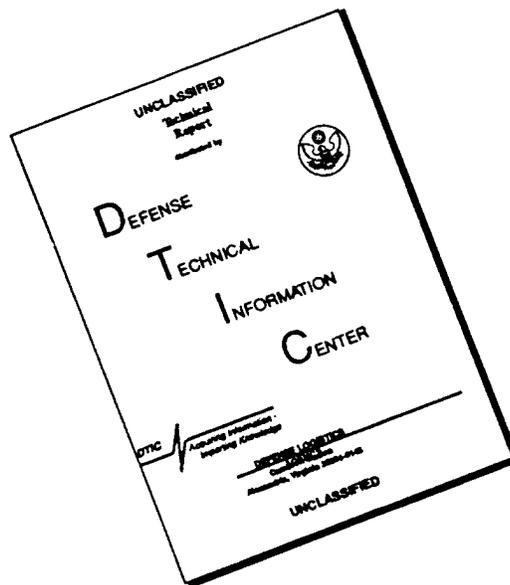


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MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN  
AS IMPEDIMENTS TO CAREER PROGRESSION  
OF ACTIVE DUTY CAREER WOMEN ARMY OFFICERS

by

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## ABSTRACT

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In an Army workplace where change is everywhere and the work environment is continually transforming, women are being called upon to play a much larger role. In accepting this challenge and representing a higher percentage of the total Army end strength than ever before, many questions are surfacing. Can women juggle the responsibilities of career, marriage, and children? Does marriage and children adversely impact the career progression and advancement opportunities of active duty career women Army officers in comparison with their male and childless female counterparts? Is the Army placing undo hardship on the women career officers who desire family responsibilities? This study was undertaken to contribute to, and support the right of, all women Army officers wanting an equitable opportunity to serve their country and have fulfilling family lives as well. It is our intention to impartially show the data and suggest possible ways to make our Army system better for those women who desire career and family responsibilities.

# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	i
<b><u>Thesis Question:</u> Marriage and Children as Impediments to Career Progression of Active Duty Career Women Officers</b>	i
• The Impact of Army Careers on Personal Lives of Female Army Officers	i
• The Army Does Not Have a Monopoly on Familial Inequities	v
• Women Being All They Can Be in the Army	vi
<b>Chapter I: Career Realities Revisited</b>	1
• Career Necessities/Career Status/Branch Qualification	2
• Career Progression to Field Grade and Senior Officer Ranks	3
<b>Chapter II: If the Army Wanted You to Have Children You Would Have Been Issued Them</b>	9
• Current Statistical Army Family Data	9
• Defining the Problem	10
<b>Chapter III: Motherhood, Apple Pie and Army Career: Is it the American Way?</b>	19
• How Does the Army Stack Up Against the Private Sector?	19
• Private Sector Career Progression	20
• Women are More Affected by Family/Work Issues than Men	22
• A Catalyst Study	23
• Private Sector Solutions: Do they Work?	25

<b>Chapter IV: Be All You Can Be</b>	<b>30</b>
• <b>Motherhood and Professional Soldier: Can Women Be Successful at Both?</b>	<b>30</b>
• <b>What Makes Women and Men Feel Successful at Home?</b>	<b>31</b>
• <b>Potential Alternatives to Current System</b>	<b>33</b>
• <b>And the Answer Is?</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Appendix A: History of Women in the Army</b>	<b>39</b>
• <b>World War II</b>	<b>39</b>
• <b>Post World War II</b>	<b>41</b>
• <b>Post Vietnam War</b>	<b>42</b>
• <b>What Did You Do During the War, Mommy?</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Appendix B: What Women Officers Revealed</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Works Consulted</b>	<b>47</b>

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Thesis Question:** Do marriage and children adversely impact the career progression and advancement opportunities of active duty career women Army officers in comparison with their male and childless female counterparts?

## **The Impact of Army Careers on Personal Lives of Female Army Officers**

Although women who desire a successful Army career have made significant progress over the years<sup>1</sup>, it has become increasingly apparent that the personal cost for such progress is high. In the Army, career advancement often means that certain aspects of soldiers' personal lives, particularly in the area of the traditional family relationship, are sacrificed. Male career Army officers also face tremendous challenges embracing a military career, however, it does not appear (at least statistically) that their personal lives become as compromised as those of their women colleagues. The impact of children specifically highlights this disparity.

While our focus is to look at the demands on women in achieving career success, it is not our intention to downplay the negative family impacts such as divorce and dysfunctional relationships with their children that many male Army career officers experience as well.<sup>2</sup> Nor was it our intention to perpetuate stereotypes between the genders, but rather emphasize some of the most blatant differences and suggest possible ways of improving them.

Because men and women have the same professional roles in the Army and must compete for many of the same assignments, equal opportunity for career development is of utmost importance to ensure equity is maintained. We have attempted to pinpoint family discrepancies between the genders with the hope of making some recommendations that will "level the battlefield," in a more fair and equitable manner for women officers who have children. Our research was narrowly tailored to encompass active duty career Army-commissioned officers serving in all non-professional branches (i.e. exclusive of Medical Corps, Judge Advocate General Corps, Chaplain Corps etc.) and includes the Active Component and Army Reserve.<sup>3</sup>

We found several indicators regarding critical assignments and advanced military education opportunities which suggest either that female Army officers take family responsibilities more seriously than their male counterparts or that social norms pressure them to assume the primary family caretaker responsibilities. Consequently, professional advancement seems to be penalized by marriage and children. We offer several observations:

- Career Army female officers are less likely to be married than their male colleagues. For instance, among battalion commanders and equivalent, 94% of the men are married vs. 56% of the women.
- Career Army female officers, regardless of marital status, are much less likely to have children than their male counterparts. Among the battalion commanders, 98.5% of the men have children vs. 20.3% of the women.

- Discrepancies in family status between men and women are more acute the further along the “fast-track/successful” career path an officer has progressed. As an example, among brigade commanders and equivalent, 96% of the men are married and only 26% of the women are married. Equally significant, 86.5% of the men have children vs. 10.5% of the women.

The data below, regarding the essential assignments Active Component officers must complete to remain competitive for upward mobility, underscore these observations:

--Resident Command and General Staff College, Military Education Level 4 (MEL 4) attendance

- 93% of the men and 66% of the women are married.
- 81% of the men and 40% of the women have children.

--Assignment to Battalion Command or equivalent

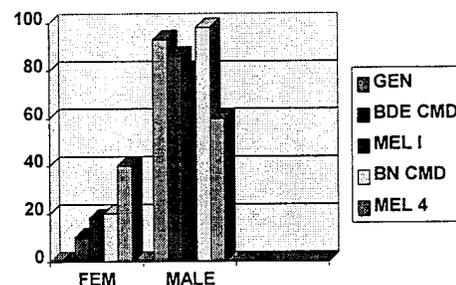
- 94% of the men and 56% of the women are married.
- 98.5% of the men and 20% of the women have children.

--Resident Senior Service College attendance

- 97% of the men and 49% of the women are married.
- 88% of the men and 18% women have children.

FEMALE & MALE WITH CHILDREN  
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--Assignment to Brigade Command or equivalent

- 96% of the men and 26% of the women are married.
- 86.5% of the men and 10.5% of the women have children.

--Among the 307 General Officers on active duty

- 98% of the men and 40% women are married.
- 82% of the men and 0% women have children.

The career management system is different for the approximately 2700 Army Reserve officers who are part of the active duty full-time support force known as the Active Guard Reserve force (AGR). Further, the grade structure is so small for AGR officers that promotion to senior grade levels is considered significant regardless of the assignment. Consequently, we reviewed only AGR senior officer data based on gender distribution. Although discrepancies regarding family status between men and women are not as great in comparison with their active component counterparts, a similar pattern was observed among AGR officers:

--Colonel

- 97% men and 27.3% of the women are married.
- 82.1% men and 45.5% of the women have children.

--Lieutenant Colonel

- 88.2% of men and 51.8% of women are married.
- 80.7% of men and 51.9% of women have children.

## The Army Does Not Have a Monopoly on Familial Inequities

We met with several major private sector companies to determine if the Army findings are unique, i.e., are female officers who choose the Army as a career more disadvantaged in terms of career progression than their private industry counterparts? Although statistics were not available due to the Privacy Act, it appears that a similar phenomenon exists with respect to married women with children at the higher echelons of corporate America as well. However, many of these companies have aggressively sought to accommodate both careers and family responsibilities through innovative methods of career management to include the development of a "family track," which allows employees to balance career and family needs through the use of programs such as alternative work scheduling and extended leaves of absence during dependent care intensive years. This approach allows career advancement for those who want to, although at a slower rate. These female executives and senior managers tend to be older than those who have advanced through the ranks in a traditional fashion making few allowances for family vis-à-vis their corporate work life. Because many of these innovations are recent, it is too early to determine whether these management methods are successful. Furthermore, private sector innovations may not be workable in the Army "warrior" culture<sup>4</sup> which puts mission accomplishment above all else and is characterized by physically demanding and hazardous jobs; constant and strenuous training; and, frequent and lengthy absences from family, especially during combat and operational deployments.

## Women Being All They Can Be In The Army

As we move into the 21st Century what choices does Army management offer the female "warrior" mother? Is it possible to be a mother and a "fast-track"<sup>5</sup> officer? We have considered several alternatives to alleviate the cited inequities:

- Develop a family track that allows an officer to take extended time off to be the caretaker for new babies and children. This option could include a two year leave of absence.
- Develop a family track that will allow an officer to stay at one rank throughout his or her career. This would require that certain jobs be identified as non-upwardly mobile positions.
- Maintain the status quo, however, inform potential Army officer careerists that in order to facilitate a fast track career family life will be disadvantaged.

We make the following career management recommendation: Continue current career development and management practices with slight accommodations for a modified "family track," permitting a leave of absence for up to two years for service members who desire time for family responsibilities during dependent care intensive years. This would allow those who desire a fast-track option to remain competitive for advancement to the upper echelon assignments and schooling, although at a delayed pace. Additionally, it is important to inform officers that in order to have a "fast-track/successful" career their family interests will suffer.

