a good job of treating its members equally. I do not for a minute think 'we' are perfect, but we are far ahead of the civilian work force."

The Air Force ROTC unit has one hundred (100) members, twenty-five (25) of which are minority students. Despite these numbers and the extra week to collect the surveys, only sixteen of the general and four of the minority specific questionnaires were returned. Because the number of minority surveys returned was more significant than in the other units,
I will explain their answers separately from the general, Caucasian American, survey responses.

The sixteen who answered the questionnaire were fairly agreed that the unit had six cadets of ethnic background. It is interesting that the Army, though virtually unaware of minorities, accurately estimated the correct number; while the Navy unit believed they had more than the number actually enrolled and the Air Force projected considerably less. Because the size of the units are fairly equal, the overall number of students does not seem to be a factor; but it may be the type of minorities each unit enrolls. African Americans and Asian Americans are likely to be noticed by Caucasians more often than Hispanic Americans or Native Americans. A further study of these different projections would be needed before a conclusion can be drawn. The majority of the cadets felt the minority students were treated equally compared to Caucasian students. On the minority quota system question, approximately half answered that they were unaware of such a system while the other half thought it was inherently discriminatory and kept the best people from the job. "People should be selected for positions based on ability not ethnic background," answered one student. Surprisingly, two students answered that the quota system was necessary. One Caucasian cadet felt the "minority quota system was needed because there are too many underrepresented races in the military." A cadet from Hispanic heritage wrote "the minority quota system is needed to prevent biased shut-outs." More so than the other two units, it is shocking that the Air Force ROTC cadets would not be aware of the military minority quota system. Unlike the Army and the Navy, the Air Force offers a special scholarship designated specifically for minorities.
Several students have in fact been recruited into the Air Force unit from the other battalions because the opportunity for a special scholarship was available. The four minority students answered on their survey that they were aware of this quota and felt they did receive special treatment in receiving their scholarships. All of the Caucasian cadets felt minorities should be allowed to serve in the Air Force and they would not have difficulties serving with people from ethnic minority backgrounds. The answers to this question are fairly uniform throughout the three ROTC units; one would have to wonder if this is due to a bias created by the zero-tolerance policy on discrimination and Affirmative Action Plan established by the Department of Defense. These policies stress the necessity for service members to get along with one another or risk a career-ending discharge. Although the majority of the responders feel the ROTC program and the Air Force in general are institutions of opportunity for minorities, three of the cadets did write of discriminatory activities they experienced or witnessed. A cadet who was once active duty Air Force wrote, "the discrimination may not occur in the workplace, but is often seen and felt off-duty, in base housing communities, the clubs, and in Bachelor's Quarters." A Caucasian cadet said that he "fears taking his Vietnamese girlfriend to unit functions for fear of racist remarks from his fellow cadets." Interestingly, an answer given by a Navy midshipman was similar to one given by an Air Force cadet; they wrote that racism is more evident in the Navy than the other branches of the service and because of that the Army and Air Force offer more equal treatment and opportunity than the Navy. The cadets also agreed the ROTC program and Air Force as a whole is doing its part to combat racism. They also felt they have the freedom to practice religious and
cultural traditions. Surprisingly, I received the most hostile reaction from a cadet in the Air Force ROTC unit. The responder's closing remarks stated, "if nobody would make a big deal out of racism or equality and just treat everybody the same then there wouldn't be a problem."

The minority student's survey had very similar questions to those answered by Caucasian students, with a few exceptions. These differences were made to gain specific knowledge of possible discriminatory practices and feelings of discrimination experienced by minority students. The four Air Force cadets had virtually similar experiences and felt they had never been discriminated against in anyway. Although they had all received special scholarships from the Air Force based on their ethnic heritage, they all felt the minority quota system was wrong. One student wrote, "it places people who are not minorities at a disadvantage and the best or most qualified person should be selected for the position." They all agreed that their relationships with ROTC members are comparable to those outside the unit; however, one person felt that he/she was always being judged while among ROTC cadets. The prior discriminatory practices of the military do not seem to be an issue for these cadets. Most were unaware of the changes over the past fifty years and only one felt there had not been any changes. I question whether or not this is due to the lack of general military knowledge on minority history of their ethnic background, or a disregard for changes in the military system. They also agreed that the military is doing a better job than the civilian work force in combating racism and that it is an excellent place for opportunity if one puts forth the effort. Lastly, none of those surveyed have had any problem practicing cultural or religious traditions.
From these survey results, it would seem the ROTC units and the military as a whole have dealt with the problem of racism to a significant degree, but like many other institutions, have not eliminated all acts of discrimination. Many proponents of the integration of women in combat roles often reflect on the Navy's ability to deal effectively with racism and to integrate people of color in all service capacities. They believe that because the Navy has been able to overcome the problem of racism, it should be able to deal with the problem of sexism and successfully integrate women into combat roles. The results and implications of the Civil Rights Movement have in fact been traced as the force for change in the repealing of the combat exclusion statutes as will be discussed further in Chapter IV. Many of the fears and questions raised during the 1960's and 1970's on the issue of racial integration are revoiced in the discussion of women in combat. In addition, the same desires for equal opportunity and the status of true citizenship are sought by women today as they were by people of color in the mid-twentieth century.
CHAPTER IV: THE CURRENT DEBATE

The question of women in combat is not solely an issue faced by the twentieth century, nor is it debated by the military alone. As long as women have been members of the Armed Forces, whether temporary or permanent, the roles they should play have constantly been questioned. It has been the desire for equal opportunity and protection under the law, plus the chance to gain social and political acceptance as true citizens, that has driven the fight for the repeal of combat exclusion statutes. Despite the efforts of military members, political activists, feminist organizations and Congressional representatives, until November of 1993 the opportunities for women in the military remained limited. It is the political and social debate made for and against a gender-neutral Navy that will be discussed in the first section, followed by a review of the political interests in the second section, and the last section will develop fully the reasons why the roles of women in the Navy have changed during the last half of the twentieth century.

The Political and Social Debate

Prior to 1973, the year that marked the beginning of the All-Volunteer Force, significant contemplation of the issue by government and military officials and the public at large was minimal. It has been since the 1980's that concern for the place of females in a traditionally male dominated organization began receiving attention. Since that time, however, a large number of articles, research studies, and reports have
been written on the subject of gender integration, and as a result, arguments have been established on both sides. One critic has pondered why "anyone would seek to add a single syllable to this deeply emotional, frequently acrimonious discussion." Nevertheless, volumes of material continue to be written and the subject of women in the military remains very topical.

The time had come in the late 1980's and early 1990's for the United States to reappraise the existing combat exclusionary policies and to take a more pragmatic approach to the issue of women in combat. The issue had been catapulted to the forefront of political and social agendas by the events of Tailhook, the Gulf War, and a newly elected President's promise to pursue broadened opportunities for women. "To debate whether or not women should be in combat is really to debate whether women should be in the military, and most observers agree that the debate is closed." It was a delusion to think that women in the Navy could continue to be excluded from combat. The Persian Gulf War proved that women could perform during combat and the public voiced overwhelming approval - combat exclusionary statutes and policies served as artificial barriers to women, were no longer realistic, and had to be repealed.

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27 McNally, 9.

28 The Tailhook Association is a professional group of Navy and Marine Corps aviators who meet once a year to discuss the latest in aviation news and to spend time socializing. In 1992 the annual meeting, held in Las Vegas, Nevada, became giant party that had gone beyond control. Fueled by excessive consumption of alcohol, the actions of association members became perverse and sexual in nature. The overwhelming amount of public response to these actions was the result of sexual harassing remarks and behavior conducted by male service members toward female service members. This resulted in the resignation of the Secretary of the Navy, the dismissal of several top ranking officers, and directed national attention toward the problem of sexual harassment.