This recommendation would not be without challenges. It may require careful management decisions by the officers concerned to ensure that very personal choices (i.e. when to start families) coincide with that time of career which is less intrusive professionally. The service member must also be cognizant of the loss of pay and medical benefits. Additionally, potential disruption in the personnel system can occur as vacancies created by officers availing themselves of this option will have to be filled. Likewise, the personnel system has to be able to accommodate officers returning to duty following the leave of absence. Finally, the Army culture must accept the policy and ensure those who use the option are not negatively affected in follow-on assignments and schooling upon return to duty. These challenges are significant, however, we feel that they are not insurmountable.

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<sup>1</sup> See History of Women in the Army at Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> Discussion, Colonel Sally Murphy, U.S. Army, April 1996.

<sup>3</sup> We did consult with the Army National Guard, however statistical AGR data was not readily available.

<sup>4</sup> Warrior culture is an Army term of art used to characterize the combat ethos inherent in the profession. There is considerable debate within and without the Army regarding the compatibility of motherhood with this ethos. The issue of motherhood and warrior is beyond the scope of this paper and is not addressed. The term is used by the authors simply to connote the profession of arms.

<sup>5</sup> For purposes of this paper, the term "fast-track officer" is used to indicate those officers who are on the desired career path leading to the key command, staff and professional education assignments necessary to become a general officer.

# CHAPTER I

## CAREER REALITIES REVISITED

As professional barriers have fallen allowing women officers to become more fully integrated within the Army warrior culture, social impediments have resurfaced that underscore the cultural obstacles that still remain.<sup>1</sup> Highlighted especially during the Persian Gulf War, the issue of warrior-mothers gained significance hinting of the public's discontent with mothers going to war. Fathers were not at issue as they traditionally have gone to war. The larger issue of this debate, however, is one which women confront daily, and that is the impact of children on their chosen careers.

Women Army officers have long known the difficulties of balancing the extraordinary challenges of an Army career along with the demands of traditional family life.<sup>2</sup> Further, it appears that many women make decisions early in their careers on whether or not to marry and whether or not to have children, recognizing that both, and especially children, may be a derailing factor in the pursuit of a fast-track professional life.<sup>3</sup> This observation was arrived at after analyzing data obtained from Department of the Army regarding gender demographics as they pertained to key assignments and professional military schooling required for career advancement<sup>4</sup> and interviewing several women officers currently on active duty and several who recently left active duty. While the findings are not conclusive, they do underscore inequities which many men and women are unaware of. The data shows that as a general rule the more senior a woman officer is, the more likely she is to be single and the more likely she is

to be childless regardless of marital status.<sup>5</sup> Quite the contrary is true for their male colleagues. They are significantly more likely to be married and more likely to have children. This is most notable as one reviews the data regarding assignments to key positions and selection for military education at the senior levels.

### **Career Necessities/Career Status/Branch Qualification**

In order to facilitate a successful career in the Army, one must “punch certain tickets” along the way. Certain jobs are required prior to being selected for the next higher rank or being competitive for the next essential professional development opportunity.

Prior to field grade rank (major or above) a young officer must be “branch qualified.” This essentially means that he/she has:

- Attended the Officer Basic Course.
- Fulfilled a branch-specific assignment.
- Attended the Officer Advanced Course.
- Commanded at the company/battery/troop level.<sup>6</sup>

Prior to branch qualification, officers must decide whether or not to remain on active duty. Those who entered the Army under a Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) active duty commitment of two to four years, or a United States Military Academy (West Point) commitment of five years, can decline further military service. Generally about 50% get out at this point.<sup>7</sup> In most instances, officers become branch qualified after they have completed their initial obligation and have made the decision to



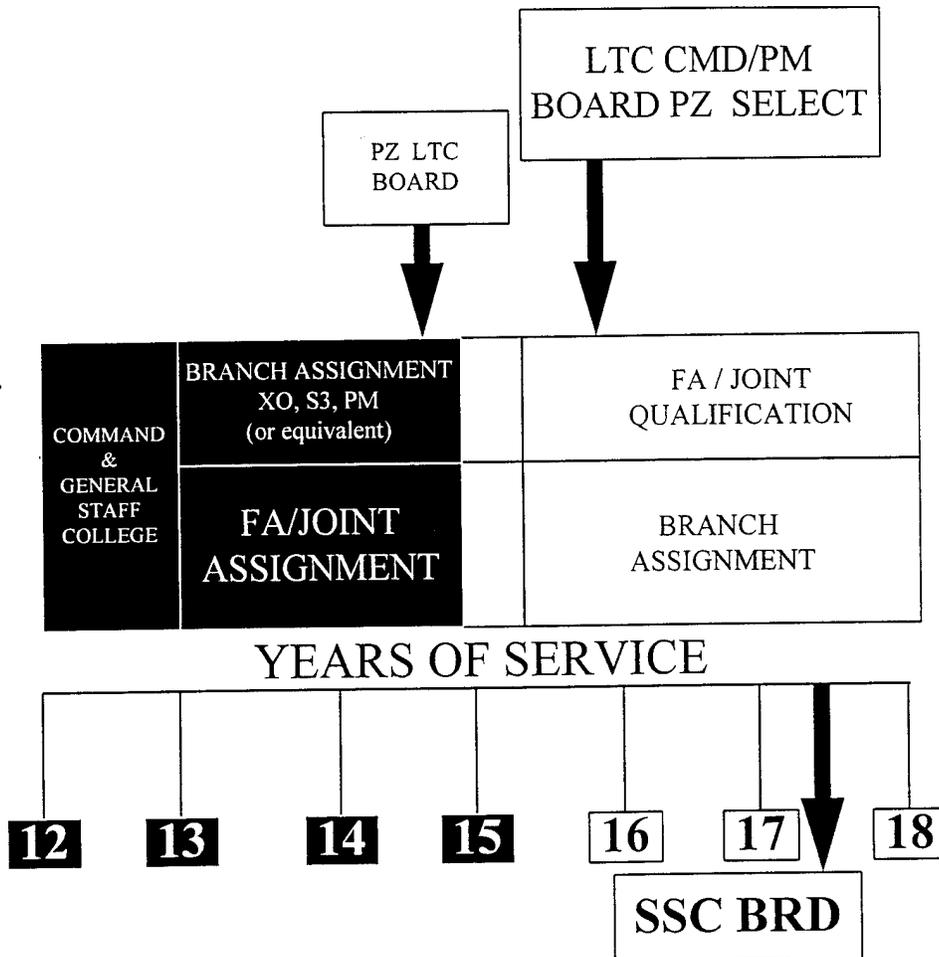
After branch qualification and between years six and eleven, an officer may be given opportunities for assignment to non-branch related areas.<sup>10</sup> These are identified as "other considerations" above.

Once an officer accomplishes branch qualification, serves in his/her functional area and/or nominative assignment ("other considerations") and attends the Combined Armed Service School (CAS3) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, he/she is considered competitive for promotion to major, thus fulfilling another vital professional development requirement. The AGR career path is different and is discussed later in this chapter.

At the major level, branch qualification starts all over again. Those who want to remain competitive for promotion to lieutenant colonel, selection for battalion level command, and attendance at a Senior Service College must accomplish certain "branch qualification" jobs as a major in order to be competitive for these more senior responsibilities and schooling opportunities.<sup>11</sup>

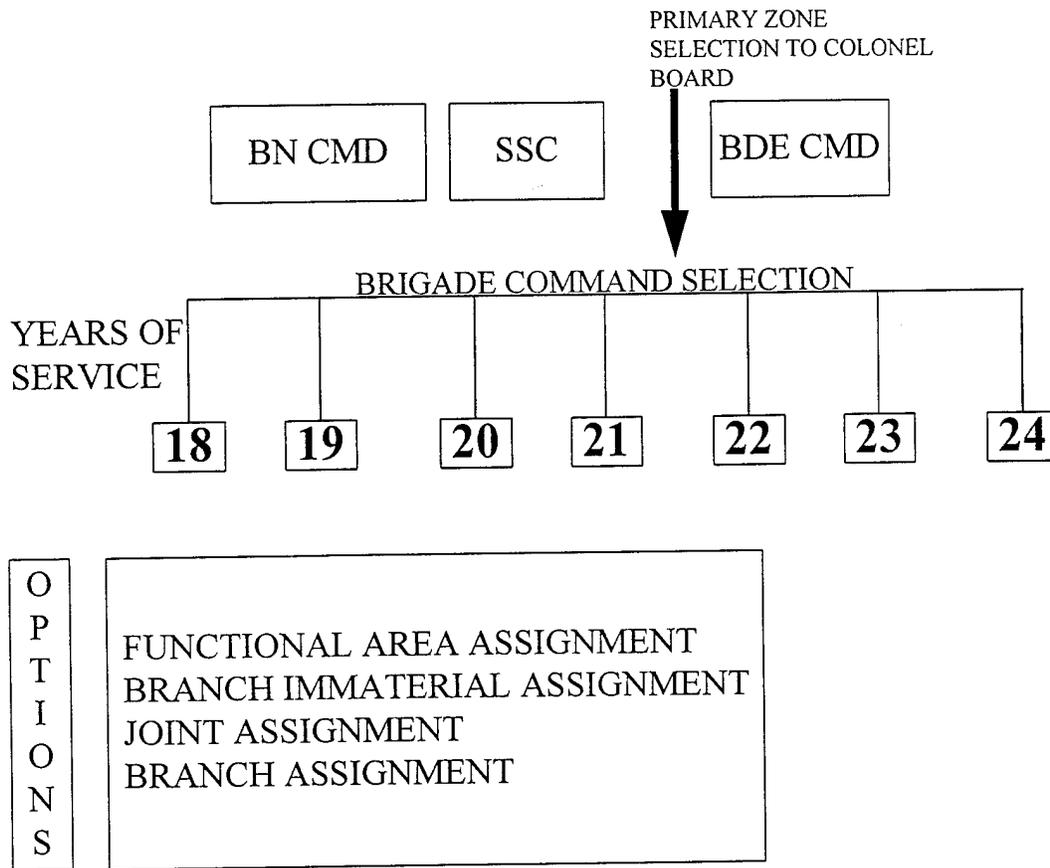
- Resident attendance at a Command and General Staff College.
- Battalion Executive Officer, Battalion Operations Officer (S3) or Project Manager Officer (or equivalent).
- Functional area qualification and or joint qualification (not essential at the major level but helpful). See Chart 2.<sup>12</sup>

## CHART 2 YEARS 12 - 15 ...



During the senior years as a major (14-16), selection for lieutenant colonel<sup>13</sup> and battalion command or equivalent are essential to remain on the fast track. It is here that upward mobility clearly takes shape and where women routinely have not done as well as men. Specific gender disparities are illustrated in the following chapter and suggestions considered as corrective measures for the apparent inequities.

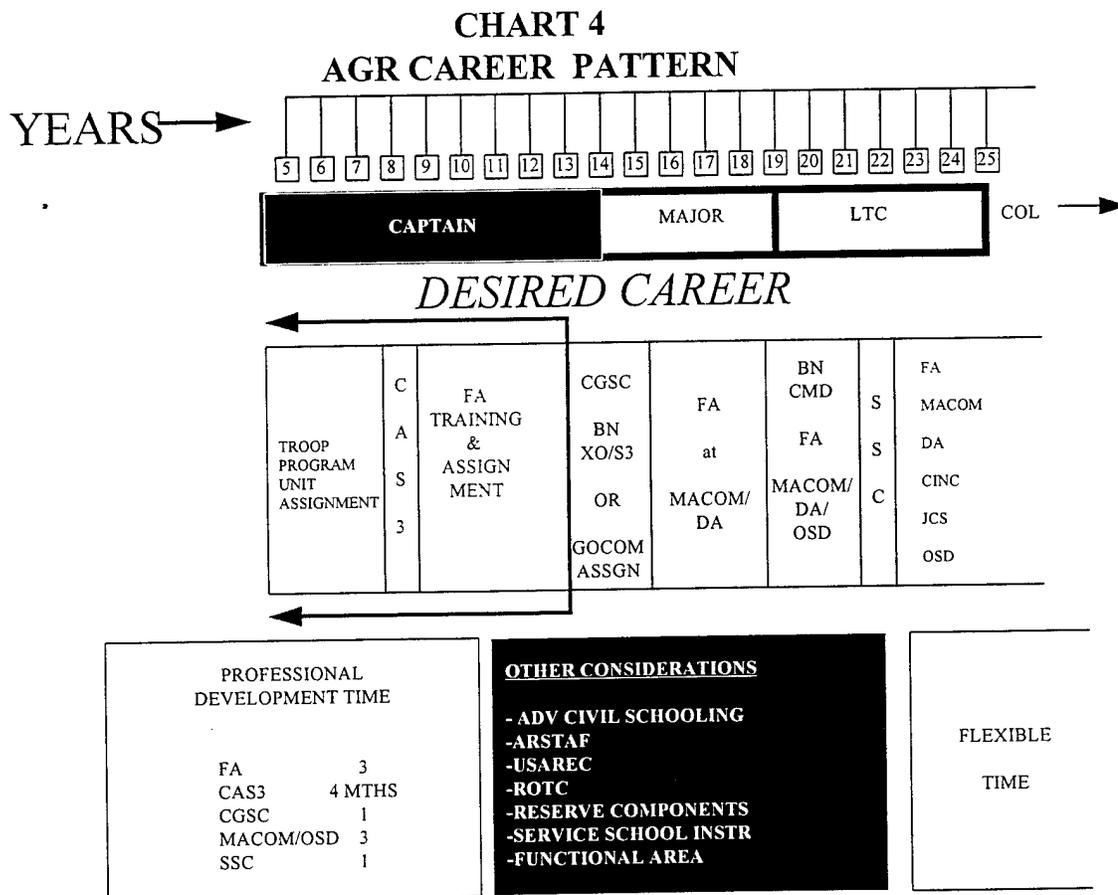
### CHART 3 THE LTC AND COL YEARS



Upon successful completion of battalion command, an officer is competitive to be selected for resident attendance at a Senior Service College (SSC).<sup>14</sup> Subsequent to SSC, brigade command is a must for general officer selection. See chart 3 above.<sup>15</sup>

The career pattern is different for Army Reserve (USAR) and Army National Guard (ARNG) officers who are part of the active duty full-time support force known as the Active Guard Reserve force (AGR). AGR officers are normally accessed onto active duty<sup>16</sup> after having served as a drilling reservist or guardsman in a troop program unit (TPU) for several years. They normally enter active duty after branch qualification.

Command billet assignments are rare for USAR AGR officers, who have frequent assignments to staff positions. Command assignments are more frequent for ARNG AGR officers through battalion command and this occurs in a Title 32 status within a state ARNG unit. See Chart 4.<sup>17</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Cultural obstacles are not new to women. Great resistance was encountered from the very beginning in allowing women to serve as full-status soldiers. See Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> Early Army senior leadership, including some WAC directors, opposed allowing married women from entering the Army and were firmly committed in maintaining regulations dismissing women for pregnancies. General Elizabeth Hoisington stated "The Army is not a suitable side-job for a woman who is already committed to maintaining a home, a husband, or a child." Unmarried pregnant soldiers were "likely to be disciplinary or adjustment problems" and "a liability to the Army because she is not free to travel." Morden, Bettie, *The Women's Army Corps, 1945-1978* (Washington: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1990) 236.

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<sup>3</sup> It is recognized that life decisions are sometimes made consciously and as a result of the circumstances one is in (i.e. personal choice, never met the right guy, unable to conceive etc.). We are not suggesting that all decisions are predicated on career enhancement or family.

<sup>4</sup> Data reviewed was as of 1 October 1995.

<sup>5</sup> While there have been women Army general officers who were/are married while on active duty (only three), none have had children.

<sup>6</sup> United States, United States Army, Director of Personnel Management, PERSCOM, Career Progression Matrix (Alexandria: PERSCOM, Oct 1995).

<sup>7</sup> Verdugo, Naomi, United States Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, telephone interview, 9 Dec. 1995.

<sup>8</sup> The AC officer remains on active duty with a Regular Army commission or in a U.S. Army Reserve voluntary indefinite status.

<sup>9</sup> This model illustrates career progression for officers other than special branch officers (e.g. Medical specialties, Judge Advocate General Corps, Chaplains Corps).

<sup>10</sup> PERSCOM

<sup>11</sup> It was not long ago that an officer could make the choice not to stay in the "fast track" and serve only in those jobs that he/she was comfortable with. By doing well in any job an officer could reasonably expect to remain on active duty for up to 28 years and retire as a lieutenant colonel. As the Army has gotten smaller and more competitive for promotion and assignments this is no longer the case. With few exceptions, if you are not promoted within a defined period of time, you must leave active duty. This is known as the "up or out" policy.

<sup>12</sup> PERSCOM

<sup>13</sup> Majors are normally considered for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel between years 14 and 15. These officers are said to be in the primary zone (PZ) of promotion consideration. PZ is based on the year of their commission and their entering active duty. A few officers are recommended for promotions ahead of their contemporaries, between years 13 and 14, they are referred to as below the zone (BZ) selectees. Some officers who are not recommended for promotion with their primary year group may be recommended for promotion with a later year group. They are considered "above the zone" (AZ) promotions. Hence, an officer has three opportunities for promotion to the next grade level from Captain through Lieutenant Colonel.

<sup>14</sup> Attendance at a Senior Service College is an absolute necessity for promotion to brigadier general regardless of component. All AC general officers have attended a SSC or equivalent fellowship program in residence. Most RC general officers complete SSC through a comprehensive correspondence program because of civilian job commitment.

<sup>15</sup> PERSCOM

<sup>16</sup> By law, AGR officers are on active duty specifically in support of the reserve component to which they belong. ARNG AGR officers can serve in one of two status's, Title 10, United States Code, which is federal status or Title 32, United States Code, which is state status. USAR AGR officers are in a Title 10 status.

<sup>17</sup> AGR officers also remain in grade longer before promotion by law compared to their AC colleagues. Recent changes to the law will permit AGR promotion opportunities similar to the AC.

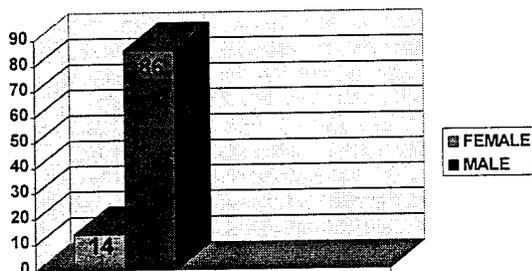
# CHAPTER II

## IF THE ARMY WANTED YOU TO HAVE CHILDREN, YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN ISSUED THEM

### Current Statistical Army Family Data

Today's Army is a very different Army from years past. Once a predominantly single male institution completely closed to women in the combat arms branches (infantry, armor, artillery, air defense, and aviation), it is now an organization almost as diverse as the population at large in terms of race, ethnicity and gender. Women, who

CHART 5  
MALE AND FEMALE WITH CHILDREN  
BY PERCENTAGE  
(Denotes Percentage)



during World War II made up 1.9% of the Army and during the Vietnam War 1% of the soldiers, are now 13.2% of today's Army. Approximately 14.3% of the Army's officer corps consists of women.<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, families and children are a significant and important part of the modern soldier's daily landscape. Sixty-five percent of soldiers are married, including 78% of the officer corps.<sup>2</sup> There are 19,000 dual military couples<sup>3</sup> and 12% of our soldiers are single parents.<sup>4</sup> The average Army family has 1.9 children, and officers are more likely to have children than are enlisted personnel.<sup>5</sup> As is the case with the American society at large, dual income families in the Army are not unusual: 48% of Army spouses are employed either part-time or full-

time, including 46% of spouses married to senior officers.<sup>6</sup> This tracks very closely to the civilian sector.

### **Defining the Problem**

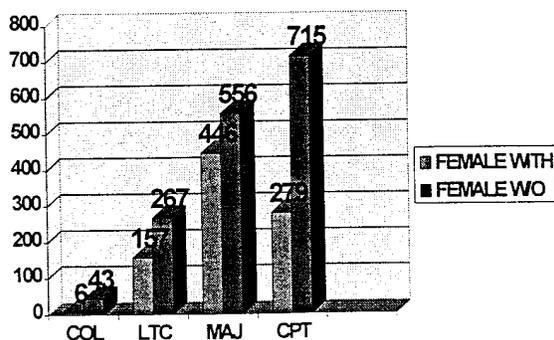
When compared to the high-level executives and senior management personnel in the private firms we visited, the Army has far fewer women equivalents who are married with children. Few, if any, of our Army women have children at the higher levels (Colonel and General). In fact, most are not married. Is this a result of an Army failure not to be more sensitive to these family related issues and therefore losing its great women officer talent along the way? In all cases the private companies had several high level women executives who worked flexible hours so that they could be very involved in parenting duties. Is it possible and appropriate to compare the Army with the civilian sector in a meaningful way? After all, we train for war, the civilian sector does not.