29 McNally, 31.
The proponents of gender-integration argued for the repeal of combat exclusionary legislation for three essential reasons: 1. a decreased youth population affecting end-strength numbers; 2. current numbers, positions, skills and locations of women serving; 3. the increasingly technical nature of warfare.

Decreased Youth Population

Little question exists that the size of the youth population available for Naval service is in significant decline. This is due to the sharp decrease in birth rates since the 1960's, and more so as a result of the current trend by professional women, to have children late in life. In 1985, the eighteen to twenty-one year old youth cohort, the prime target for Navy recruiters, was expected to decline from 12.3% of the current labor force to 9.5% in 1990. By 1988, the number of qualified people had already declined to a one and thirty-nine recruitment level and was expected to reach a one and thirty-four level in 1995. While the personnel concern during the Reagan years was in response to Administrative pressure to expand to a six hundred ship Navy, the need to recruit individuals qualified to use the high technology required in today's fleet almost demands that women be used in an even greater capacity. As Vice Admiral Leon A. Edney, Chief of Naval Personnel and Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Manpower, Personnel and Training, was quoted as saying in a 1988 interview,

\[30\] McNally, 24.

"considering the demographics this country will face in the next ten years, we can’t do this operation without the contribution that our women are making today. And by the turn of the next century, unless we utilize their considerable talents more fully, we won’t be able to do the mission."32

Numbers, Positions, Skills and Locations

When the original combat exclusionary laws were passed, women accounted for an almost inconsequential percentage of the United States Navy, and they served only in traditional roles such as administration, medical, and other support positions; this is, of course, no longer the case. Women currently account for approximately 11.8% of the active force, and based on a ten year force composition overview published by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Management and Personnel Planning, it is very likely that this percentage will increase in the future. (see table #3) As of August of 1993, women were serving in approximately 90% of the skills and 61% of the positions within the Department of the Navy.33 Additionally, women are performing critical jobs that require extensive training and experience before proficiency can be reached, and are in critical locations around the world. They clearly have an integral role in accomplishment of the overall defense mission. Appearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee in June of 1991, Becky Constantino, DACOWITS chairperson, testified,


"we saw 35,000 women serving in Desert Storm in a wider range of jobs than ever before. Pentagon officials were quick to point out the competence and quality of these women, and said that the job couldn't have been done without them...The time has come to give the chain-of-command the flexibility to use their best people to accomplish the task which our country asks of them...America deserves the best force we can maintain to defend the nation, and national security is the reason women serve."34

The Technical War

The final reason given for the repeal of the combat exclusion laws is the increasingly technical nature of war-fighting. Military battles are no longer fought in direct contact with nor in the visual presence of the enemy; state of the art equipment has moved the Navy into an "over the horizon" force. The Gulf War is a prime example of this new age warfare. Women may have been assigned to support roles, but several were killed by missiles launched from Iraqi territory and others were placed in life threatening danger patrolling the mine-infested waters of the Persian Gulf. Technology has eliminated the traditional "front line," where the horrors of battle are supposed to occur. Whether a military member is assigned to a combat designated vessel or to a replenishment squadron, he or she is subject to the perils of war; therefore, just as men are given the opportunity to train and perform in combatant positions, women must be given the same chance.

In addition to this realigned battlefield, another significant change in present-day war-fighting involves the availability of time. Computers, lasers, and other scientific technology have reduced the battle time to

34 Bolebruch, Lori, LCDR, USN, "And the Walls Come Tumblin' Down, "Naval Institute Proceedings. (February 1992), 43.
the push of a button. Because the results of armed conflicts will be
dictated by the results of the initial confrontation, all members of the
Navy currently serving in or immediately sent to a combat arena will be
expected to fight.

It is for these reasons that proponents believe the combat
exclusion statutes and policies should be repealed. The results would
not only bring the laws and policies affecting women in the Navy in
alignment with the integral role they currently play, but add a degree of
personnel consistency to the face of modern warfare.

In response to these arguments, opponents of repealing combat
exclusionary policies have expressed their reasons under the common
headings of: physical and psychological ineptitude; decreased unit
readiness and effectiveness; the harmful affects of pregnancy, sexual
harassment and fraternization. Former Commandant of the Marine
Corps, General Robert H. Barrow, USMC (Ret.), voiced the prevailing
attitude against women in combat in his testimony before the Senate
Armed Services Committee in June of 1991.

"Exposure to danger is not combat. Combat is finding...closing
with...and killing or capturing the enemy. It's KILLING... Brutality.
Death. Dying. It's...uncivilized! And women CAN'T DO IT! Nor
should they even be thought of as doing it. The requirements for
strength and endurance render them UN-FIT!...The very nature of
women disqualifies them from doing it. Women give life. Sustain
life. Nurture life. They don't TAKE it."35

It is this type of argument and deeply held attitude that has fueled
opposition to women in combat.

35 McNeil, Donald G. Jr., "Should Women Be Sent Into Combat?" The New York Times,
(July 21, 1993), E3.
Physical and Psychological Ineptitude

A significant amount of the reasoning made against allowing women in combat is that women are just not physically nor mentally capable of handling the rigors of war. A thorough review of the available evidence indicates that very few question males to be, on average, larger and stronger than females. The following summary of the research underscores these physical differences.

"Exhaustive work has been done in defining male-female anthropometric differences. The results are clear. Men are substantially larger, heavier, stronger, and faster. Men have greater physical endurance. A larger percentage of their body weight is devoted to muscle and bone mass. They can carry heavier loads longer distances at greater speeds. They can throw heavier objects (such as hand grenades) farther and more accurately. Finally, they can do all these things under greater extremes of temperatures. It should be noted that these physical advantages are genetic - no amount of physical conditioning will change them. Start with two 140-pound eighteen-year-olds, a male and female, in average physical condition. The male will be stronger faster and have more stamina. Put them into intensive physical training. At their respective physical peaks, the male will have increased physical superiority over the female."36

Despite the fact that on average the physical strength of males is greater than females, it should not be forgotten that not all males are average, just as all females are not average. Therefore, it stands to reason that just as all males are not qualified physically for combat positions, not all females should be disqualified based on a law of averages. In addition, as explained in the previous section by pro-gender-integration sponsors, the increasingly technological nature of combat does not always require

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36 McNally, 48.
the highest of physical standards. LT DiLucente, USNR, summarizes these arguments on the issue of physical strength,

"Either you have it or you don't. By instituting the same physical requirements for both sexes, the military can guarantee that those on the battlefield have the fortitude and brute strength to carry out the duties required of their specialties. Those not so endowed, male or female, can be placed into less physically demanding warfare billets that depend on talents other than muscle."37

Equally important to the physical abilities, or lack thereof, of Navy women to serve in combat, is their mental capacities. Many opponents doubt the ability of women to act aggressively, and more important, rationally, when faced with a combat situation. On the contrary, it is arguable that women generally handle pressure better than men. Studies have shown that women have performed at least as well as men under the stress of military field exercises and certainly some women have filled positions, such as fire fighters and police officers, which place tremendous mental and physical demands on an individual. Assuming that, as many have argued, "most males [are]...more aggressive than most females," there must still be some females who are more aggressive than some males.38 Accepting that some degree of aggressiveness is desirable for success in combat, the trait is not gender-specific and some women can clearly meet any minimal physical or psychological standard.