Although women who desire a successful Army career have made progress in terms of promotion and opportunity, it is becoming increasingly apparent that their personal cost for such success is high, especially when compared to their male counterparts. For women, career advancement often means that certain aspects of their personal lives, particularly in the area of the traditional family relationships, are sacrificed for the sake of a successful career. While career Army men also face tremendous challenges to this aspect of their personal lives, they are not of the same

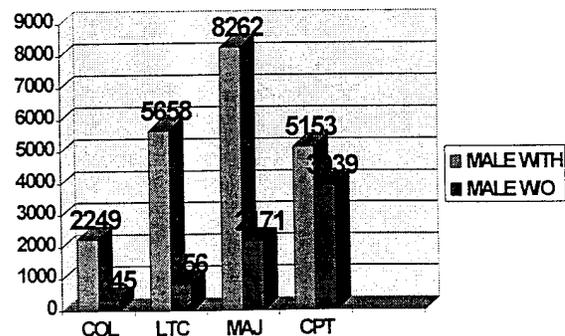
magnitude as those of their women colleagues. The impact of children highlights this disparity. While it can be argued that the Army may attract female officers who are not interested in the traditional family life and children, our research does not indicate such. Women who enter the Army do not seem any less inclined toward a traditional family life than their male colleagues. We suggest that as women officers progress on the career track, those who may be inclined toward a traditional family life opt out of the Army, recognizing that the professional demands of the career are not entirely compatible with a more traditional family life. Consequently, those who remain may have made a choice to place their careers over any family aspirations, out of necessity in a predominantly male culture. This is a culture in which there is an expectation, even as one advances in rank and responsibility, that the female member of the marriage team will assume primary dependent caretaker status. This automatically places the female fast-track officer outside the cultural norm.

Charts 6 and 7 illustrate the number of active duty (AC) career status officers, women and men, with and without children. Only 36% of women officers have children compared with 73% of male officers.

**CHART 6  
FEMALE AC OFFICERS**

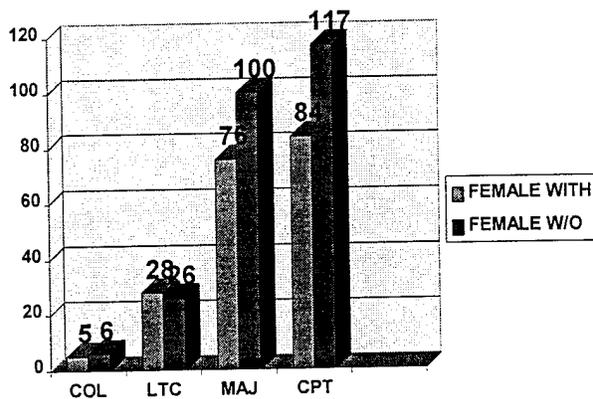


**CHART 7  
MALE AC OFFICERS**

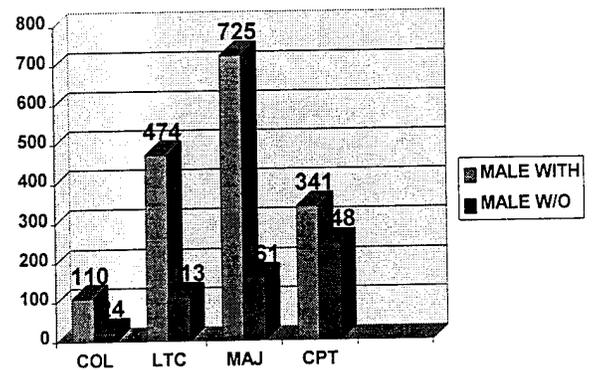


Although not as pronounced as their AC counterparts, the USAR AGR officer data in Charts 8 and 9, nonetheless, show a similar disparity between women and men. Among AGR colonels, 45.5% of the women have children compared to 82% of the men. Interestingly, only 27% of the female AGR colonels are married while 97% of male colonels are married, suggesting a higher percentage of single parents among women colonels than male colonels.<sup>7</sup>

**Chart 8**  
**FEMALE USAR AGR OFFICERS**

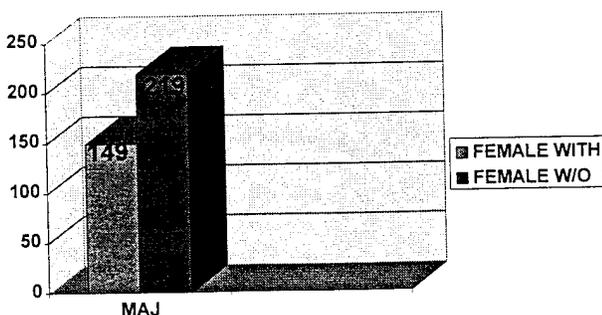


**Chart 9**  
**MALE USAR AGR OFFICERS**

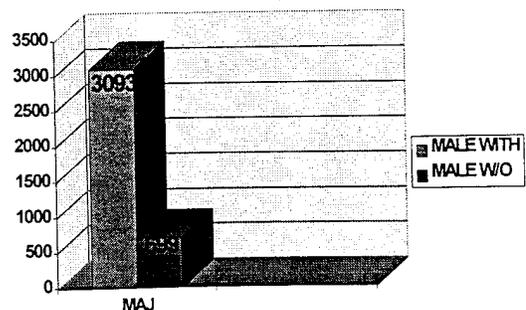


As we determined in Chapter I, specific career development jobs are required for upward mobility. Starting with resident Military Education Level 4 (those who attend the resident Command and General Staff College)<sup>8</sup>, charts 10 and 11 illustrate the differences between men and women who have recently graduated.

**CHART 10**  
**FEMALE RESIDENT MEL 4**



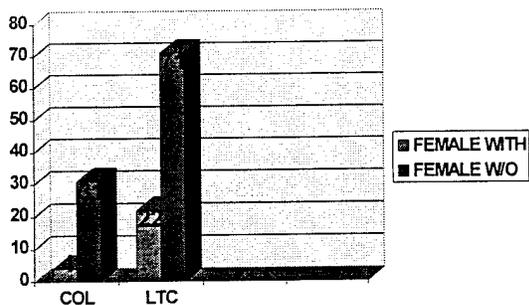
**CHART 11**  
**MALE RESIDENT MEL 4**



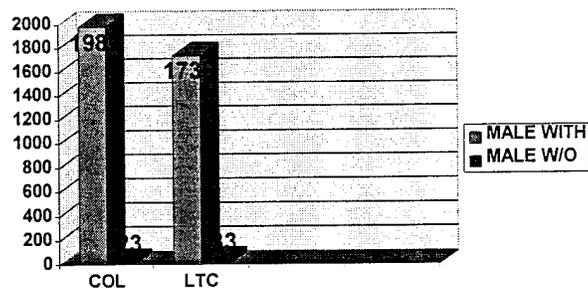
We see that 40% of the women MEL 4 graduates have children, yet 97% of the men do.<sup>9</sup> Beyond this point an even more precipitous decline in the number of married women officers and women officers with children occurs while the statistics on male officers remain fairly constant throughout the career progression cycle.

The next set of charts highlights family differences between female and male battalion commanders. Battalion command is the first high-level selection gate an officer makes which clearly indicates he/she is on the fast track. Only 20% of the female officers have children, yet 98% of the men do. As can be seen, there are already considerably fewer female with children selections than we had seen three to five years earlier at the MEL 4 level.

**CHART 12  
FEMALE BATTALION COMMANDERS OR  
PROJECT MANAGERS**

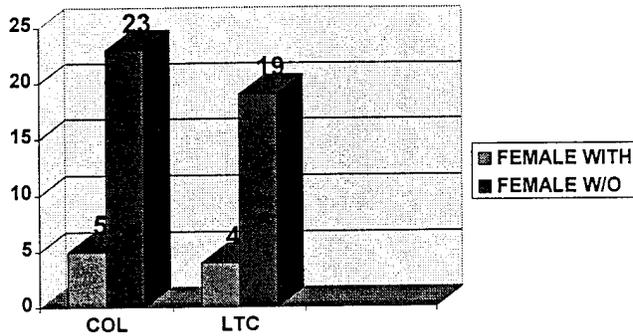


**CHART 13  
MALE BATTALION COMMANDERS  
OR PROJECT MANAGERS**

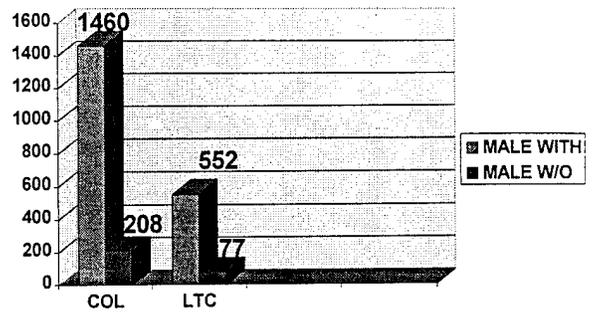


Senior Service College is the next group.<sup>10</sup> As is clear again, the number of women officers with children is even smaller. Eighteen percent of the female officers have children while 80% of the males do. The typical Senior Service College attendee is 41-45 years old.

**CHART 14  
FEMALE RESIDENT MEL 1**

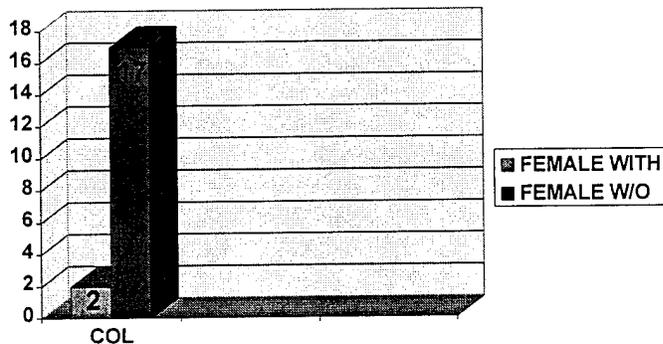


**CHART 15  
MALE RESIDENT MEL 1**

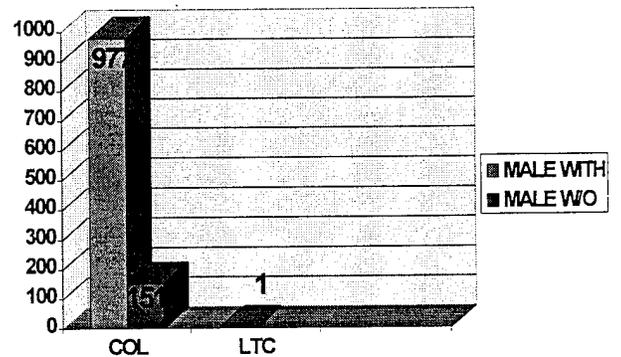


Brigade Command selection is next.<sup>11</sup> Only 10.5% of the women brigade commanders have children. Eighty-six percent of male brigade commanders have children.

**CHART 16  
FEMALE BRIGADE COMMANDERS  
OR PROJECT MANAGERS**



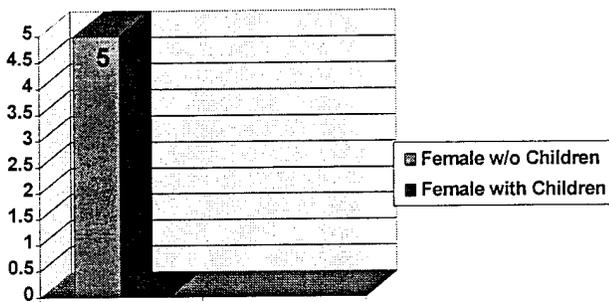
**CHART 17  
MALE BRIGADE COMMANDERS OR  
PROJECT MANAGERS**



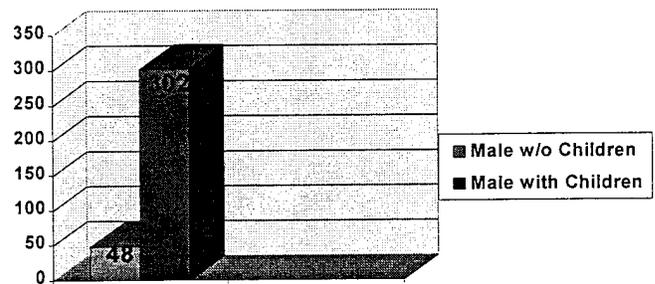
There are no female officers at the General Officer rank who have children.

Because flag rank is the ultimate goal of many "fast track" career officers, the fact that no female General has children and that most are single indicates an interesting dynamic which seems to support the thesis of this paper. Can a female Army officer have children and be successful? The obvious answer is no unless numerous other variables are to blame. According to the research we have been able to complete, there have been 18 female General officers in the Army, both past and present. None of them has ever had children.<sup>12</sup>

**CHART 18  
FEMALE GENERAL OFFICERS**



**CHART 19  
MALE GENERAL OFFICERS**



To sum up, let's look at how the totals of female officers and male officers with children look side by side as a comparison. At each qualification gate the number of female officers with children decreases, and the number of male officers with children remains principally the same.

CHART 20  
 FEMALE & MALE WITH CHILDREN  
 DISTRIBUTION TOTALS  
 (DENOTES PERCENTAGE)

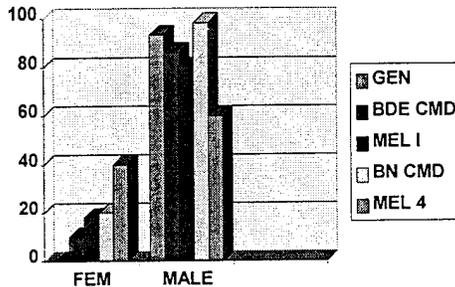


Chart 20 summarizes the differences in career progression data between men and women discussed in the previous charts.

One female Lieutenant Colonel attending the Army War College at Carlisle, Pennsylvania suggests that the

Army expects men to be married so the “command team” can be in place. That is, the Army can get “two for the price of one.” Spouses of the higher level commanders are essential to create a successful command climate for their husbands. Women spouses are in fact vital to their husbands’ careers and are expected to play an important role in assisting the wives of junior officers and enlisted personnel assigned to their spouses’ units. They attend the monthly coffee groups sponsored by the commander’s wife. They volunteer their time at the thrift shop, post nursery, Red Cross, Army community service and numerous other agencies located on post. Unfortunately, female Army commanders don’t have wives and thus are disadvantaged while serving in command positions.<sup>13</sup>

Women Army officers stated other possible reasons for fewer women making General Officer rank.<sup>14</sup> Some of these include but were not limited to:

- The attitude of female officers as the supervisor. This is a phenomenon that is unique in several ways. Historically, the Army has been predominately male, thus high level command opportunities have not been available to women. As a result

men's egos often get in the way of accepting a female boss especially in the combat arms branches.

- The negative attitude about gender norming for differences in physical strength requirements between men and women. The performance requirements on the physical training test are different for men and women. For example, in order to receive a maximum score women do not need to perform as many push-ups or sit-ups as men, nor do they have to run as fast. In the eyes of some male soldiers if women want to have the same benefits and responsibilities as their male counterparts, they should be able to maintain the same physical standards. One soldier stated, "if I'm digging a fox-hole to stay out of harms way, I expect my colleague (male or female) to be as proficient and capable of digging it as I am."
- The traditional expectation that women in the military, although not less competent or qualified, do not belong in a combat environment.<sup>15</sup>
- The expectation that because there are fewer successful women than men, people may expect all women to be less successful and behave accordingly whether they are or not.
- The inability of women to find appropriate mentors. It seems, however, that men hesitate to help women in this capacity. Sponsoring a woman may be viewed as a risky undertaking, one in which the probability of failure is too high. Preference for males as the boss operate independently of negative attitudes toward women. A study found that same sex acquaintances are solicited more frequently than are cross-sex acquaintances for leadership positions; the

conclusion was that "people groom for leadership those with whom they enjoy an in-group relationship."<sup>16</sup> In a military that historically has been predominantly male, this could be a difficult barrier to overcome.

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<sup>1</sup> United States, Department of Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, Semi-Annual Occupational Profile of Minorities and Women in the Department of Defense, Mar. 1995 (Patrick Air Force Base: DEOMI, 1995).

<sup>2</sup> As of August 1995, the Army's demographic profile reflected that 80% of officer men are married. 68% of women officers are married. The disparity is even greater at the senior grade levels as will be shown later in this paper.

<sup>3</sup> 3.3% of male officers are married to another service member. 25.6% of women officers are in dual military marriages. United States Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Army Demographics [Working Draft], Aug. 1995 (Washington: U.S. Army DCSPER, 1995).

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Army War College, Senior Service College Fellows Orientation [Briefing], Aug. 1995 (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> United States Army, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Army Demographics [Working Draft], Aug. 1995 (Washington: U.S. Army DCSPER, 1995).

<sup>6</sup> Senior officers are defined as Major through Colonel.

<sup>7</sup> 44% of all women AGR officers have children, 47% of women are married. 75% of all male AGR officers have children, 82% are married.

<sup>8</sup> Officers attend MEL 4 schooling as Majors. Most attend the Army Command and General Staff College, others attend command and staff colleges of other services.

<sup>9</sup> 64% of women MEL 4 are married, 95% of male MEL 4 are married.

<sup>10</sup> 17.6% of women have children, 49% are married. 87.6% of men have children, 97% are married.

<sup>11</sup> 26% of female brigade commanders are married, 96% of male brigade commanders are married.

<sup>12</sup> This may be due in part because of past regulations in effect when these officers entered active duty which discouraged female officers from marriage and children.

<sup>13</sup> "No wives" was a common theme mentioned by many women in both the Army and the private sector.

<sup>14</sup> Appendix B captures other revealing insights women officers shared with us. By no means are they monolithic as a group.

<sup>15</sup> Attributable to the warrior culture mentality.

<sup>16</sup> Larwood, L., & Blackmore, J. Sex discrimination in managerial selection: Testing predictions of the vertical dyad lineage model. *Sex Roles*, 1978.

## CHAPTER III

# MOTHERHOOD, APPLE PIE AND ARMY CAREER: IS IT THE AMERICAN WAY?

Are women Army officers more disadvantaged in their career progression than their private industry counterparts? Our research suggested that women in these private sector companies encounter the "glass ceiling"<sup>1</sup> as well, and face obstacles similar to those of their Army counterparts, although certain areas were more pronounced.

### How does the Army Stack Up Against the Private Sector?

We met with several major private sector companies to determine if these Army findings are unique. The companies<sup>2</sup>, members of the Fortune 500, included a major national broadcasting company, a multi-national office business equipment manufacturer, a national life insurance company, and a multi-service national bank. All of these firms, with the exception of one, were chosen because of their reputations for being family-friendly companies as determined by the magazine Working Mother. This magazine has been evaluating companies for the past ten years on the basis of their inclusion of women by looking closely at four areas: pay, opportunities for advancement, child care, and other family-friendly benefits (i.e. alternative work arrangements). The companies we examined were chosen because of their size (40,000-60,000 employees) and corporate structure (hierarchy) which, with the

exception of one, were more similar to the Army than other firms. The one exception was the major broadcasting company, selected because it was thought the media industry would have more innovative solutions for including women at the higher echelons of management. This turned out not to be the case. All the companies we interviewed are located on the East Coast. One final note, these companies are atypical of most private businesses in that they are the most liberal and progressive. Other comparable businesses are less accommodating according to our discussions with individuals in the private sector.

### **Private Sector Career Progression**

Unlike the Army's very formalized career track model, we found no common career track model for advancement and progression to the senior management level in the private sector. The road map to advancement and progression varies from organization to organization. Ironically, some do not have specific senior-level career opportunities and are quite frank in telling prospective employees "don't come [here] if you're looking for career advancement."<sup>3</sup> Others do have a career path to senior management that may take 15-20 years.<sup>4</sup> Demographically, the senior management and executive suite gender makeup varies among the organizations.<sup>5</sup> One company, whose women employees made up 73% of their work force, had two women executives of seven in the company. Another large corporation had almost 14% women in executive positions and yet another had no women in senior vice-president positions, although 75% of its

work force is women.<sup>6</sup> While no key variables stood out which explained these discrepancies between companies, it seems that those firms which have women in executive positions have had policies addressing glass ceiling issues in place for some time. Hence, a “cultural maturity” sensitive to these issues may be a determinative factor.