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38 McDonald, 15.
Unit Readiness and Effectiveness

The second set of arguments made against allowing women in combat is the belief that the readiness and effectiveness of the Navy will be compromised. Aside from the fact that women are supposedly weaker than men both physically and mentally, it is believed that the very social differences between the sexes will adversely affect combat performance. John Luddy, USMC, (Ret.), argues that it is teamwork and the bonding of unit members that wins battles. The social makeup of fighting units determines their success; and contrary to popular opinion, gender most certainly matters.39 Basically, combat units are likened to sports teams and implies that the natural bonding of males in a stressful environment is damaged if females are added to the team. This belief is based purely on social norms and traditions. The gender-integrated units in the Gulf War performed to standards and in some cases went above and beyond the call of duty; females did not adversely affect morale nor did they compromise the unit mission. Among all the arguments made by proponents of combat exclusion, the issue of unit incohesiveness is the most striking example of a lack of leadership. It is the character, ability and strength of the unit commander that will determine cohesiveness and success, not the gender of its members. The United States Navy is, has been, and will continue to be composed of a variety of people, from a variety of backgrounds, and it is the challenge and responsibility of its leadership to build an effective fighting team from this diverse group. Teamwork, esprit de corps, and camaraderie are

essential components of an effective force, but these are not traits inherent in the general population; they are taught through leadership, developed in training, and practiced in everyday activities. As a result, unit cohesiveness becomes a matter of habit, and in the event of warfare does not become a question of gender.

In addition to the adverse affects women would have on the internal effectiveness of the Naval force, it is also alleged that the admittance of women to combat roles would weaken the nation's projection of military power. It has been argued that because the majority of the world views the military as solely a place for men, and the women's place is in the profession of homemaking, the United States would clearly not be taken seriously if it allowed women to command a ship into war. Projection of military might is certainly as important as combat readiness. However, the gender of a nation's military leaders would be of little concern in the midst of battle.

More importantly, women have been and are now acting in combat roles in the armed forces of several foreign nations. Canada, Denmark and the Netherlands have women integrated into a far larger number of combat jobs than the United States. Their military policies allow women to stand sea duty on naval combatants with the exception of submarines, and assign women to combat aircraft. Britain's Royal Navy had women serving aboard combatants in a mixed crew setting during the Gulf War and had very positive results. In Norway women serve in every capacity of the armed forces without exception. Historically, women have served as combatants in the Russian military and the Israeli forces. The Soviet Union formed three all-female air regiments during World War II. "All saw action...The fighter regiment
alone carried out 4,419 combat missions and fought 125 air battles that
downed thirty-eight enemy aircraft and damaged forty-two more. It's
pilots were described as 'cool, resourceful, and fearless'; two became
aces..." The Israelis enlisted women into combat forces during the
British Mandate period of 1922-1948 to actively defend their Jewish
communities against Arab attack. As part of the forces opposing British
restrictions, Israeli women fought along with men in underground
organizations. During the War of Independence, 1948-1949, these
women became soldiers in the Israeli Defense Force and although they
were not officially a part of organized battle groups, many women fought
to defend their settlements.

It is evident, therefore, that many NATO nations have already
recognized the benefits of and the need to integrate women into their
military forces. Contrary to the opinion of many American diplomats,
gender integration has not caused these countries to appear militarily
weak. The Soviet Union was viewed as a significant military threat for
over forty years after the accomplishments of Russian female aviators.
Israel has been and continues to be viewed as a force to be reckoned
with. The United States has maintained its worldwide military prowess
throughout the twentieth century with female involvement in a significant
portion of that period. It would seem, therefore, that such military might
has very little to lose and much to gain by opening combat billets to
female personnel.

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40 Holm, Jeanne, Maj. Gen., USAF (Ret.), Women in the Military : An Unfinished
Pregnancy, Sexual Harassment and Fraternization

The final set of arguments have to do with internal difficulties encountered by the admittance of women to active military service. The opponents of women in combat argue that the ill-affects of pregnancy, sexual harassment, and fraternization would be significantly increased by the further opening of non-traditional jobs.

Obviously, as opponents of allowing women in combat frequently point out, only women become pregnant. As a result, the argument is made, that women should not be assigned to combat organizations since they may become pregnant and have to be taken out of the unit, downgrading unit effectiveness. As described in previous chapters, the issue of pregnancy has been a reoccurring problem in the Navy. Prior to 1975 members who became pregnant were automatically discharged from the service. Subsequent to that time, however, pregnancy has been classified as a "temporary disability" and women are provided reduced work schedules and jobs, extensive leave periods, and in some cases early releases from naval service. Women that become pregnant while stationed aboard ships must be left on shore when the vessel deploys for more than twenty weeks. Female aviators are not permitted to fly during, nor for a period of time following pregnancy. The Office of the Chief of Naval Operations has detailed a plan in OPNAV Instruction 6000.1A for the management of pregnant servicewomen. The instruction describes the responsibilities of the servicewoman's commanding officer as well as the requirements that must be fulfilled by the pregnant service member. The managing officer's responsibilities are as follows:
"After a pregnancy diagnosis is made and confirmed by a military medical treatment facility, a servicewoman's commanding officer must assure that the servicewoman retains a high degree of commitment to fulfill professional responsibilities. No preferential treatment shall be given because of pregnancy status. Specific limitations for the pregnant servicewoman are provided in this instruction. Additional limitations will require the judgment of the commanding officer in consultation with the health care provider and the occupational health professional."

The pregnant service member is required to:

"Plan her pregnancy to allow her to meet both family and military obligations. Seek confirmation of a pregnancy at a military medical treatment facility. Notify her commanding officer or officer in charge of her pregnancy. Perform her military duties within the limits established by her condition. Comply with worksite and task-related safety and health recommendations, made by appropriate occupational health professionals, including the use of personal protective equipment."

The loss of personnel and subsequent job performance can be extensive if a command of a 30% female ratio has ten to fifteen people on maternity status. Other personnel have to complete the duties of those on "light or restricted duty" and this can cause severe morale as well as productivity problems during a time of government downsizing. Chief Denise Stewart, division manager for naval air squadron VAQ-34, stationed in Lemoore, California, described the problem she faced in July of 1993.

"There were about a dozen pregnancies at once (in a division of 60 men and women), the majority of them involving single mothers. There was some grumbling from men who said some of the women were not pulling their weight...But the squadron got through it...and since that time nothing of the kind has happened."\(^{41}\)

Such incidents are well documented in the Navy, but should not be the barrier against allowing women in combat roles. Men are not excluded from serving in combatant positions despite GAO (Government Accounting Office) reports that show male members lose more time from duty due to sports related injuries, alcohol and weight associated health problems, than do female service members due to pregnancies.42 The fact that most women can become pregnant, just as men become injured or have alcohol problems, is certainly no reason to exclude them from serving in combat positions.

Current United States data has shown that a significant portion of the American population is choosing to postpone getting married, postpone having children, and in an increasing number of cases to have no children at all.43 For those seeking to have a military career or to serve in non-traditional roles, it is conceivable that many women will choose to have children later in life. The reality of the situation is that women do not have to become pregnant if they do not desire to do so, and the military may be particularly well-suited to encourage such birth control techniques.44 Again, this argument appears to be a problem of leadership. Naval leaders are required to train, counsel, manage and most importantly set an example for their subordinates. Young women and men need to be taught the responsibilities that go along with parenting a child and the difficulties of balancing military requirements with family needs. They also need to understand what their absence for

42 McDonald, 16.

43 McNally, 53.

44 McNally, 54.
maternal leave does to their unit's effectiveness. It is the responsibility of the Navy's leadership to ensure their personnel are fully informed in all matters of military policy, including those of family issues. By counseling the troops on the options available to them and the costs and benefits of each, it would seem that many of the pregnancy and single-parenting problems could be reduced. The problem will certainly never disappear, but effective leadership will certainly eliminate this as an argument against allowing women in combat roles.