Catalyst, a national nonprofit group located in New York City which seeks to effect change for women by working with business and the professions through research and advisory services, estimates that less than five percent of executives in U.S. companies are women. They identified several barriers in the business culture that impede the careers of women<sup>7</sup>:

- Stereotyping and prejudices about women’s suitability for leadership positions.
- Lack of careful career planning by women and the organizations.
- Exclusion from informal networks of communication.
- Lack of effective management training for female employees.
- Inadequate appraisal and compensation systems, leading to salary inequities.
- Absence of programs enabling employees to balance work/life responsibilities.

Certain impediments seem more acute in the business world than in the Army and vice versa. For instance, due in part because of its highly structured and formalized career structure, the Army has made progress in dealing with many of the aforementioned barriers in comparison with the private sector, particularly on issues of pay, leadership and management training of all officers, and career planning.

According to the literature and private revelations from women we have talked with, the

private sector seems to lag far behind in these areas. However, there is one issue which resonates quite clearly among women as a major advancement barrier and a source of constant stress and tension for those who are career-minded regardless of employment sector, the balance of work/family responsibilities.<sup>8</sup>

### **Women are More Affected by Family/Work Issues than Men**

Informally, many women disclose that maintaining a career while juggling the responsibilities of a traditional family is much more difficult for a woman executive than it is for their male peers. A major reason for this suggests that women are less willing to give up the nurturing role and family caretaker responsibilities than are their male counterparts. Surveys of women executives reveal that many feel they operate with three levels of pressure constantly<sup>9</sup>:

- Pressure of the job itself and the need to do it well.
- Pressure of being a female executive representing all women.
- Pressure of managing life demands outside of work.

The last item is very telling and its underlying reason seems socio-cultural in nature. Many male executives are married and have a tremendous support system at home allowing them to concentrate on their professional careers with minimum outside distractions. Many women executives are faced with the reality that they are expected to carry the major responsibilities for the household, nurturing intimate relationships with spouse and children, and raising the children.<sup>10</sup> One single parent woman executive

said, "The overriding challenge for me was juggling parenting and my career over those years, trying to do well at both, trying to grow in a career without crippling the children...It was difficult finding time and energy, putting one or the other off."<sup>11</sup> As Terri Apter appropriately captured in the title of her book on this subject, "Working Women Don't Have Wives."<sup>12</sup> What becomes very apparent is that many successful women executives put their jobs before family.<sup>13</sup> While male executives do the same, there is often a spouse at home to attend to that aspect of their lives. This poses the question, "Is it possible for anyone to fuse his or her personal and professional life into one smooth, charming, comfortable, and competent whole -- doing everything our mothers did, and everything our fathers did without spouse and employer help?"<sup>14</sup>

Many of the women told us that child care requires maternal instinct and they could never be comfortable allowing their husbands that responsibility. They did not say their husbands were incapable of being the child nurturer, they simply stated that they couldn't give up that role.

### **A Catalyst Study**

Catalyst recently conducted a survey of 1250 women senior-level executive (one of the largest surveys of its kind ever) and found that the best explanation for women's success is their ability to consistently exceed performance expectations. Despite family-friendly policies allowing for extended leaves for care of children and flexible work hours to accommodate family responsibilities, it seems that these women rose to

the top the traditional way at great sacrifice to their personal time. Often rising early in the morning to do paper work and to spend time with their families before going to work, they expended great personal effort.

"It takes an awful lot of stamina to pull this off," said Brenda E. Edgerton, 46, vice president of finance for Camden, N.J. based Campbell Soup Company, one of the few survey respondents who agreed to be publicly quoted. "You get tired, awfully tired, and with children it's especially more intense. And you have to make it look easy."<sup>15</sup>

Most of the women that responded to the survey said the second most important factor in their success was adjusting to playing the role so as to not be a threat to or intimidate men. Said one respondent: "Don't be attractive. Don't be too smart. Don't be assertive. Pretend you're not a woman. Don't be single. Don't be a mom. Don't be a divorcee."<sup>16</sup> Many of these women surveyed indicated that success meant learning how to play golf, understand sports talk, being current in all the outdoor jargon that men are interested in. In many respects, women have to live a lie in order to be accepted in the work place.

Unlike the Army, and contrary to the one-time belief that career women are forced to give up marriage and children to advance in the work force, 87% of the 1250 women surveyed were or had been married. About two thirds of them have children. These senior executives made an average of \$248,000 a year. Ninety-one percent of them are white. Three-quarters of them are the main breadwinners in their family. Supportive husbands were acknowledged as helpful.

Overall, these women seem pleased with their recent success in the work force. Senior executive men say that women's biggest draw back is their lack of "line" experience, and that many women just have not yet proceeded far enough through the corporate pipeline to reach top spots.<sup>17</sup> This notion has also been posited as an explanation for the small number of women at the higher echelons of the Army; that is, the dissolution of the Women's Army Corps is less than 20 years old. Therefore, it may be that women career officers have not been in the system long enough to rise to the highest leadership levels of the Army.

### **Private Sector Solutions: Do they Work?**

During the course of our research and company and personal interviews, we discovered that the incorporation of work/family programs is often essential in the development of programs for the recruiting, retention, development and advancement of women within organizations. Moreover, those organizations that are most successful have aggressively sought to accommodate both careers and family responsibilities through innovative methods of career management to include the development of "family track programs."<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, what was once considered a "woman's problem" is now viewed through a "family lens" approach and is being increasingly recognized as an issue which many men are confronted with as well in today's society.<sup>19</sup>

The family leave policies of the companies we visited varied widely. All allowed some paid maternity leave (typically 6-8 weeks) with at least some full medical benefits. The time women took off for pregnancy averaged six to seven weeks.<sup>20</sup> All married men were offered the same maternity leave policy, however, we were told few males took advantage of the opportunity.<sup>21</sup> There was great variance among the companies when it came to additional family leave:

- The banking industry company permitted up to six months leave with assurance of the same or comparable job upon return. The same company also allowed its employees to take up to two years' unpaid leave under the same criteria, but approval by the company leadership is not automatic. Women make up approximately 75% of the company's employees.
- The office business equipment company allowed up to three years unpaid leave with job security guaranteed. This company has had a supportive family-friendly work policy program in place for many years.
- The national media company had no specific written policy on this issue, but would ensure a job upon return even though it may not be the same one left. The woman vice-president we spoke with intimated that there are disincentives for taking maternity leave because one can never really catch up on the job left in the highly competitive entertainment industry.<sup>22</sup>

Catalyst notes that the success of family leave policies is "tied to other types of work and family supports."<sup>23</sup> It is unclear whether the careers of fast-track employees who avail themselves of family leave policies are derailed. Although none of the

companies we talked with had a "mommy or family track" per se, many had incorporated innovations to be more accommodating in striking the balance between work and family. The use of flexible work arrangements, part-time work arrangements, and job-sharing among employees is common. These arrangements allow employees to spend more time with their children during the most care-intensive years. Telecommuting is also becoming a more common industry tool. In fact, several companies found that worker productivity increased significantly when they were allowed to work at home.<sup>24</sup>

Many of these innovations and practices are fairly recent. Therefore, it may be too early to determine the overall success of these management methods as enablers for women to remain on the career advancement track while devoting more time to their children. However, some companies such as IBM and Texas Instruments, have succeeded in promoting women who, at times in their career, chose the "family track" career option to upper level management and executive positions but they are the exceptions.<sup>25</sup> There is also a realization that women who avail themselves of family leave programs are not monolithic in their career attitudes. Literature indicates some firms have discovered that some women want to continue on a demanding fast track and others want something less.<sup>26</sup>

The successful private sector family/work programs seem to have the following in common:

- Strong support from the top.
- A formalized and well-understood policy that is consistent with company goals.

- A family leave policy that is tied to other work and family supports.
- An understanding that the policies are an accepted part of that work culture.

Whether private sector innovations may be workable in the Army "warrior" culture is addressed in the following chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> Glass ceiling is a term used to describe "negative events that deny managers and professionals who are "different" opportunities to develop and advance in their careers - rather than a fixed point beyond which advancement is impossible." Catalyst, Cracking the Glass Ceiling: Strategies for Success (New York: Catalyst, 1994). The term has been attributed to two *Wall Street Journal* reporters who in 1986 used it to describe the "invisible barrier that impedes women from the top jobs in corporate America." It has now acquired a broader meaning to include barriers to advancement of men and women of color.

<sup>2</sup> In obtaining our data, we assured anonymity to the people we interviewed at the companies we visited.

<sup>3</sup> It is not uncommon for these companies to laterally hire at the senior management and executive level from outside their companies rather than promote from within.

<sup>4</sup> Catalyst, Cracking the Glass Ceiling, 38.

<sup>5</sup> Exact figures and marital status of women senior managers and executives were not disclosed to us by all the companies we met with.

<sup>6</sup> Research literature also indicates these disappointing figures are not the result of a pipeline issue as women have been introduced into the management track with many companies for well over 15 years. Other factors seem to be at work.

<sup>7</sup> Catalyst, Cracking the Glass Ceiling, 25.

<sup>8</sup> Regarding the issue of balancing work/life responsibilities and its apparent disproportionate impact on career Army women officers, our research suggests the Army falls short of policy progress made in the civilian corporate world.

<sup>9</sup> Morrison, Ann M., Randall P. White, Ellen Van Velsor and The Center for Creative Leadership, Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Can Women Reach the Top of America's Largest Corporations? 1992 ed. (Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1992) 15-20.

<sup>10</sup> Morrison, 113.

<sup>11</sup> Morrison, 113. Career Army women officers certainly feel the impact of children as well. One reservist on active duty as a member of a recent Army War College class noted, "I can tell you from this short experience on active duty, the Army is overwhelmingly geared toward married couples. It focuses on the female as the spouse, and the established norms make it difficult to accomplish even simple tasks where children are concerned if a spouse is not available to coordinate matters!" Another woman member of the class commented, "It [children] is certainly an issue that is central to a woman's approach to philosophy, priorities, and way of doing business."

<sup>12</sup> Apter, Terri, Working Women Don't Have Wives (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1993).

<sup>13</sup> Morrison, 28.

<sup>14</sup> Paraphrased question attributed to Hilary Cosell, Women on a Seesaw (New York: Putnam, 1985).

<sup>15</sup> Grimsley, Kirstin Downey, "From the Top: The Women's View," Washington Post 28 Feb. 1996, natl. ed. C1+.

<sup>16</sup> Grimsley, C1.

<sup>17</sup> Grimsley, C4.

<sup>18</sup> Formerly referred to as the "mommy track" which term has fallen out of favor because of its association only with women employees and not inclusive of their male colleagues who also struggle with work/family issues. Typically, a family track program allows the employee to either work alternative work schedules or take extended leaves of absence in order to devote more time to providing family care to a dependent during care intensive years. The employee is able to remain in an upwardly mobile career pattern,

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although it will take longer to reach the senior and executive positions vis-à-vis other employees who do not avail themselves of this alternative career model.

<sup>19</sup> As dual career families are becoming the norm in today's American society out of income necessity, men are beginning to realize burden sharing as a family life essential. Perhaps because women are insisting so.

<sup>20</sup> Most companies seem to permit up to six months maternity leave with some measure of job guarantee but most women seem to return after six-seven weeks, probably economically related. Additionally, Catalyst says that many high-level women return to their job earlier rather than later because they are fearful of the repercussions a longer leave will have on their careers. Catalyst, The Corporate Guide to Parental Leaves (New York: Catalyst, 1992) 61.

<sup>21</sup> In one company, only 40 men took maternity leave in the past seven years. Some surmise that cultural pressures prevent men from using these policies because it makes them seem less committed and serious about their work and organization. The suggestion is that women are expected to use them because they are the ones actually pregnant.

<sup>22</sup> This policy or non-policy struck us as odd since we were informed that many women in this industry are married and have children.

<sup>23</sup> Catalyst, The Corporate Guide to Parental Leaves, 3. Their study also found that even the best parental leave policy was inadequate without access to quality child care. Informal discussions with women Army officers and with women executives in the private sector who have children confirm that this remains a major concern to them.

<sup>24</sup> The insurance company interviewed noted that claims processors who were able to work at home almost doubled their productivity from 250 claims a day (at the office) to 450 claims a day (at home).

<sup>25</sup> Deloitte and Touche, a Big Eight accounting firm, and Morrison and Foerster, a large corporate law firm received high marks from Catalyst in this regard.

<sup>26</sup> Price Waterhouse, another Big Eight accounting firm, discovered many of their employees want more control of their schedules even if it means foregoing partnership or delaying their advancement to get there. Catalyst, Perspective, Fall 1995 (New York: Catalyst, 1995).

## CHAPTER IV BE ALL YOU CAN BE

### Motherhood and Professional Soldier: Can Women Be Successful at Both?

We have tried to show that when children are involved, women are not enjoying the same career success as men. The data clearly shows that families get in the way of women's career progression much more than is the case for their male counterparts. So the question to answer is who's to blame? Is this phenomenon a product of the American culture that is brought to the Army, or is the Army partially at fault for not doing more to alleviate an apparent imbalance because of gender roles?

As we have compared advancement opportunities for women officers in the Army with that of their civilian counterparts, family and personal life barriers seem to have a disproportionate impact on women vis-à-vis their male colleagues. It is acknowledged the Army is on the cutting edge of equal opportunity and fairness and it does a better job in many instances. But can more be done to meet the needs of today's competitive Army career woman, in a competitive field, who is trying to raise a family as well? Do we have a flexible work-leave program? Do we allow leaves of absence for dependent care? Are there opportunities to work at home when no other option is available? Do we utilize alternative work scheduling to accommodate family requirements? Is it essential that we emulate certain family/work innovations practiced in civilian corporations in order to remain competitive and be able to recruit "America's finest?"

**What Makes Women and Men Feel Successful at Home?**

Literature and research studies suggest many socio-cultural factors are at odds with notions of a more egalitarian approach to the demands of dual career households. Women in general seem to define success at home primarily in terms of family relationships and time together. Although men and women are in full agreement about the importance of relationships and time together as a gauge of success at home, men tend to place more emphasis on their role as financial providers in judging their own success, and less emphasis on their interaction with their children. Moreover, although we collected no data on this point, it appears that many women willingly subordinate their careers in favor of their spouses.

A 1995 survey (Chart 21) by Louis Harris and Associates for the Families and Work Institute compared women's and men's definitions of success at home.<sup>1</sup>

**Chart 21**

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>
<b>Numbers Surveyed</b>	<b>1502</b>	<b>460</b>
Family -- Good relationships, spending time together	26%	27%
Children--Good well-adjusted healthy	22	8
Getting everything done/ Household management	20	13
Caring for family, spouse, children	18	7
Clean/orderly home	15	2
Receiving love, support from family	9	5
Being happy	8	4
Financial--Being able to afford things	5	20
Time to do the things I want to do	2	5
Not feeling rushed/Stressed	1	1
Having my own place	1	NA
Other	3	3
Nothing/I'm not successful at home	*	NA
Not sure/Refused to answer question	7	6

\*indicates less than one-half of one percent.

To analyze women's perceptions and how they differ from men's and to help determine what courses of action the Army can take to level the battlefield, consider the answers provided by women on the issue of family responsibility to another Louis and Harris 1995 survey.<sup>2</sup>

**Chart 22**  
**Women's Answers to Family Responsibility**

Attitude	All Women	Employed Women	Women who work at home caring for families
<b>Base</b>	<b>1502</b>	<b>1072</b>	<b>231</b>
<b>It is my responsibility to take care of the people in my family.</b>			
Strongly/somewhat agree	88%	89%	93%
Strongly/somewhat disagree	11	11	6
<b>How much do you think that others value you for fulfilling your responsibilities at home?</b>			
Very Valued	59%	62%	57%
Somewhat Valued	35	33	37
Not too/not at all valued	5	4	5
<b>I get plenty of support and help from my family and friends?</b>			
Strongly/somewhat agree	89%	87%	88%
Strongly/somewhat disagree	13	14	12

We really don't understand why women, even women executives, assume more responsibility for child care than their male counterparts; and, we don't understand why women tend to yield to their husbands' careers when a career choice must be made; but research, both in and outside the Army, indicates that it does.

## Potential Alternatives to Current System

So what are some of the options we have as an institution to help alleviate the cited inequities? Or is the military's mission so different that family activities becomes a "readiness issue" that can't be fixed?

1. We can develop a "family track" professional development option that allows a soldier (male or female) to take extended time off to have or be the caretaker of new babies and children. This option could include a leave of absence for up to two years with no adverse effects on the officer's career. Upon return to active duty, he/she would simply be reintegrated into the year group of those officers two years behind his/her original year group for promotion and assignment purposes. Many civilian sector corporations permit extended leave programs for career employees who desire continued upward mobility. The U.S. Coast Guard has recently adopted a policy which allows service member to apply for leaves of absence for the care of newborn children (CNC):

- It permits career status men and women (officer and enlisted) to take up to two years leave of absence to provide care to newborn baby or for adoption purposes.
- Only one leave of absence is allowed during the course of a service member's career.
- Service member is actually discharged from Coast Guard for the leave period and must give six months notice.

- Service member is reintegrated into Coast Guard after leave but must meet entrance requirements (i.e. height/weight etc.) before reentry (mostly pro forma).
- Reintegration means that the service person must be incorporated into a different year group for promotion and advancement purposes, does not rejoin his/her initial entry year group.

While the approach adopted by the Coast Guard seems to be a positive step in accommodating family requirements of its career members, several observations are noted regarding this policy:

- Not many take advantage of the leave policy, perhaps because of the perception issue mentioned earlier in this paper regarding commitment to the job. Additionally, economics is an important factor because discharge means loss of pay.
- Fewer men than women utilize policy. This too may be a perception issue related to job commitment of the male careerist in a very traditional professional culture.
- Mostly dual military career partners use the policy. This also may be economically related with regard to loss of military health coverage by the discharged service member. In dual military marriages the discharged service member is still covered by the military as a dependent of the active duty member.

It is too early to tell if the careers of officers who have used this policy have been disadvantaged versus their colleagues who have not used the policy. However, early indications suggest that policy users are derailed from the operational career track.

**2.** Develop a “family track” that would allow an officer to stay at one rank throughout his/her career. If an officer is content with being an administrator and doesn’t desire to stay on the fast track, then the Army would allow him/her to do that. This option could include an entirely different Officer Evaluation System. Certain jobs throughout the military would be identified as “non-upwardly mobile”. The rating scheme and expectations would be different for these officers. “Front-line,” combat ready positions would be inappropriate for this consideration.

A considerable drawback to this option is the creation of a formalized category of officers who would be deemed second class. In a military that currently adheres to an up or out policy this can be a formidable cultural obstacle to overcome by all concerned. It may require an officer to make a decision early in his/her career on what career track they wish to pursue. Moreover, because more women may opt for these types of assignments, there is a very real danger of further gender “channeling” women officers into non-upwardly mobile jobs.

**3.** Maintain the status quo but inform potential Army officer careerists that in order to facilitate a successful, fast track career, family life will be

disadvantaged. This option could be a very real recruiting detractor but candor on this issue up front allows individuals to at least make an informed choice.

American culture is changing. Two income families are becoming the norm. Families are a reality and in order for the Army to remain competitive and relevant to the changing landscape, the Army must re-examine its career progression models.