Sexual harassment is certainly the most topical issue on the subject of women in the Navy and gender-integration. Opponents of women in combat argue that sexual harassment is the result of having women in traditionally male dominated jobs and will only be compounded by allowing women into combat related areas. Sexual harassment has existed in the Navy and civilian professions prior to the inclusion of women. Sexual harassment is founded in machismo, paternalistic attitudes that women are to be protected, cared for, and dominated by men. Once women stepped beyond the boundaries of homemaking and into the workplaces of men these attitudes became habitual practices. It was not until the late 1960's to mid-1970's and following the Civil Rights Movement that sexual harassment became a recognized problem in the civilian sector. It would not be until the early 1980's that sexual harassment would be perceived as an issue in the military. Prior to the 1991 Tailhook convention, the Navy had established a zero tolerance policy against sexual harassment, but the lack of a clear definition and enforcement plan rendered the policy ineffective. In 1986 and 1987, the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS)
visited installations in England, Germany, and the Western Pacific and found that sexual harassment was a major problem.\textsuperscript{45}

"Misconduct ranged from verbal abuse to blatant demands for sexual favors. DACOWITS also discovered that women did not believe the chain of command would be responsive to grievances and felt that in some cases, the services condoned negative behavior toward women."\textsuperscript{46}

Despite such efforts by military and civilian officials to call attention to the seriousness of sexual harassment, three years later, criminal assaults took place at the 1991 Annual Tailhook Association Convention in Las Vegas. The Navy's response to the event itself and the resulting political and public outrage was to develop a plan of action for dealing with sexual harassment on a fleet wide basis; a definition of sexual harassment was established, the Navy's core values of honesty, integrity, and respect for human dignity were re-established, and a regular training, evaluation, and reporting process was developed. The Navy defined sexual harassment in Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Instruction 5300.26B as:

"a form of sex discrimination that involves unwelcomed sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) 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 (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person, or (3) such conduct interferes with an individual's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment. Any person in a


supervisory or command position who uses or condones implicit or explicit sexual behavior to control, influence or affect the career, pay or job of a military member or civilian employee is engaging in sexual harassment."

Sexual harassment is definitely not a problem that solely affects the Navy, nor is it a problem caused by women in non-traditional roles. Sexual harassment is a problem of ethics and will not be solved by excluding women from combat assignments; just the opposite seems to be true. By allowing women in the Navy to have equal opportunity for billet assignments and promotions, and therefore, equality of status among male counterparts, the Navy's zero tolerance policy would stand to be significantly enhanced.

Fraternization is an issue that is often linked by opponents of gender-integration to the problem of sexual harassment. Although neither is tolerated by Navy policy, fraternization is a distinctly different charge. It is argued by opponents of lifting combat exclusion statutes that the undue familiarity and favoritism that characterizes fraternization is clearly a problem caused by women in the military. Because such activity does not naturally occur between men, the blame is placed on the growing integration of women. The Navy defined fraternization in Office of the Secretary of the Navy Instruction (SECNAVINST) 50.43 as:

"any personal relationship between an officer and enlisted member which is unduly familiar and which does not respect differences in rank and grade. Any personal relationship between officers or between enlisted personnel which is unduly familiar and does not respect differences in rank or grade where a senior-subordinate relationship exists. Senior-subordinate refers to the military relationship between members, including members of different services, in which one is senior to the other by virtue of grade, rank or authority."
Like sexual harassment, fraternization does significantly undermine the effectiveness of the fleet. Favoritism and personal relationships between supervisors and subordinates can damage morale and destroy the essential bonds of good order and discipline. Although knowledge of fraternization problems and incidences were as prevalent in the early 1970's as they are today, a Navy wide policy against fraternization was not established until 1989. Fraternization, like sexual harassment, is a problem of socialization and is not going to be solved by keeping women from combat roles. The Navy has developed and implemented a zero tolerance plan to deal with fraternization and the issue of gender-integration should not be effected.

The arguments presented both for and against the inclusion of women into combat roles have covered such wide ranging issues as simple demographics and psychographics to the complexities of scientific technology and social ethics. Having discussed the legislative "what" behind combat exclusion in Chapter II, the historical "when" in Chapter III, and most recently, the argumentative justification, it is the "who" portion of the journalistic schematic that will be discussed next. Such a political, historical and philosophical issue as the changing roles of women in the Navy would seem to include a highly diverse constituency; indeed, that is what research appears to have uncovered. Congressional representatives, government officials, interest groups, lobbyists and a percentage of the attentive public, seemingly representative of every point on the american ideological matrix, has expressed an interest in this topic.\(^7\) This matrix is composed of every political view, conservative;

\(^7\) Lunch, William, "Inside the Beltway" (Oregon : Oregon State University, Department of Political Science, 1993), 6.
liberal; statist; and libertarian, and a continuum along which the majority of views fall, either left (liberal) or right (conservative) of the matrix center. It is the interests of these groups and individuals that will be described in the following section.

Who's Who in the Politics of Combat Exclusion

The momentum for change in Congress began shortly after Operation Desert Storm/Desert Shield in which women played a significant part in its success. Although women were not assigned to combat roles, they were subject to capture, prisoner of war (POW) camps and deaths by bombing raids. In 1991 Representative Patricia Schroeder, D-Colorado and member of the House Armed Services Committee, introduced a bill to amend PL102-190 which prohibits women from serving in combat positions. The Schroeder Amendment, as it was later called, would have allowed female service members to fly in combat squadrons. Initially this amendment would have only been applicable to the United States Air Force, but Personnel Subcommittee Chair of the House Armed Services Committee, Beverly B. Byron, D-Maryland, extended the provision to the Navy. Schroeder and Byron argued that action in the invasion of Panama and the Gulf War saw a change in the nature of the modern battlefield.48 There was no longer the distinction between the front lines and a safer rear area and as a result women were subject to the death and destruction of war. While the amendment received little debate in the House of Representatives,

the Senate was not as quick to accept such a landmark change. The Roth-Kennedy Amendment, as the appeal for the inclusion of women in combat aircraft squadrons was named in the Senate, called for further study of the details involved in such a change of current policy. The details in question were the capabilities of women aviators, the logistical requirements involved, and the social ramifications of such a change. With the requirement that a study be conducted by a Presidential commission, the Roth-Kennedy Amendment allowing women aviators in combat squadrons was passed by an overwhelming majority. As part of the Defense Authorization Act of 1991 a fifteen member Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces was established to study and make recommendations on issues relating to the assignment of women in combat positions. From March to November of 1992 the committee, composed of six women and nine men, reviewed the tests conducted by all branches of the military, analyzed activities during Operation Desert Storm, Panama Invasion and Grenada Invasion that involved female service members and heard testimony from interest groups.

Interest group members voiced opinions on both the military need for an increased labor force and the desire for greater job and advancement opportunity. Linda De Perru, historian and founder of The Minerva Center for Women in the Military in Arlington, Virginia believes the use of women in the military is a labor issue. "What is driving the extended use of women is military need, especially in the modern army. Smart managers see they can't be bigots. It's counterproductive."49 In

the October 1992 issue of *Nation*, journalist Annette Fuentes presented the testimonies of three other political activists in defense of allowing women to serve in combat roles. A former officer in the United States Army who is now working for The Women's Research and Education Institute believes rank is a primary factor in the discussion of combat restrictions. The fight to end combat exclusion is driven from above by women pilots who want access to combat missions and officers who traditionally have been blocked from furthering their careers without combat related jobs. Michele Beneke, a former Air Defense Officer now activist for the American Civil Liberties Union believes the military is the "hallmark" of United States citizenship. Until women are allowed to serve in every capacity of the armed services, women will not be considered true citizens. Maria Lepousky, a professor of Women's Studies, presented data that supported the women in combat amendment. She believes women are fully capable of performing combat missions and that the military is capable of integrating women into such roles. In addition, she sees the desire by the public not to have women coming home from war in body bags as a positive deterrent against unplanned, rash military activities.

Not all reports heard and received by the committee were positive. Many Congressmen believed armed conflict and destructive force could not be dealt with by women. Freshman Republican Roscoe G. Dartlett of Maryland said, "I don't want my daughter or granddaughters to be in a position" to become prisoners of war.\(^5\) Representatives from the various military branches testified that women in combat units would

compromise the mission and overall effectiveness of the service. They felt, because men are programmed by societal norms to protect women from harm that a male service member may endanger the safety of the entire unit if he instinctively went to the aid of a woman soldier. In addition, the inherent weakness of women in upper body strength limits their ability to fulfill requirements for certain combat positions. The branch representatives felt the repeal of the regulation would force them to set different standards for men and women to do the same jobs but with less effectiveness. From these testimonies and the information gathered from concrete studies, the Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces ruled against allowing women to fly in combat. Despite this recommendation, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin repealed the exclusion for Navy and Air Force personnel and ordered the services to study further the possibilities of gender-integration.

In addition to the concerns presented by political officials on the issue of women in combat, military leaders played a significant part in the repealing of combat exclusion statutes. The Secretary of the Navy, Secretary of the Air Force, and Secretary of the Army testified before Congress; providing current and projected strength figures; numbers, positions, and locations of women serving; and their views on the ability of each service to integrate women into combat assignments. Then Secretary of the Navy, H. Lawerence Garrett, III, testified that women could and should be integrated into combat aircraft squadrons and into combat ships. He felt that because the Navy had trained women in these areas and had temporarily assigned women to combat units,
without encountering significant problems, the next logical step was the complete integration of women.  

Secretary Garrett's statements were supported by additional information provided to military personnel interest groups and lobbyists by members of the Navy's Women Officers Professional Association. One of these members was Rear Admiral Louise Wilmot, USN, a highly respected Navy official. RADM Wilmot, one of six women ever to achieve the post of Admiral, had the fortunate opportunity to work with the Chief of Naval Personnel, Vice Admiral Zlatoper, USN, in assessing the ability of the Navy to effectively integrate women into combat assignments. RADM Wilmot met with VADM Zlatoper on several occasions and discussed her views on women in combat, and the views of other top ranking female officers. In addition to these meetings, RADM Wilmot and the other female leaders held informal gatherings with Veteran's Associations, Reserve Officers organizations, feminist groups, and Business and Professional Women association members. The female officers expressed a need for a gender-neutral Navy based on the ideal of equal opportunity. RADM Wilmot and other female officers believe that the Navy has the technical and logistical capability to fully integrate women, and social issues do not appear to be a threatening concern; therefore, the officers argue, the Navy must eliminate the barriers to advancement and opportunity for women and begin judging all military members based on ability, not on gender.

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51 Palmer, "Senate Debates Rights...", 1687.

52 In August of 1993 I attended a meeting of the San Diego, CA chapter of the Women Officers Professional Association. In both formal and informal gatherings with RADM Wilmot, I learned of her role in the efforts to repeal the combat exclusion statutes.
Another group that has been a strong voice in the decisions by Congress toward women in the military are members of feminist organizations. Interestingly enough, these liberal minded groups have traditionally been against the military on most issues, but have established a strong defense for the allowance of women in combat positions. Not all feminist organizations are proponents of the amendment and those traditional feminists have sparked intense conflict between the groups. Members of the National Organization for Women (NOW) believe they must support movements for the equality of women in all facets of society, including the military. Patricia Ireland, Executive Vice President of NOW, says "the only thing this exclusion protects are men's jobs. It limits the services' ability to put the best person in the job." Cynthia Enloe, professor of government at Clark University and author of *Bananas, Beaches and Bases*, feels the "risk for feminists who do throw themselves into the national debate over the gender character of the existing military is that they inadvertently will be helping to entrench militarism itself." Like theologian and co-director of Women's Alliance on Theology, Ethics, and Ritual, Mary Hunt, Cynthia Enloe believes with the end of the cold war feminists should be working with even more fervor toward the end of militarism. Hunt asks "if it took this long to get women into combat how long will it take to get them out?" These two feminists and their followers also recognize the benefits the military provides for many women and the problems the inequality

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53 Fuentes, 516.


55 Fuentes, 516.
causes, such as sexual harassment and reduced promotion rates. While Enloe believes the issue of equal citizenship must not be linked to military service, she does feel "that the military is too important a social institution to be allowed to perpetuate sexism..."56 Carolyn Beecraft, member of the Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Services, though not a staunch feminist believes "this whole issue is about power, and whether women will be allowed to displace men in high-ranking positions."57

As mentioned earlier, not all feminists support the amendment and in fact the opponents are highly critical of their proponent constituents. David Horowitz, who was once a new left radical and anti-military activist and now could be described as an extreme right-wing Conservative, wrote an article in the October 5, 1992 issue of the National Review entitled, "The Feminist Assault on the Military." He believes the military, like many other American institutions is being overrun by the influence of the radical left feminists. Horowitz describes Representative Schroeder, NOW, and other supporters as gender feminists who deny human biology as fundamental influences of who we are. The gender feminists have little interest in national security or defense, Horowitz says, because they believe America is a "sexist, patriarchal, racist oppressor whose institutions need to be reformed beyond recognition."58 He feels the problems from sexual rules and societal defined roles have been in existence for five thousand years and

56 Enloe, 87.

57 Fuentes, 518.

the inclusion of women in combat positions will not solve them. Jean Beth Elshtan, author of "Feminism and War" is less harsh in her criticism of the amendment than Horowitz, but does raise some highly important questions. Her largest concern on allowing women in combat is the affect this would have on the children of those mothers who must leave for war. She feels the country must not forget the children and the unique relationship between the mother and the child during the early years of development.

The opinion of the general public on the issue of women in combat has been almost evenly divided, but leaning in favor of the inclusion of women. During the Persian Gulf War a Newsweek poll found 63% of its respondents approved of women pilots, 53% believed women should have combat assignments, and 50% felt that a future draft should include women.\textsuperscript{59} While these numbers have declined somewhat since the end of the war, the general public cites the roles of women in Desert Storm as positive proof that women and the military can handle integration. Clyde Wilcox, a professor at Georgetown University, published a study in the June 1992 issue of Social Science Quarterly describing the demographic and racial differences in the public opinion of women in combat by the American public. He found that black men are generally less supportive of women in combat than white men, but black women are somewhat more supportive than white females. The younger, well-educated men and women of both races exhibited more egalitarian gender attitudes, while those of conservative religious backgrounds were opposed to gender equality. Women were more

\textsuperscript{59} Fuentes, 518.
affected than men in their views of women in combat by differences in labor force participation. Those who work in the home were more apt to oppose the amendment than those with occupations outside the domestic sphere. Women veterans were also more supportive than non-veterans of removing the barriers for advancement in position and rank.60

The prevailing opinion of Navy personnel toward the acceptance of women into combat roles is generally very positive.61 There will be problems to overcome such as living quarters on ships, fraternization, and sexual harassment disputes, pregnancies and family needs, but these are growing pains experienced by all large organizations undergoing change. Each military branch, the Navy more specifically and a Naval aircraft carrier in detail is a microcosm of American society. An aircraft carrier is a floating city, with all the problems, benefits, responsibilities, rules and regulations of its land-based counterpart, but confined to a space 134 feet wide and 1,092 feet long. It will be up to the women in today's Navy to set the example and pave the way for future expansion into other branches and communities of the armed services. Many male service members hope the integration of women will bring greater equality to duty assignments and the requirements for service at sea and on shore. As explained previously, a significant amount of animosity has existed between male and female service members because men served more tours aboard ships than women, who served mainly at shore station commands. With the opening of additional surface vessels to the

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60 Wilcox, Clyde, "Race, Gender and Support for Women in the Military," Social Science Quarterly (June 1992), 323.