### **And the Answer Is?**

It is difficult to assess which way the Army should go to correct this apparent inequity between women and men. Because the Army mission is considerably different from that of our civilian counterparts it is difficult to compare professional/career tracks. The one area that is consistent, however is the culture we draw from. Increasingly, our society is represented by households where each parent or the single parent works and children are put in a child care facility. Without the excellent service of married women with children, single women with children, and single men with children, our country will not have the personnel resources available to perform our Army mission effectively. It is our opinion that to fulfill this need and prepare for the Army of the 21st Century, we have to reevaluate the way we do business. We must restructure the career paths of professional Army officers so we can fully utilize all of the talents available. We recommend the following:

- Continue current career development and management practices with slight accommodations for a modified "family track." Inform officers that in

order to have a "fast track/successful" career, their family interests in all likelihood will suffer. However, incorporate a family track option permitting a leave of absence for up to two years for service members who desire time for family responsibilities during dependent care intensive years. This would be an unpaid absence but would not disadvantage the officer who wants to continue on the fast track upon his or her return to active duty. These leaves might be requested for a variety of personal reasons -- to be at home following the birth or adoption of a child; or, to care for an elderly parent or in-law. This option allows those who still desire a fast track option to remain on track for advancement to the upper echelon assignments and schooling, although at a delayed pace.

- Provide the opportunity for individuals to work at home on a part-time basis when special needs require it. Have individualized work schedules for employees who have special family needs. This will require local commander/supervisor discretion, thus, educating local commanders will be extremely important on issues regarding work-family balancing.

This recommendation would not be without challenges. It may require careful management decisions by the officers concerned to ensure that very personal choices (i.e. when to start families) coincide with that time of career which is less intrusive professionally. The service member must also be cognizant of the loss of pay and medical benefits. Additionally, potential disruption in the personnel system can occur as vacancies created by officers availing themselves of this option will have to be filled.

Likewise, the personnel system has to be able to accommodate officers returning to duty following the leave of absence. Finally, the Army culture must accept the policy and ensure those who use the option are not negatively affected in follow-on assignments and schooling upon return to duty. These challenges are significant, however, we feel that they are not insurmountable.

While some may argue that an Army with such a policy as we are suggesting cannot remain combat ready, we contend that it can through careful restructuring and personnel management.

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<sup>1</sup> Louis Harris and Associates, Families and Work Institute, Whirlpool Foundation, May 1995.

<sup>2</sup> Louis Harris and Associates, Families and Work Institute, Whirlpool Foundation, May 1995.

# APPENDIX A

## History of Women in the Army

### World War II

The first major introduction of women in the Army as we know it occurred during World War II.<sup>1</sup> Anticipating severe manpower shortages in the event the United States was drawn into the European conflict, General George C. Marshall, then Army Chief of Staff, directed the personnel staff to do a study on the use of military women. The study envisioned a women's corps modeled on the Civilian Conservation Corps using them as hostesses, librarians, canteen clerks, cooks, waitresses, chauffeurs and messengers.<sup>2</sup> This plan did not intend that women be afforded full military status as male soldiers. Nothing came of this plan or any previous plan until after America was officially drawn into World War II. Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers introduced a bill to establish a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps of 150,000 women who would have military status on the same basis as men for non-combat duties. This created tremendous controversy and debate. The outcome was a compromise which created a Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) without military status. The Army was authorized to enroll 150,000 officer and enlisted women for noncombatant service, "to organize them in separate units: and to pay, house, feed, clothe, train, and provide medical care for them at Army posts and other facilities".<sup>3</sup> Initially, the WAACs were paid less than their male counterparts but this was corrected in November 1942 when they were finally authorized to draw the same pay and allowances as their male

equivalents. The WAAC and its successor, the Women's Army Corps maintained high esprit de corps. This was due in great part because of their high entry and retention standards which were not required of the male soldiers.

The first director of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps was Oveta Culp Hobby who was given the male equivalent rank of colonel. Because of inequities which, among other things, did not provide WAACs veteran's hospitalization if they became sick or were wounded, and did not provide death gratuity in the event of death and no protection under the existing laws of wars regarding prisoners, Director Hobby and Congresswoman Rogers introduced a new bill which established the Women's Army Corps (WAC) in the Army of the United States.

The new law provided women with the same military pay, privileges and titles as men; however, the director of the Women's Army Corps could not be above the grade of colonel and other WAC officers could not be promoted beyond lieutenant colonel. WACs served throughout the major Army commands, including overseas in the European and Pacific theaters. Upon conclusion of the war approximately 140,000 women had served as WACs. However, the WACs never reached their ceiling of 150,000 authorized. Numerous reasons contributed to this shortfall -- continued male opposition, competition from other women's military services and civilian industry because of labor shortages. Post-war demobilization led to a WAC strength of less than 8,000.

## Post World War II

Following World War II, planning was directed by General Eisenhower for the establishment of the WAC in the Regular Army with concurrent Reserve Corps status. As expected there was Congressional opposition but this was overcome and the Women Armed Services Integration Act of 1948 was passed. However, professional equity in the Army was another matter altogether. Into the 1950s and 1960s opportunities for WAC officers were limited in comparison to male officers. Promotion above major was rare. Additionally, assignment restrictions prohibited WACs from "serving in combat, commanding men, serving as chaplains or aviators, or being assigned below theater army level."<sup>4</sup> Indeed, women were confined to roles that were only in conformance with the accepted cultural pattern of the times. In the 1960s and during the Vietnam War women's roles were expanded which allowed them other job opportunities in other specialty areas outside of the traditional administrative and nursing roles. However, role expansion did not increase WAC strength which hovered around 12,000. A major event did occur in 1970 when Elizabeth P. Hoisington, then WAC director, and Anna Mae Hays, an Army nurse, were selected for promotion to brigadier general marking the first time women achieved flag rank.

## Post Vietnam War

Ironically, the end of the Vietnam War, in which several hundred women served in country, and the end of the draft led to WAC expansion. The introduction of the new Volunteer Army (VOLAR) was the impetus for WAC expansion -- men did not volunteer in the numbers needed, while women did. This led to an increase of WACs to 53,000 in 1978 from 12,000 a few years earlier. The success of this expansion, coupled with enhanced opportunities resulting from the opening of the ROTC program in 1972 to women and the admittance of women to the service academies in 1976, quickly broke down other professional obstacles to career-minded Army women. The Army discontinued the WAC Career Management Branch in 1974 as women officers were being managed by their assigned branches. Many other changes occurred as well<sup>5</sup> :

- All military occupational specialties (MOSs) were opened to women except those involving direct combat.
- WACs were authorized to command men except in combat units.
- Service women received dependency entitlements.
- Assignment constraints were removed on utilization of women.
- Mandatory discharge on pregnancy and parenthood was eliminated; voluntary discharge on marriage was eliminated.
- WACs were permanently assigned to other branches.

In 1978, the Women's Army Corps was abolished marking the assimilation of women soldiers into the permanent Army establishment. A modicum of real integration had been achieved.

### **What Did You Do During the War, Mommy?**

Women are now found in many Army specialties at every rank level including general officer and were put to the full test during combat operations and multilateral peace operations in Grenada (Operation Urgent Fury), Panama (Just Cause), Persian Gulf (Operations Desert Shield/Storm); Somalia, Haiti and Rwanda. They served as an integral part of America's Army as pilots, nurses, doctors, lawyers and as line platoon leaders, company commanders, key staff officers and battalion commanders in logistical support, military police, transportation, and air defense units. Additionally, some were prisoners of war and some also paid the ultimate price.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, women officers are again serving in similar capacities in Bosnia (Operation Joint Endeavor).

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<sup>1</sup> Many women had served in support of the Union Army during the Civil War as nurses. Not to understate this role, it became a traditional role viewed by many as appropriate for women. This role was expanded during the Spanish-American war when Congress permitted the Army to appoint nurses not in a military status but under civilian contract. Congress established the Nurse Corps as an Army auxiliary in 1901, however, military status still was not conferred. By the end of World War I, the Army Nurse Corps had grown to 20,000. See Jeanne Holm, Women in the Military: An Unfinished Revolution, Rev. ed. (Novato: Presidio Press, 1992) 6-10.

<sup>2</sup> Holm, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Holm, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Holm, 134.

<sup>5</sup> Holm, 325.

<sup>6</sup> Women officers were combat fatalities and prisoners of war in previous conflicts as well.

## APPENDIX B

### What Women Officers Revealed

An intricate part of our research was spent talking with women about the findings presented in this paper. We wanted to ensure our thoughts were relevant and portrayed the problem as it appears to be rather than the way we interpret it. Being men it is easy for us to "fix the women" and forget that men play a role in any problem that may or may not exist.

Several women responded to our survey with insightful observations as to why women are less likely to have children than men. We share a few of these responses to give the reader an indication of some of the feelings and frustrations exhibited within the population surveyed.

Several female officers in the grade of major and lieutenant colonel indicated that their decision not to have children was well thought out prior to making a military career commitment. They informed us that they never intended to have children and several were aghast at the possible suggestion that it would have been a difficult if not impossible task had they wanted to pursue it. Other women officers suggested they never made the conscious decision not to have children but that the heavy commitments of a successful military career simply precluded it.

In dual military families, it appears that women routinely take on the caretaking responsibilities even when their commitments are equal to or greater than their husbands. One major said she could never allow her husband to be the primary

caretaker. She insisted that it was her role and could not believe anyone could suggest otherwise. It generally appeared to us that the woman's career in a two career family was routinely subordinate to the males. Although there are exceptions to this rule the general consensus is women are the primary caretakers and men are the principle providers. When discussing this premise however, many strong feelings on both sides of the opinion spectrum exists.

Some women told us they were more maternal than their male counterpart and felt the parenting role was more important to them than career progression or upwardly mobile aspirations. Some indicated strong social values towards parenting as their basis of thought while others talked religious obligations and commitments.

One female officer who read our rough draft suggested that we made her feel guilty for being barren. Another female officer showed anger that we might even suggest women are less capable of doing family and career successfully than are men.

A female lieutenant colonel with two children suggested that the Army does everything possible to make it hard on family caretakers. "There are no nursery facilities that facilitate a 24 hour per day mission; there are no means by which an officer can attend Parent Teacher Association meetings, or take an active part in their children's activities; there are no formal means by which an officer can take extended time off to catch up on family commitments." Although this female officer was not talking strictly to the female problem, her point is well taken that the Army does not provide a friendly environment for successful family and career success.

Several single female officers (some who left active duty) indicated that the 24 hour per day commitment of the Army made permanent relationships difficult and children impossible. We were told time and time again that "women don't have wives" and are thus disadvantaged.

A more comprehensive research study of both men and women within the Army and those who have recently left active duty would be appropriate and perhaps would give more insight into the findings noted in this paper.

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