61 Pexton, Patrick, "Welcome aboard, say men in surface fleet," Navy Times (July 12, 1993), 12.
assignment of women, male service members hope this will reduce the
time they spend aboard ships. Data Processing Technician Second Class
Lawerence Young, stationed aboard the aircraft carrier, USS Ranger, was
quoted as saying, "I'm looking forward to women going to combat
because that will mean more shore duty for me, hopefully." Damage
Control Chief Robert Balcom, stationed on the dock landing ship USS
Rushmore, and married to a Navy sailor says, "I would like my wife to
experience the opportunity to come out and see what I do here and live
this life. I can show her, I can tell her, but until she does it, she will
never know." Little doubt exists that the integration of women into
combat aviation and sea service roles will be successful. However,
women in the infantry and special operation communities does not
appear to be an immediate possibility. These roles have a unique mission
that must not be compromised to accommodate the admission of
females, and unless the mission is reassessed it appears that women will
continue to be restricted from these fields.

It has taken almost a decade of continuous improvement for
women in the United States Navy to obtain a position approaching
equality to the majority of their male counterparts. In the process, the
views and opinions of a wide variety of interests have been heard.
However, there is one voice that is often forgotten; the voice of the
military woman. From the perspective of an active duty female member
of the United States Navy the repealing of the combat exclusion statutes
are a great victory. It is the widely held view of female service members

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63 Pexton, "Welcome aboard, say men in surface fleet," 12.
that it was the work of groups such as, Veteran’s Associations, Reserve Officer Leagues, and Business and Professional Women Associations, that developed support within the public, refuted the findings of the Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Services and brought Defense Secretary Aspin to the November 1993 announcement allowing women into some combat roles. It cannot be denied that interest groups and Congressional members with feminist ideals also played a role in bringing the issue to public attention following Operation Desert Storm, but their overly emotional and misinformed agendas did more harm than good. Service women are extremely embarrassed by the sexist, anti-male rhetoric many of these groups use to defend their position on women in combat. The issue is not the dominance of women over men, or the number of women in high ranking positions, but of equal opportunity and of a military service where men and women can work together.

Women in Combat - Why Now?

The question remains as to why these changes have occurred in this last half of the twentieth century, and more specifically in the last few years. As mentioned in the previous chapter on the history of racial minorities in the Navy, it is important to digress for a time and look directly at the political system and the transformation that occurred in the 1960’s and 1970’s. Out of the civil rights movement grew the use of grassroots interest groups to represent constituents in both national and state governments. Prior to this time, the political parties were the central force in influencing political policy. The Civil Rights leaders
battled against the Democratic party in an attempt to gain a position of power in the political system. Because the national Democratic party, and more intensely the southern Democrats, violently rejected the re-enfranchisement of African Americans, civil rights leaders were forced to find a different way into the system. Civil Rights groups such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) discovered the power of unity in organizing the people at the grassroots level. Because of the large number of people from various race and ethnic heritages, classes and genders, the success of the civil rights movement sparked the rise of other movements searching for equality - such as the women's liberation movement and the current gay rights movement.64

It is the women's liberation movement that is of most interest to the issue of the changing roles of women in the military. Both African American and Caucasian American women were important leaders in the civil rights movement. As a result, women as a whole discovered a voice of independence, freedom, and a strong desire for equal status with men. The Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act passed in the mid-1960's not only established laws for greater African American liberty and equality, but they also included rights for women. These laws were the result of powerful grassroots movements, influencing the powers of political parties. Traditionally weak political groups had found a role in politics and this would eventually lead to the rise of interest groups and the nationalization of political issues. With the advancement of women into traditionally male occupations and eventually into state and national

64 Information provided through Oregon State University, Women Studies course, Unlearning Racism, (Winter, 1994).
politics, women's rights became an issue in all societal institutions - including the United States military. Like many professional organizations, the military had traditionally been predominantly male in population. Those women who had served in World War I and more so in World War II, along with their supporters, established political organizations to increase the opportunities available to women in the military. As indicative in the most recent debate on allowing women to pilot aircraft in combat, the nationalization of politics and the rise of interest group influence has broadened the scope from which this issue is viewed. As the number of women in the military grew, a desire for equal opportunity and treatment has again surfaced as the driving force in these changes. The roles women played in Desert Storm were and continues to be the most significant basis from which current changes are being made. Although women in the Navy were assigned to support roles, supply ships along with combatants were at the mercy of underwater mines, and mail or supply aircraft were ordered to fly over enemy territory. Women were subject to all the conflict, horrors, and dangers of combat and performed their jobs to the high standards expected of military members. Suddenly, this dramatic, highly visible, and very recent event in American history discredited the beliefs that women were both psychologically and physically too weak to fight in combat, and that society did not want to see women coming home in body bags. It is unfortunate that it took an armed conflict to change political and public attitude, but like many other changes in American culture, a dramatic event was the catalyst. Two years after the Gulf

War, Bill Clinton was elected President and one of the keys to his successful campaign was the support he received from working women. With this combination of events, the stage was set for women in the military to finally achieve the opportunities they deserved.
CHAPTER V: NEW LEGISLATION

It has been more than forty years since the combat exclusion statutes were enacted as part of the Women's Armed Forces Integration Act of 1948. Although the enlistment and commissioning limitations for female members and the officer rank caps had been repealed in the early 1970's, Section 6015 Title X of the United States Code has remained in force. The results of the Gulf War and the role women played in its success, coupled with the election of a new administration heavily supported by a growing class of female professionals and the increased pressure from Congressional and public activists seems to have been the correct mixture of elements necessary to bring about a change. The changes in the policy governing the roles of women in the Navy were enacted under two separate forms of legislation. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the legislative documents that succeeded in repealing the combat exclusion statutes. Women have a new role to play in today's Navy and the words of the law along with the resulting departmental policies will provide the best guidance from which to pursue new opportunities.

The portion of the combat exclusion statute prohibiting women aviators in the Navy and Air Force from being assigned permanently to combat squadrons was repealed as part of the 1991 Defense Authorization Act for fiscal years 1992 and 1993. As explained in Chapter IV, the Schroeder Amendment, in the House of Representatives, received a limited amount of discussion and was passed with little disagreement. Many representatives remarked afterward that they were
surprised it had passed so quickly, but believed it would receive extensive opposition in the Senate. The combat exclusion issue became the Roth-Kennedy Amendment in the Senate, and as expected, did receive a significant amount of attention. Military, civilian and government officials were called on to testify on the benefits and costs associated with allowing women aviators in combat squadrons. In December of 1991 the Roth-Kennedy Amendment emerged as a compromise whereby women officers were no longer legally barred from combat aircraft, but the President would appoint a commission to study combat restrictions before any further action was taken. Despite the commissions findings that women should not be assigned to combat aircraft, but could be integrated into combat ship billets, then Defense Secretary Les Aspin issued a revised policy for the assignment of women in the armed forces on April 28, 1993. Secretary Aspin advised,

"The military services, with the support of Congress, have made significant progress in recent years in assigning qualified women to an increasingly wide range of specialties and units. Two years ago, Congress repealed the law that prohibited women from being assigned to combat aircraft. It is now time to implement that mandate and address the remaining restrictions on the assignment of women."

Accordingly, the Navy was ordered to permit women "to compete for assignments in aircraft, including aircraft engaged in combat missions... (and) to open as many additional ships to women as practicable within current law..." In addition, the Secretary of Defense

66 Ebbert and Marie-Beth Hall, 269.


directed the Navy to develop a legislative proposal to further repeal Section 6015 Title X of the United States Code.

At the same time the Navy was implementing the newly established policies for women in combat aircraft, both chambers of Congress had begun hearings on the proposal to fully repeal combat exclusion statutes. Because the Senate Armed Services Committee heard testimony from a wide range of interests in 1991 on the possibility of repealing all combat exclusion restrictions, the hearings before the House were limited to the results of subsequent studies and the plans of military leadership. After providing a detailed testimony before the Military Forces Personnel Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee on the Navy's future intents for gender-integration, Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Admiral Zlatoper, USN, remarked that

"all these initiatives are the right steps at the right time. They are supported throughout the chain of command from the deckplates to the Chief of Naval Operations. Women have served with distinction and honor throughout the Navy's history and this program permits them to fully develop and use their talents to the maximum extent possible. However, most importantly for the Navy and our nation, women working side by side with their male shipmates, throughout the fleet, will provide the talent and devotion to duty needed to keep the Navy at its peak of effectiveness. Removing the combat exclusion law is critical to the Navy's goal of full integration of women and I urge favorable consideration..."69

On September 14, 1993, the Senate passed the National Defense Authorization Act for FY1994 (S. 1298), which repealed Section 6015 Title X of the United States Code. On September 29, 1993, the House

Armed Services Committee passed its version of the Defense Authorization Bill, H.R. 2401, to also repeal combat exclusion statutes; and on October 6, 1993 it was incorporated as an amendment in H.R. 2401 and passed on November 19, 1993. The newly established law from H.R. 2401, Title V: Military Personnel Policy, Subtitle D: Women in the Service, Section 541-543 instructs as follows:

"Repeal the statutory restriction on the assignment of women in the Navy and Marine Corps. Notice to Congress of proposed changes in combat assignments to which female members may be assigned. Gender-neutral occupational performance standards."

Having met the legal requirements necessary for the acceptance of women into combat billets, all that remained was for gender-integration to be fully implemented on the fleet level. Although such effort traditionally takes years to accomplish, the Navy has increased the tempo for recruitment of qualified females, personnel training, logistical reorganization, and most importantly, the assignment of women to combat deployable units. On January 13, 1994 Defense Secretary Aspin issued his policy on the direct combat definition and a realigned assignment rule. Effective October 1, 1994 the rule adopted states,

"Service members are eligible to be assigned to all positions for which they are qualified, except that women shall be excluded from assignment to units below the brigade level whose primary mission is to engage in direct combat on the ground..."

Direct ground combat was defined as,

"engaging an enemy on the ground with individual or crew served weapons, while being exposed to hostile fire and to a high probability of direct contact with the hostile force's personnel.

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Direct combat takes place well forward on the battlefield while locating and closing with the enemy to defeat them by fire maneuver, or shock effect."\(^{71}\)

Following this direction, the Navy has since implemented a plan for gender integration in aviation squadrons, surface vessels, and construction battalions. The areas that remain closed to women are billets assigned to submarines and the Sea Air Land Teams (SEAL/s). Although the submarine community does not fall under a direct ground combat assignment, the Navy has requested additional time to study the affects of women aboard these vessels. As previously stated, the mission of the Navy SEAL/s is such that it not only performs direct ground combat tasks but goes beyond the realm of DOD policy, and as such, does not allow for the assignment of women. Unless this mission is reorganized, it does not appear as if women will be SEAL team members in the near future.

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\(^{71}\) Direct Combat Definition and Assignment Rule, 1.
CHAPTER VI : RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS

Throughout this century, the roles, responsibilities and opportunities for women in the Navy have steadily expanded in both numbers and scope. Based on Secretary Aspin's recent directive, the Navy is ready to take the next logical steps to make more opportunities available to female members. Within the constraints of recently repealed laws and past Department of Defense policy, Navy women have served in hospital ships, oilers, ammunition ships, refrigerated stores ships, transports, and training ships; and in replenishment, reserve and training aircraft squadrons. They also have served in combatant ships on temporary assignments ranging from intelligence specialties to carrier on board delivery (COD) pilots and crew members. A complete breakdown of the number and positions officer and enlisted personnel held to FY1994 is detailed in attached figures 2-6. However, under the newly established DOD policy for the assignment of women in the armed forces, the Navy has established a plan for further utilization and implementation of female personnel. The following is an explanation of the Navy's plans for women in aviation, aboard ships, and in submarines.

Women in Aviation

The Navy is rapidly moving forward in its efforts to place women aviators in combat squadrons and is continuously screening likely women aviation officers for transition to combat units. Female aviators already identified for transition were assigned to Tactical Electronic Warfare
Squadron (VAQ) 130 in July of 1993 and two of the first three women sent will be deploying with the aircraft carrier USS Eisenhower in the summer of 1994. Female aviators also competed with male aviators in the August 1993 Aviation Transition Board and by May of 1994 it is expected that as many as twenty-five women aviators will be assigned to combat squadrons. Future aircraft training pipeline selections, as well as aviation recruiting, will be on a gender-neutral basis.

Female enlisted personnel, previously restricted under non-combat aviation ratings, are now being assigned to sea based combat squadrons and aircraft carriers. "Current plans are to assign up to 3,500 enlisted women to seven carriers by the end of FY99. Each carrier will be modified to embark up to fifty female chief petty officers and approximately 400 women in pay grades E-6 and below, to be evenly split between the air wings and ships company." The air wings and carriers identified for the initial embarkation of women are Carrier Air Wing 3 on the USS Eisenhower (CVN-69), Carrier Air Wing 11 on USS Lincoln (CVN-72) and the precommissioning unit of Stennis (CVN-74). Additional carriers will be identified based on the modification completions and female personnel support.

Women at Sea

Following the enactment of the Defense Authorization Act for FY92, the Navy immediately opened eighteen additional non-combatant

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72 Hearings on Women in Combat, 4.

73 Hearings on Women in Combat, 4.
ships and three fleet staffs for the assignment of women. The newly available ships included two Amphibious Command Ships (LCC), six Replenishment Oilers (AOR), eight Fast Combat Support Ships (AOR), and two miscellaneous Command Ships (AGF). Since the establishment of the 1994 DOD policy for the assignment of women in the armed forces, the Navy added aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, amphibious warfare ships, frigates, and mine countermeasures command and control ships to the list of available billets for women members. Specifically, the Navy has opened two aircraft carriers, two Spruance Class Destroyers (DD-963), two Arleigh Burke Class Guided Missile Destroyers (DDG-51), and two Whidbey Island Class Dock Landing Ships (LSD-41). "(The) Navy will endeavor to embark women in an additional seven ships annually (2 DD-963, 2 DDG-51, 1 CVN, 2 LSD-41) through 1999." The goal is at least a 10%-20% female composition on all mixed-gender ships and as much as 40% on some vessels by the end of 1999.

Assignments and orders for enlisted women will be based on confirmation by the appropriate Fleet Commanders concerning berthing availability and ship's schedule. The Navy intends to embark female enlisted personnel in groups, one ship at a time, integrating enlisted (E1-E6) following or accompanied by the integration of women officers and chief petty officers.

Women surface warfare officers complete the same pipeline training as their male counterparts; thus no additional training will be

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74 Hearings on Women in Combat, 8.


76 Hearings on Women in Combat, 11.
required for the women officers assigned to combatant ships. The number of female surface warfare officers, previously available only for non-combatant ships, will be the pool for initial embarkation aboard combatants. The normal training pipeline will provide ensigns to the fleet eight to ten months after commissioning and these new accessions will provide the increased numbers for the future. Because the berthing available for officers is separated into private staterooms, there is no minimum number required for the assignment of female officers to a ship.

Regarding women on submarines, the verdict is still out. Navy officials have requested further studies be conducted on the ability to adequately berth and care for the medical needs of female members without compromising mission effectiveness. The obstacles to change are not necessarily political nor social, they are a matter of capability. Currently, Navy submarines are not designed to berth and care for the needs of women service members. It will take time and money to re-fit submarines for this purpose; adjusting to budget limitations, ship's schedule, and mission requirements. The opinion of those currently serving in the Navy's submarine community is very positive. Service members have voiced few disadvantages of integrating women into submarines and believe far more good will result. Although women have been and continue to be trained in the skills of nuclear power operations, logistical issues remain a concern.
CHAPTER VII : SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper has presented the political, historical and philosophical reasoning behind the changing of the regulations to allow Navy women into combat roles. In presenting these issues, three themes have prevailed throughout the chapters. First, political policies, interests and judicial rulings have effectively governed the roles of women in the Navy over the years and their revision was essential to the recent landmark changes. Second, the history of women in the Navy, the reasoning behind their roles, and the prevailing attitudes placed the current debate in a social and moral context. Lastly, but of equal importance, the ethical reasoning and decisions made by military/civilian leaders, as well as the general military/civilian population, were the underlying elements of the historical and political debate.

The issues addressed in this paper are critically important; when considering the subject of women in the military, the national security interests of the United States are a direct concern. The United States is generally at peace in the world and the majority of political and social attitudes support women in combat. Therefore, the time is right to begin the further integration of women into combat roles.

Gender integration in the Navy will take time and undergo significant growing pains. Hopefully, the resistance to change can be reduced through an understanding of how these changes developed, what the interests and concerns were behind the decisions, and how the policy was defined. Education has repeatedly proved to be the key to success in dealing with racial integration and the eradication of drug
usage in the military. As a result of the Navy's program for regular
training on sexual harassment and fraternization policy, as well as
discrimination and affirmative action, education will again prove effective
in integrating women into combat roles.

The Navy has a history of success in both military and social
battles. The successful integration of gender-neutrality during a period
of budget reductions and fleet "right-sizing" may prove to be the most
difficult battle the Navy has yet encountered. As in the immortal words
of Oliver Hazard Perry, "We have met the enemy and he is ours," we
have met the enemy of traditional attitudes and a fear of change and he
is ours.
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APPENDIX
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<tr>
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Source: Derived from data files provided by Defense Manpower Data Center
## TABLE #2

**ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL BY ETHNIC GROUP**

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<td>%</td>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
</table>

Legend:
- **AI** = American Indian
- **AN** = Alaskan Native
- **AA** = Asian
- **PI** = Pacific Islander
- **HISP** = Hispanic
- **O/U** = Other/Unknown

**SOURCE**: Uniformed Services Almanac, 1994
TABLE #3  **FACT SHEET**

Women in the Military  

November 22, 1993

Strength Figures (as of September 30, 1993, Defense Manpower Data Center):

**Ten Year Force Composition Overview** (Active Duty Women):

<table>
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<th>FY83</th>
<th>FY84</th>
<th>FY85</th>
<th>FY86</th>
<th>FY87</th>
<th>FY88</th>
<th>FY89</th>
<th>FY90</th>
<th>FY91</th>
<th>FY92</th>
<th>FY93</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>12</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ATTACHMENT #1 SURVEY MINORITIES IN THE MILITARY

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. It is being used as part of a study on minorities in the military. Your answers will remain completely confidential, so please be as specific as possible. If you have any questions or would like to speak to me directly about your answers do not hesitate to call. Thank you again for your help. ENS Holly Rosenberg, 752-0133

1. How many ethnic minorities, (people of color, Native American, Hispanic American, or people of other "non-European" ethnic backgrounds) do you have in your ROTC Unit?

2. Do you feel these people are treated the same as those of Caucasian heritage within the organization, or are they discriminated against or provided special privileges? Please explain.

3. How do you feel about the military minority quota system? Explain.

4. Do you think minorities should be military members? Would you have any problem working with a person of a different ethnic heritage than your own? (Think about a situation where a person of color may be your boss and/or you are on a deployment, confined to a relatively small space.)
ATTACHMENT #1  cont.

5. Is the ROTC program and/or the military in general a good place for minorities to pursue a career, or obtain an education, and raise a family? In other words, how do you see the military as an institution of our country? Do you think it is an institution of opportunity or does it perpetuate the system of discrimination?

6. Do you think the ROTC Unit and/or the military in general is doing their part in ensuring racial equality and combating racist activities? If not, what could they do better?

7. As a military member or soon to be a military member, do you feel you have the freedom to practice any religious, cultural, or familial traditions that are unique to your cultural heritage?

8. Please feel free to write any additional comments here and/or critique this survey.
Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. It is being used as part of a study on minorities in the military. Your answers will remain completely confidential, so please be as specific as possible. If you have any questions, or would like to speak to me directly about your answers do not hesitate to call. Thank you again for your help. ENS Holly Rosenberg, 752-0133.

1. Within the ROTC Unit have you ever felt discriminated against or compromised in any degree because of your race? If so, please describe the situation.

2. Have you ever felt that in some way you received special treatment or privileges because of your race or minority status? Explain.

3. How do you feel about the military minority quota system? Explain.

4. How do you feel your relationships, working or social, with people in the ROTC compares with those that you have in the university or the Corvallis community?
5. In the past fifty years, do you think the changes for minorities in the military to achieve better positions, working conditions and relationships have changed for the better or for the worse? Please explain.

6. If you have served as an active duty military member prior to coming to the ROTC Unit, do you notice a difference in the minority programs, awareness, and general cohesiveness between active duty military service and your time in the ROTC? In other words, did you find racism or discrimination to be a greater problem with people you worked with in the active duty forces or that you are now working with at the ROTC Unit? Explain.

7. Do you think the ROTC Unit and/or the military in general is doing their part in ensuring racial equality and combating racist activities? If not, what could they do better?

8. As a military member or soon to be military member, do you feel you have the freedom to practice any religious, cultural, or familial traditions that are unique to your cultural heritage?
9. Is the ROTC Unit and/or the military in general a good place for minorities to pursue a career, obtain and education, earn money, and raise a family? In other words, how do you see the military as an institution of our country? Do you think it is an institution of opportunity or does it perpetuate the system of discrimination?

10. Please feel free to write any additional comments here and/or to critique this questionnaire.
FIGURE #1  AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN AS PERCENTAGE OF ACTIVE DUTY FEMALE OFFICERS AND ENLISTED PERSONNEL

Source: Defense Manpower Data Center

NOTE: Information on other minority groups was not available and can be construed as represented by the African-American data.
FIGURE #2  WOMEN OFFICER DISTRIBUTION BY DESIGNATOR CATEGORY

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Women</th>
<th>Percent of Category</th>
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<td>UNRESTRICTED LINE</td>
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<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESTRICTED LINE</td>
<td>565</td>
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<tr>
<td>STAFF CORPS</td>
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<td>LIMITED DUTY/WO</td>
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SOURCE: Defense Advisory Committee on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, as of 31 December 1993
## FIGURE #3
WOMEN OFFICERS IN UNRESTRICTED LINE COMMUNITY

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<tr>
<th>Designator</th>
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<th>Percent of Designator</th>
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<td>AVIATOR</td>
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<td>SPECIAL OPERATIONS</td>
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<td>OTHER</td>
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<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL (EXCLUDES SUBS &amp; SPECWAR)</td>
<td>2,961</td>
<td>9.5</td>
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**SOURCE:** Defense Advisory Committee on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, as of 31 December 1993.
FIGURE #4 WOMEN IN THE STAFF CORPS

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<td>TOTAL</td>
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SOURCE: Defense Advisory Committee on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Services, as of 31 December 1993.
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<td>Total</td>
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SOURCE: Defense Advisory Committee on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, as of 31 December 1993.
FIGURE #6  ENLISTED WOMEN DISTRIBUTION BY RATING CATEGORY

<table>
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<th>RATING CATEGORY</th>
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<th>% OF WOMEN</th>
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<td>- NON-TRADITIONAL</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Defense Advisory Committee on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Services, as of 31 December 1993.